

The History of Stratton, Vermont

To the End of the Twentieth Century



DK YOUNG

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In Memory

This work is dedicated to the memory of

Ethel Ann Eddy

a past advocate of Stratton's local history. If not for her, many of the stories, memories and photographs of old Stratton perhaps would have been lost forever.



Ethel Eddy
1886 - 1969

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Prologue

On the North American Continent, in the northern reaches of the Appalachians, and along a range known as the Green Mountains, stands a mountain nearly 4000 feet in height. It is the highest point of land in the southern third of the State of Vermont, located midway between the state's eastern and western borders. The Mahicans, who once dwelled south and west of this area, called this mountain Manicknung - "*Place where the Mountain heaps up,*" an apt description from their perspective, since the mountains appear as one long ridge from the southwest, with Manicknung gently sloping upward to a height above its neighbors.

On July 30, 1761, Governor Benning Wentworth of New Hampshire issued a charter to Isaac Searl of West Hoosac, Massachusetts and sixty-two others for a township of thirty-six square miles, located east of the newly formed township of Sunderland in colonial territory claimed for the British Crown under the jurisdiction of New Hampshire. This charter included, and is dominated by, that same great elevation of land called Manicknung. The Governor christened this new township "Stratton." Hence, it was upon this date that the town of Stratton was conceived and it was upon this charter that the modern township of Stratton, Vermont was founded.

The story of Manicknung before 1761 remains for the most part a mystery. Thus, this history is ultimately a story of the Anglo-Americans who eventually settled within this town – those who came to develop the land and those who established a culture and tradition that eventually evolved into the Stratton of today. It is a study of the imprint left by those people upon this place called Stratton and it is also a study of the impression, however small, that this tiny mountain community has left beyond its borders – an impression that began at the time of its charter in 1761 and one that has continued through to the opening of the now world-renowned Stratton Mountain Ski Resort in December of 1962. It was during that 200-year period that Stratton, as a community, was conceived and settled, matured into a Vermont farming town, and then almost vanished, before rebounding to become one of Vermont's most prosperous townships.

In 1981, the Stratton Corporation published The Stratton Story. This publication recounts the ski resort's first twenty years and opened with a brief synopsis of "Old Stratton," by Martha Sonnenfeld, a co-author, whose ancestors had lived within the township. She stated that "*The Stratton of my ancestors is gone forever...*" I do not believe that! Unlike neighboring Somerset and Glastenbury, Stratton has survived and fares well in the present. The town government remains intact and a few buildings and families of pre-ski resort Stratton are still very much a part of the town. All indications are that the township will continue to flourish for many years to come.

In recent years, many outsiders have viewed Stratton only as a ski resort, oblivious to Stratton – the town. It is a two-dimensional perspective with no depth – perhaps lost within the shadow of the mountain. Here, I have put forth my best effort to uncover the people and places, the stories and legends of Stratton – all things that culminate into that important missing third dimension – Stratton’s history.



Stratton Mountain’s North Face

Photo courtesy of Intrawest Stratton Development Corp.

Section I

Prelude to a Town

Chapter I

Before the British

Across the Ages

On any crisp, clear day, climbing Stratton Mountain and then ascending the old fire tower to rise above the treetops and gaze across the magnificent landscape of the Green Mountains provides us with a sense of what seems to be an age-old story of nature unchanged. But the nature of this area has changed over the eons – catastrophically, in fact. The views from that tower would have been drastically different and ever-changing over the millennia had that tower been there to provide a perch for one to watch the world grow old.

Although most of the ancient past of this land has been forgotten, it is intriguing to imagine what this area must have been like before the English came and settled here. What was it like before humankind came to settle here?

The story of this region as it spans the millions of years prior to the coming of humans seems almost incomprehensible. That story is one of nature on a grand scale – a story that I cannot do justice to – but, I certainly can share my understanding of that distant time.

The story best begins in the Paleozoic Era, about 550 million years ago – about four billion years after the earth came to be. At that time, the Lower Cambrian Sea, which completely covered this area, slowly gave way to the Ordovician Sea about 500 million years ago – a sea that covered most of what is now New England. The silt that accumulated in these waters became the bases of the various strata of bedrock that exists today in this region. The Ordovician Sea retreated from this area about 440 million years ago as the Adirondack and Taconic Mountains were thrust upward by the eastward movement of the continental plates. Another 220 million years passed before the Green Mountains finally began to take shape during the last of a period known as the Appalachian Revolution. At that time, the land was forced upward to magnificent heights – mountains were created that could compete with even the Himalayas of the present age. The Appalachians were indeed a magnificent army of mountains in their day.

Of course, what we now call Stratton Mountain would have been just a small part of one of the great mountains within this range, buried deep beneath those magnificent heights, and emerging only after millions of years of erosion by water, wind and ice – a process that filled in the interior of the continent as it wore the great mountains away.

The New England area saw a number of climatic changes over those years, from that of a sub-tropical climate to that of the seemingly more appropriate Pleistocene Period – the Ice Age. The great glaciers of that time moved down from Labrador, advancing and retreating over a period of a million-and-a-half years – a process that cut and tore at the mountains and further diminished their majestic heights. As the glaciers melted away, the valleys of this region once again were submerged, leaving the mountains to stand as islands. The never-ending assault upon the mountains by wind, rain and ice continued, eroding the heights and filling in the sea around them. Manicknung’s familiar silhouette and the surrounding landscape took its present shape during that time – a time that ended a mere 10,000 years ago – only an instant ago from an earth-time perspective. Thus came to be that so familiar view from Stratton’s tower – a view most of us mistakenly see as timeless.

The Native Americans

Stratton’s human history is also a story of continual change. With the retreat of the glaciers some 10,000 years ago, it still would be another 5000 years before humans found their way into the Green Mountains. Archaeologists believe that between 3000 BC and 2000 BC pre-Algonquian cultures existed in New England. Dr. John C. Huden of the Vermont Historical Society, who studied the native Americans of this area, believed that Old Algonquian cultures existed here from about 2000 BC to approximately 1200 AD; and recent Algonquian sub-cultures have been better identified within this area from that latter date until the coming of the English during the 18th Century. There appears to have been no specific aboriginal sites within the confines of Stratton, but that does not mean that sites did not exist.

Huden conjectured that the native-American settlements within this general area might have been those of the Pocumtucks (*People of the Very Narrow Swift River*). The Pocumtucks were an Algonquian tribe that located along the Deerfield River. The headwaters of the Deerfield River originate on Manicknung, and so it is possible that the Pocumtucks had settlements nearby. This tribe maintained a fortification near Deerfield, Massachusetts for many years, until it was destroyed by the Mohawks in 1666.

The Western Abenakis, an Algonquian tribe that occupied what is now northern Vermont and adjacent lands in Canada, may have settled as far south as Manicknung. Later, the southern half of Vermont was considered within their territory, but this was the case after the arrival of the Europeans.

The Mahicans, another Algonquian sub-culture, also settled near this area. The Mahicans, “River Folk,” or “Loupes” (Wolves), better known to us as the Mohicans in James Fenimore Cooper’s, *Last of the Mohicans*, had settled in what is now southwestern Vermont, northwestern Massachusetts and eastern New York, east of the Hudson and along the Hoosac and Battenkill Rivers. Tradition has it that the Mahicans believed that evil spirits

occupied the mountains and, therefore, they did not inhabit them. Manicknung would have fallen along the Mahican's eastern border within those haunted mountains.

At the time that Champlain first sailed his namesake lake, the Mahicans numbered about 1600 warriors. Unfortunately, smallpox and other diseases brought in by the Europeans devastated the Mahican populace during the 1600s, so that by 1698 their population had fallen to only about 100 warriors. Thus inevitably, and sometime before 1750, this tribe had been broken up by the English, Dutch and Mohawks and driven away. Remnants of the Mahicans settled around Stockbridge in Massachusetts and became known as the Stockbridge Indians. Many years later they resettled on two reservations in Wisconsin.

Dr. Huden also noted that the name of the mountain, "Manicknung," came from the Mahican language, meaning "*Place where the mountain heaps up.*" In recent times, others mistakenly have believed that Manicknung means "*Place of the Bear,*" but I have seen no etymological support for this definition and believe it to be wrong. The Western Abenaki word for bear is "*awasos.*" Since nearly all the tribes of this area were of the Algonquian language group, they most likely would have used a similar form of this word. The fact that Manicknung is actually a Mahican word is strengthened by the reality that many of the Englishmen who later received charters for southwestern Vermont, including Stratton, first had settled within the lands of the Mahicans in northwestern Massachusetts; thus, if a place had not been christened with an English name, then these Englishmen were more apt to adopt the Mahican place-names found throughout this area.

By the time Stratton was chartered, many events had occurred to change the native American settlement patterns of northern New England. Colin G. Calloway, author of The Western Abenakis of Vermont, 1600 – 1800, noted that at least ninety percent of the native American population of Vermont had succumbed to European diseases even before the Europeans began penetrating this region. The native Americans that survived this unseen onslaught were also plagued with tribal discord. The Algonquian tribes were in perpetual conflict with the Iroquois nation located to the west. The Iroquois, namely the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onandagas and Senecas, claimed present day upper New York State, the Hudson River Valley and the lands around Lake Champlain, including all of western Vermont. The Mohawks, specifically, claimed the Hudson River Valley after having driven out the Mahicans.

Following the arrival of the Europeans, hostilities between the Algonquian tribes and the Iroquois were amplified further by the many wars between the French and English. The Algonquian tribes struggled to maintain lower eastern Canada and land east of the Green Mountains, but many of the tribes in southern New England and Vermont were forced to abandon their lands. Many retreated north, joining with their brothers the Western Abenakis and other related tribes of this region. Many of these

displaced peoples eventually settled at a place called St. Francis Odanack in Quebec.

The Algonquian nations had sided primarily with the French, while the Iroquois had made peace with the English. War between the English and French resulted in a “no man’s land” between their so-called territories – territories that coincided with those of the native Americans – an area which included southern Vermont.

For a brief period following the arrival of European settlers, native Americans still used southern Vermont as hunting and fishing grounds. This led to conflict on occasion between the native Americans and the English, highlighted by King George’s War (1744 – 1748) and the French and Indian War (1754 – 1760). King George’s War ultimately drove the English settlers out of Vermont for a few years. It was not until the end of the French and Indian War, in which the French had lost their Canadian territories and the Algonquian stronghold of St. Francis Odanack had been attacked and considerably weakened by Rogers’ Rangers, that the majority of Vermont was truly opened for English settlement. By the time the great hordes of English settlers began arriving within this region, the devastating circumstances of disease and war had created a widowed land. Thus, Vermont was not the virgin wilderness these settlers believed it to be. By that time, the only indications that Algonquian cultures had ever existed within this area were some of the Algonquian names given to the mountains, the lakes and the rivers – names that were recorded on the maps of that time or kept alive through tradition.

Chapter II

Making the World England

The Coming of the English

For nearly two centuries, the tribes of the Connecticut and Champlain Valleys had been familiar with the Europeans who had come in increasing numbers to occupy the eastern shores of the continent. They soon realized that the English, specifically, had come to claim great quantities of land for themselves, then strip it of its trees to create farm and pasture lands. In contrast, the French colonials were mostly trappers and missionaries, who left the forest alone. The French seemed much less invasive to the Algonquian cultures than did the English planters of New England; therefore, the French were able to infiltrate parts of what is now northern Vermont, and co-exist peaceably with the tribes of that region at an early time.

Although English Yankee settlements into this region were set back from advancement by King Philip's War (1674 – 1675), they inevitably made their way into the upper Connecticut valley. Meanwhile, a few Frenchmen established homes in northern Vermont and a scant number of Dutchmen under English rule in New York settled lands within what is now Pownal, Vermont. However, since the French were later defeated by the English and forced out of the region entirely, and the Dutch either had left or were absorbed into the English settlement of Pownal, history can record that it was the English who were able to establish the only lasting settlements within Vermont's borders to this day.

The story of the English in the Green Mountains begins with the settlements known as the Equivalent Lands. Matt Jones, in his book, Vermont in the Making, provided many of the details of the Green Mountain's early history, as this area fell under the control of the English. I have used his work extensively here to tell the story of Stratton's beginnings as an English land grant – a story that began many years before Stratton was given a charter.

The Equivalent Lands, 44,000 acres of which were located in the southeast corner of present day Vermont (Putney, Dummerston and Brattleboro), were lands given to Connecticut by Massachusetts as part of an agreement that established a boundary between those two colonies. The lands were then sold by Connecticut to private individuals and jurisdiction fell to Massachusetts. Lieutenant Governor William Dummer, then acting Governor of Massachusetts ordered a blockhouse to be built on the Equivalent Lands. This blockhouse, named Fort Dummer after the Governor, was erected in 1724 in the southeast corner of what is now the town of Brattleboro, near where Broad Brook flows into the Connecticut River. It was built to protect Massachusetts's northern settlements from Chief Grey Lock's raids during a conflict known as "Grey Lock's War" that had erupted between the Western

Abenakis based in what is now northern Vermont and the settlers of northern Massachusetts.

With the establishment of Fort Dummer and the end of Grey Lock's War shortly thereafter, native Americans quickly lost any foothold that they had tried to maintain within southern Vermont. They made their existence known from time to time to the settlers of the region; but alas, once the English took hold of Canada in 1760, any significant native American presence in southern Vermont soon was considered a thing of the past.

The New Hampshire Grants

Not long after Fort Dummer was established, a disagreement arose over the placement of the border between Massachusetts and New Hampshire. This dispute continued between those two colonies for about fourteen years. To settle this matter, King George II, decreed that the boundary between Massachusetts and New Hampshire should be surveyed. This decree was made on March 5, 1740, and the boundary was surveyed in 1741. The King's decision placed the boundary further south than even the New Hampshire government previously had claimed. Both Hinsdale and Fort Dummer were located north of that line, thus placing these settlements supposedly under New Hampshire jurisdiction. A dispute continued between the two colonies for many years, since New Hampshire refused to garrison Fort Dummer adequately. To protect its citizens, Massachusetts elected to maintain and garrison this fort, despite the fact that it had no jurisdiction there.



Benning Wentworth

With the border between New Hampshire and Massachusetts established, Benning Wentworth, the newly appointed Governor of New Hampshire, assumed that the King was, in fact, recognizing the jurisdiction of New Hampshire to extend as far west as that of Massachusetts, which claimed that its western boundary existed at a line twenty miles east of the Hudson River.

King George's War, which began in 1744, delayed for several years any action by Governor Wentworth in making land grants within his new territory. It was not until January 3, 1749/50¹, that the Governor chartered his first township there, along this new western boundary, intent on establishing his authority in the farthest reaches of his newly claimed jurisdiction. He christened this new six-mile by six-mile township "Bennington" in honor of himself.

1) Indicated as old calendar / new calendar year.

The gentlemen to whom the grant was given made no attempt to settle Bennington. It was not until after the area was made safe at the end of the French and Indian War that Samuel Robinson, a veteran of that war, brought a group of settlers into the area on June 18, 1761, to establish the first Bennington settlement.

Wentworth's Agenda and the Controversy with New York

The charter of Bennington brought about another territorial dispute, this time between the colonies of New Hampshire and New York. Wentworth's grant of Bennington conflicted with a previous grant or patent called Walloomsac, made by New York in 1739. As we shall see, this dispute was just one small feature of a much larger conflict.

Before Governor Wentworth began issuing charters, he had sent notice of his intentions to Governor Clinton of New York, who delayed in challenging Wentworth until after Bennington was granted. Within a matter of months, Clinton informed Wentworth that New York's jurisdiction, in fact, extended east to the Connecticut River, as determined by the patent granted by King Charles II to the Duke of York in 1664. This patent, the basis for New York Colony, stated that the Duke was to hold His Majesty's entire domain west of the Connecticut River and East of Delaware Bay.

This raises the question, "If the 1664 patent still applied, then why the controversy between Massachusetts and New Hampshire?" If Massachusetts had no claim to lands west of the Connecticut, then neither did New Hampshire, and the decision that launched Wentworth's grants would have been all for naught. So how and why did this controversy begin?

The heart of the problem stood in New England's growing population pushing into the frontier west of the Connecticut River – territory claimed by New York. It was a controversy accentuated by the different philosophies of land ownership and governing techniques that existed between New England and New York. New Englanders were freeholders – men who owned the land outright; while New York maintained a leasehold system where settlers leased their farms from manor lords – owners of vast tracts of land. The main difference concerning government was that New England had developed local government at the town level, while New York's governing body closest to its people stood at the county level.

At the early stages of this controversy, Connecticut was able to negotiate a resolve that established its western border at a point twenty miles east of the Hudson – an agreement that existed between New York and Connecticut only. The dispute between New York and Massachusetts was another matter. Massachusetts always had claimed that its territory extended west of the Connecticut River by virtue of an early charter that extended its jurisdiction westward to the Pacific Ocean. Many years passed with no resolution from the King. In spite of the controversy, Massachusetts had issued and

continued to issue grants west of the Connecticut River; by 1750, the controversy had developed into an out and out land war along the Hudson between the New York manor lords and the New England settlers – settlers backed by prominent members of the Massachusetts General Assembly. It was not until 1757 that the Board of Trade recommended to the King in Council that Massachusetts's western border should be established along a line 20 miles east of the Hudson River, as was Connecticut's western border; and it was not until 1773 that this recommendation was made official. Meanwhile, the land war continued.

Although Massachusetts western boundary had not yet been officially resolved in 1740, the King's resolution of the Massachusetts and New Hampshire boundary that year certainly implied that all of New England extended to that line twenty miles east of the Hudson River. If the Massachusetts border had been resolved by that time, then New Hampshire certainly would have extended to that line. With events as they were, Governor Wentworth was able to use the argument that King Charles II's patent must have been obsolete.

In April of 1750, as the dispute between New Hampshire and New York was just beginning, Wentworth sent a letter to the governor of New York informing him that he would not issue additional grants within the disputed territory until the matter had been resolved by the King. No sooner had Wentworth made that promise than he signed the charter for the town of Halifax in May, 1750. The matter was brought to the attention of the British Board of Trade, coming before the King in Council in 1753. Unfortunately, any serious consideration by the monarchy was postponed for many years, in part due to the outbreak of the French and Indian War in 1754. By the spring of that year, Wentworth had repeatedly broken his promise, issuing a total of sixteen charters in the disputed territory. With the outbreak of the war, however, the business of charters fell to the wayside.

At the end of the French and Indian War in 1760, the disputed territory stood wide-open for settlement. Wentworth wasted no time in once again beginning a vigorous land granting policy west of the Connecticut, so that by the end of 1764, he had chartered 128 towns therein. In each of these charters, the Governor had allotted himself a large tract of land. He had issued very large amounts of land to a select few individuals – friends, relatives and associates, and of course, the good governor was most generous to himself.

Wentworth distributed these charters in spite of the fact that the King had previously established criteria to be met before any colonial governor could issue a given land grant. The requirements were that at least 50 families should be prepared to settle upon the land before a grant was issued and no more than 50 acres were allowed for each man, woman and child in a grantee's family. In other words, a man with a wife and six children could be granted no more than 400 acres. The King and the British Board of Trade intended that at least 100 families must first be settled on the grant before it

received full status as a town and that each grantee was to settle, plant and cultivate at least five acres in each fifty acres of his grant within five years of the issue date. Wentworth, however, had his own ideas.

The question arises, “What really motivated Benning Wentworth to bend the rules, defy the King, the British Board of Trade and the Governor of New York and issue so many illegal land grants?” There appears to have been at least two motives. First, but not necessarily foremost, was New England’s struggle with New York to establish a contiguous western border. It appears from the names upon his grants that Wentworth was cooperating with the very Massachusetts men at odds with New York in the land war. Secondly, the governor obviously had plans to make himself rich by keeping a large portion of each grant for himself.

The successful results of Connecticut’s and Massachusetts’s bold advances into New York’s territory indicated that if Wentworth’s grants were to appear legitimate and if even only a few families were to settle within his grants, it would be difficult for New York to wrestle the disputed territory from him. The governor, therefore, knew he had to pad his grants with at least 50 names to make them look legitimate. To accomplish this, Wentworth had no trouble in finding men willing to take a risk in land speculations – one of the rare methods by which a colonist could become wealthy. His grants were made even more attractive to these men by his extremely low price of about thirty English pounds per charter.

Meanwhile, the extent of the grants issued was not readily divulged to New York, nor to the British Board of Trade. Cadwallader Colden, Lieutenant Governor of New York from 1761 to 1776 and previously that colony’s Surveyor General, took a keen interest in Wentworth’s “illegal” activities. He continued to press for a decision on the border dispute and tried to keep the Board of Trade informed about Wentworth’s dealings as he discovered them. Finally, in 1764, more than fourteen years after the dispute had begun, the matter was put before the King in Council and the boundary dispute was resolved. On July 20, 1764, after reviewing all sides of the argument, the King decreed that the west bank of the Connecticut River to the 45th parallel stood as the border between New York and New Hampshire.

Following the decree, the Board of Trade, by that time well aware of the situation, continued to question Governor Wentworth on the matter of his land grants. He was reluctant to reveal the true extent of his land granting activities, but when pressed on the issue, he submitted a full list of grants and tried to explain his policies – particularly those concerning the lands he had given himself. The Governor had broken nearly every rule set down by the King in regard to grants. He could not deny the evidence against him. A bankrupt man before his appointment to the governorship, Benning Wentworth had made himself one of the richest men in the colonies by granting himself more than 65,000 acres.

In 1766, Wentworth was forced to resign his governorship due specifically to the ordeal of the New Hampshire Grants. He died in 1770,

never reaping the benefits of his contrivance (nor any severe consequences for that matter), except of course for the low granting fees he had collected. Following his resignation, Benning Wentworth's nephew, John Wentworth, was appointed to the governorship of New Hampshire.

In retrospect, as evident through the King's resolutions of Connecticut's and Massachusetts's border disputes with New York, if Governor Wentworth had been much less greedy and had followed a less aggressive and more lawful land granting policy, New Hampshire may well have won the border dispute and what is now Vermont would have become part of New Hampshire. The conflict would have been resolved and the State of Vermont would never have come to be.

New York had won the battle of the border, but there were men living on at least some of Wentworth's grants and there were even more who had invested heavily in those grants. The resulting consequences balanced on New York's handling of this delicate situation. In actuality, the controversy was just beginning.

Chapter III

Stratton – A Town Conceived

The Charter

In 1761, the year that the majority of Wentworth's grants were issued, on July 30th, probably at the governor's residence in Plymouth, New Hampshire, Benning Wentworth signed a charter that designated Isaac Searl as head of a group of 63 grantees for a township of six miles by six miles, located due east of the town of Sunderland which had been chartered just the day before. The Governor labeled this new township "Stratton" (*See Appendix B – Stratton's New Hampshire Grant*).

Stratton's Grantees were:

Isaac Searl, Nathaniel Burt, Gideon Clark, John Lyman, Samuel Blodget, Jonathan Basscomb, Job Searl, Caleb Blodget, Curtis Leomis, Nathan Lyman, Rev^d John Searl, Oliver Wendell, Eleazer Hannum, Daniel Lee Jun^r, Caleb Blodget, Charles Clapp, Cap^t Benoni Danks, Benj^a Cudworth, Daniel Lee, Esq., James Hill, Joel Hunt, Elisha Mather, Joseph Hill, Seth Babbit, Martin Phelps, John Hill, Richard Stainer, Caleb Strong, John Holden, Joseph Brown, Spencer Phelps, Josiah Brewer, Joseph Pincheon, Esq., Martin Phelps, Jun^r, Jonas Cuttler, Mansur Bunbury, Asael Clapp, Jun^r, William Rawson (III), William Parson, Oliver Lyman, John Smith, Henry Apthorp, Joel Lee, Rev^d Jonathan Judd, Jacob Wendell, Esq., Nathaniel Cudworth, Lieut Thomas Sweat, William Brattle, Esq., Nathaniel Noyse, Nath^l Phelps, Thomas Hubbard, Esq., Augustus Clapp, Esq., Nath^l Phelps, Jun^r, Richard Wibird, Esq., Charles Mather, John Smith Jun^r, John Downing, Esq., Ruggles Woodbridge, William Lyman, Sam^l Wentworth of Boston, Elias Lyman, William Blunt, and Benning Wentworth.



Portrait of William Brattle

*Courtesy of
the "Fine Arts Collection
of Brooks Memorial Library,
Brattleboro, Vermont"*

The Grant

What were the specific circumstances surrounding the establishment of Stratton's Charter? Who were the men named upon the charter and why were they interested in Wentworth's grant(s)? Were they potential settlers, speculators or mere "dummy grantees" ready to sign over their rights to a

single person as soon as the grant was issued? Did they even realize that they were grantees of Stratton or had Wentworth used their names just to fill out the charter? To answer these questions, we must take a close look at those very men. I shall start by scrutinizing the man responsible for putting the deal together – Mr. Isaac Searl.

Isaac Searl

As head of the Grantees, Isaac Searl was most certainly the central figure of Stratton's earliest history as a township. Fortunately, some details of Isaac Searl's life and business affairs have survived, allowing us a look at this enterprising man, whom I believe played a very important behind-the-scenes role in the creation of Vermont. Records are scant, and Isaac Searl apparently managed to stay elusive for much of his life, making it very difficult to tell his life story. Others who have researched Isaac Searl believed that there must have been more than one man by that name; however, I believe that most of the information I have managed to collect applies to only one man – a man who remained very active in land speculation and who often moved from place to place throughout his life.

Isaac Searl, the son of James and Mary Searl of Northampton, Massachusetts was born there on June 2, 1723. He was just five years old when his father died, and when he became of age, Isaac inherited some of his father's property. During the early period of his life, Isaac learned the shoemaker's trade, lived on Main Street in Northampton and owned 24 acres there.

In 1749, Isaac sold at least some of his Northampton property. At that time, he and his brother, James, received land grants that were parts of an additional grant of 3000 acres lying between Northampton, Springfield and Westfield, Massachusetts. On April 9, 1752, he sold another eleven acres in Northampton and, in this deed, he was called a cordwainer.

On March 6, 1753, Isaac was listed among the grantees of Stamford, one of the sixteen grants that Benning Wentworth had issued before the French and Indian War. Stamford was located directly north of the Massachusetts's line and across from a colonial outpost called Fort Massachusetts. Isaac probably did not intend to settle in Stamford, since he had just established a home in West Hoosac, located on the western side of that same fort.

In 1754, Isaac was among a group of settlers who signed a letter of complaint, stating that the commander of the fort, Ephraim Williams, had refused to help the English settlers of West Hoosac after they had been driven from their homes at the outbreak of the French and Indian War. In 1755, Isaac was named among the soldiers stationed at this fort and, in March of 1756, Isaac and several other residents of the town undertook the construction of a blockhouse, at their own expense, to provide for their own safety. This small blockhouse was called Fort Hoosac.

It appears Isaac had left the frontier about this same time and resettled in Salisbury, Connecticut, probably to escape the war. I am unsure why he decided to resettle specifically in Salisbury; although, his brother, James also had resettled in Connecticut – in Simsbury, their mother’s hometown, and his brother John also settled near there. Other relatives resided in that vicinity, as well. At some point – possibly in Salisbury, but most likely in West Hoosac – Isaac married Hannah Hawley. Isaac and Hannah had several children, with one child born and one child dying in Salisbury in 1759. That same year, Isaac also was among the grantees of New Marlboro, Massachusetts. Evidently, Isaac resettled back in Northampton around 1760 before returning eventually to West Hoosac after the war. West Hoosac was renamed Williamstown in 1765, and it was there that Isaac Searl apparently spent much of the remainder of his life.

Over time, Isaac had developed into a shrewd and successful land dealer, so much so that he was called the wealthiest property owner in West Hoosac in 1759. Eventually, Isaac’s new wealth allowed him the title of Gentleman and at times he used the title of “Captain” – probably a rank he had obtained in the militia.

Isaac owned a number of lots on both sides of Water Street in Williamstown, including house lot #55. It is believed that, upon this lot, Isaac built the long two-story house that had existed where the Williamstown Savings Bank now stands. Isaac held a seat in Williamstown’s Methodist meetinghouse, which also was built on this same lot.

By the time Governor Wentworth had begun issuing large numbers of charters west of the Connecticut River in 1761, Isaac had already established himself as an experienced and successful speculator of lands. He was situated at the forefront of the newly opened frontier and he evidently was somewhat familiar at least with the valleys of the Walloomsac, Hoosac, and Battenkill Rivers. He must have been very aware of the potential that this real estate contained as it entered the New England market, following the defeat of the French. He certainly was among the right men in the right place at the right time once the war had ended. This is evident in that Isaac was able to secure and then sell thousands upon thousands of acres within Wentworth’s grants over the following years. After the war, Isaac was named on the following Wentworth grants: Pownal (January 8, 1760 – located directly between Williamstown and Bennington), Arlington (July 28, 1761), Sunderland (July 29, 1761), Stratton (July 30, 1761), Salisbury (November 3, 1761), Wilmington (June 17, 1763), Stamford’s regrant (second meeting on June 9, 1764), Hubbardton (June 15, 1764) and Franconia, New Hampshire (February 14, 1764). It also is worthy of note that in Sunderland, Stratton and Hubbardton, Isaac was designated as head of the grantees and he was the man charged with organizing and moderating the first proprietors’ meetings for those towns.

In 1762, Mr. Searl found himself in a precarious situation, when he was indicted for passing counterfeit notes. Searl, who in the end was not tried,

deposed that the counterfeit notes that he had passed had first been passed to him by Dr. Seth Hudson of West Hoosac. Hudson also had been indicted for counterfeiting and he subsequently was tried and convicted of this crime. Seth Hudson had been Fort Massachusetts's surgeon. He was a prominent figure in obtaining the West Hoosac grant and he was responsible for convincing Wentworth to issue him the grant for Pownal, of which Isaac Searl was also a grantee. Seth Hudson may well have been a major influence in Searl's life – although it seems that, over the years, Mr. Searl was far more successful in land speculation than Hudson ever had been.

There are several reasons why I believe that Isaac Searl played an important and active, although behind-the-scenes, role in the establishment of Vermont. First of all, he was a close friend and business associate of Samuel Robinson – the same gentleman who had settled Bennington. Isaac had been arrested in 1764 and thrown into the Albany jail for his part in Robinson's efforts to displace the Dutch in Pownal, Vermont. As we shall see, these two men continued to work together to maintain their speculative acquisitions in the years ahead. Secondly, it is my opinion that Isaac Searl played a significant role in bringing the Allen brothers of Salisbury, Connecticut, into the New Hampshire Grants. In 1771, Isaac had sold 32 original rights (well over 10,000 acres) of Hubbardton for 64 pounds or about 160 Spanish milled dollars to a young Ira Allen of Salisbury, Connecticut. Ira's purchase of approximately half of Hubbardton from Searl was just a precursor of the Allen family's vast purchases that developed into their Onion River Company. Ira Allen became an aggressive and successful speculator and, like Isaac Searl, he surveyed many of his acquisitions. Perhaps Isaac Searl was Ira Allen's mentor. Whatever the facts, Isaac Searl was apparently a very powerful and influential individual.

Isaac had resettled in New York City about 1771, where he was called a merchant. He eventually returned to Williamstown, but may have resettled in various towns over the following years. He may have been the same Isaac Searl who resided in Livingston, New York in 1779, perhaps the same who lived in Pownal, Vermont during the early 1790s and possibly the same who resided in Petersburg, New York, in 1795. It seems he was a man of business and if he indeed was the same Isaac Searl who resided in these different localities over the years, perhaps he moved to wherever his business took him.

Isaac's son, Hix Searl (later seen as Sall) was a loyalist and had left the American colonies for Quebec during or after the American Revolution, settling a place called Caldwell Manor in Noyan, Missisquoi County, just across the border from Vermont. Isaac may have spent his latter years in Quebec, with his son's family. No record of his death has been found. One rumor exists that Isaac died in Quebec in 1797. This may not have been the case, since an Isaac Searl was recorded as living in Pownal in 1800.

Unfortunately, many of the records that possibly could have unveiled much of the mystery that surrounds Isaac's life were lost to a fire that burned most all of Williamstown's early records. What records have remained

certainly paint a portrait of a fascinating individual who was one of, if not the most prominent and successful of the speculators of Wentworth's grants. Some of his role in establishing Vermont will be discussed in detail later in this history, but for now, we must turn back to his part in establishing Stratton.

The Searls and the Battenkill

It appears that Searl's acquisition of Stratton was part of a much grander scheme – an apparent attempt to own the Battenkill Valley. In 1760, Isaac Searl and his cousin, John Searl (born in 1711 – a son of Ebenezer Searl), began assembling a list of potential grantees for lands in the New Hampshire Grants. In the summer of 1761, they presented this list to Governor Wentworth along with a request for land. It may be that they specifically indicated to the governor their desire for the Battenkill Valley, since they were fortunate enough or perhaps influential enough to get just that – in the form of three contiguous grants – each six miles by six miles square – a strip of land beginning at a point six miles north of Bennington's northwest corner, skipping over the yet to be granted town of Shaftsbury, and engulfing the Battenkill River as it exits Wentworth's proclaimed territory on its journey to the Hudson. This eighteen-mile-long strip then continued eastward toward and into the Green Mountains. These grants were christened Arlington, Sunderland and Stratton – issued over a period of three days from July 28 through July 30, 1761. Governor Wentworth designated John as head of the proprietorship for Arlington, while Isaac held that position for Sunderland and Stratton.

If the Searls were in fact trying to grab as much of the good bottomland of the Battenkill as they possibly could, while conforming to the standard rule of six-mile by six-mile townships as I have concluded, then why did the third charter fall to the east instead of to the north of Sunderland and along the course of the Battenkill? That land was chartered just two weeks later on August 11, 1761, as Manchester. This raises additional questions: Did the Searls' understand the actual topography of this eighteen-mile strip of land? Did they understand at that time that the placement of Stratton and much of Sunderland had put them well within the Green Mountains and did they believe that the Battenkill flowed directly east to west down from the mountains? I cannot answer those questions conclusively; but, since the land had not yet been surveyed or properly mapped prior to the time of the charters, it seems very likely that they did not fully understand the landscape. Perhaps, if they had known the true topography, the area of Manchester may well have been granted to them as "Stratton," leaving the area that became Stratton unchartered.

Following the acquisition of Arlington, Sunderland and Stratton, it appears that the Searls attempted to deal with each of these grants

sequentially, especially concentrating their efforts on the Battenkill valley. The first priority obviously was to organize the proprietorship of Arlington, the first proprietors' meeting for that town being held there in October, 1762. At this meeting, Isaac Searl was elected Proprietor's Collector and Treasurer. It was not long before a settlement within Arlington was established. Although Isaac's intentions for his newly acquired lands appear to have been purely speculative, several members of the Searl family settled in Arlington in a small clearing north of the village. Isaac remained in West Hoosac and sold 5,500 acres of Arlington to various individuals, 3,000 of which were sold to Captain Jehiel Hawley of New Milford, Connecticut, in 1764 (NH Provincial deeds, vol. 69, p. 348). Isaac's wife, Hannah may have been a close relative of Mr. Hawley.

Sunderland was next on the agenda. The first proprietor's meeting was held in Pownal on July 7, 1763, Isaac Searl again being elected Proprietors' Collector and Assessor. In October, 1763, Isaac sold 40 of Sunderland's original rights at vendue, apparently amounting to more than 16,000 acres of undivided lands. Most of these rights were sold to Isaac's associate, Samuel Robinson, Esq. (Bennington's first settler), his son, Samuel Robinson, Jr., and John and William Searl (Isaac's cousins). The following month, it was voted to pay Isaac Searl 62 pounds to lay out the lots. He remained active in Sunderland and he was mentioned within the minutes of the next proprietors' meetings held in the summer of 1766. I last found his name mentioned in the Sunderland records (post-mortem) when his rights to the undivided lands were sold at vendue in 1812.

The Wrong Side of the Mountains

Hence, we would assume that Stratton would have been next on Isaac Searl's agenda, but that was not to be. Stratton was different – it was located within the mountains without easy access from the west at that time. Before Stratton could be settled, the natural barrier of the mountains would have to be breached. From Searl's point of view, Stratton obviously was on the wrong side of the mountains. Additionally, if some effort had been made to organize Stratton, it would have come at a very difficult time, since the King's resolution of 1764 put these lands under New York jurisdiction and the legality of all the New Hampshire grants was in question and in danger of being completely nullified.

No records exist of any early proprietors' meetings for Stratton, and it appears that no meeting occurred. As we shall later see, Isaac seemed to be the sole owner of this grant by the time it was mentioned again in records in 1771. But, before we go into that story, we first need to consider the other men listed upon this grant.

The Other Grantees

With the exception of Isaac Searl, it appears that none of Stratton's grantees played a significant role in Stratton's history; yet, they still, at least, played a small role in making this grant appear legitimate. The names compiled on most New Hampshire Charters consisted of two groups – the first group was composed of men who had requested lands. Some enterprising individual designated as the head proprietor for a given grant organized these men into a group as grantees for that charter. The second group consisted of Governor Wentworth's associates, who were added to a given charter by the Governor, often without their prior knowledge. Since Stratton obviously contained both groups, I have tried to distinguish between these groups and find some clue as to who at least some of these men were.

Most of "Searl's Grantees" can be traced back to the area around and including Isaac Searl's hometown of Northampton, Massachusetts. Apparently, most of these men were Isaac Searl's friends, relatives or business associates – many of whom either invested cash in a speculative land deal or were dummy grantees who had made some arrangement to sign over their rights to Searl once the charter was issued – much the same as Sunderland apparently had been handled. **Isaac Searl** had included some of his relatives as grantees. His brother, the **Reverend John Searl**, was among that lot, as was his brother-in-law, **Daniel Lee, Esq.**, born September 13, 1715 – a son of Stephen and Elizabeth (Woodward) Lee. Daniel was husband of Isaac's sister, Eunice. Searl also added Daniel and Eunice's son, **Joel Lee** (born August 25, 1742 at Kent, Connecticut) as a grantee of Stratton.

Some of the others considered as "Searl's Grantees" were very likely the same men identified as follows: **Benoni Danks**, born about 1716 at Northampton – a son of Robert and Rebecca (Rust) Danks. He resettled in Cumberland, Nova Scotia before 1773; **Benjamin "Ruggles" Woodbridge**, a son of the Reverend John Woodbridge of South Hadley, Massachusetts – Ruggles later served as an officer during the American Revolution; **Caleb Strong** who married Phebe Lyman. Their son, Caleb Strong (1744 – 1819) (who was not a grantee of Stratton) became Governor of Massachusetts in 1799/1800; **Nathaniel Burt**, born November 14, 1739 at Springfield, Massachusetts – a son of Deacon Nathaniel and Sarah (Chapin) Burt; **Gideon Clark** who married Rachel Wright; **John Lyman**, probably a son of Ebenezer and Experience (Pomeroy) Lyman, born April 19, 1717 at Northampton; **Thomas Sweet**, born March 14, 1701, at Attleboro, Massachusetts – a son of Henry and Elizabeth (Walker) Sweet; **Caleb Blodgett**, son of Caleb and Sarah (Wyman) Blodgett – born on December 1, 1721, at Woburn, Massachusetts. He married Elizabeth Wyman there on August 7, 1744; his brother, **Samuel Blodgett**, son of Caleb and Sarah (Wyman) Blodgett – born April 1, 1724; **Nathan Lyman**, born May 5, 1706 at Northampton – a son of John and Abigail Lyman; **Eleazer Hannum**, born March 28, 1730 at Northampton – a son of Eleares and Martha Hannum; **Jonas Cutler**, born

October 16, 1727, at Weston, Massachusetts – son of Capt. Ebenezer Cutler and Anna Whitney; **Charles Clapp** – son of Roger and Elizabeth (Bartlett) Clapp – born about 1725 at Northampton; **Benjamin Cudworth**, born May 13, 1716 at Scituate, Massachusetts – married Mary Little there on November 13, 1740 (he may have been a Wentworth associate); **Joel Hunt**, born May 29, 1731 at Northampton – son of Jonathan and Thankful (Strong) Hunt; **Elisha Mather**, born April 4, 1740 at Northampton – married Eunice Mosley on January 22, 1763 at Westfield, Massachusetts; **Seth Babbit**, born April 20, 1730 at Northampton – son of Erasmus and Abigail (Burt) Bobet; **Martin Phelps**, born December 24, 1723 at Northampton – son of Nathaniel and Abigail Phelps. He married Martha Parsons; and the **Reverend Jonathan Judd** of Northampton.

As for friends and associates of Governor Wentworth, these men included: **Samuel Wentworth** of Boston, one of the governor's relatives; **Henry Apthorp**, **Richard Wibird, Esq.** and **John Downing, Esq.**, all of whom were members of the New Hampshire Council; **Thomas Hubbard, Esq.** – Massachusetts's Speaker of the General Assembly; **Jacob Wendell, Esq.** – a Justice of the Peace of Suffolk County, Massachusetts and **Oliver Wendell**, whom I believe was Jacob's brother, making them sons of Jacob and Sarah (Oliver) Wendell, relatives of John Wendell who also became heavily involved in the New Hampshire Grants; **Joseph Pincheon** of Boston, **Richard Stainer** of Boston (probably the same who married Abigail Allen there on June 15, 1740) and **William Brattle, Esq.**, a prominent man of Massachusetts for whom Brattleboro was named. The last man on the list was **Governor Wentworth**, himself.

Some notes of interest concerning these gentlemen are that Richard Wibird had been named on 48 grants and John Downing had been named on 28 grants, while many more of Wentworth's grantees had been listed upon multiple charters. Also, Joseph Pincheon of Boston died about 1772 and Isaac Searl purchased his share of Pownal from Joseph's executors, Edward and Charles Pincheon in 1773.

The manner in which Isaac Searl dealt with Sunderland gives us a wonderful litmus test of his intentions and the intentions of those men found listed upon both Sunderland's and Stratton's charters. None of the original grantees of Sunderland appear to have settled upon that grant, although it was settled shortly thereafter. We see that in 1763, soon after Sunderland's first proprietors' meeting, Isaac Searl was able to sell 40 original rights under his authority as collector. In other words, Isaac Searl had obtained most of Sunderland for himself within that two-year period. This seems to indicate the true nature of Sunderland's Charter and hence that of Stratton's Charter – that they were Searl's personal grants, made legitimate by using dummy-grantees. Both charters, apparently, were filled with the names of men who intended to sign over their rights to Isaac Searl, probably for a small price.

Still though, there may have been a select few grantees with the intention of settling on these grants, but that did not happen. As for Stratton, no information has been found to support the belief that any ever intended to settle there.

While in search of clues concerning Stratton's conception, I came across the diary of the Reverend Jonathan Judd, one of Stratton's grantees who ministered to many of the Northampton individuals named on Stratton's charter, including Isaac Searl himself. This diary is kept at Forbes Library in Northampton. The good Reverend had religiously updated his diary, year after year, beginning in 1742. In it I found the following entries that, I believe, are pertinent to the granting of Stratton and reflect Judd's association with Isaac Searl:

<i>"April, 1760</i>	<i>visited I. Searl who is sick."</i>
<i>"April 25, 1760</i>	<i>Isaac Searl – Let him have two [Spanish milled] dollars towards a right of land."</i>
<i>"November 8, 1771</i>	<i>Capt. Searl was here."</i>
<i>"May 7, 1774</i>	<i>Mr. Searl here."</i>

Stratton's charter was the only New Hampshire land grant that contained the names of both Isaac Searl and Jonathan Judd together as grantees; thus it is almost certain that the right of land Jonathan noted in his diary became his share of Stratton the following year. It also is apparent from this diary that the Reverend certainly was not looking for a new home and – since the matter of the grant was never addressed again – we can assume that he took this investment as a loss. I suspect that Judd's view of the matter and his subsequent loss was consistent with the majority of those listed on Stratton's charter. Regardless of whether Isaac reimbursed some or all of them, by the time Stratton's charter resurfaced it appears that Isaac Searl considered himself the sole owner of this grant.

Another interesting note about Judd, given in The History of Northampton, Massachusetts, was that he had once rebuked Ethan Allen for his offensive language, when Judd had visited Allen's leadmine in Northampton, during the latter half of the 1760s – before Ethan became involved with the New Hampshire Grants. This incident, besides being a humorous anecdote, adds illustration to the importance of the Northampton area, in respect to Wentworth's grants and it highlights another possible link between Isaac Searl and the Allens.

The general area of Northampton was indeed the home of a large number of Stratton's grantees, but it appears that at least a few of these men had ventured away from that town and into Massachusetts's northwestern frontier. Many apparently served in Massachusetts's colonial militia during the French and Indian War and at least a few eventually had settled nearer that frontier by the end of the war, as had Searl. The stronghold on this frontier, Fort

Massachusetts, was another place that several of Stratton's grantees had in common.

As discussed earlier, Fort Massachusetts had been built to protect its namesake's northwestern frontier. It was located at the foot of Mount Greylock between what is now Williamstown and North Adams and it was under the command of Colonel Ephraim Williams. Colonel Williams was killed during the French and Indian War at a battle known as the Lake George fight in 1755. Subsequently, Williams College and Williamstown, Massachusetts were named for him. He belonged to a prominent family of western Massachusetts, the family to whom much of the Bennington Grant had been given and he was a cousin of the famous Colonel William Williams who also played a prominent role in Vermont's early history.

As for Stratton's grantees, the following had some sort of connection with Colonel Ephraim Williams and Fort Massachusetts: Thomas Hubbard, Massachusetts's Speaker of the General Assembly and a member of the Committee of War during the French and Indian War, corresponded with Colonel Williams concerning the Massachusetts militia at Albany. Jacob Wendell can be found documenting copies of various correspondences from Fort Massachusetts to the Massachusetts General Assembly as Justice of the Peace of Suffolk Co., Massachusetts. Another of Stratton's Grantees, Samuel Blodgett (born 1724), a native of Northampton, serving under Williams, is known for his account of "The Bloody Morning Scout," the skirmish of the Lake George fight in which Williams was killed. This Samuel Blodgett also settled for a time in Williamstown and can be found listed on six separate New Hampshire Grants.

If the roles of the militia and the men of Fort Massachusetts were scrutinized further, I am sure that several more of the names listed on Stratton's charter would be found therein. The fact that the above named Massachusetts officials are found involved in the affairs of the northwestern frontier and also among the proprietors of Wentworth's grants illustrates Massachusetts's involvement in New Hampshire's struggle with New York, and further substantiates the conclusion that the New Hampshire Grantee's conflict with New York was an extension of New York's land war.

Knowing that several of Stratton's grantees had been familiar with Massachusetts's northwestern frontier, we can assume that at least a handful of them were able to view the mountains to the north from Mount Greylock, and in their scan of the horizon they probably took notice of Manicknung's distant profile. Whether or not they knew that it would fall within their grant is unknown. Some may have even traveled or scouted within the township, but in the end not a one settled within Stratton's bounds.

1) See "Green Mountain Insurgency: Transformation of New York's Forty-Year Land War," by Donald A. Smith, PhD., *Vermont History*, The Vermont Historical Society, Vol. 64, No. 4, Fall 1996.

Fair Market Value?

Governor Wentworth, in his grand design to quickly charter the territory west of the Connecticut River, decided to make his fees for a charter extremely reasonable. This was in part due to the profit potential of the Governor's Lot, unique to Wentworth's Grants. It appears that the average charge for a New Hampshire Grant was about 70 Spanish milled dollars or about 30 English pounds.

In regard to the Governor's fees for Stratton, the only clue I have found that even hints at a specific amount that Searl initially might have paid for Stratton was the two dollar right purchased by the Reverend Judd. If this was a consistent figure paid by all of the grantees, with the exception of those gentlemen added by the governor who were not required to pay, then we can assume that Searl might have collected between 100 and 120 Spanish milled dollars for Stratton alone. That figure assumes that Searl did not add in any non-paying grantees himself. Even if Searl had collected that amount, it would seem likely that he would have held back some of that money to cover his own expenses. Therefore, it seems prudent to assume that Searl paid no more than the average grant fee of about \$70.00 for Stratton. The actual figure probably will never be known.

What's in a Name?

We will never know for certain why Benning Wentworth penned "Stratton" across Searl's grant on that 30th day of July 1761. There are two reasonable theories for his action presented here, as well as another less-likely option.

The first theory, one that I favor, was presented in A Book of Strattons, by HR Stratton, and published by the Grafton Press in 1908. Mr. Stratton states in Volume I, page 9 that "*Stratton and Stratton Mountain were named for Hezekiah Stratton's family of Northfield, Massachusetts, who owned land in the vicinity. Hezekiah and his six sons gave their country valiant service in the French and Indian War.*" The Strattons owned lands as far north as what is now Vernon, Vermont – an area that was associated first with Northfield, Massachusetts, before the New Hampshire – Massachusetts boundary was established, placing it (after that time) in Hinsdale, New Hampshire. Thus, Governor Wentworth may well have heard of this pioneering family's services to the crown, thus Wentworth certainly could have honored this family by naming a grant for the Strattons, while keeping with his methods. Yet, there was no apparent connection between the Hezekiah Stratton family and the Grantees who obtained the Charter of Stratton from the Governor.

There was some speculation recorded in the Vermont Historical Society's publications that Stratton was named for Samuel Stratton of Northfield, Massachusetts, called an early settler of the town, but this apparently was a misinterpretation of the Book of Strattons theory above, which speaks of

Hezekiah's immigrant ancestor, Samuel Stratton, who seems to have been confused with Hezekiah's son, Samuel.

The second theory was chosen by the noted authority on this subject – Esther Swift, author of Vermont Place Names. Swift believed that the name “Stratton” was chosen by the governor to honor Stratton – a town in Cornwall, England – the location of an English battle – a victory for the Royalists during the Restoration of the Stuarts to the English throne more than a century before. With lack of any proof, her reasoning is that this era of English history carried a theme that Wentworth liked to draw from when naming his grants; thus, perhaps, he believed this would help secure their legitimacy in the eyes of the King.

Stratton's sister towns, Arlington and Sunderland, both of which apparently were named by Wentworth honoring English nobility of his time, probably were attempts at flattery in hopes of gaining some support from these English noblemen who wielded some power in legitimizing Wentworth's controversial grants. Arlington was probably named for August Henry Fitzroy (1735 – 1811) 3rd Duke of Grafton, 4th Earl of Arlington, 4th Viscount of Thetford, and Baron Sudbury, while Sunderland was probably named for George Spencer (1739 – 1817) 6th Earl of Sunderland, 4th Earl of Marlborough. Apparently it is no coincidence that most of their titles were used as names of New Hampshire Grants¹.

Additionally, I also followed up on another theory – a possibility that the name “Stratton” was given upon request of Isaac Searl. There exists a rise of land in Isaac Searl's hometown of West Hoosac (Williamstown), Massachusetts that was once called Stratton Mountain – named for a Stratton family of West Hoosac, apparently unrelated to the Northfield Strattons. But again, I have found no real links between Searl and that mountain or that Stratton family. Additionally, I doubt that Wentworth would have followed through with such a request had it ever been made.

Hence, without some record of Governor Wentworth's motive, it seems we shall never know for certain the namesake of this town. Regardless of the reason, the essence of the name “Stratton²,” with its ancient Old English meaning of “*Dwelling upon the Roman Road*,” seems to have been very inappropriate for such a wild place with no roads and no dwellings at the time of its conception.

1) Grafton, however, was coincidental.

2) The original name for Stratton, Cornwall, England was Straetneet – Cornish for “Valley of the River Neet” corrupted to “Stratton” over time with the old English etymology given above.

An Uncertain Time

In consideration of the circumstances surrounding Stratton's beginning, it seems amazing that the charter of Stratton remained intact at all, becoming the instrument upon which the township of Stratton, Vermont, was founded. From the day it was issued, nearly twenty-two years would pass before anyone came to settle within the town. Yet, the charter survived that difficult period, in part due to the victory of those dedicated to preserve the New Hampshire Grants and also in part due to Isaac Searl's influence with Vermont's forefathers. As we shall see, the charter of Stratton really should not have gone so far.

Whatever Searl's intentions had been for Stratton, they definitely were altered by unforeseen circumstances that would delay Stratton's settlement by more than two decades. Stratton's history as a paper town was not necessarily idle during those two decades. When the first of the surviving records of the proprietors of Stratton were written on December 26, 1781, a new group of owners existed, entirely different from the grantees listed on Wentworth's Charter. And, it was this new group that ultimately established a permanent settlement within Stratton's borders. When the settlers did come, they came from the east. When a road finally was cut into Stratton, it was laid out from the east to the southwest. Hence, once a settlement was established in Stratton, the settlers associated their town with the eastern side of the mountains – separate from its sister-towns of Sunderland and Arlington.

To understand why and how Stratton's Charter survived, we once again must turn to the controversy that deepened with the King's decision of 1764 and the demise of Governor Wentworth. It was certainly a time of uncertainty for those who owned land in the region.

A Festering Wound

By 1765, there were only 28 settlements within Wentworth's grants. Settlements and settlers were of utmost importance in this controversy, since the King and the British Board of Trade had no intention of removing settlers from their lands. They did, however, greatly disapprove of land speculators. Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on one's perspective, the settlers and the speculators appeared to have been intertwined and inseparable. In reality, the speculators were able to hide behind the settlers and rouse them against New York – an effort that eventually led to the establishment of an entirely independent state wedged between New York, and New Hampshire. We know this to be the final outcome of the controversy, but it need not have ended that way!

Following the King's decision on the matter, New York's acting governor, Cadwallader Colden, had devised a method to transfer New Hampshire's grants into New York patents by issuing confirmatory patents to any of the New Hampshire grantees that applied for them. These patents

came at a price, not unreasonable to settlers or speculators. Meanwhile, a small number of conflicting patents had been issued by New York within its new jurisdiction, but the Governor and Council recognized their responsibility to the New Hampshire settlers, and so they issued an order protecting the property rights of those who had settled on the grants before May 22, 1765. Of the 28 settlements within the grants, at least 19 applied for confirmatory patents. Thus, it appears that New York's concessions were acceptable to the majority of the settlers on the grants, further indicating that these settlers readily might have accepted New York rule.

Any hopes of a quick resolution of the issue were dashed when in November, 1765, Sir Henry Moore assumed the duties of Governor of New York. Governor Moore disapproved of the low confirmatory patent fees devised by Colden and he made it known that he had no intention of recognizing the claims of speculators. Moore's arrival on the scene put salt into an open wound and the real conflict began. He had challenged the speculators, many of whom had invested everything they had in these grants – men willing to go to great lengths to keep their potential fortunes. And so they did!

Many of the proprietors met at the Royal Exchange Tavern in Boston on September 5, 1765, and again in November, to discuss the difficult situation that they had found themselves in. No record of these meetings survived; although following the meetings a large number of the grantees applied to acquire confirmatory patents from New York.

In December, 1765, Samuel Robinson and Isaac Searl traveled to New York to confer with Governor Moore about confirmatory patents for their lands. Following the meeting, Robinson and Searl quickly concluded that confirmatory patents were to be a last resort. Apparently, Moore's fees to confirm a New Hampshire grant amounted to about 300 pounds sterling – too much for many of the land-poor speculators and apparently unacceptable to Robinson and Searl. These two men prepared a letter to James Nevin, a former member of Wentworth's council, informing him of their concerns. In this letter they referred to their interests in Pownal, Bennington, and Shaftsbury, stating that New York's wrongful confiscation of these lands would ruin them. They also stretched the truth by claiming that more than a hundred townships had petitioned for confirmatory patents, but Lieutenant Governor Colden had granted the same lands to others, "*We mean in great measure and entirely, Bennington, Shaftsbury, the biggest part of Arlington, also Sunderland and Manchester,*" in which towns, as they claimed, there were already 60 families each. This complaint was focused upon Colden's patent of Princetown, which he had issued on May 21, 1765. The circumstances around Princetown's patent were very similar to those surrounding the Searls' acquisition of the Battenkill Valley four years before. Colden appeared very hypocritical for issuing this patent in lieu of his complaints about Benning Wentworth's illegal activities. Princetown had been granted to so-called dummy grantees who, in turn, signed over the

patent to three New York men, Kempe, Duane and Rutherford. Princetown was somewhat different in that it was no bigger than a single New Hampshire grant (26,000 acres) but it was drawn to include most of the fertile bottomlands along that river. This violated the King's order to all governors, "*that the length of each tract should not extend along the banks of a river,*" the very order that Wentworth and the Searls apparently had tried to sidestep with three separate charters. Therefore, Princetown was also an illegal patent, but more so, it was a direct threat to Samuel Robinson, Isaac Searl and their constituents who held rights to this very same land through Wentworth's grants. In protest, Robinson and Searl requested Nevin to press for confirmation of the New Hampshire Grants, of which he did.

Meanwhile, on June 6, 1766, Governor Moore issued an order that all men holding claims in the disputed territory (themselves or their attorneys) appear before the governor and council and present their claims. Some well known Massachusetts men: Henry Lloyd, Harrison Gray, John Searl, Sir John Temple, Jacob Wendell, Nathaniel Appleton, William Brattle and others met on July 29, 1766, and appointed Giles Alexander of Boston as their attorney to appear before the Governor and Council of New York and "*endeavor to obtain a confirmation of the grants made to them under the seal of New Hampshire.*" Two of these gentlemen were listed among Stratton's grantees, while John Searl, as I had noted earlier, was Isaac Searl's business partner and cousin. Thus, it seems probable that Isaac Searl may have conferred with Alexander about the grants they held in common. Later, Giles Alexander would play a very important role in Stratton's history.

In September, Alexander announced his return from New York with information about New York's requirements for confirmatory patents. He advertised that he planned to divulge this information to interested landholders at meetings to be held at Portsmouth on October 2 and at Boston on October 13. It was in this manner that some of the settled towns dealt with New York. The fees imposed on landholders with just a few hundred acres, if that, were acceptable to many of the settlers; however, the fees for the thousands of acres held by the speculators was a different story; therefore, the speculators decided to take up this matter with the King. Robinson and Searl specifically headed up efforts to petition the King to reverse the New York decision and reinstitute the New Hampshire grants. They enlisted the support of settlers in Bennington, Pownal, Shaftsbury and Arlington. These petitions were signed in the fall of 1766, mostly by nonresident proprietors. They contained no names of settlers east of the Green Mountains but a considerable number of those living west of the mountains. There were about 650 signatures of which about 400 were nonresident proprietors. Isaac Searl's signature can be found on petition #19 mingled with the others (*see Provincial State and Town Papers of New Hampshire Vol. 26*).

It was decided by the proprietors to send Samuel Robinson as a delegate to the King in London. Robinson best represented the landholders of the New Hampshire grants, since he was a settler, a holder of vast amounts of land in

the region and a respected soldier of the last war. Robinson sailed for London on December 25, 1766. Meanwhile another man, William Johnson, went to London with the same purpose. Johnson had close connections with the influential men of the Church of England. This church also had lands at stake within the grants. Johnson had another advantage in that he was of a social stature that allowed him to mingle with government officials, much more so than Robinson.

When the issue was presented to the Privy Council, it was decided to make a last minute change. The petition was substituted with one drawn up by Johnson and signed only by Samuel Robinson "*on behalf of himself and more than one thousand other grantees...*". This substitution was made to hide the fact that most of the signers of the original petitions were speculators – a fact that would be frowned upon by the Privy Council and the King. At this same time, Johnson drew up a petition for "the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts" – an arm of the Church of England. Several months earlier, Nevin's petition in behalf of Robinson and Searl also had been presented to the Council.

Unfortunately, these efforts resulted in only prolonging the affair. The Privy Council referred the petitions to the Committee of Plantation Affairs who, in turn, referred them to the Board of Trade. The Board of Trade was severely critical of Wentworth's Grants and could not recommend confirming them, but did recommend that an order be issued to Governor Moore of New York to desist making any grant of any of these lands until the King had decided what should be done – a decision not forthcoming.

Upon receipt of the new order, Governor Moore took it to mean that no grants throughout the area were allowed, including even confirmation of these grants, thus stalling the process and postponing all effort to resolve the crisis. Robinson remained in London trying to rally support in the interest of the petitioners and died there of smallpox in September, 1767. With all forms of resolution on hold, the controversy only deepened – the wound festered.

In 1768, the County of Cumberland had been created to govern the citizenry east of the Green Mountains. It followed approximately the same boundaries as the current counties of Windham and Windsor. In 1770, Gloucester County was formed north of Cumberland. The establishment and subsequent enforcement of county rule did not sit well with the New England settlers who were accustomed to their more local form of government, by the town. The establishment of these county governments only added to the controversy and turned many pro-Yorkers east of the mountains against New York authority.

In 1769, Governor Moore died and Lieutenant-Governor Colden, as acting governor, once again began issuing patents for previously unchartered lands. In 1770, the situation took a turn for the worse when Lord Dunmore was appointed governor of New York. Although he specifically was ordered not to make grants within what is now Vermont, Dunmore decided to issue

patents with no regard to any of Wentworth's grants. This obviously added fuel to the fire, but only briefly, as in 1771 Dunmore was replaced by William Tryon, former governor of North Carolina. Aware that he had inherited many problems with the New Hampshire Grants, Tryon decided to implement the plan that Lieutenant Governor Colden had devised – a plan to allow half fees for confirmatory patents of these grants – fees that amounted to about 4¹/₂ dollars per 100 acres. The governor and council eventually agreed on this method and many of the New Hampshire Grants applied for a New York patent, but only a handful would actually receive one. In 1772, Tryon was rebuked by the Board of Trade for deviating from the law and ordered not to take further action in regard to patents. He did not confirm another patent until late 1774. In March, 1775, the Board of Trade agreed that all New Hampshire Grants that did not interfere with New York's patents should be confirmed. As we shall see this agreement came too late. The repeated delays in finding a solution had allowed the wound to fester far too long. Meanwhile, other events were taking shape that would take the Grants in a different direction – away from New York, out of British hands and toward independence.

Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys

In 1770, Ethan Allen had found his way into the New Hampshire Grants. He was a native of Salisbury, Connecticut, and had relatives already settled in the grants. Two of his in-laws, Remember Baker and Seth Warner had been early settlers of Arlington and Bennington, respectively. Ethan speculated in an iron mine in Salisbury, then tried his luck with a lead mine in Northampton, Massachusetts. When these ventures failed, he headed into the northern wilderness in 1769 to hunt and explore. In 1770, he became involved with some New Hampshire Grantees seeking to defend their titles in Albany. These grantees hired Ethan to proceed to Portsmouth and to New Haven to retrieve copies of their New Hampshire grants. He apparently met with the governor, John Wentworth, who convinced him that the King would legitimize Benning Wentworth's grants sooner or later. Recognizing the potential for big profits, Ethan soon was buying shares of these grants, as were his brothers, Heman and Ira, and a number of their friends and relatives.

Invested heavily into the New Hampshire Grants, the Allens were soon among the ranks of the land-poor who would lose everything if their grants were nullified. They had arrived on the scene when it appeared that perhaps a decision would be made in favor of the grants, but as that possibility deteriorated, Ethan and some of his friends were ready to act in defiance of New York. This, fueled by New York's proceedings of ejectment of some of the grant settlers, drew the men of the western settlements ever closer to open rebellion against New York authority.

The leaders of the grants had the privilege of observing an earlier conflict between settlers and the New York government – the New York Land Riots, a

previous chapter in the continuing conflict between New York authority and New England settlers. It appeared that civil unrest would be required to convince New York to let go the reins on the grants. Ethan Allen was just the man to create that unrest. He helped to form a militia – the Green Mountain Boys – charged to protect the rights of the New Hampshire Grant settlers. Fortunately, they were able to understand the bounds of civil unrest that, if crossed, would invoke intervention by British regulars – they never crossed those lines before the Revolution. Over the next few years, Ethan and the Green Mountain Boys acted to usurp any New York authority implemented within the grants.

Independence

The differences between the settlers of the grants west of the mountains and New York continued into 1775, while the King had made no decisions that would add some resolve to the situation. It was in that same year that a most extraordinary and coincidental event occurred that set the stage for the creation of an independent state in the Green Mountains. In April of that year, British regulars exchanged fire with a militia of Lexington minutemen. The American Revolution had begun and British authority started to unravel in the colonies. Ethan Allen took the initiative and the following month, the Green Mountain Boys captured Fort Ticonderoga. They had taken a very bold step that lifted them from the status of a disgruntled mob to that of heroes at the forefront of the struggle for American Independence. This won them recognition as a regiment of the Continental Army in which no Yorker would be permitted to serve as officer. An important step had been taken to legitimize a separation between the New Hampshire Grants and New York. Ironically, Seth Warner instead of Ethan was appointed Lieutenant Colonel over them.

The environment had changed, giving the settlers of the grants the upper hand, but the problem further developed into one of disunity among the towns of the grants. With all the colonies vying for independence, the settlers of the grants were able to seek their own freedom, not only from Britain, but also from the colonies themselves and, of course, it was the Allens that pushed hardest for an independent state.

In 1776, conventions were held at Dorset to consider independence. In October and again in January, 1777, they met in Westminster. At this last meeting, the settlers of the New Hampshire Grants elected to proceed to draw up a Constitution for an independent state. There still existed considerable opposition to the plan, but that was greatly weakened when in May, New York's new Constitution was presented to the public. It was a document unacceptable to the New England settlers and it pushed many of the New York advocates to accept independence. On July 2, 1777, the new state's Constitution was adopted at Windsor.

New Connecticut was suggested as a name for the state, but that was being used by Connecticut's territory in the Susquehanna Valley. In April of 1777, Dr. Thomas Young of Philadelphia, a close friend of Ethan Allen, had written a letter addressed "*to the Inhabitants of Vermont...*" encouraging them to proceed with the establishment of a free and independent state. The letter had been widely circulated at that time and the newly coined name appealed to many. Some believe that "Vermont" was a corruption of Verd Mont, apparently taken from a map of Champlain's discoveries, where he had labeled the mountains of the region "Verd Mont," – French for Green Mountain. The Allens apparently believed that this was Thomas Young's interpretation of the word and perhaps Young believed it to be Champlain's definition (if that is where Young had found it). In all likelihood, Thomas Young had indeed intended it to be synonymous with Green Mountain. And so, as we all know, Vermont became the official name of the New Hampshire Grants west of the Connecticut River. Young had died on June 24, 1777, apparently without divulging his personal definition of "Vermont." Young may have taken the name from Champlain's maps. If that is so, then there is some controversy over Champlain's meaning of Vermont. Verd mont is grammatically incorrect as it should read monts verts. Some speculate that the intention of Champlain's notation was "versmont" or "vers le haut" meaning, "in the direction of the mountains."

Shortly following the convention, a request for recognition was presented to the Continental Congress, but this request was denied due to various reasons, including the boundary disputes with Vermont's neighboring states. The Allens and their friends, all of whom had many enemies within and beyond the territory, controlled the new state. Opposition to the new state remained high. Besides opposition from New York, Vermont was threatened by the British to the north who maintained control of the country north of Rutland, while Tories abounded within; Massachusetts had its eye on the old towns in the southeast; the towns along the upper Connecticut on both sides had close ties to one another and opposed independence unless all were included; many of the southern towns were full of devout Yorkers; and even New Hampshire considered reclaiming Vermont or dividing the territory between itself and New York with the mountains as a boundary. With all this controversy at hand, the Continental Congress wanted no part of Vermont.

In the end, the Allens were successful in retaining an independent state by playing these adversaries against one another. While the war still raged, they courted the British, preventing an invasion by doing so and scaring the Continental Congress with the possible consequences of a British Vermont. They agreed to accept the Eastern Union – the towns on both sides of the upper Connecticut and also annexed the New York towns east of the Hudson – called the Western Union; thus greatly increasing Vermont's size and giving themselves some leverage in negotiations with New Hampshire and

New York. Vermont, therefore, maintained a precarious existence as an independent republic for about fourteen years.

The Allens had led the way in forging this new Republic, all in the spirit of keeping their precious land titles; but by the time that Vermont was admitted as the fourteenth state on March 4, 1791, Ethan was dead, and Ira's political power had dwindled. Concessions also were made – the claims to the eastern and western unions had been abandoned and a financial settlement had been worked out with New York.

The events that culminated in the creation of Vermont have made it one of the most colorful stories of American history – a story that establishes the context in which Stratton's continuing chronicles can be explored.

Stratton for Sale!

Following the King's decision to place the New Hampshire Grants within New York jurisdiction in 1764, any thought of organizing Stratton as a town apparently was abandoned. Searl seemed to have bigger problems to deal with – specifically keeping title to all his New Hampshire Grant properties. It seems apparent that once the towns of Arlington and Sunderland had been surveyed, Searl must have realized the inaccessibility of Stratton. One example of how Stratton must have been viewed at that time is echoed in the journal of Walter Rutherford, an owner of New York's Princetown Patent that had overlapped some of Sunderland. During his visit to Princetown, Rutherford wrote, describing the eastern boundary which cut through the center of Sunderland as “...*the foot of the Green Spruce, or East Mountain, which is almost impassible and is a continued ridge southwardly beyond the Massachusetts line and Northwardly as far as Lake Champlain, is totally unfit for either range of timber, yet a good barrier...*” Stratton was beyond that ridge. Searl may have come to that same conclusion; thus, with the combination of an uncertain title and the misfortune of its rugged terrain, Stratton's Charter apparently was tucked away and did not resurface for several years.

As already discussed, Governor Tryon of New York had decided to allow confirmatory patents in 1772; thus Isaac Searl petitioned for confirmation of Stratton's charter. His petition was dated November 12, 1771, and is recorded in the [Calendar of New York Colonial Manuscripts Endorsed Land Papers](#) (1864 – page 546); but confirmations for most towns that had applied were delayed until late 1774. Sometime between November 12, 1771, and December, 1774, Isaac Searl sold Stratton to Colonel Edmund Fanning. The sale probably took place while Searl was residing in New York as a merchant. Fanning apparently carried the records of this sale to Fort George, New York, since at some point before a patent could be issued, the original records of sale were lost in a fire there. To resolve the problem, Isaac Searl, John Grunley, and Whitehead Hicks, Mayor of New York City, along with Edmund Fanning, all of whom apparently were involved in the original

transaction, submitted affidavits acknowledging this sale, thus legitimizing Fanning's claims to Stratton and clearing the way for the patent.

Lieutenant Governor Colden of New York officially awarded Fanning the patent for Stratton on June 22, 1775. The patent was formalized on August 22 (*See Stratton's New York patent in Appendix C*). Stratton would be the only New Hampshire Grant, then considered a part of western Vermont, to receive a Confirmatory Patent from New York under its original name.

Stratton's new patent included a list of proprietors. They were: Edmund Fanning, John Moore, William Jauncey, Thomas White, David Mathews, Thomas Barrow, James Barrow, John Woods, John Blage, Edward Blage, John Bowles, Francis Panton, Moses Marden, John Fowler, Davis Hunt, Henry Broadwell, Benjamin John Johnston, Malcolm McIsaac, Ennis Graham, James Shaw, John Kelly, Samuel Avery, John Elliott and Christopher Blundell.

Edmund Fanning

Colonel Edmund Fanning, the new owner of Stratton, was an attorney of North Carolina, where he had been a member of the Assembly, Recorder of Deeds and Colonel of the Militia. When Tryon was appointed Governor of New York in 1771, Fanning, who was the governor's son-in-law, accompanied Tryon to New York as his private secretary. In 1775, Fanning was appointed Surveyor General of New York. At the outbreak of the American Revolution, Colonel Fanning raised a corps of Loyalists called the "Kings American Regiment of Foot." At various times he held the ranks of Major General, Lieutenant General and General in the British Army.



Edmund Fanning

Following his participation in the war, Fanning was appointed Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia in 1783, and later he was Lieutenant Governor of Prince Edward Island for nineteen years. He died in London in 1818.

Following the establishment of a Vermont independent of Britain, New York and New Hampshire in 1777, a vigorous effort was made at chartering and settling any unoccupied and unclaimed towns within its borders. Lands

owned by so-called “Tories” were confiscated and resold to support the new government; in 1780 taxes were placed on towns to support the war effort. Therefore, a rush to claim and settle the south-central area of the Green Mountains ensued. Jamaica, although first settled in 1775, was not chartered until 1780. Winhall was first settled in 1780 and Wardsboro was chartered and subsequently settled that same year. The issue of Stratton’s ownership resurfaced at this same time.

Fanning loses Stratton

During the Revolution, Colonel Fanning was an active loyalist to England and, as previously noted, commanded a Regiment of Tories against the rebellious colonials. And so, soon after Vermont’s independence, opposition to Fanning’s proprietorship surfaced. This opposition led to an interesting chain of events that ultimately resulted in the settlement of Stratton nearly twenty-two years after Stratton’s charter was issued.

In 1778, Vermont created “*The Court of Confiscation*,” a vehicle used to take property from so-called “traitors.” Confiscated property was sold and the proceeds were used in lieu of taxes to fund Vermont’s government. It was not long before Mr. Fanning’s name was presented to this court. Colonel William Williams and a group of petitioners of Wilmington, Vermont presented a petition to the Vermont General Assembly in Bennington on October 17, 1780. The petitioners requested Fanning’s patent to be forfeited due to his loyalty to England and his open hostility to the American Patriots. The petition went on to request that they, the petitioners, be granted the town of Stratton by the General Assembly of Vermont – a request that was never allowed¹. On the day this request was presented, the General Assembly appointed Colonel Williams “*to desire the Court of Confiscation to make report of their proceedings at this or the next session.*” Although no record exists of the forfeiture or specifics of how this situation was handled, the final outcome was that the possession of Stratton, whether legally or otherwise (and who is to say what the legalities were), reverted back to the original New Hampshire Grantees. Later, Edmund Fanning presented claims to the British Commissioners in Ontario for losses of his estates in America (*Ontario Archives pp 46-48 A.O.T. vol II pp 152-153*).

1) An earlier petition had been filed on May 4, 1780, by Colonel Williams with a list of petitioners differing somewhat from the second.

Those Gentlemen of Worcester

In June, 1779, when the Vermont legislature first took up the matter of obtaining charters for record in order to regulate town lines and locate vacant lands, the situation was very confused. Governor John Wentworth had carried the book of charters to England and many of the charters that were turned over to New York were not to be found. In the instance of Swanton, Vermont, Ira Allen, Surveyor General of Vermont, emphasized the validity of the original charter and considered transactions made after 1763 as invalid. The Town Proprietors of Vermont, by Florence Woodward, explains that New Hampshire Charters were given recognition – but not always the grants that were made by New York. Recognition could be secured by submitting the old charter at the expense of the state. This was apparently the basis upon which Isaac Searl had retained title to Stratton, since Vermont apparently had deemed the transaction between Stratton’s Original Grantees and Edmund Fanning as invalid. Ira Allen probably played some part in reinstating Isaac Searl’s claim to the original grant. Then again, perhaps Stratton’s land title was so ambiguous that Mr. Searl was able to take advantage of this confused situation and reclaim title to the township.

In 1778, Isaac Searl and Giles Alexander were involved in a dispute with Colonel William Williams and others of Wilmington over land rights in Wilmington that arose from a duplication of charters (Draper and Wilmington were charters for the same area). These gentlemen all were well informed and stayed involved in Vermont’s land granting activities that the state’s land office began to conduct in 1779. Therefore, when Williams petitioned for Fanning’s forfeiture of Stratton, it was within a matter of weeks that Isaac Searl resold Stratton to Giles Alexander. Searl and Alexander had out-maneuvered Colonel Williams in this deal. Searl profited from the sale of Stratton a second time and Alexander was, for a short time, the sole owner of Stratton (*the legitimacy of this sale is discussed below*).

Alexander’s Stratton

Giles Alexander of Boston was mentioned earlier as a key figure in negotiating between New York and the New Hampshire Grantees. There were several gentlemen named Giles Alexander who became involved with the New Hampshire Grants. These men included Giles Alexander, Esq., son of Philip and Joanna Alexander, born in 1723, who was named among the Original Grantees of Stamford, chartered on June 9, 1764, and also Hubbardton (along with Isaac Searl), and Dunbar, both chartered on June 15, 1764. The Dunbar charter also names Giles Alexander, Jr., who apparently was Giles Alexander Esq.’s son, although only aged about fourteen years at that time. Giles Alexander, Esq. married Mary Hayward in the late 1740s and he was named Proprietor’s Clerk of the Boston Pier in 1782. He seems to best fit the profile of the Giles Alexander that purchased Stratton; however, according to Matthew Jones in Vermont in the Making, the Giles Alexander

who was most involved in the New Hampshire Grant negotiations had married into the Wendall family – another family who had become greatly involved in Governor Wentworth’s land grants. If that statement is true, then the Giles Alexander who purchased Stratton was born on December 25, 1742, at Wilmington, Massachusetts, a son of Peter and Hannah Alexander. This Giles married Mary Wendall on June 20, 1763, at Boston. Jones also stated that Giles had been a post rider between Boston and Portsmouth, New Hampshire at one time. Both of these men were originally from Wilmington, Massachusetts and both later resided in Boston. The older gentleman apparently was the younger man’s uncle. The true identity of Stratton’s Alexander remains inconclusive despite Jones’ findings.

Giles Alexander acted together with John Wendell, the Portsmouth attorney, in soliciting proprietors of the New Hampshire Grants to place their claims in his hands for presentation to the New York authorities. Thus, Giles was appointed attorney for Henry Lloyd, Harrison Gray, John Searl, Sir John Temple, Jacob Wendell, Nathaniel Appleton, William Brattle and others on July 29, 1766, to appear before the Governor and Council of New York and confirm the grants made to them under the seal of New Hampshire. Giles also was instrumental in procuring a confirmatory patent for Newfane in January 1767, as an agent appointed by that township’s settlers. He and twenty New York men were issued the patent and on the following day, Alexander conveyed the township to Luke Knowlton of Shrewsbury and John Taylor of Northborough, Massachusetts as agents to convey the lands to the New Hampshire claimants, once those men had paid their share of the fees. In the Boston Gazette of February 12, 1770, Alexander advertised that he had 30,000 acres of good land in the southeast part of the grants.

Several years later, Giles Alexander and some of his associates petitioned the Vermont General Court on or before June 18, 1778, and this petition was compared with one submitted by Mr. Alvord (Olford) and inhabitants of Wilmington, Vermont, concerning a land dispute. This brings us back to his purchase of Stratton in late 1780, at which time he immediately began selling Stratton’s proprietary rights.

Alexander acted quickly to secure his right to Stratton. Captain David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts was the first to be brought into Alexander’s new group of proprietors. Captain Thayer purchased approximately half of the rights – 32 original shares – of Stratton from Alexander on October 9, 1780, for 50,000 pounds (or so states the record made ten years later on September 4, 1790, within Stratton’s land records).

The following year, 1781, saw a flurry of sales of Stratton’s proprietary rights by Alexander and Thayer to gentlemen, most of whom obviously were interested in making a profit rather than purchasing a new home. Prominent buyers, all from Massachusetts, were: Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, William McFarland of Worcester, and Paul Thurston of Ward, to name just a few. Some rights were sold a number of times within the next few months, quickly building a new group of proprietors for the town. Many of these transactions

were made between gentlemen that would never settle in Stratton and probably never ventured there.

Challenges to Alexander's Purchase of Stratton

The legitimacy of the sale of Stratton to Mr. Alexander in 1780 seems even more questionable after combing the town's land records. Several years after Alexander's purchase of Stratton, some of the Original Grantees challenged the new proprietors, forcing additional transfers to be made. For instance, the ownership of the original right of John Downing was suspect in more ways than one. His rights obviously were not properly resolved at the time Searl sold Stratton to Alexander. This right changed hands several times, beginning with Alexander. Eventually it was sold to Abraham Rugg on October 9, 1784. About that same time, a John Downing, who was living in Williamstown, Massachusetts claimed ownership of the original right of John Downing, Esq., thus disputing Rugg's ownership. To confuse the situation further, this man was probably not the same John Downing, Esq. – a member of the New Hampshire Council – named on Stratton's charter. The situation was resolved on June 7, 1790, when Giles Alexander repurchased this right from the plaintiff, John Downing of Williamstown, for a single shilling, indifferent to Downing's identity. Subsequent records reflect that ownership by the new landholders remained intact.

Other disputes were resolved when William McFarland repurchased rights from at least two of the Original Grantees after purchasing those rights from Alexander and Thayer. A potential dispute also arose when a land record was brought in to be recorded at Stratton by Reuben Hobart of Boylston, New York, who had purchased 3300 acres of Stratton from Reynolds Vaughan of Manchester, Vermont, for 330 pounds on July 5, 1794. This land was the total of the property that Mr. Vaughan had purchased as original rights of Nathan Phelps, Jr., John Smith, John Smith, Jr., Eleazer Hannum, Elisha Mather, William Lyman, Spencer Phelps, John Searl, Nathaniel Noyse, and Nathan Lyman. Evidently, Mr. Hobart lost his claim to this property, although the deed was recorded in Book 1 of Stratton's Land Records on page 156. Over the years, several other rights were claimed, including those of Governor Wentworth by his descendants. In most cases, these claims were ignored, probably because most of these lands had been auctioned off to pay delinquent taxes.

Those that paid the tax were most likely to be recognized as the rightful owner. On several occasions, taxes were placed on the town by the State of Vermont. Landholders who did not pay had their lands confiscated by the Town's Constable and Collector and he then auctioned off the confiscated lands at a tax-sale. A period of one year was given to the original owner to repay whoever purchased the land in question at the tax-sale. If this did not occur, then the person who put up the money at the auction became the undisputed owner. At that time, the Constable and Collector issued a deed.

Challenges such as those by the Original Grantees and their heirs went, for the most part, unrecognized and ownership fell in favor of the taxpayer.

The above disputes make it appear as though Isaac Searl was among the few, if not the only, member of the Original Grantees to profit from the sale of Stratton to Alexander in 1780. The sum he collected remains unknown, although, if Alexander's sale price of 50,000 pounds for half of Stratton to Thayer was factual, then Mr. Searl may have acquired a considerable amount of money from the sale.

Although questionable, Alexander's purchase of Stratton withstood the assault of all challenges to its legitimacy, making it possible to trace most all of Stratton's property transfers back to Alexander's purchase from Isaac Searl.

At Long Last – Settlers

Finally, after more than twenty years, the proper circumstances had been established for the development of a settlement within Stratton. In 1782, the first road was built into the town and in 1783, Timothy and Oliver Morsman, Stratton's first settlers, arrived and began the daunting task of clearing the wilderness from their farms. Others followed; more roads were built for better access to all four corners of the town; a sawmill and a gristmill were established, so that within a few years, Stratton became a working proprietary town of Vermont. In 1788, five years after the first settlers had arrived, Stratton began the next transition by establishing a town government and it proceeded with the task of transferring control from the proprietors to the inhabitants – a process that would take Stratton about seven years to accomplish.

The events and circumstances that carried Stratton through its years as a working propriety will be discussed in detail later in this history, but now it seems appropriate to scrutinize the broader aspects that guided Stratton through the years.

Chapter IV

Putting Stratton in Context

Stratton's Economic Backdrop

Over the years, Stratton's town records not only have addressed issues unique to Stratton, but also have reflected the events and the business of the state and the nation. Although many of the subjects of Stratton's town meetings over the years seem to be issues entirely about, and for the town, many were in fact inspired by the social and municipal structuring that occurred throughout the state. Furthermore, the issues at hand were not always evident through the town records. Therefore, it becomes apparent that Stratton's historical picture cannot be displayed appropriately or adequately upon a blank wall. Instead, it must be placed upon the proper social and economic backdrop that inspired its creation and promoted its continuity.

Overall, Vermont as a haven for an early American agrarian society was somewhat of a failure. Lewis Stilwell, author of Migration from Vermont, detailed the trials and tribulations of the collective Vermonter of the nineteenth century. Within the following paragraphs, I have paraphrased and summarized some of Stilwell's research, then compared the overall situation in Vermont with that in Stratton. Stratton, it seems, has followed Vermont's ups and downs in economic development on a somewhat exaggerated scale. For most of its history, Stratton was considered among the state's poorest communities. It was not until the coming of the ski resort in the 1960s that this town established itself as one of Vermont's wealthiest towns.

The Golden Years

Although Vermont would not become an agricultural success and also failed to follow the rest of the country into the industrial age, things were not always bleak for this state prior to the mid-twentieth century. In fact, Vermont's beginnings seemed very bright. 1783 to 1808 were considered the state's "golden years." This was the period between the American Revolution and the Embargo Act established by President Jefferson to protest British encroachments on Americans' rights. It was a time when America's frontiers were somewhat limited and Vermont was capable of filling the needs of the expanding population of southern New England. Vermont's fledgling farms were vibrant and land was relatively inexpensive; therefore, during that time, settlers flowed into the state at an incredible rate.

Life for the earliest settlers was very difficult. After the initial hardships of taming the wilderness were conquered, life became somewhat easier as the farms were slowly cleared and better established. Each farmer raised a little of everything he needed and, at first, wild game still existed to supplement his family's diet.

During the “golden years,” wheat was the crop of abundance. It grew well on the newly cleared fields, producing as much as 40 bushels an acre – enough to become a good export crop for Vermont. Stratton, however, apparently never stepped beyond the level of subsistence farming.

The pine and oak timber of Vermont’s virgin forest was also of high quality. Initially though, it was not, and could not, be exported to any great extent due to the primitive transportation methods of the area. The greater profit came through burning the forests. The ashes from huge fires of hardwood logs were collected and converted into potash through a process of leaching and boiling. Sometimes, this potash was baked and refined into a more valuable form called pearl ash. Potash was essential in making soap and pearl ash was used as an early form of baking powder. These products, like wheat, were highly valued commodities in comparison to their respective weight and, therefore, were among the state’s first exports.

Although this time was considered Vermont’s golden age, Vermonters still had serious problems to contend with. For more than ten years, Vermont went without any useful circulating currency. Barter was the major means of exchange and in 1786, Vermont’s legislature officially recognized neat cattle, wheat, rye and Indian corn as legal tender. This greatly impeded the expansion of large-scale commerce and promoted the concept of extended credit. With little or no currency, every Vermonter tended to fall into the categories of debtor or creditor. Debtors were often jailed and their lands and possessions confiscated, if they failed to meet the demands of the creditor. Fortunately, relief arrived with the introduction of the new U. S. currency during the mid-1790s, before any serious consequences played out; but unfortunately, many Vermonters of that generation maintained the bad habit of long-term debt and late payment.

Not only did the buying and selling of property strain the debt situation, but also the imposition of taxes at that time seemed to drive out those with no hard currency. Stratton’s records reflect the difficulty of that time. Each new tax brought on a huge turnover of Stratton’s lands through tax-sales. It appears that just a handful of men were able to buy up the thousands of acres that were confiscated for delinquent taxes. The new owners tended to resell this land to new arrivals, who in turn were unable to pay the next tax, thus propagating a vicious cycle that continued in Stratton for a very long time. The lack of currency may have helped to initiate this constant turnover of property holders in Stratton, but many more factors were involved in maintaining this phenomenon.

Late frosts in the Spring of 1788 devastated the crops of that year, prompting Vermont’s governor to forbid exports from the state at that time. Additionally, eastern Vermont suffered a serious drought in 1800. Although, these and other more localized difficulties took their toll on Vermont, hunting and fishing still could provide the needed supplement for survival. Therefore, these difficulties were overcome and general prosperity continued in the state.

Greener Pastures

By 1795, “Genesee Fever,” the term used to describe the migration out of Vermont, as well as the rest of New England, into the Genesee Valley of New York, was working its way through the population. Those who had settled Vermont were becoming restless once again. The ideal farm did not seem to exist in the Green Mountains and so many began to pull up their shallow roots and head west in search of better fields. Many of Stratton’s early settlers made that trip. Often the land records show that a man – a resident of Massachusetts – would purchase a lot in Stratton; he settled on that lot, remained there for a brief period – a few years or sometimes just a few months. Next, the record shows that he had sold his Stratton lands and that he had resettled somewhere in New York. Overall though, the influx of new settlers into the town and the state far outweighed the numbers that were leaving during that time. Between 1790 and 1800, Stratton’s population almost tripled, rising from 95 to 271.

The end of Vermont’s golden years came in 1808. That year began the many misfortunes that reduced much of the prosperity in the state to poverty and changed emigration into an outright exodus. First, President Jefferson’s embargo of 1808 bluntly ended trade with Canada, crippling the economy of northern Vermont. This resulted in a sharp decline in the price of farm goods throughout the state and brought on the sudden demand for payment of debts by creditors hurt in this situation. This came at a time when few Vermonters were able to pay off their debts. In an assertive effort to let the nation know that Vermonters were unhappy with the embargo, towns appointed representatives to sign a grievance to Congress. On April 21, 1808, Stratton voted to send Samuel Boutell and Sampson Bixby to Newfane to sign this petition. Stratton, with little or no export trade to be hurt, probably felt only the secondary and tertiary effects of the embargo.

It seems evident that other circumstances had taken a toll on Stratton between 1800 and 1810, enough so that Stratton’s population dropped by 1.5% during that time period. Although, this percentage may seem somewhat insignificant, it is important to note that the populations of Vermont and the nation were growing during those years. Vermonters were generally young, families grew quickly, with the birth rate far exceeding the death rate, and new emigrants still continued to settle in Vermont, all of which made up for the losses caused by the exodus to New York. By comparing Stratton’s 1800 census to its 1810 census – name for name – Stratton’s population exchange rate appears surprisingly high. About 57% of those that had lived in Stratton in 1800 had left town by 1810. In other words, more than half of Stratton’s population in 1810 had not lived in Stratton in 1800, not even as children in their parents’ homes. It appears that Stratton’s incompatible farming conditions were very convincing, thus many who attempted to cultivate the mountain’s slopes lasted only a few years before retreating to more cooperative terrain. Although a large percentage headed into New York and

beyond, some went no further than the neighboring towns of Wardsboro, Arlington, Jamaica or Dover.

Vermont's Gray Skies

Meanwhile, on the state level, things continued to look grim. In 1811, torrential rains hit central Vermont and devastated that region. The resultant floods washed two-thirds of the mills in Windsor and Rutland counties away. Within the year, the Vermont State Bank collapsed. This was followed by the declaration of war on Great Britain in 1812, which resulted in the initial evacuation of northern Vermont towns. However, once the initial panic passed, Vermont actually regained some of its prosperity during the war, brought on by an extensive smuggling trade with Canada. British authorities claimed that two-thirds of the British army remained supplied with beef, throughout the war, smuggled in from Vermont and New York. The war also brought some prosperity to Vermont legitimately in the form of manufacturing and wheat sales, but these markets diminished with the end of the war.

No sooner had the economy begun to wane after the war than Vermont was dealt another significant blow. A volcanic eruption in the Pacific caused 1816 to become "a year without a summer" in New England. Several inches of snow fell across the state on June 8. The summer months remained cold and the crops of that year were a complete loss. Corn had to be imported at \$3.00 a bushel. Many of the farmers that had struggled before that time, were forced to give up their farms and go elsewhere.

Although "the year without a summer" had to take a toll on the citizens of Stratton, no mention of this event can be found in the records, nor did it seem to have an affect on the flow of settlers into or out of town. This probably indicates that there was very little for this disaster to affect in Stratton. Stratton's grand list data for the year 1817, shows Stratton as having only 104 acres of improved land with 31 homes, 213 cattle, 41 oxen, 56 horses and mules, only three watches and \$15.00 cash among the entire population. This placed Stratton dead last in improved lands in comparison to the rest of Windham County and it was the second poorest community in Windham County, following Somerset.

By 1820, Vermont was near bankruptcy. Most all of its marketable natural resources, its soil and its forests, were depleted. Gone too was the once abundant supply of wild game. Within the forests that were allowed to grow back, Vermonters promoted sugar maples and prevented other species such as oak to return. This limited much of the food supply that deer and other wildlife had depended upon. The old forests that still remained were, for the most part, difficult to access and not worth the cost of retrieving as lumber. An added ecological problem was that once the majority of the forest disappeared, and the sponge-like loam of the forest floor had been replaced by hard-packed pasturelands and fields, the characteristics of Vermont's mountain brooks changed. When it rained, intense run-off flooded the brook

beds and the surrounding valleys. When the rains stopped, the flow slowed to a trickle; therefore, the mills upon those brooks that managed to survive the floods could not operate from lack of water once the rains had stopped. This phenomenon had a significant effect on Vermont's manufacturing and lumber industries that relied on waterpower. Apparently, though, Stratton's forests were not affected to this extreme.

The soil, made fertile by the forest that had once stood upon it, was quickly wearing out from lack of replenishment. A plague of weevils in 1824 persisted for some years and another of grasshoppers in 1826 took a tremendous toll on Vermont crops at that time. Poor farming practices of Vermont's early pioneers and the resultant poor condition of the soil as well as the short growing season made Vermont seem almost barren as compared to the west. Piling these undesirable conditions onto the even shorter growing season caused by Stratton's overall high elevation had to make the general outlook for this town seem all the more bleak, from a farmer's point of view.

The many problems that befell the state during those times did not go unnoticed by Vermont's business community nor by the state government. On occasion, strategies were devised to offset the effects of these events in an attempt to keep Vermont on her feet. Efforts by the state included the improvement of the state's transportation systems – first by an assertive effort to establish turnpikes and county roads and later by developing a statewide rail system. Improved education legislation also was enacted to promote the well-being of Vermont. This, however, tended to have an adverse effect in that the educated tended to escape the farm and leave Vermont in search of a career. The business community also saw opportunity in the development of the wool industry and later the dairy industry.

The Road to Recovery?

As mentioned above, the state set out to develop a statewide system of roads that would link its communities to major market towns, in order to stimulate Vermont's export market. Therefore, in 1800, a general law was enacted that provided for the organization of turnpikes and county roads.

County roads were funded by taxes imposed on the towns they progressed through, but in many instances these communities were too poor to build good roads. Often, this dilemma was alleviated by the creation of a turnpike company, which consisted of a group of investors sanctioned by the state. These companies built the needed roadways. They, in turn, collected tolls from the travelers that used their roads.

Before 1810, Vermont had chartered over twenty turnpike companies. New Hampshire also developed a system of turnpikes at this same time as well as a series of toll bridges across the Connecticut River, joining the two states' road systems. This effectively provided the needed roads connecting

eastern Vermont to Boston and Hartford. Regular stagecoach routes were then established. In the winter, caravans of sleighs pulled by four-horse teams were driven over the snow-packed turnpikes, carrying eastern Vermont's farm produce to the Atlantic seaboard markets; and in autumn, herds of Vermont cattle were driven to Boston's slaughter houses. Meanwhile, western Vermont also was improving transportation to the market towns of their choice – namely Troy and Albany in New York. In southern Vermont, there were three potential links between the western and eastern sides of the Green Mountains. One of these potential routes progressed across the mountains through Stratton and Sunderland.

Therefore, with the possibility of profiting from a toll road through this area, a group of businessmen applied for and received a charter for the Stratton Turnpike Company in 1808, but for one reason or another construction was postponed for many years and the road was not completed until 1831. Evidently, it prospered for a few years and maintained a toll for about three decades. The Stratton Turnpike brought some business into Stratton before it was abolished in 1856, at least from those that stopped for the night at Torrey's Tavern or Wyman's Inn.

A Sheepish Economy

Improvements in transportation could potentially help Vermont compete. The real challenge was to find some market in which it could compete. Twice in its early history, Vermont found such a market in the wool industry. First in 1811, a wool craze began in the state when Spanish merino sheep were imported, raising the quality of the product and providing an edge on this market for the state. This, however, was short-lived since by the end of the War of 1812, the price of wool had dropped considerably. A revival came to this market in 1825 with the introduction of Saxony merino sheep. This market thrived in Vermont for over ten years. During that time, Vermont's flocks grew from 475,000 in 1824 to 700,000 in 1828 and 1,100,000 in 1837. The wool market seemed to be the only option Vermont had during those years that could bring prosperity back to the state. Therefore, Vermont began to take the shape of a vast sheep pasture. Smaller farms previously used to produce crops were being bought up and converted into larger farms of pastureland. The end result was that the state's poor farmers had sold out to the rich owners of large sheep flocks. This meant fewer farms and a reduction in manpower required to operate them. Ironically, the business that potentially could save Vermont at the same time stimulated migration out of the state; and so it is no surprise that 1830 to 1840 marked the time of the great migration from Vermont westward. 1836 was a peak year for this migration. Even larger numbers might have left the state in subsequent years had it not been for the "Crash of 1837," which dampened the nation's economy and dissuaded emigration until the hard times were over.



1836 was significant in Vermont's history. It was the last year before a major economic depression, Vermont's sheep population was on the rise and migration from the state was at a peak. Stilwell chose that year to approximate the sheep population throughout the state – town by town. Fortunately, Stratton's grand list of 1836 is one of the few early grand lists of the town that still exists, allowing for a comparison of Stratton's flocks to those of surrounding towns. Towns east and west of Stratton each had over 5000 sheep. Stratton was among a single row of towns along the spine of the mountains¹ that had sheep populations less than 1000. That year, Stratton's sheep population was just 266. This was much lower than Stratton's average of about 475 sheep during the years of 1828, 1829, and 1840 – the only years around that time that Stratton's grand lists still exist². In 1836, only about 26 farmers owned sheep in Stratton – an unusually small number as opposed to the other three years that records remain. Most of these farmers had less than 20 sheep each, Stephen Ballard having the largest flock of just 37 sheep. In 1828, 36 farmers had owned sheep with no flock greater than Jedidiah Morse's 28. In 1840, the number and size of Stratton's flocks remained just as small, with the exception of Stephen Ballard, Jr.'s flock of 33 and Thomas Stacey's flock of 45. Neat stock (cattle and oxen) totaled somewhere between 200 and 300 for each of the four years mentioned above, indicating that Stratton's farms maintained a balance in their livestock, further suggesting that the sheep industry never played a part in Stratton's economy. It is clearly apparent that Stratton had failed to take advantage of the one industry that had helped to sustain neighboring towns and the state for about a decade.

1) Mount Tabor, Peru, Winhall, Stratton, Somerset, and Searsburg, along with the adjacent towns of Glastenbury, Woodford and Dover

2) Stratton's grand lists – 1828 – 457 sheep, 1829 – 474 sheep, 1836 – 266 sheep, 1840 – 494 sheep.

The lifting of protective tariffs in 1841 sheds light on the dependency that Vermont's wool industry had on those tariffs. In 1842, a compromise temporarily saved Vermont's sheep farmers, but in 1846, the Democrats under President Polk lifted virtually all tariffs on the wool trade. The result was a collapse in that trade in Vermont. In 1848 and 1849, Vermont farmers began an almost reckless slaughter of their flocks for whatever the hides and mutton could bring. Many flocks that escaped the slaughter were driven west where there was a good market for Vermont merino sheep.

By 1850, nearly all of Vermont's agriculture and its industries were in the doldrums – two-thirds of the mills had been abandoned and timber was being imported from Canada. In 1850, an acre in Vermont sold at an average of \$15.00 while an acre in adjacent New York State sold for an average of \$29.00. To make a bad situation worse, tuberculosis was running rampant in the state. 25% of those that died in the state at that time were victims of this disease. Those that survived were encouraged to leave the state and go south or west.

Between 1850 and 1860, cattle began replacing sheep, while hay, oats and potatoes were replacing wheat and corn crops. In Stratton, however, there were no great herds of cattle. It remained a town consisting of small subsistence farms.

A Losing Battle

As previously stated, emigration westward was becoming epidemic with Vermonters. Nearly every person who remained in the state knew someone living in the west. Many families regularly corresponded with those westerners, receiving for the most part enticing reviews of those western lands. An additional encouragement for migration was the fact that local papers advertised land and promoted colonies of Vermonters to settle in various parts of the west. All things considered, Vermont was losing the battle to retain her population. By 1860, 42% of Vermonters alive in the United States were living in states other than Vermont.

One offset for this trend was the influx of Irish immigrants into the U. S. during the 1830s and 1840s. By 1850, about 15,000 of those Irishmen had settled into Vermont, greatly supplementing the state's population and disguising the extent of emigration from the state. In Stratton, however, the Moran family was the only Irish family to settle here at that time – they apparently immigrated here before the main exodus from Ireland had begun.

Another offset was the economic panic of 1857 that greatly reduced emigration from Vermont. The west did not appear as appealing during hard times, since the expenses and risks of relocating could not have been so easily absorbed by most families. Before renewed prosperity arrived that would promote another major emigration westward, the Civil War began.

Vermont gave dearly to restore the Union. Many a Vermont farmer left his family and farm to enlist. After the war, the men that returned home brought with them more stories of better farmland and opportunity westward. Perhaps those that had remained dead-set against change before the war were not so leery of it after venturing out of Vermont with the army. Whatever the reason, migration from Vermont again began to increase following the war and continued well into the twentieth century. Several of Stratton's families, joined by others of this vicinity, went on as a group to settle in Geneseo, Illinois. Other localities throughout the west were settled by groups of Vermonters.

Putting the State on Track

Before the middle of the 19th Century had arrived, the turnpike system quickly was becoming obsolete. Transportation by locomotion was coming of age throughout the country, compelling Vermont to develop a rail system so it could compete with the rest of the region. In 1848, a section of rail was completed along a twenty-mile stretch between White River and Bethel. By 1851 there were over 400 miles of track laid within the state. Unfortunately, the railroads had come too late to help Vermont's teetering economy, and to make the outlook worse they also provided an easy way out of Vermont for those who wished to leave.

The first railroads built in Vermont were too distant to benefit Stratton. During the 1850s, the nearest railroad to this town caught the northwest corner of Sunderland on the opposite side of the mountain and progressed through Manchester. The nearest railroad on the eastern side of town followed the Connecticut River. Since Stratton was bypassed completely by the railroads, they only could hurt the town, primarily because this new form of transportation greatly reduced the traffic that had progressed across the Stratton Turnpike.

The residents of Stratton saw the importance of a rail system and believed that the town should invest in a rail company that potentially could benefit the town, provided that the company put down rails through Stratton. Therefore, on November 30, 1875, at a special town meeting, the residents "*Resolved that the Town of Stratton aid in the construction of the Rail Road to be built by the Green Mountain Rail Road Company by subscribing to the capital stock of said Rail Road Company, the sum of five thousand four hundred dollars....*".

The Green Mountain Rail Road, however, was not tempted by the town's allure and, apparently, no town funds were invested within that company. Had this opportunity come to pass, Stratton may well have become another Manchester or Chester, Vermont.

It was not until 1880 that the West River Railroad was completed between Brattleboro and South Londonderry, bringing the trains a bit closer to Stratton. This railroad was used for public transportation, and also carried mail and shipped goods back and forth along the West River Valley. In all,

though, it did very little to promote the economies of the towns it serviced. Furthermore, it greatly hurt Stratton because it had replaced the mail route across the town – carried by Henry Waite’s stagecoach from West Wardsboro to Arlington – thus ending the stagecoach service through town and eliminating much of the business brought to Wyman’s Hotel by that stage. The most accessible station to Stratton was Wardsboro Station in East Jamaica, and so Waite’s stagecoach resumed service from West Wardsboro to Wardsboro Station.

The West River Railroad operated until the flood of 1927 destroyed much of the line. It was restored briefly in 1934, and then officially went out of business in 1936. By that time, the remnants of the *Stratton Turnpike* – a road now called the *Kelley Stand Road* – was for the most part a logging road. The only major stop between Stratton and western Sunderland, the Kelley Stand, had been abandoned and routes north and south of Stratton had become more popular travel corridors across the mountains; therefore, Stratton was not likely to be established as a crossroads ever again.

Picking up Steam – Lumber and the Rails

The establishment of rail systems, as well as the introduction of steam-powered mills, helped promote the lumber business, providing somewhat of a boost to Vermont’s economy and Stratton’s economy as well. Private railroad companies were created to move lumber from the remote regions of the state into the market, while steam-driven mills were built where waterpowered mills would have been less effective or useless.

The Deerfield River Railroad penetrated Stratton’s southwest corner along the West Branch of the Deerfield River and also extended into the western side of Stratton’s Somerset Annex, opening up Stratton’s remote regions to the lumbering business. Another rail system, operated by Rich Lumber Co. of Wanakena, New York, and built in 1913, ran along the western slopes of the Green Mountains in Manchester, extending almost as far east as Stratton Pond and into what is now the Lye Brook Wilderness. This is not to say that these areas had existed untouched before that time. In fact, several lumbering operations had existed in Stratton’s western lands from the early 1800s. Hawkes and Wetherbee established a mill on the East Branch of the Deerfield River in Stratton about 1801, and others such as N. J. Shaw, and Lucius Smith also operated mills in this area of Stratton. The railroad greatly increased the export capabilities of the region and brought some prosperity to the town in that respect.

About 1880, Joel F. Grout and his sons developed a prosperous lumber complex in Stratton, known as the Grout Job, on the old Hawkes and Wetherbee site. The Taft and Stewart Mill, the Dufresne Job and the Upper Tudor Mill also brought jobs to Stratton during the last decade of the 19th Century.

Changes in land ownership also became apparent during that decade. In 1894, the land records show large amounts of lands in private ownership –

parcel after parcel – being sold at auction by the town for delinquent taxes. Within a decade, large lumber companies had acquired most all of these same lands.

During that decade and into the first decade of the Twentieth Century, Stratton's subsistence farming community had dwindled and many of those farmers were replaced by lumbermen or they became lumbermen themselves – finding work in Stratton's large mills or within the smaller operations that sprang up across the town. This prosperity was limited and the technology that brought it to Stratton soon took it away.

Between 1901 and 1903, all of the large mills within Stratton had sold out – Stratton's lumber business was transforming and the era of locally owned and operated mills soon ended. Stratton had fallen prey to the larger land and lumber companies that found it more economical to haul timber off to distant mills rather than process it locally. The community of local mills began to be substituted with migrant lumbermen with no families or men who left their families back in the larger communities while they went away to work. By 1920, over a third of Stratton's population consisted of migrant lumbermen, boarding in Stratton's lumber camps. Eventually, transportation further reduced the number of workmen needed within Stratton and established a working environment where lumbermen could live outside the town and commute back and forth from home to the various worksites with their respective logging crews. Once again, a potential reprieve for the town had metamorphosed into a harsher sentence.

Vermont Finds Its Own Meaning

During the early 1890s, the Vermont Board of Agriculture, which was responsible for Vermont's "publicity," began a campaign to save the state by encouraging tourism. It was during this time that the "Vermont" image was devised to promote Vermont's appeal to the outside world. Vermont began to be "advertised" as a place of peace and tranquility among the Green Mountains – a landscape dotted with small villages with little white churches surrounded by farms and forests. It was an image aimed at the city-dwellers of southern New England and New York – an image that promoted Vermont as a place of retreat, where visitors could enjoy a quiet and relaxing atmosphere – a place to rejuvenate themselves before returning to the hustle and bustle of city-life.

Among the objectives of this campaign was a promotion to save Vermont's farms by encouraging these same people to buy up abandoned farms as second homes. It also encouraged Vermonters to take in tourists as their guests in the "Bed and Breakfast" fashion as an extra income.

This campaign established an image for Vermont that seemed to work well. For the most part, it appealed to native Vermonters and those that traveled here in the years that followed. It was and is a multi-faceted

campaign that has prevailed to this day as the life-blood of Vermont's economy.

About 1912, there was an early effort by some of Stratton's residents to try and promote their town as best they knew how. Stratton was seen by some as a place of nature, fostering early hopes that the fledgling Green Mountain Club and its Long Trail might bring in the tourism and business so desired and needed by this community. The Long Trail was conceived on Stratton Mountain and its founder, James P. Taylor, was a familiar figure in Stratton. At that time, the town also had started its own hiking club, full of local enthusiasts – The Stratton Mountain Club – a group that seemed to bring the community together for a time. It promoted hiking up the mountain and it established and promoted Stratton's famous landmark – the Webster Memorial.

The Stratton Mountain Club's enthusiasm did not bring in the business that Stratton needed though, and, with the loss of some key members, the club faded away. At that time, it seemed that the town itself might follow that very course.

The Age of the Automobile Arrives

The dawning of the age of automobiles probably hurt Stratton as much as did any other of the advancements in transportation. Even the promotionalism of Vermont could not help a town that lay far off the beaten path, along bad roads. To provide the accessibility for tourism, road improvements had to be made, but funds for such improvements were hard to come by in the poorer towns. With the arrival of the automobile also came the need for a difficult and expensive change in winter road maintenance – a change that did not oblige the old-fashioned form of winter travel – the horse and sleigh.

During those times, Stratton did not make any significant efforts to develop for the future. Accessibility to and through the town remained somewhat difficult when conditions were not optimal. With fewer and fewer residents remaining to finance the needed maintenance, Stratton's roads could only grow worse. It was not until President Franklin Roosevelt implemented some of the much-needed social programs in the 1930s, that the road system in Stratton was improved somewhat. One such program established the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) that was responsible for building several of the bridges that still exist within town.

To Know the Fabric, Examine the Thread

The above events and phenomena set the stage for Vermont and Stratton as the twentieth century arrived and continued beyond its first half. Other significant events would add to the overall canvas of their histories, but the

phenomena mentioned above were the most influential in those that shaped this region to that time. These events seem to have put Stratton on a course toward extinction with barely a hundred years of history behind it.

Meanwhile, during that time, a routine existence continued for the inhabitants of Stratton. The typical farmer here grew a little of everything he needed to feed his family – crops probably included corn, oats, and potatoes, while livestock likely included pigs, chickens, sheep and cattle. A typical Stratton farmer inevitably owned a horse or a mule and a pair of oxen. Like farmers throughout the state, he probably continued to till too much land and failed to supplement the soil or rotate his crops. He knew that his farm was producing less per acre each year, yet all he could do was to work harder, struggling just to get by. This lifestyle inescapably instilled a dislike for farming in the younger generations – yet another adversity for Vermont at that time. Stilwell quoted Horace Greeley, a native son of Vermont, as stating, *“Our farmers’ sons escape from their fathers’ calling whenever they can, because it is made a mindless, monotonous drudgery, instead of an ennobling, liberalizing, intellectual pursuit.”* A review of Stratton’s censuses decade to decade reflect that Stratton’s children seldom took up the family farm or created a nearby farm for themselves within this town. Thus, Stratton’s population has fluctuated over the years for one reason or another, but it has never grown much larger than the 361 residents recorded in the 1860 census.

A summation of the situation in Stratton during those times can be found in the letters of Martin C. Grout, a son of Joel and Lucy Grout. Martin was born in Stratton in 1815 and left home for greener pastures as soon as he was able. Martin did not think much of his hometown. He settled in Jamestown, New York, about 1834, a locality where several of Stratton’s residents had resettled as well as many families from neighboring towns. While in Jamestown, Martin wrote back home to his mother, Lucy Grout, saying, *“You cannot be in a worse place to get a living than in Stratton, if you go the whole country through.”* In another letter to a relative, he writes *“...it is a bad place where she is (his mother), especially in the winter season. The snow falls to such a depth that makes it bad for her and the boys getting along to what it would be here..... Snow fell to a depth of four feet last winter, and it has not been known to be half so deep before.”* Martin’s wife, Lydia, also wrote to her mother-in-law in 1848, *“Stratton appears to us like a cold unfruitful and lonesome place. It has no charms for me except the dear friends that inhabit it.”*

Lucy Grout apparently felt differently – probably deeply attached to her birthplace and the place where her husband was buried. She remained in Stratton nearly all of her life and she collected many letters such as those above, sent to her by her children and siblings – many of whom had abandoned Stratton for those greener pastures.

Stratton’s farms could not sustain the town and the lack of industry and the failure to maintain a frequented transportation route through town

inevitably forced Stratton along a path that brought it to the brink of extinction.

To the Brink and Back Again

All things considered, a very grim and undesirable economic backdrop existed for Stratton during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – a backdrop that did not change until the 1960s. Although its neighbors, Somerset and Glastenbury, each lost their status as a town in 1937, Stratton managed to hold out for the light at the end of the tunnel. There was gold at the end of that tunnel – the ski industry. The creation of the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort brought in the tourism, the capital, and the residents needed to revive the town, economically. This phenomena has been supplemented by the second-home industry across the entire town, which has thrived because of Stratton’s wilderness and seclusion.

Stratton is now very little of its old self. Few pre-1900 dwellings exist, no farms in the true sense remain, and a very scarce few individuals have any connection with pre-1900 Stratton; but the town government has remained intact to this day and those that currently reside here are determined to carry on Stratton’s history and tradition well into this new century and this new millennium.

Section II

Stratton's Many Facets

The last section explored and established the very foundations of Stratton. Up to this point, this task has been accomplished using mostly a chronological progression. As we enter the years that Stratton blossomed into a full-fledged town, however, it becomes more difficult to address the events, circumstances and various aspects that culminate into Stratton as a whole, that is, if we were to follow a time-line; therefore, the remainder of Stratton's story has been broken down into subjects, with each subject presented in its entirety in most instances.

To begin this new section, we return to the beginning of Stratton's first settlement and delve into the force behind the effort – the Propriety.

Chapter V

The Propriety (1781 – 1795)

An In-Depth View of Stratton under the Proprietors

To understand Stratton's history as a Propriety, we first need to explore the meaning of a proprietary grant and how proprietary townships developed and progressed, specifically in Vermont.

Before Governor Wentworth began granting lands in the Green Mountains, the process by which lands within the British colonies were divvied had become somewhat standardized under the British Board of Trade. The Colonial Governors were given the authority to act for the King by granting lands within their jurisdiction. As previously discussed, the King had established certain criteria that these governors should follow to promote settlement and dissuade speculators, but the New Hampshire Grants were corrupted versions of these policies; hence, once Vermont was founded to protect these very grants, protocol tended to follow a somewhat different course. It fell to the matter of who owned the town and not necessarily who settled the town. The men listed on the grant and their successors were more appropriately called proprietors. Since, it was important to the proprietors of a grant to increase the value of their property, these land grants were treated as if they were a business. The proprietors were collectively responsible for improvements to their land grant, which included subdividing the land into lots, finding settlers to locate there and coordinating and financing the building of roads and bridges, gristmills and sawmills – all those attributes that would accommodate the new settlement.

The subdivision of lands generally occurred immediately after the grant was issued. Grantees listed on the grant were assigned specific lots dependent upon the share of land he was entitled to. An entire township was not always subdivided entirely at first, the philosophy being that the remaining undivided lands would grow in value as the settlement began to flourish, while allowing the proprietors to hold common interest in those lands. Additional division and distribution of these lands came later whenever the proprietors deemed this action appropriate. Once the undivided lands were completely distributed, it was time to end the proprietary government, so that full control of a township – border to border – could be turned over to the inhabitants of the town.

To dissolve the proprietary government properly, that body was required to complete any outstanding obligations to the township and resolve its debts. Before the end of proprietary rule came about, there often existed a time of dual-governing bodies – that of the proprietors and that of the town. The new town government often consisted of proprietors – the requirement being that town officials had to reside within the town. Ideally, the proprietors and the town were able to work together. Stratton seemed to follow this example.

The First Proprietors' Meeting

1781 marked the beginning of a “10 shillings per hundred acre” property tax in Vermont that inevitably persuaded land speculators to act quickly in their dealings. For profits' sake, it was necessary to organize and develop a plan for settlement of the township as soon as possible. Therefore, a meeting was called to be held in the town of Grafton, Massachusetts to discuss plans for Stratton. This first recorded Proprietors' Meeting for the new town took place on December 26, 1781, at Thomas Bicknal's home in Grafton. The following is a copy of the minutes of that meeting:

December 26, 1781.

Elected Jacob Stephens Moderator; Edward Rawson, Esq. elected Proprietor's Clerk. William McFarland and Timothy Morsman selected as a committee to collect papers in hands of Silas Rice (former clerk) and deliver them to Edward Rawson. Captain David Thayer chosen to collect taxes from the Proprietors and owners of land in Stratton laid on them by Vermont General Assembly and to see the money paid according to said State Act.

Voted to buy a book to record votes and deeds of the lands and conveyances made by said propriety in the future.

Lots under 200 acres be laid out into 200 acre lots before 2nd Tuesday in June next at the cost of the original Proprietors. Paul Thurston was chosen to see this through.

Mr. John Blood was given the choice of any lot for a mill spot, provided he give the lot granted to him by the Proprietor in exchange. Nathaniel Thayer and Edward Rawson gave John Blood 250 acres for this purpose

provided he build a gristmill and a sawmill and that he put 10 settlers in Stratton before June 1, 1783. Blood was required to give a bond to Mr. Rawson for this agreement. Meeting adjourned until the following day.

December 27, 1781, voted that Captain David Thayer deliver the old original charter (New Hampshire Grant) into the hands of Edward Rawson to be kept in the clerk's office of the Town of Stratton. The meeting voted to close.

The above minutes highlight several interesting aspects of Stratton's beginnings as a settlement. First, this record implies that there had been some organization of Stratton's proprietors before this meeting; it also implies that proprietary papers once existed. Those papers probably included minutes of previous meetings as well as copies of records of the latest property transactions for Stratton, and possibly a layout of the lots within Stratton. It was not until this meeting that the proprietors voted to purchase a book of record – now known as “The Proprietor's Book.”

For the Record

Unfortunately, the Proprietor's Clerk failed to transcribe any record of meetings held before December 26, 1781. From that time, however, meeting minutes of Stratton's proprietary government were maintained regularly within the Proprietors' Book. In addition to the meeting records, this book contains copies of most of the land transactions that had taken place between 1780 and 1788. Copies of these transactions were written down in no given order, while some important transactions that are needed to reconstruct the earliest transfers of land within Stratton were not recorded by the proprietors (i.e. Giles Alexander's sale of half of Stratton to David Thayer in 1780); instead, they were documented later by the town government, established in 1788.

The town maintains land records in separate volumes, specifically designated for that purpose. Together, the deeds recorded within the Proprietors' Book and those within the town's land records provide the continuity of property transfers from Alexander's purchase of Stratton in 1780 to the present time.

Stratton as a Proprietary Township

Following the first efforts toward organizing Stratton, the proprietors began to meet on a somewhat regular schedule, and the development of a proprietary government began to unfold on an “as required” basis. During the first meeting in 1781, the only officers elected to transact the business of the proprietors included a Moderator to govern over the meeting, a Proprietors' Clerk to record the business of the proprietors and a Tax Collector to collect and pay the imposed state tax. Another tool used by the

proprietors was the “committee.” Committees were elected to investigate, consider and make recommendations to the remainder of the proprietors, concerning the various projects they pursued. Committees were commonly used by the proprietors, as well as by the town government that followed.

By the Fall of 1782, John Blood had completed a road into Stratton, apparently along much the same route *Canedy Rd.* now follows. On September 16, 1782, the proprietors met in Stratton – the first meeting ever held within the township – to discuss the building of a County Road through the town. This was the only subject on that day’s agenda and the meeting was adjourned to meet back in Massachusetts in November.

During the November 1782 meeting, the proprietors discussed necessary betterments for Stratton, including the County Road, the building of mills and compensation for those who had labored on these projects. It was evident that the new settlement required additional funds to support its progress, as well as some means of providing revenue demanded by the state. Therefore, it was necessary to impose taxes on the landholders of Stratton. Thus, the positions of Tax Assessors and Treasurer became necessary. Edward Rawson was chosen Treasurer, while Wm. McFarland, Jonathan Bacon and Elijah Thompson were chosen Assessors. Nathan Patch also was chosen Collector in place of Captain Thayer (the previous Collector). Immediately following the above elections, the proprietors “*voted that each possessor of land in the township be rated by the number of acres he possesses in the town and that each possessor of land in the town give the assessors an exact list of the number of acres he possesses on or before January 1 next on oath – If required or be doomed according to their desertion.*” Yes, even then, taxes and impending doom walked hand-in-hand.

At this same meeting, Captain Thayer was elected the Proprietors’ Agent. An Agent was responsible for the transaction of any legal dealings required by the proprietors. In this instance, the reason was specific – “*to convey the votes of this meeting attested by the clerk to the General Court of Vermont that the same may be ratified by the General Assembly of Vermont, the said meeting and the warning not being published according to the laws of the said state of Vermont.*” Apparently, this was the first of several misunderstandings between Stratton’s proprietors and the state government. Captain Thayer also produced a receipt from Jon Knickerbocker, Treasurer’s Clerk for the State of Vermont for 108 pounds, 8 shillings – discharged of the tax laid on Stratton at 10 shillings for each 100 acres in 1782.

Preparations completed in the Fall of 1782 paved the way for Stratton’s first settlers during the following year. Hence, in the summer of 1783, those settlers began to arrive. After the initial influx of settlers, Stratton – as a propriety – began the process of establishing itself as a Vermont town. The settlers remained absorbed in clearing their farms and building homes and the proprietors ensured that their obligations to the new settlement were being carried out. Meanwhile, Stratton slowly began to take the shape of a typical New England farming community.

The proprietors did not meet in 1783; instead, their next session began in September, 1784. Following an extensive four days of meetings held at that time, the proprietors did not meet again until 1786.

The Charter

On June 1, 1786, the proprietors convened at a meeting in Stratton at the home of Oliver Morsman. No overwhelming issues were debated or discussed. The only points of interest were the establishment of a new road and the appointment of Oliver Morsman as an agent to acquire a copy of the charter. This last issue highlights an important point in that the minutes of the first documented meeting of 1781 implied that the proprietors had a copy of the charter.

At the next meeting, held on May 30, 1787, the proprietors met at the home of Joseph Patch, who had built a house and tavern within Stratton. At this meeting, the proprietors *“voted to choose a committee to look at the charter and see if the same be recorded in a secretary’s office in the state and take the most effectual means to have the Town of Stratton settled in a limited time as mentioned in the charter.”* This statement is strange, implying that perhaps Morsman had acquired a copy of the charter, yet it also implies that the proprietors did not know the actual details of the charter. This is evident in that no pertinent time limit for settlement was given within the charter and few of the charter’s stipulations still applied to a Vermont town of the 1780s. The charter only specifies that *“each grantee, his heirs or assigns, shall plant and cultivate five acres of land within the term of five years for every fifty acres contained in his or their share..... on penalty of forfeiture of his grant.”* This only would have worked against the original grantees of 1761 – twenty years before the first settlers attempted to cultivate even the first acre in Stratton. The charter also required that the proprietors lay out, at or near the center of the township, one-acre lots for each grantee before any division of the township occurs – a stipulation that they failed to carry out or failed to mention. This provision had intended to provide a site for a local village within each grant.

If the proprietors had possession of the charter in 1786/7, then why did they fail to understand it and, furthermore, whatever became of it? If they did not have a copy, then why did they imply that it indeed existed at that time and why had they made the same implications in 1781? There are no certain answers to those questions, but an understanding of their situation can shed light on some possible answers. I believe that no such copy existed at that time and that this statement was intentionally deceptive to help substantiate the new proprietors’ claims to Stratton. If, however, this copy really existed, it has since disappeared.

In all likelihood, in 1761, a copy of Stratton’s Charter may have found its way to Isaac Searl, remaining in his hands from that time to the time Searl sold Stratton to Edmund Fanning in the early 1770s. At that time, it seems

likely that the Charter would have been transferred to Fanning as proof of this sale. If that was the case, then that specific copy likely was destroyed in the aforementioned fire at Fort George, along with all other records applicable to Fanning's claim of Stratton. It also seems unlikely that Isaac Searl would have retained an additional copy of the charter following this sale. If he had, then it probably would have accompanied his affidavit subsequent to the Ft. George fire, asserting Fanning's right to Stratton. Keeping this in mind and also considering the apparent nature of Alexander's purchase, it is not too bold to assume that the proprietors wanted to imply that they had a copy of the Charter to substantiate further their claim to the town, when, in actuality, they did not have such a copy.

To understand the proprietors' dilemma, it is important to note the conditions of the market they had purchased into. At its inception, Vermont had inherited a quagmire concerning land ownership issues. The new government had no way of knowing, nor proof of who owned what in the state. New York and New Hampshire had issued many conflicting grants to begin with; meanwhile, to raise needed revenue, Vermont began issuing charters of its own. In order to prevent Vermont's grants from conflicting with previous legitimate grants, Vermont attempted to obtain all recognized charters within its jurisdiction in 1779. This goal was not accomplished and so in 1782, Ira Allen resigned as Surveyor General for that very reason. He stated that without those existing charters it was probable that grants made by the Legislature would trespass on previously granted townships and he did not want to be a party to it. It is safe to assume that Stratton was among the towns that had not supplied Allen with a copy of its charter. Instead, David Thayer submitted a caveat *against the granting of the township of Stratton by the State of Vermont* on February 14, 1782. Later, it was evident that Vermont still required a copy of Stratton's charter and that the proprietors would be responsible to supply a copy to the state. Therefore, Stratton's proprietors voted to acquire a copy on June 1, 1786, but it was not obtained at that time. The issue arose again in 1787, but again went unresolved. Finally, as one of the last orders of business for the proprietors, a copy of Stratton's Charter was obtained. On September 16, 1793, Nathan Patch of Worcester, Massachusetts, a proprietor at that time, journeyed to Exeter, New Hampshire, and obtained Stratton's Charter. This document was copied from "*the Book of Charters, Volume 2, Folio 89 and onwards,*" and attested by Joseph Pearson, Secretary. The generic New Hampshire Grant had been a pre-printed form and Stratton's specifics were written in by hand. Another copy made on this same date also went to the Vermont State Archives. It was very likely that Nathan Patch had returned with this copy also and forwarded it on to the state. As of this writing, the 1793 copy of Stratton's Charter made for the town is displayed within Stratton's Town Office. It was restored for posterity and framed in 2000.

Ultimately, Stratton's New Hampshire Grant had little to do with the settlement of Stratton. It was obsolete and ineffective by the time the first

settlers had arrived. Its only purpose was to give Stratton's proprietors some small evidence that they had a right to Stratton.

A Map of the Lots

The first documented Proprietors' Meeting also addressed Stratton's layout of lots. A map of Stratton apparently was drawn before 1781, showing Stratton in a Lot / Range grid format. This grid divided Stratton into lots, each approximately 200 acres in size (a half-mile by a half-mile). Range numbers ran east to west (1 through 9) and Lot numbers ran south to north (1 through 12). The wildlands, as they were known, located in the western part of town, were not included in the original grid.

Using this grid, each lot is identified by a unique Lot / Range number. Each lot was assigned to one of the Original Grantees. For example, the southeast lot of Stratton's original grid was (and is) referred to as the 1st Lot in the 1st Range and the Original Grantee who owned it was Augustus Clapp. To simplify lot identifications, I have abbreviated this format so that this specific lot is designated as 1L1R. This format is used within the following pages to identify each of Stratton's original lots – 1L1R through 9L5R – a description of ownership transfers of each lot is detailed in Section III.

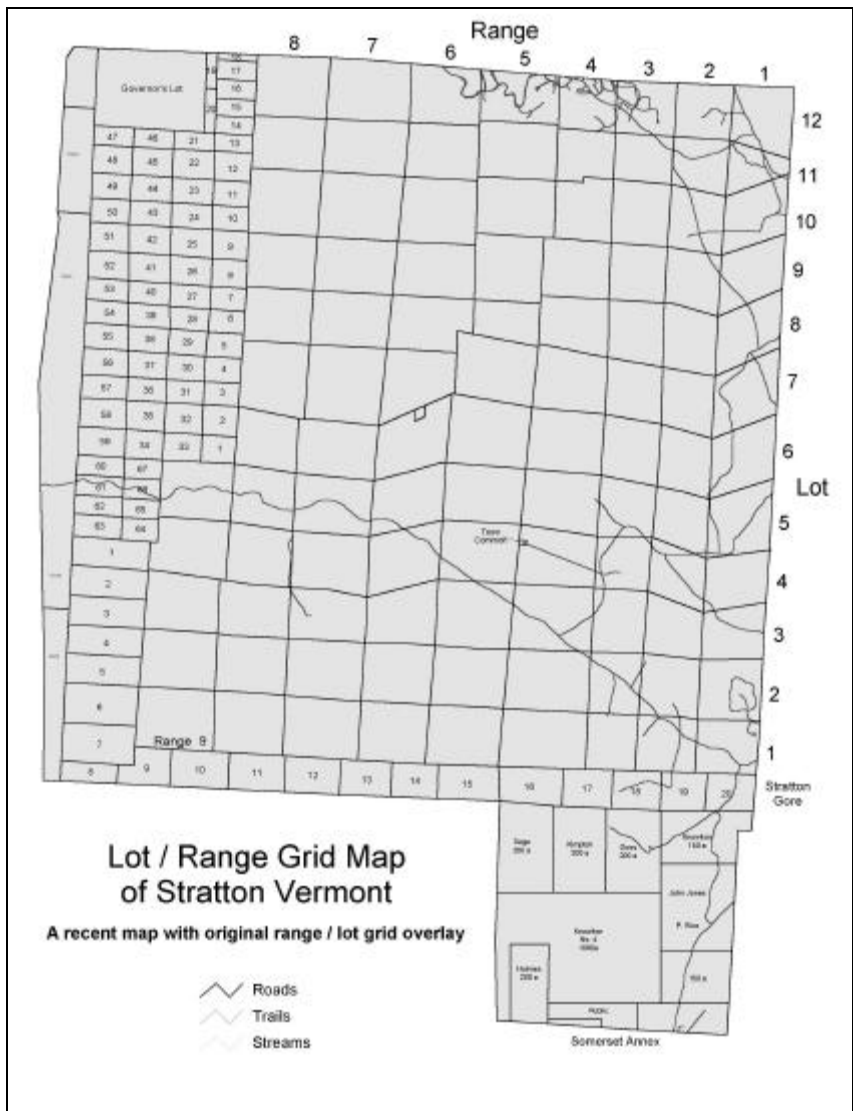
The problem discussed at the 1781 Proprietors' Meeting concerned the size of some lots. Apparently, this problem was not solved as ordered and surfaced again at a later date. The actual problem, which later was clarified, was that lots within the first three ranges each contained only 160 acres, instead of the intended 200 acres; therefore, freeholders who owned these lots had been unfairly taxed for a full 200-acre parcel and deserved compensation.

Another interesting fact is that Governor Wentworth had allowed himself a parcel of 500 acres – the Governor's Lot – designated as the northwest corner of Stratton. Additionally, according to the apportionment or schedule described in Stratton's Proprietors Book, Governor Wentworth also was allotted two 200-acre lots. Most of the Grantees were apportioned two 200-acre lots for their own, or so we are led to believe by the proprietors' records. It is more likely that the division of the town was not made until the 1780s; and so, I believe that the men who drew up the apportionment mistakenly allotted Wentworth the extra two lots, allowing him 900 acres in Stratton. Of course, this was just in name and he really never held title to that land once Stratton was established.

Wentworth also set aside lands in his Charters for the Church of England, for the first settled (Anglican) minister, for schools and for the Anglican missionary society known as the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts." These lands were later called the leaselands and lots assigned specifically to the church were called glebes.

A map, which included the above-mentioned grid, was drawn in 1903. This map also included the 3rd Division, which was a plan of 40-acre lots in the northwest corner, and the 4th Division – 100-acre lots called the undivided

lands in the southwest. Additionally, it included Stratton Gore along Stratton's entire southern border and the West Gore along Sunderland's border. Lastly, the Somerset Annex of 1858 also was added to this map. I have superimposed this 1903 Lot / Range Map over a current map of Stratton, in order to better establish the approximate locations of these lots. Although this method of property identification is not precise; it has been more than adequate for the task at hand. It is a key reference to much of the remainder of this book.



Stratton's First Settlers

By the end of 1782, the proprietors had made arrangements and completed preparations for the introduction of settlers into the township. John Blood had finished a road into the geographical center of the township and he was given the task of bringing ten settlers into Stratton. Hence, in the summer of 1783, the first settlers of Stratton began to arrive. Two Massachusetts men, Timothy Morsman of Worcester and his brother, Oliver Morsman of Ward, came to Stratton to claim their land and build their homes. Many were soon to follow. Oliver cleared the land and built a log home on the west half of 5L4R, located west of what is now the end of *Shepardson Rd.* and, apparently, along the first road into town. Meanwhile, Timothy pitched a tent near the south line of the town, not far from Grout Pond (as it is known today). Later, at the Proprietors' Meeting held September 22, 1784, the proprietors "*voted that Timothy Morsman and Oliver Morsman should have the original right that was granted to the Church of England. Of consequence of their being the first settlers in Stratton.*"

There is no record of just who, or how many, followed the Morsmans into Stratton that year. Joseph Patch, Jonathan Phillips, Jared Blood, James McFarland, Sylvanus Ballard and Edmund Gibbs probably were among that first group.

Those that Followed

In comparison to the early settlements of the New Hampshire Grants within Bennington County, Stratton's settlement was somewhat different. A typical town of this region was settled from Connecticut, western Massachusetts and the Hudson Valley of New York. Much of this settlement was a result of a continuing migration of people searching for religious freedom – people who disagreed with the conservative Puritanism (the Congregationalists) embedded in eastern Massachusetts's society, whose escape paths ultimately brought them into the Green Mountains. A result of this type of migration was the establishment of settlements, each made up almost entirely of a specific religious orientation. Supposedly, Samuel Robinson and Isaac Searl promoted their towns in this fashion. Congregationalists were directed to Bennington, Baptists to Shaftsbury and Pownal, while Anglicans were directed to Arlington. This class of settlers remained predominant within western Vermont after the American Revolution.

Although Stratton had been chartered as a western town, it did not fit this pattern. This difference was due to the transfer of Stratton's Charter from the town's original grantees to the proprietors established by Giles Alexander. If the original grantees had settled Stratton, the town, no doubt, would have followed the stereotype of a western Vermont town settled before the war. Instead, the more conservative proprietary established by Alexander and Thayer would include a number of men, most of whom originated from an

area south of, and including, Worcester, Massachusetts, bringing to Stratton eastern Massachusetts's ideals. Ward, Charlton, Grafton, Oxford, Uxbridge and Sutton, Massachusetts were hometowns for most of Stratton's proprietors and settlers of the early 1780s. The source of incoming settlers, however, would soon spread to other regions of New England as various proprietors began to sell off their rights. Religion, apparently, was not a driving force in establishing Stratton's settlement.

A number of the early settlers of Stratton, including Oliver Morsman, were recruited from Ward, Massachusetts and the surrounding area south of Worcester, no doubt by Paul Thurston. Mr. Thurston, a prominent proprietor of Stratton and a resident of Ward in 1781, was present when Giles Alexander purchased Stratton. Thurston also helped John Blood spearhead the efforts of settling Stratton.

A look into the beginnings of Ward, Massachusetts reveals that many who were involved in organizing that town became involved in developing Stratton's first settlement. The town of Ward (now called Auburn) originally was set off from Worcester, Sutton, Leicester and Oxford – incorporated on the 10th of April 1778, thus, preceding Stratton's settlement by only a few years.

Although Ward seems to have been the keystone Massachusetts town to contribute to Stratton's initial settlement, the largest contributor of Stratton's earliest population was Sutton, Massachusetts. From the time of its first settlement in 1783 and through to 1791, Stratton's population grew to 95 persons in 24 households. During that time at least twelve families had moved in and then out of town. The following families: Bixby, Chase, Gale, Gleason, Greenwood, Holman, Kidder, Stone, Waite and Woodward – more than a third of Stratton's households in 1791 – came from the small town of Sutton. Other families from Sutton, like the Bartletts, the Garfields, the Marbles, and the Sigourneys had settled in Stratton before 1800. A close examination of Sutton's records revealed that nearly all of these families were related in some way.

Another town of importance in Stratton's early settlement was Franklin, Massachusetts, located east of the South Worcester area. There, Jonathan Hawes of Franklin, who began purchasing land in Stratton from Captain Thayer in late 1781, recruited settlers. By 1791, six of the 24 families in Stratton were from the Franklin area.

A fourth area of significance was Leominster, Massachusetts, located north of Worcester, where Paul Thurston of Ward sold land in Stratton to Joel Hale of Leominster in 1784. The following year, Jacob Stevens of Ward sold land to Samuel and John Boutell of Leominster – in-laws of the Hales. The Boutells and Hales began settling in Stratton in 1788.

Sudbury, Massachusetts also appears to have been home to several families that came to Stratton before 1800, via Somerset and Stratton Gore. This may be due to the fact that the Morsman family originally came from Sudbury and it may be that some of Somerset's proprietors resided in that

town. Details of these families can be found in the Family History Supplement to this book.

Why did They Come?

What motivated Stratton's first settlers to leave family and friends behind and venture into the mountainous and forested country of Vermont to build farms? Was life or the prospects for a good life in lower New England too bleak for them to stay? Stratton should not have appealed much to a prudent farmer. Did they not know just how short the growing season was here or how poor and rocky the land really was? Perhaps not! After all, the land was abundant and cheap – unlike anything available within lower New England – and, no doubt, the speculators had painted a wonderful picture for those with such a need. With hard work, persistence and some luck, a family could do well for themselves in the Mountains of Vermont. Or so they thought!

Crockett, in his History of Vermont, pointed out that during the last years of the American Revolution and the years that followed, independent Vermont fared far better than her American neighbors. Vermont was debt-free and immune from calls from the American Congress for more money and men. Taxes were low and government was not burdensome. Land was abundant, fertile and cheap. In comparing Vermont to its neighboring states, still involved in a war with Britain, Crockett wrote, "*Vermont was like a sturdy craft that had weathered the fiercest storm and now was safe in a harbor in which she was sheltered from the tempest that raged outside.*" It was during this "safe period" that Stratton's first settlers arrived – just a few months before the American Revolution ended.

At least 20 of the 24 heads of families in Stratton in 1791 very likely served during the American Revolution, as did eight of the twelve that had come and gone by that year. The actual count probably was even higher. In all, about 51 Revolutionary War Veterans settled in Stratton and at least seven had been at the Battle of Bennington in August 1777. Others also served in the campaigns of upper New York, which may have brought them through southern Vermont. Regardless of where they served, it seems apparent that the Revolution had instilled a spirit of adventure within those that eventually came to settle Stratton. Vermont, after all, was among America's first frontiers and it was the first relief for a growing New England population. To many of these settlers, Stratton would be only a stopping point for a few years before they packed up once again and moved on to New York or to lands further westward.

Lewis Stilwell, author of Migration from Vermont, pointed out that the settlers coming into Vermont were, for the most part, young and vigorous. They thrived in taming the wilderness, then when the work was complete, many sold their land for a considerable profit and moved on to begin the process again. In retrospect, many of Stratton's first settlers seemed to have followed this pattern – the search for a good farm was not at the top of their

agenda – they came to clear, build and sell, meanwhile thriving on a lifestyle in the wilderness. This lifestyle, however, did not hold true for everyone who ventured into Vermont’s wilderness. Many who came to Stratton intended to settle permanently – to beat back the wilderness and establish a good farm to grow old upon. Whether the intent had been to profit or to stay, the high number of tax-sales during those early years attests to the fact that many settlers could not make it in Stratton. Many simply walked away from their land without a profit, never to return.

Taming the Wilderness

The general scenario played out in the settlement of a typical Vermont town probably held true for Stratton as well. A man purchased land, and then came in on his own with only a broad axe, a musket and some essential provisions, cutting a path to a choice spot on his property. Upon his arrival, he may have been lucky enough to find a small clearing to quickly start a patch of Indian corn, while clearing what land he could for a dwelling. Many of the first dwellings were simple log homes as primitive as one can imagine. Hilltops were the prime spot for a new home. The hills were dry and safe from flooding, and there the trees were less dense than in the valleys, while the undergrowth was not so thick, allowing for a greater area to be cleared that first year. The resultant view was an added benefit. It took one good man a month to clear three acres of Vermont’s forest. Those that were persistent were ready for the rest of the family to settle in during the winter.

Winter was the ideal time to bring in all the family belongings. Traveling by sledge in winter was the preferred mode of transportation over those first crude roads, since those roads were all but impossible to travel by wagon in the summer months. Although preparations for the arrival of the family were complete, they likely were extremely crude. The family’s new home often barely passed as a shelter. During those last months of winter and well into spring, many families seriously struggled against cold, wet and hunger to survive. After the family arrived, there still was much work to accomplish. Women and little children, as well as the men, all worked very hard to establish their farms. Each farm usually contained a few sheep, a small herd of cattle and one or two pigs. In the higher districts, such as Stratton, farmers tended to keep more cattle. At first, while most of the cleared land was being used for crops, the livestock ran loose in the forest and often fell prey to wolves. When the first grain was harvested, it was either processed in a crude plumping-mill on the farm or carried to a nearby gristmill, if one existed. In all, that first year was very difficult for a pioneering family in the harsh wilderness of early Vermont.

In many cases, newly arrived settlers required added support from the community during that first year. Help was not so difficult to find or accept since more often than not the newly arrived family was closely related to a neighbor or two. Wild game, while it lasted, sufficiently supplemented the

settlers' diets. Deer and moose were abundant in the beginning. During the waning of the 18th Century, a family would not starve in Vermont as long as at least one among them could shoot or fish.

The Town Established

It appears that by 1787, the proprietors were pursuing all criteria needed to establish a town government for Stratton. Four years had passed since Stratton's first settlers arrived and it is apparent through later meetings that the proprietors were having some difficulty adhering to the laws implemented by Vermont's government. A town government was inevitable and it would solve some of the problems Stratton's proprietors faced in dealing with the State of Vermont.

On March 31, 1788, the efforts of the propriety culminated in Stratton's first Town Meeting, held at the home of Oliver Morsman, located west of what is now the northwest end of *Shepardson Rd.*. This first meeting, called to order by Moderator, Aaron Hudson, addressed the structuring of the Town's governing body, modeled as Vermont law dictated. It was established that Stratton would have a Select Board of three members, a Town Clerk, Treasurer, three Listers, a Constable, a Grand Jurorman, Petit Jurormen, and Highway Surveyors.

Timothy Morsman, Solomon Gale and Benjamin Hobbs were elected to fill the positions of Stratton's first Selectmen, while Asa Phillips was elected Stratton's first Town Clerk. Additionally, Sampson Bixby was elected Town Treasurer and Joseph Patch was elected First Constable. Stratton had officially become an organized Vermont town.

The Last of the Proprietary Government Finding a Means to an End

The formation of a town government did not mean that the proprietary government had ended. Following the establishment of the town government in 1788, dual-governing bodies would exist in Stratton for another eight years. The proprietary government could not officially end until the last of the undivided lands had been surveyed and apportioned. Although this actually would not occur for many decades, the organized proprietary government was nearing its final days.

After the town government was created, the proprietors still had business to address. Some of the projects they had committed to were not complete, including the completion of a gristmill, some road building and a copy of the town's charter had not yet been obtained. Also, the problem of the inadequate acreage within the lots of the first three ranges still had to be resolved. Although the first two issues would be resolved fairly quickly, the last issue, as well as settling all of the proprietors' debts, lingered on for several years. The division of the so-called wildlands meant that surveys and

mapping would have to be completed by the proprietors. Maps and ownership schedules would be the last records left behind by Stratton's proprietors, while the last order of business would be the raising of funds to pay all debts.

A lack of resolve on behalf of the proprietors kept the proprietary government around well beyond its usefulness. Following the establishment of the town government, the only real issues that the proprietors tried to deal with were the acreage problem and the acquisition of copies of the town's charter. On May 29, 1788, the proprietors met and "*voted to choose a committee to measure the lands in said town and see what land falls short in three first ranges in said gore and the said Proprietors are to make up all that they fall short in the undivided land said lands to be made up before there be any further division made of the undivided lands.*" Here is highlighted the problem of the 160-acre lots. This, however, was not resolved and at the next year's meeting, the proprietors voted to reconsider that vote and apparently overturned it. This was followed by two years of inactivity. It appears as though the proprietors had attempted to disband without resolving its debts or the undivided land issue.

Finally, on July 4, 1791, a "*fifteenth part*" of the proprietors made application for a meeting, specifically to address their indebtedness. The meeting was legally warned (for the first time) in accordance with the Act of 1787, by Luke Knowlton, Justice of the Peace, in Newfane. The proprietors met on September 14, 1791, elected officers, then adjourned to the next day, at which time they managed to adjourn until June 11, 1792. Perhaps they were avoiding all issues or perhaps key proprietors were not able to attend at that time. The proprietors met on that date but adjourned to the following day for each of the next three days. On June 14, they agreed to allow a committee of William McFarland, Jr., Nathan Patch and Israel Stevens to lay out the 40-acre lots and then to lay out the undivided lands into 100-acre lots. The proprietors finally had set the wheels in motion that ultimately would allow them to disband.

The following month, another meeting was called for November, 1792, at John Gooding's dwelling in Putney, Vermont. The business specified was for the proprietors to consider selling the undivided lands to pay their debts. That meeting was adjourned to June 24, 1793, and they met at that time at the dwelling of Eliakim Garfield in Stratton, who resided in Joseph Patch's old house. This meeting was non-productive and eventually it was adjourned to September 26, 1793, and again to the following day. At that time, instead of offering to sell the undivided lands, they decided upon, and voted in favor of, "*a tax of 9 shillings, 11 pence and 2 farthings on each proprietors' right*" to pay the cost of laying out the 3rd Division of 40-acre lots. Later, a copy of the warning for this tax was written into the Proprietors' Book and a vendue (tax-sale) also was recorded therein, reflecting that all the 40-acre lots fell into the hands of a select few individuals for the cost of the taxes owed. The taxes collected were used to pay for the survey of the 3rd Division.

In 1793, the town government worked with the town's proprietors in an attempt to resolve the issue of the undersized lots. Obviously, it was to the town's benefit to ensure and persuade the proprietors to fulfill their obligations and to turn over the affairs of the town completely to the inhabitants. The Proprietor's Meeting of September 26, 1793, produced a resolution for the inadequate acreage of the first three ranges by joining with the town government in a petition to the General Assembly of Vermont. This petition was to be presented at the Assembly's session held on the second Thursday in October, 1793. The petition read as follows:

Praying in behalf of said Propriety and the inhabitants of said Town of Stratton that whereas the Proprietors of the said Town of Stratton at their several meetings heretofore held for the carrying on the affairs of said Propriety living in other states and not acquainted with the laws of this state apprehend that some of their proceedings through mistake were not agreeable to the laws of this state in every particular though honestly intended which has caused some dispute between the said Proprietors and the purchasers of the Proprietors land and said Proprietors' surveyor in laying out the three first ranges in said town on the east side thereof as he supposed in 200 acre lots Whereupon they appear through his mistake to amount to no more than 160 acres in each of said lots whereas the other ranges amount to 200 acres whereby there appears to be a great disproportion in the allotment of said town. Many of the purchasers have been deprived of their rights in said purchase, but on agreement between said Propriety and the purchasers of said lots at this meeting have agreed that the said purchasers content themselves with the said 160 acres in each lot, several purchased by them and that said lots be for the future accounted to be but 160 acres in each of said lots and to never be taxed for more in any single tax. For the same and your petitioners humbly pray that your excellency and honours would take this petition to your wise and just consideration and establish all the former votes and proceedings in said propriety the same as being in every point of light agreeable to law and let the bounds agreeable to the charter of the state of New Hampshire and the recent agreement of said Proprietors and inhabitants of the town of said Stratton at this present meeting as your humble petitioners in duty bound and shall ever pray.

The meeting then was adjourned to June 11, 1794, at which time the proprietors met and reviewed accounts held against them since 1787. The meeting was again adjourned to be opened on November 12, 1794. Meetings were held on that day and over the next few days and more accounts were reviewed. Then, on November 14, 1794, the propriety's accumulated debt

was determined and a tax of 2 pounds, 17 shillings, 1 penny was placed on each proprietors' right to be paid by the last Wednesday in June, 1795. Later, the result of this tax was recorded on page 12 of Book 2 of Stratton's land records: *For the payment of a tax voted by the Proprietors of said township of Stratton on November 14, 1794, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of running lines, laying out roads, building mills and other charges of the Proprietors in said township the following rights were sold at vendue.* Upon the next six pages were recorded the properties that were auctioned off to pay that tax.

The last order of business for that day was to choose Nathan Patch, Jesse Johnson and William McFarland as a committee to establish the boundary lines of the township of Stratton. This issue was one of importance at the state level, since Vermont had pressured the towns to obtain charters so that official boundaries of all towns could be established by the state. This issue had come to light at a Town Meeting of September 26, 1793, when the town voted to accept the report of their committee concerning a petition to the General Assembly to ratify the outline of the township of Stratton. This was just ten days after Nathan Patch had obtained a copy of Stratton's charter. The outline of the town was to be made at the cost of the proprietors. No record exists of the proprietors' committee's actions; however, it seems apparent that something had to be accomplished in this sense in order that the proprietors meet their obligations to the town and the State of Vermont. Although Vermont's Surveyor General, James Whitelaw, was able to produce a somewhat accurate map of Vermont in 1796, it was not, however, until 1803 that Stratton's boundaries were made official by the state.

The proprietors met according to the above adjournment on September 3, 1795, then adjourned to September 7. At that time, it was ordered to record the "*Proprietors' Schedule of June 7, 1786,*" and also to record within the Proprietors' Book all "*sales, divisions and doings,*" which had occurred since that time. The so-called proprietors' schedule followed, assigning the Original Grantees to each of the divided lots of the first and third divisions of the town. Many of the sales that had taken place between 1780 and 1788 already had been recorded within this book; however, land records were being maintained by the town in books kept specifically for that purpose and, therefore, no property transfers follow here; although, the last pages of the Proprietors' Book contain drawings of the third and fourth divisions as specified – drawings that were later transposed onto the 1903 Grid Map of Stratton.

The meeting of September 7, 1795, was adjourned to "*the second Wednesday in September next at the dwelling of Asa Phillips in Stratton aforesaid.*" No record of this proposed meeting or any other meeting of Stratton's proprietors exists. Although sales of the proprietors' rights would continue for several decades, the proprietary government had fulfilled the last of its business concerning Stratton; it faded away, leaving the business of Stratton's government entirely in the hands of its local inhabitants.

Even as the propriety faded from the town records, Stratton had little to show for itself as a community – no village, no common, no meetinghouse, no church - just a collection of farms and a couple of mill sites. However, social progress was on the near horizon. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Stratton’s population began to establish the many facets of a New England community.

**Stratton’s
Proprietary Government
(1781 – 1795)**

Clerks:

1781 – 1784 Edward Rawson
1784 – 1787 Jonathan Phillips
1787 – 1789 Jared Blood
1789 – 1792 Joseph Patch
1792 – 1795 Asa Phillips

Treasurers:

1782 – 1784 Edward Rawson
1784 – 1787 Jonathan Phillips
1787 – 1789 Jared Blood
1789 – 1793 Isaac Chase
1789 – 1793 Isaac Chase
1793 – 1795 William McFarland

Chapter VI

Forging the Mold

Stratton – as a settlement – began to take on a specific shape. The mountain and the brooks and the people who came to tame the wilderness dictated this shape. While these changes were internal, other events added to Stratton’s physical and political dimensions – changes that should be addressed before delving into Stratton’s internal alterations.

Stratton joins Windham County

Although Stratton had begun as a township of Bennington County, the topography of this area dictated that Windham County was more appropriate for Stratton. After Vermont declared its independence, a new line was drawn along the ridge of the Green Mountains, dividing Vermont into Bennington County on the west and Cumberland County on the east. Stratton remained within Bennington County at that time. In February 1781, the Vermont Legislature passed an act that subdivided Cumberland County into the counties of Windham, Windsor and Orange counties.

Following the settlement of Stratton, the inhabitants felt that their town belonged within the limits of Windham County. After all, Stratton’s first road had to divert south into Somerset, since Sunderland had no roads that would directly connect with a road in Stratton. Reaching Bennington via Somerset required a long and arduous trek over the mountains, evident even as late as the 1820s, when there still existed a nine-mile stretch of wilderness between the last house in Stratton and the first house west of the mountain – a forest known as “the nine-mile wood.” Therefore in 1785, the town of Stratton petitioned the General Assembly to redesignate the town as part of Windham County. Newfane, Windham County’s shire town, was closer and more accessible than Bennington (Bennington County’s seat). Although there is no existing record that this resolution was granted, the Town of Stratton had been incorporated into Windham County prior to the formation of Stratton’s town government in 1788.

As late as 1796, the official map of Vermont placed Stratton in Bennington County; however, in 1810, when James Whitelaw republished the 1796 map of Vermont with corrections and revisions, Stratton, along with Somerset, was placed correctly within the boundaries of Windham County.

Vermont joins the Union

On October 22, 1790, on a motion made by Representative Stephen R. Bradley, the Vermont Legislature recommended the passage of an act calling a state convention to consider the ratification of the Constitution of the United States. Five days later, a bill was passed calling for the election of one

delegate from each town to be held on the first Tuesday of December. The elected delegates were directed to meet in Convention at Bennington on the first Thursday in January, and so the Convention met at Bennington on Thursday, January 6, 1791.

No mention of this notification nor of any dealings concerning Vermont's entry into the United States exists within Stratton's records. No record of a delegate being elected exists and, although the official record of the above Convention was not preserved, Stratton was not named in the report of the proceedings printed in the *Vermont Gazette*. Stratton's residents were not alone in failing to represent themselves at this Convention. Stratton's neighbors – Jamaica, Wardsboro, and Somerset also were excluded.

Reshaping the Town

Stratton was among a grid of New Hampshire Grants that covered what is now southwestern Vermont, but its charter only lists Sunderland to the west as a reference to determine just where the township of Stratton was located. This practice was commonplace among Wentworth's many grants. Jones writes in *Vermont in the Making* that surveys were made superficially for many grants, marking only the longitudinal boundaries every six miles for a given row of grants, then granting each new town, while referencing only the previous grant. With a lack of important details, this method often led to problems such as boundary disputes and "no man's lands," once legitimate surveys began to be drawn up for these towns. Furthermore, the situation was convoluted by the circumstances that followed the chartering process, which delayed for several years any attempts at surveying the area along the eastern bounds of that grid.

It was not until 1769 that an effort to survey these lands began. In 1770, Phineas Munn by order of the Surveyor General of New York performed a survey marking Stratton's eastern side. Excerpts from the Field Book of Surveyors' Records include, "*Thursday 31 (May) went on the survey for Mr. Stevens, got 2 gallons rum 6 [shillings] 10 [pence]. Friday June 1 made the SE corner of Somerset..... made the NE corner of Somerset which is a hemlock tree with rocks laid about marked SOME# ** STRATⁿ continuing the same course.... Monday June 4, 1770, proceeded on said survey..... made NE corner of Stratton & SE corner of Winhall which is a beach tree with rocks marked * Winhall * PM * Stratton.....*" (The "PM" here were Phineas Munn's initials).

As settlement progressed in this area after 1780, the lands and boundaries of these towns were properly surveyed. The rough terrain of the area as well as fluctuations in the earth's magnetic fields (supposedly exceptional in Vermont) promoted errors and, therefore, differences often existed between independent surveys of adjacent properties. Sometimes

surveys revealed that there were actual gaps between towns. The term “gore” was used to describe land lying within these gaps.

Surveys of this area indicated that there existed two gores along Stratton’s borders that did not seem to fall within the acknowledged borders of Stratton or within the borders of adjacent towns. One gore, known as Stratton Gore, was found to exist along Stratton’s southern border and another, called the West Gore, existed along Stratton’s western border. These gores eventually were added to the town.

Another circumstance also added to Stratton’s dimensions. The division of the Town of Somerset on Stratton’s southern boundary led to Stratton’s annexation of four square miles of that town.

Stratton Gore

Following a survey of Wardsboro in August, 1781, an error was found in previous surveys, whereas a strip of land of about 1,270 acres between Stratton and Somerset existed and did not belong to either town. This strip was about 550 yards wide on the east side and 616 yards wide on the west side and ran the entire six-mile length of the Stratton-Somerset border, plus another 220 yards eastward, since Stratton’s eastern border was that much farther east than Somerset’s eastern border. By reviewing a map of the general area, it appears that this gore should have been an integral part of the town of Somerset. This error seems to imply that Munn’s New York survey may have been ignored, since he had set a boundary between these two towns with no noted gap separating the towns.

As a result of this noted mistake, Aaron Marsh, Jonathan Phillips and others surveyed this unclaimed land on May 24, 1785. Subsequently, Timothy Morsman, Jonathan Phillips and Oliver Morsman petitioned the General Court of Vermont to grant this strip of land to them and the town of Stratton on June 19, 1785. John Holbrook, Sr., Nathan Stone and John Holbrook, Jr., all of Wardsboro, already had submitted their own petition for this grant on May 30. No recorded legislative actions were taken on behalf of either of these petitions; however, it is apparent that by June 1, 1787, Stratton Gore was considered part of Stratton proper. On that day, Oliver Morsman sold land in the gore to Edmund Gibbs. Morsman apparently held the rights to this property and, therefore, some recognition of Stratton’s claim to the gore must have been acknowledged by the state by that time.

On June 3, 1787, the proprietors of Stratton accepted a survey of Stratton’s undivided lands made by Israel Stevens. This survey, although its specifics were unrecorded, apparently included Stratton Gore and divided it into 200-acre lots, beginning with lot #1 on the eastern side of the Gore and continuing numerically in order to its westernmost lot. Although nothing specifies that this was the Second Division of lands in Stratton, it makes sense that this was indeed the case, as the next survey on record was called the Third Division.

On June 11, 1793, the Fourth Division of Stratton divided Stratton Gore into smaller lots and also reversed the numbering method to a west-to-east format. This change was not used immediately by all the owners in their subsequent property transfers; therefore, tracing ownership in Stratton Gore can be confusing. Many of the earliest deeds for Stratton Gore were not recorded in Stratton. Perhaps they were recorded in the Wardsboro or Somerset records or perhaps the Gore settlers maintained their own records during those first years. If those records still exist, I have yet to find them.

Although it appears that by the summer of 1787 Stratton Gore was considered part of Stratton Proper and its inhabitants were later included within Stratton's census in 1791, the Gore apparently was not legally a part of the town at that time. Several years passed before this issue was resolved. Another petition by the inhabitants of Stratton Gore for its annexation by Stratton was submitted on October 2, 1799 – “... *it being very inconvenient for the inhabitants of said gore as they have not been allowed to vote in town meetings and yet are called upon to do military duty in the town of Stratton and also cannot have roads laid out through said gore for the benefit of said inhabitants.*”

This time, Vermont's General Court granted the petitioners' request and Stratton Gore officially became an integral part of Stratton Proper. The official date of annexation was October 28, 1799.

With the inclusion of Stratton Gore, new names began to surface in Stratton with no mention of their origins. It appears that these families – Pike, Grant, Moulton, Goodell and others – were recruited by the Morsmans to settle this area. These families all were related and, for the most part, came to Stratton Gore from the Hopkinton, Massachusetts area. Oliver and Timothy Morsman had ties with this town through their uncle, William Morsman. In fact, these families well may have been relatives of the Morsmans.

Landmarks within what was once Stratton Gore include *218 Penny Ave.* and remains of the Lyman sawmill, located on Pike Hollow Brook at the intersection of *Pike Hollow Rd.* and *Penny Avenue*, also the east-west section of what is now *Willis Cemetery Rd.* – once part of the *Gore Rd.* – as well as the cemetery, and all the homes and cellar holes along that stretch of road.

The West Gore

As early as 1789, the town of Stratton recognized that a gore existed between the proprietor's original layout of Stratton and Sunderland's eastern border. This gore is evident on the Lot / Range grid Map as the westernmost strip along Stratton's western side, divided into just four lots labeled “West Gore.”

The agenda for the March meeting of 1789 called for a vote to take up the task of laying out and building a road to Manchester, Vermont. The more specific objective of the meeting was to acquire the townsmen's support in

cutting the road through the West Gore. Since this Gore was considered a no-man's land, there existed a problem as to who would be responsible for the roadwork through it. This problem apparently stood in Stratton's way of creating the road to Manchester. To resolve this issue, the inhabitants of Stratton "*voted that the inhabitants, every man as one, turn out to cut the road through the gore from Stratton to Manchester whenever notified by the commissioner of the land tax.*" It appears that this was Stratton's offer to the State of Vermont to show the state that this town would take responsibility for that section of the new road.

In 1803, Vermont officially set the boundaries of Stratton and, at that time, the state government apparently determined that the West Gore was internal to Stratton proper. After all, Stratton's charter directly linked Stratton's western border to Sunderland's eastern border; therefore, no gore could exist between the towns, but instead would have existed within the town itself.

Asa Utley of Landgrove, Vermont, challenged this opinion and submitted a petition to Vermont's General Assembly in 1805, requesting that this gore – thought to be an area of approximately 3,000 acres – be granted to him. The General Assembly recommended that the petitioner withdraw his petition, since it had not been ascertained that any such gore existed between Sunderland and Stratton. This decision apparently established that this gore fell within Stratton.

On April 23, 1810, the town set off two separate parcels located in the gore between Stratton and Sunderland. The first parcel was said to consist of 2,400 acres, located south of the main road and it was deeded to Samuel Boutell, Levi Hale, Thomas Millet, all of Stratton and Hinsdale Hammond, Selah Hammond, Stephen Corben and Stephen Corben, Jr. of Wardsboro. The second parcel was said to be 3,360 acres north of the main road and it was deeded to Peter Howe, William Wheeler, Thomas Millet and Russell Haynes, all of Stratton. These acreage estimates obviously were greatly exaggerated, since the West Gore encompassed only about 1,092 acres.

On October 4, 1811, another petition was submitted, requesting a grant for a gore between Stratton and Sunderland. Ozi Baker, a surveyor, who had been Arlington's Town Clerk, made this request. This petition stated that a gore, six miles by 91 rods [(500.5 yards) totaling 1,092 acres], existed between the two towns. The petition was filed on October 16, 1811. It was considered twice and laid over to the next session – no additional record concerning this petition exists. Since again this was not considered an issue at the state level, it becomes apparent that the West Gore was indeed an issue internal to Stratton; therefore, ownership, subsequently, was determined by the town and ownership apparently was maintained by the gentlemen named in the deeds of April 23, 1810.

Subsequent transfers of the West Gore are somewhat obscure over the next several decades. It was not until March 6, 1843, that the town voted to have the line run between Bennington and Windham Counties.

Stratton's Annexation of Northeast Somerset

When Governor Wentworth began issuing the bulk of his New Hampshire Grants, little attention was given to the topography of each town. On paper, his westernmost grants looked very neat, all in nice six-mile by six-mile squares oriented north to south and east to west – a checkerboard laid across the mountains. The problems that accompanied this method soon arose with the arrival of settlers and their attempt at providing equal access to all four corners of a township and at providing a central place for town meetings. In many instances, the topography had a much greater affect on these issues than the first proprietors might have envisioned.

Somerset was a prime example of the folly of this method. It was among Wentworth's grants, issued to Thomas Denny and 62 others on September 9, 1761 – south of Stratton and east of Glastenbury. It probably was named for Edward Seymour, the ninth Duke of Somerset – a member of the King's Privy Council – in another attempt by Wentworth to pacify the very men who could nullify his questionable grants. Like Stratton, Somerset sat idle for many years. Following the King's decision that placed the New Hampshire Grants under New York jurisdiction, Governor Dunmore issued the conflicting New York patent called Leinster that fell within the boundaries of the New Hampshire Grants of both Somerset and Woodford. In February, 1772, or soon thereafter, Governor Tryon's half-fee confirmatory patents included one of Kellybrook to Luke Knowlton and others in lieu of Somerset. Kellybrook was patented on July 20, 1774 (*NY Land Patents vol 16 pg 383*). Again, like Stratton, once Vermont had claimed its independence, the New York patents were ignored and the old New Hampshire Grant of Somerset was considered the legitimate document of governance for this township. Unlike Stratton, Somerset had a settlement established by the son of one of its original grantees and the Grandson of another. Daniel Rice, son of Ephraim Rice and Grandson of Perez Rice, came to Somerset about 1776 and settled in the Great Meadow on the northwest side of Mount Pisgah – an area now covered by the waters of Somerset Reservoir. In the years that followed, other settlers, including Daniel's brother, Perez, began arriving in Somerset and building their farms. As the population established itself across the township, the problems associated with Somerset's topography began to emerge.

Somerset was split north to south by a rise of land dominated by Mount Pisgah – now known as Mount Snow – a rise of land that continued northward to a double peak called Mount Two Brothers – Dover Mountain (*Rt. 100* currently runs between these twin peaks). Thus, Somerset's settlers on the eastern side of Mt. Pisgah and those that settled in what is now Pike Hollow were somewhat isolated from Somerset's main population in the Great Meadows. Additionally, the settlement that began developing within Pike Hollow was split between the towns of Stratton and Somerset.

It was obvious to the settlers within Pike Hollow that it would be greatly advantageous for this area to fall entirely within the jurisdiction of one town or another. The citizens of Pike Hollow took up this issue almost as soon as

they began settling there. The Pikes, who initially had settled in Stratton Gore, began settling this little valley in about 1800. Jotham Pike established a farm on the Somerset side in 1802. Thus, with ties to Stratton, the logical solution was for Stratton to annex all of Pike Hollow.

On March 12, 1804, the town of Stratton voted on the following article: *“To see if the town will accept of a number of families belonging to Somerset to see if they can be set off to Stratton legally.”* The town then *“Voted to accept of Jotham Pike, William Pike, Marshall Baker, Micah Balcom, Benjamin Sawtell, Ebenezer Waste, David Babcock, and Robert Allen together with their lands on the following conditions. VIZ: that the center of this town shall remain where it now is till the inhabitants of the six mile square shall see cause to make it and them only have the privilege of moving it so long as the town shall remain six miles square.”* Apparently, the details of this request could not be worked out with the Town of Somerset or the state; hence, nothing came of it.

Another attempt to bring this area into Stratton occurred on September 17, 1835, when an article was raised to be voted upon for the town to petition the legislature to appoint a committee to examine the towns of Winhall, Stratton and Somerset as to the possibility of annexing the north part of Somerset to Stratton and the north part of Stratton to Winhall. At this meeting, the town voted against this resolution and so the town's boundaries remained the same for another 24 years. Had this proposal been accepted, Stratton would have lost most of its mountain and all the land now occupied by the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort.

Meanwhile, the attempt to unite Pike Hollow continued. In 1830, Stratton's southeastern school district and Somerset's northeastern school district were united in a single schoolhouse, but it was not until 1851 that the Vermont legislature approved the complete annexation. Stratton agreed to accept it only if the area came into Stratton “debt-free.” Stratton officially annexed the northeast two-mile by two-mile corner of Somerset in November 1858.

The remainder of Somerset east of Mt. Pisgah was under negotiation to become part of Dover (Wardsboro South District), but Dover continually refused to be a party to it. Wilmington also considered annexing this strip and eventually accepted it. Thus, in 1858, “the Handle” was created – Wilmington's annexation of this strip gave that town a handle that progressed northward between Somerset and Dover for four miles – all the way to Stratton. Wilmington kept its handle for about ten years, before giving it over to the town of Dover in 1869. Fortunately for Dover, this same area contains the Mt. Snow Ski Resort – Dover's goldmine.



The Old Road Sign beside the Meetinghouse

Photo courtesy of the Ethel Eddy Collection

Chapter VII

Infrastructure

The last chapter explained how the inconsistencies of antiquated surveys and the inconveniences of grid-towns prompted the reshaping of Stratton politically and physically from Wentworth's original square grant to the familiar profile the town retains to this day. This chapter explores the affairs that helped to shape Stratton's internal layout – its infrastructure.

The phenomena that helped determine the outcome of Stratton's layout was (and still is) a balance between nature, the dictates of the original charter with its subsequent Lot / Range grid format, convenience, politics and people. The mountain was extremely influential in determining which lots would be most productive and, therefore, which lots were most likely to become populated and subdivided. The courses of Stratton's brooks and streams often helped to determine the courses of roads and the placement of mills and businesses; in turn, the mills helped determine the course of additional roads. Politics and religion seem to have determined the placement of the Town Common, which led to the formation of a small village. Ultimately, the creation of a main east-west thoroughfare – the Stratton Turnpike – dictated the relocation of the town's village and the abandonment of the Town Common area. Meanwhile, politics and some influential people fueled the engines of progress needed to carry the initial efforts of the proprietary government over to the townsmen.

In the beginning, the proprietors attempted to promote uniform development of the town. To accomplish this goal, it was necessary for the propriety to provide and maintain fair and equal access to all parts of the town by building roads to all of its four corners. This was an important tactic needed to keep peace and harmony between the landholders of the town, especially since the entire town was assessed uniformly. A man who owned a flat and fertile acre beside a brook in the southeast corner of town paid the same tax on his acre as did the man who owned the most inaccessible rocky acre on a remote hilltop in the northwest corner. Each, at least, deserved the right to get as close as possible to his land (within reason) upon a town-built road and each expected to meet the other no more than halfway for town meeting. Thus, the town's forefathers probably imagined Stratton as a little square town with a uniform web of roads linking one lot to another with a little Town Common at its center.

Uniformity might work on paper, but in reality the terrain of the town held the most influence over the shape of Stratton's infrastructure. In the beginning the roads and a Town Common were set down in fairness in the eyes of the propriety and the town, but over the course of Stratton's first few decades, the terrain prevailed. Undesirable lands often were abandoned or ignored and less-used roads were discontinued. By the middle of the 1800s, the infrastructure of Stratton and its future Somerset Annex had been etched

upon the terrain. The maps have changed little since that time – but previous to that time, Stratton’s map was very fluid.

One of the most difficult challenges in developing Stratton’s history has been the reconstruction of its early layout. To accomplish this, it required scrutinizing and coordinating town records with land records, the Lot / Range grid and newer maps as well as recreating the shapes of old roads from the surveys recorded in the Town Records. Roads often were laid out, referencing the homes of townsmen, therefore, it was necessary to determine where these townsmen lived, first by determining what ranges and lots he had purchased through the examination of the land records, then by determining where the house may have been located through vague descriptions in the deeds (descriptions of building locations generally did not exist) and by searching ownership changes to a point where a map might show a dwelling (1856, 1869 or 1900). This research, accompanied by visual sightings of old cellar holes, apple trees and stonewalls in many (but certainly not all) circumstances, has resulted in the conclusions put forth here on paper. Hence, the following paragraphs explore the town’s infrastructure and the various aspects that influenced its outcome.

Leaselands

As discussed previously, many of the requisites established in Stratton’s Charter were ignored by the propriety, thus the Charter had little influence over the specific outcome of the town’s design; one exception to this rule was the division of the town into lots and the establishment of leaselands within these lots.

Complying with Benning Wentworth’s New Hampshire Grant, Stratton’s proprietors set aside five lots to be used in support of Religion and two lots for the support of Education. These last two lots were referred to as the School Lots. As for those lands set aside for religious purposes, Wentworth required the establishment of a lot to be awarded to the first settled (Anglican) minister of the town; second, there were two lots set aside for the Church of England; and third, there was one lot set aside for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPGFP).

Following the American Revolution, the Vermont Legislature declared that the Church of England or its successor, the Episcopal Church, no longer could claim these lands legally. This was no great surprise, since England had become an enemy, not to mention that Vermonters were more Calvinistic than Anglican or Episcopalian in their beliefs. This decision applied to all the religion-oriented leaselands. Over the next several years, the Episcopal Church appealed this decision through the courts. Finally in 1823, the United States Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Church’s title to only the SPGFP lands. The remaining Church leaselands remained in the possession of the towns, as they had been since the close of the Revolution.

Not long after Stratton was settled, the town had decided to award the confiscated Church Lands (3L9R and 6L5R) to Stratton's first settlers, and so the Selectmen deeded these lots to Oliver and Timothy Morsman, respectively. Later, since these lots were somewhat undesirable, they were abandoned by the owners and eventually sold off by the town at public auction (called a vendue in the records). This sequence of events occurred repeatedly over the next several decades. However, at the March Meeting of 1841, the town directed that the public lands be placed in the care of the Selectmen and that the money received from the leases should be expended on schooling. This directive apparently applied to all the various lots considered as Public Rights per the original survey of the town. At that time, the town considered the Church Lands once again as Public Rights, possibly a mistake because they had gone unclaimed for several years and a proper search through the town's records was not completed; therefore, the fact that the town previously had sold off these lots for private ownership went unnoticed – a convenient mistake since the town apparently had not properly disposed of those lots in accordance with the Vermont Statutes.

Meanwhile, the SPGFP lot (7L5R) initially was not recognized as such in Stratton. It was sold at vendue on several occasions through 1805. After that time, it again was recognized as a Public Right. At some point, a mix up occurred and one of the school lots (3L8R) also was considered an SPGFP lot, mistakenly. This mix-up probably occurred because such a long period had passed between the original designation of the leaseland and the time that the SPGFP finally had caught up with their holdings in Stratton. Although the church was recognized as the rightful owner of the SPGFP lands throughout Vermont, a long time passed before they were able to claim their rights within the towns.

It appears that it was not until about 1846 that the SPGFP regained its lands in Stratton. That year, an indenture was made between the SPGFP and the Selectmen of Stratton, allowing the Selectmen to lease 7L5R, an undivided half of 3L8R and 40-acre lot #50 for 31 years, provided they pay \$7.00 (per year) to the SPGFP Agent in Westminster. These lots were dealt with in this manner well into the 20th century. It was not until 1927 that this London-based organization submitted a quitclaim of their lands in Vermont towns, conveying their interest to the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont (*see Book 12 of the Land Records, pages 180-183*). 7L5R and Lot #50 apparently were leased for the last time in 1949 and currently are included in the Green Mountain National Forest. At the present, 6L5R's lease also is held by the Green Mountain National Forest. 3L8R and 3L9R later were referred to as the Shaw Mill lot. They remained public lands and were leased to CP Barlow in 1953. This deed stated that the lessee should pay an annual rent of \$70.00 to the town. Barlow since has quitclaimed his interest in the land to the VanVleck family. The individuals holding this lease currently pay taxes on these lands.

As described above, the lot set aside for “the First Settled Minister,” – 8L5R – located at the top of Stratton Mountain never served that purpose. In 1792, this lot was sold at a public vendue to John Childs of Charlton, Massachusetts. It was bought and sold several times, before it again was sold for taxes to Asa Phillips on September 5, 1795. By 1848 this lot too was again called a Public Right. Stratton’s Selectmen farm-let this lot to Cheselton Allen in 1848 and by 1856 Arnold Cook leased it from the town. It since has been included within the Green Mountain National Forest.

Over the years, the Town leased out both school lots to a number of people. At a Town Meeting held April 6, 1791, the town voted to sell the school lot (apparently 8L2R). They subsequently voted to give Timothy Morsman a bond for a deed of this lot. Later, Timothy was forced to give it up, because he did not meet the requirements of the sale. Apparently, he was required to clear a certain percentage of the lot, but he had not accomplished that task. In October 1793, the town *“Voted to choose three committee men to settle with Timothy Morsman in regard of the school lot with his giving up the title that he now holds of the lands. Later, the committee “appointed by Lieutenant Morsman and chosen by the Town of Stratton have according to your direction looked into his labor betterments and disappointments and do conclude that to do each party justice that the town shall give Lieutenant Morsman 28 pounds to be paid within one year and all obligations be given up and the town take the school lot into their hands again.”*

After Timothy Morsman, several residents leased the school lot, sequentially. In 1795, the town agreed to lease this lot (8L2R) *“as long as wood grows and water runs to Samuel Matthews for 133 pounds, 10 shillings said interest to be paid annually or the possessor is to be routed.”* Matthews forfeited his right the following year. The town went through a number of leasees who did not fulfill the agreement. The lot then was split in half – east and west. Stephen Pratt and Samuel Gleason each leased a half. At least one house was built on the school lot – probably by Samuel Gleason. Both men continued to work these lots for several years.

For many years the split school lot provided some revenue for the town’s schools. Currently, the school lot is held by the Green Mountain Power Company.

Roads

An important aspect of a newly planned community, such as Stratton in the 1780s, was its accessibility to major towns and marketplaces. Its settlers would require an easy and somewhat direct road to those places, thus promoting commerce by and for the new community, which, in the end, would increase the value of property within the town. Along with primary roads, the town would need to build secondary roads to tie each cluster of farms to those main roads.

Primary roads that linked one township to another often were called County Roads – financed by the state via taxes placed on the towns those roads progressed through. Secondary roads – called Town Roads – were financed by the town itself. The earliest roads were the responsibility of the proprietary government, then, as the citizenry replaced the propriety, the town government – specifically the Selectmen of the town – became responsible for roads. The creation of new roads and the discontinuance of outdated or less-used roads ultimately fell to the voters. Generally, if the need for a new road existed, as recognized by the Selectmen or by petition of the citizenry, the Selectmen would order the town’s highway surveyors to “lay out” a potential path for this new road. The path then would be presented as an article to be voted on at Town Meeting. If the citizenry approved of the road, the Selectmen saw that the new road was built.

Until more recent times, Highway Surveyor was an elected position and it was not filled by someone necessarily with expertise in the field. Often, towns created positions for as many as five Highway Surveyors to lay out their roads. The town also was responsible for providing the manpower needed to build and maintain its roads – often by a committee. Townsmen most often performed the labor on the roads in the vicinity of their own farms, while the town compensated these individuals for their work.

Since the task of road building and road maintenance became more complex as the tools of the trade became mechanized, the position of Road Commissioner was established in 1893 to oversee all roadwork within town. At this same time, the town purchased a new “road machine.” In 1909 and for several years following, Stratton decided to have two Road Commissioners, elected by ballot – one for the north part of town and one for the south part of town. More recently, the Selectmen, as a board, hold the position of Road Commissioner. They are responsible for maintaining a highway department and appointing a Road Foreman.

The following pages detail the development of Stratton’s system of roads from the proprietors’ first efforts to the present.

The Proprietors' Roads (1782 – 1788)

1 ***Blood's Rd.*** is an appropriate name for the first road to penetrate Stratton's borders. In the Fall of 1782, John Blood completed a road three miles into Stratton, providing the first accessible route into the virgin wilderness of the new town. This road entered the town somewhere along Stratton's eastern boundary. It apparently originated in what is now West Wardsboro. I believe that it followed an approximate course along what are now *Canedy Rd.*, part of the *West Jamaica Rd.* and *Shepardson Rd.* as they progress toward the geographical center of the town. I have included an approximate path for this road on the Proprietors' Road Map.

Blood's Rd., apparently, was considered to be just an access road; therefore, it was not meant to, nor did it meet the proprietor's standards; so on September 16, 1782, a group of Stratton's proprietors journeyed into the confines of the township; they convened a meeting, the first evidently ever held within Stratton's boundaries, and discussed the creation of a new road.

2 ***The Bennington Rd.***: At the Proprietors' Meeting of September 16, 1782, a committee was chosen to "*view a County Road through Stratton and to coordinate with Selectmen of Wardsborough, Newfane and Sunderland and in towns with no Selectmen the principal men of those towns to see if they will join in laying out a County Road to Bennington.*" John Blood, Jacob Stephens and Elijah Thompson were selected as this committee.

The meeting adjourned until the second Tuesday of November to meet at the home of Peter Hardy in Ward, Massachusetts. At that meeting, the committee reported "*a road may be had through the Town of Stratton over the mountain. For a County Road to Albany or the nearest market town on the west side of the mountain.*" The proprietors voted to accept this report, then "*chose a committee to act in conjunction with the several towns applied to join with Stratton's Proprietors to lay out a County Road over the mountain west of said town viz. Newfane, Wardsborough, Sunderland, Shaftsbury, Glastenbury.*" The proprietors also directed that "*said road shall be laid out as near the center of the town east and west as the circumstances of the land will allow in order to promote the settlement of the town and to keep peace and harmony among the Proprietors that own land on each side of said road.*" They also "*voted to give the land whereas the road shall be laid out let it fall on what lots as it may for particular conveniences.*" Paul Thurston agreed to clear the new road, once it was laid out.

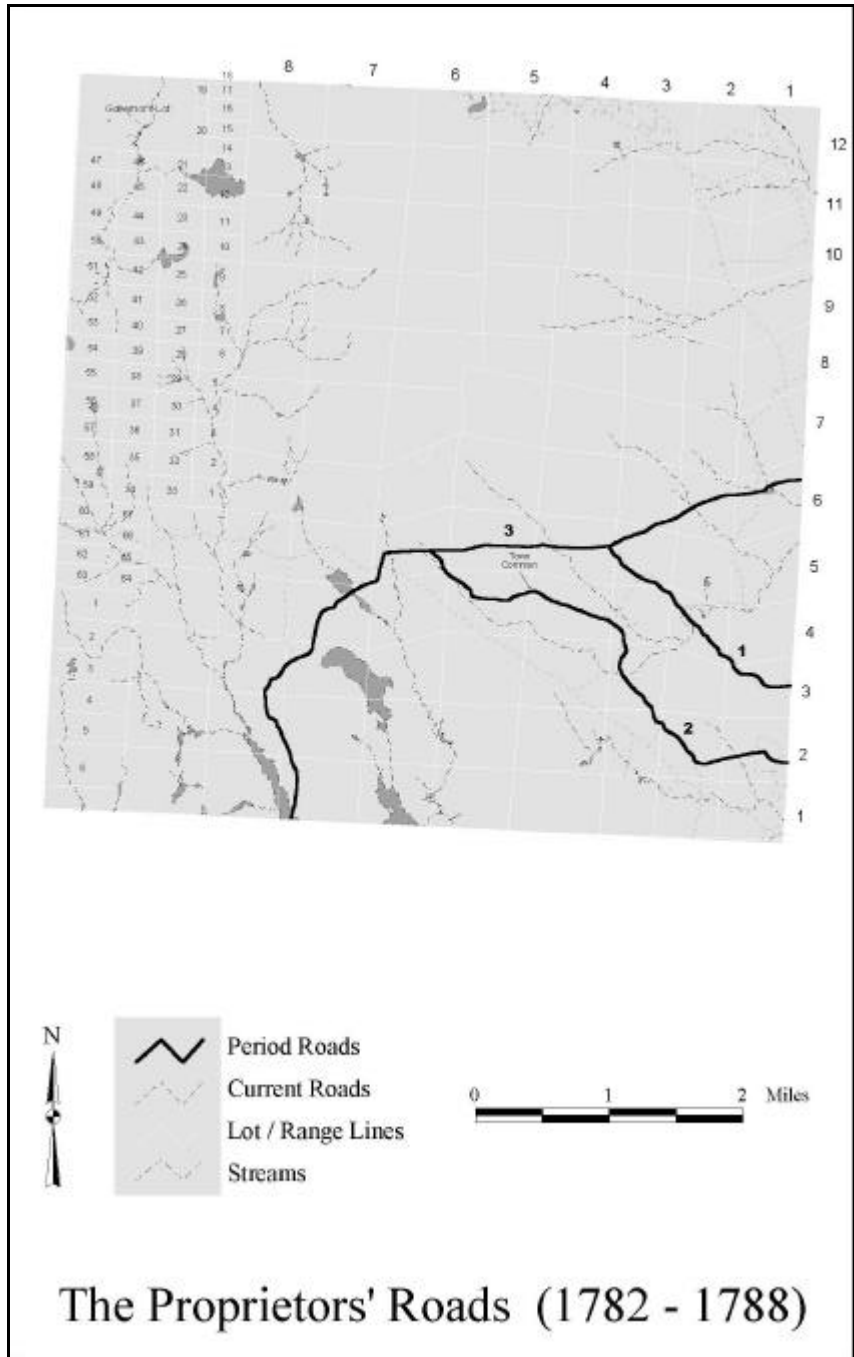
During the autumn of 1784, the proprietors had finished surveying the above road, beginning on the east side of the town, approximately halfway between the north and south town lines. The new road –

referred to as the *Bennington Rd.* – entered the eastern border of the town from Jamaica, then cut deep into the geographical center of Stratton, but instead of heading into Sunderland, the proprietors decided to have it turn south and follow the East Branch of the Deerfield River into Somerset.

A review of early maps of the region (1791 and 1796) shows that there were two possible routes to Bennington that Stratton's main road could link to. To the north of the town, a road connected Londonderry to Manchester and continued south to Bennington. To the south, a road began in Wilmington and headed north into Somerset. This last road, apparently, was the same as the old *Somerset Rd.* that cut across the central portion of Somerset, across Mount Pisgah, then continued into Glastenbury before turning south into Woodford on its route to Bennington. Another road looped around the north side of Mount Pisgah, then headed into an area then called Podunk (not to be confused with Podunk in West Wardsboro), located in the Great Meadows of Somerset before it linked back with the old *Somerset Rd.*.

The southern route was the more direct route and, therefore, Stratton's proprietors decided to connect their proposed road to this road. A vague description of this road – christened the *Bennington Rd.* – was given in the minutes of the Proprietors' Meeting of September 16 and 17, 1784. I have drawn the approximate path of this road on the Proprietors' Road Map, progressing from 6L1R to the end of what is now *Shepardson Rd.*. It is unclear if the eastern end of this road connected with a pre-existing road in Jamaica. It is also unclear if the road continued through Stratton Gore and actually connected with the *Somerset Rd.*, but in both instances it seems certain that it did. Much of the *Bennington Rd.* became the main route of a network of roads that were built soon thereafter.

- 3 ***Patch's Rd.***: In 1785, the proprietors voted that a committee “*shall lay out a road from Wardsborough line through Wm. McFarland's lot and through Jonathan Phillips' lot where it will best suit and so on until it intersects the great road leading from Jamaica to Bennington.*” The lots mentioned here probably were 3L4R owned by Phillips, and 2L2R, owned by McFarland. The proprietors apparently addressed this road again in 1787 – referred to as a two-and-a-half-mile road that Joseph Patch built. At a town meeting held in 1789, the town formally accepted what was likely this same road. It was referred to as the *South Rd.* and it began at Thayer's home in 2L1R. Its course fell between what is now *Canedy Rd.* and the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*. It progressed to the Phillips' farm in the vicinity of what is now *Ball Farm Rd.*, then headed to Patch's Tavern, crossed this lot (4L4R) and eventually joined with the *Bennington Rd.*.
-



The First Town Roads (1788 – 1800)

By 1789, the newly formed town government was ready to take on some of the tasks previously charged to the proprietors – most importantly – the creation of new roads that would extend toward each corner of the town – a crisscross of five roads: the *North Rd.*, the *South Rd.*, the *Somerset Rd.*, the *East Rd.* and the *Sunderland Rd.*. With the building of this foundation into which smaller connecting roads could merge, Stratton's infrastructure began to take on a shape somewhat different from the Stratton of today.

The town had accepted four of these roads before the end of 1789 and their surveys were completed by March 1790 and recorded into the Town Records in detail. At a Town Meeting held in August 1791, it was voted to have the roads opened by June 1, 1792. The *Sunderland Rd.* was created a few years later. Unfortunately, the detailed survey of this road was not recorded within the Town Records. A standard width for town roads was set in 1797 at two rods (33 feet).

Stratton's First Town Roads were:

4 *The North Rd.:* This road, sometimes referred to as the *Manchester Rd.* or the *Great Road*, stretched for nine miles across Stratton, beginning on the east line of the town in 3L1R and ending near Stratton's northwest corner in the Governor's Lot. Evidently, it followed the approximate courses of *Blood's Rd.* and the central portion of the *Bennington Rd.*; therefore, it followed about the same course as *Canedy Rd.*, *Shepardson Rd.* and that part of the *West Jamaica Rd.* between them, continuing along what is now *Forest Road 345* beyond the end of *Shepardson Rd.*, skirting north of the old Town Common, and heading west to 5L6R. Within 5L6R, this road crossed over "Hale Bridge¹," which apparently forded the east branch of Meadow Brook (also called Torrey Brook). From that point, this road progressed southerly around Little Stratton Mountain and then continued north and west, passed the southwest side of Stratton Pond, progressing to and apparently through the Governor's Lot. A reconstruction of the actual survey found within the town records seem to indicate that the road ended at the southern border of the Governor's Lot, although the description included with the survey implies that the road ended at the town line. When James Whitelaw produced a map of Vermont in 1796, this road was the only road in Stratton included thereon.

In 1888, a section of the *North Rd.* that extended west of what is now *Shepardson Rd.* was discontinued. Most of this old road had been discontinued before that time. The roads named above – *Canedy Rd.*, *Shepardson Rd.* and that part of the *West Jamaica Rd.* between them – are the only remnants of this once major road still in use to this day.

1) Despite the spelling difference, this bridge was named for James Haile of Putney, Vermont, owner of this lot at that time.

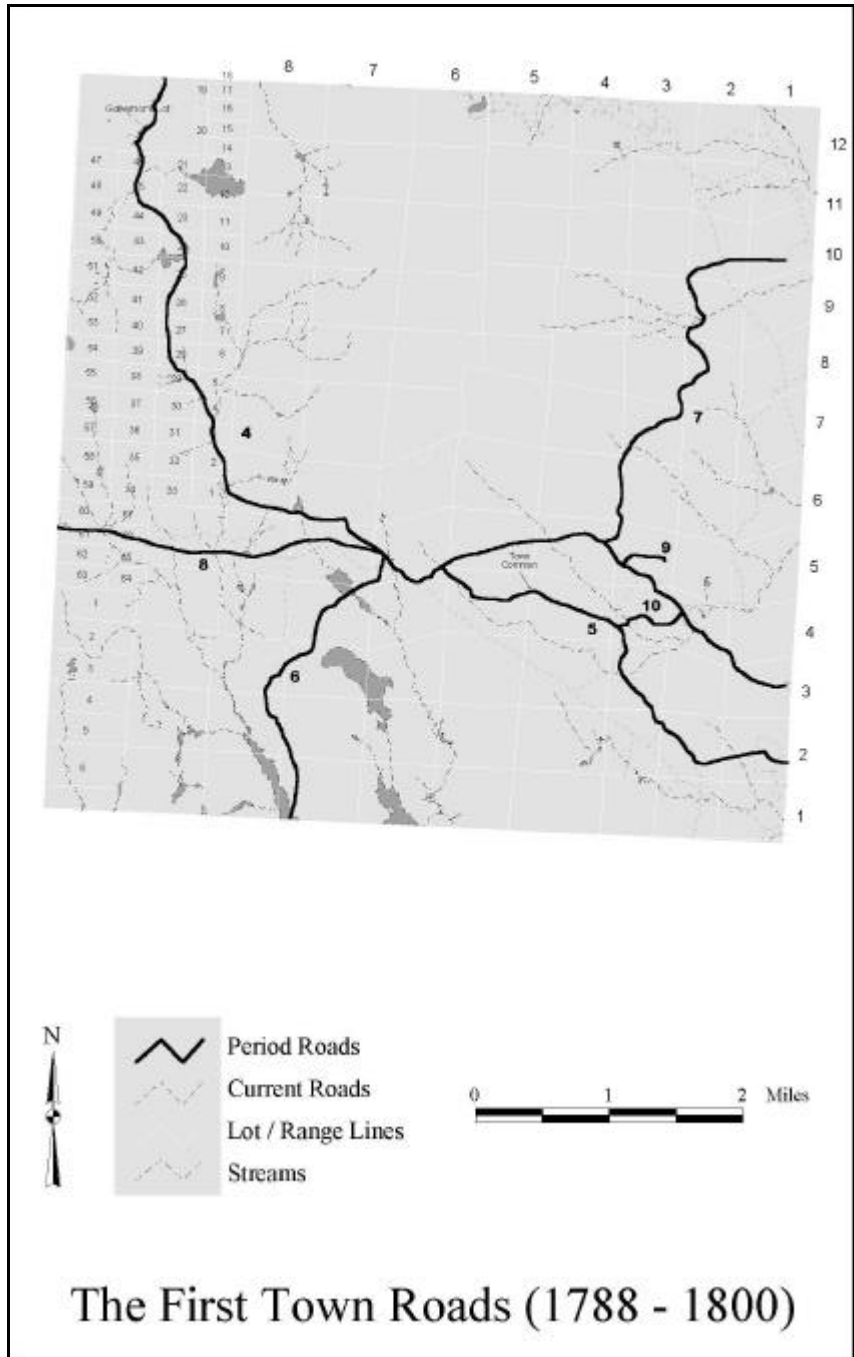
- 5 **The South Rd.:** This road, apparently, was laid out in 1789 along the path of *Patch's Road* (1785) and its survey entered into the records in 1790. The *South Rd.* was often referred to as the *Wardsboro Rd.* or the *Middle Rd.* once the *Gore Rd.* was added after 1800. The *South Rd.* began in 2L1R near Stephen Thayer's house, in the vicinity of what is now *Leon Stocker Dr.* in Snow Mountain Farms West. Evidently, it progressed west and north, following a path that cut across 2L1R, 2L2R, 3L3R, 4L3R, 4L4R and 4L5R. The survey found within the town records is partially unreadable and appears to include some errors. The map included here shows an approximate route, indicating that it crossed what later became the Town Common. It continued into 4L5R and met with the *North Rd.* in 5L6R. Evidently, Stratton's *South Rd.* tied into what was called an old stagecoach road in Wardsboro.
- 6 **The Somerset Road:** This road probably followed the same course as the western section of the *Bennington Rd.* (1784) as I have indicated on the map. The *Somerset Rd.* should not be confused with the road of the same name that progressed across the town of Somerset. Stratton's *Somerset Rd.* was laid out in 1789 and its survey entered into the records in 1790. It began in 5L6R at Hale Bridge (see the description of the *North Rd.*). The *North Rd.* and *South Rd.* converged east of the bridge, while the *Somerset Rd.* began just west of this bridge. This road progressed around the north end of what is now called Grout Pond, then continued around the ridge on the west side of the pond. Its course remained east of the river and continued into Stratton Gore, with a total length of about $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles. Apparently, this road was replaced by another road built in 1804, between Boutell's farm on 5L7R and the Deerfield River as it crossed Stratton's southern border (see #17).
- 7 **The East Rd.:** The last road to be laid out and surveyed in 1789, called the *East Rd.*, began on the east side of 10L1R near the Kidder House. The Kidder house was located near the sharp bend of what is now *County Rd.*. The *East Rd.* continued almost due west for the first half-mile to Solomon Gale's house on 10L2R, which stood on the northwest corner of the intersection of what is now *Stone Chimney Rd.* and *Mountain Rd.*. After passing the Gale house and continuing slightly west of what is now North Cemetery, the road then turned south and continued in that direction for another mile and a half to the homestead of John Greenwood, located on the west half of 7L2R. The road continued south and slightly west meandering through 6L4R and 6L3R and into 5L4R for another mile and a half to where it joined with the *North Rd.* beside the home of Oliver Morsman, at the west end of what is now *Shepardson Rd.*. Total length of this road was about 3.4 miles. It has sometimes been referred to as the *High Bridge Rd.*.
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- 8** *The Sunderland Rd.*: Although this road was not among the major roads to be opened in 1792, it was completed before 1797; therefore, I have included it on the map of the first town roads.

The creation of a road through Stratton to Sunderland was not defined clearly in the early Town Records and no survey was recorded for this road before 1827, but it indeed existed in 1797, since it was mentioned in the records that year.

In 1786, the proprietors had “*voted to chose a committee to see if there can be a road to Sunderland over to the Lake Road.*” The *Lake Road* was a main highway that connected Bennington to the Lake Champlain region. The proprietors selected Oliver Morsman, Abraham Rugg and Samuel Boutell as a committee to investigate the proposed road, and they were to make a report at the next meeting. This same issue was addressed again in October 1787, and May, 1788, but with nothing accomplished except appointments of committees. A road to Sunderland was not addressed again until 1794. That year, the town “*voted to choose a committee to meet the courts committee of Sunderland to look out a road from Sunderland to Stratton.*” No mention was made of the outcome of this meeting, nor of the building of such a road, but by 1797, town records imply that a road to Sunderland had been created. Also, a record of 1800 implies that the road linked with the *South Rd.* that crossed the area chosen as the Town Common on 4L4R. It probably joined the other major roads near Hale Bridge on 5L6R. Hence, I have drawn in an approximate course for this road between Hale Bridge and Sunderland, using no guidelines or surveys.

Two additional early Town Roads: *Town Roads 1790 – 1800*, also includes (9) a small road in 5L3R that connected the Chase farm to the *North Rd.* and another road (10) in 4L2R and 4L3R that connected the *North Rd.* with the *South Rd.* between the Phillips’ place and the Stevens’ barn. These roads completed Stratton’s infrastructure as the town entered the 19th century.



Town Roads – Phase Two: 1800 to 1830

Several significant phenomena occurred around 1800 that prompted another major road-building phase for the town. These phenomena were the annexation of Stratton Gore along the town's southern boundary in 1799, the establishment of a Town Common in 4L4R in 1800 and the completion of the town's largest mill site – Batchellor's sawmill and gristmill – on the line between 4L1R and 5L1R in 1802.

The creation of the Town Common brought about a shift of the center hub of Stratton's road network from 5L6R to 4L4R, while the annexation of Stratton Gore placed the responsibility of that area's roads onto Stratton proper. Batchellor's Mill prompted the creation of a road more east and lower down the mountain than the *East Rd.* as well as another route along the Mill Brook (Ball Mountain Brook) toward the farms along the *North Rd.* Meanwhile, more roads were created within the extreme eastern ranges of the town, reflecting the faster growing areas of the town near Wardsboro, Jamaica and northeast Somerset. Thus, by 1805, Stratton had laid out most of the road network needed to support the town for about another 25 years. Subsequently, during this road building phase, the town voted to have the roads three rods wide (49.5 feet) beginning in 1802.

The map "**Town Roads 1800 – 1830**" reflects the changes that the town underwent during those years. Also, it begins to reveal a face of a more familiar Stratton, faintly visible among the many lines of the town's early ill-fated progress. A description of some of the more noteworthy roads of that time follows:

- 11 A Road from John Gleason's house to Winhall** was built in 1800 commencing from the *East Rd.*, about 100 yards west of his home near what is now North Cemetery and progressing northward along the northern extent of what are now *Mountain Rd.* and the *Stratton Mountain Access Rd.*, entering Winhall in the vicinity of what is now *Middle Ridge Rd.*
 - 12 A Road from the Town Common to the Gore** was built in 1800. This road proceeded south from the Town Common, southeasterly through the 4th Range and into Lot #17 of Stratton Gore by the Gibbs farm. This section continued southward to the Somerset border. The east-west section of the road began at Gibbs' farm, continued eastward to what is now Willis Cemetery and established the course of what is now the east-west section of *Willis Cemetery Rd.* Instead of turning northward as the road does now, however, the *Gore Rd.* progressed eastward remaining within Stratton Gore until it reached the Wardsboro line, a few yards south of where the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* crosses into Wardsboro.
 - 13 A Road from the Town Common to Batchellor's House** was built in 1800, extending from the north side of the Town Common to the *North*
-

Rd. at Jacob Batchellor, Jr.'s house, located on the west side of 5L4R (originally the Morsman house and later known as the Patch house). In 1809, this road was replaced by another that followed approximately the same course.

- 14 A Road from Gleason to Glazier:** This road, built in 1801, began along the *East Rd.* near Samuel Gleason's house on the west half of 8L2R and progressed eastward to John Glazier's farm (now often called the Brown farm) on the north half of 8L1R.

 - 15 A Road from Hill to Waite:** An 1801 road built from John Hill's farm on 12L1R to John Waite's farm on the west side of 10L1R. This road was discontinued in 1832.

 - 16 A Road from Batchellor's Mill to Garfield:** In 1803, the town built a road along Ball Mountain Brook from Batchellor's Mill over to the Garfield farm located at what is now the intersection of *Canedy Rd.* and the *West Jamaica Rd.*. This road remains as that part of the *West Jamaica Rd.* now existing between *Mountain Rd.* and *Canedy Rd.*.

 - 17 A Road from the Deerfield River to Boutell:** This 1804 road apparently was built to replace the western end of the *Somerset Rd.*. It began at the Somerset line apparently on the east side of the river and progressed northward to what is now the main picnic area at Grout Pond. The road then followed the approximate course of the current *Grout Pond Access Rd.*. In the vicinity of that road's intersection with the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, it turned east northeast for about 800 feet and ended at the Boutell farm (later called Torrey's Tavern). There is no apparent record of this road's discontinuance from the Deerfield to the Grout farm; however in 1880, the Selectmen discontinued the section from the old Grout farm up to the Hale farm. The remainder of this road to the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* was discontinued in 1884; although, the Selectmen agreed to leave the road "as is" to allow Joel Grout a right-of-way. The *Grout Pond Access Rd.* was reestablished by the town in 1949.

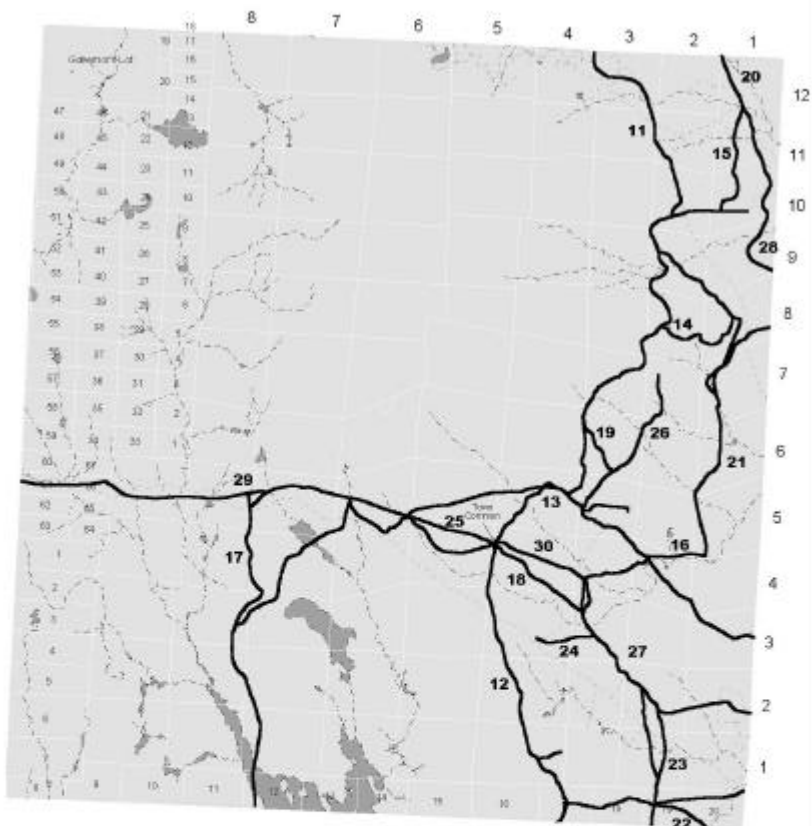
 - 18 A Road from the North Rd. to Sigourney:** This 1804 road began in 5L6R and progressed to and through the Town Common. This road then continued southeast to the northwest corner of 3L3R to the farm occupied by Anthony Sigourney. This path was south of the road now referred to as *Old Town Rd.* and nearer to Ball Mountain Brook.

 - 19 A Road from Reid to Cook:** This 1804 road apparently connected Benjamin Reid's home on the south half of 6L3R (also seen as the Knapp farm) to David Cook's house on the north half of this lot.
-

- 20 A Road from Hill to Winhall:** This 1804 road followed the approximate path of what is now *Pikes Falls Rd.*, north of what is now *North Rd.*.
- 21 Mountain Rd.:** The first version of this road was built in 1805, beginning on the *East Rd.* in 9L2R on an east-west ridge known as the tongue of the mountain and continuing southward along the approximate path of the current road, ending at Batchellor's Mill opposite *Mountain Rd.*'s intersection with what is now the *West Jamaica Rd.*.
- 22 A Road from Pike's Mill to Robbins:** This 1805 road connected what is now the *Pike Hollow Rd. – Penny Ave.* intersection with the *Gore Rd.* in the vicinity of what is now the sharp bend in *Willis Cemetery Rd.*. This road was discontinued in 1832.
- 23 A Road from Somerset to the South Rd.:** This road was built in 1807. It progressed up from Pike Hollow along the line between the Knowlton Lot and Goss Lot in Somerset, intersecting the *Gore Rd.* at what is now the sharp bend in *Willis Cemetery Rd.*. The road continued west of what is now *Willis Cemetery Rd.* and apparently connected with the *South Rd.* in the vicinity of the current *Bills Rd.* intersection with the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*.
- 24 A Road from the Guild farm to the South Rd.:** This road, built in 1811, connected the Guild farm (which stood where the Town Hall now stands on the east half of 3L4R) to the *South Rd.* as it crossed 3L3R, more than a half-mile due east of Guild. This road was discontinued in 1832.
- 25 A Road from Millet to Boutell:** This 1820 road began at Millet's farm beside the Town Common and continued westward to Boutell's farm on 5L7R. It paralleled the current path of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* on the north side, probably following the old *Sunderland Rd.*. Most of this road was discontinued in 1836.
- 26 A Road from Marble to Greenwood:** This 1825 road extended for a mile and a quarter from the Marble farm on 5L3R on what is now *Shepardson Rd.*, northeast to the Greenwood farm on 7L2R. It replaced that part of the *East Rd.* that connected these areas, which was discontinued at this same time. This road was discontinued in 1888.
- 27 The Stratton Road:** Also called the *Winhall-Somerset Rd.*, this was one of two roads approved in 1825 by the County Court to be built through Stratton. This road, built four rods wide, began in the northeast corner of Stratton at the *Winhall Rd.*. Most of the path of its northern section can
-

be seen on McClellan's Map of 1856 and Beers' Atlas of 1869 (see Appendix A). It followed a course south from the *Winhall Rd.* (now *Taylor Hill Rd.* as it becomes *Pikes Falls Rd.* in Stratton. It progressed along that path, then continued south along what is now *County Rd.* (a name taken because the eastern part of this road was once part of the *Stratton Rd.* – a county road). At the site of the old District #1 schoolhouse, the road continued south away from *County Rd.*'s current path and eventually crossed Kidder Brook before entering Jamaica. The *Stratton Rd.* reentered Stratton in the vicinity of what is now *Pleasant View Rd.*. From that point, it continued along the path of *Mountain Rd.* down to the *West Jamaica Rd.*, then followed that course westward to the vicinity of the current *Canedy Rd.* intersection. At that point, it followed the 1790 crossroad that cut across 4L3R to 4L2R – this old road traveled across to what is now Ball Cemetery, and continued up *Ball Farm Rd.*. From that point, the *Stratton Rd.* turned south along the path of the *West Jamaica Rd.* for about a third of a mile. Here, it turned southeast and followed part of the course of the old *South Rd.* (also called the *County Rd.*) to what is now the northwest end of *Knowlton Farm Rd.*. It followed this road, crossed what is now the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, to take up the current course of *Willis Cemetery Rd.*. Where this road now turns sharply westward, the *Stratton Rd.* instead continued south to the Somerset line and beyond. (See the continuation of the *Stratton Rd.* in "Roads within the Somerset Annex.")

- 28 A Road from Kidder to Estabrook:** In 1826, a road was laid out from Kidder's farm in 10L1R south along the Jamaica line, it crossed into Jamaica then back into Stratton before ending at Ezra Estabrook's farm on the south half of 8L1R. This appears to have followed much the same path as the *Stratton Rd.*, built the year before.
- 29 The Sunderland Road:** This road was one of two roads approved in 1825 by the County Court to be built through Stratton. Referred to as a road from Torrey's to Sunderland, it was built in 1827, commencing at Torrey's Tavern on 5L7R and continuing westward to Sunderland. It was replaced by the *Stratton Turnpike* in 1831 and it was discontinued officially in 1832.
- 30 A Road from the Meetinghouse to Wardsboro:** Built in 1828, it approximately followed the path of the road between the Town Common and Sigourney's farm in 1804. This road apparently existed south of the current path of *Old Town Rd.*
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Town Roads - Phase Two: 1800 to 1830

Town Roads – Phase Three: 1830 to 1960

31 *The Stratton Turnpike*

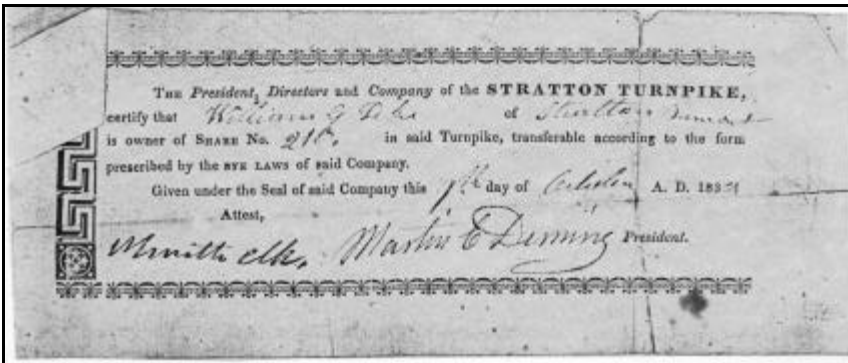
The final approval by the County Commissioners of the construction of the *Stratton Turnpike* in 1827 prompted Stratton's third major road-building phase. Ultimately, it created a major shift in the town's infrastructure because this new route bypassed the Town Common, prompting the abandonment of that area and bringing about the discontinuations of a large number of the older roads within the town.

Between 1796 and 1810, Vermont, as well as its neighbors, began the extensive task of building turnpikes. Stratton happened to be situated along a potential route where a turnpike could cross the mountains, tying western Vermont to eastern Vermont. On May 17, 1804, in recognition of this fact, the town agreed to have a committee evaluate the building of a turnpike leading from Shaftsbury through Stratton to Walpole Bridge. Nothing, however, came of this effort and several years passed before the issue of a turnpike through Stratton was revisited. This second effort culminated in 1808 when Vermont chartered the *Stratton Turnpike Company*. Subsequently, petitions were submitted to the General Assembly of Vermont on several instances, requesting the state to create taxes in the affected towns for construction of the new turnpike. The shareholders of this company also included some of Stratton's citizenry.

The *Stratton Turnpike* would be one of the three turnpikes that crossed the mountains of southern Vermont. It was planned to progress westward from Stratton's Town Common into Sunderland and through to Arlington. To the east, intentions were to proceed into Wardsboro and connect with the road to Newfane.

The project remained stagnant for a very long time and actual construction of the road was held up for many years. Finally, a meeting concerning this project was held on the first Tuesday of January 1827, at the home of Anthony Jones in Newfane. An advertisement in the Semi-weekly *Eagle* read, "***Stratton Turnpike Company*** by a late statute are required to meet at the dwelling house of Anthony Jones in Newfane on the first Tuesday of January next at 10 O'clock AM on important business. All persons who feel an interest in said turnpike are requested to give their attendance at the time and place above-mentioned."

Construction of the new turnpike started that year and it was finished in 1831, but the Turnpike began in the vicinity of the Town Common in the center of the town, instead of the town's eastern border; therefore, in 1830, the town voted to petition the legislature to grant an additional turnpike road to continue from the end of the *Stratton Turnpike* to the Wardsboro line. This, however, was not granted. In its stead, a town road was built in 1831.



A Stratton Turnpike Shareholder's Certificate owned by William Grant Pike

Courtesy of Ellen Lyman

The Turnpike was completed in 1831, but it followed a path slightly different from the original planned course. Upon completion, the Turnpike had missed the Town Common by approximately a half-mile to the south. It is much the same path that the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* follows in the present. The road to Wardsboro also followed the remaining path of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* into Wardsboro, entering that town approximately 100 yards north of the preexisting *Gore Rd.*

Following its completion, the *Stratton Turnpike* quickly became a heavily used route across the Green Mountains, as it was part of a major route between Boston and Albany. The Stratton Turnpike was an 11-mile expanse through Stratton, Sunderland and Arlington – the only tolled section of the entire route as it crossed Vermont. Its tollgate stood on the western end in Arlington. Evidently, Stratton became a busy town during the next two decades.

Upon completion of the turnpike, the older road to and through Sunderland was discontinued. This old route, however, became useful after major flooding in the fall of 1869 washed out much of the newer road. For a short time after that disaster, the mail was carried on foot along the old route.

The completion of the turnpike in 1831 prompted the discontinuation of many of the town's early roads. In 1832, the Selectmen abolished a number of roads across the town, some of which did not correspond with the *Stratton Turnpike* – a major change to Stratton's infrastructure.

Discontinued roads (or sections of roads) included:

- 1) The road from Luther Waite to Winhall (Gleason to Winhall built in 1800 – see #11).
- 2) The road from Nahor Howard to Lyons (That part of the *East Rd.* between the Woodward place on 7L3R and the French house on 9L2R – see #7).
- 3) The road from Rand to the Meetinghouse (That part of the *South Rd.* from the Thayer place on 2L1R to the Town Common on 4L4R – see #5).
- 4) The road from Coes to the road between Stimpson and Grout (That part of the *North Rd.* from the Patch house on the west half of 5L4R to the old junction near Hale Bridge on 5L6R – see #4).
- 5) The road between the Meetinghouse and Fuller (Apparently, that part of the *South Rd.* between the Meetinghouse on 4L4R and the Fuller farm on the southwest corner of 4L5R – see #5).
- 6) The road from Fay to Guild (built in 1811, connecting the Guild farm on 4L3R with the *South Rd.* in 3L3R – see #24).
- 7) The road from Sunderland to Hudson Grout (this was the *Sunderland Rd.* between 5L6R and the Sunderland town line – see #8).
- 8) The road from Tyler Waite to Winhall (This was the road built in 1801 between Waite on the west half of 10L1R up to the Hill farm on 12L1R – see #15. This apparently also included part of the road that continued to Winhall).
- 9) The road from Levi Hale to Pike’s sawmill (this was the road built in 1805 between Pike and Robbins, connecting what are now *Willis Cemetery Rd.* and *Penny Ave.* – see #22)

Abolishment of the Toll

In 1856, the Stratton Turnpike and its toll were abolished due to the effort of a group of citizens led by John William Kelley. Kelley was the proprietor of the Kelley Stand, a hotel located within Sunderland, along the route of the turnpike. He was also a logger and he owned a sawmill in Sunderland; thus, he stood to profit if the toll was discontinued. Once the turnpike was abolished, the road became known as the *Kelley Stand Rd.*. More recently, it has come to be known as the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* in Stratton, although this is a more appropriate name from Sunderland’s perspective.



JW Kelley and wife
JW was the Proprietor of the Kelley Stand
in central Sunderland, Vermont

Photo courtesy of Joan Beach Little



The Kelley Stand Hotel in Sunderland in the 1920s
The man in the center is Robert Lawler,
a squatter who lived in the old abandoned hotel.

Photo courtesy of the Ethel Eddy Collection



**Winter roads were prepared by horse-drawn snow-rollers
Although unidentified, this rig apparently was Stratton's snow-roller.**

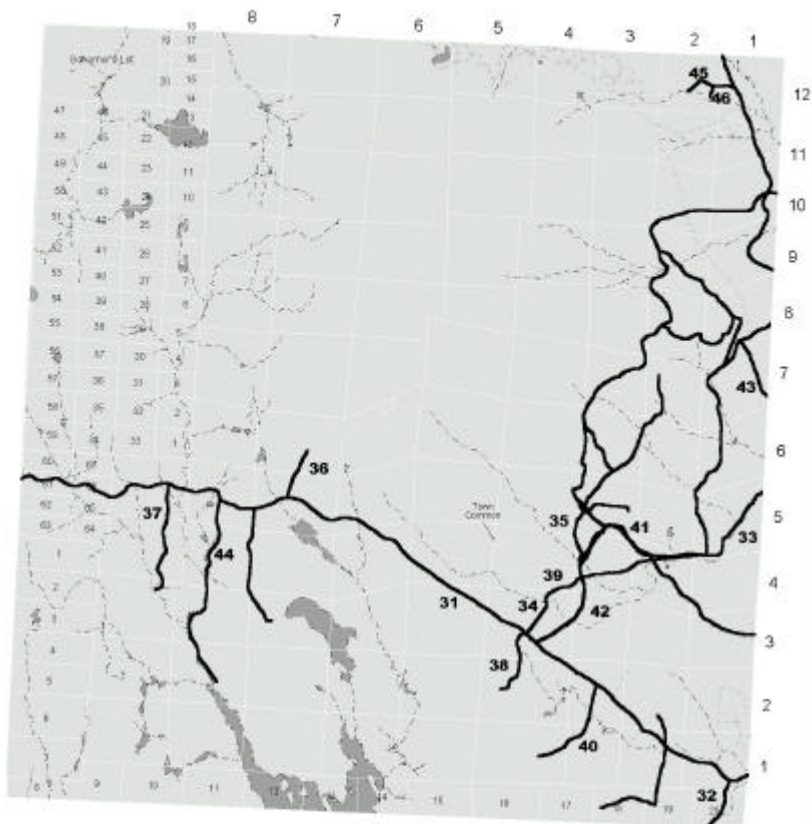


Traffic along the *Kelley Stand Rd.* near the Grout Job

Additional Roads created after the Stratton Turnpike included:

- 32 A Road from Pike to Rider:** This 1832 road later became the northeast end of *Pike Hollow Rd.* as it progressed through Stratton Gore from what is now the junction of *Pike Hollow Rd.* and *Penny Ave.* to the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*.
- 33 A Road from Bissell to Jamaica:** This 1833 road progressed from Bissell's Mill (previously Batchellor's Mill) on 5L1R and 4L1R northeasterly across 5L1R and into Jamaica. It has since become the eastern end of the *West Jamaica Rd.*.
- 34 A Road from Phillips to Sprague:** This road, built in 1833, apparently connected the Phillips farm on 4L3R and 3L3R to the old Guild farm on 3L4R, then owned by Sprague and now the location of the Town Hall. This road existed to the west of the current path of the *West Jamaica Rd.* between those two points. It was discontinued the next year.
- 35 A Road from Scranton to Grimes:** This 1836 road connected the Grimes farm located at what is now the intersection of the *West Jamaica Rd.* and *Ball Farm Rd.* to the Scranton farm (the old Marble farm) on *Shepardson Rd.*. This road ran west of the current path of that section of the *West Jamaica Rd.*. Apparently, this road was discontinued in 1848.
- 36 A Road from Allen to Pond:** This road, built in 1840 extended northeastward from the *Stratton Turnpike*, slightly west of what is now *Forest Road 341* toward the old Hill farm on the west half of 6L7R. It ended southeast of this farm and northwest of the Grout farm, located in the southeast corner of 6L7R. This road can be seen on Beers' Atlas of 1869, leading to the farm of JB Grout. Much of this road was discontinued in 1880 and the remainder was discontinued in 1884, although the Selectmen elected to leave it alone, allowing a right-of-way for Joel Grout of the Grout Job.
- 37 A Road from the Shaw Mill to the Stratton Turnpike:** NJ Shaw operated a mill on the leaselands of 3L8R and 3L9R on Black Brook. In 1844, the town built a road from the Turnpike down to this mill site. This road was discontinued in 1880.
- 38 A Road from Ballard to the County Rd.:** This 1844 road headed southwest from near what is now the intersection of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* and *West Jamaica Rd.* to Stephen Ballard's house on 2L4R.
-

- 39 A Road from the Moon house to the County Rd.:** This 1844 road progressed from the Moon house in the northeast corner of 3L4R, about 450 ft. down to what is now the *West Jamaica Rd.*
- 40 Old Forrester Rd.:** This 1845 road connected Moses Forrester's farm on the line between 1L3R and 1L4R with the *County Rd.* (the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*). Originally, this road extended more than a quarter-mile beyond its current southern end.
- 41 A Road from Center School to Allen:** This 1845 road established the current path of what is now the *West Jamaica Rd.* from a point beginning at *Ball Farm Rd.*, the location of the Center School at that time, northeast to *Shepardson Rd.*, then southeast down to a point ending at *Canedy Rd.*, where the Samuel Allen farm once stood.
- 42 A Road from the New Meetinghouse to Styles:** This 1848 road completed what is now the southwest end of the *West Jamaica Rd.* from the Meetinghouse to the northwest corner of 3L3R. The description indicates that the road originally intersected with what is now the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* on the opposite side of the meetinghouse. This accounts for the odd angle between the building and the current path of the road. It has not been ascertained when the road was changed to the west side of the building.
- 43 Forrester / Half Mile Rd.:** This road, built in 1853, ran from the Estabrook farm (now *468 Mountain Rd.*) southeast to the Jamaica line. It is still an active town road.
- 44 A Road to the Lucius Smith Mill:** In 1868, the Selectmen laid out a road from a point a few yards west of the East Branch of the Deerfield River on the *Kelley Stand Rd.* down to the Lucius Smith Mill. This road is visible on McClellan's Map of 1869 (see Appendix A). In 1889, this road was discontinued and another built in its place. In 1913, the southern end of this road was discontinued in anticipation of the creation of Somerset Reservoir and later, the remainder of the road was discontinued.
- 45 North Rd.:** Not to be confused with the *North Rd.* of 1789, this short expanse of road in 12L1R and 12L2R was laid out as a pent road "2 rods wide" in 1901, across Calvin Pike's land to land of Fred Rawson. This road has since been designated a town road – it is still in use today.
- 46 Dini Lane:** This road was built about 1956 after the Kent family gave Stratton a right-of-way for a town road to the Mattick property.
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-  Period Roads
-  Current Roads
-  Lot / Range Lines
-  Streams



Town Roads - Phase Three: 1830 to 1960

Roads Within the Somerset Annex

The Stratton Rd. (see 27 above): Built in 1825, it progressed down from Stratton Gore into Somerset along the Goss lot's eastern boundary and crossed *Pike Hollow Rd.* between what are now *192 Pike Hollow Rd.* and *182 Pike Hollow Rd.*. It crossed the brook before the dam had been built there. Evidence of an old road on the south side of the brook and opposite *192 Pike Hollow Rd.* indicates that the road jogged westward before it continued south southeast to the Rice farm, probably following about the same path as the old *Johnson Hill Rd.*, and the southern end of what is now *Penny Avenue*. Its course was redirected at different times, but it ultimately continued up hill to merge with the southern end of what is now *Penny Ave.*, near *Rt. 100*, and just downhill (north) of the farmhouse of Perez Rice (the site of *21 Penny Ave.* – the Pickering house).

47 Pike Hollow Rd.: In 1817, the town paid William Pike for putting in water bars on the road that ran between his house and the house of his brother, Jotham Pike, who lived in Somerset at the end of the road (now *241 Pike Hollow Rd.*). This is the first mention of this road in Stratton's records. The southwestern section of this road probably existed as early as 1805. By the time of the Somerset Annex, *Pike Hollow Rd.* meandered from the William Pike sawmill southwest to the Jotham Pike farm, northwest to the Joseph Pike farm, then westward to the Hartwell and Reed farms. In 1833, the "*Pike to Rider*" section of the road built through the Gore completed what we now know as *Pike Hollow Rd.*. In 1899, the western end from what is now *171 Pike Hollow Rd.* westward was changed from a pent road to an open road and it has remained so to this day. That same year, a section of road that had connected the end of *Pike Hollow Rd.* (near the old Joseph Pike farm) with what is now *Willis Cemetery Rd.* was discontinued. In 1943, the town rebuilt the road to the Hromada farm (now *241 Pike Hollow Rd.*). This course has remained mostly unchanged to the present.

48 The Old Somerset Road: A continuation of the 1800 road from the Town Common down to Stratton Gore and into Somerset's Kimpton Lot, this road was sometimes called the *Old Somerset Rd.*. It continued southward through the Knowlton Lot (part of which is referred to as the Moon Lot) toward Mount Pisgah (Mt. Snow).

49 Penny Avenue: The road now called *Penny Avenue* also existed at an early time, connecting William Pike's sawmill at the bottom of the hollow with the Rice farm near the top of the ridge. This road crossed over Mt. Two Brothers – now called Dover Mountain – and it progressed through this area mostly east of the current path of *Rt. 100*. It continued

southward and split into the *Handle Rd.* that extended southward through Somerset (now part of Dover) and the *Dover Rd.* (*Blue Brook Rd.*) that extended southeasterly into West Dover. In 1856, McClellan's Map (see Appendix A) shows a road that roughly followed the course of the current *Penny Avenue*, down from the ridge and into Pike Hollow beside the Lyman house (*218 Penny Ave.*). Beers' Atlas of 1869 shows no road from the old Rice farm down into Pike Hollow; however, after that time, a road extended between this farm (now seen as *21 Penny Ave.*) and what is now *171 Pike Hollow Rd.*, connecting with *Pike Hollow Rd.* (for continued development see *The Dover Rd.* below).



Mary Lyman on the bridge across Pike Hollow Brook to the Lyman farm (now *Penny Ave.*). The bridge washed out in 1938.

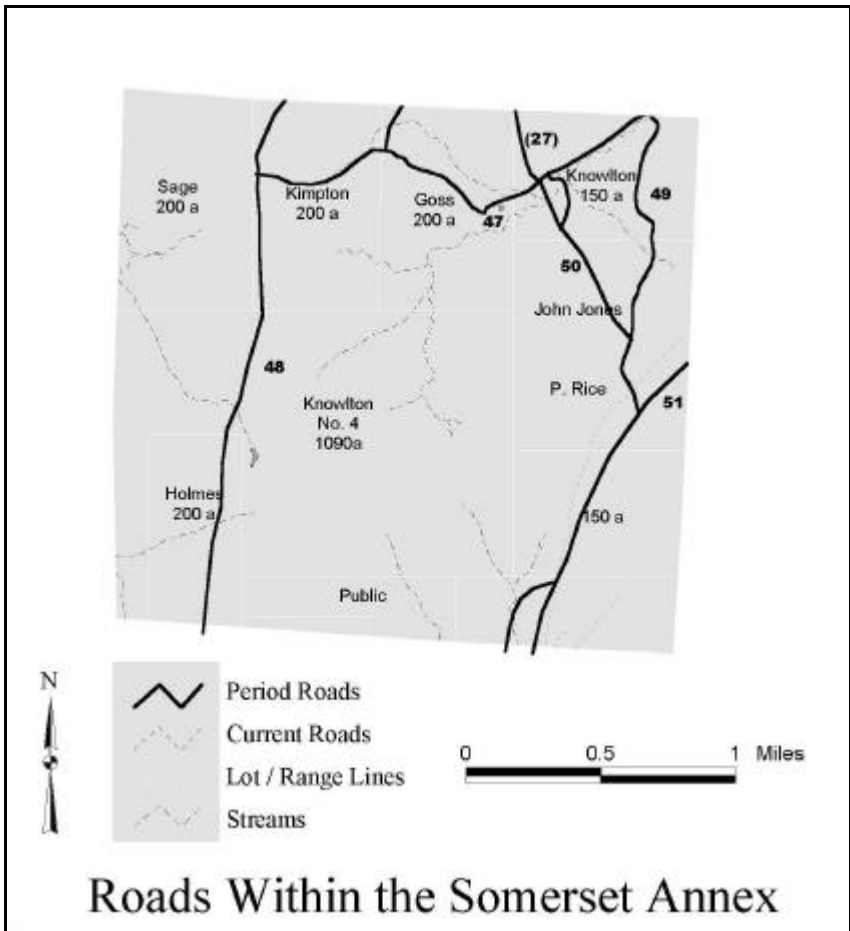
50 *The Dover Rd.*: In 1872, the Selectmen laid out this road from schoolhouse #6 in Pike Hollow, south to the Albert Eddy farm (*21 Penny Ave.*). This road apparently followed a short expanse of what is now *Pike Hollow Rd.* before it turned south and headed up the ridge, connecting with the main road between Dover and Wardsboro.

In 1887, another route was laid out between the Elmer Eddy farm (*171 Pike Hollow Rd.*) and the Orrin Johnson farm (*21 Penny Ave.*), apparently replacing the 1872 route.

There had been discussion around 1900 that the road should be moved back to its original location near the Lyman house (*218 Penny Ave.*), but William Lyman did not want the road there and convinced the Selectmen that efforts to clear the old road would be too expensive. Therefore, it was not until 1940 that the road between the old Johnson farm (*21 Penny Ave.*) at the top of the ridge and the Lyman place (*218 Penny Ave.*) at the bottom of the hollow was opened for use. At that time, it was referred to as the *Johnson Hill Rd.* and sometimes the *Dover Rd.*. In the 1960s, the Horrigan family lived at the top of the hill, near

the site of the Johnson farm. Mrs. Horrigan, whose first name is Penny, lived there as a girl. Jokingly, the road had been referred to as *Penny Avenue*. When this road was officially named, the *Penny Avenue* nickname was used.

51 A Road from the Rice farm to Podunk: Another road that approximately followed the current path of *Rt. 100*, joined the Rice farm with Podunk in Wardsboro as discussed under “*Penny Ave.*”



Recent Roads:

Roads associated with the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort: With the development of the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort beginning in the 1960s, many private roads, maintained by the resort, have been created along the town's northern boundary to support the ongoing development within the resort. At that time, the *Stratton Mountain Access Rd.* was built from *Rt. 30* in Winhall up to the resort area and across to the *Pikes Falls Rd.*. Beginning in 1977 and lasting into 1979, *Mountain Rd.* was improved and rerouted in some areas so as to maintain its entire course within Stratton. It connects with the *Stratton Mountain Access Rd.*. The length of road from this intersection down to *Pikes Falls Rd.* has since been renamed *Brazers Way*, in remembrance of Paul Brazer.

Snow Mountain Farms West: This subdivision, created from property owned by the Cersosimos, exists within 2L1R in Stratton and extends into Wardsboro. It contains several private roads, accessible through Wardsboro only.

Neighborhoods

An interesting aspect of Stratton's early settlement was the development of its neighborhoods. As Stratton's farms were hacked from the wilderness, a specific growth pattern developed, driven by the terrain, the original survey of the town, and access to the first roads. Those that came to Stratton tended to settle on the eastern and southern sides of town. Initially, the first four ranges on the eastern side of the mountain – as much as a mile west of what is now *Mountain Road* – saw many farms cut from that wilderness. The entire southern half of town, westward to the East Branch of the Deerfield River, also became farmland. Farms also sprang up as far as the terrain would allow on the southern sides of Stratton and Little Stratton Mountains. At that same time, farms quickly were growing to the south of Stratton in Stratton Gore and Somerset.

In some instances, specific areas of the town became populated almost entirely by a given family or people from a given town. One example was the westernmost settlement along what is now the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, on the eastern side of the East Branch of the Deerfield River and south of Little Stratton Mountain. This area, which includes Grout Pond, was for the most part initially populated by families from Leominster, Massachusetts – the Hales, the Boutells, the Ramors, and the Jacob Allen family – all of whom were related in one way or another prior to their move to Stratton. Some of their children eventually took over these family farms or bought nearby lots, expanding the neighborhood. Most stayed only a few years, then sold out and moved away. By 1825, the only family of this group that remained in Stratton was the Hale family. Meanwhile, other families had settled on those farms – eventually the Grout family dominated this area and in the first decades of the 20th Century, logger families living at the Grout Job on the East Branch of the Deerfield accounted for a third of Stratton's population. The complex there included a large boarding house, barns, a school, the mill and various outbuildings. This area is now covered by forest and the last of the Grout Job's old outbuildings was intentionally destroyed by the National Forest in the Fall of 1999.

Another such example was a neighborhood located in the vicinity bounded by what is now *Willis Cemetery Rd.*, up to and along *Old Forrester Rd.* and westward for a couple of ranges. Families that settled there came from the Athol, Massachusetts area in the early 1800s. They included the Olivers, the Youngs, the Newhalls, the Hasey Sprague family, the Eddys and the Forresters. Most of these families were related in some way. The first three families stayed only a short while. The Spragues stayed for a couple of generations, while the Eddys and Forresters continue to own property in Stratton to this day. This neighborhood, as well as the Leominster neighborhood, disappeared more than a century ago, now evident only by the few scattered cellar holes that remain.

The Pike Hollow area fared better. Jotham and William Pike followed their half-brothers, the Grants, to Stratton. They first settled at what is now the bend in *Willis Cemetery Rd.* in Stratton Gore. The Pikes bought up land in the Gore and also land located further south in Somerset. They soon owned nearly all the land surrounding Pike Hollow Brook. Over the years, they subdivided and sold off lots to various people, including their children and grandchildren. Many years later this area became the most populated neighborhood in Stratton. Nearly all who lived there were descended from the Pike brothers.

Another area of Stratton that developed in this same manner was the Pikes Falls Area, named for Isaac Newton Pike who had moved from Pike Hollow to the northeast corner of town. Pikes Falls developed into a neighborhood that included areas of Winhall and Jamaica and centered itself around the Seventh Day Adventist Church located across the border in Jamaica. By 1900, Finnish immigrants that had settled in Winhall found their way into Stratton and about 1930, socialists Scott and Helen Nearing, authors of *Living the Good Life*, had settled near this neighborhood within Winhall. They also owned land within Stratton. This area remains developed due to its closeness to the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort.

The area north of *Shepardson Rd.* was once occupied by families such as the Cooks, Pratts, Reids and Shepardsons. These families also all were related in some way prior to their moves into Stratton.

The most notable of Stratton's settlements – entirely gone now – was Stratton's first village, which started to develop around Stratton's first Meetinghouse at the beginning of the 19th Century. It all but disappeared by 1840 and now is covered by forest. It was located just west of the Stratton Recreation Area.

Stratton's First Village

The establishment of a Town Common on 4L4R during the first decade of the 19th Century prompted the subdivision of the lots surrounding this general vicinity – specifically the west half of 4L4R and the east half of 4L5R. Within the period between 1800 and 1830, a small village grew up around the Town Common. In turn, its location determined the paths of several town roads. But again, the dictates of nature would prevail and the layout of Stratton was soon to change.

Stratton's Second Village

When the Stratton Turnpike – completed in 1831 – missed Stratton village by a half-mile to the south, it was within the span of a few years that most of the homes around the Town Common were abandoned and the old roads that crossed it were discontinued.

By 1840, an inn had been built on the old Guild farm, located at what is now the intersection of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* and the *West Jamaica Rd.*

Meanwhile, development occurred along the Turnpike east and west of this location. The Wyman Inn, as it was known, became the center of a new village and in 1847 the Union Church was built on the Wyman's property. The old inn was kept for a time by Cheselton Allen, until it burned in 1856. Within a few years, Wyman rebuilt. The new building was referred to as the Wyman Hotel and later the Willard Shepard Hotel.

Stratton's second village nearly disappeared too, once the completion of the West River Railroad had caused the mail route from West Wardsboro through Stratton and on to Arlington to change, consequently ending stagecoach service through Stratton. The church and the parsonage were among the few structures to survive. In the early decades of the 20th Century, this neighborhood was all but a ghost town. Ultimately, this small village was revitalized with the construction of the current Town Hall around 1960 and the Town Office in 1988.

In recent history, the development of the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort has triggered the creation of neighborhoods, mostly consisting of vacation homes, surrounding the ski slopes. The North Brookwood neighborhood is a direct result of this development as are the hundreds of condominiums and town homes built within the resort. Additionally, on the southeast side of town, straddling the border with Wardsboro, Snow Mountain Farms West was created by the Cersosimo family with a number of private roads and small developable lots. Currently, it is a mix of year-round residents and vacation homes.

The Heart – the Home

Inevitably, pre-1900 Stratton truly cannot be defined by a village or by its neighborhoods. Instead, the heart of Stratton during those times existed within the individual farms that dotted the hills and valleys on and around the mountain. Hence, the best way to understand Stratton is to examine and understand each of its farms. Stratton's farms are scrutinized in detail within Section III, Chapter XVII.

Conclusion

Stratton's infrastructure has changed little since the mid-1830s, while major changes had occurred by that time from the original pattern of roadwork set down by the proprietors and first settlers just 50 years earlier. Unfortunately, no detailed map of the town is known to have been created until McClellan's Map was published in 1856 (see Appendix A).

In 1893, the Selectmen recorded the first Certificate of Road Mileage for the town of Stratton as required by Vermont Statute. At that time, Stratton had 25 miles and 229 rods of town roads. At the beginning of the 20th Century, Stratton reported just over 26 miles of town roads. The total mileage has changed little in the last century, as the yearly reports continue to record about 26 miles of roads within this town. The reports, however, do not

tell the whole story. Stratton has not remained stagnant since that time. Although the shape of Stratton's infrastructure has changed little, the quality of these same roads has increased drastically, with the majority of town roads being paved. Additionally, a significant number of private roads, mostly associated with the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort, have been added in recent decades.



A Picnic at the Old Grout Job

Photo courtesy of the Ethel Eddy Collection



**Ralph Pike posts the Warning for the 1962 Town Meeting, while
Town Clerk, Irene French, stands in the doorway of Schoolhouse #5.**

Photo from the Town's Archives

Chapter VIII

Local Government and Politics

Perhaps the most critical of all the facets of a society is its government – that culmination of a people’s ideals, morals and resolve molded together into a working structure of social self-discipline. Vermont’s system of town government can be found at the heart of true Democracy in all its splendor and err, while the goals of the state and federal governments and the methods by which these goals are achieved reflect the political affiliations of their citizens.

This chapter explores the system of town government used in Vermont and it details how Stratton has adapted to this system over the past 200+ years. It lists the names of those who have held some of the key offices within Stratton’s town government as well as those chosen to speak for Stratton within the state government – the town’s Representatives to the General Assembly of Vermont. This chapter goes on to explore the political affiliations of the average citizen of Stratton, year to year, by examining the local results of the elections for Governor of Vermont and President of the United States, on occasion with a discussion of the issues behind the choice. This is highlighted by a detailed account of Daniel Webster’s visit to Stratton during the campaign of 1840 and the lasting affect that event had upon this town. Lastly, this chapter notes the history of Stratton’s Postal System, the officials appointed to the position of Stratton’s Postmaster and the locations of Stratton’s Post Offices over the years.

Town Government in Vermont

Vermont’s system of local government was brought to this region from lower New England. It is a system established in the tradition of the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay, who had improvised on an even older English Parish form of local government, similar to a form of local government devised by John Calvin in the 16th Century. The Puritans adopted a method of government by which the people of a given town could carry out the business of their own town. Whereas at first all the qualified and accepted voters of a town – the Freemen – met to transact local business each month or perhaps each week, it soon became practice for the Freemen to meet less frequently and, instead, appoint and later elect a group of “select men” to carry out the business of the town between Freemen’s Meetings. Meanwhile, additional positions were created within the town government to carry out specific duties essential to the development and implementation of local governance.

In Vermont, from the very beginning of its independence, all adult males were “*free and privileged to attend and to vote at Town Meetings*” but only after they had taken the Freemen’s Oath, swearing allegiance to Vermont. Since that time, Freemen also must be formally accepted by the town before

they are allowed to participate in Town Meeting or vote in General Elections. The Town Meeting is the formal legislative body of Vermont's town governments – a forum by which the townspeople have the power to create local laws, create and support local institutions and elect the officers needed to carry on the day-to-day business of the town. These actions, however, must fall within the window of jurisdiction allowed to the town as determined by state and federal laws.

Vermont's Town Meetings are held on the first Tuesday in March each year, or whenever the Freemen of a town have felt it necessary to assemble and act on town business. The town's Selectmen post a warning for each meeting before the meeting is held. This warning informs all the Freemen of the town when and where the meeting will take place and what business will be discussed during the meeting. Each meeting is presided over by a Moderator who ensures that the meeting is carried out in an orderly and legal manner. A Clerk is also present, charged with recording the minutes of the meeting. The first order of business of any given March Meeting is to elect Town Officers. Additional business is discussed in the order of the Articles set down in the Warning. This includes the acceptance of the Auditors' Report that details the business of the previous year and the approval of a budget for the upcoming year.

After the annual Town Meeting, the elected officers carry out the business of the town. The Selectmen, who act as the executive branch of town government, meet regularly throughout the year, while the Town Clerk and Treasurer maintain regular office hours for the day-to-day business of the town. Additionally, other boards, commissions and committees meet regularly or as necessary to keep local government functioning, as it should.

Stratton's Town Government

Although Stratton was established in 1761 and settled in 1783, it was not until 1788 that the residents of this township met together in Town Meeting to form a town government – perhaps inspired by the ongoing creation of a Federal Constitution and its ratification by Vermont's neighbor, the United States, that same year.

Stratton's first Town Meeting took place on the last day of March 1788. At that time, the Freemen of Stratton established the town's first Select Board, as well as the positions of Town Clerk, Treasurer, Constable, Listers, Jurormen and Surveyors – positions required to carry out the basic mandates of local government at that time. This was just the beginning of the governmental structuring of the town. Over the following years, positions were added and deleted as set down by the laws of the state and the choice of the people – a process that continues to the present. Offices found within Stratton's town government and a summary of their duties include:

The Selectmen, a board of three or five individuals who have the general supervision of the affairs of the town and shall cause to be performed all the duties required of towns not committed by law to any particular officer. A Board of three Selectmen was established at Stratton's first Town Meeting of 1788. Stratton increased the number of its Selectmen to five in 1973.

A Moderator is an individual elected to preside over Town Meetings. The Moderator directs the business of the meeting and maintains order of the meeting and subsequently verifies that complete and correct minutes were taken by the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk is an individual elected to manage the Town Office. The Town Clerk's main responsibility is to maintain and preserve town records, which include minutes of meetings, land records, election results and vital records and more recently Civil Union licenses. The Town Clerk issues marriage licenses, as well as death and birth certificates; the Clerk also presides over the Board of Civil Authority and acts as the Chief Elections Official for the town. This position was established in Stratton at the first Town Meeting held in 1788.

The Treasurer holds a ministerial position, responsible for managing the finances of the town as directed by the Selectmen. Additional responsibilities include assisting the Selectmen in creating a budget for the town and establishing a tax rate. This officer usually is elected to the positions of **Trustee of Public Funds** (charged with managing property and funds from which income may be realized) and the self-explanatory position of **Tax Collector**, which was added to the duties of the Treasurer in 1880 by town vote. The position of Treasurer was established in Stratton at the first Town Meeting of 1788.

The Listers are three elected officials charged with fairly assessing all properties within the town. The Listers are responsible for creating a **Grand List** of all property owners and their assessed properties, thus establishing an overall value for the town. The Selectmen and the Treasurer compare the Grand List to the overall town budget and calculate a tax rate. Three Listers were elected during Stratton's first Town Meeting of 1788.

The Auditors are three elected officials charged with verifying the accuracy of the town books. The Auditors produce the Annual Town Report, detailing the Town's business for the year. This report is presented to the voters of the town, who vote to accept the report during Town Meeting. These positions were first established in Stratton in 1842.

The Constable was created as a position responsible for enforcing the laws of the town. Originally, the Constable and the Tythingman acted as a police force for the town. The Constable also presided at General Elections and acted as the courier of notifications for orders set down by the Selectmen. Until recently, the position of Tax Collector went hand-in-hand with the Constable's position. The position of Constable was established at Stratton's first Town Meeting of 1788. Stratton continues to elect this position, now called the First Constable, as well as another position for Second Constable. Currently, these positions are little more than titles, while the County Sheriff's Department handles law enforcement.

The Delinquent Tax Collector is a person who takes on the task of retrieving any money due the town through taxes that were not promptly paid in any given year. Their duties include the right to confiscate delinquent property and put it up for sale. The Delinquent Tax Collector was a position rolled into the duties of the Constable and Collector. Only recently has it become a separate position.

The Grand Juror (or Jurorman) is responsible for preparing the presentment or charge in criminal cases that involve the town and gives it to a Justice of the Peace or to a municipal court. The Grand Juror may pursue this action until the case is settled. The Grand Juror became an elected position in Stratton during the first Town Meeting of 1788.

Petit Jurors (or Jurormen) were elected by the towns to sit as jurors for the year. This became an elected position in Stratton during the first Town Meeting of 1788 and remained an elected position in Stratton until about 1915.

The Town Agent is responsible for pursuing or defending civil cases that involve the town. The Town Agent may become involved in cases such as appeals by landowners to the state over assessment of property by the Town. Town Agent first became an elected position in Stratton in 1844.

Highway Surveyors were charged with maintaining town roads and they laid out new roads as called for by the Selectmen. These positions were among the first positions established within the town government in 1788 and they were last filled in 1892, when the position of Road Commissioner was created. In most years, Stratton had five Highway Surveyors, but in 1892, the town elected twelve – one for each district.

The Road Commissioner became an elected position in Stratton in 1893, taking over the duties of the Highway Surveyors noted above – duties that include the upkeep of roads and the plowing of roads in winter. For many

years, Stratton had two Road Commissioners – one for the north part of town and another for the south part of town. In recent years, Stratton’s Selectmen have held this position, while they employ a **Road Foreman** and a road crew to maintain town roads.

The Health Officer is a position created in 1902 in Vermont and appointed by the Selectmen in each town. Together, the Selectmen and the Health Officer make up the town’s **Board of Health**. The Health Officer enforces the town’s health ordinance.

The Tree Warden – a position created in 1906 in Vermont – is responsible for the care and maintenance of trees along public highways. Stratton does not have a Tree Warden.

The Fire Warden is a position appointed by the Vermont State Forester with the approval of the Selectmen. This officer issues burn permits and is required to report all fires in woodlands in the town. The Fire Warden has full police power to call for help in putting out forest and brush fires.

The Cemetery Commission consists of three elected commissioners charged with all aspects of managing the town’s cemeteries. Previous to the establishment of a commission, caretakers of the town’s cemeteries, called **Sextons**, were first elected in Stratton in 1821 – one Sexton for each cemetery. There were as many sextons in town as active cemeteries. Their main responsibility was to dig the graves. Currently, the Cemetery Commission supervises the distribution of plots and provides for the maintenance of all cemeteries within town.

The Planning Commission is a seven-member commission elected for four-year terms since 1994. Before that time and beginning at the end of the 1960s, this commission was appointed by the Selectmen. The Planning Commission is charged with development and implementation of a Town Plan, Zoning Bylaws and Subdivision Bylaws needed to coordinate and control future growth of the town. This commission recommends a candidate as **Zoning Administrator**, who is appointed by the Selectmen to enforce the Zoning Bylaws.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment is a five-member board appointed by the Selectmen and charged with reviewing cases of variance from the Town’s Zoning Bylaws.

The Recreation Committee is a five-member committee elected at town meeting to oversee the development and maintenance of the town’s recreation area. It was established in the early 1990s, when the town acquired land to develop a Recreation Area.

Justices of the Peace: Stratton may have as many as five justices elected during a General Election for a two-year term. Their duties include giving oaths of office and performing Marriages and Civil Unions. At one time, justices sat in judgment over local hearings, but now that duty is limited to serving on the Board of Civil Authority and the Board of Abatement.

The Board of Civil Authority is comprised of the Selectmen, the Town Clerk and Justices of the Peace. This Board sits as a municipal court to review issues such as applications to the voter checklist and appeals of assessments.

The Board of Abatement includes the same officers as the Board of Civil Authority with the addition of the Treasurer. This board considers abatements of taxes.

The Liquor Control Board was established in Stratton in 1903 as required by law, following the repeal of Vermont's temperance law established in 1853. This body is responsible for granting licenses to sell intoxicating beverages within the town, providing the town votes to allow such sales. In 1969, the law requiring a yearly vote on this issue was changed. That year, Stratton voted to allow the sale of alcohol in the town. This decision stands until the town chooses to reconsider the issue. Stratton's Liquor Control Board has limited authority and must forward license applications to the state for final approval. This board also approves licensing for the sale of tobacco products within town. Currently, the Selectmen comprise this board.

Outdated Positions:

Although most of the following positions are antiquated, several still remain as elected or appointed offices within Vermont's town governments. Presently, the Selectmen are required to appoint from the qualified voters of the town three Fenceviewers, a Pound Keeper, for each pound in the town, Inspectors of Lumber, Shingles and Wood, Inspectors of Coal, and a Tree Warden. Currently, the Weigher of Coal, the Pound Keeper, Fenceviewers, and the Inspector of Lumber are positions held by the Select Board.

Fenceviewers were officers who ensured that fences were maintained properly and that property owners on both sides of the fence did their fair share of maintaining the fence. This position was much more important when Stratton was a farming community. Stratton first elected these officers in 1803.

The Inspector of Lumber, Shingles and Wood ensured the quality and quantity of wood products and certified such if called on by interested parties within the town. The first election for this office in Stratton was held in 1870.

The Inspector of Leather (or **Sealer of Leather**) was an officer who inspected and stamped leather offered for sale in the town. No leather could be sold or shoes made and sold locally unless the leather bore the official stamp. Stratton first elected this office in 1803.

The Weigher (or Inspector) of Coal was called upon by townsmen to independently verify the weight of coal during a sale of this once important source of heat.

The Inspector of Hoops and Staves was another position added to the regimen of Town Officers in Vermont, but Stratton chose not to have one when the office was voted upon in 1827.

The Sealer of Weights and Measures guaranteed honest exchanges of quantities of grain, etc. Stratton first elected this office in 1793. The very first laws of Vermont required each town to procure and maintain a complete set of weights and measures of all types – linear, liquid and weight. All measuring devices used in the town had to be checked annually against these standards and the town's sets were periodically checked with the state's set.

The Pound Keeper was responsible for maintaining the town's pound, which originally was used to hold stray animals, thus protecting the fields of local farmers. During early Town Meetings, the town often voted to make the pound keeper's barn or a nearby barn the pound. Stratton established a pound in 1797; however, the town did not elect its first pound keeper until 1804. This position was appointed by the Selectmen after 1914.

Haywards designated where fences would be built to protect grain from cattle. This position was first elected in Stratton in 1825 and discontinued after 1840.

The Overseer of the Poor, a position established in Stratton in 1810, was charged with providing support for all poor persons who applied for relief from the town. This relief was required to continue for as long as the said person remained in the care of the town. The overseer could put the town's poor and their families to work and prevent them from leaving town so they would not become burdens on other towns. Often the poor person or family was bid off to someone who agreed to provide food and shelter at the lowest cost to the town. In many cases their property was put up for bid and deeded to the person who bid highest for the property. This position still stands and is filled by the Selectmen who assign a **Social Service Officer** (see *Social Welfare and the "Warning to Depart"* in this Chapter).

Tythingmen were elected to guard the town's morals and keep an eye on its small boys as well as its loafers. They could halt a suspicious traveler passing

through and arrest them without a warrant at any time. The Tythingmen and the Constable made up a crude local police force. Beginning in 1789, Stratton elected one man to this position. Later two and then three men were chosen as tythingmen. This position was last filled in Stratton in 1840.

Library Commissioners or the Board of Library Trustees and Librarian: Stratton attempted to create a Board of Library Trustees as early as 1894, but it was not until 1913 that the town elected to have a library and a commission to manage it. A Free Public Library was created at that time and a board of five Library Trustees was elected. Each position was a five-year term. For many years the library was kept in the Eddy home (*174 Pike Hollow Rd.*). Later it was moved to the schoolhouse (#5). The old collection still exists and remains shelved in the library room that was built into the Town Hall in the 1960s. The position of Library Commissioner was discontinued in Stratton in 1964.

The Winhall / Stratton Fire District

Vermont law allows for the creation of jurisdictions within towns and across town borders that have the power to regulate common facilities and tax properties within itself to support those facilities. Upon petition from homeowners within the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort, the Vermont Legislature approved the creation of the Winhall / Stratton Fire District created for the purpose of operating and managing the water supply and sewage plant systems for the communities within the resort area. This district was chartered on April 27, 1995 and recorded on page 283 of Book 62 of the Stratton Land Records. This District was organized to operate under the directives of a Manager, while a Prudential Committee is responsible for appropriating operating funds through district taxation. Before the Fire District was created, these systems were owned and operated by Stratton Corporation, owner of the ski resort. The Fire District, which is an entirely separate entity from Stratton's town government, maintains the only public sewage and water supply systems within the town of Stratton.

Legal Issues of Town Meetings Past

Generally, the business of running a town is somewhat routine and dull. Within a small, quiet town such as Stratton, only on rare occasion does an exciting issue come to light. Discussions at most town meetings are limited to the town's budget and its effect on the tax rate. From the perspective of history, though, the collective Town Meeting tells an interesting tale of the social and political changes of Vermont as those changes trickle down to the towns or are pushed up to the state level. It reveals the process of identifying and dealing with the issues of the times. Part of this process can be seen when changes to Vermont's Constitution and the Constitution of the United States are put before the Freemen of the towns.

Many of the issues discussed at Town Meetings over the years warrant scrutiny. While issues such as roads and schooling are better detailed within their own chapters; some issues, however, fail to fit elsewhere and have been included below:

Justice

There have been only a few occasions when Stratton has had to deal with Crime and Punishment. Evidently, this fact was obvious to Stratton's early residents, who on September 7, 1797, voted at Town Meeting not to purchase any stocks for imprisonment. Therefore, it seems that at no time has a place of imprisonment existed within this town. Ultimately, law enforcement has been left to the County Sheriff's Department.

Most legal issues within Stratton have been limited to civil cases. For instance, the land records of the early 1800s occasionally show that Stratton's Constable was ordered to apprehend some poor fellow, who had gotten himself into serious financial trouble, and carry him to the jail in Newfane. At this same time, the order also directed the Constable to confiscate all of the individual's property within town – property that ultimately would be auctioned off to pay the creditor that had filed the charges. Additionally, some civil cases concerning unauthorized logging on private property have occurred in town as have some issues concerning paupers of the town. As for criminal activity, the only notable event was the Baybrook incident, which involved a shoot-out in this town – a somewhat amusing event discussed in detail in a later chapter. Currently, Stratton's Constable, Grand Juror and Town Agent have little business to carry out for the town, while Stratton continues to pay for the services of the Windham County Sheriff's Department, mainly to enforce traffic laws. The town also hires legal council – the Town Attorney – to assist in the complexities of creating and enforcing local ordinances and bylaws.

Temperance

The social and moral implications of alcohol consumption have been issues in Vermont and this Country from an early time. The 1820s and 1830s saw temperance movements, such as the Vermont Temperance Society that flourished in this state, fueled by the religious fervor of the times. In fact, the popularity of the temperance movement increased so much so in this state that a "local option law" was passed in 1844 and nearly half the counties in the state voted to go dry.

This was not enough and so in 1853, the temperance movement was successful in getting a law passed by the state that prohibited the sale of intoxicating liquor as a beverage – only permitting sacramental usage. This law was signed by the Governor in 1852 and considered by the voters at a special election in February 1853. At that time, Stratton voted 47 to 18 against this law, but to no avail. It is interesting to note that this law was supported by Luther Torrey – the owner of Torrey's Tavern in Stratton, a

business he had decided to close down several years before this law went into effect.

In consequence of this new law, each County appointed a special commissioner who was empowered, in turn, to appoint Town Agents who might sell liquor for “*medicinal, mechanical and chemical purposes,*” as per a law that had gone into effect in 1847. Meanwhile, Vermonters voted whether or not to allow for a license of this sort to be issued in their specific town. The licensing issue was put before Stratton’s Freemen in 1847, 1848, 1850 and 1852 with overwhelming approval of the voters.

These early liquor licenses are recorded within the Town Records, mostly out of chronological order and often written in at the bottom of earlier pages, wherever a blank space could be found. Separate licenses were issued in 1851 to Ebenezer and Cheselton Allen for a period ending April 30, 1852. Cheselton Allen was granted a four-year license in 1852 and additionally on June 27, 1853 he was granted a license to keep tavern in his house. The last of these early licenses again was granted to Cheselton Allen in 1857 “*a license to keep tavern... in conformity to the statutes.*” An inference to a tavern at a time when alcohol could be used only for medicinal purposes, legally, certainly seems absurd. This may be explained by the fact that ultimately Vermont’s Prohibition law was mostly overlooked, enforcement was difficult and many changes were made to it during the years following its enactment. The truth was that very many Vermonters continued to indulge in drink throughout its existence. As for Stratton, the issue of liquor licensing during Vermont’s prohibition years faded out of the records when in 1858, Cheselton Allen’s Inn burned.

In 1903, as the state’s prohibition law entered its fiftieth year, the citizens of Vermont voted to abolish it. This time, Stratton voted 12 to 16 against the act of repeal. Once repeal was official though, Stratton again voted to sell licenses and as a result the following entry was made in the Town Records: “*Whereas the legislature of the State of Vermont at the biennial [meeting] of 1902 enacted a law entitled “An Act to Regulate the Traffic in Intoxicating Liquors” and the same being now operative by the vote of February 3, 1903 and the Town of Stratton at the Annual March Meeting March 3, 1903 having voted to grant licenses for the sale of intoxicating liquors in said Town of Stratton, therefore we the Selectmen of the said Town of Stratton in pursuance of the requirements of Section 7 of said act hereby appoint as License Commissioners within and for said Town of Stratton the following persons – residents of said Town of Stratton their terms of office to commence on the date of their appointment and expire as hereafter stated. Calvin N. Pike – term of office to expire May 1, 1905. Douglas Forrester – term of office to expire May 1, 1907. Jerome B. Temple – term of office to expire May 1, 1909. Stratton March 4, 1903”*

The demise of Vermont’s prohibition law gave Vermonters a seventeen-year window before the 18th Amendment established a national policy of

Prohibition from 1920 to 1933. For most years in that window of time, though, and beginning in 1904, Stratton voted not to license the sale of alcoholic beverages within this town. Once the question of prohibition was put to the voters in 1933, Stratton voted 9 to 6 to repeal the 18th Amendment.

In recent times, Stratton has authorized the local sale of alcohol, while Stratton's Board of Liquor Control issues annual licenses to several businesses within the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort.

Moving the County Seat

Another interesting issue that came before this town was Newfane's decision to abandon Newfane Hill and relocate the County buildings to Fayetteville. This was an issue of concern for all towns in the County, thus each town was asked to send a delegate to consider this issue. Moses Forrester was elected to that position at a meeting held in 1824. The County seat moved to Fayetteville after that time, and in 1827, towns were asked to send another delegate to meet in Newfane to participate in the decision of how to dispose of "*the old courthouse, jail, land and appurtenances.*" Bille Mann represented Stratton in those discussions.

Somerset Reservoir

In 1913, Stratton took part in negotiations allowing the New England Power Company to create Somerset Reservoir. A deal was accepted that required Stratton to discontinue the road down to the Tudor Mill, for which the Power Company agreed to pay \$15.00 annually to the town. Once the Power Company acquired the property, construction began on the Somerset dam.

What Town Meeting?

On the morning of March 4, 1947, Town Meeting day, the Moderator, Ralph Pike, met with an unusual circumstance, apparently due to the inclement weather that day. He wrote to the Town Clerk, "*I went up to the schoolhouse and stayed until 10:15 and no one came so I read the warning and came home. Bob [Hromada] and Richard [Holman] came down and we adjourned the meeting until Tuesday, March 11, 1947 at 10:00AM.*" This letter was recorded into the Town Records on March 6, 1947. The meeting continued on March 11th and the Town's business warned for that year was concluded.

A Tax Issue – The Boy Scouts vs. the Town of Stratton

Beginning in the early 1950s several Town Meetings were dominated by discussions concerning a legal wrangling over a Property Tax exemption for the Stratton Mountain Scout Reservation. In 1948, the Fort Orange Council, Inc., Boy Scouts of America, later renamed the Governor Clinton Council, Inc. No 364, Boy Scouts of America, purchased about 1,700 acres of land in Stratton in the vicinity of, and surrounding, Grout Pond. The Boy Scouts pursued their demand for a tax-exempt status at that time. It went to court in 1954 and a compromise was reached. From 1967 to 1974, Stratton made no

attempt at taxing this property. In 1974, however, most of their property was reappraised and added to the Grand List, with only the camp surrounding Grout Pond maintaining an exempt status. In June 1976, the Boy Scouts brought action against the town to regain a total tax-exempt status and reclaim any taxes paid during that time. The Superior Court found for the plaintiff, but Stratton appealed to the Vermont Supreme Court. The Supreme Court, "*Affirmed in part, reversed in part and remanded for entry of an order consistent with the views expressed*" (in the courts opinion). In 1979, before this case reached finality, the Boy Scouts sold their holdings in Stratton to the National Forest.

Social Welfare and the “Warning to Depart”

Before state and federal institutions were established to handle social welfare, families or towns were charged with the care of such individuals. During the 19th Century, it was not uncommon for the Town to take up relief of its poor during Town Meeting. In some cases, the town held a special town meeting to raise money to defray the expenses of fellow townsmen who no longer could care for themselves. In one such instance in 1831, Stratton held a special meeting and voted to reshingle and resill the widow Boutell’s house. Generally though, the care of the poor fell to the Overseer of the Poor, while strict rules were adhered to in order to protect the town from indigent wanderers. If an individual qualified for town relief, most often they were bid off to be cared for by the lowest bidder, while their remaining personal or real property was sold or auctioned off to the highest bidder in order to supplement their care. This was a practice that seems very cold and cruel today – an image magnified by the harsh wording of the Town Meeting minutes, such as, “*Voted the paupers of Stratton to be struck off at auction this day.*” or “*Voted to set up widow Grant at auction to be struck to the one that would keep her the cheapest.*” It is important to remember that it was difficult for small communities to care for their poor, especially during hard times.

On several occasions, the Overseer of the Poor and the Town Agent had to involve themselves in civil cases against other towns to retrieve the cost of day-to-day care and any doctors’ expenses that might have accumulated for individuals who were legal residents of other towns. It seems the Overseer of the Poor was a busy town official in 19th Century Stratton. The burden on this official obviously fluctuated with the changes in the population and the well-being of the economy. With few exceptions, this job has all but disappeared from town affairs since the establishment of the national social security system by the Roosevelt administration in the 1930s. On occasion, though, since that time, individuals have asked for, and received assistance from the town’s social services officer.

Warnings to Depart

In the late 18th Century, Vermont devised a method for its communities to protect themselves from wandering vagrants. At that time, the Vermont Legislature changed an old law known as the English settlement law of 1662, that provided that any person who takes up residency within the town and who appears likely to become a burden on the citizens of the town might be warned by the Constable to “*Depart the Town*” within a year’s time following their arrival. Vermont towns, like many of their New England counterparts, reserved the right to warn strangers out of town. Often, towns took up the policy of warning out almost every newcomer. This warning, in effect, gave notification to newcomers that they first must be accepted as a Freeman of the town before they could participate in town meetings or receive benefits from

the town. Although this tradition appears to have been insulting, most Vermonters understood that it was common practice throughout this region and many stayed to become prominent citizens of the town. Vermont towns were allowed to issue Warnings to Depart until 1817. After that time, the law changed so that a person asking for social welfare had to prove that they had been a resident of the town for three years, without receiving any benefits allotted the poor during that time.

An article to warn out new inhabitants was first put to the vote in Stratton at a town meeting held on March 8, 1790; however, the inhabitants voted against it and in 1791 they voted to raise five pounds to defray the incidental charges of the poor of the town. It was not until 1806 that Stratton began the practice of “Warning Out” newcomers – a practice the town continued until the law was changed in 1817. In that period, a total of 41 warnings were issued by Stratton’s Selectmen.

Among those warnings were three occasioned to be noteworthy. I doubt that any other Vermont town can boast that they had the opportunity to warn out the town’s first settler. Stratton had that opportunity and took it. Timothy Morsman and his brother Oliver were considered to be Stratton’s first settlers. These brothers moved from town after residing in Stratton for several years. In his old age, though, Timothy and his wife returned to Stratton in 1808. Their names were among those that had recently come to town that year; hence, indiscriminately, the Morsmans were duly warned out by Stratton’s Constable in early 1809.

Another seemingly strange circumstance concerned Aaron Lyon, who was warned out of town on July 2, 1806. This was the same day that Lyon was appointed supervisor over the construction of Stratton’s meetinghouse.

The last noteworthy warnings concerned John Coes, Jr. and Susannah Gale, who were warned out of Stratton twice – once in 1806 and a second time in 1811. It is likely that Coes and Gale had moved away and returned to Stratton in that time. It is also possible that the Selectmen actually wanted Coes and Gale to leave. John and Susannah apparently were living together over that five-year period (not very acceptable to an upstanding New Englander of the early 1800s). Two months after the second warning was made, Mr. Coes and Miss Gale filed an intention of marriage with Stratton’s Town Clerk. They were married soon after.

“Warnings to Depart” were written into the town’s vital records, interspersed with births, marriages and deaths. The following is an example:

State of Vermont, Windham County to Levi Robbins present constable of Stratton in the County of Windham.

Greetings, you are hereby commanded to summons Jonathan Millins and Jennie Millins and all under their house now residing in Stratton to Depart said Town here of fail Not but of this precept and your doings hereon Due return make according to Law given under our hand at Stratton this 28th day of June AD 1806.

George Oliver Selectmen
Sampson Bixby of Stratton

Windham County, Stratton - July 2, 1806

That I served this precept by putting a true and attested copy into the hands of the within named Persons.

Attested:

Levi Robbins, Constable *July 2, 1806*

The following people were warned to depart Stratton:

- 1) Jonathan and Jennie Millins on June 28, 1806; served July 2, 1806.
- 2) Asa and Betsey Fay on June 28, 1806; served July 2, 1806.
- 3) Aaron and Betsey Lyon on June 28, 1806; served July 2, 1806.
- 4) John Coes on June 28, 1806; served July 2, 1806.
- 5) Calvin and Dolly Oliver on June 28, 1806; served July 2, 1806.
- 6) James and Betsey Smith on June 28, 1806; served July 2, 1806.
- 7) Widow (Priscilla) Williams on June 28, 1806; served July 2, 1806.
- 8) Susannah Gale on June 28, 1806; served July 2, 1806.
- 9) Samuel and Lucretia [Marble?] on December 21, 1807; served January 26, 1808.
- 10) John and Naomi Wheeler, January 4, 1808; served January 30, 1808.
- 11) Jedidiah Baker on January 4, 1808; served January 30, 1808.
- 12) Zephaniah and Submit Davis on January 4, 1808; served January 30, 1808.
- 13) Richard and Celia Harris on January 4, 1808; served March 7, 1808.
- 14) Josiah and Sarah Lyon on March 7, 1808; served March 10, 1808.
- 15) Asahel and Charlot Burt on February 25, 1809; served March 3, 1809.
- 16) Timothy and Lucy Morsman on February 25, 1809; served March 3, 1809.
- 17) Isaac and Mary Shepardson on March 13, 1809; served March 13, 1809.
- 18) Clotildy Baker on May 31, 1809; served May 31, 1809.
- 19) Peter and Elizabeth How on January 25, 1810; served January 25, 1810.
- 20) William Wheeler on January 25, 1810; served January 25, 1810.
- 21) Russell and Philena Haynes on January 25, 1810; served January 25, 1810.
- 22) William and Clarissa Newhall on January 17, 1811; served February 1, 1811.
- 23) John Coes on January 17, 1811; served on February 1, 1811.

- 24) Susannah Gale on January 17, 1811; served on February 1, 1811.
 - 25) Anna Gale on January 17, 1811; served February 1, 1811.
 - 26) Persis Wheeler on January 17, 1811; served January 30, 1811.
 - 27) Mercy Manning on January 17, 1811; served February 1, 1811.
 - 28) Nevinson and Experience Grant on February 10, 1812; served February 17, 1812.
 - 29) David and Merriam Cummings on February 10, 1812; served February 17, 1812.
 - 30) James and Lucy Potter on February 10, 1812; served February 27, 1812.
 - 31) James Jr. and Mary Potter on February 10, 1812; served February 27, 1812.
 - 32) James and Sally Fuller on December 17, 1812; served December 21, 1812.
 - 33) Oliver and Rhoda Wellman on December 17, 1812; served December 22, 1812.
 - 34) Abraham and Zeresh Wheeler and Martha Russell on March 7, 1814; served March 11, 1814.
 - 35) John Shepardson and Miriam Shepardson (sister?) on January 13, 1814; served January 22, 1814.
 - 36) Jabez and Becka Pratt on March 7, 1814; served March 11, 1814.
 - 37) Ebenezer and Eunice Wellman on January 13, 1814; served January 19, 1814.
 - 38) Jason and Nelly Barnes on March 7, 1814; served March 11, 1814.
 - 39) Joshua and Betsey Grant on November 6, 1816; served November 11, 1816.
 - 40) Benjamin and Sarah Rider on November 6, 1816; served November 11, 1816.
 - 41) Alexander and Mary Bragg on March 10, 1817; served March 12, 1817.
-

A Place for Public Meetings

Where shall we hold the next meeting? This was one of the many issues that faced the Freemen of Stratton year to year, especially during the many years that no public facility existed within the town. An acceptable meeting place had to be large enough to accommodate all those who wished to attend the meeting and it had to be conveniently located, as well.

The first town Meeting of 1788 was held at the home of Oliver Morsman. This house was located west of what is now the gate at the end of *Shepardson Rd.*.

All Town Meetings held in 1789 through 1792 convened at the house and tavern of Joseph Patch, as had some of the Proprietors' Meetings during that time. Patch was Proprietors' Clerk from 1789 – 1792. The remains of Patch Tavern are located within what is now the town's Recreation Area on the north side of *Old Town Rd.*, up the hill and a couple of hundred yards west of the volleyball court.

By the March Meeting of 1793, Eliakim Garfield's family had settled into the Patch homestead. The first two meetings held in 1793 convened in Garfield's house, while in September 1793, a meeting was held at the dwelling of Jacob Batchellor. The Batchellors had settled onto the east half of 5L4R and their home was located at what is now the end of *Shepardson Rd.* east of, and beside, the gate that exists there now. Two additional meetings called in late 1793 were held at Batchellors, while another was held back at the Garfields' house.

In 1794, the first two meetings were held at the Garfield house, and then in June a meeting was called to order at the home of Asa Phillips. Additional meeting held that year also convened at the Phillips's home – located at the northeast corner of the intersection of what are now *Ball Farm Rd.* and the *West Jamaica Rd.*. The remains of the old foundation can still be seen there. Asa Phillips was Stratton's Town Clerk for most years from 1788 to 1800.

The March Meeting of 1795 was held back at the Batchellors' home. At that time, it was voted to hold all meetings there during the following year. In fact, all meetings were held there through March, 1798.

By 1798, Thomas Lathrop had settled into the Joseph Patch homestead. Lathrop was elected Town Clerk that year and it then was voted to hold meetings at his home for the following year. Meetings continued to be held at the Lathrop home through to the end of 1807, with exception of the March 1806 meeting that was held back at the Batchellor homestead. Thomas Lathrop moved from Stratton in early 1808 and then Jedidiah Baker occupied the old tavern house. Meetings beginning in February 1808, and continuing through to and including the March meeting of 1809 were held in Baker's home. Meanwhile, events had taken place that would provide for a public facility used for Town Meetings. These preparations began with the establishment of a Town Common during the first years of the 19th Century.

The Town Common

In the continuing tradition of the old church-based towns of colonial New England, the establishment of a Town Common within a typical Vermont town was driven more by religious motivations than by any municipal need. Stratton, consequently, was relatively slow in dealing with this issue; thus about 18 years would pass from the time Stratton's first settlers arrived in town to the time Stratton's Town Common finally was established. Before that time, the center of town activity was in the vicinity of Patch Tavern and along a road that led north, passed the corn mill to Jacob Batchellor's house and along the Wardsboro Road east from Patch Tavern down to Asa Phillips' farm and sawmill – an area now mostly covered by the Stratton Recreation Area.

Motivated by state legislation established in 1797, (see Chapter XIII, *Religion in Stratton*), the town began to consider the creation of a public place to hold town business and, more importantly, a place to worship. After Stratton's first Town Meeting of the new century, held in March 1800, the following petition was presented to the Selectmen for the establishment of a town center:

To the selectmen of Stratton, Gentlemen, we the subscribers have a mind for a town meeting to see if the town will agree for a centre we hereby do request you to call a town meeting as soon as is convenient.

Stratton August 15, 1800

John Greenwood, Sampson Bixby, Richard Bartlett, Samuel Blodgett, David Cook, James Thurston, Simon Davis, Jonas Woodward, David Stoddard, Ezra Estabrook, Calvin Batchellor, John Holman.

At a subsequent meeting, the Selectmen elected a committee to decide upon a Town Common upon which the town's meetinghouse could be built and it was decided to accept for this purpose a four-acre parcel of land from Thomas Lathrop.

The chosen area was located on the western boundary of Lathrop's farm – 4L4R – up the hill from his house. It stood upon the *South Rd.* that existed at that time. Although it would be several years before a meetinghouse was put on the town's agenda, the town accepted the Town Common, and a new cemetery was started thereon. Currently, only the foundation of the meetinghouse and two gravestones exist on the Town Common. Recently, the town has cleared the old *Wardsboro Rd.* – now called *Old Town Rd.* – as it progresses to the Town Common from the *West Jamaica Rd.* through what is now the Stratton Recreation Area.

On December 4, 1801, Mr. Lathrop deeded this parcel to the town with the understanding that it would revert back to him or his heirs if use as a Town Common was ever discontinued – specifically, if the use of the

meetinghouse which was to be built there was discontinued or moved to a different part of the town or – interestingly – if additional meetinghouses were built within town. Although this reads as though Lathrop intended to keep other denominations from building meetinghouses in Stratton, the language of the lease was standard and, therefore, it is doubtful that this was his intent.

In 1806/7 construction of a meetinghouse finally commenced upon the common and a few years later, a schoolhouse was built there.

In March of 1809, the town voted to hold all future meetings within the newly constructed meetinghouse. On September 5, 1809, the town officially met for the first time in the new meetinghouse to vote during the General Election. The meetinghouse continued as Stratton's official meeting place into the 1830s; however, on many a cold day, meetings were recessed from the large unheated meetinghouse to reconvene in the schoolhouse on the Town Common or within a nearby private home.

As stated previously, the establishments of Stratton's Town Common and its meetinghouse were more religiously than publicly motivated. Many of the details surrounding its inception and use are discussed in Chapter XIII, *Religion in Stratton*.

Going Downhill

Following the completion of the Stratton Turnpike in 1831, a semblance of a new village began to develop down the hill from the old village. This new location began to take shape upon the old Guild farm, where the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* now intersects with the *West Jamaica Rd.* At that time, the Town Common and its adjacent homes no longer were situated upon the main road through the town and so they were abandoned slowly. Beginning in 1833, the town struggled to free itself from holding meetings at the old meetinghouse. Several townsmen wished to construct another meetinghouse at that time, but a majority of voters disagreed.

In March 1836, the town voted to hold future town meetings at the home of Thomas Sprague, who lived on the old Guild farm on the east half of 3L4R. It appears that Sprague had moved from town before a meeting could be held in his home. The June 7, 1836, meeting was held at the home of Thomas Jones. Jones apparently had taken up residence at Sprague's house during that year. Subsequently, Luther Holbrook purchased the Guild farm. Holbrook turned his home into an inn in 1838. Holbrook's Inn soon became the center of activity in Stratton. Additionally, Holbrook held the position of Stratton's Postmaster and his barn was used as the pound. Beginning in September 1838, the inn became the town's official meeting place.

In 1843, Holbrook sold this lot to William Cummings who continued to operate the inn. Cummings sold this property to his son-in-law, Freeman Wyman, the following year. Additionally, in 1847, the town's new church, the Union Church, was built beside the inn. Apparently, the new

meetinghouse was used strictly as a Church, therefore town meetings continued to be held at the inn.

In 1852, Cheselton Allen became the innkeeper of Wyman's inn and so for the next few years meetings were said to be held at the inn of Cheselton Allen. In 1858, the old inn burned and a hotel was built on this same site. Immediately after the fire, a town meeting was held at the vestry of the meetinghouse. On August 21, 1858, meetings began being held at Freeman Wyman's house. In December, 1863, the town meeting was held at Wyman's Hotel. This continued as the town's usual meeting place until 1880.

Freeman Wyman died in 1870 and after his death, his wife, Lorena, leased a small parcel of land surrounding the meetinghouse to Stratton's Selectmen for as long as the meetinghouse was kept in repair. This parcel can be considered Stratton's second Town Common. Meanwhile, Lorena and her second husband, Willard Shepard, operated the hotel. The Town Meeting of 1880 was said to be held at the inn of Willard Shepard. The hotel went out of business shortly after Lorena's death in 1887, however, Town Meetings continued to be held there until 1892.

On July 18, 1892, a Town Meeting was held at the home of J. Thatcher Sprague, located just west of the current Town Hall. In November, 1893, a Town Meeting was held at the home of Milon F. Perry. The town paid Mr. Perry for use of "the hall" on several occasions. This may have been within the old hotel building. Meetings were held at "the hall" until 1898.

The Town House

In 1898, the town purchased a lot from Alva Styles, located west of the old hotel site. That year, the town established a Town House as a place to hold town meeting. Town meetings were held in the Town House (sometimes called the Town Hall) until 1933. It was sold in 1956. The old Town House still stands, now seen as *761 Stratton-Arlington Rd.*

Schoolhouse Meetings

At the March Meeting of 1933, Stratton voted to change its meeting place to the Lowe Schoolhouse (#5), located near what is now the *Bills Rd.* intersection with the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*. The first meeting there was held to vote on the repeal of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution. The 1934 March Meeting also was held at the Lowe schoolhouse; however, the warning for the 1935 meeting stated that the town would meet at the Town Hall (Schoolhouse #2), located near the *Shepardson Rd.* intersection with the *West Jamaica Rd.* (*258 West Jamaica Rd.*). Meetings were held at this so-called Town Hall until 1943. At that year's meeting, the town voted to hold future meetings at the Schoolhouse, implying that they would be held at the only true school left in Stratton – Schoolhouse #5. Stratton continued to hold town meetings within Schoolhouse #5 until the new Town Hall was completed in 1966.



**Ruins of the Wyman Hotel
circa 1910**



**The 1898 Town House is on the left of this view,
westward along the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.***

Photos courtesy of the Ethel Eddy Collection



Town Meeting 1962 in Schoolhouse #5

Mr. And Mrs. Fred Holton, Ralph Pike, Malvine Cole, Lee Bills, Mr. And Mrs. George Wendland, Irene French, Vivian Tuttle, [Rose Pike], Cathy Samson, (nonvoter) Inez Bills (11 of 13 voters)

Photo from the Town's Archives

The Town Hall

This building was constructed by Paul Brazer and Stub Samson, beginning in 1958 and continuing over several years. Construction was delayed due to a lack of funds in 1959, but enough money was appropriated to complete the project. The new Town Hall was dedicated at a special celebration of Stratton's 200th birthday held on July 30, 1961. At that time, 200 copies of the town charter were purchased to help celebrate the momentous event.

Apparently, the Board of Civil Authority held the first public meeting within the Town Hall, but not until September 25, 1965. The first Town Meeting held there occurred on March 1, 1966. Town meetings continue to be held there to the present.

Construction of Stratton's Town Hall beginning in 1959



Photos courtesy of Carolyn Underwood



The Town Hall 2000

Town Offices

For most all of Stratton's history, the Town Office was kept within the home of the Town Clerk. There is no mention of a separate town office until about 1942. It may be that Town Records were kept within Schoolhouse #2 at that time and perhaps the Town Clerk worked from this building.

From 1946 to 1963, Irene French kept the office within her home (618 *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*). After Vivian Tuttle took over as Town Clerk in 1963, she set up an office in her home (now 498 *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*).

The Town Hall was completed in the early 1960s and a large vault had been installed there, specifically for the Town Records, but even after that time, Vivian Tuttle kept the office within her home. Once Andy King became Town Clerk in 1973, he moved the town office into the Town Hall, appropriating the stage for that purpose. This arrangement continued until the current Town Office (9 *West Jamaica Rd.*) was completed in 1988. This building was dedicated to the memory of Mr. King in 1991 and, in 1999, the Listers' Office was dedicated to the memory of M. Lee and Inez Bills for their 50 years of service to Stratton.



Stratton Town Office

The Town Garage

During most of Stratton's existence, the highway surveyors and later the Road Commissioners retained the equipment necessary for maintaining the roads on their own property and within their own barns.

For many years, during the mid-20th Century, the town kept a small garage on the west side of *Pike Hollow Rd.*, a short distance from the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* intersection. And, from the beginning of the 1960s until the Town Garage was built in 1975, the road crew maintained a storage area where the Town Office stands today. The town's dumpsters were kept at this site and additional dumpsters were kept near the *Brazers Way – Pikes Falls Rd.* intersection for a few years. In 1975, the town bought land and built a garage northwest of the intersection of the *West Jamaica Rd.* and *Mountain Rd.*. Since that time, this complex has increased to include two buildings, a salt shed and a refuse area.

The Volunteer Fire Department

For many years, Stratton relied on mutual aid agreements with surrounding towns for its fire protection. In 1967, the Stratton Mountain Volunteer Fire Department was formed. At that time, this organization purchased a makeshift truck, which was kept at the Maintenance area at the ski resort. It was not until 1978 that the homeowners at Stratton Mountain purchased a standard fire engine.

In 1985, as a requirement set by the state for additional development within the resort, a Fire Station was constructed on property donated by Stratton Corporation, located opposite the junction of *Mountain Rd.* and *Brazers Way (5 Brazers Way)*. In 1988, a ladder truck was added to the fleet and in 1995 an even larger fire engine was purchased. Over the years, Stratton's Volunteer Fire Department has consisted of between 12 and 15 volunteer members.

Town Officers (1788 – present):

Selectmen:

- 1788 Timothy Morsman, Solomon Gale,
Benjamin Hobbs
- 1789 John Greenwood, Samuel Boutell,
Sampson Bixby
- 1790 John Greenwood, Clark Stone, Stephen
Thayer
- 1791 John Greenwood, Bille Mann, Stephen
Thayer
- 1792 John Greenwood, Clark Stone, Joseph
Patch
- 1793 Clark Stone, Timothy Morsman, Asa
Phillips
- 1794 Samuel Boutell, Bille Mann, Asa
Phillips
- 1795 Stephen Thayer, Clark Stone, Solomon
Gale
- 1796 John Wait, Jacob Allen, Sampson
Bixby
- 1797 Samuel Boutell, John Holman, Bille
Mann
- 1798 Sampson Bixby, Samuel Boutell, John
Greenwood
- 1799 Samuel Boutell, Sampson Bixby, John
Greenwood
- 1800 Samuel Boutell, Thomas Lathrop,
Bille Mann
- 1801 Samuel Boutell, Bille Mann, Samuel
Marble
- 1802 Samuel Marble, Jacob French, Ira
Scott
- 1803 Jacob French, Thomas Lathrop, Ira
Scott
- 1804 Sampson Bixby, John Greenwood,
Abel Kidder
- 1805 Samuel Boutell, Bille Mann, George
Oliver
- 1806 George Oliver, Sampson Bixby, Abel
Kidder
- 1807 Samuel Boutell, Sampson Bixby,
William Stearns
- 1808 Samuel Boutell, Sampson Bixby, Abel
Kidder
- 1809 George Oliver, Thomas W. Millet,
Nathaniel Moulton
- 1810 Sampson Bixby, John Greenwood,
Thomas W. Millet
- 1811 Sampson Bixby, John Greenwood,
Samuel Boutell
- 1812 Samuel Boutell, Sampson Bixby, John
Greenwood
- 1813 Samuel Boutell, Sampson Bixby, Ezra
Estabrook
- 1814 Sampson Bixby, John Glazier, John
Greenwood
- 1815 Samuel Boutell, Sampson Bixby, John
Greenwood
- 1816 Ezra Estabrook, Abel Grout, Jr.,
William G. Pike
- 1817 Ezra Estabrook, Abel Grout, Jr.,
William G. Pike
- 1818 Ezra Estabrook, Abel Grout, Jr.,
William G. Pike
- 1819 Ezra Estabrook, Abel Grout, Jr.,
William G. Pike
- 1820 William G. Pike, Ezra Estabrook,
Moses Forrester
- 1821 William G. Pike, John Glazier, Ezra
Estabrook
- 1822 William G. Pike, Moses Forrester,
John Glazier
- 1823 Moses Forrester, Ezra Estabrook, John
Glazier
- 1824 William G. Pike, Richard Scott, Asa
Phillips
- 1825 Richard Scott, John Glazier, William
G. Pike
- 1826 Richard Scott, Stephen Ballard, John
Glazier
- 1827 Richard Scott, Stephen Ballard,
William G. Pike
- 1828 Richard Scott, Stephen Ballard,
William G. Pike
- 1829 Richard Scott, Abel Grout, Jr.,
Jedidiah Morse
- 1830 Richard Scott, Abel Grout, Jedidiah
Morse
- 1831 Abel Grout, Jr., John Glazier, Ashbel
Kidder
- 1832 Ashbel Kidder, Baxter Lyon, David
Rice
- 1833 Stephen Ballard, Richard Scott, Elias
Bassett
- 1834 Stephen Ballard, Baxter Lyon, Noah
Hill
- 1835 Benjamin Thatcher, Noah Hill,
Richard Scott
- 1836 Richard Scott, John Underwood, Levi
Hale, Jr.
- 1837 Stephen Ballard, Ezekiel Estabrook
Warner Howard
- 1838 Stephen Ballard, Ezekiel Estabrook,
Ashbel Kidder
- 1839 Stephen Ballard, John N. Glazier,
David Rice
- 1840 David Rice, John Underwood, Isaac N.
Pike
- 1841 John N. Glazier, Stephen Ballard,
Warren Higley
- 1842 John N. Glazier, Ezekiel Estabrook,
Joseph Blodgett
- 1843 John N. Glazier, Ezekiel Estabrook,
Amos Parsons, Jr.
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- 1844 John N. Glazier, Ezekiel Estabrook, Amos Parsons, Jr.
 1845 John N. Glazier, Ezekiel Estabrook, David Eddy
 1846 Amos Knights, John Underwood, Hudson Grout
 1847 Amos Knights, Otis P. Parsons, John N. Glazier.
 1848 Ebenezer Allen, Abel Grout, James Fuller
 1849 Luther Torrey, Hiram Ames, NJ Shaw
 1850 Rufus Lyman, Freeman Wyman, David Eddy
 1851 Rufus Lyman, Amos Parsons, Prentis B. Putnam
 1852 Rufus Lyman, Ezekiel Estabrook, Melvin A. Knowlton (Prentis B. Putnam replaced Ezekiel Estabrook who died August 19, 1852)
 1853 Rufus Lyman, John N. Glazier, Otis P. Parsons
 1854 Rufus Lyman, John N. Glazier, Prentis B. Putnam.
 1855 John N. Glazier, Rufus Lyman, Prentis B. Putnam
 1856 John N. Glazier, David Eddy, Otis P. Parsons.
 1857 David Eddy, John N. Glazier, Otis P. Parsons
 1858 Rufus Lyman, MA Knowlton, HP Forrester
 1859 John N. Glazier, MA Knowlton, Joseph Pike
 1860 Ralph Parsons, John N. Glazier, Rufus Lyman
 1861 Rufus Lyman, John N. Glazier, David Eddy
 1862 Henry P. Forrester, Chester O. Holden, Jacob B. Grout
 1863 HP Forrester, JB Grout, HW Estabrook
 1864 Rufus Lyman, MA Knowlton, JN Glazier
 1865 Rufus Lyman, John N. Glazier, Melvin A. Knowlton
 1866 MA Knowlton, Jacob B. Grout, Henry P. Forrester
 1867 MA Knowlton, AH Pike, AK Estabrook – Selectmen. (Jonas H. Smith replaced AK Estabrook who died May 21, 1867)
 1868 AH Pike, JF Hubbard, HW Estabrook
 1869 MA Knowlton, Joseph Pike, Rufus Lyman
 1870 MA Knowlton, Rufus Lyman, Jacob B. Grout
 1871 Edwin L. Grout, Nathaniel E. Hart, E. Allen (In April 1871 Daniel Harris was chosen to replace NE Hart who had moved.)
 1872 EL Grout, LF Sheldon, Ebenezer Allen
 1873 Jacob B. Grout, Wm. R. Lyman, John Dunlap
 1874 MA Knowlton, EH Willis, AH Pike
 1875 Alex. H. Pike, Wm. R. Lyman, MA Knowlton
 1876 MA Knowlton, Evander H. Willis, Elias Cobb
 1877 Wm. R. Lyman, Henry P. Forrester, Jerome B. Temple
 1878 WR Lyman, JB Temple, LW Sprague
 1879 Willie R. Lyman, HP Forrester, LW Sprague
 1880 Henry P. Forrester, Lyman W. Sprague, EL Grout
 1881 HP Forrester, Edwin L. Grout, Calvin N. Pike
 1882 Calvin N. Pike, Wm. R. Lyman, AD Knight
 1883 Henry P. Forrester, Wm. R. Lyman, Calvin N. Pike
 1884 Abel J. Pike, Henry P. Forrester, Calvin N. Pike
 1885 Abel J. Pike, Calvin N. Pike, HP Forrester
 1886 AJ Pike, Calvin N. Pike, Herbert F. Willis
 1887 Herbert F. Willis, HP Forrester, Joel F. Grout (Joel F. Grout, Jr. was chosen to replace his father who had removed)
 1888 CN Pike, AD Knight, EL Grout
 1889 Henry P. Forrester, AD Knight, Elmer Eddy
 1890 AD Knight, Elmer Eddy, George M. Smith
 1891 George M. Smith, Henry P. Forrester, JF Grout, Jr.
 1892 AD Knight, EA Eddy, JB Temple
 1893 HP Forrester, AD Knight, CN Pike
 1894 HP Forrester, AD Knight, CN Pike
 1895 HP Forrester, AD Knight, JC Jones
 1896 HP Forrester, CN Pike, JF Grout
 1897 HP Forrester, AD Knight, EA Eddy
 1898 HP Forrester, EA Eddy, AD Knight
 1899 EA Eddy, HP Forrester, AD Knight
 1900 EA Eddy, HP Forrester, AD Knight
 1901 EA Eddy, HP Forrester, AD Knight
 1902 AD Knight, OE Allen, OA Johnson
 1903 HP Forrester, OE Allen, AD Knight
 1904 HP Forrester, EA Eddy, AD Knight
 1905 HP Forrester, EA Eddy, AD Knight
 1906 HP Forrester, EA Eddy, AD Knight
 1907 HP Forrester, EA Eddy, AD Knight
 1908 HP Forrester, EA Eddy, AJ Pike (George M. Hurd was appointed to replace AJ Pike resigned)
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(1909 marked the beginning of three-year terms for Selectmen. The first year one, two and three year terms were elected to initiate the rotation.)

- 1909 EA Eddy (1 year), HP Forrester (2 years) Ray E. Lyman (3 years).
1910 EA Eddy [HP Forrester, Ray E. Lyman]
1911 HP Forrester [Ray E. Lyman, EA Eddy]
1912 Ray E. Lyman [HP Forrester, EA Eddy]
1913 EA Eddy [Ray E. Lyman, HP Forrester]
1914 HP Forrester [EA Eddy, Ray E. Lyman]
1915 Ray E. Lyman [HP Forrester, EA Eddy]
1916 EA Eddy [Ray E. Lyman, HP Forrester]
1917 WE Forrester [EA Eddy, Ray E. Lyman]
1918 Ray E. Lyman [WE Forrester, EA Eddy]
1919 EA Eddy, [Ray E. Lyman, WE Forrester]
1920 DH Forrester [EA Eddy, Ray E. Lyman]
1921 Ray E. Lyman [DH Forrester, EA Eddy]
1922 EA Eddy [Ray E. Lyman, DH Forrester] (August 18, 1922 – Ernest Pike appointed to replace Ray E. Lyman – moved)
1923 Henry Wheeler [EA Eddy, DH Forrester] (failed to elect Lyman's replacement so appointed DH Forester)
1924 DH Forrester, [Henry Wheeler, EA Eddy]
1925 EA Eddy [DH Forrester, Henry Wheeler]
1926 Henry Wheeler [EA Eddy, DH Forrester]
1927 DH Forrester [Henry Wheeler, EA Eddy]
1928 EA Eddy [DH Forrester, Henry Wheeler]
1929 Ernest Tuthill [EA Eddy, DH Forrester]
1930 Henry Wheeler [Ernest Tuthill, EA Eddy]
1931 EA Eddy, [Henry Wheeler, Ernest Tuthill]
1932 Ernest Tuthill [EA Eddy, Henry Wheeler]
1933 DH Forrester [Ernest Tuthill, EA Eddy]
1934 Floyd C. Hurd [DH Forrester, Ernest Tuthill]
1935 Charles Samson [Floyd C. Hurd, DH Forrester]
1936 Ernest Tuthill [Charles Samson, Floyd C. Hurd]
1937 Floyd C. Hurd [Ernest Tuthill, Charles Samson]
1938 Lyman Green [Floyd C. Hurd, Ernest Tuthill]
1939 Ralph Pike [Lyman Green, Floyd C. Hurd] Lyman Green resigned March 1939 elected Charles Samson)
1940 Floyd C. Hurd [Ralph Pike, Charles Samson] (Charles Samson resigned – elected Elmer H. Eddy for 1 year; Floyd Hurd resigned in December, 1940 and Lawrence A. Denker was appointed until March Meeting)
1941 Elmer H. Eddy 3 yrs; Lawrence Denker 2 yrs, [Ralph Pike]
1942 (not recorded – apparently Ralph Pike elected) [Elmer H. Eddy, Lawrence A. Denker] (Elmer H. Eddy resigned and Robert Hromada was appointed by the Selectmen)
1943 Raymond Styles [Ralph Pike, Robert Hromada]
1944 Robert Hromada [Raymond Styles, Ralph Pike]
1945 Ralph Pike [Robert Hromada, Raymond Styles]
1946 Raymond Styles [Ralph Pike, Robert Hromada] Raymond Styles resigned and Herbert French appointed.
1947 Robert Hromada 3 yr; Richard Holman 2 yr [Ralph Pike]
1948 Ralph Pike [Robert Hromada, Richard Holman]
1949 Richard Holman [Ralph Pike, Robert Hromada] (Richard Holman resigns and Paul Brazer appointed)
1950 Stanley Samson 3 yrs; Paul Brazer 2 yrs [Ralph Pike]
1951 Ralph Pike [Stanley Samson, Paul Brazer]
1952 Percy Knapp [Ralph Pike, Stanley Samson]
1953 Stanley Samson [Percy Knapp, Ralph Pike]
1954 Ralph Pike [Stanley Samson, Percy Knapp]
1955 Paul Brazer [Ralph Pike Stanley Samson] (Stanley Samson resigned all offices, LeRoy Wagner appointed for 1 yr.)
1956 Leroy Wagner [Paul Brazer, Ralph Pike]
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- 1957 Ralph Pike [LeRoy Wagner, Paul Brazer]
- 1958 LeRoy Wagner [Ralph Pike, Paul Brazer]
- 1959 Ralph Pike [Paul Brazer, Fred Holton]
- 1960 Ralph Pike, Fred Holton, Paul Brazer
- 1961 Fred Holton [Ralph Pike, Stanley Samson]
- 1962 Ralph Pike [Stanley Samson, Fred Holton]
- 1963 Stanley Samson [Elmer Tuttle, Ralph Pike]
- 1964 Stanley Samson [Elmer Tuttle, Ralph Pike]
- 1965 Stanley Samson [Elmer Tuttle, Ralph Pike]
- 1966 Stanley Samson [Elmer Tuttle, Ralph Pike]
- 1967 Stanley Samson [Elmer Tuttle, Ralph Pike]
- 1968 Stanley Samson [Elmer Tuttle, Ralph Pike]
- 1969 GE Herre [Stanley Samson, Ralph Pike]
- 1970 Ralph Pike [Stanley Samson, GE Herre]
- 1971 Stanley Samson [Ralph Pike, GE Herre]
- 1972 Ray Liller [Stanley Samson, Ralph Pike]
- (In 1973, the Town approved expansion of the Select Board from three to five members – one three-year term and two one-year terms to be voted each year. For the following years, Selectmen are listed in no given order.)*
- 1973 Ray Liller, Ralph Pike, Stewart Underwood, Herbert Schachinger, Arthur Wright
- 1974 Ray Liller, Ralph Pike, Stewart Underwood, Herbert Schachinger, Arthur Wright
- 1975 Al Dupell, Herbert Schachinger, Stewart Underwood, William C. Clark, Arthur Wright
- 1976 Stewart Underwood, Herbert Schachinger, William C. Clark, Al Dupell, Ray Liller
- 1977 Herbert Schachinger, Charles Allen, Al Dupell, Virginia Over, Malvine Cole
- 1978 Al Dupell, Herbert Schachinger, Charles Allen, Virginia Over, Malvine Cole
- 1979 Al Dupell, Herbert Schachinger, Charles Allen, Virginia Over, Malvine Cole
- 1980 Al Dupell, Lawrence Bills, Charles Allen, Virginia Over, Malvine Cole
- 1981 Al Dupell, Lawrence Bills, Charles Allen, Virginia Over, Malvine Cole
- 1982 Al Dupell, Lawrence Bills, Charles Allen, Virginia Over, Malvine Cole
- 1983 Al Dupell, Lawrence Bills, Virginia Over, Arne Lauren, Keith LaMarche
- 1984 Al Dupell, Robert Hardy, Virginia Over, Arne Lauren, Keith LaMarche
- 1985 Al Dupell, Herbert Schachinger, Keith LaMarche, Arne Lauren, Robert Hardy
- 1986 Al Dupell, Robert Hardy, Arne Lauren, Lawrence Bills, Keith LaMarche
- 1987 Al Dupell, Arne Lauren, Lawrence Bills, Keith LaMarche, Kenneth Tuttle
- 1988 Al Dupell, Arne Lauren, Lawrence Bills, William Dunkel, Robert Hardy
- 1989 Al Dupell, Arne Lauren, Lawrence Bills, Robert Hardy, Diana Stugger
- 1990 Al Dupell, Arne Lauren, Lawrence Bills, Robert Hardy, Diana Stugger
- 1991 Al Dupell, Arne Lauren, Lawrence Bills, Robert Hardy, Diana Stugger
- 1992 Al Dupell, Lawrence Bills, Robert Hardy, Diana Stugger, Earl Pickering
- 1993 Al Dupell, Lawrence Bills, Diana Stugger, Ray Hawksley, Earl Pickering
- 1994 Al Dupell, Lawrence Bills, Ray Hawksley, Diana Stugger, Ken Maurer
- 1995 Al Dupell, Earl Pickering, Ray Hawksley, Diana Stugger, Ken Maurer
- 1996 Al Dupell, Lawrence Bills, Ray Hawksley, Diana Stugger, Ken Maurer
- 1997 Al Dupell, Earl Pickering, Lawrence Bills, Ken Maurer, Diana Stugger
- 1998 Al Dupell, Earl Pickering, Lawrence Bills, Chris Liller, Keith LaMarche
- 1999 Al Dupell, Earl Pickering, Lawrence Bills, Chris Liller, Steve Maynard
- 2000 Al Dupell, Earl Pickering, Lawrence Bills, Chris Liller, Steve Maynard
-

Town Clerks:

1788 – 1793 Asa Phillips
1793 – 1794 Stephen Thayer
1794 – 1798 Asa Phillips
1799 Thomas Lathrop
1800 Asa Phillips
1800 Richard Bartlett (one meeting)
1800 – 1808 Thomas Lathrop
1808 – 1814 Thomas Millet
1814 – 1816 John Shepardson
1816 Thomas Millet
1816 – 1818 Ezra Estabrook
1818 – 1822 Thomas Millet
1822 – 1823 Ezra Estabrook
1823 – 1825 Richard Scott
1825 – 1832 Asa Phillips
1832 – 1834 Elias Bassett
1834 – 1835 Benjamin Thatcher
1835 – 1849 Richard Scott
1849 – 1854 Freeman Wyman
1854 – 1855 LaFayette Sheldon
1855 – 1857 Freeman Wyman
1857 – 1891 LaFayette Sheldon
1891 Abigail Sheldon was appointed to
replace her deceased husband on
December 28, 1891.
1892 – 1903 Orlando H. Palmer
1903 – 1904 Hermon Elmer Eddy
1904 – 1932 Elmer Albert Eddy

*(In 1923, the March meeting was deemed
“illegal” – John Clayton was elected Town
Clerk at that meeting, but at a special town
meeting held March 31, 1923, to correct
the illegality of the first meeting, EA Eddy
was elected Town Clerk.)*

1932 – 1933 Millard O. Johnson
1933 – 1934 Floyd C. Hurd
1934 – 1935 Millard O. Johnson
1935 – 1941 Jennie Holman
1941 – 1942 Marjorie Holman
(resigned July 18, 1942)
1942 – 1945 Lawrence Denker
(resigned October 15, 1945)
1945 – 1963 Irene French
(resigned November 12, 1963)
1963 – 1973 Vivian Tuttle
(three-year terms begin in 1974)
1973 – 1991 Andrew King (resigned)
1991 – 1993 Terri Bills Garland
1993 – 1999 Patricia Coolidge
1999 Constance Montemagni
(resigned March, 1999)
1999 – present D. Kent Young

Treasurers:

1788 Sampson Bixby
1789 Joel Hale
1790 Solomon Gale
1791 – 1792 Joseph Patch
1793 – 1798 Sampson Bixby
1799 Samuel Marble
1800 – 1801 Jacob Batchellor
1802 – 1807 Thomas Lathrop (resigned)
1807 – 1810 George Oliver
1811 Samuel Marble
1812 – 1814 Thomas Millet
1815 Samuel Marble
1816 – 1817 Thomas Millet
1818 – 1825 Samuel Marble
1826 – 1830 Asa Phillips
1831 Richard Scott
1832 – 1833 Elias Bassett
1834 – 1835 Benjamin Thatcher
1836 – 1838 Richard Scott
1839 – 1849 Ezekiel Estabrook
1850 David Eddy
1851 – 1855 LaFayette Sheldon
1856 Freeman Wyman
1857 – 1867 LaFayette Sheldon
1868 Joseph Pike
1869 LaFayette Sheldon (resigned)
1869 – 1870 Joseph Pike
1871 – 1881 LaFayette Sheldon
1882 Rufus Lyman
1883 – 1884 LaFayette Sheldon
1885 – 1888 William Lyman
1889 LaFayette Sheldon
1890 – 1891 Calvin N. Pike
1892 – 1902 Orlando H. Palmer (resigned)
1902 – 1904 Hermon Elmer Eddy (resigned)
1904 – 1913 William Lyman
1914 – 1916 Emma Lyman
1917 – 1922 Mary Lyman
1923 – 1926 Inez Eddy
1927 – 1933 Doris Johnson
1934 Edgar H. Tuthill
1935 – 1940 Charles Holman
1941 – 1942 Marjorie Holman
1943 – 1945 Lawrence Denker
(resigned October 15, 1945)
1945 – 1963 Irene French
(resigned November 12, 1963)
1963 – 1970 Ruth Samson
1971 – 1972 Joann Liller
(three-year terms begin in 1974)
1973 – 1991 Andrew King (resigned)
1991 – 1994 Constance Montemagni
(resigned)
1994 – 1999 Laura Hawksley
1999 – 2000 Tamara Buonvino (resigned).
2000 – present Constance Montemagni

Stratton's Representatives to the General Assembly:

(Listed by year elected for the legislative session beginning the following year.)

This office was elected in Stratton, beginning in 1799.

1799 – 1816 Samuel Boutell
 1817 – 1819 Bille Mann
 1820 Abel Grout
 1821 Bille Mann
 1822 Abel Grout
 1823 Bille Mann
 1824 – 1826 Richard Scott
 1827 (unknown)
 1828 – 1829 Richard Scott
 1830 (unknown)
 1831 Abel Grout
 1832 – 1833 Stephen Ballard
 1834 – 1835 Benjamin Thatcher
 1836 – 1838 David Rice
 1839 Joseph Blodgett
 1840 David Rice
 1841 Ashbel Kidder
 1842 John N. Glazier
 1843 David Rice
 1844 – 1847 Amos Parsons, Jr.
 1848 Joseph Blodgett
 1849 John Underwood
 1850 – 1851 Rufus Lyman
 1852 John N. Glazier
 1853 Rufus Lyman
 1854 Stephen Grout
 1855 – 1856 John N. Glazier
 1857 – 1859 Melvin A. Knowlton
 1860 – 1861 Henry W. Estabrook
 1862 – 1863 Jacob B. Grout
 1864 (unknown)
 1865 N. Newton Glazier
 1866 Joseph Tripp
 1867 N. Newton Glazier
 1868 – 1869 Melvin A. Knowlton

In 1870 two-year terms began.

1870 Jacob B. Grout
 1872 EH Willis
 1874 Moses Pike
 1876 EH Willis
 1878, 1880 AD Knight
 1882, 1884 Willard Shepard
 1886 Herbert F. Willis
 1888 AD Knight
 1890 George M. Smith
 1892 AD Knight
 1894 Charles H. Grout

1896 Orrin A. Johnson
 1898 Elmer A. Eddy
 1900 Franklin G. Lackey
 1902 Hermon E. Eddy
 1904 AJ Pike
 1906 EC Pike
 1908 DH Forrester
 1910 Ray E. Lyman
 1912 George M. Hurd
 1914 EA Eddy
 1916 Ernest C. Pike
 1918 Ray E. Lyman
 1920 Ray E. Lyman
 1922 Douglas H. Forrester
 1924 Millard O. Johnson
 1926 Ernest C. Pike
 1928 Millard O. Johnson
 1930 Ralph Pike
 1932 Lyman M. Green
 1934 Melvin H. Robinson
 1936, 1938 Charles Holman
 1940 Richard L. Holman
 1942, 1944, 1946 Mirth Hromada
 1948, 1950 Ralph Pike
 1952 Irene French
 1954 Malvine Cole
 1956, 1958, 1960 Ethel Eddy
 1962, 1964 Vivian Tuttle

In 1965, Vermont changed to representation based on population instead of locality. At that time Stratton was placed into a district with other small towns. The district in which Stratton belongs changes periodically, dependant upon reapportionment studies. Stratton's assigned districts over the years are as follows:

From 1965 to 1974 Stratton belonged to *District #72* with Townshend, Grafton, Jamaica, Wardsboro and Windham.

From 1975 to 1982 Stratton belonged to *Windham-1* with Townshend, Newfane, Brookline and Windham.

From 1983 to 1992, Stratton belonged to *Windham-Windsor-1* with Wardsboro, Jamaica, Londonderry and Weston.

From 1993 to the present, Stratton belongs to *Windham-4* with Dover, Jamaica, Londonderry and Wardsboro.

Representatives for those districts were:

1965 – 1976 Royal B. Cutts (R)
 1976 – 1982 Stephen A. Morse (R)
 1982 – 1988 Michael Burnhardt (R)
 1988 – 1998 Wendell Coleman (R / I)
 1998 – Present Rick Hube (R)

Changes in Stratton's Population over the Years

- 1790 – 1800 Stratton's population grew by 285% from 95 to 271; but the influx of new settlers was even greater since 13 of the 24 families listed in 1790 (54%) had moved away before 1800.
- 1800 – 1810 Stratton's population dropped by about 2% from 271 to 267; however the influx of new settlers was much greater since 29 of the 51 families listed in 1800 (57%) had moved away by 1810.
- 1810 – 1820 Stratton's population grew by about 2% from 267 to 272; however the influx of new settlers was much greater since 24 of the 43 families listed in 1810 (56%) had moved away by 1820.
- 1820 – 1830 Stratton's population grew by 23% from 272 to 335. Finally a majority of families from one census to the next remain in town. Only 18 of the 51 families listed in the 1820 census (33%) left before 1830.
- 1830 – 1840 Stratton's population grew by about 2% from 335 to 342; however 34 of the 57 families listed in the 1830 census (60%) had moved away by 1840.
- 1840 – 1850 Stratton's population dropped 17% from 342 to 285; half of the families (28 of 56) had left Stratton between 1840 and 1850; therefore, a large number of new settlers were still arriving in Stratton during the 1840s, despite the drop in population and the fact that the sons of some of the 1840 households had established households of their own by 1850.
- 1850 – 1860 Stratton's population grew 27% from 285 to 361. This was largely due to the addition of the Somerset annex that added 10 households totaling 51 people, all of whom would have been considered citizens of Somerset before 1858. Also 42 of the 61 families in Stratton in 1850 were still there in 1860, indicating that the population was not so fluid as before 1850 (31% left). It appears as though 11 additional households were added during this decade besides the 10 from Somerset and the 19 that apparently had exchanged hands.
- 1860 – 1870 Stratton's population dropped 19% from 361 to 294. 44 of the 82 households of 1860 were still in Stratton in 1870 (46% left Stratton). Seven less households – only 75 – existed by the end of the decade. Therefore, 31 new families were established in Stratton at that time.
- 1870 – 1880 Stratton's population remained stable 294 to 296; however only 35 of the 75 heads of households in 1870 were still in Stratton in 1880 (53% had left Stratton). By that year, the number of households had dropped to 66.
-

- 1880 – 1900 Stratton's population dropped 9% from 296 to 270. Only 26 of the 66 heads of households in 1900 had lived in Stratton in 1880. Therefore about 60% of the 1880 population left Stratton over the next two decades. These statistics were taken over a twenty-year period, since the 1890 census records had been destroyed by fire.
- 1900 – 1910 Stratton's population dropped 68% from 270 to 86 (note that this decade was opposite of 1790 to 1800). The number of occupied households dropped from 66 to 21; 14 of which had remained from 1900. In other words, 79% of the population of 1900 left before 1910.
- 1910 – 1920 Stratton's population grew 4.7% from 86 to 90 (33 of this number were lumbermen living at the boarding house at the old Grout Job). 11 of the 19 households in 1920 were carried over from 1910. Since there were 21 households in 1910, 48% left before 1920.
- 1920 – 1930 Stratton's population dropped 39% from 90 to 55.
- 1930 – 1940 Stratton's population grew 112% from 55 to 117.
- 1940 – 1950 Stratton's population dropped 54% from 117 to 54.
- 1950 – 1960 Stratton's population dropped 22% from 54 to 42 (Lowest population since the first settlement. Officially, the census recorded a population of just 24, but this was not correct).
- 1960 – 1970 Stratton's population grew 148% from 42 to 104, mostly due to the growth brought on by the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort.
- 1970 – 1980 Stratton's population grew 17% from 104 to 122.
- 1980 – 1990 Stratton's population remained stable 122 to 121, regardless of the expansion of the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort's vacation home market.
- 1990 – 2000 Statistics from the 2000 census show Stratton with a population of 136, of which 107 were adults. This is an increase of about 12% since 1990.
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Stratton's Politics

At the time Vermont entered the Union in 1791, strong political affiliations had not yet intensified within the state, while the right of suffrage seems to have emerged rather awkwardly in many towns. Stratton was among those towns that failed to participate in the elections for Representatives to Congress at that time. In fact, Stratton's citizens evidently failed to participate in any General Election, except one, before 1799.

Apparently, the first General Election held by Stratton's officials occurred on December 30, 1794, so warned by Asa Phillips, Constable, on December 18th. Surprisingly, the Town records read as follows:

"The inhabitants of the town of Stratton though notified as above did not see course to meet nor to choose a representative to Congress. Attested – Asa Phillips – Constable for Stratton."

The call for a vote went out again and this time the Freemen of Stratton met on February 10, 1795 and all present voted for Nathaniel Niles, a Jeffersonian Republican (an affiliation also called Anti-Federalist or Democratic Republican). Niles failed to win the overall election. After that time, a small gap occurred in the enfranchisement of Stratton's voters and it was not until 1799 that Stratton again participated in a General Election. This was an election of state officers, including Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Treasurer and the twelve members of the Governor's Council.

By the beginning of the 19th Century, about the same time that Stratton began participating regularly in the General Election process, Vermont's political history had become a victim of bitter factionalism between Federalists and Anti-Federalists. At that time, distinct parallels could be found between church affiliation and political affiliation. Traditional Congregationalists tended to remain supporters of the Federalist Party, while more radical and evangelical denominations such as the Baptists tended to support the Jeffersonian Republicans – a parallel that lasted through the first few decades of the 19th Century. The poorer mountain communities like Stratton tended to vote for the Federalist Party, reflecting their conservative Congregationalist religious base.

Beginning in the mid-1830s, the voters of Vermont consistently followed the views of the Whig and Republican parties, respectively – that is until the 1980s arrived. In fact, Vermont had an unbroken chain of Republican Governors from 1854 to 1963 – a time seen by many as "enlightened," with the drawbacks of bitter factionalism on the wayside and the state in the hands of a political party capable of adapting to change – a view many would say is in contrast to that of the Republican Party of today.

Representation and the Story of Statewide Property Taxes

Until 1965, Vermont's General Assembly – the House of Representatives – consisted of a single delegate from each town within the state with no consideration to population. When Stratton had the smallest number of

voting citizens in the state around 1960, it was said that each of these voters had more power than any other voter in the United States. This was because Stratton had a representative within the state government who was on equal terms with representatives that had thousands upon thousands of constituents. Since Vermont consists mainly of small towns, a legislature based on locality ultimately was controlled by a small percentage of the overall population – a system that did not coincide with the connotation of representation set forth in the Constitution of the United States.

The result of this arrangement was that Vermont's "Local Control" Legislature passed many laws that helped small town Vermont and burdened towns with large populations. One interesting result of this arrangement occurred in 1890 when the Legislature passed a state levy on Grand Lists to centralize the collection and redistribution of education funds. As noted by Greg Sanford, Vermont's archivist at Vermont's Secretary of State's office, a November 26, 1902 Free Press editorial attacked one such proposal to further pool money for education from the wealthier communities as "*Communism runs mad! ... picking pockets through the State School tax.... Some towns pay in more than they get back...*" – an opinion similarly echoed at the end of the 20th Century. A statewide property tax was not something new at that time, since Vermont had depended on property taxes to support the state government since the 1780s. Eventually, some forty years after the statewide education property tax was implemented, continued attacks on this system culminated in its demise and a state income tax was created in its stead in 1931.

Circumstances were different for Stratton during that first era of statewide education property taxes – Stratton was among the poor receiving towns at that time. Since then though, two things changed. First, Stratton became home of the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort, eventually placing Stratton among the wealthier towns. In fact, the ski industry tended to shift the wealth to the once-poor mountain towns and away from the population centers – towns fortunate enough to have a large tax-base and a small municipal budget. Second, in 1965, Vermont shifted representation to a population-based system instead of a locality-based system. After that time, Stratton was rolled into a district with neighboring towns. Meanwhile, with the tables turned, a statewide education property tax once again has come to light with the passage of Act 60 in 1997. This time, Stratton pays into this system far far more than it receives.

Until the more recent past, Stratton's voters generally have followed suit with the rest of the state. Since the 1980s, it has been Vermont that has turned away from a long tradition of Republicanism, while Stratton has remained on that somewhat old but steady traditional course established in the distant past. The following paragraphs denote the results of the Gubernatorial and Presidential elections in this town, indicating Stratton's true political affiliations over the years.

Stratton Votes for a Governor

Gubernatorial elections were held yearly in Vermont until 1870. After that time, this state's general elections have been held every two years. Evidently, it was not until 1799 that Stratton participated in the general election process. That year, the incumbent Governor, Isaac Tichnor, a Federalist who had held this office since 1797, received 17 votes in Stratton. No votes were recorded for an opponent, but other offices received as many as 19 votes, implying that 19 voters participated in this election. During the following yearly elections, Tichnor held nearly unanimous victories in Stratton's gubernatorial elections through 1810, although he had lost the overall election of 1807 to Israel Smith, the Democratic Republican, and the elections of 1809 and 1810 to Jonas Galusha, the Democratic Republican. Galusha had received only 6 of Stratton's 45 votes in 1809 and 6 of 34 votes in 1810. In 1811, Stratton voted 39 to 2 for Martin Chittenden, a Federalist, over Governor Galusha who was reelected. 1812 through 1815 were near repeats of 1811, although Chittenden was unsuccessful in unseating Governor Galusha until 1813. Chittenden retained the governorship in 1814 only to lose to Galusha in 1815. 1816 saw a new Federalist candidate in Samuel Strong. He received 34 votes to Galusha's 6 votes in Stratton, but again Galusha was elected Governor. In 1817, no numbers were recorded in Stratton for the race between Tichnor and Galusha. Although Galusha had no Federalist opposition in 1818, he received only 7 of at least 22 votes from Stratton, with the majority not casting votes for Governor. In 1819, Stratton voted for William Bradley over Galusha 16 to 9. In 1820, Richard Skinner received all 17 votes cast for Governor in Stratton. Skinner succeeded Governor Galusha that year. 1821 saw a repeat of the previous year and Skinner received 12 of 13 votes in 1822.

In 1823, Cornelius Van Ness, the Democratic Republican candidate, received 21 of Stratton's 22 votes for Governor. He was elected and held that position for three years, receiving all of Stratton's votes the remaining two years. In 1826, a four-way election, resulted in 20 of Stratton's 28 votes for Lemuel Whiting. Ezra Butler, a National Republican, however, was elected Governor that year. Butler received all of Stratton's votes in an unopposed election the following year. In 1828 and 1829, Samuel C. Crafts, a National Republican, received all of Stratton's votes and won the election both years. He received a majority of Stratton's votes in 1830 in a more heavily contested race. Crafts retained the Governorship that year also. In 1831, only William A. Palmer, the Anti-Masonic governor-elect, was listed as a candidate in Stratton's records with no votes noted in the record. The next year, Palmer received 29 of the 43 votes cast for Governor in Stratton. In 1833, Ezra Meech a combined Republican Democratic coalition candidate won Stratton with 19 votes to Palmer's 18 votes, but Palmer was reelected. In 1834, Palmer took 19 of Stratton's 38 votes in a three-way election and retained the governorship. The next year, Palmer received a one-vote majority in Stratton, but he could not get the majority of the Legislature needed to be governor; therefore, Lieutenant Governor Silas H. Jenison assumed the duties of the

Governor. In 1836, Silas Jenison, the Anti-Masonic candidate, and William Bradley, a Democrat, split Stratton with 23 votes apiece. Jenison won the election and continued his duties as the elected Governor. This same year marked the end of the Governor's Council and the beginning of Vermont's Senate. The even split of 1836 was repeated in 1837 and Jenison remained as Governor. In 1838, however, Jenison held an 11-vote lead over Bradley and continued as Governor. In 1839, Jenison, candidate of the Democratic Whig convention, beat out the Democrat, Nathan Smilie, in Stratton and maintained the governorship. In 1840, the year of the great Whig Convention in Stratton, Jenison, the Whig candidate, received 35 votes to the 28 votes for Paul Dillingham, the Democratic candidate. Jenison won the election that year also.

In 1841, Charles Paine (Whig) received 27 votes and Nathan Smilie (Democrat) received 20 votes in Stratton. Paine became Vermont's next Governor. The following year, Paine was reelected Governor, receiving 40 of Stratton's 66 votes – the remainder going to Smilie. In 1843 John Mattocks (Whig) received 39 of Stratton's votes to the Democratic nominee, Daniel Kellogg's 29. Mattocks became Governor that year. In 1844, William Slade (*Whig*) took 37 votes in Stratton over Daniel Kellogg's 30 votes and Slade was elected Governor. In 1845, Daniel Kellogg, a Democrat, took 32 of Stratton's 71 votes to beat out William Slade, the Whig, who took 28 votes and Wm. R. Shafter, the Anti-Slavery candidate, who received 11 votes. For the first time in Stratton, a Democrat received the most votes in a gubernatorial election, probably because of Governor Slade's stand on education. Slade, however, was reelected that year. In 1846, the Whig candidate, Horace Eaton took 37 of Stratton's 66 votes. The remainder went to John Smith, the Democrat. Eaton became Vermont's Governor that year. He took Stratton by just one vote in 1847 and he was reelected by the state. In 1848, Carlos Coolidge, the Whig candidate, received 31 of Stratton's 66 votes in a three-way race and went on to become Vermont's next Governor. This was repeated in 1849. In 1850, the Whig candidate, Charles K. Williams, took 35 of Stratton's 63 votes and went on to be elected Governor. In the election of 1851, Williams was reelected by the state. He took 24 of Stratton's 47 votes; however, in Stratton's election for County officials, Whig candidates receiving 16 votes each and Democratic Candidates receiving 40 votes each, in most instances. In 1852, Erastus Fairbanks, a Whig and the winner of this election, received 21 of Stratton's 51 votes. John S. Robinson, Democrat, received 19 votes and Lawrence Brainerd, Free-Soil, received 11 votes. 1853 was a repeat of the previous year, with a turnout of 69 voters in Stratton; however, Robinson became Vermont's next Governor. In 1854, Stephen Royce, the candidate of a Whig and Republican coalition, took 52 of Stratton's 66 votes. Merritt Clark, a Democrat, took the remainder. Royce was elected Governor. The same split followed for Lieutenant Governor and for Treasurer, but Whig votes were split with a Free-Soil candidate. Democrats faired better in the Senatorial races; but there was little

consistency in the County elections. In 1855, that election was the first to be a contest between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. Royce, now called a Republican candidate, took 35 of Stratton's votes and went on to win reelection, while the Democrat, Merritt Clark took 22 of Stratton's votes. In 1856, Ryland Fletcher, a Republican, was elected Governor over the Democrat, Henry Keyes. Fletcher took 51 of Stratton's 66 votes. 1857 was a repeat of the previous year, except only 57 votes were cast in Stratton. In 1858, the split in Stratton was repeated, with Hiland Hall as the Republican candidate. Hall was elected Governor. In 1859, Hall won reelection over John G. Saxe, the Democrat, with 50 of 57 votes in Stratton. In 1860, Stratton voted 46 to 21 for the Republican candidate and winner of this election, Erastus Fairbanks. In 1861, Stratton voted 49 for the Republican Party to 21 for the Democrats to help Frederick Holbrook defeat Benjamin Smalley and become the next Republican Governor of Vermont. 1862 was a repeat of the previous year. In 1863, the Republicans, then called the Union Party, nominated John Gregory Smith, while the Democrats nominated Timothy Redfield. Smith was elected Governor, taking 35 of Stratton's 46 votes. In 1864, Stratton split its vote 26 to 26 for nearly all offices at the state and county levels, probably a sign that more and more people were dissatisfied with the war effort. Smith was reelected Governor that year. 1865 saw a 41 to 18 split in favor of the Union candidate, Paul Dillingham over the Democratic candidate, Charles N. Davenport. Dillingham was elected governor that year and this process was repeated in 1866. In 1867, John B. Page (Union) ran against John L. Edwards (Democrat). Page took 37 of Stratton's 51 votes and went on to win that election. The General Election of 1868 duplicated that of the previous year. Peter T. Washburn (Republican) won the 1869 election over Democrat, Homer W. Heaton. Stratton voted 24 to 16 for Washburn, but Democrats took 16 of the 31 votes cast in Stratton for most County officers.

A Constitutional change in 1870, eliminating the Council of Censors and it adopted biennial elections in Vermont. That year, John Wolcott Stewart, a Republican, was the first Vermont Governor elected to a two-year term. Stratton gave Stewart 37 of the 52 votes cast in town. In 1872, Julius Converse, the Republican Governor-elect, took 42 of 44 votes cast in Stratton. Asahel Peck (Republican) took 27 of Stratton's votes, while WHH Bingham (Democrat) took 15 votes in 1874. Peck became Governor that year. Horace Fairbanks ran on the Republican ticket in 1876, while Bingham was renominated by the Democrats. Fairbanks, who won the governorship, received 51 votes and Bingham received 16 votes in Stratton. In 1878, the Republican, Redfield Proctor, won over CW Willard. Stratton voted 38 to 11 in favor of Proctor. In 1880, Roswell Farnham (Republican) was elected Governor over Edward J. Phelps. Farnham took 48 of Stratton's 66 votes. In 1882, John L. Barstow (Republican) and George E. Eaton (Democrat) battled for the governorship. Barstow won the election, but he took only 14 of Stratton's votes, while 22 were cast for Eaton. This was the first time a

Democratic candidate for Governor won the majority of Stratton's votes since 1845. The remaining state and county contests of this election received 9 votes for Republicans and 22 votes for Democrats across the board from Stratton. In 1884, the town voted for the Republican ticket at all levels, with Samuel E. Pingree, the Republican Governor-elect, taking 47 votes and Lyman W. Redington, the Democrat, taking 27 votes. Ebenezer J. Ormsbee (Republican) was elected Governor in 1886 over Stephen C. Shurtleff (Democrat) with 53 of Stratton's 54 votes. The remaining state and county contests of this election also were split 53 to 1 in favor of Republicans. In 1888, Shurtleff retained the Democratic nomination, while Paul Dillingham became the Republican candidate. Dillingham was elected Governor and received 35 of Stratton's 45 votes. Carroll S. Page (Republican) and Herbert F. Brigham (Democrat) contested for the governorship in 1890. Page, the Governor-elect, won 34 of 46 votes in Stratton. In 1892, Levi K. Fuller, the Republican Governor-elect, took 31 of Stratton's 44 votes in a four-way race. Urban H. Woodbury – Republican Governor-elect – received 33 of Stratton's 43 votes in 1894. In 1896, Josiah Grout, Republican Governor-elect, received 35 votes to Democrat John Henry Jackson's 10 votes in Stratton. The Republican candidate, Edward C. Smith, was elected Vermont's Governor in 1898. He received 19 of the 24 votes cast in Stratton that year. Republican Governor-elect William W. Stickney received 45 of the 53 votes cast in Stratton for Governor in 1900. In 1902, Republican Governor-elect John G. McCullough took 17 of Stratton's 30 votes. Interestingly, Percival W. Clement, a candidate of the Local Option League received 15 votes, while the Democrat, Felix W. McGettrick received only 4 votes. This anomaly was the result of a split in the Republican Party over the repeal of Prohibition in Vermont. Charles J. Bell, the Republican Governor-elect in 1904, received 32 of 37 votes cast in Stratton, while one vote was cast for the Socialist candidate, Clarence Morse. In 1906, Governor-elect Fletcher D. Proctor (Republican) received 18 of Stratton's votes, while Percival W. Clement received 5 votes as a Democrat and 3 votes as an Independent. During this election, Clarke C. Fitts of Wardsboro, who was a law partner of Hermon E. Eddy of Stratton, was elected Vermont's first Attorney General. Fitts later joined the Stratton Mountain Club. In 1908, Governor-elect George H. Prouty received 20 of Stratton's 27 votes, while the Democrat received 4 votes. The Socialist candidate received 2 votes and the Independent League candidate received 1 vote. In 1910, of 20 votes cast in Stratton, Republican John A. Mead received 11 votes and won the governorship. In 1912, of Stratton's 17 votes, the Democratic candidate for Governor, Harland B. Howe, received 8 votes over Allen M. Fletcher, the Republican Governor-elect, who received 7 votes. Meanwhile, Stratton's overall General Election leaned toward the Republicans with an 11 to 7 split between the parties. The Republican Lieutenant Governor-elect, Frank E. Howe, was a familiar face in Stratton at that time. He also was a member of the Stratton Mountain Club. In 1914, Charles N. Gates, the Republican Governor-elect received 16 of

Stratton's 23 votes. In 1916, Republican Horace F. Graham defeated Democrat William B. Mayo. Graham received 16 of Stratton's 18 votes. This same year, Hermon E. Eddy of Stratton was elected state senator for the Marlboro District of Windham County. In 1918, Republican Percival W. Clement became Governor-elect over William B. Mayo with 6 of 8 votes from Stratton. In 1920, Republican James Hartness became Vermont's Governor, with 11 of Stratton's 13 votes that year. In 1922 Republican Governor-elect Redfield Proctor received all of Stratton's 13 votes. In 1924, Republican Governor-elect Franklin S. Billings received 11 votes for Governor, while Roland E. Stevens received only 3 votes. In 1926, Republican Governor-elect John E. Weeks received 10 votes in Stratton, while Walter Farnsworth received 3 votes. 1928 saw all of Stratton's 19 votes go to Republican John E. Weeks. In 1930, Stanley C. Wilson, the Republican Governor-elect, received all 21 votes from Stratton. That same year, Charles H. Grout, a former resident of Stratton was elected a Senator from Windham County. In 1932, Governor Wilson received all of the town's 18 votes. In 1934, Republican Charles M. Smith received 19 of Stratton's votes for Governor. Democrat James P. Tenney received only 2 votes, while the Socialist, John Hutton, received 1 vote. In 1936, Republican Governor-elect George D. Aiken received 31 of Stratton's 34 votes and in 1938, Aiken received all 22 of Stratton's votes (Governor Aiken's grandmother, Fanny (Wyman) (Aiken) Shelley, had been a resident of Stratton). In 1940, William H. Wills, the Republican Governor-elect, received 27 of Stratton's 28 votes. In 1942, Wills received all 11 of Stratton's votes. In 1944, Republican Mortimer R. Proctor, the Governor-elect, received 23 of Stratton's 24 votes. Republican Ernest W. Gibson received 11 of Stratton's 13 votes in 1946 and he was elected Governor. In 1948, Gibson received all 19 of Stratton's votes and was reelected. The Republican Governor-elect, Lee E. Emerson, received all 19 votes cast for Governor in Stratton in 1950. In 1952, the Republican vote split with 12 for Emerson and 13 for Henry Vail, while the Democrat, Robert Larrow received 4 votes. Emerson was reelected Vermont's Governor that year. In 1954, Republican Governor-elect, Joseph B. Johnson, received 25 votes from Stratton and Democrat E. Frank Branon received 7 votes. In 1956, Johnson took 29 votes and Branon received 10 votes in Stratton. Johnson was reelected Governor. In 1958, Stratton gave the Republican Governor-elect, Robert Stafford, 19 votes and the Democrat, Bernard J. Leddy 5 votes. In 1960, F. Ray Keyser, Jr., Republican Governor-elect, received 17 votes, while Democrat, Russell F. Miquette, received 9 votes and Republican, A. Luke Crispe, received 1 vote. In 1962, Republican F. Ray Keyser, Jr. received 17 of Stratton's votes for Governor, while Democratic Governor-elect Philip H. Hoff received 9 votes. In 1964, Republican Ralph A. Foote received 20 votes, while Governor Hoff received 18 votes. Hoff was reelected. In 1966, Stratton's vote was split with both candidates, Republican Richard A. Snelling and Democrat Philip H. Hoff, receiving 18 votes each. Hoff again was reelected. In 1968, Republican Governor-elect Deane C. Davis

received 28 of Stratton's votes, while Democrat John J. Daley received 13 votes. In 1970, Republican Deane C. Davis received 32 of Stratton's votes and was reelected Governor, while Leo O'Brien received 14 votes. In 1972 Democratic Governor-elect Thomas P. Salmon received 30 of Stratton's votes, while Luther F. Hackett, the Republican, received 36 of Stratton's votes. Thomas P. Salmon was reelected Governor in 1974, receiving only 12 of Stratton's votes, while The Republican, Walter L. Kennedy, received 37 votes. In 1976, Republican Richard A. Snelling received 43 of Stratton's votes and was elected Governor of Vermont. Stella B. Hackel received 17 votes in this town. Governor Snelling was reelected in 1978, 1980 and 1982 with 31 of Stratton's 40 votes in 1978, 51 of Stratton's 66 votes in 1980 and 38 of 77 votes cast in Stratton in 1982. The Democrats who lost to Snelling during those elections were Edwin C. Granai in 1978, M. Jerome Diamond in 1980 and Madeleine Kunin in 1982. In 1984, Madeleine Kunin was the Democratic Governor-elect, but she received only 24 of Stratton's votes, while John J. Easton, the Republican, received 52 votes. Kunin was reelected in 1986 and 1988, but the Republican candidates took more votes in Stratton in both elections. In 1986, Kunin had 31 votes to Peter Smith's 33 votes and in 1988, Kunin took only 36 votes to Michael Bernhardt's 62 votes in Stratton. In 1990, Republican Governor-elect, Richard A. Snelling, had 45 of Stratton's votes and the Democrat, Peter Welch had 27 votes of a total of 77 votes cast in Stratton. Snelling died of a heart attack on August 14, 1991, and Lieutenant Governor Howard Dean took his place. Dean was elected Vermont's Governor in 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998 and 2000. In 1992, Dean had 64 votes, while the Republican, John McClaughry, received 39 of a total 105 votes cast in Stratton. In 1994, Governor Dean received 24 of Stratton's votes and David F. Kelley, the Republican, candidate received 28 votes. In 1996, Governor Dean received 43 of Stratton's votes and Republican John L. Gropper received 35 votes. However, in 1998, Governor Dean received only 8 of Stratton's votes, while Republican Ruth Dwyer received 85 votes and in 2000, Ruth Dwyer received 72 votes and Governor Dean received 22 votes. The large turnout and reversal in support of Dean in 1998 and 2000 were due to Stratton's overall opposition to Act 60, which had tripled Stratton's property taxes over a three-year period.

Stratton's Presidential Elections

Until 1824, Vermont's General Assembly voted for Presidential Electors; therefore, it was not until the election of 1828 that Stratton's Freemen were able to cast their votes for President. At that time, Stratton voted 52 to 1 for the electors supporting the National Republican candidate, John Quincy Adams, who lost the election to Andrew Jackson.

In 1832, Stratton voted for the Anti-Mason Party Presidential candidate, Wm. Wirt with 18 of 31 votes for each of his electors, following suit with the rest of Vermont.

The results of the 1836 election were left blank within Stratton's Town Records. The Whig candidate, William Henry Harrison, won in Vermont, but lost the election to the Democrat, Martin Van Buren.

In 1840, the year of the great Whig Convention held in Stratton for Vermont's First Congressional District, electors for William Henry Harrison, the President-elect, received 36 votes, while those for Martin Van Buren received 25 votes. This seems to contradict popular belief that Harrison had an overwhelming majority of Stratton's vote as popularized by the folklore surrounding Daniel Webster's visit to Stratton.

In 1844, 36 of Stratton's votes went for the Democratic candidate, James K. Polk, while Henry Clay, the Whig, received 35 votes. Clay won Vermont, but Polk won the election.

In 1848, the vote was split 26, 20 and 10 – apparent for Zachary Taylor (Whig), Martin Van Buren (Free-Soil) and Lewis Cass (Democrat), respectively. Taylor won both Vermont and the election.

In 1852, Stratton's votes were as follows: 22 for Winfield Scott (Whig), 19 for Franklin Pierce (Democrat) and 13 for Hale (Free-Soil). Vermont went to Scott, but Pierce won the election, overwhelmingly.

In 1856, John C. Fremont, the Republican Candidate received 60 of Stratton's votes, while James Buchanan, the Democratic President-elect received 12 votes. Fremont also won Vermont.

In the 1860 election in Stratton, Republican Abraham Lincoln's electors each received 57 votes to Democrat Stephen Douglas's 14. President-elect Lincoln also won Vermont.

In 1864, Abraham Lincoln beat the Democratic contender, George McClellan, 40 votes to 17 votes in Stratton. Lincoln won Vermont and he was reelected President that year.

In the election of 1868, the Republican President-elect and winner of Vermont's electors, Ulysses S. Grant, received 50 votes in Stratton to Democrat Horatio Seymour's 17 votes.

In 1872, Ulysses S. Grant received 33 of Stratton's 41 votes while Horace Greeley received only 2 votes and the "Anti-Greeley" Democratic Candidate received 6 votes. Grant won Vermont and the election.

In 1876, no results were written in for Stratton. Republican Rutherford B. Hayes, whose father was from Dummerston, Vermont, probably won Stratton over Democrat Samuel Tilden. Hayes had a 4 to 1 majority in

Windham County and more than a 2 to 1 majority in Vermont. Although he lost the popular vote, Hayes became President.

In 1880, Republican James Garfield won Vermont and the election. In Stratton, he received 49 votes over Democrat Winfield Hancock's 20 votes.

In Stratton's 1884 Presidential Election, 39 votes went to James G. Blaine's four Republican electors and 26 votes went to Grover Cleveland's four Democratic electors. Blaine won Stratton and Vermont, but lost the National Election to Cleveland.

In 1888, Stratton gave 38 votes to Republican Benjamin Harrison and 13 votes for incumbent Democrat Grover Cleveland. President-elect Harrison won Vermont, although Cleveland won the popular vote.

In 1892, Republican Benjamin Harrison had 24 of Stratton's votes while the President-elect, Grover Cleveland, had only 13 of Stratton's 39 votes. 2 votes went to the Prohibition Party candidate. Harrison won Vermont but lost the election.

In 1896, Republican William McKinley received 34 votes in Stratton, while Democrat William Jennings Bryan received 5 votes and John N. Palmer received 3 votes. Overall, President-elect McKinley received 80% of Vermont's vote.

1900 was a repeat of 1896 with 32 Republican votes for McKinley and 3 Democratic votes for Bryan in Stratton and a substantial majority of Vermont's vote going to the winner, William McKinley.

In 1904, Stratton voted 15 for Republican Teddy Roosevelt and 4 for Democrat Alton B. Parker. Roosevelt won Vermont as well as the National Election.

In 1908, the Republican, Howard Taft received 12 of Stratton's votes, while Democrat William Jennings Bryan received 4 votes, Eugene Debs the Socialist candidate received 1 vote, as did the Independent League candidate. Vermont voted overwhelmingly Republican and Taft won the National Election.

In 1912, Stratton gave 12 votes for the Republican electors who supported incumbent, Howard Taft. Five votes went to the Democratic electors who supported Woodrow Wilson, while 3 votes went to the National Progressive electors who supported Teddy Roosevelt. Taft won Vermont, but Wilson won the National Election.

In 1916, it appears that Stratton cast 10 votes for electors supporting Republican Charles E. Hughes for president and 7 votes for those supporting Woodrow Wilson. Hughes won Vermont, but lost the election.

In 1920, it appears that Stratton cast all 13 of its votes for President-elect Warren G. Harding, who carried Vermont.

In 1924, all 20 of Stratton's votes went to Republican and native Vermonter Calvin Coolidge, the President-elect, who carried Vermont.

In 1928, 19 of Stratton's 21 votes went for Republican President-elect Herbert Hoover, who won Vermont.

In 1932, Stratton's 11 votes apparently went for Herbert Hoover, who won Vermont, but lost to Franklin Roosevelt.

In 1936, 27 of Stratton's 34 votes were for Alfred M. Landon, the Republican candidate who won Vermont, but lost to Roosevelt.

In 1940, Stratton maintained the same vote split, with the majority for Republican Wendell L. Wilkie who won Vermont, but lost to Roosevelt.

In 1944, Stratton's 25 votes went to Republican, Thomas E. Dewey who won Vermont, but lost to Roosevelt.

In 1948 in Stratton, 16 voted were for Republican Thomas E. Dewey, while 2 voted were for the winner, Democrat Harry Truman. Dewey won in Vermont.

In 1952, 24 of Stratton's 30 votes were for Republican President-elect Dwight D. Eisenhower, who carried Vermont.

In 1956, 34 of 38 Freemen in Stratton voted for Eisenhower, who won Vermont and reelection.

In 1960, Republican Richard Nixon received 18 of 26 votes. He won Vermont but lost to Democrat John F. Kennedy in the National Election.

In 1964, Stratton cast 20 votes for Democrat, Lyndon Johnson, the winner, while Republican Barry Goldwater received 16 votes. Johnson carried Vermont. This was the first time in 120 years (since the election of 1844) that a Democrat received a majority of votes in Stratton.

In 1968, Republican Richard M. Nixon received 27 of Stratton's 29 votes. He won Vermont and the election.

In 1972, incumbent Richard Nixon received 45 of Stratton's votes and won Vermont and the election, while George McGovern received 22 of Stratton's votes.

In 1976, Republican Gerald Ford received 39 of Stratton's 67 votes, while President-elect Democrat Jimmy Carter received 28 votes. Ford also won Vermont.

In 1980, Jimmy Carter received 16 votes and Republican, Ronald Reagan received 42 votes, while Independent John Anderson received 6 of Stratton's votes. Reagan also won Vermont and the presidency.

In 1984, Republican Ronald Reagan received 58 of Stratton's 81 votes and he was reelected, while Democrat Walter Mondale received 23 votes. Reagan also carried Vermont.

In 1988, Republican President-elect George Bush received 63 of Stratton's votes to Michael Dukakis's 34 votes. Bush also carried Vermont.

In 1992, Republican George Bush received only 32 of Stratton's 108 votes. Democrat Bill Clinton, the President-elect, received only 27 of Stratton's votes, while H. Ross Perot, the Reform Party candidate, received 48 votes from Stratton – the majority. This was the first time a third-party candidate received a majority of Stratton's votes since Wirt won in 1832.

In 1996, Democrat Bill Clinton received 38 of Stratton's votes, while Republican Bob Dole received 36 votes. Clinton carried Vermont and he was reelected to the Presidency.

In 2000, Republican George W. Bush received 54 votes and Democrat Al Gore received 41 votes of the 99 votes cast in Stratton. Al Gore carried Vermont, but Bush won the election.

Daniel Webster and the Whig Convention of 1840

Upon a small clearing, barely an acre in size, along an old gravel road and surrounded by a vast forest stands a small memorial. Upon it is written, “*This rock marks the spot where Daniel Webster spoke to about 15,000 people at Whig Convention July 7 & 8, 1840. Erected by Stratton Mt. Club, August 10 A.D. 1915.*” Many who read these words are bewildered by their implications. Why is it that one of the most important political figures of early 19th Century America came to the poor, sparsely populated mountain town of Stratton, Vermont to speak before thousands upon thousands of New Englanders? Where did these spectators come from and why did they come? How did they get here? What did they eat and drink and where did they sleep? These very questions have had historians and tourists alike scratching their heads. But this event did occur and the number of spectators given here is very likely an accurate estimate.

Prelude and Preparation

To understand why Webster came to Stratton and why so many people came here to listen to him, we must first regress back to the Presidential Election of 1836, which sets the backdrop for Webster’s motive – the election of 1840. In 1836, Andrew Jackson, a Democrat, no longer was bidding for the presidency. In his stead, his Vice President, Martin Van Buren, ran on that party’s ticket. Meanwhile, a collection of Jackson and Van Buren’s enemies had formed themselves into a new political party called the Whigs. The Whigs could not decide on a single candidate that year and so William Henry Harrison and Daniel Webster were among three Whigs found upon the presidential ballot in 1836. With the Whig party split, Van Buren won that election.

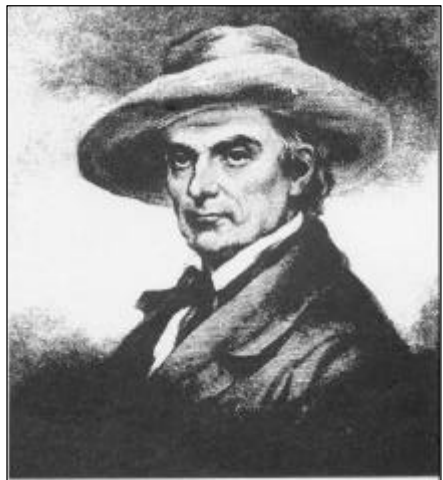
The following year, the banking system in America collapsed – called the Panic of 1837 – it plunged the United States into a severe depression and it brought the country to the verge of chaos and revolution as partisanship prevented any relief of the circumstances. This situation remained a scourge on Van Buren’s presidency for his entire four-year term and it became a focal point for the Whigs’ attack on Van Buren and the Democrats – “*loco-focos,*” during the campaign of 1840.

That year, the Whigs were able to decide upon one candidate, William Henry Harrison (known as Old Tippecanoe for his defeat over Tecumseh at the Battle of Tippecanoe) and his vice-presidential candidate, John Tyler. The old General, was by then 67 years of age, and he quickly became ridiculed by the Democrats, who referred to him as “old granny.” One reporter wrote, “*Give him a barrel of hard cider and settle a pension of \$2000.00 a year on him and he will sit the remainder of his days in his log*

cabin.” The Whigs quickly exploited this insult and modified it to compliment Harrison as a rough Indian fighting frontiersman – a champion of the common man who could identify with the average American. With this image in mind, the Whigs devised a campaign strategy more like a circus than a campaign – a campaign that rallied around a log cabin and hard cider and all things that represented the misfortunate common folk of America, with the slogan Tippecanoe and Tyler too. Meanwhile, the Whigs tried to further separate Van Buren from the average American by portraying him as a vain aristocrat who partook only of fine wines, sitting in the White House, conspiring with other Democrats against the average American. This, of course, was politics at its finest, greatly misrepresenting both candidates, neither of whom fit the image assigned to them by the Whigs. One such political jingle from that election was:

*Let Van from his cooler of silver drink wine,
And lounge on his cushioned settee.
Our man on a buckeye bench can recline,
Content with hard cider is he.*

Meanwhile, in southern Vermont plans were made for a nominating convention for the Whigs of Vermont’s First Congressional District. This district consisted of Windham and Bennington Counties and a few towns in Rutland County. Frederick Holbrook, later Governor, was at that time president of the Young Men’s Whig Association in Brattleboro, Vermont, sometimes called the *Tippecanoe and Tyler Too Club* – a club that conceived the idea of holding an outdoor mass meeting at which thousands of New Englanders could come to hear



Daniel Webster

about the terrible state of the country and the irresponsibility of the Democrats. Holbrook’s club laid out the details for just such a meeting – details that included choosing an ideal location and an ideal speaker. As for the Convention’s main speaker, Hiland Hall, a US Representative from North Bennington, a Whig, who also later became one of Vermont’s governors, personally invited Daniel Webster to come to southern Vermont and speak on

behalf of the Whigs. Webster, the great American orator of his time – known as the Defender of the Constitution – readily accepted. The chosen location for the Convention was Stratton, Vermont.

Why was Stratton chosen to host this Convention? Logistically it was central to Vermont's First Congressional District and it was located along a major thoroughfare – the Stratton Turnpike. But 1840 Stratton was a very small farming community of only 344 persons with no facilities to accommodate a massive crowd. Then again, this setting coincided with the theme of the Whig campaign. Another fact that helped make Stratton the chosen place was that one of the major political figures of the Whig party in Windham County had land in Stratton and enough to accommodate such an event. This person was Phineas White.

Mr. White, a resident of Putney, Vermont, was not as famous as Frederick Holbrook or Hiland Hall, but he was a notable public servant. He served Windham County as State's Attorney for several years; he was judge of Probate Court and served as Chief Judge of the County Court from 1818 to 1820. In 1820, he was elected to Congress as one of three Representatives from Vermont, serving one term. In 1836, he was a member of the committee for the revision of the Vermont State Constitution. Several times he was elected Representative of Putney to the General Assembly and he was elected Senator for Windham County, serving from 1838 to 1840. He was a member of the Golden Rule Lodge of Masons in Putney, holding the position of grand master of the state at one time. Mr. White also served as Trustee of Middlebury College, President of the Vermont Bible Society and President of the Vermont Colonization Society.

Although Mr. White never lived in Stratton, he had become the largest landowner in this town by 1840. White began purchasing land in Stratton in 1815 and, in 1835, he purchased the Stratton properties of A. D. McFarland. These properties consisted of vast amounts of land previously acquired by William McFarland, an early proprietor of Stratton. Among White's holdings was a 300-acre site along the Stratton Turnpike, near the East Branch of the Deerfield River. It was upon this site that the Whigs agreed to hold their convention.

What is now only a small one-acre clearing kept open for the memorial was, in 1840, the center of a vast cleared pasture. One person who attended the convention described it as "*a magnificent amphitheater of hills, of at least five miles diameter. From the verge of the clearing to the summit of the mountains, there was a deep and unbroken fringe of foliage, which added greatly to the beauty of the scene. It was far from the haunts of men, scarcely a house being visible.*" Those houses included the Levi Hale farm toward the pond and Hudson Grout's farm on the pond, the Joshua Greenwood farm across the road (which apparently was abandoned and perhaps no longer standing at that time), Torrey's Tavern only a quarter-mile to the east and the Purrington and Grout farms northeast toward Little Stratton, while White's own lumber mill stood about three-fourths of a mile to the west.

Preparation for the convention included the construction of a log cabin 100 feet long north to south by 50 feet east to west. Also, a great number of wooden shingles were made for the crowds to dine from, and large amounts of hard cider were shipped in.

The Vermont Phoenix of June 26, 1840, made the following reports:

We are authorized to say that the Hon. Daniel Webster, who has an appointment at Barre, Mass., on the 4th of July, will, unless very pressing duties in Congress should prevent, take Stratton in his way back to Washington, and that he may be expected to address the Convention on the afternoon of the 7th of July.

Log Cabin Raising. – We learn the fourth of July is the day selected for raising the Log Cabin, in which is to be held the District Convention on the seventh – a fit day for such an employment. As our Fore-fathers on the fourth of July 1776 raised a document which delivered thousands from the thralldom of Tyranny – so will the Whigs of this District, on the Fourth of July 1840, raise a building in which means shall be devised to rescue thousands from a worse Tyranny – that of “British” Loco-Focoism.

This same edition went on to print the formal warning of the convention:

The undersigned respectfully invite the Young Men of the First Congressional District of Vermont and all others opposed to the oppressive measures – the extravagant expenditures and corrupting influences of the present National Administration and in favor of Harrison and Reform; to meet in Convention at the Log Cabin, to be erected in Stratton, for the occasion, on the Green Mountains, a little east of the heights of land near the Turnpike Road leading from Arlington to Wardsboro – On Tuesday the 7th of July next, at 12 o’clock, M., – for the purpose of discussing the political affairs of the country: To nominate a suitable Candidate to represent this District in Congress: To respond to the nomination of State officers and Presidential Electors, which may have been made by the State Convention at Burlington. And to transact such other business as the exigencies of our political affairs may seem to require, for the advancement of the cause of the people and the overthrow of their oppressors.

The business of the Convention it will be perceived, is of no small importance, and we doubt not there will be a strong rally, from all parts of the District, of the Young – Middle-aged – and Old Men. A

day or two spent in discussing the affairs of an oppressed Country, in the pure air of the Green Mountains, beyond the reach of the miasmatic taint of Loco Foco corruption cannot but invigorate the devoted patriotism, which has ever characterized the honest Yeomanry of "Always Faithful" Vermont.

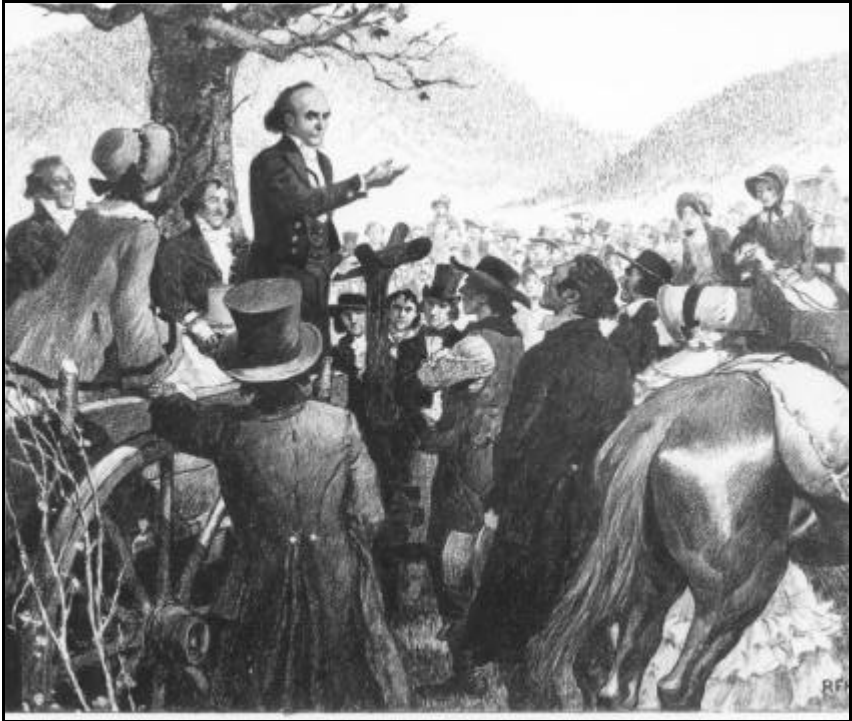
It is expected several Gentlemen from neighboring States will be present and address the Convention: (The warning was followed by a long list of approximately 300 names.)

The Convention

On July 7, 1840, the first day of the convention, delegations from many of the townships of the district paraded onto the convention grounds with large teams bringing in their ensemble - all dressed for the log cabin theme and riding on decorated wagons. There were cabins that came from nearly every town within fifty miles around, drawn by horses and oxen. One log cabin was drawn by 26 yokes of oxen representing the number of states in the union at that time, the forward pair being the smallest steers labeled "New Hampshire" that being a small state from which little was expected. The Brattleboro delegation left for Stratton at 3:00AM and arrived at the convention grounds at 1:00PM. They arrived in an omnibus drawn by six horses, coaches decked with flags and an appropriate banner, on one side of which was "*General Harrison in the field plowing with one hand resting upon his plow and the other reaching upward to receive the Constitution from an Eagle which is just descending with it in its talons.*" This delegation came with three days of rations and other camp equipment. Most delegations probably arrived in this same manner with like provisions.

Reports from the tollgate in Arlington indicated that nearly 6000 people came through it on their way to the convention. With larger numbers from the eastern side of the district and many coming in from the north and south, the crowd was estimated to be at 15,000 by the time Webster gave his speech. Those that came were ready to camp out on the convention grounds and in the surrounding forest.

Supposedly on July 6, Webster proceeded from Barre, Massachusetts to FitzWilliam, New Hampshire by stage. There, he was met by a delegation and brought to Brattleboro by barouche. About four miles from Brattleboro, he was met by "a prancing cavalcade of horsemen from Brattleboro's Wide Awake Club." Frederick Holbrook, a member of the cavalcade and later Governor, stated that he "*was never so impressed by a human being. He seemed to us troopers more like a god let down from above than mortal man.*" This description was often mimicked afterward with references to "the godlike Daniel." Webster proceeded to an out-door gathering held by Colonel Townsley and gave a brief speech that afternoon, then settled down for the night in Brattleboro.



**Daniel Webster addressing the crowd at Stratton
July 7, 1840**

Courtesy of National Life Insurance Co.

In the early hours of the morning on July 7, Webster and an entourage of more than 100 proceeded to Stratton – a 37-mile trip – with all the trimmings of a parade, including a log cabin on wheels – apparently the same cabin pulled by 26 yokes of steers. Webster arrived in Stratton in the barouche, drawn by four black horses, “*preceded by a committee of arrangements from Brattleboro, and accompanied by a delegation from Franklin County, Massachusetts.*”

Upon his arrival at the Convention ground in Stratton at 2:00 PM, Webster was greeted by the Chairman of the Convention, Waitstill Ranney of Townshend, Vermont. Congressman Hiland Hall gave an opening speech, then Daniel Webster addressed the crowd for nearly two hours. One description of the event states that *Mr. Webster was bareheaded when he arose to speak to the vast throng seated on the ground, the fences and even perched in the trees of the broad field of Stratton. How grand and imposing the great man looked as he stood for a little while with his magnificent eyes fixed in silent contemplation of the splendid view before him. How hushed and still were the people when he turned to them and slowly and deliberately*

began his great speech. There is no record of Webster's speech except for the opening line, "*Fellow citizens, we meet today among the clouds.*" Another account states that he also said, "*When I see so many gathered here today from the banks of the Hudson even to the Connecticut, I know there is something wrong in the affairs of the Government.*"

Additional speakers for the convention included Mr. Chapman and Mr. Wells, both of Massachusetts, Mr. Blackmore (Possibly Green Blackmer of Bennington), A. L. Miner of Manchester, Vermont and Samuel Elliot of Brattleboro.

After the speeches were over, delegations retreated to the surrounding forest to establish overnight camps. Niles National Register reported, "*The most striking part of the affair was the effect of the encampment at night. Mr. Webster declared his determination to camp with the Green Mountain Boys on the summit of their far famed hills, and, of course, the declaration was received with great pleasure. And very soon large numbers erected wigwams in the contiguous forest, and blazing fires were kindled in every direction.*"

That evening, Daniel Webster ate beans and pork from a shingle, like everyone else there, but instead of camping with the multitudes he spent the night in the southeast corner room of the nearby Torrey's Tavern.

A resolution was passed by the Stratton Log Cabin Convention at that time that read as follows:

Let honesty and reputation
Be passports for our approbation
And we'll elect by acclamation
Brave Harrison, and save the nation...
Prosperity with all her train
Of blessings, shall return again;
Rich blessings, flowing from pure fountains,
And, durable as – Stratton Mountains.

Following the Convention, on Friday, July 17, 1840, the Vermont Phoenix issued the following report:

Vermont to the Rescue Great Turn Out of the People

More than Ten thousand Whigs at the grand Convention on Stratton Mountain. Never within our recollection have we been permitted to witness a scene equal in novelty and grandeur to the one exhibited at the Stratton Convention last week. It was such a scene as we could wish every Whig in the United States might have witnessed. The people were awake – one would have supposed that some mighty event was about to take place, as the people were seen hastily wending their way in masses up the rugged roads leading to the Convention ground. It seemed as if every house, cottage and hamlet had

disgorged itself of its tenants. Every road seemed lined with vehicles – coaches, chaises, wagons of every description and the like, all seemed to have been put into requisition for the occasion. Those who could not afford the means of a public or other conveyance, traveled the distance on foot. Most of the delegations were obliged to travel from twenty to forty miles. All was life and animation. It seemed as if no obstacle, whatever its magnitude, could impede their progress. If ever before our friends abroad have doubted whether the Green Mountain Boys would do their part, could have witnessed this pageant, we know they would have said, let the Green Mountain Boys alone, they'll do their duty. All classes were here assembled – the laborer, the mechanic, merchant, farmer, all left their accustomed duties, many of them at a great sacrifice and expense, with a determination fixed and immovable that if anything could be effected by them to bring about a change it should be done. Here you might see old and young, rich and poor, mingling together and discussing freely on the political state of things in the country. Oh that Buchanan, Benton, Wright, and even Van Buren himself could have been present to have seen this mighty gathering of the people. They would not longer claim Vermont as a Van Buren state, but in the height of their anguish would exclaim – she's gone, hook, line and sinker.

As the procession on the east side of the mountain passed on from Hammond's Mills (West Wardsboro) to the Convention ground, a distance of eight miles, with their banners flying and bands of music playing lively airs, and the eye reverted to the valley below, it rested upon one of the most imposing spectacles ever presented. As the procession neared the encampment each delegation was received separately with hearty cheers. The first thing which struck the eye upon the ground were the numerous tents, the fine bands of music, to the number of ten or twelve each, vying with the other, to render the scene interesting. Here might be seen a booth, there a tent – and yonder a log cabin. All this taken with the beautiful scenery, unequalled anywhere, made up one of the grandest sights that ever was seen.....

In closing our description we cannot fail to say a word in relation to the scene at night. The grand encampment, nothing could have been more romantic. Look where you would, in whatever direction, the whole encampment was alive. About 8 o'clock one of the finest exhibits of fireworks took place that we ever saw, which together with numerous campfires, the loud huzzas for Harrison, the repeated groans for the falling dynasty, rendered it one of the most impressive and grand scenes which the freemen of this section ever witnessed. In conclusion we may say that if any supposed our account exaggerated, we can only say the half has not been told.

And, on July 24, 1840, the Phoenix reported: "I understand some of the Democrats in their rage have set fire to the Log Cabin in Stratton since the Convention, but it would not burn. I trust they will be as unsuccessful in destroying the Log Cabin spirit that now prevails among the Green Mountain

Boys. I learn that the worthy Whig Matrons of Stratton have honored the cause by holding a social tea party in the cabin and the young maidens contemplate doing the same. May the same spirit inspire old and young till our country is freed from demagogue rulers."

There are many more accounts of the events of those two days. Some of the more interesting recollections were told many years later by residents of the town. Some were retained by Ethel Eddy and read during various memorial celebrations of the event. These accounts include:

*New York, N.Y.
August 10, 1901*

To the committee of the Log Cabin Celebration and Old Home Gathering

Gentlemen:

Your request that I be a guest of your honorable body on the 16th instant was received with great pleasure.

It was a happy surprise. May the occasion be auspicious and enjoyable. On reading your invitation, I thought over the three score years and more that have passed to the time that I, Luther Torrey's youngest son, stood under the shadow of the old Log Cabin of 1840, looked with awe at its architecture and majestic proportions and with eyes and mouth wide open, witnessed the people hurrying to the scene over highways, byways, fields and fences.

I recollect that I did not do much work, but I did a good deal of looking on. How big I was! Big as any boy that stood under the shadow of Bunker Hill. How I watched and waited and waited and watched for the greatest event of all, the arrival of Daniel Webster. And when the "godlike Daniel" appeared, what whistling, howlings and blowing of horns of all kinds! It would easily have sent the walls of Jericho to the ground a second time. The sensations I then felt choke me even now. Great Scott! Where did so many people come from? The 1840 convention was a great out-pouring and a great event for its time and place. After he heard of the victory of Saratoga, Benjamin Franklin said he was six inches taller the next morning when he walked through the streets of Paris. I think some of the good people in and around about Stratton felt a head taller after the convention. The fields may have looked greener to them and the Green Mountains a little more elevated.

The campaign of 1840 was a notable one in the nation's history and the Log Cabin Demonstration in Stratton a notable one in Vermont history. Who can say how much the policies, spirits, and aspirations manifested then have had to do with shaping the destinies of our Great Republic.

I am glad, indeed, that you propose to recall and celebrate the loyalty, devotion, and spirit of Log Cabin times. Success and long life to the committee and friends of the enterprise. I shall give three cheers and a tiger for you when I think you are safely camped on the 1840 convention ground.

*Most respectfully,
E.H. Torrey*

*Townshend, Vt.
August 12, 1901*

Rev. O.H. Palmer

My Dear Sir:

I cannot conveniently be with you on the Old Home Day. My age is rather against it. I am 87, but will tell a few incidents that happened on that memorable day. I recollect a man had his pockets picked, and Webster asked if it was a "Sub-Treasury Pocketbook." The Democrats had a bill in Congress at that time called a Sub-Treasury bill. The Whigs passed it out of the House. Another incident which is very vivid in my mind is that a young man by the name of Deming from Arlington robbed some poor cow of her bell and put it upon his own neck. He marched through the cabin backward and forward so that no man shut his eyes. If he were lucky enough to get one eye closed, Deming would catch him by one leg, and if he found himself, he would be at the other side of the cabin with the music of the cowbell upon Deming's neck. No doubt there are others who recollect these same incidents.

*Sincerely yours,
H.L. Porter*

*Editor, Vermont Phoenix
Brattleboro, Vt.
(1907)*

Dear Sir:

Sixty-seven years ago, July 7, 1840, the people of Brattleboro were up, out, around and astir uncommonly early. The "Godlike" Daniel Webster had spent the night of the 6th there, and the Tippecanoe & Tyler Too club of which young Mr. Frederick Holbrook, now our venerable ex-governor, was president, and some one hundred others, were to escort him to Stratton, where he was that day to address an outdoor mass Whig convention on the issues of the campaign. Many errors about this convention have appeared in print. A Vermont "historical reader" says: "Webster was there and ate his dinner from a shingle like the others, there being no plates." Twenty thousand persons dining off twenty thousand shingles! A newspaper account

of Mr. Webster's dinner says: Again the same "historical reader": "When all was ready he [Webster], mounted a stump and delivered his speech." He was then in his 59th year and portly. The president of the convention, Waitstill R. Ranney, and Hiland Hall "mounted the stump" with Mr. Webster and made short addresses. Some fifteen or twenty others, also, probably including President Holbrook, had seats thereon.

The site of the stump or of the "Webster Grandstand" was a natural amphitheatre in a rough pasture, a little north of a good stage road and three miles east of the top of the Green Mountains and three-fourths of a mile east of White's sawmill, now Grout's, so-called, on Deerfield river. Phineas White of Putney owned the mill and pasture. Mr. Webster spoke Saturday, July 4, 1840, in Barre, Mass., came to Brattleboro Monday, the 6th, to Stratton the 7th and spoke in Bellows Falls the 8th.

Brattleboro's "prancing cavalcade of horsemen" didn't prance through her streets in honor of Daniel Webster July 5, 1840, as in print, for that day was Sunday. More likely they were singing "Auld Lang Syne" and the Doxology. Nobody knows where in Brattleboro Mr. Webster spent the night, July 6, or where he dined at the Stratton convention. Maybe he dined on the stand he was speaking on – there was plenty of room – and maybe in "a large tent," but that tent wasn't "pitched on the summit of the mountain." That summit was an unbroken forest then as now and always except by the road and three miles distant. Maybe and more likely he dined with his new-made political friends in the log cabin, 100 feet long, north to south and 50 feet wide, cut in two width-wise by a drive for teams. The Democrats celebrated this log cabin in a song beginning thusly (to the tune of Yankee Doodle):

*Dad and I went up to Stratton early
Tuesday morning.
And there we saw the Federalists as
thick as bees a-swarming.
A great log cabin there was built all
filled with hard cider,
As long as uncle's barn and shed, I
guess it must been wider.*

It is in print that Mr. Webster spent the night after the rally in West Wardsboro at the private home of a stranger. Guess not. And that the stranger set fire to his only cigar and "after puffing at the weed some little time" handed the residue to Mr. Webster, who finished it, "appreciating the luxury." He did not. He had such an offer on the steps of the hotel at West Wardsboro, where he stopped on his way to the convention, but declined with thanks. In 60½ years the story grew to the improbable and nauseating dimensions as above. Mr. Webster was remote from his teens. He had traveled from Brattleboro to the Stratton convention 37 miles, by the winding of streams or over mountain spurs; had been lionized all the way; had

addressed a multitude of fifteen or twenty thousand, and had loaned his ears there and everywhere from dawn in Brattleboro to dark in Stratton to "Hip, hip, hurrahs." He didn't travel back seven miles to West Wardsboro. In the early darkness after the rally he, with another, entered the southwest corner room of Luther Torrey's near the rally grounds, and the candles were soon put out and he there pillowed his big weary head "tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep," till the coming dawn.

August 16, 1901, there was assembled, as per a newspaper report, on the Webster convention grounds 1,000 people, mostly from the East. As they passed the site of Luther Torrey's they saw posted "Where Webster stayed." Those who posted the notice knew and know the stubborn fact.

Yours truly,

E.M. Torrey

On July 14, 1840, John Haswell's *Vermont Gazette*, which he published in Bennington, gave a different view of the Log Cabin Convention:

"Crowds poured forth to Stratton to derive light from this great federal luminary, but returned disappointed, vexed and chagrined at their wasted time and labor. All felt and most all admitted that this advent of the "Godlike Daniel" among the Green Mountains was a total failure.

The remark is frequent and utters volumes of the degradation of a great man, "Why little Hall made a better speech than Webster." The performance of Mr. W. is spoken of as a disgraceful tirade of coarse billings-gate and barroom ribaldry. His auditors listened in vain for any suggestion or exposition of Gen. Harrison's principles or policy that should counteract the bad times, or be a substitute for the Independent Treasury – The embarrassment under which Mr. Webster labored, was, no doubt, produced by his efforts to assume the sentiments of a democrat, and that to a blue light federalist was choking and up hill business. To hear Daniel Webster attempt to preach democracy must have presented a ludicrous burlesque that even Diogenes would have laughed at. The absurdity of Whig pretensions to the principles of democrats is nowhere more conspicuously exhibited than in their Hard Cider debauches, which are made the organs of the party. At Burlington Charles Adams, William Upham, and H[eman] Allen were the only inhabitants of this state who addressed the meeting. These men were and still are federalists of the bluest dye. During the last war they opposed every measure of the government. Aristocrats in principle and practice; in their breasts no pulsation of democracy ever throbbed. And now Daniel Webster, the head of Essex junta and the instigator of the Hartford convention comes among the Green Mountains to enlighten the democracy of Vermont. Satan quoting scripture is an apt emblem of Daniel Webster, the apostle of federalism, preaching republican principles."

Celebrating the Memory: “Old Home Day” and “Daniel Webster Day”

Since that time in 1840, the Town of Stratton has honored the memory of this event in various ways. It appears that several decades transpired, however, before the site of the convention became a cherished legacy in its own right. For many years, the old cabin remained on its original site. A road survey of 1856, recorded in the Town Records, references this old cabin and a nearby tamarack tree not far from the abandoned Torrey’s Tavern. McClellan’s Map, drawn that same year, however, does not show a building on this site, nor does Beers’ Atlas of 1869 (see Appendix A). In 1921, one writer noted that at that time, a dead tamarack tree stood upon the convention grounds. Upon it was a sign that read, “*The only remaining tree that stood on these grounds in 1840.*”

Beginning in the latter years of the 19th Century, a holiday known as Old Home Day became popular across New England. Interestingly, this unofficial holiday originated on August 15, 1877, in Cornish, New Hampshire, when the Reverend James T. Jackson of the Congregational Church there invited 15 people to the church to “renew old acquaintances. The custom grew and spread throughout New England, first known as Old People’s Visit. Being a late summer holiday, this celebration became an out-door event in many towns. In Stratton, this holiday often was combined with celebrating the most memorable event of Stratton’s past – Daniel Webster’s visit. Among the more notable celebrations were those held in 1901, 1915 and 1940.

The 1901 Celebration

In 1901, although this year did not mark a notable anniversary of the event, a large celebration was held, called the Log Cabin Celebration and Old Home Gathering of August 16, 1901. Some of the accounts given above describing Webster’s visit, were given per request of those who organized this 1901 gathering, attended by approximately 1,000 people.

In preparation for this event, the old convention ground had to be cleared of the growth of spruce, balsam and tamarack that had sprung up over many years of neglect. A log cabin 12’ by 20” was built on or near the site of the original cabin. “*The roof thatched with boughs was surmounted by a live raccoon as of old. Inside was a stuffed panther killed in Wardsboro in 1875. One lone tamarack dead now, but still standing – the only remaining tree on the grounds when Webster was there, stood as a sentinel to guard the spot from oblivion. A bandstand was erected, trimmed in evergreen and bunting. Seats and tables were provided and a 12-foot flag flew in the breeze.*” C. M. Russell, E. M. Torrey and the Reverend N. N. Glazier gave speeches. Refreshments were served and the Wardsboro Cornet Band provided music.

LOG CABIN
CELEBRATION

— A N D —

Old Home Gathering !

Stratton, Vt., Aug. 16, 1901

On the site where

DANIEL WEBSTER

addressed the Great Convention in 1840.

Survivors of the 1840 Convention invited to
be guests of honor.


Hons. C. M. Russell,
E. M. Torrey,
Rev. N. N. Glazier,

and others will deliver addresses.

The Exercises will be interspersed with
singing, and the

Wardsboro Cornet Band

will dispense appropriate Music.

 Ample provision for man and beast.

COME EVERYBODY !!!

H. E. Mundell, Printer, Jamaica, Vt.



The Old Log Cabin replica built in 1901

Photo courtesy of the Ethel Eddy Collection

The Memorial

On August 10, 1915, the Stratton Mountain Club, a local club established in 1912 (see The Stratton Mountain Club in Chapter XV), held a commemorative celebration of the 75th anniversary of Daniel Webster's visit to Stratton – an event attended by a crowd of about 800 people. The highlight of the celebration was the unveiling of a memorial bronze plaque (mounted on a boulder) upon the field where Webster's speech took place. Although the gathering was not nearly as large as that of the event it honored, a crowd of 800 persons in Stratton at that time was remarkable in its own right.

In preparation of the celebration, the club's president, Ethel Eddy, and other members of the club, went about the task of determining the site where Webster had given his speech. After interviews with several old-timers who were present that day in 1840, as well as others who visited the site with parents in the years that followed, a location for the memorial was determined. The details of the plaque were also worked out. In an article published in the Brattleboro Reformer on July 30, 1960, Miss Eddy stated, "*I was president of the Stratton Mountain Club at the time the marker was erected in 1915. Files of newspapers printed in Bennington and Windham Counties in 1840 were searched as well as other records of the event. We found estimates of the throng that attended the rally to range from a low of 10,000 to, in one report, 50,000. However, most accounts gave the number as around 15,000.*" This seemed the likely multitude and so the inscription was set and the bronze plaque was ordered.

The week before the celebration, a group from the Stratton Mountain Club headed to the site of Webster's speech and set the commemorative marker on the designated spot. Elmer Eddy, Henry Lackey, Ray Lyman and Henry Payne set the stone that Monday, August 4th, and Mr. Grant of Brattleboro mounted the tablet to the stone. Mrs. Ray Lyman, Miss Amy Moran, Miss Ethel Eddy, and Miss Davis accompanied the men and provided lunch for the party.

The following Sunday was the day of the celebration. It was a day filled with events, including an historical address by former Lieutenant-Governor Frank E. Howe. Following Mr. Howe's address, Doris Eddy, a daughter of Hermon Eddy, unveiled the marker. James Taylor, founder of the Long Trail and a member of the Stratton Mountain Club, was introduced and he gave a dedicatory address followed by a reading of the marker's inscription. As evening approached, the celebration was relocated to West Wardsboro.

It is interesting to note that, at that time, the area where the memorial was placed was privately owned by a lumber company and no attempt was made to retain the site for the club or the town.



The original Webster Memorial

**The Webster Memorial Dedication Ceremony
August 10, 1915**



Unveiling of the Webster Memorial by Doris Eddy



Visiting the 1901 cabin

In 1940, between 1,200 and 1,500 people assembled for the centennial celebration of the Whig Convention at Stratton – an event sponsored by the Historical Society of Windham County. Ethel Eddy presided as chairman of the Webster Centennial Committee and she presented a brief history of the site and the events that had taken place there a century ago. Governor George Aiken was the main speaker, stating that he was honored now to have spoken at two different sites where Daniel Webster had preceded – the first being in Charleston, South Carolina. Governor Aiken went on to *“pay tribute to those of Webster’s time who struggled in behalf of the liberties, which the people of this country now enjoy.”* A second guest speaker was John F. Scully of Brockton, Massachusetts, whose speech focused on American Liberty and the European threat at that time. The Brattleboro Military Band provided music for the occasion.



Daniel Webster Day Ceremonies

Although the flag must be a 45-star flag official from 1896 – 1912, this seems to be a celebration held much later – probably 1940.

At this same time, John Gale, president of the Historical Society of Windham County, made an announcement that the American Realty Company of Glens Falls, New York, owner of the site, had staked out the surrounding acre and deeded it to the Historical Society with no compensation. Mr. Gale held up the deed at that time and proclaimed, *“We accept the gift.”* He went on to express the appreciation of the Historical Society and hoped that *“posterity would cherish the spot and remember its significance.”*

Meanwhile, celebrations at this site became annual events, as the Daniel Webster Day Committee that organized the 1940 celebration remained an active entity for many years. The legend of the event was further promoted in 1947, when Howard Breslin (1912 – 1979) published an historical-fiction novel called *The Tamarack Tree*. This book tells a fictional story of life in Stratton during those early July days of 1840, set against the great Whig Convention.

During the 1950s, though, controversy loomed over this historic site and the prospects of yearly celebrations on the site looked dim for a time. This controversy began in 1953, following a very successful Daniel Webster Day celebration, at which Vermont's Speaker of the House, Consuelo Bailey, was the guest speaker – an event attended by 400 people. The speakers arrived at the site in an old stagecoach and music was provided by Cook's Circus Showband of Springfield. Ethel Eddy and the Reverend J. J. Sessler of Grafton gave additional speeches.

Following the celebration, the Daniel Webster Day Committee, by that time chaired by Malvine Cole, met at the Samson home in Stratton and voted to make the celebration a yearly event that would give “*political big-wigs, local, regional or national, the opportunity, if they want it, to sound off in good spirit and inspiring surroundings.*” The 1953 celebration had been profitable and so the committee also decided to invest in the site by adding picnic tables and improving the water supply. This created a problem, as the Webster Site was still the property of the Historical Society of Windham County.

Within the year, Malvine Cole was elected Stratton's Representative to the Legislature. As chairman of the Daniel Webster Committee, she helped create The Daniel Webster Association. This organization was formed, subsequently, and it adopted a constitution and bylaws and filed papers with the state as a non-profit organization in 1955. Several people within Stratton, the Historical Society and the state government believed that Mrs. Cole intended to use the Webster grounds as her personal political stepping-stone. Among those who seemed to express this opinion was Ethel Eddy, former President of the Stratton Mountain Club and a longtime advocate of Daniel Webster Day celebrations. Ethel was a member of the Historical Society of Windham County and chairman of the Webster Centennial Committee in 1940, when the Historical Society was deeded the property. Ethel also was among the original members of the Daniel Webster Association and participated in developing its constitution.

At this same time, the Historical Society relayed a policy to Stratton that anyone wishing to use this site must make application for each event and that no structures were to be erected on the site. The Daniel Webster Association quickly pointed out that those conditions would make it impossible to hold any major event on the site, as the rule prevented “*even barbecue pits from being erected.*” The controversy grew as Mrs. Cole threatened to have the Selectmen condemn the site as a park, putting it into the town's hands. At

this same time, a petition was presented to Stratton's Selectmen to acquire the site as follows:

“We the undersigned freeholders of the Town of Stratton herewith petition the selectmen of Stratton to take whatever steps are necessary and within their rights and privileges as defined by Section 3647 and 3804 of the Vermont Statutes and by any other statutes, or articles of the Vermont Constitution, to lay out, acquire and possess for a public park and public use and benefit the land commonly known as The Daniel Webster Monument Grounds, and any other lands thereto which they may deem necessary to the development of an area which shall be used for play and picnic, festivity and celebration, especially for celebration of Daniel Webster Day, serving not only town residents and property owners, their children and children's children, but the needs for recreation and inspiration of visitors to our township.”

A lawyer representing the town went to discuss options with the Executive Board of the Historical Society. Fearing litigation, the Historical Society decided that they did not wish to retain ownership of the site and, therefore, they considered two options – either deed the property to the town, as the Town had requested, or to Vermont's Historic Sites Commission. The Executive Board considered the internal political contention within Stratton and so they decided it would best be protected in the hands of the Historic Sites Commission. The Historical Society made the formal offer in late November 1955.

Within a few days of the offer, the Historic Sites Commission agreed to accept it. Vrest Orton, chairman of the Commission, sought Governor Johnson's approval on December 5th. The Governor sent a request to Malvine Cole to come to the Governor's Office on December 9th or 12th to discuss the matter. On December 9th, Chairman Orton arrived at the Governor's Office with the deed. At that time, Orton convinced the Governor to give his approval, but it was subject to legal approval of the deed by the Attorney General. Following the meeting, Orton carried the deed to the Attorney General's office. Meanwhile, Governor Johnson attempted to contact Malvine Cole on Friday, Saturday and Sunday to inform her of the decision, but he was unable to contact her. In fact, Malvine already was in Montpelier, and she paid a visit to the Governor on Monday, December 12th, as requested. At that meeting, Governor Johnson explained to Mrs. Cole that he had accepted the deed and that he felt the site would be best preserved in the hands of the state. He also told her that the state would cooperate in permitting the site to be used for Daniel Webster Day celebrations in the future.

The story made its way into the Rutland Herald on December 13th and it was the headline in the December 15th issue. These articles, however, intensified the controversy momentarily as they reported that Malvine Cole had stated to the Herald by telephone, that Governor Johnson had given her the deed. This was not the case, Mrs. Cole corrected the Herald reporter and the correction was published December 16th as follows: Mrs. Cole had said, *“The governor presented me with a Fait Accomplis as far as the deed was concerned.”*

Following the transfer, Senator Graham Newell of St. Johnsbury, a board member of the Historic Sites Commission, stated, *“The Webster Site can best be given statewide value under a broad policy of a state group. We shall take every reasonable step to protect this interesting site from improper exploitation and develop it under our permanent policy of considering the interests of all the people of Vermont. Under the aegis of the Vermont Historic Sites Commission, a site of this kind is safe and may be presumed to be protected as long as the State of Vermont exists.”*

Within a few weeks of the transfer, the Historic Sites Commission met at the City Council Chamber in Rutland for a Hearing, per request by the Town of Stratton. The Rutland Herald reported that there were fifteen people – about half of Stratton’s voting population – present from the town. The Chairman, Vrest Orton and board member, Senator Newell conducted the Hearing. The Commission asked what plans were being made for next year’s celebration and they wanted to know if Stratton’s internal politics would be kept out of the celebration. Mrs. Cole stated that they planned to have an elephant and a donkey – mascots of the political parties – for show at the event, and she wished to invite candidates for Governor and Lieutenant Governor from both parties to speak there. She agreed that Stratton’s internal politics would not be part of the event. The article reported that despite good humor during the meeting, there were indications of strong personal clashes within the Town of Stratton itself. Orton stated, *“My advise to everybody in Stratton is to pass around the olive branch. I never heard of such a big fight in such a little town.”*

Statements from the hearing were considered at a later meeting of the Commission. Daniel Webster Day Celebrations were allowed to continue over the following years. No permanent structures were built there and no facilities were added. In the General Election of 1956, Ethel Eddy defeated Malvine Cole in the contest for Stratton’s Representative to the General Assembly.

In 1960, the Daniel Webster Association cosponsored a Daniel Webster Day celebration with the Stratton Corporation. The President of Stratton Corp., Frank Snyder, spoke at the celebration, informing residents and visitors about the new ski area. Also in attendance were: Senator George Aiken, US Representative, Robert Stafford and former Governor, Lee Emerson.



Daniel Webster Day 1960

In more recent times, however, activities and events to commemorate Webster's visit to Stratton have been rare occasions. In 1965, Malvine Cole compiled and published Daniel Webster Spoke on Stratton Mountain, a pamphlet detailing the events of that time. Then, on Memorial Day weekend, 1977, the memorial plaque had fallen victim to vandals. It had been pried from the stone and eventually discarded in a stream. After that time, the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort had a new memorial stone engraved and placed it a few yards up the hill from the old memorial. Fortunately, the old plaque was found eventually and given to the Russell Collection – a collection of local history located in East Arlington. In 1992, the plaque was returned to the town and mounted on a different boulder – inset, so it could not be removed so easily as it had from the original stone. The old stone was moved across the road and pushed out of the way. To rededicate the memorial, Malvine Cole organized an old-fashioned Daniel Webster Day held on July 5, 1992. She had her 1965 pamphlet reprinted at that time to sell at the event and other saleable memorabilia were produced.

Most recently, a program sponsored by the Historical Society of Windham County on July 18, 1999 brought a Daniel Webster impersonator, Jim Cooke, to speak upon the original site before a crowd of about 70 people. At that time, I introduced the speaker and gave a brief history of the place and the event. Midway through the program, a thunderstorm interrupted the oration. The speaker and spectators alike rushed to the Town Hall where the program continued.

Also in 1999, as a member of the Recreation Committee, I requested that the road crew move the original Webster stone to the Recreation Area to be used to mark an old foundation. Presently, it supports a plaque that tells the history of the dwelling that once stood there.

As for ownership of this historic little acre, it has taken another turn. In 1998, I followed up on a request by the Selectmen to see if the town could acquire the Webster site. Vermont's Historic Sites Commission had avoided the grounds and the town had taken on the responsibility for its upkeep for many years. At that time, I spoke with the chairman of the Commission, John Dumville, who agreed that the Webster Memorial acre should be transferred to the town. In 1999, the paperwork was complete and the State of Vermont deeded the site to Stratton.

Postal Service

Currently, Stratton does not have its own Post Office; instead, postal service is provided by the surrounding towns of West Wardsboro, West Dover, Bondville, Jamaica and South Londonderry. This last office, however, maintains a separate small branch within the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort – the Stratton Mountain Rural Station, which opened on September 15, 1962. It continues service, using South Londonderry’s zip code. There was a time, though, when Stratton maintained its own Post Office.

When postal service was established in this area, Stratton’s residents had to travel to Wardsboro for their mail. A Post Office was established in Wardsboro in 1814 to provide service for an area composed of Wardsboro, Stratton and Somerset. Wardsboro’s first Postmaster was the Reverend James Tufts, appointed to that position by the administration of President Monroe.

It was not until February 11, 1834, that a Post Office was established in Stratton. Thomas Sprague was appointed Stratton’s first Postmaster and he filled that position until January 20, 1836. At that time, the Post Office was kept within the home of the Postmaster. Sprague resided on the east half of 3L4R at, or very near, the site where the Town Hall now stands. William Mann Scott assumed Sprague’s duties and served as Postmaster until June 15, 1838. Scott evidently lived in a house west of Sprague’s home on the west half of 3L4R. Luther Holbrook, who also ran the inn at the corner of what later became the intersection of the *West Jamaica Rd.* and the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, was the next Postmaster. He held that position from June 15, 1838, to October 4, 1850; however, the Post Office was temporarily discontinued between August 28, 1843, and July 23, 1844. Following Mr. Holbrook’s service, LaFayette Sheldon, the town’s blacksmith, ran the Post Office from October 4, 1850, to January 8, 1886. Evidently at that time, the Post Office returned to where it had been when Mr. Scott was Postmaster. From January 8, 1886, until January 26, 1892, Evander H. Willis was Postmaster. Next, Milon F. Perry ran the Post Office to November 21, 1898. Orlando H. Palmer, the town’s Free-Will Baptist Minister and Town Clerk, served as Postmaster from 1898 until January 5, 1903, apparently running the office from his home – the Parsonage (now *685 Stratton-Arlington Rd.*). Stratton’s last Postmaster was Bert L. Perry, who closed the office for the last time on July 15, 1910. Bert Perry evidently ran the Post Office from his home, located on the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* east of the Union Church. At that time, rural free delivery (RFD) had been introduced to Vermont and many of the smaller post offices were closed down. Stratton has not had its own Post Office since that time. In recent years, the West Wardsboro Post Office allows the name Stratton, Vermont to be used with their zip code for local delivery within Stratton, while local delivery in the northeast part of town still must use Jamaica, Vermont as their address.



Photographs of one of the homes used as a Post Office in Stratton during the 19th Century. This building was located west of the Stratton Meetinghouse, along the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*

Photos courtesy of the Ethel Eddy Collection



School #5 Students 1898

**back row – Abbie Lowe, Martie Baybrook, Irene Allen, Leola Forrester
Eva Wakefield (teacher)**

middle row – Robert Palmer, Ethel Allen, Chloe Palmer, Winnie Lowe

front row – Rachel Palmer, Lucy Palmer

Chapter IX

Stratton's Schools

The Vermont School System

During the American Revolution, school was all but nonexistent in the day-to-day activities of Vermont's children. In 1782, near the close of the war in the northeast, Vermont's General Assembly passed a law that provided district common schools in every township, and so a number of districts were established within each town. Districting and schoolhouse placement ultimately were based on the distance children would have to walk to get to school. Each school district also required the establishment of an operational organization to carry out its business; therefore, the position of school trustee for each school district was created. To finance the schools, districts were authorized to set taxes on property within their jurisdiction – half the tax was paid by the parents of the district while the other half was paid by all taxpayers within the district. In addition, aid was given through leases of the school lots set aside in the charters of each town. Hence, a system of elementary education took form across Vermont – a system that underwent little change before the mid-19th Century.

Some minor changes to Vermont's school laws included the establishment of a school fund in 1825, devised so as not to be appropriated until it could defray the expenses of a good common school in each district of the state. This fund was abolished in 1845. Another change in 1827 created superintending committees for each school district within a given town. Offices of a superintending committee consisted of a District Clerk, a Collector, a Prudential Committee and a Treasurer.

A few notable changes to the state's school system occurred in 1845, when a new supervisory system was established that included the election of one or three school superintendents within each town. In 1846, Stratton elected to have one superintendent and Ezekiel Estabrook was elected to that position.

The 1859 – 1860 school year saw standard School Registers that were issued by the state for use in the schools. Before that time, school records occasionally were written into the town records or written into ledgers. These School Registers were operational logs for teachers, school directors and superintendents alike, as well as a handbook of legal guidelines associated with teaching within Vermont schools. Stratton's surviving School Registers are kept within the Town Office.

In 1870, state laws were enacted that made school attendance mandatory between the ages of eight and fourteen and towns were given the choice between the district system and the town system of schools. At that time, Stratton's voters considered two articles: the first asked for the abolishment of the school district system and the second asked to reduce the town's districts

to just three – neither article passed. Throughout the 1880s, the town rejected adopting the town system. It was last considered at the Town Meeting of 1889 and again it was rejected. In 1890, state legislation effectively ended the school district system. The schools were turned over to the town, and later district properties were assessed and the town paid each district the assessed value of their property. The Town Records report:

“Appraisal of School Houses in Stratton, Vt.

In accordance with Act No. 21 Sec. 20 of the Acts of the legislature of the State of Vermont for the year 1892 in regard to the appraisal of School Houses by the Selectmen of the Several Towns in the State. We have appraised the several School Houses in the Town of Stratton as follow to wit:

The School house in district #2 – \$75.00.

#3 - \$100.00, #5 - \$75.00, #6 – 150.00.

The School House of #13 in Jamaica of which the Town of Stratton’s share not yet decided – \$100.00.

The Town of Stratton has also assumed the indebtedness of School District #2 to the amount of \$26.85.”

Additionally, in 1892, the state adopted new legislation that allowed for a Board of School Directors for each town. Each town could elect either three or six school directors. In 1893, Stratton chose to elect three School Directors; thus, Stratton’s School Board was created: H. H. Forrester was elected to a one-year term, Charles H. Grout was elected to a two-year term and AJ Pike was elected to a three-year term to begin the rotation. Since that time, all terms have been for three years, with only one position up for election each year (under normal circumstances). It continues to this day.

High Schools

Education in Vermont beyond the elementary level or common school level has a slightly different history. Throughout the 19th Century, an education beyond the elementary level simply was not considered for many children. Most young people apprenticed in the trade they wished to enter into in adulthood. If, however, parents planned to provide a higher level of education for their children, then those children were sent to a County Grammar School (predecessor of the high school), a finishing school or a college preparatory school – a seminary or academy. It was not until 1898 that the state mandated that towns with populations greater than 2,500 shall establish high schools. Stratton did not fall within this category; thus, once high school had become an essential part of childhood schooling, Stratton’s children have had to travel to other towns for that purpose. The only exception are those who might attend the privately owned, Stratton Mountain School, located in Stratton within the ski resort.

The Beginning of Schooling within Stratton

The institution of schooling found its way slowly onto the agenda of Stratton's local government. Apparently, Stratton's proprietary government never felt that it needed to address the issue of schooling; thus, no mention of a school was made within their records. Eventually, the town government began to address local schools, but that did not occur until 1793 – five years after the first Town Meeting. That year, the town voted to set up a committee “to lay out the school money” collected from rents on the school lot. No details exist concerning expenditures of this committee; however, the following year, it was “voted to divide the town into districts for schooling.” The first details of districting were set down in the minutes of the March Meeting of 1797, which established four districts for the town as follows: “voted to district out the town for schooling in the following manner: the north district to come south as far as the town gives of the mountain so called; the west district to run east on Manchester, Sunderland and Somerset Roads to Alexander Joslin's being the 5th lot, 5th range and to Richard Bartlett's on the 4th lot 5th range. The east or middle district to take all the rest on the two roads except Captain Thayer and Lieutenant Bixby and what is south of Sunderland Rd. to be called the south district.” This first effort at creating districts in Stratton became the basis of Stratton's school district structure until common schools within Stratton ceased to exist in 1918. Over the years, these districts were at times modified, numbered and on occasion renumbered, but they never were redrawn completely.

At a special town meeting held in June, 1797, the town voted Trustees for the schools as follows: Solomon Gale for the north district, Jacob Batchellor for the middle district and Samuel Blodgett for the west district. A trustee for the south district, for some reason, was not considered at that time and it was not until 1799 that Richard Bartlett was elected Trustee of that district. These gentlemen were the first of many to hold these positions until the laws were changed in 1827.

School Funding

The first school funds within Stratton consisted of rents on the school lot as detailed above. In 1799 and again in 1800, the town considered raising additional money for schooling, but they did not act on these articles. Then, in 1801, the Town voted to raise money by districts – therefore, each district property owner paid a tax to support only the school within their district. This method was changed in 1827, when state law mandated a school tax of three cents on the dollar assessed to the Grand List by the Selectmen, who distributed these funds to the districts, proportional to attendance. Additionally, in 1841, monies collected from the lease of all public lands were voted toward schooling.

The amount of funds brought into each district changed over the years, but no major change in appropriating funds occurred until a statewide

property tax bill was passed in 1890, ending the school district system. This law mandated that a state tax be assessed on each town, while funds were redistributed back to the towns.

In 1897, Stratton's school directors asked to raise 75 cents on the dollar of the Grand List to pay all school expenses. After that time, a town-wide school tax was voted on at each Town Meeting. The statewide property tax system was abolished in 1931 and school funds again were obtained entirely by a local property tax. This remained in effect until another statewide property tax bill – Act 60 – was implemented in 1998, similar to its 100-year-old predecessor (see Chapter VIII).

School Time

By 1800, Stratton had fully implemented a standard district school system across the township. At that time, Stratton's children probably attended school for four months during the summer months – a standard for the times. In 1807, Stratton considered forming a winter school, but the town failed to act on this issue. In Knapp's *History of Stratton* in Hemmenway's *Gazetteer of Windham County, Vermont*, he indicated that by 1883 most of Stratton's district schools maintained the standard four months of schooling per year. Educational advantages were limited and boys over the age of twelve received only two months of schooling per year. At that same time, with Stratton's population standing at about 300 people, Stratton supported five school districts. The teachers in these districts were paid an aggregate yearly salary of \$303.12. There were 70 pupils and the entire combined school budget for the town was \$322.60.

The development of the school year as we know it today was a long and gradual process. In fact on some occasions, some districts failed to have a school for six months or more, warranting the replacement of district officers and re-implementation of a standard policy for the district. State law mandated the number of weeks schools were to be opened, but the schedules were somewhat flexible over the years, often determined by the weather or the growing season or the availability of a teacher.

In 1893, Districts 2, 3, 5 and 6 each still had functioning schools. These four schools were maintained into the new century, although on occasion, lack of a teacher or lack of students meant that at least one of the schools did not hold classes for the year.

As Stratton's population continually dwindled during the late 1800s and early 1900s, Stratton's schools followed suit. In 1895, what probably should have been the School Register for District #6 was labeled "Town System School." And in it, the May / June term of that year appears to have combined Districts 5 and 6, implying that a single school held classes in Stratton at that time. Records for the following term, however, show most of those students being taught in District #6, while the rest apparently went to District #5 –

indicating that just a single combined term existed for that year. The time of only one school within Stratton, however, certainly was on the near horizon.

1902 was a critical year for Stratton – it was the last year that the Reverend O. H. Palmer held the position of Superintendent of Schools. In fact, with O. H. Palmer's removal from Stratton the following year, the town lost its Minister, Town Clerk, Treasurer, and Postmaster – all in one fell swoop. Additionally, the Grout Bros. had sold the Grout Job; therefore, the district in that part of town – District #3 – went from nine students at the beginning of the 1901/2 school year down to just three students by the end of the year. Coincidentally, during this same school year District #6 did not have a school after the first term. Therefore, only Districts 2 and 5 maintained schools during the entire year.

To understand what took place over those years, it seems best to quote the Reverend O. H. Palmer's last Superintendent's Report – his report tells the difficulties the town faced in maintaining schooling for its children and it implied what was over the horizon for Stratton. He writes:

“Fellow Citizens: In making my final report as Superintendent of Schools in Stratton, Vermont, it becomes my duty to tell briefly of the work accomplished which, as is often the case, especially in educational work, we find that the amount accomplished is far short of what was aimed at. In keeping with the recommendation of last year, we tried to have the schools begin early so as to get in the required number of weeks and close before the deep snow came.

This was effected in regard to No. 2, but apparent scarcity of teachers made the schools in No. 5 later. The small school's distance from large places, coupled with the scarcity of teachers in the market, has made harder the task of filling the various positions, and while all aimed at has not been done yet we feel that something has been accomplished and another difficult factor to deal with has been the apparent and manifest indifference on the part of some of the parents and pupils as to attendance.

It hardly shows appreciation of the advantages in our way when we allow a whole term to pass with scholars or a family of pupils to stay away from school.

The cost of the school is the same; the interest is shortened by everyone who stays out.

And while the school may not have been just what we wanted, there will always be a big vacancy in the mind of those pupils where might have been stores of useful knowledge.

We will recommend early commencing of the terms: regular attendance of all available pupils when not necessarily detained. We urge the duty of parents to visit the schools as a matter of encouragement, both to the pupils and teacher, and, second, as a means whereby prejudice may be overcome and correct views of each school and its work obtained. We know of and sympathize with the pupils in the lack occasioned by the small numbers, etc.. But the duty remains: the opportunity will never come again in their way.

Our pupils, so it behooves us to seize by the forelock the passing chance. A brief statement of the various school teachers follows:

No. 2, spring term of ten weeks taught by Miss Helen C. Murray, of Winchester, Mass., and, although highly educated and working very hard, different methods and want of familiarity with programme of our schools made results less than hoped for.

Fall term of ten weeks was taught by Miss Maude Aiken of Putney, Vermont. Order, interest and advancement good and we feel confident that helpful lessons were learned.

The winter term of eight weeks was taught by Mrs. Jennie M. Wheeler, and although the attendance was not what it should have been, yet we are confident a good school was taught and those who attended made real advancement in their studies. It is uncertain how many pupils will be in this school next year, as the number must largely depend on the work at the saw mill.

No. 3 has not been held as there were no pupils to attend, but probably a request for a school in the old school house, with preference for a Catholic, will be made.

No. 5 spring term of ten weeks was taught by Ernest O. Allen of Jamaica and, although a very young and inexperienced teacher, yet excellent work was done. Order, interest and attendance very good.

Fall term of ten weeks was taught by Miss Marion E. Warner of Sunderland, Mass., and, although well educated and trying very hard, yet the common mistake of an attempt to apply high school methods to primary workers made some of its inadaptability apparent.

Winter term is being taught by another new teacher, Miss Abbie E. Lowe, who, we are satisfied, is trying hard to make a successful teacher.

No. 6 – Only one term was taught and that with only three pupils in the spring of ten weeks. Taught by Mrs. Lillian Burbee Lyman. Excellent work was done and an effort made to retain her, but she moved from the State, which made it impossible, and so the three pupils have not had other advantages than home study.

With the sincere hope that another year may be more productive of good results than the past, I submit the report.

Sincerely,

O.H. Palmer, Superintendent

Stratton's school system continued its sporadic existence for another four decades. District #2 kept a school only until November 24, 1906; thus by 1907 and until 1911, Schoolhouse #5 remained the only operational school in Stratton. But as the school-aged population tended to recede from west to east, it became logical to relocate the school to Schoolhouse #6 in Pike Hollow. This occurred in 1911, while Schoolhouse #5 went unused. The Pike Hollow School (#6) was used until 1918. Between 1918 and 1938, no schools were held within Stratton. Then in July 1938 Schoolhouse #5 was

reopened, called a Union School, and taught by Mrs. Phyllis Corliss, but only for a brief time. Although during its last year of operation this school had as many as 28 pupils in attendance, it was closed down for the last time in December 1941 – just as America entered World War II. After 1941, all school-aged children in Stratton went to schools in neighboring towns – most likely Jamaica or Wardsboro. This fact has continued to the present.

Redrawing the Districts

Over the years that Stratton maintained multiple school districts within town, citizens often requested changes to these districts to accommodate the convenience of parents and children in attending their assigned school. Most requests were honored at an annual meeting, effectively reshaping the districts each year requests were granted – a process that continued as long as farms continued to develop in town and individual families worked out the details of getting their children to school.

The first of several redistricting efforts occurred in 1803. At that time, the town voted: *“to have the north district come to Mr. Jonas Woodward and take him in and all north of him in that district and to be called the first district and from Mr. Woodward’s all the inhabitants between him and James Randall, Bille Mann, and Joshua Robbins with them to be in another district and to be called the second district and all the inhabitants from them south to the Somerset line to be in another district and to be called the third district and to have the west district remain as it was and be called the fourth district.”*

The following year, the town voted to create District #5 from the first and second districts: *“Voted that John Greenwood, Jonas Woodward, Joel Estabrook, John Gleason, Ezra Estabrook, John Glazier, Arnold Cook, Archibald Pratt, Ambros Batchellor and David Cook are set off in a district by themselves and to be called the 5th district.”*

In 1820, the old District #3 was absorbed by District #2. Over the next few years redistricting was considered but not acted upon by the town. Then in 1823, the town *“voted there be a school district to begin at Deacon John Gleason’s (probably Glazier’s) north line and extend south on the east road to the Batchellor’s Mills – No. 5.”* This extended from the north half of 8L1R down to the south line of 5L1R – along *Mountain Rd.*

In 1825, another major redistricting process occurred. The town voted to accept the North School District of Somerset to combine with the District #3 of Stratton and *“to set two tiers of lots on the south end of said town onto the 3rd school district beginning at Wardsboro line to the west line of the 5th range except Matthew Randall.”* At this same meeting, District #4 was set onto District #2. This expanded District #2 was referred to as the Center School District at that time.

In 1833, the town voted to divide the Center School District on the west line of the fourth range; hence, it was divided and the new districts were organized in 1835.

In 1844, the town attempted to redistrict the town so to include the wildlands. A committee was formed and this time the lines followed the Lot / Range grid, with only a few exceptions. The committee recommended eight districts, of which only the first five districts would have required schools as districts 6, 7 and 8 included only unpopulated areas at that time. The town failed to consider this effort at the meeting of 1845. Instead, alterations continued to be made to the old districts.

The School in Pike Hollow

In 1825, Stratton had accepted students from the north district of Somerset into Stratton's District #5. Then in 1830, "*at a meeting legally warned and held at the schoolhouse in the southeast district in Stratton the said district and the northeast district in Somerset was organized as one district and the said district passed a vote that said district hereafter shall be known as Stratton and Somerset United School District.*" This combined district apparently remained an entity until 1851. At that time, "*on petition of Pardon Wellman and other freeholders of the 5th school district in Stratton being a district formed and composed partly of inhabitants of said Stratton and partly of inhabitants of the town of Somerset praying that the Union of said Districts be dissolved. Witnesseth we the undersigned being appointed by the honorable David Arnold one of the assistant judges of the County Courts a committee to examine into the subject and premises set forth in the said petition having appointed a time and place of hearing and having notified the parties to wit the petitioners and district and at said time and place the parties appeared and having heard the proofs and allegations and examined the premises set forth in said petition and of the parties it is adjudged by said committee of Justices as aforesaid that the Union of said district be and the same is hereby dissolved agreeable to the State in such case provided and it is further adjudged that the district lying in Stratton shall hold the property belonging to the district as before constituted and shall pay the inhabitants of said district as estimated by the parties not to exceed 10 dollars. Said property consisting of the school house, wood and stove and said District in Stratton to have the benefit of taxes now in.*" This apparently was motivated by District #5's efforts to build a new schoolhouse on 2L3R.

In that same year, Stratton's southernmost farm in Pike Hollow (located at that road's intersection with what is now *Penny Avenue*) was set off to

Somerset's northeastern district (Somerset's District #3), which included the southwestern portion of Pike Hollow and, about 1857, a new schoolhouse was built at the end of *Pike Hollow Rd.*

With the annexation of northeast Somerset in 1858, District #6 was established to include all of Pike Hollow, with the exception of a short length of the northeastern end of that road. That same year, the town voted to include the Rice and Briggs farms (which were located on what is now the *Rt. 100* corridor) into District #6.

Redistricting after the Annexation of Northeast Somerset

In 1860, after Stratton annexed part of Somerset and just before the Civil War, Stratton's population peaked. The older districts had remained in place with only an occasional farm being reassigned from one district to another. And, District #6 was created from the old Somerset District #3 and part of Stratton's District #5. During the 1862 / 1863 school year, children in the extreme southern part of the Somerset Annex attended Wilmington District #16 (called the territory as it was the handle – later part of Dover).

Following the Civil War, the population began to dwindle and the effects began to show in the school districts. Beers' Atlas of 1869 shows the districts as they existed at that time. In 1870, new legislation by the state was introduced, intending to reduce the number of schools within any given town to just three. That year, however, Stratton voted to pass over the article intended to address that legislation.

In 1871, the town voted to set District #1 in Stratton's northeast corner onto District #13 in Jamaica, effectively eliminating Stratton's District #1. Before that time, Stratton had experimented with combining children from Winhall and Jamaica during various years. After that time, this school was referred to as the Pikes Falls School and Stratton children attended that school most years from 1873 to 1891 and 1909 through 1917. Additionally, beginning in 1870, children in the southern part of the Somerset Annex began attending District #9 in Dover (previously Wilmington #16).

In 1873, Stratton voted to set District #4 onto District #2 effectively to combine those two districts, while some of the District #4 students began attending District #12 in Jamaica. This change did not work and so District #4 was reinstated in 1875. Classes were last held there in 1879.

Another redistricting effort commenced in 1882. This effectively placed lands not included in school districts onto adjacent districts for tax purposes. With the legislation of 1890 put into effect, most issues previously resolved by redistricting no longer were applicable, but the old districts remained in name after that time.

Schoolhouses

Where did these children attend school? During the first years of Stratton's history, schools were likely held within a convenient farmhouse offered for that purpose by the owner. The decision of whether or not an older building was to be designated as a school or if a new schoolhouse was to be built was left to the citizens of each district. Eventually, each district was able to provide schoolhouses for their children.

Within the Town Records, the first mention of an attempt to build a schoolhouse within Stratton occurred on April 4, 1806. On that date, Hasey Floyd Sprague donated six square rods for the purpose of building a schoolhouse thereon for District #4 in Stratton (This was not the same as the 4th school district seen on Beers' Atlas of 1869). In actuality, this was a piece of the farm on which Sprague lived, in lot #2 in Stratton Gore, located about one-half mile west of Willis Cemetery (see Section III Chapter XVII). The proposed schoolhouse lot was located ten rods north of his house and by the side of the road near the corner, where the so-called *Somerset Rd.* and the *Gore Rd.* met. The school, however, apparently was not built on this site, since on August 25, 1810, District #4 deeded this lot back to Sprague and Sprague deeded another six-rod-square of ground "*where the new schoolhouse now stands, situates as best to accommodate said schoolhouse.*" This seems somewhat confusing as the redistricting of 1803 indicated that Stratton District #4 included all land west of the *Somerset Rd.* and south of the *Sunderland Rd.*. The first designated location mentioned above places District #4 schoolhouse on the east side of the *Somerset Rd.* in District #3 – perhaps the second location was west of the road. This schoolhouse may have remained in use until 1825, when the districts were redrawn and this area became part of District #3, which combined with Somerset's north district.

The next mention of a schoolhouse site within the records occurred in 1818. At that time, the town voted to build Schoolhouse #2 on the Town Common. And, in 1819, Abel Grout, William G. Pike and Bille Mann were appointed to put down stakes where schoolhouse #5 was to be built. Thus, by 1820, Stratton had at least three schoolhouses.

In 1835, an organizational meeting for redistricting the Center School district met at "*the house occupied as a school house in said district.*" This implies that the schoolhouse on the Town Common already had been abandoned, coinciding approximately with the abandonment of the old meetinghouse. The "*house occupied as a school house*" may have been the same noted in the records of 1845 – a house located at what is now the junction of *Ball Farm Rd.* and the *West Jamaica Rd.*

Additionally, in 1846, records indicate that a schoolhouse existed near Jonathan Babcock's house (now seen as *356 Stratton-Arlington Rd.*) on 1L1R. This, apparently, was the District #5 Schoolhouse at that time. This may have been a different building than the schoolhouse that was staked out in

1820, as the road had changed since that time. This building was replaced in 1851 (see Schoolhouse #5 below).

On the Map

With the creation of McClellan's Map of 1856 and Beers' Atlas of 1869 (see Appendix A), there exist clearer pictures of Stratton's schoolhouse locations. Beers' Atlas also shows the School Districts as they stood in 1869.

Schoolhouse #1

The schoolhouse in District #1 was located opposite the intersection of what are now *Lost Lane* and *County Rd.*. Apparently, it was last used in 1870. After that time, District #1 was set onto Jamaica's District #13.

Schoolhouse #2

Both maps show that this schoolhouse was located on the southwest corner of what is now the *Shepardson Rd. / West Jamaica Rd.* intersection. Schoolhouse #2 was rebuilt between 1901 and 1902 on the east side of the *West Jamaica Rd.*, opposite the *Shepardson Rd.* intersection. While the new building was under construction, school was held in the Ball farmhouse on the northeast corner of the *West Jamaica Rd. / Ball Farm Rd.* intersection. School last was held in this new schoolhouse in 1907. Later, this building was used as the Town Hall from 1935 to 1943. It since has been sold and it is still in use as a privately owned camp – 258 *West Jamaica Rd.*



A Recent Photo of Schoolhouse #2

Schoolhouse #3

This westernmost School District built a school on the south side of what is now the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, about three-fourths of a mile east of the *Grout Pond Access Rd.*, as indicated on McClellan's Map of 1856; but, by 1869, Beers' Atlas shows it on the north side of the road in this same vicinity (see Appendix A). This schoolhouse was picked up and moved to the site of the Grout Job that stood at the intersection of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* and the East Branch of the Deerfield River. The move probably occurred about 1892 or 1893. School was held last in this District in 1902.

Schoolhouse #4

District #4's school stood on the west side of the *Mountain Rd.*, approximately 1½ miles north of the *West Jamaica Rd.* intersection. Although no school was held here between 1870 and 1876, this schoolhouse was last used in 1879. The foundation of this old schoolhouse still can be seen there, near the edge of the road.

Schoolhouse #5

District #5 built a new schoolhouse in 1851 on 2L3R. In 1853, Aaron Lowe granted District #5 "*land on which the school stands as long as the town uses it as a building spot for a school.*" It once stood on the south side of *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, midway between *Old Forrester Rd.* and *Willis Cemetery Rd.* This building was not used as a school between 1911 and 1938, but it remained town property and classes commenced there once again in 1838. It was used last as a schoolhouse in 1941.

Once the building was no longer in use as a school, the land reverted back to the owner of the Lowe farm at that time. Subsequently, this schoolhouse was used as a place for Town Meetings regularly from 1943 to 1965. In 1972, Schoolhouse #5 was relocated from its original site to its present location, beside the Stratton Meetinghouse, while the land had reverted back to the Tuttle family, owners of the old Lowe farm at that time.

Following the move, Schoolhouse #5 was restored to a one-room schoolhouse, to be used as a museum. It remains so to this day. Recently, the School Board deeded this building over to the town.



Schoolhouse #5 at its original location



Moving Schoolhouse #5 (1972)

Photo courtesy of Joy Lewis



Schoolhouse #6 before it was converted to a dwelling



Schoolhouse #6 during remodeling efforts

Schoolhouse #6

Circa 1857, just before Stratton annexed northeast Somerset, a schoolhouse was built in Pike Hollow on the west side of Pike Hollow Cemetery and on a parcel of the Adams Allen Grout farm. Once Stratton annexed this area in November 1858, this school became Stratton's Schoolhouse #6. Classes were held here for most years to 1903. It went unused until 1911, when it became Stratton's only operating schoolhouse.

In 1918, Schoolhouse #6 closed for the last time and on September 10, 1936, the town sold it to Abel Daniels. Since that time, it has been renovated into a dwelling. Currently it is a vacation home – seen as *230 Pike Hollow Rd.*

The Stratton Mountain School

It seems appropriate to note here a private school that exists within Stratton. The Stratton Mountain School is a private high school that conducts a curriculum around its specialty of ski instruction. The school began at the ski resort as a tutorial program about 1970, with three tutors, a coach and a dozen enrolled students. These students stayed in donated “his and her” chalets at the resort. Within a few years, the tutorial program developed into a fully accredited school with the full use of a renovated ski lodge – the old Tyrol Hotel – located near the Chapel of the Snows.

In 1998, the first buildings of a new school complex were completed on *Brazers Way*. The old building was demolished in 2000 to make room for the new Copper Lantern Inn.

Conclusion

Over the span of just 150 years from 1790 to 1940, the citizens of Stratton watched their school system rise and fall – a reflection consistent with much of the town's history. With no public schools within the town before 1790, Stratton expanded to six operating school districts by 1860. Then, just five decades later, the town struggled to keep even a single school in service – a struggle that ended in 1918 only to be briefly rekindled for a handful of years around 1940. During the early 20th Century, Stratton seems to have had a push-me-pull-you relationship with its school system. Depopulation brought about school closings and school closings persuaded even more families to leave town – another of the many circumstances that nearly brought Stratton to extinction before 1960. In recent years, though, the small number of school children within town and better methods of transportation continue to reinforce the Town's decision to rely on the schools of neighboring towns.



**The Gravestone of Dya Hill
within the Old Town Cemetery**

Chapter X

Cemeteries

Within Stratton there are seven areas currently set aside as cemeteries. Other lots with interred human remains exist within this town, but those sites have fallen into anonymity within the forests. The earliest recorded death within town was that of Elizabeth Boutell, who died on May 24, 1796. Deaths certainly occurred previous to that time in Stratton and at least one death occurred in Stratton Gore before that time. The earliest known marked grave in Stratton is within Stratton Gore, in Willis Cemetery – a stone dated 1795 – which marks the death of Anna Moulton Grant.

Many of the earliest settlers of Stratton probably buried their dead near their homes in small private plots, likely marking each grave with a fieldstone, a pile of stones or a wooden cross. Over the years, some of these plots developed into cemeteries used by the general population.

Evidently, there existed an early cemetery, which was used in common by the town's people of Stratton, located in 5L5R, probably on the eastern border of that lot, well beyond the gate at the end of *Shepardson Rd.* At that time, this area fell along the first road that cut across Stratton from West Jamaica to Somerset. This first public cemetery went out of use about 1803, once the Town Common and its associated cemetery were established. The exact location of this first cemetery has been forgotten over time and any gravestones that may have existed there long since have disappeared.

About 1802, a cemetery was started on Stratton's new Town Common, situated in the west half of 4L4R. This cemetery currently is referred to as "The Old Town Cemetery."

Several years passed before any mention of the town's cemeteries were written down within the town records. The first of these records was an article addressed at the town meeting of March 11, 1811, which read, "*to see if the town will take into consideration respecting the burying yards and take security for the same.....*" During that meeting Hasey Sprague, William Stearns and Bille Mann were appointed to a committee to inspect the burying grounds and make a report to the town; however, no report was recorded.

Also at that meeting, it was voted that "*the selectmen provide a burying cloth by the expense of the town.*" This was a cloth used to cover the coffin during the funeral service and it was reused during each town funeral. A burying cloth was acquired within the year; and so, during the next town meeting, Joshua Robbins was directed to keep it at his home. Generally thereafter, the burying cloth was kept at the home of the Town Clerk. In 1849, a new burial cloth was needed, but it was decided that Abel Grout, Jr. could repair the old cloth by cutting it down to a smaller size.

Although the town had addressed the mutual care of its cemeteries in 1811, ten years passed before Stratton appointed caretakers for these grounds. In 1821, Stratton finally appointed sextons for that purpose. It was among

the sextons' duties to dig graves within the cemetery they were assigned and to keep the yard clear of brush. There were three sextons that first year, one for each of the town's active cemeteries. Bille Mann was sexton for Center Cemetery (originally, this referred to the Old Town Cemetery), Joshua Sprague for the South Cemetery (Willis Cemetery) and Abel Kidder for the North Cemetery. Asa Phillips took Bille Mann's job the next year, and so the positions of sextons were continued by town appointment.

Over the years, some of the earliest cemeteries were forgotten and their stones were toppled and covered over time or possibly even removed. One story exists that in the early 1900s, Dr. Russell of Arlington photographed some stones within a cemetery south of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, near Grout Pond. He stood the overturned stones against trees, took photographs, and then put the stones back as he had found them. The location of this cemetery has since been forgotten. Also, other rumors exist of more recent findings of stones in Stratton near *Canedy Rd.* on the Wardsboro town line and another lost cemetery was described in deeds as being located within 5L4R at the end of *Shepardson Rd.*. A description of this last cemetery exists within a deed that granted this cemetery to the town. This deed narrows its location down to a one-acre plot between the main road (of that time) and the brook, just east of the dwelling house (at the end of *Shepardson Rd.*) and on a knoll overlooking the brook. The remains of the dwelling (house and barn) are located next to the gate at the end of *Shepardson Rd* and had been owned by Jacob Batchellor, Sanford Holmes and later by Edwin Grout, to name a few. This one-acre cemetery was deeded to the town by Moses K. Shepardson, the executor of Sanford Holmes' will. Sanford had owned the property and offered it to the town in 1829. He later sold the lot with the exception of the cemetery plot. After his death, the cemetery lot was deeded to the town. No stones exist there and no evidence remains of it ever being a cemetery. In 1836, it was referred to as the Cemetery near J. Rand's farm. Unfortunately, it appears that this site was excavated for gravel several years ago. Shamefully, these burial sites have been forgotten over the years. Hopefully, though, they will be rediscovered in the future.

Stratton's seven distinguishable cemeteries remaining within the town are: Ball Cemetery, Blodgett Cemetery, Eddy Cemetery, North Cemetery, the Old Town Cemetery, Pike Hollow Cemetery, and Willis Cemetery. There is, however, a single stone not included within the town's established burying yards, located behind *218 Penny Ave.*, at the corner of *Pike Hollow Rd* and *Penny Ave.*. This stone marks the burial site of infant twins born to Rufus and Tryphena Lyman. With only this exception, no other marked stones are known to exist outside the boundaries of the known cemeteries.

As of 2000, there were only 400 marked or identified gravesites within the entire town of Stratton. Although Stratton is, and always has been, a small town, this number does not reflect adequately the number of people that have lived within Stratton. There are several reasons that might help account for this imbalance. For one, there are many unmarked graves within the town

– no marked grave exists before 1795 and nearly all the existing cemeteries appear to have several unmarked graves within them. Also, many of Stratton's residents can be found buried in cemeteries of some of Stratton's neighboring towns. Many can be found in the cemeteries of Wardsboro, Dover and Jamaica. Many of the earliest residents moved on before they grew too old or escaped the harsh conditions of Stratton in their old age by retreating to nearby valley towns. For instance, there were a few early Strattonians buried in St. James Cemetery in Arlington. Finally, the fluidity of this region, continuous from the early 1800s until the population was almost nonexistent after 1920, kept the population rather young as the older generations settled in less harsh areas. In the 80 years since 1920, there have been less than 70 burials in Stratton, with less than 20 since 1990, a far cry from the tragic year of 1863, when 33 deaths and subsequent burials were recorded in Stratton in that single year – 30 of which are still marked sites within the town. Therefore, with local gravesites at a minimum, a complete listing of these sites could be added to this history. *Cemetery Listings* can be found in **Section III**.

A worthy note of interest added here for those who have or will visit Stratton's cemeteries – it was (and still is) a common practice to bury the dead facing east, so that the souls of the deceased may see the rising sun on the day of the resurrection. Also, since it was considered improper to stand over the dead, the inscriptions were placed on the side of the stone opposite the body. Therefore, you must face east to read most all of the gravestones in Stratton, with the exception of just a few of the more recent markers.

Ball Cemetery

This cemetery is located at the eastern end of *Ball Farm Rd.*, on the north side of the road. Asa Phillips, a prominent citizen of Stratton, set aside a parcel of land upon his farm in the west half of 4L3R for use as a cemetery. Later, it was referred to as Grimes' Cemetery, since the farm eventually had been sold to James Grimes. It is near the center of town from a north / south perspective and for that reason it was referred to as Center Cemetery for most of its existence. Currently, it is referred to as Ball Cemetery, named for Edward Ball, a more recent owner of the original Phillips farm. Interestingly, no one with that family name was buried therein.

Ball Cemetery is considered the main cemetery in Stratton and it is by far the largest in town, with about 230 gravesites. The oldest remaining stone here is that of Rebecca Paine who died on May 1, 1825. This cemetery is still in use and recently it was enlarged when the Samson family donated a section of land to the town for that purpose. It is surrounded by a stone wall, with a gate near the road. The wall was modified to encompass the addition as well as the old plot.

Blodgett Cemetery

This cemetery is located in the woods upon a knoll and along a small brook directly across from the Stratton Golf School, on the northwest corner of the intersection of *Pikes Falls Rd.* and *North Rd.*. Originally, it was a private cemetery for the Blodgett family. There are no walls or fences to mark this cemetery's boundaries. Currently, Blodgett Cemetery lies on private property owned by the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort.

Eddy Cemetery

This cemetery is located northwest of the intersection of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* and *Willis Cemetery Rd.*, beyond the house that occupies that corner. It was a family plot, originally situated upon the farm of Phineas Ward Eddy. The stones face east as expected (away from the road). To the west of this cemetery there once existed a millpond that had spread out over the lowland there. Eddy Cemetery is surrounded by a stone wall with a gate on the side nearest the road. This cemetery's first burial was in 1836 and it was last used in 1911. Currently, it is situated on private land.

North Cemetery

This cemetery is located at the end of *Stone Chimney Rd.*, in the northeast quadrant of Stratton, near the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort's Sun Bowl. The road approaches the cemetery from the east. North Cemetery was a 0.22-acre parcel, but it has since been enlarged to include 1.4 acres, recently cleared and enclosed, providing a wonderful view of Stratton Mountain. The earliest existing stone there is dated 1802. This cemetery went unused for 131 years, as evident from the last marked grave in 1858 to the time of the next marked grave there in 1989. A fence was built around the entire 1.4 acres in 1991 and a gate was placed near the road.

Old Town Cemetery

This cemetery is located in the woods on *Old Town Rd.*, about half-a-mile west of Stratton's Recreation Area. It is located within the Old Town Common, on the south side of the road, across from the old foundation of Stratton's first meetinghouse. This was the center of town from 1801 until the mid-1830s. The stone wall that bordered the old road also marked the road side of the cemetery. This cemetery was in use by 1803, but probably it was not used after the early 1830s. Only two stones remain; although, it is evident that many more graves exist therein.

Pike Hollow Cemetery

This cemetery is located at the end of *Pike Hollow Rd.* in the Somerset Annex of Stratton. The first known burial there occurred in April 1828. This cemetery continues to be used to the present. Pike Hollow Cemetery was originally the southwest corner of Samuel Willis's farm in Somerset. Joseph Pike had buried some of his children on this lot – a knoll located across from the house of his father, Jotham Pike. Willis sold Jotham this corner (seven rods north by six rods west – or about 100 X 116 ft.) for five dollars on February 3, 1834, with the intention that it would be used as a cemetery by the whole neighborhood. Subsequently, stone walls were laid out around the burying ground and stone steps were built to access the grounds, leading up from the road.

This cemetery and the neighboring schoolhouse incorrectly were considered as part of the old Samuel Willis farm, owned by Adams Allen Grout in the years before Stratton gained the Somerset Annex. It rightfully should have remained part of the Jotham Pike farm.

In 1962, the Pike Hollow Cemetery Association was formed to allocate lots and provide general upkeep of the cemetery. Just prior to that time, the town had widened the road and the front wall was damaged. The Association evidently had the wall repaired. In September 1963, an addition of about half-an-acre was deeded to this Association by Ethel Eddy, extending the cemetery out on 2½ sides. The addition has since been leveled out for use. Currently, there are eight used plots in the new section, beyond the walls of the original lot. The Association gave the cemetery to the town on June 8, 1974, but no deed was issued until 1985.

Willis Cemetery

This cemetery is located at the end of *Willis Cemetery Rd.*, on this road's north side. It was used first by the Grant and Pike families and others who occupied Stratton Gore. Originally, it may have been a family plot upon the farm of Nevinson Grant¹. It was referred to as South Cemetery in Stratton's early records. Later, the Willis family, for whom the cemetery was named, owned the farm located on the cemetery's western side. Willis Cemetery is surrounded by a stone wall with an opening near the road at its southwest corner. This cemetery was in use by 1795 and it continues to be used. Here lies buried Robert Penn Warren, America's first Poet Laureate.

1) The exact location of Nevinson Grant's farm has not been ascertained. The fact that his daughter, Anna Moulton Grant, was probably the first to be buried here indicates that this cemetery may have been upon his farm. Nevinson was one of the first to settle in Stratton Gore and the farm beside this cemetery was a prime site for his farm.

Chapter XI

The Businesses of Stratton

From the onset of settlement and through the 19th Century, Stratton, as a town, remained little more than a conglomeration of subsistence farms. Settlers here traveled to Wardsboro, Dover and Jamaica for their provisions or traded with their neighbors for items that they did not grow or raise on their own farms. Many of Stratton's early citizens can be found among the names listed in the ledgers kept by Newell's Store or Daniel Harris's Store in Hammond's Mills (West Wardsboro), as well as Brown-and-Ryder's Store" there or Robinson's Store in Wardsboro.

An excellent example of commerce in this area at that time can be seen in the ledger of Abel Grout, Jr. – it is a record of his business, noting work performed and what compensation he received, whether by goods or by cash or by task. It shows that he had performed jobs such as carrying someone to Wardsboro by wagon, digging a grave or tending a sick animal – perhaps for payment of potatoes or chickens or a load of firewood. Cash was seldom the medium of business. In the 19th Century, most everyone kept records such as this to monitor and track their livelihood. Capitalizing on “odd jobs” was a vital component of the social-economic structure of a sparsely populated rural American town, such as Stratton, where most specialized professionals would have starved for want of work.

This is not to say, however, that legitimate businesses did not exist in pre-20th Century Stratton – they did! One of the first orders of business for Stratton's proprietary government of the late 18th Century was to establish milling operations for both grain and lumber. And, every town at that time had a tavern where the men could gather to discuss business, weather and politics, over a drink. The mills, however, were the important foundations of business within a wilderness town, hence we shall start by discussing Stratton's first gristmill and sawmill.

Proprietary Business – Stratton's First Mills

Inevitably, the most important “first” businesses of a newly settled town of the 18th Century were its mills – a gristmill so that the settlers could grind their wheat and corn into meal, and a sawmill that could process the many trees that would be cleared to make way for the farms, allowing settlers to construct frame homes instead of primitive log cabins. The proprietors of any given town realized the importance of quickly developing millworks, and so the development of these businesses was placed high on their agenda.

Phillips' Sawmill

In Stratton, the proprietors assigned the construction of the first sawmill and gristmill to John Blood at the first recorded Proprietors' Meeting in 1781.

The proprietors gave Mr. Blood a bond to build a mill on 5L2R; however, he apparently did not fulfill this commitment. Instead, this bond was transferred to Jonathan Phillips as directed at the Proprietors' Meeting of September 17, 1784. Mr. Phillips was deeded a 200-acre lot – 3L3R – by Blood for this purpose. On September 22, 1784, the proprietors made another offer of \$60.00 and 5L2R to anyone willing to undertake the construction of a gristmill, but Mr. Phillips apparently did not get involved in this endeavor.

The next mention of any effort to build a mill occurred when Jonathan Phillips asked for an extension of the agreement at the Proprietors' Meeting of May 31, 1786. Mr. Phillips and his sons, Reuben and Asa, apparently completed the sawmill on the west half of 3L3R, probably on Ball Mountain Brook near where it now crosses the *West Jamaica Rd.*, just northeast of the present Town Hall.

Later, in 1797, Nathan Patch, a proprietor of Stratton, who had purchased the east half of 3L3R from Reuben Phillips, claimed to hold a bond on a mill in the west half of 3L3R on land Jonathan Phillips had sold to his son, Asa Phillips. Nathan sold the rights to this mill to James Randall of Orange, Massachusetts.

Graves' Gristmill

Abner Graves was the man who built Stratton's first Gristmill – so states Lyman Knapp in his *History of Stratton* in Hemmenway's *Gazetteer of Windham County, Vermont*. There is some confusion as to the intended location of the first Gristmill as records clearly state that the proprietors offered 5L2R for that purpose. Perhaps this was an error in the records, since Abner Graves built his mill on 2L5R instead. 2L5R is located southeast of what is now Grout Pond and includes a length of Meadow Brook, which runs through "Graves Meadows." Abner Graves purchased this lot on April 18, 1787. As for 5L2R, there was no mention of a mill site upon that lot in subsequent property transfers during the proprietary years.

Graves came to Stratton in 1787 and took up the task of building a mill on his property at that time. At the Proprietors' Meeting of May 29, 1788, the proprietors "*voted to choose a committee to view the gristmill to see if it is done to the exceptions (sic) of the town. Solomon Gale, Benjamin Hobbs and Jared Blood chosen as said committee.*" Hence, the mill in Graves' Meadow likely was Stratton's first gristmill – possibly a mill for wheat. Additionally, Graves and his mill were mentioned in a lot description in a deed dated December 1, 1788, when Timothy Morsman sold land in Stratton Gore to Zachariah Harvey. Apparently, Graves' Mill was in operation only for a few short years. No remains of this mill have yet been discovered.

With the completion of a gristmill and a sawmill, Stratton's proprietors had fulfilled their obligations to the new settlement, in respect to businesses. Additional enterprise within Stratton would be left entirely to the private sector.

Stratton's Numerous Mills

During Stratton's early years, two additional gristmills were built to accommodate the town's farmers, but changing agricultural practices within this town ended their usefulness before 1850.

Stratton's sawmills became much more important to the community over the years, as farming became less reliable and relied upon. The town's rugged terrain had prevented mass clearing during the first years of settlement and so cleared farms had remained sparse in Stratton. This was a great benefit to the emerging milling operations that sprang up on nearly every brook within town. The first years of the 1840s saw several new mills within the town.

Stratton's forest was abundant enough over the years to maintain several waterpowered mills across town; and when the technology of steam-driven mills arrived here, they could be built upon small water sources – nearer remaining stands of timber in the more rugged areas of town. Additionally, a boom developed for the lumber industry in this area at the end of the 1880s that lasted through the 1890s. At that time, rapid growth within Bennington, Vermont and North Adams, Massachusetts was taking place and new construction methods were implemented. Called the balloon-and-platform framing method for homes, it required more accurately sized lumber. The Grouts, Taft and Stewart, Dufresne and the Tudor operations all developed or expanded to meet these needs. This boom carried Stratton into the 20th Century, but eventually, changing techniques and improved transportation methods ended the era of Stratton's sawmill industry.

The first decades of the 1900s saw the community of farmers and lumbermen and their families give way to the logging crews of lumber companies. These crews consisted mostly of young men with no families or men who had left their families behind to work in the forests, returning home whenever the work allowed it. At first, these men boarded within town at lumber camps, but as transportation improved and work methods changed, they were able to commute in and out of town on a daily basis from larger communities.

This change became very evident when the owners of the largest mills within Stratton – Grout, "Taft and Stewart," Dufresne and Tudor – all sold their businesses between 1901 and 1903. Within just a few years, these mills and their lands fell into the hands of large timber and land companies – companies, such as the Deerfield Lumber Corp., the Somerset Land Co. of Portland Maine, the Emporium Lumber Co. of Pennsylvania, the New England Hardwood Co., the American Realty Co., the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Co., the Deerfield River Co., the Champlain Realty Co., the Connecticut Valley Lumber Co. and, the International Paper Co.. These companies, however, were interested only in the timber and not the mills; thus, the larger local mills were abandoned and Stratton's main source of jobs disappeared.

Stratton's timber industry came about gradually – later enhanced by the rails that progressed into this area and the changing technology of the business. At the peak of this industry, logs were loaded on cars and rolled to Arlington on rails with no powered locomotion, while teams pulled the empty cars back. Later, large logging trucks carried the timber down out of the mountains. At the far end of the tracks and the road, existed an area of East Arlington, known as Pulpville, which was used to store the pulpwood brought down from the mountains, awaiting shipment by railroad to the processing mills.

The era of large landholding companies within Stratton lasted only to the end of the 20th Century. For various reasons such as exhausted resources, complicated environmental opposition and higher property taxes, these companies have since sold off their holdings within this town. Much of the western part of Stratton was purchased by the Green Mountain National Forest, beginning in 1979, while the area around Somerset Reservoir had been purchased around 1913 by the New England Power Co. to create this reservoir. International Paper – the last of the large timber companies to own land in Stratton – sold its last holdings here at the beginning of 2001 – an era was over!

The following paragraphs detail some of the mills that developed within Stratton:

The Corn Mill

In addition to Graves' Mill, Stratton had a second early gristmill, simply referred to as "the corn mill." It existed prior to 1791 in 5L4R on the little brook then called Chicken Brook (currently referred to as Ball Brook, located north of what is now the Town's Recreational Area). Oliver Morsman owned the east half of 5L4R (108 acres) in early 1788. Subsequently, he sold this lot to Nathan Patch on October 27, 1788 and Mr. Patch resold this site to Jacob Batchellor of Brookfield, Massachusetts on February 25, 1791. This last deed mentioned the corn mill. Two acres of 4L4R also were set aside for this gristmill and the owner of that lot, Joseph Patch, sold this parcel to Batchellor on December 21, 1792.

Nothing exists in Stratton's records detailing the operation of this mill. It may have continued processing corn into meal until Batchellor built another mill in 1802. Remains of the old corn mill still can be seen along the brook there.

Batchellor's Mills

(later called Bissell's Mills)

Jacob Batchellor had purchased the site of the corn mill in 1791, but that site likely failed to provide enough waterpower to conduct an expanding business. Thus, in 1802, Mr. Batchellor and his son, Calvin, built a mill on a much

better site along Mill Brook (Ball Mountain Brook) in 5L1R. Batchellor's new mill complex consisted of a sawmill, located on the south side of the brook and a gristmill, located on the north side of the brook.

The next year, Calvin Batchellor sold his one-fifth part of the mill complex to Samuel Marble, Jr.. This mill site also was referenced in the town records on several occasions as a starting point for at least two new roads built around that time period; thus, the construction of this mill changed the face of Stratton in many respects. Batchellor's Mills continued as Stratton's main mill complex for nearly 50 years. Batchellor had financed this operation and he continued to own the site for the majority of the next 20 years, but the actual millers and mill workers of that time remain anonymous. It may be that Batchellor's son-in-law, Joel Grout was among his mill workers, as well as Samuel Marble, Jr..

In 1818, Batchellor sold the mills to David Newman, who operated them until 1821. That year, Newman sold the site back to Jacob Batchellor. Two years later, on March 6, 1823, Batchellor resold the mill site, in its entirety, to Jonathan M. Bissell.

Bissell's Mills: Following the sale, this complex was known as Bissell's Mills and it seems certain that Mr. Bissell lived at the site and was involved completely in their operations.

Jonathan sold the mill site to his son, John W. Bissell (of Montague, Massachusetts) on September 17, 1838; however, Jonathan continued operations until his death in 1849.

Subsequently, John Bissell sold the mill site to Darius and Joel F. Grout on June 5, 1850. The Grouts had grown up just across the road from the mill. In fact, Jacob Batchellor was their Grandfather. This sawmill was mentioned by Sewell Batchellor (a son of Jacob Batchellor) as the "*old mill*" in a letter home to his sister, Lucy (Batchellor) Grout in 1854.

Darius and Joel F. Grout may have operated this mill only briefly, if at all, for by 1856, McClellan's Map does not show a mill on this site, implying that it no longer was in use at that time. Joel eventually moved to Sunderland and operated a mill there before returning to Stratton and starting the Grout Job (see below).

Remains of Batchellor's sawmill and gristmill can be seen on Ball Mountain Brook in 5L1R. Remains of the old dam can be seen on both sides of the brook, but those on the south side of the brook are the most prominent. The spillway for the sawmill also can be seen on the opposite side. Later, apparently, Parsons Mill was built very near this site.

In June of 1997, while researching Stratton's History, I spotted one of the old millstones of Batchellor's gristmill, partially buried at this site. Additionally, hemlock logs laid across the brook bed as foundations for the old dam were visible and still in good shape after nearly 200 years. With permission of the current owners, this millstone was excavated by Daniel Hescocock of Wardsboro and myself, on July 6, 1997. Subsequently, it was moved to the lawn of the Stratton Meetinghouse on July 10, 1997, by

Stratton's road crew. This stone was the bedstone of the gristmill (the bottom immobile stone of a working pair). Once this stone was removed, the owner of the property found the runner stone buried even deeper than the first. This stone remains with the property.



**The millstone,
as it was discovered**



The runner stone



**Steve Scully, Dan Hescok
and Kent Young
retrieving the first millstone.**



**The bedstone from Batchellor's Gristmill
now displayed at the Stratton Meetinghouse**



Hemlock logs laid across the brook in 1802 to support Batchellor's dam

With the abandonment of Bissell's Mills in the middle of the 1800s, Stratton's population no longer had access to a local gristmill. Apparently, with the changes that had taken place in local agriculture over previous decades, the gristmill may have become obsolete even before that time.

The Solomon Gale Mill

(Also seen as the French Mill)

About 1795, Solomon Gale started a sawmill on Kidder Brook along the line between 9L2R and 9L3R. In 1799, Gale sold his property, including the mill, to Jacob French. The property description states that the dam redirected Kidder Brook away from 9L3R to power the mill on 9L2R. The mill yard consisted of half an acre on 9L3R. French operated a mill on this site until his death in 1810. John Greenwood owned this property after the widow French left Stratton about 1814, but there are no records indicating that the mill continued to operate during those years. Nahor Howard purchased the property with the mill in 1819. The Howards may have operated a sawmill there until the mid-1830s. In 1856, McClellan's Map shows no structures remaining on that site at that time.

The William G. Pike Sawmill

(Also seen as the Lyman Mill)

William Pike operated a sawmill on Pike Hollow Brook as early as 1805. Apparently, this mill was located very near or on the site of a second mill, built by Pike's son-in-law, Levi Knight, in 1820. In 1835, Pike built another mill on the site of Knight's mill and, in 1844, he sold the mill to another of his son-in-laws, Rufus Lyman. Lyman operated this mill for many years, as did his son William Lyman and grandson, Ray Lyman. The Lymans cut lumber and also made spouts. The lumber was stacked to the side of the mill between the brook and *Pike Hollow Rd.*, before it eventually was hauled by wagon to Wardsboro Station in East Jamaica, where it could be taken to market on the West River Railroad (during the years that railroad was operational). The old millpond was located on the west side of Penny Avenue and held enough water to cut about eight logs in a day during the summer months.

This mill was last used in 1922, when Ray Lyman moved from Stratton. Much of the remains of the old mill were carried off by the hurricane and flood of 1938. Those remains that still exist can be seen on the brook below the Lyman house (currently *218 Penny Ave.*).

The Alexander Hamilton Pike Sawmill

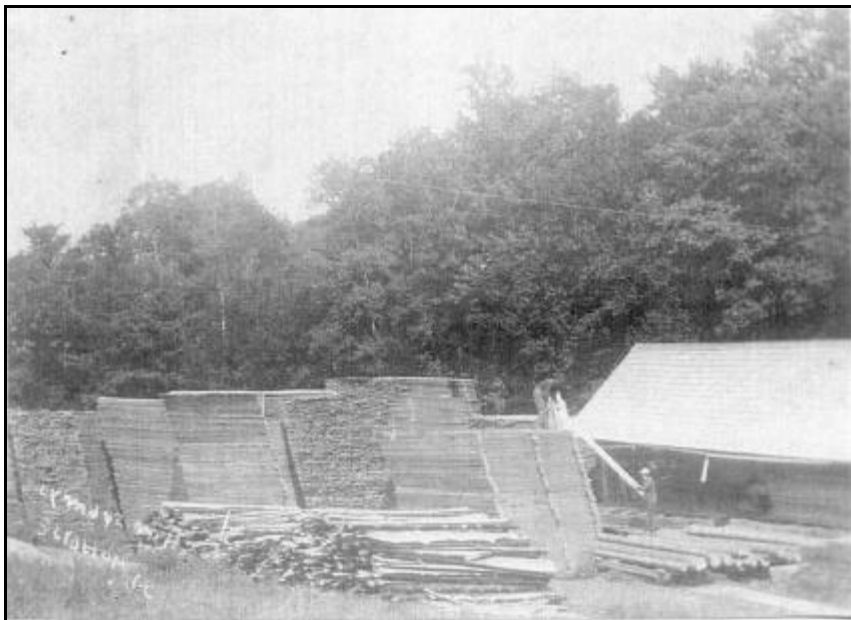
(also seen as the EA Eddy Sawmill)

In 1844, AH Pike constructed a sawmill on his property along *Pike Hollow Rd.* in Somerset. He built a dam across from his house, which once stood on the site of *182 Pike Hollow Rd.*, while the waterpowered sawmill was constructed downstream (on the east side of the current driveway to *171 Pike Hollow Rd.*) and on the south side of the brook. Remains of the mill and dam are still very evident there.

Pike built another house southeast of the mill (*171 Pike Hollow Rd.*) and lived there for many years, while operating the mill there. By 1881, Elmer Albert Eddy took over operations at the mill and for more than ten years, Pike and Eddy split the profits. Eddy bought out Pike in 1894.

Around the beginning of the 1900s, EA Eddy abandoned use of the old mill. At that time, he and his uncle, Orrin Johnson, began operating a steam-driven mill, which they had built upstream of the old millpond, directly opposite what is now *192 Pike Hollow Rd.*. The steam engine may have been the same that Orrin Johnson had used at a site more than a mile west of here (see the OA Johnson Mill). The large flat area surrounding this new steam-mill was used as a lumber yard, while the site of what is now *192 Pike Hollow Rd.* was the location of the mill workers' camp.

The steam-driven mill continued operation until about 1910. During some of that time, Ernest Martin was the sawyer at the mill.



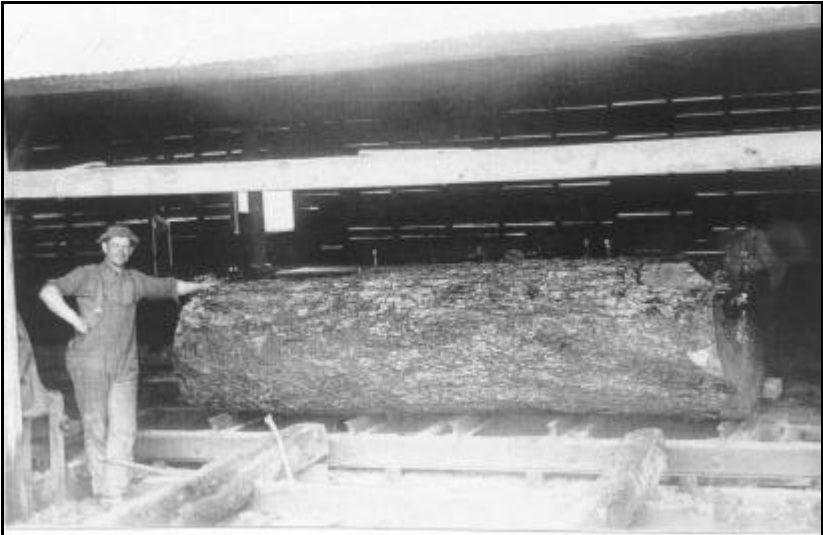
**The Lyman Mill on Pike Hollow Brook
William Lyman and Ray Lyman stacking lumber**



**Remains of the Lyman Mill in Pike Hollow
with 218 Penny Ave. overlooking the site**



**The Millpond of the AH Pike sawmill
Pike's house (now *171 Pike Hollow Rd.* stands in the background)**



Ernest Martin at EA Eddy's Sawmill

Photo Courtesy of the Ethel Eddy collection

The Phineas Ward Eddy Sawmill

This mill was located on 1L2R at the *Stratton-Arlington Rd. – Willis Cemetery Rd.* intersection, beside the Eddy homestead (now seen as 399 *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*). Phineas Ward Eddy and his sons built the mill, probably as early as the mid-1820s and before 1844. The Eddys sold the mill and farm to the Allens in the 1860s. Beers' Atlas of 1869 shows that the mill still existed on this site, but it apparently did not remain operational long after that time. The dam is still visible and area of old millpond is evident.

The Shaw Sawmill

In 1842, N. J. Shaw and Steven Moultrip started a milling operation on Black Brook on the leaselands – 3L8R and 3L9R – and, in 1844, the town built a road down to the mill site. In 1845, Shaw and Moultrip sold their rights to Chester Allen and George Fowler, but Shaw reacquired these rights the following year. Apparently, Pliny Fisk Grout lived on this site and may have operated the mill about this same time. Before the end of 1846, Shaw rented out the mill to Orrin Torrey for two years. After 1850, Abner and Gridley Gurney owned and operated the mill briefly. In 1853, they sold their rights to Allen and Joseph Parkhurst. Beginning that same year, Alvin Goodell operated the mill. By 1856, Jesse Sage had taken on its operation and in 1869, Beers' Atlas shows this site as the C. Birch Sawmill.

This mill was an up-and-down sawmill, which was operated by a flutter-box arrangement – according to Wayne Rowell who has studied this site. This mill burned before 1880 and it was not rebuilt. The road to it was discontinued by the town that year.

The Grout Job

This mill site was located on a prime site along the East Branch of the Deerfield River. Before it became the property of the Grouts, this site was the location of various milling operations. These operations included:

Hawkes and Wetherbee Mill: Daniel Wetherbee and Benjamin Hawkes, both of Leominster, Massachusetts purchased this site – part of 5L8R – from Atherton Hall on August 22, 1801 and described as being about 200 feet from the road, which leads from Samuel Boutell's over the mountain (the *Sunderland Rd.* – now the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*), beginning about 100 feet west of the bridge (across the East Branch of the Deerfield River). It was a one-acre lot west of the river and north of the road. Hall sold this lot on the condition that Wetherbee and Hawkes build a sawmill on the land within one year and they must keep it in repair for two years. They apparently did just that. Daniel sold his half of the rights to Bezaliel Lawrence of Leominster on May 22, 1802, and eventually resettled in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. Benjamin returned to Leominster and sold his half of the rights to Daniel Newhall on September 17, 1802. This mill site was mentioned in a deed in

1804, but it is unclear whether or not a sawmill remained operational on this site over the next few decades.

White's Mill: In 1827, Phineas White purchased the west half of 5L8R from the Halls. Apparently, the old mill site was included in this transaction. White may have financed the continued operation of the old mill for a few years, but in 1838, he had a new mill built on this site. This newer mill was called White's Mill at the time of Webster's speech in Stratton in 1840. In 1841, Philo Buck, Levi Babcock and Samuel West purchased this lot from White. It seems likely that they continued milling operations at this same mill.

By 1845, Calvin Torrey had purchased some of the rights to this property and, apparently, he took over operations of this mill. Calvin died in 1851 and at that time, some of this lot was deeded to his father and brother, Luther and Orrin Torrey, who were operating the Shaw Mill on 3L8R. Thus, for a few years after that time, milling operations on this site are obscure. McClellan's Map of 1856 shows a sawmill on the site, but this old mill probably already had fallen into disrepair (see Appendix A).

Hubbard and Metcalf Sawmill: Before 1870, Osmer Fitts had built a new mill on this same site. Beers' Atlas of 1869 shows it as the Hubbard and Metcalf Sawmill (see Appendix A). John F. Hubbard and Albert Metcalf lived at this mill site in 1870. They apparently operated the mill for Fitts before purchasing this site for themselves. Before the end of the decade, these gentlemen had sold their rights to Edgar W. Bowker. In 1880, Bowker resided at the mill site, along with four other men – obviously all mill workers. That same year, Bowker sold the site to Joel F. Grout.

The Grout Job: With the purchased of the mill site on 5L8R in 1880, Joel F. Grout established the logging operation of *Joel F. Grout & Sons' Saw and Shingle-Mill and Chair-Stock Factory*. This business apparently flourished over the next few years and a larger milling complex developed here. In 1885, Joel sold the business to his sons, Joel Franklin Grout, Jr. and Edgar Irving Grout. They operated under the name *Grout Bros.*. The Grouts developed an extensive complex around the mill during the 1890s and into the first years of the 1900's. The mill itself was situated over the stream, while there was a large boardinghouse nearby for loggers and mill workers. Several barns and outbuildings existed there and the Stratton District #3 schoolhouse was



Joel F. Grout

Photo courtesy of Joan Little

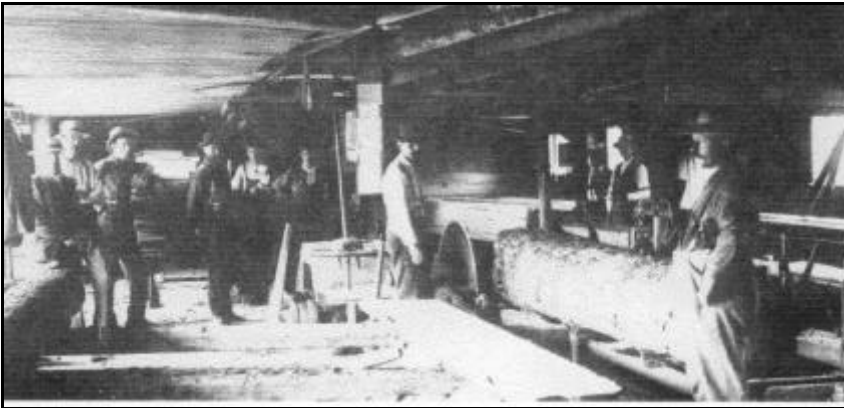
moved from its original site up to the complex.

In 1902, the Grouts sold the mill site to Silas Griffith of Danby, Vermont, who was called the lumber king of Vermont at that time. The Grouts moved to East Arlington and Sunderland, where Grout Bros Lumber in Sunderland continued as a business until Joel died in 1914. The business name then changed to Irving E. Grout.

When Griffith purchased the Grout Job, the deed required that Griffith fulfill a contract with the Estey Organ Co. in Brattleboro. Additionally, the Grouts agreed to continue repair and construction of the new boardinghouse at the site. Although the schoolhouse was not used there after that time, the boardinghouse remained in use for many years and, apparently, operations at the mill, itself continued for a few more years.

Griffith died in 1906 and his holdings in Stratton were sold off to various lumber companies, such as the Emporium Lumber Co. of Pennsylvania and the Somerset Land Co.. Apparently, milling operations at the site stopped about this same time, but lumbermen continued to use the boardinghouse. In 1920, when Stratton's entire population was just 90, the loggers residing at the boardinghouse there numbered 33 – about 36% of the population.

Eventually, the boardinghouse also was abandoned. The buildings on this site have since decayed away or they were intentionally destroyed. In 1999, the USDA Forest Service destroyed the last building of the old Grout Job – a building previously maintained as a private camp for many years.



Interior of the Mill at the Grout Job circa 1900



The Grout Job as seen looking west along *the Stratton-Arlington Rd.*



**The Grout Job as seen looking east along *the Stratton-Arlington Rd.*
The mill sits directly over the river.**



The Boardinghouse at the Grout Job



Logging Crew at the Grout Job circa 1900

Lucius Smith Chair Shop and Sawmill

In 1867, Lucius Smith purchased 1200 acres in the southwest corner of Stratton and, subsequently, established a mill there on 1L9R, on the East Branch of the Deerfield River. At that time, the town agreed to build a road down to the mill site. Smith was said to be a “*Manufacturer & Dealer in all kinds of Building Lumber both Plain and Dressed also Lath, Shingle and Chair Stock.*” This site remained in business for several years, but, eventually, it was flooded by the millpond of the Upper Tudor Mill (see below).

The Upper Tudor Mill

This mill was built down stream of the site of the Lucius Smith sawmill (see above), located about three miles south of the Grout Job, on the East Branch of the Deerfield River.

William Tudor and George Town of Somerset already owned a large logging operation in Somerset, when they decided to purchase this site in Stratton. In 1889, William bought the estate of William Bassett – 1700 acres on the site described above for \$3,500.00. While operating this mill, William Tudor continued living in Somerset, but made the trip to Stratton almost every day.

Between 1889 and 1891, William Tudor and George Town expanded this milling operation because of an increase in lumber demands. At that time, they built a large sawmill, other outbuildings and a dam – 12 feet high and 140 feet across. Remnants of this dam are still visible today.

The mill normally used a large water wheel for power; however, when water levels were insufficient during the summer and fall months, a steam-engine was used. Consequently, the steam-engine was very inefficient, requiring many man-hours of preparation and maintenance.

The lumber produced by this mill was used for general building purposes such as floorboards, siding, roof boards and clapboards. Once it was ready for the market, the Tudors hauled their lumber to North Adams by wagon in summer and sleigh in winter.

In 1892, William sold this operation to his sons, George and John Tudor. George already had settled in Stratton. John was living in Stamford, Vermont. In 1902, the Tudors sold the operation to W.W. Peck, who was trying to gain control of the entire East Branch of the Deerfield River. This was the same time that Grout Bros., Dufresne, and the “Taft and Stewart” mill, all had sold out, inevitably ending the era of large locally-owned milling operations within Stratton. By 1913, the site of the Upper Tudor Mill had been acquired by the New England Power Co. to create Somerset Reservoir.



The Upper Tudor Mill



Remains of the Upper Tudor Dam

Photos courtesy of Wayne Rowell



Millworkers at the Upper Tudor Mill



**Some of the Lumbermen employed by the Tudors.
Two of these men, known to have resided in Stratton, are Nelson French, who is sitting on the ground and Arthur Ball who is standing at far left.
One of the two women in this photo is Harriet Ball, Arthur Ball's wife.**

Photos courtesy of Wayne Rowell

Taft and Stewart Mill

Willis H. Taft of Jamaica and Henry J. Stewart of Londonderry ran a milling operation in Stratton, situated on the east half of 5L3R, near the intersection of *Shepardson Rd.* and the *West Jamaica Rd.*. This was probably the site label “The Old Mill” on a map of Stratton circa 1900 (see Appendix A).

In 1890, probably driven by the lumber boom that had begun about that time, Taft leased a lot in Stratton from David F. Wilder, with permission to put up mill buildings and dwellings to sustain a large milling operation. About that same time, Taft also purchased rights from Edward H. Merrick for 6L5R and 7L5R, town leaselands that were subject to an annual rent of \$14 payable to the town. In 1891, Stewart became a partner.

This lumber operation was a major contributor to Stratton’s economy for about ten years. Taft and Co. had held timber rights on several large tracts of land from the Grout Pond area up the mountain and over to the *West Jamaica Rd.*. This mill provided jobs for several of the town’s residents.

Taft and Stewart sold the mill to Silas Griffith of Danby, Vermont, on November 15, 1902. A description in the deed states that the sale included “*the mill buildings with boilers, engines, sawmill machinery, saws, belting, shafting, track, tools and appliances in and about said mill.*” The site also had a dwelling built thereon by Taft and Stewart included in the sale.

Griffith, the lumber king of Vermont, who also had purchased the Grout Job at this same time, may have maintained operation of this mill for a few years. With his death in 1906, however, it appears that Griffith’s executors sold off his Stratton properties to larger lumber companies and this mill was abandoned after that time.

The Dufresne Job

Louis Dufresne of Manchester, Vermont operated a sawmill and lumber business on Stratton’s northwest slopes in 11L8R, beginning in 1886 and continuing into the 20th Century. Dufresne sold off the last of his lands in Stratton in 1903. At that time, he was a resident of Troy, New York. Currently, the Long Trail progresses through the remains of this old logging complex, as it extends between Stratton Mountain and Stratton Pond.



The Mill at the Dufresne Job

Courtesy of the Ethel Eddy Collection



**The ruins of the Dufresne Job on Stratton
Circa 1920**

Photo courtesy of Wayne Rowell

Various Small Millworks

Hitchcock and Moreton: On July 5, 1894, OC Hitchcock and HE Moreton leased land from Frank Hescok of Stratton on Eddy Brook (probably Ball Mountain Brook) along the *West Jamaica Rd.*, located southeast of where the Recreation Area now stands. These gentlemen intended to manufacture lumber chair stock – a business that apparently was very short-lived – if it had existed at all.

Orrin Johnson's Sawmill: Orrin Johnson resided on the old Rice farm on what is now Penny Avenue. In the late 1890s and first years of 1900, he had a steam-driven mill within the northwestern part of the Somerset Annex, called the Sage Lot. It seems possible that the steam-engine was the same used at the Eddy Mill, across from *192 Pike Hollow Rd.*, while Johnson worked with his nephew, EA Eddy, in a lumber business there.

Lucien Read's Steam Mill: Lucien Read briefly operated a small steam mill, located at the end of *Old Forrester Rd.* on the Roderick Forrester Farm. A farm Mr. Read had purchased in 1901.

Portwine's Mill: This was a portable sawmill in operation for a short while around 1950. Apparently, it was established by Anthony and James Portwine near where the *Forest Rd. 341* intersects the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*

Taverns, Inns and Hotels

During Stratton's first century as a settled town, businesses were established within town that could provide visitors with accommodations. By 1888, though, Stratton had been effectively bypassed; thus, no such establishment could survive. With the exception of a Bed and Breakfast or two, no overnight accommodations for traveling strangers could be had in Stratton after that time – not, at least, until the development of the ski resort began in 1962. Accommodations that existed within Stratton during its first century are as follows:

Patch Tavern

Stratton's first tavern was kept by Joseph Patch within his home on 4L4R. Patch Tavern was established in Stratton about 1786. Patch was proprietor of this tavern until 1793. After that time, the Garfield family settled into the Patch house, but it is not apparent that they continued the tavern business. The remains of Patch's home and tavern can be seen within the Town's Recreation Area, along the *Old Town Road*, about 200 yards west of the volleyball courts.

In 1798, the state legislature enacted a law requiring officials of each town to meet and nominate by a majority vote persons, whom "*they shall judge fit and suitable to keep inns or houses of public entertainment in their respective towns for the year ensuing.*" There is no record of this process taking place within Stratton, before additional similar laws were passed in the mid-1840s.

Several families settled into the old tavern house over the next three decades, but there is no evidence that a tavern was kept there during those years. In 1820, Luther Torrey brought his family to Stratton and settled into this same old tavern house. Torrey may have kept a tavern here, briefly before he settled on the west half of 5L7R, into the old Boutell farm before 1825, but there is no evidence of that possibility. In 1826, Torrey sold the east half of 4L4R to Asa Phillips. Asa's brother, Jonathan Phillips, received a license to keep an inn from 1825 to 1827. Jonathan may have kept an inn within his home on the southwest side of the Town Common during that time, but it seems more likely that he kept the inn at the old Patch Tavern. If an inn continued to operate at this site once the Stratton Turnpike was established in 1831, Patch Tavern no longer stood upon a well-traveled road and it certainly would have gone out of business at that time.

Torrey's Tavern

Once Luther Torrey had settled into the Boutell farm circa 1825, he undoubtedly established a tavern there. In 1826, Torrey purchased a license to keep tavern – records show that he renewed this license only to 1830 and again in 1833, but Torrey's Tavern remained one of Stratton's predominant businesses for about 20 years, and it probably thrived, since it stood along the well-traveled Stratton Turnpike. Torrey's Tavern stood just a few hundred feet northeast of what is now the intersection of the *Grout Pond Access Rd.* with the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* and it was the tavern in which Daniel Webster spent the night of July 7, 1840. Torrey's Tavern succumbed to the temperance movement of the 1840s, when Luther volunteered to take down his sign. After that time, he went into the lumber business with his son.

An Inn on 5L7R – Grout and Allen

During the late 1820s and early 1830s, in addition to Mr. Torrey and Mr. Phillips, innkeepers' licenses were issued to Hudson Grout in 1829 and Ebenezer Allen in 1830. Grout may have operated an inn from his home on the east half of 5L7R in 1829 (see E. Allen on Beers' Atlas of 1869). Ebenezer Allen purchased this same dwelling the next year and, subsequently, received a license to continue the business.

The Wyman Hotel

In 1838, Luther Holbrook established an inn upon his farm, at the site where the Town Hall now stands – a business that help establish Stratton's second village, once the Turnpike had bypassed the first village. Town meetings were held at this inn, the Post Office operated from this building and later a church was build beside it; thus it soon became the center of Stratton's social life.

In 1843, Holbrook sold the inn to William Cummings, who allowed his son-in-law, Freeman Wyman to take over the business. Wyman finally

purchased this lot for himself in 1848. He continued to operate the inn and, as Town Clerk, he kept the Town Office here.

Beginning in 1852, Wyman turned over the inn to Cheselton Allen, but retained the property. Thus, for the next few years, it was referred to as the Cheselton Allen Inn. About this same time, Vermont began 50 years of Prohibition, but Allen continued the business of innkeeping until 1858. That year, the inn burned. Within the year, Wyman rebuilt, but Allen no longer participated in the business. After that time, it came to be known as the Wyman Hotel.

Wyman maintained the hotel until his death in 1870. After that time, his wife, Lorena, kept the business. Lorena had married Willard Shepard in 1875 and they continued operating the hotel until Lorena's death in 1887. Andrew Rawson was called the hotelkeeper in 1879, but he died that same year. Shepard kept the hotel afloat for about another year, but once the stagecoach discontinued service from West Wardsboro to Arlington in 1888, Shepard moved to Jamaica and this hotel shut its doors for the last time.

Sundry Businesses of Stratton

Mills and the lumber industry certainly dominated Stratton's business endeavors before the Ski Industry found the town in the 1960s; however, other businesses did exist here over the years.

Potash: This was an early industry that thrived during the first years of heavy clear-cutting in Vermont. Apparently, though, it did not thrive in Stratton. At least one potash house was kept in this town at an early time. It existed on the farm of Jedidiah Baker on 4L4R in 1808.

Mining: Extensive mining efforts occurred within neighboring towns – even gold was mined in Sunderland, while iron mines existed in Dover. In Stratton's records, there is mention of only one mine – probably an iron mine – started by Jacob French on his property on 9L3R, at the beginning of the 1800s. Additionally, Austin Bissell had an acre-lot on the west side of 5L4R, where he built a furnace – probably to process iron ore.

Blacksmiths: Stratton had several Blacksmith shops over the years. Jacob Batchellor operated a blacksmith shop near his home on 5L4R – near the end of what is now *Shepardson Rd.* David Rice worked as a blacksmith in town during the 1830s and 1840s, probably within a shop on his land in 7L1R. LaFayette Sheldon had a shop on his property, located slightly west of where the Town Hall currently stands. Additionally, Abraham Wheeler, who settled in the northeast corner of town at an early time, had operated a shop before moving to Stratton and so it seems likely that he practiced the trade here. A blacksmith shop also existed on the Eddy farm (*171 Pike Hollow Rd.*) during the years surrounding 1900. Lyman B. Grout, who lived beside Batchellor's Mill and Hezekiah Hall, who resided in the Somerset Annex, near the Dover border, also called themselves blacksmiths.

Kilns: Several kilns also were established across town. The Lyman family had a lime house on their lot (near *218 Penny Ave.*) and a major Limekiln operation was developed at the southwest end of Pike Hollow. Henry A. Fitts owned a $4\frac{3}{4}$ -acre lot, containing “lime rock,” as early as 1869. A kiln later was built and operated by Martin and Fitts Lime and Cement Co., owned by Clarke C. Fitts and James L. Martin, both of Brattleboro, Vermont. This three-furnace kiln was located in the Somerset Annex, southwest of what is now *241 Pike Hollow Rd.*, currently owned by the Bills family. This kiln was in operation during the 1890s and early 1900s. Due to the distance of transportation, which was by horse-drawn wagons, this industry was discontinued. Presently, the kiln’s remains are visible still. For many years, Pike Hollow Brook was referred to as Lime Kiln Brook and a section of the *Winhall – Somerset Rd.* and *Pike Hollow Rd.*, combined, was called the *Lime Kiln Farm Rd.* – it apparently progressed over to the kiln.

A Charcoal Kiln also existed in Stratton, as evident of a ruin on the Winhall border along *Pikes Falls Rd.* Apparently, it was in operation during the 1930s.



Martin and Fitts Lime and Cement Co. operations in Pike Hollow

Photo courtesy of M. Lee Bills

Maple Sugaring: Many of Stratton's farmers kept sugar orchards upon their lands to produce maple syrup and sugar loaves as a staple and to sell for profit. Child's Gazetteer and Business Directory of Windham County, printed in 1884 lists a score of sugar orchards across Stratton ranging from 200 to 1,500 trees per orchard. One of the area's more notable sugaring businesses was that of Scott Nearing and Floyd Hurd, which existed upon *Pikes Falls Rd.* during the early 20th Century. The Bills' sugarhouse at *241 Pike Hollow Rd.* has been the only active sugarhouse within Stratton in recent years.



Gene Thomas with Doris Eddy sugaring on the Eddy farm

Fern Collectors: One of Stratton's more unusual businesses was a Fern Collection business. Ferns were collected in Stratton and sent to flower shops in Boston and New York. Ora (Atwood) Knapp recalls that Mate Jones, who lived in Pikes Falls, organized groups to go to the area of the Grout Job in the 1920s. Workers stayed there for as long as a month, living in makeshift, tar-papered cabins there. Workers were paid three cents for a "bunch" of ferns. The Atwoods were among the workers that gathered ferns for Mr. Jones.

Ellen Lyman recalls that another gentleman, Mr. Wheeler, who lived at the corner of *Willis Cemetery Rd* and the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* (399 *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*), collected ferns from the gatherers also. He

purchased wooden boxes from Ellen's father, Ray Lyman, who built them at his sawmill on *Pike Hollow Rd. (218 Penny Ave.)*, then shipped them off to Boston and New York.

Doctors

Only on rare occasion during its history has Stratton had a resident doctor; nonetheless, a few have lived here over the years. Stratton's Town Records indicate that the town relied on doctors in adjacent towns to care for its sick. Among the doctors, who regularly treated Stratton's citizens over the years were Dr. Joel Holton of Jamaica, and the following Doctors who resided in Wardsboro – Samuel Wheeler, John Warren, Dana Hyde, Franklin Martin, Abner Bliss, and O. V. Hefflon. The following individuals were doctors who resided in Stratton:

Dr. Harvey: Beginning in 1786, Dr. Zachariah Harvey settled in Stratton, in fact, Grout Pond was called Dr. Harvey's Pond, while he resided here. It is unclear whether Dr. Harvey actually practiced in Stratton at that time. He had moved to Putney before 1789.

Dr. Purrington: During the last half of the 1830s, Luther Purrington resided in Stratton. He was called a physician before he settled in Stratton, but strangely, he was not referred to as a doctor while he lived in this town.

Dr. Kent: Dr. William P. Kent settled in Stratton during the 1870s, but there are no records that indicate that he practiced his profession in Stratton. He was called a farm laborer in 1884 and died here in 1889.

Dr. Parsons: Dr. Ralph Parsons settled in Stratton and ran his practice from his home. He resided at what is now *618 Stratton-Arlington Rd.*. The sign that hung in front of his house is kept in the museum of the Historical Society of Windham County. Dr. Parsons died in 1891 and he was buried in Ball Cemetery.



Dr. Ralph Parsons' sign

In recent history, many of Stratton's residents rely on Grace Cottage Hospital in Townshend for medical attention. In fact, this hospital was

named for Grace (Preston) Grout, wife of Dr. Abel J. Grout. Abel J. Grout was an early benefactor of this hospital and requested it be named for his wife. Dr. Grout's parents were natives of Stratton.

The Carlos Otis Clinic: This clinic was established in Stratton at the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort in 1972 to provide orthopedic care for skiers and area residents.

Utilities

The measure of modernization of a remote area such as Stratton can be best determined by the availability of utilities – electricity and telephone. These services can be installed anywhere for a price, and so power lines and telephone poles have progressed slowly across this town over the years – following the development. In fact, power has become available along the entire route of *Mountain Rd.* only in recent years – at the very end of the 20th Century. The western half of Stratton remains remote, with no lines or poles following the roads across that part of town into the National Forest, and costs have made installation impractical for several camps off the beaten path. Yet, even in remote places, small generators can bring modernization to those who wish to have it.

The story of the development of these services within Stratton begins just after the turn of the 20th Century. The very first services that came to this area were supplied by small private companies, owned and operated by individuals from neighboring towns.

For example, in Jamaica, in 1903, Henry McLean operated an electrical generator that produced an Alternating Current (AC) at his mill on *Pikes Falls Rd.*. This power plant supplied 110 volts for several streetlights in that vicinity and it provided power for about 60 customers. Some of these customers may have resided in northeast Stratton, but that has not been verified. Power from this plant was cut off at 11:00 PM each night and service began again in the morning. McLean's business lasted for many years and it apparently existed until standard power lines found their way into that area. Standard electrical power was not available for most of Stratton's residents until the late 1940s.

Telephone Service: In 1901, Emery Melendy founded the Melendy Telephone Company in Jamaica. The first noted reference to a telephone line existing in Stratton was made in 1913, when the efforts of the Stratton Mountain Club brought a line up the mountain to the fire-spotter's cabin, near the fire tower. In 1922, the Gleason Telephone Co. of Wardsboro bought out Melendy and, later, it was sold its business to New England Telephone and Telegraph. Ellen Lyman recalls that her parents had a phone at their home (now seen as *218 Penny Avenue*) before they moved from town

in 1922; thus, all of Pike Hollow probably had the option to own a phone then. At that time, the operator was in Wardsboro.

Somerset Reservoir

In an effort to provide a means to create electricity, the New England Power Company (NEPCO) undertook the creation of a series of dams and reservoirs along the Deerfield River, for the purpose of providing waterpower to turn electric generator turbines. By 1913, this company had bought up the lands that would be flooded. Since the northern reaches of the reservoir in Somerset progressed into Stratton, NEPCO had purchased a large number of acres within southwestern Stratton. Hermon Eddy, a native of Stratton and a lawyer, was involved in this effort. Additionally, Stratton's Selectmen were required to discontinue a road that progressed into the flood zone.

All preparations accomplished, a large earthen dam was completed and Somerset Reservoir came to be, ultimately providing power for areas of Massachusetts.

Among the landmarks covered by the reservoir within Stratton was the old Upper Tudor Mill. The New England Power Company retained the lands surrounding the reservoir until it was purchased by USGen New England in 1998.

Somerset Dam Construction



The intake side of the Discharge station (under construction)



This trestle was built along the designated path of the dam. Trains hauled and dumped loads of earth along this route, which buried the trestle within the earthen dam.



Piping from the Reservoir to the generators



Dam construction with Mt. Pisgah (Mt. Snow) in the background



**The Discharge Station
Inez, Elmer, Hermon and Doris Eddy on the platform**

The Business of the Present

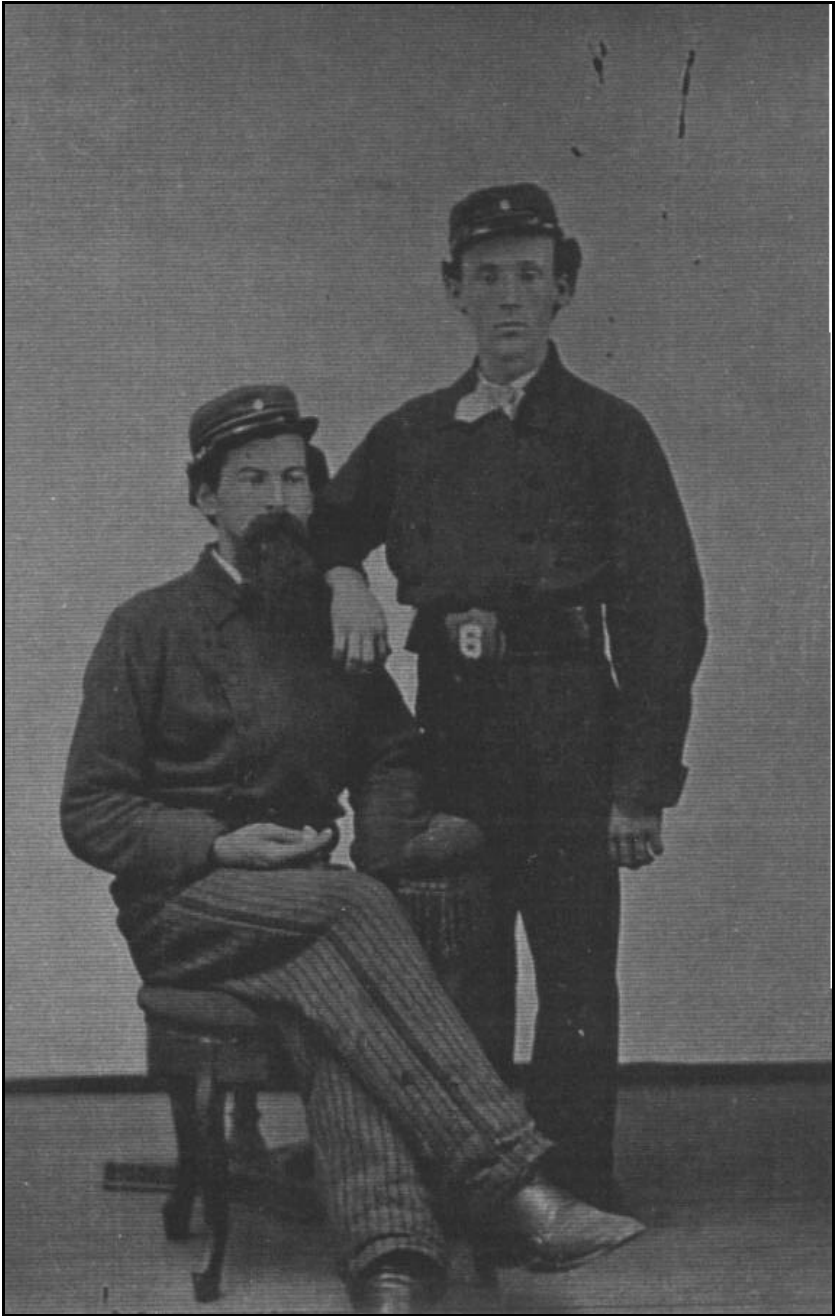
Since the development of the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort, a business in itself, Stratton has become home to a number of resort related businesses, including a number of hotels, restaurants and shops within the resort, as well as a Golf School on *Pikes Falls Rd.*, originally begun by Arnold Palmer and a convenience store – businesses that provide mostly seasonal jobs.

Additionally, Stratton has become a haven for second-homeowners, which provide jobs for local contractors, who are in the business of new construction, repair and maintenance – contractors who specialize in carpentry, excavating, electrical work, plumbing or painting, as well as snow plowing, shoveling, trash removal, general caretaking and housekeeping. These are the jobs that keep much of Stratton’s working population employed. Professional and Industrial related jobs remain sparse in the immediate vicinity, thus most of those individuals who wish to live here and work within a profession must travel considerable distances to their jobs.



The Stratton Mountain Ski Resort circa 1999

Photo courtesy of Intrawest Stratton Development Corp.



Orrin and James Johnson
Civil War Soldiers of the 6th Vermont Regiment

Chapter XII

Military and the Militia

Up in Arms

The Revolution

Many of Stratton's early settlers had served the colonies during the American Revolution. It appears that 51 veterans of that war eventually settled within this town. Details of their services can be found within their biographies in the Family History Supplement of this History.

Revolutionary War Veterans who settled in Stratton

Robert Babcock	Hezekiah Gibbs	Amos Parsons
Sherebiah Baker	Samuel Gleason	Nathan Patch
Sylvanus Ballard	John Gleason	Jonathan Phillips
Richard Bartlett, 3rd	Jacob Goodell	Reuben Phillips
Jacob Batchellor	Joshua Grant	Samuel Pike
Ebenezer Bill	Nevinson Grant	James Potter
Jonathan M. Bissell	Abel Grout	John Ramor
Sampson Bixby	Joel Hale	Abraham Rugg
John Blood	Benjamin Hobbs	Ira Scott
Jared Blood	Francis Kidder	Anthony Sigourney
Samuel Boutell	James Knox	Clark Stone
William Boutell	Phineas Lamb	Stephen Thayer
Isaac Chase	Bille Mann	Paul Thurston
David Cook	Samuel Marble	James Tinney
Eliakim Garfield	John Moffett	Jonathan Upham, Jr.
Nathaniel Garfield	Timothy Morsman	John Waite
Edmund Gibbs	Oliver Morsman	Jonas Woodward

The War of 1812 and the Mexican-American War

The only known participants in the conflicts that occurred between the American Revolution and the Civil War were Jacob Batchellor, Jr. and Lyman Holden (both of whom served during the War of 1812) and William Mann Fuller (who served during the Mexican-American War in 1848). Apparently, Batchellor was taken prisoner and held in England for a time.

The Civil War

As Stratton celebrated 100 years of existence, America entered the devastating years of the Civil War – a very difficult time for all Americans of that era. Although the battle lines were far from Vermont, the war effort reached into the very homes of the citizens of this state and this town. Letters between soldiers and their families reflect the misery of long separations and the fears of losing loved ones. These types of letters were eagerly awaited and always welcome, but another kind of correspondence – a letter sent by a soldier's commanding officer – was always dreaded. Letters of both types

received by some of Stratton's families still remain, giving us a glimpse of that tragic time in the lives and deaths of Stratton's soldiers. Some of these letters have been transcribed within the stories of those families within the Family History Supplement to this book. Below is one that I felt belonged here:

*Washington City, D.C.,
July 15th, 1864*

*To the Parents and Friends of Lyman B. Pike,
It becomes my painful duty to communicate to you the sad
fate of Lyman B. Pike, who received a fatal shot from the
enemy's sharpshooters, at the battle of Monocacy Junction,
Md. fought on the 9th inst. He was among the foremost in
the engagement, and fighting most heroically, dealing terrible
blows upon the enemy, having shot down the colors three
times in succession, when a shot from the enemy pierced his
heart, killing him instantly. He was a brave soldier, and
ever prompt and energetic in the discharge of the duties
assigned him. I would write to Mrs. Pike, the widow of
the deceased, but I know not where to direct. I remain in
Sympathy,*

*Sergeant Edward Bushnell,
Co. E, 10th Vt. Vol. Infy*

Stratton's Town Records reflect the hardships that this war had put directly upon the town. Over the course of the war, each town had a quota of soldiers that it was required to enlist, dependent upon the number of men requested by President Lincoln and the population of the town. Each town was responsible not only for recruiting these men, but also for paying them throughout their enlistment.

In 1862, Stratton was responsible for hiring six volunteers to serve in the nine-month militia – Rufus Lyman was chosen as Stratton's recruiter. At that time, the town agreed to pay its recruits \$7.00 per month. At a special meeting in November, 1863, warned to address the increase in Stratton's quota, the town voted to pay all volunteers \$200.00 each. In 1864, that sum increased to \$500.00 per year and the Selectmen were authorized to borrow the money to meet this commitment. Additionally, the town voted to pay the men who had been drafted into service and, in 1865, the town agreed to pay one man \$550.00 for a three-year term of service.

During the Civil War, at least 61 men who called Stratton their home at some point during their lives served the Union. Only 34 of these men enlisted as residents of Stratton, while the remainder enlisted in other towns. Twelve of these 61 soldiers lost their lives during the war. The era of the Civil War was certainly the most trying time of Stratton's existence.

**Soldiers of the Civil War
(known to have resided in Stratton)**

Samuel Abbot, Jr.*
Jonathan Babcock
Daniel Bounds
Henry L. Carroll*
George Clough*
Ezekiel B. Coates
Samuel G. Conant*
Andrew J. Copeland*†
George E. Eager*
Erastus A. Eddy
Rodney L. Estabrook
Nelson F. Estabrook
James T. Fay*†
N. Newton Glazier*
Jason E. Goss*
Pliny Fisk Grout†
James Grout*†
John A. Grout*
Joel Grout*
Lyman B. Grout
George Hartwell

Lyman H. Harvey*
James H. Johnson*†
Orrin A. Johnson
Jesse C. Jones*
Erastus H. Jones†
Henry Knapp*
Pitman Knapp*†
Lyman Knapp*
Preston Knapp
Velasco Knapp*
Henry H. Lincoln*
Matthias J. Lincoln*†
William N. Lincoln*
William H. Parsons
Joseph H. Peck*
Milon F. Perry*
Chauncey F. Perry
Oscar F. Perry
Norman T. Pike†
Lyman B. Pike†
Dana P. Putnam*

Henry H. Putnam*
Sidney C. Putnam*
Abner H. Rice
Stillman Smith†
William Smith*
Lyman W. Sprague*
Jeremiah D. Styles
Frank Symmister
Orrin P. Torrey
Nathan J. Tracy
Ludowick Underwood*
Lorenzo Underwood*†
George E. Waite
Emery Wheeler
Alvin H. White
Henry F. White*†
Emery Wilder
George A. Williams*
Evander H. Willis*
Arad T. Wood

(* indicates enlistment for Stratton; † indicates that they died in service)



Lyman B. Pike and wife



Pitman Knapp

Pike and Knapp were casualties of the war

Wars of the 20th Century

The Spanish-American War, the last American war of the 19th Century, had little effect on Stratton's citizens and no one from this town is known to have participated in it. The next great test for this country was World War I. Stratton's veterans of that war numbered at least 17 – three of whom died in service.

There have been at least 13 veterans of World War II known to have lived in Stratton at some point during their lives. It is likely that additional veterans of both World Wars have lived within Stratton over the years. Certainly, Stratton has been home to veterans of the several conflicts that have occurred since WWII, but I will leave those rolls to anonymity.

In 1997, Stratton dedicated a memorial to its veterans. The stone monument stands beside the Town Hall, beneath the flags of the country and the state.

Veterans of World War I

Ora Atwood
Elmer J. Barrett
George Brown, Jr. †
Harold J. Evans
Herbert French
Roy Joel Grout
Harry Leno †
Gardner Leno
Andrew Lewis
Herbert Magoon
Harry Magoon
Leon Perry
Harold Prentiss
Wells Samson
Harvey D. Wheeler †
Clarence W. Wheeler
Elmer E. Thomas

Veterans of World War II

Daniel Banziruk
M. Lee Bills
Paul Brazer
Elmer H. Eddy
Wendell Fletcher
Richard L. Holman
Frank Kurimai
Edna Kurimai
Leonard Kuusela
Ray Liller
Earl Pickering
Clarence Wheeler
Charles Whitney

(† indicates that they died in service)

Stratton's Militia

In the belief that Vermont's settlers should be prepared to defend their homes, Vermont instituted a Militia Law in 1779 that created an enrolled militia for the state, "*that all male Persons, from Sixteen years to fifty, shall bear Arms, and duly attend all Musters and Military Exercises...*" This, of course, was common for the times and reflected the laws of other New England colonies. Vermont's General Assembly was given the power to call out any part of the militia for almost any emergency, including natural disasters. The Governor and Council had the same power, in the event that the General Assembly was in recess at the time of an emergency. In both cases, the Governor was considered the acting Commander-in-Chief. This law also allowed the soldiers and freemen of the militia to appoint their own Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel and Major, all of whom were commissioned by the Governor, subsequently. This made Vermont's militia very democratic and, unfortunately, compromised the authority of those officers over their subordinates. This resulted in a lack of discipline, especially in the enforcement of imposing fines on the noncompliant. The extent of noncompliance helped to undermine the militia's effectiveness in fulfilling its purpose.

In 1792, following Vermont's acceptance into the United States, the Federal Government enacted "*an Act, more effectively to provide for the National defense by establishing a Uniform Militia throughout the United States.*" This made every white male citizen of the United States a member of a "federal militia," as well as a member of the "state militia." In May, 1794, Congress authorized the raising of 2,139 men for the militia in Vermont. At that time, Vermont had a formal military force of three divisions and maps were printed showing the geographical boundaries of every unit down to the company level. This formal force was more theoretical than real, since local companies were very unorganized and, in some instances, nonexistent.

In 1793, to support its militia, Vermont required that every town be supplied with 32 pounds of gunpowder, one hundred weight of lead or musket balls and 128 flints for every 64 soldiers.

At the onset, Stratton seems to have been unorganized in the affairs of its militia. It was not until September 5, 1797, that the town voted to raise \$25.00 to buy powder, lead and flint for the town stock. Apparently, this purchase was made at that time and at the March Meeting of 1798, the Town voted to maintain its stock with the town's treasures. Stratton's treasurer kept this stock until 1808.

Although no record of Stratton's militia exists for that period, it was about this same time that the town apparently organized its local company and began training. During that same year, Stratton's records refer to Captain Thayer and Lieutenant Bixby. Although the records do not refer directly to the militia, the use of these titles implies that these men indeed were active in the militia. Since Thayer and Bixby were citizens of Stratton,

they must have been active in Stratton's militia. Therefore, Stratton's militia must have been organized and active at that time. Captain Stephen Thayer likely was Stratton's Company Commander, while Sampson Bixby would have been second-in-command. Additionally, when the Town Common was established, the lease noted that the Town Common would be used as a training field.

Meanwhile, on the state level, no serious attempts were taken to make the federal or state militias effective military organizations. Generally, between 1792 and 1812, militia companies drilled on their own initiative (if at all) and militiamen performing in those drills participated voluntarily. Keeping these facts in mind, it is safe to assume that Stratton's militia did not train regularly until more stringent regulations were incorporated in 1818.

The Militia Law of 1818 was better defined than previous militia laws. It required military duty twice a year, once in September or early October and once in June. At those times, all able-bodied white males aged 18 to 45, were required to muster and train with the company. Failure on the part of an enrolled militiaman to muster at the appropriate times was punishable by a fine of \$2.00 for their person and 25 cents for each required piece of gear that they failed to have with them. The law also gave an incentive and recognition for fulfillment of duty by exempting properly equipped militiamen from some local taxes. These incentives remained in effect for over a decade and they apparently were the main reason that enthusiasm for the militia remained at a high point in Vermont for several years.

The Militia Law of 1818 also established the phenomenon known to Vermonters as "June Training," which quickly developed into a day of statewide celebration. The first Tuesday in June was one of two days set aside for the enrolled militias of all Vermont towns to turn out for a day of inspection and drill. The second training day varied from town to town. It generally was held in late September or early October, at the discretion of the local Company Commander. June Training, however, took on a life of its own as an important social event for Vermonters. The atmosphere was more like a county fair and it took on the aspects of a modern holiday. Children looked forward to it as a day of fun and play, since in most cases, it was the only weekday of the year on which they were not required to do work. It seems that the men of the militia treated the event much the same as the children. June Training served as an important social function, as well as a patriotic duty, being one of the few times the entire community gathered together each year. It was similar to the modern 4th of July Celebration!

Abel Grout, Jr., in a ledger he maintained, referred to General Mann in 1819. This, in all likelihood, referred to Bille Mann, a veteran of the American Revolution, and an excellent candidate to lead Stratton's militia. It seems probable that Stratton's company of militiamen belonged to the regiment headquartered in Townsend. Wardsboro had two companies in that regiment and General Daniel Read of that town was the inspector of the entire regiment there. General muster for this regiment was held in

Townshend and, therefore, it seems likely that Stratton's militia reported to Townshend for at least some of their musters.

It also is likely that Stratton's company occasionally met on Stratton's Town Common for June Training or perhaps for the Fall Musters. It is tempting to imagine Stratton's farmers all heading to the Town Common, their wives following with picnic lunches and the children gathering to watch the spectacle or play with their friends. The militiamen may have fallen into formation for the inspection and then briefly marched across the Town Common or around the meetinghouse to the cadence of their elected Company Commander, as their families looked on. It also can be assumed that once the exercise was over, regardless of the location, the hard cider came out and a celebration of the long-anticipated summer began, continuing into the evening.

No record remains of the early militia in Stratton. We can assume that by 1797 and possibly as early as 1793, Stratton had an organized company of militia. The only clues to the specifics of this company lie in the titles of the gentlemen elected as its officers or in the fact that the town continued to maintain a stock of lead and powder.

The following is a list of Stratton's citizens who served as officers during the time of the militia. The Company Commander apparently held the title of Captain and the Lieutenant evidently was the second-in-command. Bille Mann, who was referred to as General Mann in 1819, may have held a position within the ranks of this area's regiment.

Officers of Stratton's Militia:

1793	Lieutenant Timothy Morsman (This was also his rank during the Revolution)
1797	Captain Stephen Thayer
	Lieutenant Salmon Bixby
1798/9	Captain Salmon Bixby
	Lieutenant John Greenwood
1803	Captain Abel Kidder
1805/6	Captain William Stearns
1808/9	Captain George Oliver
1815	Captain William Stearns
1818	Major Sanford Holmes (probably a title held in the Connecticut Militia)
1819	General Bille Mann
1825	Captain Daniel Hill
1826	Captain Abel Kidder
	Captain Ezra Estabrook
1832 – 1836	Captain William G. Pike
1833	Captain Leander Carter

Note: Thomas Jones was an ensign in the 1st Artillery Company of the Third Regiment in the State Militia. He held the titled "Captain" at the time he married Abigail Carter.

The Town Stock of Powder and Lead

The town's stock was entrusted to Stratton's Treasurer until 1808. That year, the Treasurer, Thomas Lathrop, moved from Stratton, and so at a special meeting held to fill the offices left vacant by him, Captain George Oliver was

chosen to keep the “*Town Stock*.” From that time on, an individual was assigned, through a vote at town meeting, to maintain the town’s stock of powder and lead. In several instances, it appears that Stratton’s Company Commander was keeper of the town’s stock. This was a logical choice as long as the Company Commander resided close to the training field. Additionally, two of the keepers, Captain Richard Scott and Jonathan Phillips, resided beside the Town Common, and so their homes were convenient locations for this purpose. The militia’s supply of lead and powder remained a community responsibility for about 30 years. At the March Meeting of 1827, the town “*Voted that the Selectmen shall dispose of the town stock and return the avails to the town Treasurer.*” The reasoning for this act at that particular time has not been determined. Enthusiasm for the militia apparently continued in Vermont beyond 1827. Stratton apparently still had a company of militia after that time and several years remained before the militia was officially disbanded by Vermont. Perhaps this event was unrelated to Stratton’s attitude about its militia. Regardless of the reasons, Stratton no longer was obliged to supply powder or lead to its citizen soldiers.

Keepers of Stratton’s Stock of Powder and Lead:

The Town Treasurer	1798 to 1808
Captain George Oliver	1808 to 1811
Samuel Marble	1811 to 1817
Captain Richard Scott	1817 to 1822
Captain William G. Pike	1822 to 1823
Captain Richard Scott	1824 to 1826
Jonathan Phillips	1826 to 1827

Conclusion

Just what the state of Stratton’s militia might have been at any given time remains a mystery; however, an assumption can be made that it followed the course of other Vermont towns. The Vermont militia experienced a high level of participation during the 1820s. That response was probably due to the tax-exempt status awarded to participants. However, the era of tax-exempt militiamen ended on October 28, 1829, when revisions to the old militia laws stated that the militia and “bands of musicians” no longer were exempt from highway or school taxes. After November 9, 1831, all militia tax-exemptions were repealed. As one would expect, the June 1832 muster count for the state declined considerably.

The serious decrease in attendance on training days, caused the state legislature to rethink the removal of the tax-exempt status and so it was reinstated. This, however, did not bring about the hoped-for surge of enthusiasm. The inability to rekindle an interest in this institution was partly due to the long era of peace that had ensued after the War of 1812. Another

major factor was the temperance movement that began to excel in the state at that time. Supporters of the temperance movement viewed the military as a symbol of drunkenness and debauchery and they believed that Vermont's militia had followed that same path. Therefore, they demanded reforms that would eliminate the revelry and reinstitute the real purpose of June Training. The Vermont Legislature also recognized this need and so in 1837 they passed a comprehensive reform measure. Reform, however, was not enough and so attempts were made in 1840 to abolish Vermont's militia. This movement had considerable opposition and the militia continued as an institution in Vermont. 1842 saw another attempt by the legislature designed to improve and revitalize the militia. This included a requirement for officers to prosecute to recover fines. This effort also failed to produce the desired results, and so, on October 30, 1844, Vermont's Legislature passed a law stating that "*all acts, and parts of acts requiring the enrolled militia to do military duty, are repealed, except in cases of insurrection or invasion.*" At that point, the organized enrolled militia disbanded and the phenomenon of June Training ended in Vermont.

After 1844, the volunteer militia (which had existed in parallel with the enrolled militia) still remained in Vermont, but no volunteer company existed in Stratton. It was not until the call for soldiers arose during the Civil War that Stratton again participated in raising troops of any sort. At that time, the town attempted to meet its quota of soldiers. An increased interest in maintaining a large militia within Vermont resurfaced following the Confederate raid on St. Albans, Vermont. This scare resulted in the Militia Law of 1864. No records exist locally that indicate its effect on Stratton until 1867. Town records exist for that year that specifically name individuals who were enlisted in the militia and those who served in the volunteer state militia, but it seems likely that Stratton's enrolled militia existed only on paper. The Vermont Legislature recognized the burden that a large militia placed on the state and so that same year, it began enacting new laws that reduced the size of the state militia and apparently removed the requirement of enrollment. The records of 1867 are the only records of a militia that Stratton retains. Not since that time has a military organization existed within the town.



**The Union Church
(Stratton Meetinghouse)
1949**

Chapter XIII

Religion in Stratton:

In the Beginning – Diversity

When Vermont declared its independence in 1777 it had established a constitution more democratic than any other former colony to that time. The creation of such a document can be accredited to Vermont's inherent diversity of Protestant faiths. Roth, in his book The Democratic Dilemma, describes the relationship between church and state in early New England and the effect of that relationship on the New Hampshire Grants. The Grants – like Rhode Island – had become a haven for New Englanders who were persecuted for their religious beliefs by the established Congregational and Anglican theocracies of Massachusetts and Connecticut. Schisms in Puritan doctrine had created a variety of “theo-political” platforms for ministers and their followers to adhere to. Those that did not cling to the official doctrines of the lower New England communities often were compelled to leave their homes in search of a place where they could live by and enforce their own beliefs. Many came into the northern wilderness of the Grants. These various religious groups – along with deists and other nonconformists who also settled Vermont – joined to devise a constitution that took the power away from the Congregationalists and Anglicans and spread it among all Protestant faiths. Church and state remained closely associated, but the state could not dictate which protestant faith a Vermonter had to support, spiritually or financially. Roth goes on to note that in the election sermon to the Vermont Legislature in 1782, the Rev. Gershom Lyman of Marlboro, Vermont, prayed that legislators would pass laws that ultimately mandated Christian morality and regular protestant worship throughout the state, while requiring citizens to respect both civil and ecclesiastical authority. At that time, the majority of Vermonters apparently agreed with Rev. Lyman; hence, state legislation in 1783 stipulating “*that the Precepts of Christianity and the rules of Morality [might] be publickly and stately inculcated on the minds of the Inhabitants*” was enacted. This act allowed for some religious diversity by asserting the rights of nonconformists, but only within the context of Protestant faiths. It authorized town governments to tax their citizens to acquire the capital needed to build meetinghouses and provide preaching, but only if a two-thirds majority of the town wished to do so. Church taxes were not forced on people “*of differing sentiments in religious duties, which lead moral and peaceable lives,*” provided they filed certificates from their churches in order to prove that they were of a “*different persuasion.*” This new “dissenter legislation” did not intend to control the sincere nonconformist within the community or to “*dictate the conscience of a single individual,*” but instead it meant to prevent those “*who pretend to differ from the Majority with a design only to escape Taxation*” from doing so. However, if a citizen of the town had no

man of the cloth to certify that he belonged to some minority Protestant congregation of the community, then that citizen was obliged to support the majority church.

Most of these resolutions occurred prior to the establishment of a settlement in Stratton, but they played an essential part in the development of the town. At first glance, it seems as though Stratton, as a fledgling town, had been little concerned with religion. The town records of Stratton do not reflect that its citizens were held to any religious code or law and no punishments were issued for neglecting the Sabbath or for “sinning,” but first appearances can be deceptive. No doubt, some of Stratton’s earliest settlers failed to attend services regularly and some probably never belonged to a particular faith, but we can assume with confidence that Stratton, in its early years, was populated by families that clung tightly to their religious beliefs. Considering the region of Massachusetts, whence they came, many of these first settlers would have been traditional Congregationalists. It too is apparent that there existed at that time a number of Baptists within town. Methodists and at least one Quaker are known to have settled within Stratton at an early time also. Since no single religious persuasion seemed to dominate Stratton during those first years of the settlement, it is safe to assume that there existed a balance of diversity – a balance that kept religion from their political decisions, but not necessarily from their politics. True, it seems that Stratton remained unorganized in its religious affairs to the end of the 1700’s, but it would be wrong to say that Stratton’s citizens were morally different from their neighbors or unconcerned with their religion.

During those first years, with the lack of a common place of worship, people that attended church services in town did so within private homes or they may have attended some of the established churches within the towns that bordered Stratton, but this arrangement did not satisfy some individuals, evidently. The first reference to religious matters within Stratton’s Town Records occurred in 1792 when its citizens voted “*not to pay for preaching nor to find a minister for the town.*” The defeat of such an Article reinforces the implications of a balance of diversity at that time – but it was a balance that would not last! By 1796, the scales began to tilt in the direction of Stratton’s Congregationalists. This can be deduced by analyzing the next few references to religion in Stratton’s records, together with some circumstantial evidence. Taxation supporting a single religion finally came to be in Stratton that year when the town voted to “*pay a minister for six days of preaching for the ensuing year.*” The town also voted “*to meet one third part of the Sabbaths in which there may be preaching the present year at Eliakim Garfield’s dwelling house in said Stratton and one third part at William Boutell’s and the other third part at Jonas Woodward’s in said town.*” Garfield’s house was centrally located, while Boutell lived in the western part of town by what is now Grout Pond. Woodward lived on an east-central lot. These gentlemen were all Congregationalists, thus implying that the ministers hired to preach in Stratton that year were of that faith.

In 1797, the town “voted *Mr. Jacob Batchellor, Amos Allen and Asa Phillips to be a committee to ask the neighboring ministers to favor the Town of Stratton with preaching – each minister one day for the year 1797.*” and also, “voted to link *Jacob Batchellor’s and Solomon Gale’s rates which the collector held against them for preaching for the year 1796.*” A lot can be read into these two statements. The last reference seems to provide a glimpse of Stratton’s only enforcement of the “dissenter legislation” discussed above. Batchellor and Gale, both Baptists, evidently did not pay the tax raised for (Congregational) preaching in 1796, further implying that they did not have the required certificates exempting them from such a tax. Although Baptist services were held in Stratton at Batchellor’s home between 1792 and 1795, as recorded in the records of Wardsboro’s Baptist Church, payment for this preaching would have come from the pockets of the Baptists and not from the town coffers. No doubt, finding themselves subject to a tax for Congregational preaching, while paying for their own preaching did not sit well with these gentlemen. Additionally, it seems as though these same minutes denote that a compromise occurred in 1797. By voting for Mr. Batchellor “to ask the neighboring ministers to favor the Town of Stratton with preaching,” we can assume that he most certainly would have asked a Baptist Minister to come preach in Stratton, implying that the town was willing to pay for Baptist preaching as well as Congregational preaching in 1797. Although this last implication seems to have “rebalanced” Stratton’s religious tilt, as we shall see, state legislation would promote further the cause of Stratton’s Congregationalists.

Mandated Support of Religion

That same year, Vermont passed “*An Act for the Support of the Gospel,*” Chapter 51 [Revised Laws of Vermont 1797 (Rutland, 1798), pp. 474-79: Hereafter referred to as Chapter 51]. This law required all taxpayers to support the construction of houses of public worship and the settling of Congregational ministers within each town and it also clarified the requirements for exempting citizens from church taxes. There is no way of knowing just how controversial Stratton’s citizens found these mandates to be, or how resistive the minority congregations were to their implementations. Additionally, these mandates would have been a big financial burden for such a small, relatively poor town like Stratton. Consequently, some combination of these obstacles stifled any progression toward these goals. No religious issues were voted on or discussed in the Town Meeting of 1798, and a vote for the town to pay for preaching was defeated in 1799, while articles concerning preaching listed in the 1800 and 1801 warnings were not addressed at those respective meetings. But this apparent disregard of Chapter 51 was soon to end. Although Stratton seemed content with inaction, the town inevitably had key citizens that could force the issue in one way or another.

There was a man whose arrival into Stratton who may well have caused the shift that pushed Stratton to follow through with implementing the Chapter 51 mandate – this man was Thomas Lathrop. Mr. Lathrop came to Stratton about the same time that Chapter 51 was implemented in Vermont. He purchased the Patch property – the social center of the town at that time – and he was elected Town Clerk in 1798. Coincidentally, Mr. Lathrop appears to have been a very devout Congregationalist. This fact is evident in his 1820 obituary, which read, “*The strict morality of his life, his zeal in rebuilding the waste places of Zion, the pleasure he seemed to take in the sanctuary, at the domestic altar, and, in short, wherever the God of Jacob was worshiped, the integrity and benevolence of his heart, the beneficence of his hand, and his undeviating affection as husband and father, altogether furnish his friends the consolation that their loss is his gain.*”

Lathrop’s status in town may have given him the leverage needed to ensure that Stratton pursued the full implementation of Chapter 51. He certainly was the man who donated the four-acre parcel for the Town Common and he may have been instrumental in the development of Stratton’s Congregational Church. Hence, with the momentum provided by Lathrop and others who shared his ambitions, Stratton was in a position to abide by this controversial law, fully.

The Church of Christ in Stratton

At the end of the summer of 1801, Reverend James Tufts, the first settled minister of Wardsboro, and the Reverend Gershom C. Lyman of Marlboro, Vermont (the same man who had addressed the Vermont Legislature in 1783 as previously discussed) were instrumental in establishing a Congregationalist Church for Stratton.

At a meeting held on August 17, 1801, Tufts was chosen Moderator and Lyman acted as Clerk, while nine of Stratton’s citizens signed the covenant declaring the new church to be a regular Church of Christ (a traditional Congregational Church) called *The Church of Christ in Stratton*. Proceedings of the new church began on August 30th, when the Rev. Mr. Ethan baptized children of the original members. In the months that followed, the ranks of this congregation began to grow as new members were accepted by letters of dismission from other churches or through baptism.

The Original Nine Members:

Abel Kidder	Mary Kidder
Francis Kidder	
Sampson Bixby	Sarah Bixby
Edmund Gibbs	Phebe Gibbs
Samuel Blodgett	Mary Blodgett

A Meetinghouse Impasse

At the end of 1801, Stratton formally accepted Lathrop's lease for the Town Common parcel. The next step was to coordinate and build a meetinghouse on this lot, but that task apparently was not an easy one for the town. Many underlying factors seemed to have slowed down this project. The town readily accepted Lathrop's lease – little expense was involved in that transaction – but a meetinghouse was a different story. It seems likely that Stratton's non-Congregationalist citizens would have opposed the use of their tax-dollars to construct a building intended mainly for the use of that congregation. It also seems likely that many wanted to wait for the establishment of a Congregationalist Society within Stratton to accomplish that task. Chapter 51 had provided that when any number of residents "exceeding twenty-five" wanted to start a church, they could ask the Town Clerk to warn a Town Meeting and form a church society. After that time, it would be the responsibility of that society, instead of the town, to impose church taxes, and also to propose a location for a meetinghouse, and to build it. The formation of this society was required because a congregation was legally a "body religious," not a "body corporate;" therefore, it could not hold title to property – it was the society that qualified as a "body corporate." Stratton, however, apparently was too sparsely populated to organize such a church society. Since no local society was formed at that time, Stratton continued to address the business of religion at Town Meetings – business that continued as an impasse. One indication of this stalemate was the vote to pass over clearing the trees and brush from the Town Common at the March Meeting of 1801. Although the next few years were spent in surveying and building new roads that crossed the new Town Common, no other town business concerning the Town Common or the construction of a meetinghouse was addressed by the town until the summer of 1806.

Church and State – the Beginning of the End

Stratton's citizenry also may have understood the controversy that "*An Act for the Support of the Gospel*" had created within the state. To protect the Constitution, Vermont's forefathers had established a political body called the Council of Censors – a council of thirteen men elected every seven years tasked with reviewing new laws and making recommendations to the General Assembly. Following the Council of Censors' first review of Chapter 51, the Council felt that this law might be unconstitutional, quoting the second clause of Article 3 of Vermont's Constitution: "*No man ought to, or of right can be compelled to attend any religious worship, or erect or support any place of worship, or maintain any minister contrary to the dictates of his conscience.*" The Council argued that the new law "*expressly bind the citizens of this state, indiscriminately, to erect and support places of public worship, and to maintain ministers, contrary to this clearly defined right, provided they are so unfortunate as to be in the minority of any town.*" Following the

1799/1800 session of the Council of Censors, the law was changed “*by simplifying the certificate of nonagreement with the ‘religious opinion’ of a majority of the town inhabitants, authorizing absent persons to dissent within one month of any vote and allowing dissenters to file once to be released from further taxation, after paying their share for the last year.*” Although this was a minor change, it hinted at the revocation of the entire law sometime in the near future, but not until after the next meeting of the Council in 1806.

Building a Meetinghouse

Finally, at a Special Town Meeting held July 2, 1806, the citizens of Stratton voted to build a meetinghouse for the town on the Town Common for the cost of four hundred dollars. A committee of Sampson Bixby, George Oliver, Abel Kidder, and Thomas Lathrop was chosen by the Selectmen to superintend the project. Additionally, Aaron Lyon was added to that committee. Mr. Lyon probably was added due to the fact that he had just purchased the house located on the west side of the Town Common, within a few rods of the building site. Strange as it may seem, this was the same day that Aaron was warned out of Stratton by Levi Robbins, Stratton’s Constable (*see Stratton’s Warnings Out*) as ordered by the Selectmen. Nathan Patch offered to provide glass and nails for the project. This meeting was adjourned to October 6, 1806, and when it was continued on that date, the town voted to rescind the votes passed to build the meetinghouse and called for a group of people to form themselves into a body independent of the town to build the meetinghouse. Apparently, a group was organized to do just that. There is no documentation that confirms that this group was a Congregationalist Society, although it most certainly would have been so. Nonetheless, an independent group was formed to build the meetinghouse at that time.

Stratton’s Special Town Meeting of July 1806 may have been held in anticipation of the Council of Censors’ opinion on Chapter 51. That same year, the Council had determined that the state no longer should mandate town support for the building of meetinghouses or the hiring of clergy – effectively initiating a true separation of church and state in Vermont. This coincidence implies that those citizens who called the Special Town Meeting had hopes that the town would decide to build a meetinghouse with tax dollars before this law was changed. This almost came to be; however, the citizens who met again in October had the foresight to proceed in a manner fair to all in town.

Strangely, the warnings for these meetings were recorded in Stratton’s town records out of sequence – following records of the March 2, 1807 Town Meeting and beginning at the bottom of the page used for the 1807 meeting. Since this sequence eliminates the possible excuse that a page was missed, it can only mean that it was not recorded until after the March 2, 1807 meeting had occurred.

Chapter 51 was repealed by the General Assembly on October 24, 1807, and so ended the controversial ties between church and state in Vermont. Stratton failed to fully implement all the mandates of Chapter 51 before it was finally repealed; thus, Stratton did not build a meetinghouse with tax-dollars. Even so, a meetinghouse was constructed on the Town Common and it was used for both municipal and religious gatherings for the next quarter century.

Stratton's Congregationalists

The Church of Christ in Stratton, like Congregational Churches of this area, inherited their beliefs from the Puritan worship practices of lower New England. It is an institution based on John Calvin's doctrine of faith and predestination. Each congregation is part of a greater "Consociation of Churches," but the minutiae of Church policy are left to the discretion of the local congregation. Although the Church of Christ in Stratton was organized in 1801 (as described above) the town did not have a resident minister for many years, relying mostly on supply pastors from neighboring congregations and missionary organizations such as the Vermont Domestic Missionary Society – ministers who might have performed just one Sunday service before moving on to another town.

It was not until 1834 that Stratton was able to find and hire a resident minister. Joseph B. Goddard took that position, but he remained in Stratton only through the following year. In 1836, Joseph Davidson was hired to replace the Rev. Goddard. He ministered in Stratton from September 1836, to September 1838. After that time, no resident pastor existed for Stratton's church until 1846. Again, supply pastors were relied upon and, if one could not be obtained, then one of the deacons held the service – a common occurrence. The first to hold the positions of deacons were Sampson Bixby and Francis Kidder, who were elected in June 1802 at the home of Abel Kidder. Both gentlemen held their respective deaconship until 1814. Other deacons of this church included: Samuel Boutell (1814 – 1822), Abel Grout, Jr. (1818 – 1875), Abel Kidder (1822 – 1831), Luther Waite (1836 – 1855), Ezekiel Estabrook (about 1840 – 1852), and Henry W. Estabrook (1859 – 1883).

Until about 1840, the Congregationalists had continued a routine existence within Stratton, but in that year the Church Clerk recorded an odd account. This peculiar entry states that Sarah Ann Ballard was dismissed to the Union Congregational Church. What did this mean? It implies that by 1840 a Union Congregationalist Society existed in town – a separate entity from the old Congregational Church of Christ in Stratton. From that time, the Church of Christ records are sketchy and do not record another dated event until 1846. After that time, it appears that some members were readmitted to the church, while the records that follow refer to the church as "The Congregational Church in Stratton," unlike previous records. What happened here? [The History of Dover, Vermont](#), by Nell Kull, records a like-

event. Their town was introduced to the Unionist movement in 1842 and members were drawn in from Dover's various churches. The Unionist doctrine required only evidence of piety in the acceptance of new members, eliminating many of the differences at the church level between the Congregationalists and the Baptists. And so, it appears that the original doctrine of the Church of Christ in Stratton succumbed to the Unionist movement that had infiltrated this area. Evidently, following Miss Ballard's dismissal, the congregation changed its doctrine to incorporate this new liberal form of belief. Apparently, not only did the Union Congregational Church swallow up Stratton's old Church of Christ, but it also absorbed Stratton's Baptist Church, which had officially disbanded in 1847.

In 1846, the Reverend Asahel Nott (*sometimes written as Nutt*) became Stratton's resident Congregational Minister. It was during his ministry in Stratton that the new meetinghouse – the Union Church – was built upon the property of Freeman Wyman (where it stands today). Reverend Nott left Stratton in 1849 and no Congregational minister was assigned to Stratton until 1873. In May of that year, Amzi B. Emmons took the position and remained until November 1874. Reverend Emmons was the last Congregational Minister to settle in Stratton.

The surviving minutes of this church portray only a small portion of the collective personality of its members. Many of its early traditions can be assumed from the standard beliefs and practices of New England Congregationalists of that time. Some of their practices included no cooking after sundown on Saturday – no travel on Sunday unless to meeting – usually a meeting in an unheated meetinghouse – and no driving of a team on Sunday.

Some of Stratton's Congregationalists were very dedicated. For instance, Lucy (Batchellor) Grout remained a member of the church for more than 50 years. Conversely, others who joined failed to meet the personal standards set forth by this church. For instance, William G. Pike, his wife, Myranda and their daughter, Fannie, were found guilty of not attending services regularly in 1823. The congregation excommunicated all three. Unfortunate, since the Pikes appear to have been active churchgoers to that time and dedicated Christians all their lives.

Additionally, conflicts between family members were readily addressed by the greater family of the congregation. An example of this greater-familial set of standards can be seen in a father and son conflict between Joel Estabrook and his son, Stephen, in 1836/7. At that time, the congregation "tried" both men in order to reveal their differences, in hopes that they would repent their wrongs to one another and the congregation and become upstanding members once again. Both men were found guilty of "unchristianlike" behavior. Joel also was found to have "*expressed unkindly feelings toward his brethren who are engaged in the temperance reformation and in other benevolent efforts.*" The congregation found both men guilty

and the church's fellowship was withdrawn from them. Stephen made his confession and he was accepted back into the congregation. Joel did not!

Another incident in the church records concerned the separation of Hiram and Elvira Knapp. Following an inquiry into their marital status in 1859, "*The church met according to agreement to see what [the] church would do with Mr. Hiram Knapp and wife, they having separated and do not live together as man and wife.*" "*Mr. and Mrs. Knapp both asked for dismissal from the church.*" "*The Church voted to dismiss them from the church. Therefore the church will be no more accountable for their misconduct.*" Although Mrs. Knapp was widowed within the year following this ordeal, she did not seek readmittance to this church until 1868.

Today, instances such as these would be considered gross invasions of privacy by most of us, but they were commonplace and expected by the devout Christians of 19th Century New England.

The records indicate that in 1871, the Congregational Church in Stratton had a total of 22 members. The last recordation for this church occurred on October 18, 1874 – the baptism of Isabell Rosella Pike. Although the minutes end here, the church was not officially defunct until 1883. The original record book of this church is kept at the Vermont Historical Society in Montpelier – a transcription also can be found in Stratton's Town Office.

Stratton's Baptists

The Baptist Church in America branched from the Congregational Churches of New England, due to a difference in doctrine concerning baptism. Because the Baptists found no scriptural support of infant baptism, they discontinued this practice. They also followed a doctrine considerably more strict than the Congregationalists.

Prior to the establishment of a Baptist Church in Stratton, the Baptist Church in Wardsboro had drawn in several members from Stratton. Their records show that between 1792 and 1795 some services were held in Stratton – specifically at the home of Jacob Batchellor.

Following an assertive effort by the Baptist Society to establish itself more strongly in this region, enough of the younger generation was recruited to organize a Baptist Church in Stratton in 1817. Evidently, the religious fervor at that time was a direct result of the disastrous year of 1816 – the year without a summer.

The first deacons of Stratton's Baptist Church were John Greenwood and John Glazier. In 1825, Stratton's Baptist members numbered about forty, but beginning in 1834 many were drawn into the Baptist Church in West Wardsboro. This and the evident restructuring of the Congregationalist Church in Stratton to a Union Congregationalist doctrine led to the demise of Stratton's Baptist Church in 1847. No records detailing Stratton's first Baptist Congregation are known to remain.

The Wardsboro and Stratton Baptist Society

A separate organization called *the Wardsboro and Stratton Baptist Society* held its first meeting on February 14, 1834. The creation of this joint society may have been fueled by Deacon William Crowningshield, who had moved from Wardsboro to Stratton the year before. He had settled in Stratton Gore on the ridge north of Pike Hollow and beside what was later called Willis Cemetery – an area more closely associated with West Wardsboro than with Stratton’s other population centers. William was elected the society’s first president at that meeting. Additionally, Hammond’s Mills (West Wardsboro) found itself upon a major thoroughfare, once the Stratton Turnpike and its associated County Road were completed in 1831. Apparently, with the geographical center of this congregation shifted west by adding Stratton as part of the society and the increased accessibility of Hammond’s Mills via a major thoroughfare, it was voted to move the Baptist meetinghouse in Wardsboro from its original location on the hill, where Bill’s Lumber currently is located, down to Hammond’s Mills on the main road – where it stands today. In 1834, the Wardsboro Baptist Church probably was disassembled and rebuilt on its present site. The belfry was added a few years later and a bell was purchased. This church served Stratton’s Baptist citizens from the southern part of town for many years, outlasting all of Stratton’s established churches. Some of Stratton’s citizens known to have belonged to the Wardsboro Baptist Church included the Knowlton family, the Glaziers, the Smiths, the Lymans and the Eddys. A transcription of some of the Wardsboro Baptist Church minutes, including activities of many of its Stratton members, can be found in [Return to Yesterday](#), by CS Streeter.

The Free-Will Baptist Church of Stratton

The Free-Will Baptists differed from the Baptists in that they did not believe in Calvin’s teaching that the road to heaven was open only for the predestined elect of God, but believed that they could make their way to heaven by good works accomplished by their own “Free-Will.” This congregation often was referred to as “that barrel-thumping crowd” because of their charismatic approach to worship.

On July 13, 1857, a Free-Will Baptist church of eight members was organized by Rev. I. J. Hoadley and Chester M. Prescott in Stratton. The Rev. Mr. Prescott settled in Stratton and ministered to this congregation for only a few years. After his removal, subsequent ministers included Rev. John B. Randall, John Parker, Joseph Tripp, John C. Ball, Fitzalen H Butler and Rev. Orlando H. Palmer. The first deacon of Stratton’s Free-Will Baptist Church was David Eddy.

For several decades, the Free-Will Baptist Church in Stratton continued to grow in number. The Vermont Phoenix reported on May 30, 1879, “*Rev FH Butler preached his farewell sermon last Sunday. He baptized four who were united with the Free-Will Baptist Church in Stratton. One was united by*

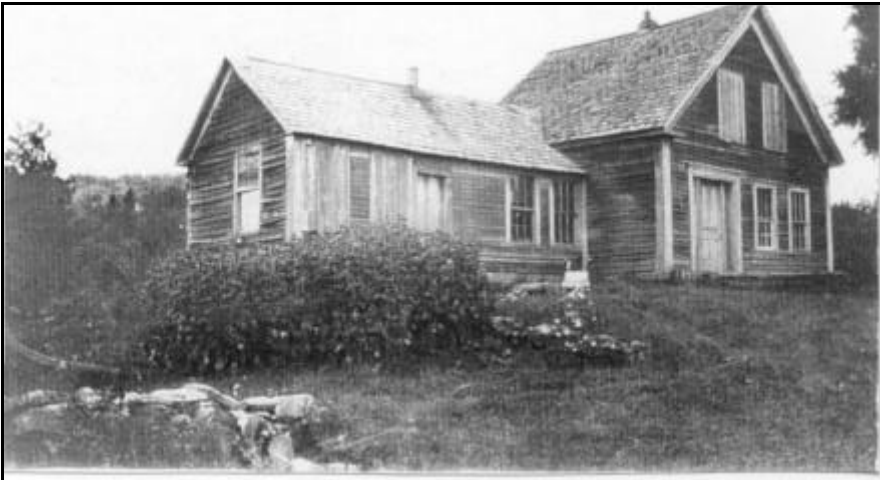
letter at the same time. Mr. Butler removes to Franklin, New York;" and on September 12, 1879, "the Rensselaer quarterly meeting will be held with the Stratton Free-Will Baptist Church commencing September 12." The Free-Will Baptists eventually gained full use of the Union Church in Stratton, probably following the dissolution of Stratton's Congregationalist Church in 1883. Additionally, in 1885, the Free-Will Baptist Society purchased from Daniel Harris, a house and ten acres located opposite the church, across the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*. Here, they created a parsonage for their resident minister.

Orlando Palmer was the last full-time minister to live in Stratton and conduct regular services at the church. In 1903, the year he left Stratton, Palmer wrote that there were only three resident members of his church left at that time. Rev. Palmer removed to Wilmington and with his loss the Free-Will Baptist Church, as well as the regular use of the church, ended in Stratton.



**Reverend O. H. Palmer
and his wife**

Photo courtesy of Frank Pelletier



The Free-Will Baptist Parsonage

Stratton's Smaller Congregations

Stratton was more than a balance of Congregationalists and Baptists. People of other faiths and followings came to live here too. Stratton reportedly had a small number of Methodists. Beginning in 1825, this town was part of the Newfane circuit – a Methodist class or society that also supplied preaching for Jamaica, Windham, Fayetteville, and Wardsboro. In 1831, the Newfane Circuit changed its name to the Wardsboro circuit. One of its Methodist ministers was James M. Fuller. It is possible that he was the same James Fuller who had resided in Stratton in the mid-1800s. Little else is known of those who may have attended Methodist services within this town.

Additionally, Stratton may have been home to a number of Millerites, a religious sect that believed the world would end on March 21, 1843. Thousands became Millerites in this area, but once the prophecy was found to be wrong, many of its followers developed into what has come to be known as the Seventh Day Adventists. A Seventh Day Adventist Church established itself in the Pikes Falls area of Jamaica during the last half of the 19th Century and early 20th Century. Members of this congregation included Stratton families such as the Bourns who donated land in Jamaica for this church, also the Pikes, Sages and Hurds, while Walter Twing of Stratton served as a lay minister of this church.

Furthermore, one of the early families – the Wheelers – were said to be Quakers, but no other reference to that faith can be found. In recent times, people of a variety of faiths have settled in the town, but the majority that have attended regular services have done so in neighboring towns.

The Meetinghouse

What of Stratton's places of worship – the meetinghouses? Following the revocation of "*An Act for the Support of the Gospel*" in 1806, the issue of building a meetinghouse was effectively taken from the hands of town government. From that point in time, Stratton's town records do not mention any of the details of the construction of the meetinghouse. But the meetinghouse indeed was built at that time. Construction probably commenced in 1807 through the efforts of the members of the Church of Christ in Stratton and the building was ready for church services the following year.

The site chosen for this building – the Town Common – is situated upon the side of a hill, overlooking what is now called Ball Mountain Brook, with wonderful views of the Vermont landscape to the south and east – an excellent location for a church in the eyes of an 18th-Century New England Congregationalist. Although it was built upon land leased to the town, the town apparently did not spend a penny of taxpayers' money on this meetinghouse. The money needed to finance this project evidently was raised by the customary selling of pews to the families who intended to worship

there. Proof of this fact can be seen in a property transfer between Asa Phillips, Jr. and his brother-in-law, Jedidiah Baker. Baker bought some land from Phillips on September 1, 1812. This sale also included rights to pew #3 on the “*lower floor*” of the meetinghouse.

It seems sad that we will never know how this building truly looked, since no detailed plan of this structure, nor drawings or photos remain, but clues to its size and shape do survive. Its foundation still exists, giving us its true dimensions of 38 feet north to south, by 48 feet east to west, and the above-mentioned deed implies that it had two floors. The existence of a large stepping-stone indicates that the main entrance was on the south side (a long side) of this building; thus, it would have faced the road.

Taking this information into account, it seems apparent that its style was that of a typical New England meetinghouse built around 1800. Perhaps the builders of Stratton’s church had access to The Country Builder’s Assistant by Asher Benjamin, printed in 1797, a guide available to support the demand of meetinghouse construction brought on by Chapter 51. The builders of Bennington’s First Church, which was completed in 1805, used this guide. It certainly is possible that a copy of this book made its way to Stratton – or – perhaps Stratton’s carpenters simply produced a replica of the West Wardsboro Baptist Church, which was built in 1792. The foundation for that church’s main structure is exactly the same as Stratton’s first meetinghouse. It only makes sense that the builders of the Stratton Meetinghouse would use a nearby structure such as the West Wardsboro Baptist Church as a model.

As to who may have helped build the meetinghouse, it seems possible that Joshua Robbins and Aaron Lyon were among the carpenters, while Asahel Burt may have been the painter. In all likelihood most of Stratton’s able-bodied devout Congregationalists and other interested individuals probably pitched in to bring this building into existence.

Regardless of how it was built, Stratton’s first meetinghouse was completed during 1808 and the Congregationalists began to worship there at that time. In 1809, the town began to use the new meetinghouse for Town Meetings and Freeman’s Meetings, apparently as guests of the society that had formed to build it.



A probable likeness of Stratton’s first Meetinghouse. This old photo of the West Wardsboro Baptist Church was altered to remove the belfry.

Few of Stratton's records mention this building. Those that exist show that it remained a central meeting place for the town for only about 25 or 30 years. With the completion of the *Stratton Turnpike* in 1831, the Town Common effectively was bypassed a half-mile to the south, shifting the center of the town's activity down the hill and reshaping Stratton's infrastructure more to its present form. The neighborhood of and around the Town Common was soon to be abandoned and the need for a more conveniently located meeting place became an issue. Ultimately, over the decade of the 1830s, any reluctance to change faded and town meetings began to be held down next to the *Stratton Turnpike*. The last town record to mention the old meetinghouse was from January 15, 1839, when a special town meeting was held to see "*if the town will agree to pay a sum of money in addition to what is or may be subscribed for the purpose of building a meetinghouse so that the town may have the privilege of holding town and freeman's meetings in the same and to see what the town will do with what property they hold in the old meetinghouse.*"

The Union Church

Stratton's existing Meetinghouse

The first record of Stratton's second meetinghouse – the Union Church – occurred within a road survey in the Town Records, dated July 5, 1848 – a description of the southwestern end of what is now the *West Jamaica Rd.*, where it intersects with the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*. The record states, "*Beginning in the center of County Rd. [the Stratton-Arlington Rd.] one rod and twelve links [about 20 ft] easterly from where a line with the easterly side of the new meetinghouse would intersect the County road, then running north...*" This description indicates that the intersection of these two roads originally was located on the east side of the meetinghouse, accounting for the odd angle between the meetinghouse and the current path of the *West Jamaica Rd.* which later was rerouted to the west side of the meetinghouse. This entire area belonged to Freeman Wyman at that time and he allowed the people of Stratton to place their new church upon his property, apparently in 1847.

This "new" meetinghouse, called the Union Church on early maps, had a smaller frame than that of the first structure; in fact it is more rightly called a church than a meetinghouse in that it was built specifically for worship services and not the multiple uses of a municipal building. It was constructed using the "Greek Revival" style that had become popular in this region during the 1820s, with dual entrances on a gabled end, beneath the steeple, and with the pulpit on the opposite end. It is likely that this building was furnished with a stove when it was built – evident by the brick chimney in early photographs. Iron stoves first came into use during the 1840s and the old Puritan tradition of heatless Sunday services fell to the wayside with the

generations of that time. The stove probably remained in the building, until services no longer were held there on a regular basis. The stove and chimney have since been removed.

On October 22, 1872, the estate of Freeman Wyman leased the area around the Stratton Meetinghouse to the town for as long as a meetinghouse was maintained on the premises. In 1901, just prior to the departure of Stratton's last resident minister, the Free-Will Baptists purchased an Estey Organ. After the minister left, this organ was moved to the Eddy farmhouse on *Pike Hollow Rd.* for safekeeping for many years. It has since been returned to the church. As of this writing, the old organ remains in working order, but is in need of repair.



The Union Church, now referred to as the Meetinghouse

Since the turn of the 20th Century, the Union Church has seldom been used, but efforts by the local population have kept the structure in repair. The Old Stratton Church Association was formed in the 1920s for this very purpose. Their only revenue was a dollar-per-year membership dues and a small income from bake sales, all used to maintain the church. Later, this organization changed its name to the Old Stratton Meetinghouse Association, and enough funds and participation were attained to make the major repairs required to keep the old church standing. More recently, the Town of Stratton has continued efforts to preserve and maintain this historic building for posterity as a museum.

Meetinghouse Folklore – Fact or Fiction?

A note about the folklore of the Stratton Meetinghouse: There exists a story, passed down over the last eighty years that tells how Stratton's original meetinghouse was moved down the hill by a team of oxen from the Town Common to the site at the intersection of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* and the *West Jamaica Rd.* – a story that I have heard many times and one that I initially believed. In fact, the sign upon the meetinghouse indicates that this was so. But, this story is definitely incorrect, although there seems to be some basis upon which it developed.

I believe that the old meetinghouse built in 1807/8 on the common fell into ruin just before 1840. A new meetinghouse, more correctly referred to as the Union Church – the same that exists today – was built in 1847 on the site where it still stands.

The first of several clues denoting that the old meetinghouse built in 1807/8 was not the same as the current meetinghouse is that the size and style of each building were not the same. The foundation of the first meetinghouse, which still can be seen on the Town Common beside the Old Town Cemetery, indicates that its dimensions were 48' by 38', while the dimensions of the current meetinghouse are only 37' by 31'. Near the old Town Common, a house foundation (with remains of a fireplace) approximately the size of the current meetinghouse, often has been mistaken for the meetinghouse foundation, but surveys as well as many deeds indicate that this building was a private home upon the adjacent lot (4L5R) and not the Town Common. Not only is the larger foundation the only foundation on the Town Common, it also has no cellar hole and no remains of a fireplace, consistent with the fact that early meetinghouses traditionally were unheated. The style was also different in that the first meetinghouse had a single main entrance, centrally located on the long side (the 48' side) of the building and, as previously noted, it also had two levels. Apparently, Stratton's first meetinghouse was very similar to the West Wardsboro Baptist Church, but without the belfry. The belfry of the West Wardsboro Church was added only after that church was relocated to its present site in 1834. In comparison, the current meetinghouse has two entrances on its short side (the 31' side) beneath the steeple, as was common for the Greek Revival style that had become popular in the 1820s, a style that maintained its popularity through to the time this structure was built in 1847. The current meetinghouse is only a single story structure. Furthermore, the words of Stratton's last resident minister, who moved away from Stratton in 1903, indicate that he was not familiar with such a story. He stated in his brief history of the Stratton Church written within the Church records that: *"It appears from tradition that this church shared the church building with those of other faith as there have been but two churches in Stratton, both built and used in common. The first was near the old common all gone but the brush and grass covered foundation that was 36' X 48' probably. This edifice has been past using now*

about 60 years. Between the decay of this house and the building of the present Union House on the road from Wardsboro to Arlington and has been repaired several times so that it is now in good shape and belongs to the inhabitants of Stratton.” This statement is complemented by the facts that Lyman Knapp never mentioned the movement of the building in his *History of Stratton* in Hemmenway’s *Gazetteer of Windham County, Vermont* in the mid-1880s and moreover by the town records of 1847, which call the meetinghouse a “new” meetinghouse in the description of the road there. Furthermore, the town report of 1939 describes the meetinghouse as being “erected about 1849.”

All things considered, it certainly seems that the story of the Stratton meetinghouse’s trek down the hill to its present location is only a myth. On the other hand, there seems to have been some similar event that occurred upon which this story was based. If indeed some structure was moved, it might well be that it was not Stratton’s meetinghouse, but rather Stratton’s Town House.

During the closing years of the 19th Century, Stratton had tried to establish a regular place to conduct its town meetings. In 1898, the town finally purchased property and established a Town House – an alternate term used for Meetinghouse or Town Hall, allowing a distinction between the two buildings.

In an interview with Ora Knapp of Wardsboro, daughter of Ora Atwood, who was born and reared in Stratton, Mrs. Knapp indicated that her father often had told her he remembered that the meetinghouse was moved and that, as a young boy, he had gone to watch the event with his mother. Ora Atwood was born in 1888. This statement apparently gives clout to the fact that some building was moved during the mid-1890s and not during the 1840s. If this is true, it could not have been the meetinghouse, since maps drawn in 1856 and 1869 show this building standing at its current location.

There are also rumors that photos exist depicting the meetinghouse being moved by oxen. It is doubtful that such photos would have been taken in Stratton in 1847 or 1848 so close to the beginning of photography, but an event in the 1890s certainly could have been photographed. Unfortunately, these photos have not surfaced during my research.

In conclusion, I suggest that it may have been the Town House that was moved in Stratton about 1898 and that the status of this building as a meetinghouse for the town was a misinterpretation of the story – that is, if any building was moved. Another possible theory is that the story was confused with the movement of the Baptist Church in West Wardsboro in 1834, from the hill where the Bills’ Sawmill currently is located, down to the site where the church now stands. Many of Stratton’s citizens were members of that church. Regardless of the facts, it has been passed down over the years that Stratton’s first meetinghouse was moved from the old Town Common to its present site – a story that is undoubtedly wrong!

The Mystery Bell

Another mystery exists around Stratton's meetinghouses. The church in Pownal, Vermont has possession of a bell, supposedly brought there from Stratton. Harold Dean, a mason who had worked on a restoration of Stratton's Church circa 1930, was given this bell as payment for his services. Mr. Dean was told that the bell had been used at Webster's speech in 1840. Dean donated the bell to the church in his hometown of Pownal. It was installed in that church's belfry in 1953 and a plaque hangs in the church, explaining its supposed history. It is a large bell, well suited to be a church bell, but the Union Church is not fitted for a bell and it seems unlikely that one ever existed in the old meetinghouse. It may have been used by the conventioners, during Webster's visit in 1840, but then, where was it kept and how was it used during nearly a century of time that followed? I have found no clues of the Church Bell's existence within this town; hence, its place in Stratton's history is still a mystery.



The Mystery Bell within the Pownal Church belfry

The Minister and the Dove

There exists a series of personal letters that breathes life back into the time when Stratton's churches were active – letters that can take us back to the Stratton of 1868. One of Stratton's temporary Congregational pastors, Albert Elijah Dunning, left a remnant of that forgotten era. In a letter home to a friend, Albert wrote:

“In a little brown story-and-a-half house, which at this moment is almost hidden in one of the fiercest snow-storms you ever saw, far up among the Green Mountains, two thousand feet above the sea, is some one thinking of you. He sits alone before a quaint little old-fashioned fireplace, whose blaze of maple wood begins, as twilight comes on, to make soft lights and shadows on the white walls and bare floors. Shall he tell you about that room? The people who own it are poor. So are all the people in these mountains. But they have put into it everything they have which they think will add to the minister's comfort, with a devotion that is touching and a taste that is comical. It is crammed with three bureaus, two tables, lots of chairs, nine bibles and testaments, forty-five case daguerreotypes, funny cheap plaster casts, a leaden rooster, trinkets made of cloves and shells, family

photographs on the wall, in stand-up collars and stately gravity, an old carved bedstead, supporting an immense feather-bed covered with the whitest of sheets and counterpanes, its pillows almost touching the sloping roof. Its one little window with cracked panes and loose casement lets in the snow, but looks toward far-off hills that on clear days lie blue against the sky, and a nearer valley from which on still evenings comes up the gurgling of a brook. The snow in the woods is now from three to four feet deep, and judging from the marks of the hedgehogs on the trees has been ten or twelve feet deep. My little meetinghouse has a pulpit cushioned with old green velvet, backed by a window hung with plain white muslin curtains. It holds about one hundred and fifty, if they could be gathered from the hills. Last Sunday one poor woman came through the driving snow on foot three miles (it was a terribly cold day) leading a blind husband. Do not such people love the Gospel? I spend my mornings in study and afternoons I make calls. At some places I am received very cordially, at others coolly. I had an offer of a much better salary to go to New Berne, N. C., and nearly went, but it was a large church and I am glad I came here. Everything is more primitive than you can imagine. I daily partake of unvarying salt pork and potatoes, amid the squalls of six uneasy, hungry children, the clinking of many knives in one common butter dish, and other circumstances I once thought too horrible to mention. But my room is an unfailling place of comfort, and the children keep it supplied with splendid apples and nuts. The women are almost all plain and toothless, the men rough from nature and exposure. Children are abundant.

I go from house to house through narrow roads and across lots and woods, often finding a distance of a mile between two houses. The people care more about being visited than about great sermons. So I try to comfort and encourage Christians, warm the cold-hearted, and turn the thoughts of the impenitent towards Christ. I could wish there were more refinement. I have met only three or four people who were anything like company. Yet if my whole life were to be spent among them, it is such a happy, blessed thing to bring them to the love of Christ, that I think I should daily thank God for turning me to this life work."

A postscript added on the next day, April 8, said, "When you get this letter, I cannot tell. We are at present cut off from communication with the outer world. The snow on the mountain is said to be 6 to 8 feet deep, and here I nearly wearied myself out in trying to get half a mile tonight. I have seen no news since a week ago yesterday. The storm has been very severe. On Stratton Mountain they tell me the snow doesn't melt off till late June or early in July.

The people ask me to eat with them or to stay all night with them where I call, and they give me the best they have. But you cannot have any idea how primitive it is. Every letter you write me here is twice a comfort."

Some weeks later after Albert had left Stratton, he constructed another letter that told of his work here. "It has given me a deeper and grander view

of life, and a broader and stronger love for all human souls. I used to go over those rugged hills alone to visit the sick and anxious ones, saying over to myself with an untold joy 'pure religion and undefiled before God, etc.' There were several conversions and a very deep religious interest before I left. Families were united in their love to Christ, and many found a new joy and a new manliness in loving Him. I held meetings every other evening and was very tired at the close. I had to preach at funerals, too; that is their custom.... The people gave me at last their full confidence, and I heard, oh! so many stories of lives that no written description could do justice to. My little church was crowded to overflowing before I left, and my call to stay was mixed with tears and grateful prayers for my happiness. I think I would rather be a minister, and live in poverty among those simple folk, than to be the richest merchant in New York. I didn't return here [back to his home] till some time after term began and find plenty of work to do. But I value my experience [there] more than a whole year's work here, if I could have but one."

The Congregationalist of July 9, 1868, gave this statement: "As a result of the recent revival at Stratton, four have joined the Free-Will Baptist Church, and five the Congregational Church. – Mr. Albert E. Dunning from Andover labored here six weeks in the Spring, and a blessing followed."

Many years later, the Lesson Exposition by Doctor Albert Dunning appeared in The Pilgrim Teacher, on April 9, 1916. Albert wrote, "In my student days I went as a missionary into a mountainous rural district of New England. One Sunday afternoon as I was preaching in the little church, a white dove suddenly appeared above me, circled round my head, hovered over it, alighted on it, and rested there. The small congregation gazed on me in awe as I continued speaking. Up to that time no great interest had been manifested. But at the next meeting the multitude overflowed the meetinghouse and filled the space around it. They hung on the preacher's words. The story spread through the hills. From every side the people came to see the man on whom the dove had rested. Men who had lived to middle life and to old age with little interest in religion came confessing their sins. Numbers were added to the church. I have heard that to this day the story is told in those mountains of the man of God on whom the dove rested, and of the revival that followed.

Should I have done any good by insisting that the dove flew in unnoticed through an open window, and that she alighted on my head because it was the only resting place she saw? Would I have been warranted in telling the people that there was no more manifestation or message of God in that incident than in any other? Did I know enough to make such an assertion? No event like that had ever occurred within the memory of the people. The result was an ingathering into the churches greater than any other in their history. And I am gratefully willing to believe that God wrought a wonder for the salvation of the people."

Albert Elijah Dunning: a Book of Remembrance by Harriet Westbrook Dunning 1927



A gathering at the Stratton Meetinghouse

Photo courtesy of Joy Lewis

After scrutinizing Dunning's letters, along with the surrounding neighborhood of 1868 Stratton, it is clear that he preached within Stratton's Union Church. While in Stratton, he probably stayed with the family of Lyman Sprague who lived about a quarter-mile west of the church (see Beers' Atlas of 1869). Dunning's exaggerations of the Stratton winter were likely the result of locals jesting with a naive flatlander, who was unfamiliar with Vermont weather. Unfortunately, I have found no parallel fact or folklore to substantiate Mr. Dunning's claim that his story lived on in "*those mountains*" as legend for many years afterward. It certainly did not survive to the present day – only recently revived with the discovery of his memoirs during research for this history. Nor is their proof that he caused a great influx into the church. The Congregationalists' records do reflect that five new members were added to that church in 1868 – Elvira, Emma and Villa Knapp, Adelia Estabrook and Emeline (Carter) Grout – giving some weight to this claim, but even with the addition of four members into the Free-Will Baptist Church, it certainly does not corroborate "*an ingathering into the churches greater than any other in their history.*"

A Religious Overview

The religious ambiance of Stratton over the last two centuries has had its ups and downs, but it never became extremely profound nor did it ever disappear entirely. High points of religious zeal within Stratton may have been caused by the existence of a popular settled minister in the town, the arrival of a zealous supply pastor or perhaps some greater circumstance that conjured up the fear of God. Ultimately, 19th Century Stratton was bound to follow the mood swings of the rest of this region – swings that included religious awakenings in 1812, 1817, and 1825. These were reflections of the War of 1812, the year without a summer (1816), and the “second Great Awakening” of the mid-1820s. Likewise, Millerism and the Unionist movement of the 1840s, self-reflection brought on by the Civil War, the diphtheria epidemic in the early 1860s, and even the ministry of Albert Dunning in 1868 all swayed some part of the population of this town to reflect upon their lives and attend church services regularly, if only for a short while. Then, by the beginning of the 20th Century, it seems as though religion had left Stratton all together with the departure of the Rev. O. H. Palmer in 1903. Obviously this was not the case. What really occurred were the economic changes brought on by the evolving lumber industry and the subsequent abandonment of the area around the church. Even before Palmer left Stratton, the town’s centers of population had continued to shift to its southeast and northeast corners, while much of the remainder of town succumbed to the forest. Stratton’s remaining citizens went on to be absorbed by the congregations of Wardsboro, Jamaica, Dover and other communities – a situation that continues to the present.

The Chapel of the Snows: It seems likely that Stratton would not have been home to another active church, had it not been for Tink Smith, one of the founders of the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort. Smith wanted a chapel built at the resort; and so, in 1962, the Chapel of the Snows, a nondenominational church, was built at the base of the ski slopes. Since that time, tourists and locals alike have attended regular services there. Currently, Protestant and Catholic services are held at the chapel every week. The ambiance continues!



A large gathering at the Stratton Church



**The Stratton Meetinghouse
following restoration efforts by the Old Stratton Meetinghouse Assoc.**



Snow-laden evergreens along an old road heading toward the mountain.

Chapter XIV

Stratton Mountain Tales, Tragedies, and Titillating Tidbits

A Mother's Sacrifice – The Blake Ordeal

In the year 1821, a tragedy occurred in Stratton – an event that soon became woven into the tapestry of Green Mountain folklore – a sad incident that inspired verse – verse later put to music. The poem, *A Mother's Sacrifice* by Seba Smith became very popular in its day and the ballad is performed still by local artists.

This particular Stratton Mountain Tragedy is the story of Harrison Gray Blake, his wife, Lucy Blake, and their daughter, Rebecca. There are several embellished accounts of the event; however, the following tale is likely the most accurate. It is from an article entitled:

“A true and particular statement of the sufferings of Harrison Gray Blake, and the death of his wife on the Green Mountain; taken from the relation of the above Mr. Blake and from Mr. Richardson, the young man who first found the sufferers.”

“On December 19, 1821, Harrison Blake, his wife Lucy and 14 month old daughter, Rebecca set out from Salem, New York to visit their parents in Marlboro, Vermont. They proceeded with a horse and sleigh to the foot of the Green Mountains on the western side. Here, at a tavern, they stopped to inquire about the road ahead as already there was five inches of snow on the ground. The landlord stated that the road was good and that a loaded team could travel to Wardsboro in three hours. They left the tavern at about 1:00PM to ascend the mountain and found the traveling good for about two or three miles. There they came to the end of the well-trodden road where only a man and horse had proceeded. At that point the snow was about three feet deep. They continued on in the sleigh for a short time, but the horse had become so fatigued that Mr. Blake decided to leave the sleigh. Mrs. Blake and the baby rode on horseback while Mr. Blake proceeded on foot. They continued on for some distance before the horse refused to travel further. With the situation becoming increasingly dangerous, Mr. Blake decided to continue on ahead of his wife in search of help. They agreed to shout to maintain contact for as long as they could.

It being in the night, the weather cold, the snow deep and a gloomy forest of nine miles through, darkened the way, so but a small progress could be made.

Mr. Blake found himself to fail, being debilitated in his feet and legs. Supposing his feet to be balled with snow, having left his great coat and mittens with his wife – his fingers were so frozen he could not tell what the

matter was; but by going to a tree and striking them against it, found they were frozen. He proceeded forward until he became so exhausted that he could not walk, then endeavored to get along by the help of a stick, which he laid before him and then drew himself forward until at length he could not go farther.

In his shocking situation, his wife called to him and asked if he was likely to obtain help; to which he replied he could not get farther; upon which she said she would come to him, and they would die together. Mrs. Blake could not make it to him, but they continued to shout to one another.

The Blakes were heard by a certain man – the first inhabitant from them and also by a woman who went some distance in the night to obtain help, but no one went to their help at that time.

Meanwhile, Mr. Richardson had gone over the mountain and he had not returned according to appointment and a rumor was carried to his son in the middle of Stratton by the school children that had supposed his father to be on the mountain in distress, it being 11AM on December 20th. At that time, young Richardson immediately started and went on to the mountain two miles beyond inhabitants and found Mr. Blake lying upon his face, apparently trying to throw off his clothes and making a strange noise. Richardson turned Blake over, but he was senseless with his hands and feet badly frozen. After rubbing him and giving him some spirits, Richardson picked him up and carried him toward the first inhabitants' house. Blake recovered enough to inform Richardson that his wife and child were still on the mountain.

Mr. Blake was carried into a house about 4PM, where he was treated for his condition. Richardson retrieved some help and went back out to find Mrs. Blake and the baby. They found Mrs. Blake lying on her face about 700 feet back from where they had found Mr. Blake. They raised her up – she breathed three or four times and died. The search party continued further to look for the baby. Rebecca was found about a half-mile back wrapped in both parents' great coats and a blanket. She looked up and smiled at her rescuer.

The baby had frostbite on just one toe. Mr. Blake lost all but the big toe on his left foot. Once Mr. Blake had recovered somewhat, father and child were taken to Mr. Blake's parents' home in Marlboro, Vermont, where he continued to recover.

Apparently about a week passed before little Rebecca could be returned safely to her grandparents in Marlboro. Mr. Blake eventually recovered, although he lost four toes from his left foot. Lucy's body was taken back to Marlboro and buried on the Tuesday after the tragedy at Branch Cemetery in South Newfane. Her stone still exists and reads:

LUCY BLAKE
Consort of
Harris'n G. Blake
Perished on the
Green Mountain
Dec. 20, 1821
Age 28

And so ended the tragedy, but not the story. The Blake Tragedy was reported in various papers across the region and within one of these papers – the *Eastern Argus* of Portland, Maine – the story fell into legend. The editor of that paper, Seba Smith, wrote the following verse – a poem that came to be known throughout America and Great Britain in the years that followed:

A Mother's Sacrifice

*The cold wind swept the mountain height
And pathless was the dreary wild
And mid the cheerless hours of night
A mother wanders with her child.
As through the drifting snow she pressed,
The babe was sleeping on her breast
And colder yet the winds did blow
And darker hours of night came on
And deeper grew the drifts of snow.
Her limbs were chilled, her strength was gone.
"O God," she cried in accents wild,
"If I must perish, save my child."
She stripped her mantle from her breast
And bared her bosom to the storm.
Then round the child she wrapped the vest
And smiled to think the child was warm.
With one cold kiss, one tear she shed
And sank upon a snowy bed.
At dawn a traveler passed by
And saw her 'neath a snowy veil.
The frost of death was on her eye;
Her cheek was hard and cold and pale.
He moved the robe from off the child.
The babe looked up and sweetly smiled.*

What happened to the Blakes following the tragedy? According to a niece of Mr. Blake – Mrs. F.J. Wilcox of Northfield, Minnesota (taken from an account given by her to *the Phoenix*, a Brattleboro newspaper, in 1894): The baby, Rebecca, was reared by her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. James Blake, in Marlboro, Vermont. James Blake died July 3, 1839 age 77; and Rebecca, his wife, died April 11, 1835, at the age of 74. Both were buried in Branch Cemetery. The baby, Rebecca, grew up and married S. A. DeBroat. The DeBroats lived out their latter years in Cleveland, Ohio. The father, Harrison Gray Blake, survived the tragic ordeal, but apparently his feet were badly crippled for the remainder of his life. Harrison Gray Blake was born November 14, 1778, and died in Cleveland, Ohio, in May 1868. He was buried in the Cleveland West Side Cemetery.

The Blakes had left two children at home on the day of the tragedy, Lucy and Harrison Blake, Jr.. Lucy married Ezra Dean of Marlboro and Harrison Jr. became a lawyer, banker and politician, settling in Medina, Ohio. Harrison Blake, Jr. went on to serve in Congress during the administrations of Presidents Buchanan and Lincoln.



Rebecca Blake
“The Smiling Child”



Harrison Gray Blake
many years after the tragedy

Scrutinizing the Event

The following article concerning the Blake Tragedy and dated February 15, 1939, in The Bennington Banner was written by Ethel Eddy of Stratton. She writes:

“I have always heard Father (Elmer A. Eddy) say that the place where the tragedy occurred was not on the present road as the road at that time did not run as it does now. As I remember, the road at that time ran south of the present road, crossing the present road probably somewhere below or near where the road comes out from Grout Pond, and a little way below running toward the little mountain (Little Stratton Mountain). It is some distance from where the road leaves the present highway (Stratton-Arlington Road) to where the old settlement was, as the site of the old settlement is only about a mile from the Stratton – Jamaica highway (the West Jamaica Road), reached by an old road opposite the cemetery a mile or more below (north of) the Stratton church.

The incident must have occurred not far from the Grout Pond Road as Uncle Joel Grout, who lived on the old farm by the pond, wrote me that he remembered hearing his grandfather (Abel Grout, Sr.) or father (Hudson Grout) tell about it. They heard Mr. Blake calling for help but thought it was a man who habitually got drunk and made a disturbance calling¹. I think I have that letter somewhere and will look for it when I get to the farm.

The baby was taken to the home of my Grandfather or Great Grandfather Grout (it had to be her Great Grandfather, Abel Grout, Jr.). They lived about a mile or a little less up the road I had mentioned above, from the present highway toward the little mountain, and my Great Grandmother (Theodocia [Batchellor] Grout) nursed the baby with hers (probably Pliny Fisk Grout, born July 5, 1820) for, I think, about a week. I’ve heard father and mother both tell of this.

I understood father that he didn’t know the exact spot. He might have meant it was not far south of the spot mentioned in your article.”



**Theodocia Grout
in her latter years**

1) It seems likely that Eber or Jonathan Hill was the man who “habitually got drunk and made a disturbance calling.”

Another account explains that “*At that time, a stretch of road known as ‘the nine-mile wood’ was located between the last inhabitant on the west side of the mountain and Torrey’s Tavern, the first house near the road on the east side.*” However, in 1820 what would later become Torrey’s Tavern was at that time the house of Samuel Boutell, located on the west half of 5L7R, a few rods northeast of the *Grout Pond Access Rd.*’s intersection with the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* and indeed located near the site of the Webster Memorial, but it would have been the second house on the road after the Nine-Mile Wood.

This version also stated: “*The next morning, another gentleman, Mr. Hale and his sons ventured out on the road to find a doctor for his ill wife. On his way, Hale’s sons evidently had heard the shouts of Mr. Blake. Hale told another man, Johnson Richardson, what his boys had heard. Richardson hastened in the direction indicated and found Mr. Blake badly frozen, yet able (by pointing) to make him understand that there were two more further on. Richardson went to get help. Four of the rescue party carried Blake from the mountain, while the others went on and found Mrs. Blake still alive but fatally frozen.*” This account may be accurate, adding to Richardson’s brief explanation in the earlier account. The Hale family lived on 4L8R, along the *Grout Pond Access Rd.* – less than a half-mile south of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* intersection.

William Hawkins wrote a popular version of this tragedy as a high school essay in Wilmington in 1934 and it too was published in the local papers. He obviously embellished the facts to tell a good story; therefore, I have not included his version here. His timeframe of events did not coincide with the above version and his detail of the trek as well as certain events only Lucy Blake could have relayed to another (which could not have happened) make his version even more questionable.

The mystery of the exact location this horrific event occurred still remains. As indicated in Chapter VII, no survey of that road to Sunderland exists, and it was not until a new road was laid out in 1827 that a path was recorded. There was an effort by the Historical Society of Windham County to place a tablet marking the sight of the tragedy; however, this effort was abandoned since the exact sight could not be located. The sight was thought to be just west of the clearing where Daniel Webster addressed about 15,000 people some 19 years later. Evidently, in 1934 there was a wooden sign nailed to a tree marking the supposed site of the tragedy, but in light of the fact that the road was not the same then, the marker was probably incorrect.

The Poem

The story of the story is also remarkable. Seba Smith, who felt compelled to commit the tragedy to verse, was a nationally known poet and political satirist who was editor of the Eastern Argus, a paper out of Portland, Maine. “*A Mother’s Sacrifice*” apparently was published first in 1822. It was among his works that became fairly popular all across the United States and Great Britain. His pen name, Major Jack Downing, was in reference to a satirical character that Mr. Smith had created under which he delved into the politics of the time. Articles by Major Jack Downing were published in many local papers as well as papers across the country.

The poem was published in several school readers in the region – one being the “*Introduction to the National Reader*” published in 1832 at Brattleboro, Vermont. This poem may have been in school readers across the country.

This verse eventually was put to lyrics under the title, “*Stratton Mountain Tragedy*” and it was published in *Vermont Folk Songs & Ballads* by Helen Hartness Flanders and George Brown; Stephen Daye Press 1932. The account written by them states:

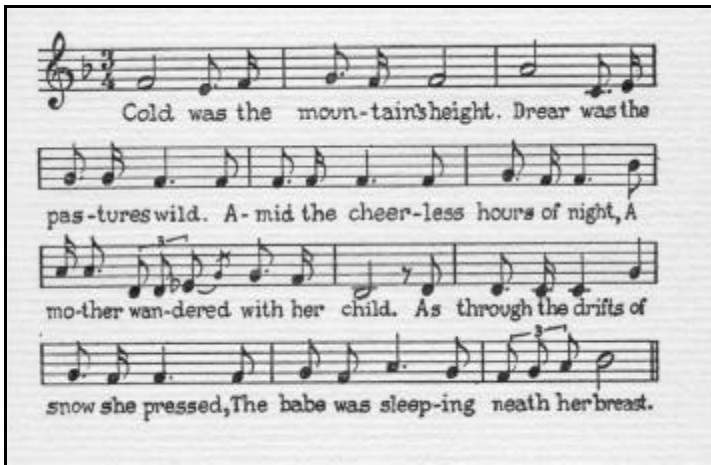
“The melody as sung by Mr. Beers has never been printed. It is much more graphic than another one which Mrs. Fred Field of North Springfield sang. Her tune, though she had never seen the music, resembles one printed by Oliver Ditson Company, copyrighted in 1843, the composer being L. Heath. The author was given as Seba Smith. In Town’s Third Reader, Lesson LIV, appears The Snowstorm of which no author is given. It is worded rather like a traditional version contributed by Mrs. Anna Dole of Danville, Vermont.

Recorded, words in their tune by George Brown, as sung by Mr. E.C. Beers. Full text printed literatim as furnished by Mrs. Beers.

A newspaper article, apparently from *the Vermont Phoenix* written in 1931, states that many years earlier this song was sung in a New Orleans concert hall, after which someone stood up and said that the smiling child – Rebecca – was in the audience. At that time, Rebecca went up to greet the singer. This was stated as hearsay in the article. This event probably occurred in the Medina, Ohio area instead of New Orleans as reported.

Recently, *Stratton Mountain Tragedy* has been recorded and is still performed by a local artist, Margaret MacArthur, of Marlboro, Vermont.

Stratton Mountain Tragedy



Cold swept the mountains high,
Dreary was the pathless wild.
Amid the cheerless hours of night
A mother wandered with her child.
As through the drifts of snow she pressed
The babe was sleeping neath her breast.

Bitter blew the chilly wind.
Darker hours of night came on.
Deeper grew the drifts of snow,
Her limbs were chilled, her strength was gone.
"O God," she cried in accents wild,
"If I must perish, save my child."

She took the mantle from her breast
And bared her bosom to the storm.
As round the child she wrapped the vest,
She smiled to think that it was warm.
One cold kiss, one tear she shed
And sank upon the snowy bed.

A traveler passing by next morn
Saw her neath the snowy veil.
The frost of death was in her eye
Her cheek was hard, cold and pale.
He took the robe from off the child.
The babe looked up and sweetly smiled.

The Mysterious Fate of the Hills

If you have ever hiked the current path of the Long Trail from the *Kelley Stand Rd.*, toward the top of Stratton Mountain, you would have progressed through the site of a 200-year-old farm, probably without realizing it. The path meanders through the forest and into a large stand of birch. There, it finds its way between the stone remains of an old barn and dwelling, just west of the trail's intersection with *Forest Road 341*. At one time, before it had succumbed to the forest, whence it came, this area was open and clear and it resounded with the noise of early Vermont farm life, as did many of the old now-abandoned farms of this town. This place, however, has a somewhat eerie past, for it was once the home of the ill-fated Hill family.

Thomas Hill brought his wife and family to Stratton in 1797 and settled upon this farm, tucked within the shadows of Little Stratton Mountain. There, Thomas died just 10 years later, leaving a widow, Jane, and three sons to continue the task of keeping the farm. In a short while, Jane remarried to a widowed neighbor, Samuel Boutell, and settled into his house. Meanwhile, the Hills' farm was split between Thomas's sons. The oldest, Thomas, Jr., left town before 1810. The second son, Eber, had married Dysa Thomas and they remained on the family farm. Eber's brother, Jonathan and sister, Margaret, also remained on this farm.

In 1814, Eber's wife, Dysa, passed away and she was buried in the Old Town Cemetery – her stone is one of the two that have remained intact there. Their children may have gone to live with relatives, while Eber remained on the farm with Jonathan and Margaret.

In 1820, Jane and her husband, Samuel Boutell, moved from the Boutell farm back into Jane's old home with Eber, Jonathan and Margaret. Upon Samuel's death in 1822, Jane, Eber, Margaret and Jonathan became charges of the town – paupers. In one account from 1826, when the Overseer of the Poor, their neighbor Abel Grout, Jr., made arrangements for their care, Eber, Margaret and Jonathan were said to be noncomposmentis. Alcoholism may have been the culprit, since in an account of the morning of the Blake Tragedy in 1821, the Grouts first ignored the calls for help as they thought it was a neighbor who often got drunk and yelled – possibly one of the Hills.

The Hills remained charges of the town for many years and during that time several individuals attempted to provide care for them in exchange for payment from the town and the deed for the property, but each time someone agreed to this arrangement, they soon backed out.

Enter Dr. Purrington! He came to this town from Heath, Massachusetts, via Winhall in 1834, and was never referred to as a physician in Stratton's records. In October of 1834, he agreed to care for the Hills for the remainder of their lives in exchange for their farm, keeping with the custom of the times. Purrington apparently moved into the farm with the Hills at that time, and he mortgaged the property through the Selectmen for \$1000.00. In April of 1835, at a town meeting, the town agreed to pay Purrington \$25.00, in

addition to the property deed for his continued care for the Hills, but the money was not collectable until the end of the year – the town gave him just \$2.00 in advance.

It was the chain of events that followed that add mystery and suspicion to Dr. Purrington's relationship with the Hill family, for within two weeks of the meeting Eber Hill died on May 1, 1835. Before the year was out, Jane also was dead – the date of her death was December 20th. A month later, Margaret passed away and three months later, Jonathan succumbed. Within the span of less than a year, all four of the Hills had died and Mr. Purrington had retained title to their farm. But, the death of the Hills was not the end of this story, for just two months later, in June, 1836, a fifth death occurred here, when Purrington's own wife, Eunice, passed on.

Purrington remained in Stratton for only a few years. After the death of his wife, he remarried to a local Stratton girl, Minerva Scott, in 1839. There was no mention within the records of the Town of the suspicious nature of the deaths that had occurred here after Mr. Purrington's arrival. Perhaps they were all quite coincidental. No one shall ever really know. By 1840, Mr. Purrington had removed himself from Stratton, leaving his second wife behind and a mystery left to posterity. As for the farm? Well, it too died within a few short years, taking with it the secrets of the passing of the Hills.

1863 – A Year of Tears

The year 1863 AD, the same year President Lincoln declared Thanksgiving to be a National Holiday in America, was, ironically, a year drenched in tragedy for the citizens of Stratton, Vermont. It was a year of death and a year of mourning in this town. Many of Stratton's young men had gone south to defend the Union, leaving behind parents, wives and children – many never to reunite with their families. It was not the battle lines of Virginia that tore hardest at the fabric of these families; instead it was the disease that swept the home front that year. It was diphtheria that came to Stratton in 1863 and it came to kill the children.

In 1862, Stratton, with a population of about 360 people, saw only two deaths caused by diphtheria. George W. Jones, aged 46, died of the disease in January of that year and Hattie Brown died in late October; but with the new year came the devastation of a true epidemic. 1863 saw at least 25 deaths – mostly children – who were choked to death by this terrible disease. Diphtheria did not come alone; instead, its victims must be added to the casualties of the war, to those that succumbed to old-age and to the toll of other terminal illnesses of the mid-19th Century that also visited Stratton that same year. In all, about 39 of Stratton's citizens died in 1863 and the news of the deaths of at least a score of former residents made its way back to Stratton before the year was out. Even today, the cemeteries of this town still bear witness to the tragedy of that time, with the year 1863 carved most often upon the gravestones here.

Strattonians that died in 1863 were:

Local deaths:

Mary J. Allen*
 Mary E. Allen
 Amos E. Allen*
 Stephen Ballard
 Lula B. Copeland*
 Sarah Estabrook*
 Polly Fay
 Stephen Forrester
 Mariette Forrester*
 Charles Grout*
 Eliza Hescocock*
 Otis Hescocock*
 James Hudson*
 Catherine Hudson*
 Frank Hudson*
 Silas Jones
 Walter Jones*
 Pitman Knapp†
 Herman Knight*
 Alantha Lincoln

Jane Lincoln*
 Dwight Mundell*
 Melissa Payne*
 Marilla Payne*
 Frank Perry*
 Mary Pike*
 Eugene Pike*
 Perez Rice
 Ira Scott
 LaFayette Sprague*
 James Sprague*
 Melvin P. Styles
 Mary Styles*
 Martha Willis
 (unnamed) Willis
 Franklin Willis*
 Edmund Alton Willis*

Out of town deaths:

Newell H. Akeley
 Robert Babcock

Albert Blodgett
 Pliny Fisk Grout†
 James Grout†
 Franklin Glazier
 Nahor Howard, Jr.*
 WG Howard
 Mary Johnson
 Cora Johnson
 Frank Knapp
 Carrie Leonard
 Nellie Leonard
 Louisa Pike
 Minnie J. Reid
 Eliab Scott
 Stillman Smith†
 Israel Sprague
 Eunice Wellman
 Dorothy (Estabrook) Wellman
 Amasa Wyman
 Harriet Forrester Wyman

* A victim of Diphtheria

† A casualty of the War

News of the mounting tragedy back home had reached Stratton's soldiers on the war's front lines by the close of summer, 1863. Lyman B. Pike, concerned with this devastating news, wrote to his parents back home:

Camp in the Fields
September 1, 1863

My dear Parents,
A great deal of pleasure that I received a letter from you but I am very sorry to learn that there is so much sickness in Stratton this summer and what can the matter be? Has God in his greatness and wisdom seen fit to afflict the people in the town in order that they may see where they are and turn to him and lead better lives? Oh my dear Parents, let us pray he will stay the hand of the master's wrath and his people in that town may live more to Christ and live more holy in [him].

Lyman

But Lyman failed to return home to Stratton alive! The following year, on July 9, 1864, he caught a rebel bullet at the battle of Monocacy Junction, Maryland. He was brought home to Stratton and buried in Pike Hollow.

Stratton's Diphtheria Epidemic seems to have run its course by the close of 1863. Only three more children, Clarissa Eddy, Martha Wilder and Cora Holden were to die of the disease in 1864. Apparently, no child has died of diphtheria in Stratton since that time.

The Remarkable Deaths of Persis and Louisa Gates

Willis Cemetery seems the ideal resting place – remote and peaceful, yet well cared for by the town. It holds the remains of many of Stratton’s citizens from an early time. As is any old cemetery, it is a story book of tragedy and sadness – a place of tears, telling tales of loved ones taken too soon and the old whose time had at last come – a place of healing for those left behind – a place of honor for those we look up to – a place to reminisce and lastly a reminder of our own mortality. Among the many stories interred in this old cemetery can be found a somewhat amazing account of life and death in this small mountain community. It is the closing chapter of the story of the widow Persis Gates and her daughter, Louisa.

As one enters the old cemetery through the far opening in its surrounding wall, there exists a rather unremarkable looking gravestone nearest the gate; yet, the words inscribed thereon are unique and inspiring:

*Mrs. Persis Gates and Louisa her daughter
died Nov 16, 1868, ages 86 and 56.
Sustained by an unfailing trust in God which
was never disputed, this mother endured pain
and extreme poverty for several years without
complaint for her daughter’s sake. For the story
of her life, though she did not know it, many all
over the land have learned a lesson of faith of
submission and of love to God and man.
According to her frequent prayer, mother and
daughter entered into life together.
Blessed is he who considereth the poor.*

Of course, this is the conclusion of their story! The beginning? Well, it can be found some 56 years earlier at the time of Louisa’s birth.

Persis Newton was born about 1782. Her last name, Newton, apparently was taken from her first marriage. About 1812, when Persis was 30 years old, she gave birth to a daughter, Mary Louisa, a special little girl, who would define her mother’s remaining five-and-a-half decades, for Louisa, as the little girl was called, was mentally disabled.

Children with this sort of disability were not expected to survive long at that time, yet Persis’ persistent loving care allowed her daughter a long life. Persis, twice widowed, previously had married John Wheeler of Stratton and through him she had inherited property in the Southeast corner of the town. On September 23, 1849, Persis married Elias Gates and they settled upon her farm. Their home was located on the south side of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, about half way between *Pike Hollow Rd.* and *Willis Cemetery Rd.*

Although Louisa was 37 at the time her mother and Elias were married, she still required the same special attention that her mother had been providing Louisa all her life.

On May 29, 1865, Elias slipped and fell on the ice and, subsequently, died of his injuries. Persis, already in her 80s, was left with no means of income and a childlike daughter to care for. Mrs. Gates and her daughter soon became charges of the town and remained impoverished for the years that followed. Louisa, now in her mid-50s, was still healthy and could be expected to live for many more years. She was not physically disabled and, therefore, she was able to move about on her own. Persis had taught Louisa always to carry a pail, partially filled with pebbles, whenever she went out-of-doors, because the continuous rattling of the pebbles kept Persis alert to the whereabouts of her mentally disabled daughter.

The old woman deeply loved her daughter and she, of course, was fearful of Louisa's well being after her own death. The story goes that Persis repeatedly prayed that the Lord would allow her to outlive her daughter. Her prayers seemed to go unnoticed as the old woman became more and more feeble over the years, until one day, a shocking yet extraordinary event brought Persis and Louisa's lives to a close.

The story goes that on November 16, 1868, Louisa wandered off to the nearby Willis farm. Her mother, alarmed when she could no longer hear the rattling of the pebbles in the pail, ventured out on her own to find Louisa. The old woman evidently found her daughter lying in a field on the Willis property. Louisa had been attacked and killed by an angry buck sheep. Persis tried to get to her injured daughter, but the angry buck attacked the old woman also.

Later that day, Mr. Willis noticed that one of his buck sheep had returned covered in blood. Anxious to discover what had happened, he headed out to the field where the buck had spent the day. There, he found the bodies of Louisa and Persis. The town's records of their deaths – confirming the story – report that the two women had been killed by a cross buck. As their stone reads, Persis' prayer had been answered. The following verse gives a romanticized account of that event.

An Old Woman's Prayer

God's own hand did guide the beast
outward from the peaceful flock,
no thought of mate – no thought of feast,
a warrior 'mongst the gentle stock.

T' was a pasture reaped of summer hay –
snow-dusted as the winter comes.
A peaceful place it seemed that day,
with an autumn breeze that gently numbs.

A widow's home stood near this ground.
An old woman, tough, yet frail and fair
challenged by a love so bound
for an aged daughter's want of care.

A child? Not so – yet so in mind.
The old widow dwelt upon her plight –
she was a mother sixty years in kind,
who may not last another night.

“Oh Lord, my lord, my God I pray,
though my time is now so very near,
please keep me here another day,
my child alone – that is my fear!”

Hence, it happened by an act of grace,
when one autumn day, her daughter strayed
and wandered to that peaceful place,
far from where she often played.

The beast pranced out across the field.
Majestic ram's horns were his crown.
But, the aged child knew not to yield,
and started after what she'd found.

The older woman heard the scream
and struggled out into the day.
It surely seemed a ghoulisn dream,
as she came to where her daughter lay.

The hand of God then stayed the beast,
instead of dashing to the wood,
instinctive fears showed not the least,
as he turned to where the woman stood.

A farmer heard the second scream
and rushed to see the trouble there,
squinting through the brilliant gleam
of sun and snow and icy air.

Two bodies lay upon that field,
both old and draped in pauper's dress,
one protecting as a shield
o'er child first fallen to distress.

The beast's great prints left in the snow
told the tale to one and all.
T' was obvious to those that know –
the beast had bid the Master's call.

Though hard to grasp, a prayer was made.
An answer came, which first seems cruel.
Two lives that day were soon to fade –
beneath a beast? Nay, God's own tool!

DK Young

The Burglar of Stratton

This is the ordeal of Albert Baybrook, a boy of nineteen, who had grown up on a farm in Stratton and, by his mischievous demeanor, soon found himself spiraling in a whirlwind of trouble.

In the year 1898, it appears that Albert had decided to help himself to a number of valuables and a pocketful of cash kept within the Brown and Ryder Store in West Wardsboro one night. It was reported that \$112.00 of postal money, \$38.00 of the store's money, a gold watch and several silver watches were missing from this establishment. The robbery of the postal money made this a federal crime. Following the robbery, Albert left town – a fugitive.

Some time later, Albert was spotted in Hoosick, New York, but someone had persuaded him to return to Bennington. In Bennington, Albert was arrested and locked up. Meanwhile, a Mr. Willis, the Post Office inspector investigating the case, was summoned to Bennington. There, Willis and other officers retrieved Albert from the jail and escorted him into New York State on the train. During the trip and somewhere near Eagle Bridge, New York, Albert was allowed to go into the train's water closet. That was the last the officers saw of him that day. Albert had opened the window and escaped from the speeding train.

Several days later, back in Stratton, Irving Grout, one of the proprietors of the Grout Job, started up the mountain between Stratton and Arlington to meet his brother who was drawing lumber there. Irving rode his bicycle up the mountain as far as possible, then walked the remainder of the way. Irving met Baybrook coming down the mountain. Albert apparently had stolen a horse in Bennington, rode it up the mountain to Stratton and set it free. He was on foot when he met Mr. Grout.

Later that day, when Grout returned down the mountain, his bicycle was missing. Grout proceeded to Brown and Ryder's store to inform them that Albert was back in town. The storeowners called Constable Benson of Wardsboro. Benson and others met and devised a plan to capture the stealthy thief. They guessed that Albert would be at one of the two lots that his parents farmed in Stratton. As suspected, a report was made confirming that Albert was at his father's farm on the *West Jamaica Rd.*

Benson quickly traveled to the Baybrook farm, where he found Bert Perry, a resident of Stratton, and another man already there. When Baybrook appeared, someone fired a shot and Albert returned a shot. Several more shots were fired. One shot from Baybrook was at such close range that Perry's coat sleeve caught fire. Albert was overpowered and arrested.

Articles published in the Vermont Phoenix in late 1898 dubbed Albert "the Burglar of Stratton," but he was never convicted of that crime. In the end, the postal authorities and the storeowners were easy on the boy. Albert eventually plea-bargained, pleading guilty only to an assault charge. He was sentenced to eight months in the correctional facility, where apparently he did his time. Later, Albert married and settled in New York. He died in 1973.

Notable People of Stratton's Past

Although throughout its existence, Stratton's population has been extremely small in comparison to other American towns, neighborhoods or even individual buildings in most any average-sized city in this country, Stratton has had a handful of celebrated individuals call it home, own some part of it or settle near its borders. Those individuals include:

Lyman Knapp (1837 – 1904) served as the Territorial Governor of Alaska from 1889 to 1893 during the Benjamin Harrison administration. Knapp grew up in Somerset and Stratton and went on to become a hero of the Civil War. He settled in Middlebury, Vermont after the war, where he was editor and publisher of the Middlebury Register and pursued a career in law. He was residing in Middlebury when he was appointed to the governorship of that distant territory. Following his term he settled in Washington State.

For a detailed account of his life and family, see Enos Lyman Kimball Knapp in the Family History Supplement to this book.



Lyman Knapp

*photo courtesy
of William Knapp*

Robert Penn Warren (1905 – 1989) kept a summer home in Stratton during his latter years. Mr. Warren was America's first Poet Laureate (1976 – 1977) and the author of many books, including All the King's Men.

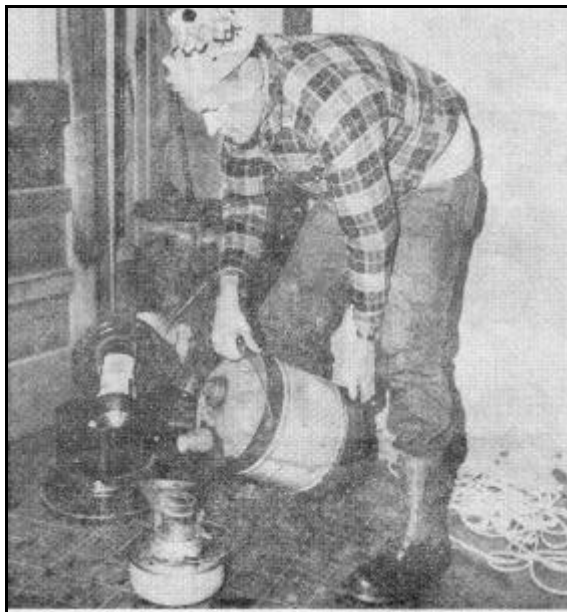
For additional information see Robert Penn Warren in the Family History Supplement to this book.

Eleanor B. Roosevelt once had owned the land now called the Town Forest on Rt. 100 in Stratton. She was Eleanor B. (Alexander) Roosevelt, wife of Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. – grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt. She owned additional lands in Dover and kept a summer home there at Two Tannery Road.

Scott Nearing owned land in Stratton's northeast corner and settled on *Taylor Hill Rd.* in Winhall, a short distance from the Stratton line. Mr. Nearing was a well-known Socialist of the John Reed era. He had been a college professor before moving to this area in the 1930s. Here, he and his wife, Helen, built several stone dwellings, grew their own organic vegetables and went into the sugaring business with the Hurd family (see Floyd Hurd in the Family History Supplement to this book). The Nearings wrote several books, including Living the Good Life. They resettled in Maine before the ski area was developed.

Pearl Buck settled near the northeast corner of Stratton in Winhall on a farm overlooking what is now the Stratton Golf School. She is best known as author of The Good Earth and she was awarded both the Nobel Prize and a Pulitzer Prize. She had visited this area as a guest of the Nearings and decided to build a home nearby. She remained here for several years, but removed from Winhall as the ski area developed. She settled in Danby, Vermont, where she spent her last years.

E. G. Marshall owned the old Henry Eddy Sugarhouse, now seen as 79 *Willis Cemetery Rd.*, in the 1960s, and used it as a camp. Mr. Marshall was a notable actor who starred in the television series, "*The Defenders*," at the time he owned property in Stratton. He had starred in several movies, including "*12 Angry Men*" and the "*Caine Mutiny*." More recently he starred in the television series, "*Chicago Hope*," before his death in 1998.



**EG Marshall at his camp in Stratton
(January 14, 1964)**

Photo from the Town's Archives

Chapter XV

Back to Nature

Stratton of the 20th Century

Throughout its history, Stratton has been a place of inspiration for many of those who have come here. American Patriots, passing the mountain to fight the British at Bennington, were inspired enough to bring their families back to this rugged place and etch out a farm beneath the mountain's summit. Daniel Webster came to Stratton in 1840 to speak on behalf of old Tippecanoe, attracting 15,000 people from all across the region. Later, authors such as Robert Penn Warren and Pearl Buck, as well as activists like Scott and Helen Nearing, all had come to dwell within the shadow of the mountain to find inspiration. But the story of the Stratton we know today was brought on, partially, by the inspirations of those with grander schemes. Stratton was to become a haven for nature lovers through the efforts of men like James P. Taylor, founder of the Long Trail and Benton MacKaye, founder of the Appalachian Trail, while the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort was created here through the inspiration and efforts of men like Tink Smith and Frank Snyder. Additionally, Vermont's own efforts increased tourism and established the "Vermont image" that helped establish a second-home market within this area. Take away any one of those efforts and Stratton would not be as we know it.

The story of the Stratton of the 20th Century best begins with a visit to Stratton by James Paddock Taylor in 1909. That year, while viewing Stratton's summit from a forester's tent on the side of the mountain, a revelation came to Taylor – the idea of building a system of connecting trails across Vermont. Just a few months after this conception, the Long Trail and the Green Mountain Club were formed, the work of cutting trails began and a Vermont legacy was born.

James P. Taylor, an educator, had grown up in Hamilton, New York, attended college at Colgate as well as other noted colleges, and had returned home to teach History and English at Colgate Academy. He later ventured into Vermont and was teaching at Vermont Academy in Bellows Falls at the time of his visit to Stratton and his conception of the Long Trail. During his subsequent campaign to build the trail, Taylor managed to excite many Vermonters and persuade them to take part in his dream – a dream that would preserve the natural beauty of the mountains, while promoting tourism and boosting the lagging economy of this area. Some of those Vermonters were citizens of Stratton.

This story, though, is a story intertwined with a number of historical facets of this town and this state. To understand it, we must look back to the economic misfortunes of the state's industrial and agricultural endeavors, to the state's efforts to promote tourism, to the changing face of the timber

industry and to the railroad that bypassed this town. It is a story of just part of the grander solution that would cure Stratton's woes yet, it is a vital thread that holds this complex fabric of history together – binding the Stratton of old to the Stratton of the present. To follow this story, it seems best to tell it woven within the tale of this town's own hiking club – the Stratton Mountain Club.

Stratton's Early Climbing Enthusiasts

Prior to Taylor's 1909 visit to Stratton Mountain, this town already had several citizens interested in climbing their mountain. This interest may have been indirectly due to Taylor, since one of his former students, Hermon Eddy, a native of Stratton, had developed a taste for the outdoors. As a boy, Hermon had attended Colgate Academy in Hamilton, New York, at the time James Taylor taught there. After a brief stay in Hamilton, Hermon returned to Stratton and became the youngest Representative elected to the Vermont State House in 1902 at the age of 21. About that same time, Hermon, his sister Ethel, and their parents hiked Stratton Mountain for their first time. Seven years later, when Taylor had his revelation upon Stratton Mountain, Mr. Eddy had already become a prominent lawyer living in Brattleboro. His family remained in Stratton, though, and they had maintained an interest in hiking the mountain.

Evidently, the sport of climbing mountains was becoming popular at the time Taylor visited Stratton and hikes to the top of Stratton also were becoming popular, no doubt fueled by Taylor's enthusiasm. To highlight this fact, *the Vermont Phoenix* had published a number of articles around this time, debating who might have been the first woman of European descent to reach the summit of Stratton Mountain (in an assumption that native American women had been there before). Among those submitting an article was Hermon's sister, Ethel Eddy.

The September 17, 1909, issue of *the Vermont Phoenix* carried an article entitled "*Girls Brave Stratton Mountain.*" The article described how four climbers, Lila Pierce, Flora Wilson, and R. H. Chappell of New Haven, Connecticut, and a guide, Cyrus Knapp, left their camp called "The Echoes" in Wardsboro, found their way to Stratton village, left their horses at a nearby farm, then headed toward Stratton's peak. The trail they took showed few signs of having been blazed recently; thus, a greater part of the way had to be broken by Mr. Knapp. The party reached the summit in three hours, and they built a pair of shacks for the night. The next morning, they returned to Stratton village from the summit. The descent had taken only an hour to complete. The article went on to proclaim the two girls as the first "white women" to reach Stratton's summit.

Of course, these girls were not the first "white women" to climb Stratton. And, it was within the next issue of *The Vermont Phoenix*, on September 24th, that an article submitted by Ethel Eddy, rebuked the claim. In fact, the article described several ascents to Stratton's top by local women. Miss Eddy

recalled that in 1901 or 1902, she, her mother Inez Eddy (Mrs. Elmer Albert Eddy), and Ella Eddy (Mrs. Emery Eddy) along with six men, Elmer Albert Eddy, Emery Eddy, Henry Payne, Abel J. Pike, Henry Lackey, and Hermon Elmer Eddy climbed to the peak, beginning at the Edwin Grout farm. Leaving their teams at the farm, the group hiked the three miles to the top, had dinner, enjoyed the scenery, then returned. These women also flattered themselves with thoughts that they were the first “non-native American women” to brave the mountain. That also was wrong, as they found out several years later that one snowless Christmas day, sometime prior to 1884, another group that included a few women made the journey to the top. These women were Mrs. Edwin Grout, her daughter, Carrie, and Mrs. Masena Bald (probably Marena Ball of Stratton). Additionally, a group that included women made the hike in the summer of 1907 and another climbed the mountain in 1908. No doubt others had made the trip, previously.

Trail Building

Within three years of Taylor’s visit to this mountain, Stratton had developed its own hiking club – the Stratton Mountain Club – a club certainly inspired by Mr. Taylor, but one that maintained a separate status from Taylor’s Green Mountain Club (GMC). Separate, true, but the early histories of these clubs paralleled one another.

By the summer of 1911, a zealous campaign by James Taylor had created the Green Mountain Club and the first section of the Long Trail had been opened to hikers. Although Taylor had worked vigorously to promote the formations of localized Green Mountain Club chapters, which were needed to supply the manpower for trail-building, he and his club soon realized that professionals were required to complete the task. This, despite the Green Mountain Club’s financial difficulties, cleared a path for the Vermont State Forestry Department to merge the idea of a fire patrol path with that of the GMC’s recreational trail. The GMC made an agreement with the Forestry Department that this department would supply the labor if the GMC financed the project; hence, the state’s woodsmen, headed by Robert M. Ross, commenced work on the trail in 1913. That summer, the southern portion of the trail was completed from the Massachusetts line to the summit of Stratton, as were other sections further north. The Forestry Department had used old logging roads, which often missed the wonderful scenic views that Taylor had intended to provide upon his trail. Nonetheless, there was a trail – one that inevitably would change over the years to capture those scenic views. By the time the Green Mountain Club had started trail-building in Stratton, the Stratton Mountain Club already had built their own trail to the top of Stratton Mountain.

The Stratton Mountain Club, as an entity separate from the GMC, swelled to a membership of nearly 150 enthusiasts, but this phenomenon never may have occurred had it not been for the marriage of the Green

Mountain Club and the Vermont State Forestry Department. This union evidently sparked the idea of a serious community effort to finance and build a fire tower atop Stratton Mountain – an idea heavily supported by businessmen with financial interests in Stratton’s woodlands and local residents with interests in their own safety. The construction of a fire tower, therefore, was the project that launched the Stratton Mountain Club to become more than just a handful of hikers.

The idea of fire protection did not emerge simply as an afterthought to the trails. Instead, the problem of forest fires had been building since the turn of the century, due to the poor logging practices in place at that time, accompanied by the widespread increase in the logging industry. These conditions led to frequent catastrophic forest fires across the state. In 1903, thousands of acres of Vermont’s forest burned. This catastrophe prompted the creation of a network of town forest fire wardens in 1904. Despite this effort, the problem became worse. In 1908, nearly 16,000 acres burned. This resulted in state legislation in 1910, allowing for fire patrols and state-employed watchmen who were to serve at fire-lookout stations created by private landowners. The first fire station was created at Camel’s Hump in 1911 and the following year, a private landowner built a wooden tower on Burke Mountain in northeastern Vermont. Stratton’s turn was soon to follow.

The Stratton Mountain Club

Until recently, details of the Stratton Mountain Club’s activities had been lost – hidden away among the remaining possessions of Ethel Eddy (1887 – 1969), this club’s president during most, if not all, of its existence. Within an old suitcase passed down through the family, the Stratton Mountain Club’s records, related photos and old scrap books had remained tucked away, with only an occasional viewing by a family member. Their significance was fully realized only a short time ago, allowing the story of this organization to be told.

Ten friends, probably inspired by the attention given to the Long Trail at that time, formed the Stratton Mountain Club on July 27, 1912. Among those friends were Hermon and Ethel Eddy, and their father, Elmer Albert Eddy, William Lyman and his son, Ray Lyman. On August 9, 1912, the Vermont Phoenix’s West Wardsboro column stated, “*An organization of young people is being formed which is named the Stratton Mountain Club. A preliminary meeting has been held. A party of 19 went out Saturday and cut a trail neatly to the top of Stratton Mountain, but were hindered from finishing by a shower. Dinner was served by ladies of the party. They hope to have a log cabin on the summit at some future time.*”

The circumstances behind the creation and subsequent activities of the club were not written down, but an analysis of the events of that time and the people involved allow for some speculation of what went on behind the scenes.

Early in his effort to create the Long Trail, Mr. Taylor contacted a large number of influential community members across the state. At that time, he already was acquainted with Hermon Eddy, a prominent Brattleboro lawyer with many influential ties. Mr. Taylor became an early member of the Stratton Mountain Club, most likely to show support of its role in building and maintaining that area's trails and in hopes of it potentially becoming a section of the Green Mountain Club, a possibility that did not occur. Mr. Eddy, on the other hand, enjoyed hiking, but he also was interested in the business the trail could bring to his native Stratton, a town that had been slowly dying since his boyhood. In bringing about a legitimate organization, it appears that Mr. Eddy took control of the situation. He evidently recruited a large membership for the club from Brattleboro, and he also was instrumental in recruiting those businesses that would benefit most from a fire tower – the companies that owned or leased huge tracts of forest land in Stratton and the surrounding countryside. Hermon worked for Clarke C. Fitts, a native of Wardsboro, who was Vermont's first Attorney General (1904 – 1908) and the owner of a distinguished law firm in Brattleboro. At that time, Mr. Fitts was the president of one of Stratton's large landholding companies, the Deerfield Lumber Corp., which held land in and around the area where the Long Trail would be formed. The third member of Mr. Fitts' law firm trio was Harold Whitney, who also was vice-president of the Deerfield Lumber Corp.. Evidently, the idea of fire protection inspired Mr. Fitts and Mr. Whitney and several gentlemen like them to become members of the new club. In fact, the Stratton Mountain Club had several influential members, including James P. Taylor, himself, and Frank E. Howe who was the editor of the Bennington Banner and served as Vermont's Lieutenant Governor from 1912 – 1915. Howe's link to Stratton and the club probably existed through his son, Paul, who was a student of Taylor's at Vermont Academy.

On occasion, the club was mentioned in the West Wardsboro Column of the Vermont Phoenix. The August 30, 1912 edition mentioned that "*the Stratton Mountain Club met at E. A. Eddy's Saturday Evening*," and the October 11, 1912, edition stated, "*The Stratton Mountain Club climbed the mountain Saturday on a picnic trip*." The club no doubt was mentioned on other occasions by the Vermont Phoenix over the following years.

The first document of this organization known to exist is an account of the club's financial standing, printed in 1914 and entitled "*Stratton Mountain Club In Account with H. E. Eddy*." This document shows contributions from several lumber companies and citizens, who had donated to build Stratton's fire tower. These include donations from the Deerfield Lumber Co., the Somerset Land Co., the New England Hardwood Co., the Deerfield River Co., the Town of Stratton, the Town of Somerset, and several individuals. It also lists expenses paid to R. M. Ross, the Vermont State Forester in charge of building the Long Trail, and various additional expenses paid, such as: the telephone account, purchase of a used stove, and bills for labor.



The Stratton Mountain Club's First Trail Building Crew (1912)

Members here include Hiland Forrester on the left, Leola Forrester center,
William Lyman with the ax and Doris Eddy on the right.

Photo courtesy of the Ethel Eddy Collection

Records of the club's first three years of meetings have not been located (if any existed at all) with the exception of the above mentioned financial statement, an invitation to the dedication of the fire tower, and several photographs. The third year, 1915, briefly was noted within a newspaper article, and the fourth year, 1916, as well as the following years to 1919, were documented within a notebook entitled "*Stratton Mountain Club Records.*" This notebook also contains a final brief entry made in 1922, while another notebook lists most all of the Stratton Mountain Club's members from 1916 to 1919.

By 1914, construction of most of the trails across Stratton were completed. The Green Mountain Club Trail (GMC trail) entered Stratton from Somerset as it progressed up the western side of Somerset Reservoir, along an old timber road. It followed the East Branch of the Deerfield River to a logging operation on the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* known as the Grout Job. The trail then followed the *Stratton-Arlington Rd* for a good distance toward Stratton, passed the *Grout Pond Access Rd.* and then turned left, heading up the road – north toward Little Stratton Mountain on the Forestry Department's Ross Trail [located east of *Forest Road 341*]. It crossed the remnants of the Hill farm and followed a course up and around Little Stratton's summit on the western side, then progressed to the peak, following

much the same course as it does today. The trail then headed down the northwestern slope to another logging operation known as the Dufresne Job, then followed the Timber Road to Manchester. Another trail skirted off down to, and along, the southern edge of Stratton Pond, while another branched off to the lower peak of Stratton, where the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort currently stands. The Stratton Mountain Club had built their own trail in 1912, along a more commonly used path known to the locals. *The Stratton Mountain Club Trail* progressed up the east side of the mountain, starting from the Edwin Grout farm (on 5L4R at the end of what is now *Shepardson Rd.*), and ended at the summit.

Another accomplishment of the Stratton Mountain Club that year was the construction of a cabin about a quarter-mile down from the peak, beside a spring. This structure, referred to as Manicknung Cabin or Porcupine Lodge, was used by the fire-spotters, once the tower was built. The 1920 Long Trail Guide refers to the cabin – “*down the east slope about a half mile [are] a spring and Forester’s cabin, an old cabin now given over to hedgehogs, which may give shelter in an emergency*” – implying that it was no longer in use at the time; however, the guide also stated that “*a phone of the State Forestry Service is installed near the tower.*” Another account by the Long Trail Guide in 1924 described it like this “*... the watchman is housed in Porcupine Lodge about a quarter mile east of the summit, steeply down hill, where there is excellent water. This lodge is built of huge logs, is small, and has but one spare bunk beside that of the watchman.*” The description notes “*a telephone installed at the tower that connects with a farmhouse in the valley on the east side.*” (this was the Forrester farmhouse, which had stood on the same site as *468 Mountain Rd.*). This old cabin has since succumbed to the mountain.

About this same time, construction of the Stratton Mountain Fire Tower began at the summit. This was the first steel fire tower to be erected in Vermont. It was constructed by the Forestry Department, and funded by the club, as evident through three payments made in 1913 to R. M. Ross and recorded in that year’s financial statement. *On October 20, 1913, \$100.00 – paid to R. M. Ross*, another payment of \$50.00 was made on January 16, 1914, and a final payment of \$37.13 was made on June 8. Some of those payments, however, may have been funds paid out for construction of the Ross Trail, in addition to the construction of the tower. Also, additional funds may have been paid out at a later date.

Near the time of the fire tower’s completion, the club gathered at the peak for a dedication ceremony on Thursday, June 25, 1914. Construction had been delayed by weather, and so the tower was not yet complete at that time. A fairly large group turned out for the event, with approximately 250 people present, from ages 13 months to 81 years. Speeches were given by Lieutenant Governor Frank E. Howe, James P. Taylor and Hermon Eddy – all members of the Stratton Mountain Club. They spoke while standing upon the wooden scaffolds used to erect the tower.

In 1915, Miss Ethel Eddy was elected president of the Stratton Mountain Club, which, by then, had accumulated a membership of 106. And, it was Miss Eddy who worked out the details of the club's next major accomplishment, the Daniel Webster Memorial. During the summer of 1915, the Stratton Mountain Club had a commemorative stone placed at the site where Daniel Webster had spoken 75 years before, in 1840 (see details of the 1915 celebration in Chapter VIII). 800 people attended the ceremony and witnessed the unveiling of the memorial.

Following the ceremony and festivities of that day, the evening's agenda was filled with a banquet and the club's annual meeting held at the vestry of the Baptist Church in West Wardsboro. Hermon Eddy presided as toastmaster and spoke appreciatively of the club's work to that time. Additional speeches were given by Mr. Howe and Mr. Taylor, Dr. O. V. Hefflon of Wardsboro, Attorney Clark C. Fitts of Brattleboro and Ray E. Lyman of Stratton. Following the speeches, the club discussed plans for improving the Ross Trail. Elections also were held and Ethel Eddy and Ray Lyman were re-elected president and vice-president, respectively. Following the evening's agenda, Mr. Howe and Mr. Taylor stayed the night at the E. A. Eddy farm (*171 Pike Hollow Rd.*).

Although the dedication of the Webster Memorial marked the highpoint of the Stratton Mountain Club, the following years contained busy agenda's for club members. A record of the club's minutes, beginning in 1916, were among Miss Eddy's belongings and from these records it appears that the club tried to meet about twice a month. They planned trips up the mountain, trail repairs and inspections, and various social gatherings for the town. The majority of activity was centered on the club's annual meeting, which usually occurred during the Old Home Day celebration in August.

Highlights of the club's activities that year, as given in the minutes, were as follows: On August 8, 1916, the club's annual meeting, attended by only 16 members, was held at the Green Mountain House, a hotel in West Wardsboro. The club reported an increase of 38 members over the year, Ethel Eddy was re-elected president, Ray Lyman was elected vice-president and the club voted to hold an Old Home Day at the Stratton Church on August 26th. Later, it was noted that 250 people gathered there that day for a picnic lunch and to hear speeches by Hermon Eddy, Rev. Burt Henry Eddy, Dr. Abel J. Grout, Roy Lyman and Rev. L. Huntley Sprague. Additional events occurred throughout the day and a concert was given in the evening at the West Wardsboro Baptist Church.

An uneventful autumn, 1916, was followed by an unfortunate turn of circumstances for the club that winter. In December, Clarke C. Fitts died of complications from surgery and, in February, Hermon Eddy also passed away. Mr. Eddy had been elected state senator from the Marlboro District of Windham County in the last election and he had gone to attend the opening session of the Senate in mid-February. Upon his arrival in Montpelier, Mr. Eddy became deathly ill with scarlet fever. He remained at the hotel in

Montpelier during his illness and passed away there on February 23rd. The Stratton Mountain Club had lost two of its most influential members in less than a three-month period. At a subsequent Stratton Mountain Club meeting, it was voted to adopt a resolution on Hermon Eddy's death, and ten dollars was given to the church repair fund.

From that point onward, the club's records are extremely mundane. During the summer of 1917, the club offered awards for exhibits presented at the Grange Fair in Wardsboro: "*voted to offer prizes to the boy who has the best exhibit of vegetables grown by himself*" and "*to the girl who has the best exhibit of canned goods.*" The club showed its concern for the war effort that year by voting to take up war relief work and a lecture was given to the club on the work of the Red Cross.

On August 14, 1917, the club held its annual picnic on the site of the original village of Stratton. About 100 people were present and a short address was held by former Lieutenant-Governor Frank E. Howe. Following the picnic, the club held a meeting at the vestry with 25 in attendance. Elections were held and Ethel Eddy was re-elected president. Ray Lyman was re-elected vice-president, and a secretary, treasurer and the trail committee were appointed. The club then "*voted to place a wooden stairway in the tower on Stratton Mountain. The president reported that a sum nearly sufficient to defray the expense of stairway had been raised. The club agreed to pay the remaining expense. The state to furnish a man to build stairway and platform.*" "*The club also voted to have a trail on the east side of the Somerset reservoir surveyed, provided the Bennington section agrees to clear the trail.*" This last statement delineates the relationship that the Stratton Mountain Club had with the Green Mountain Club. The "Bennington Section" of the Green Mountain Club is currently one of 13 chapters of that organization.

On August 13, 1918, the annual meeting was held at Stratton Church and again about 100 members were present. Henry Bond of Brattleboro gave a short address and a basket picnic followed. Later that evening, Ethel Eddy was re-elected president and Ray Lyman was re-elected vice-president. The club voted to give \$10.00 to the Stratton Mountain Tower stairway. They "*also voted to have a committee appointed by executive board to make plans and see that such plans are carried out at once concerning the erection of a suitable stairway in tower.*" Following the vote, "*G. M. Campbell of Baltimore, Maryland, who has been forest ranger on Stratton Mountain this summer was present and spoke interestingly of his work – also mentioning the needs of the cabin, among which were a new floor, a stove, shutters for the windows, and so forth.*"

An article in the West Wardsboro column of the Vermont Phoenix dated July 18, 1919, reported, "*Seventeen members of the Appalachian club who have been taking a walking tour through Windham county, climbed Stratton mountain Tuesday. They were accompanied by Annie Griffith, Burdette Lyman and Ethel Eddy. The party climbed the mountain by way of the Long*

Trail and returned on the Stratton Mountain Club trail. The two new platforms recently built on the tower on top of the mountain made its ascent much less arduous."

On August 27, 1919, the club held a basket picnic at the old church in Stratton with about 80 people present. "*Rev. T. D. Childs of Newfane delivered an interesting address. Walter H. Crockett of Burlington, director of the publicity department gave a talk on the opportunities for developing summer homes in this and Bennington counties.*"

On October 18, 1919, the club held its annual meeting in the vestry of the church with nine members present. Once again, Ethel Eddy and Ray Lyman were re-elected president and vice-president, respectively. "*The committee of Ray Lyman, Jack Alden and Douglas Forrester were appointed to investigate the condition of the cabin on Stratton Mt. and to report at the November meeting.*"

The November meeting was held on November 28, 1919. New members were voted in as usual and refreshments were served. They voted to buy a cord of wood for the church (evidently the West Wardsboro Church) and to have the next meeting on the Tuesday following Christmas.

Following the last entry of November 28, 1919, the next page is dated August 20, 1922. I have no explanation for the absence of two years of meetings. Those records probably were maintained within another book which has since been lost. Evidently, interest in the club was fading by this point and the club, as an organization, was soon to be disbanded. Whatever the cause of its break up, the next entry seems to be the dying breath of the Stratton Mountain Club.

On August 20, 1922, "*The club held a meeting at the vestry of the church at West Wardsboro. There were twenty members present. A letter was read by the sec. from H. E. Whitney, suggesting that the club deed to the Vermont Timberland Owners Association the club's interest in the Stratton Mountain Tower on condition that the Association keep the tower and trails in repair. The club to have the same privileges and uses. The club decided and voted to deed the tower to the Association. It was also decided to hold a basket picnic in Stratton near the Old Stratton Church on (left blank) after which refreshments and a general good time were had by all.*" A note made at the end of the membership notebook dated August 20, 1922, states "*Letter read from HE Whitney telling about the club. Twenty members present. The club decided to continue the meetings through the summer.*" No further entries exist! It appears that the club disbanded at the same time the fire tower was sold.

Apparently, part of the tower had blown down during the winter of 1920/1. The cost of repair or even an acknowledgement of the damage was not reflected in the club's minutes, but this event may have been the deciding factor that caused the club to sell the structure and then disband. It also was inevitable that the tower would have to be taken into the fire protection network being organized across the state at that time. In 1915, the Vermont

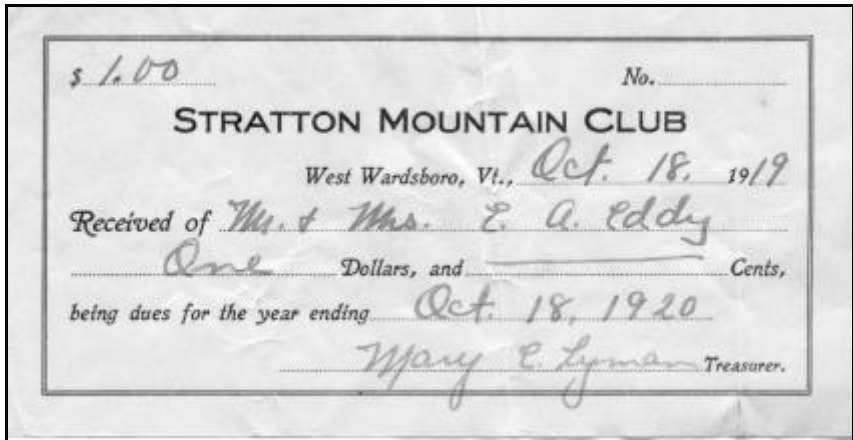
Timberland Owners' Association was formed, primarily for the prevention of forest fires. It raised money by assessing members for payments relative to the acreage in their possession. In cooperation with the Vermont State Forester (and later the Vermont Forest Service), the association developed a fire protection network that included lookout towers, foot and motor patrols, and telephone communications.

Coincidentally, another hiking club known as the Brattleboro Outing Club was started in 1922. Its early existence is even more obscure, but it may have been a reason for the end of the Stratton Mountain Club, as it was something new and something out of Brattleboro, home of many of the Stratton Mountain Club's membership. This club was started by Fred Harris, founder of the Dartmouth Outing Club, who had moved from New Hampshire to Brattleboro. The Brattleboro Outing Club constructed a 40-mile-long trail (partly on roads) from Brattleboro to the top of Stratton Mountain during the early 1920's.

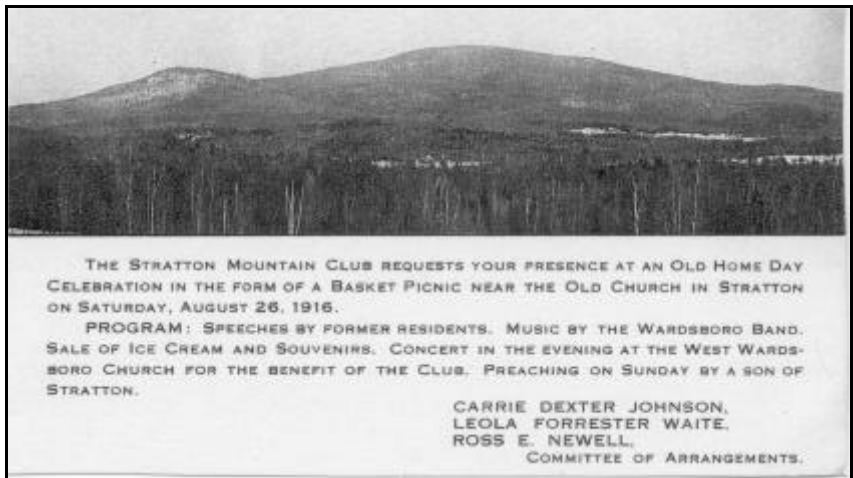
By 1924, the Long Trail Guide stated that "*The State Forestry Department maintains the steel tower erected originally by the Stratton Mountain Club....*"

There are many questions left unanswered about the Stratton Mountain Club. What events caused the club to disband and its trail to be abandoned? How close had this club been to the Green Mountain Club, and why did it not become an integral part of that club? – After all, James Taylor was among its members, it shared in maintaining the Ross Trail, which was, and is, part of the Long Trail, and it tried to coordinate some trail building efforts with the Bennington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Regardless of the reason, the club ceased to exist in 1922.

The trail, the Webster marker and the fire tower are all legacies of the Stratton Mountain Club. Although much has changed since that time, remnants of the club's existence can still be found in the town of Stratton. The Stratton Mountain Club indeed had left a subtle mark upon Stratton's landscape and a brief chapter in its history.




Stratton Mountain Club membership card



Stratton Mountain Club invitation to an Old Home Day Celebration August 26, 1916

The Fire Tower Dedication June 25, 1914

 THE STRATTON MOUNTAIN CLUB will hold dedication services at the completion of the observation and fire-protection tower on Stratton Mountain, on the summit of that mountain, Thursday, June 25, 1914, at two o'clock in the afternoon. Everyone is cordially invited to come and help make this an occasion of great enjoyment.

The speakers are to be Lieut.-Gov. Frank E. Howe of Bennington, James P. Taylor, President of the Green Mountain Club, of Burlington, and H. E. Eddy of Brattleboro. Fred C. Adams of Brattleboro will sing.

A conveyance will be provided at a moderate price to carry visitors from the Green Mountain House at West Wardsboro to the foot of the mountain. People wishing to take advantage of this should write to Ray E. Lyman, West Wardsboro, Vt.

The President and Secretary of the Stratton Mountain Club will be very glad to answer any questions asking for information concerning trails, etc. Address, West Wardsboro, Vt.



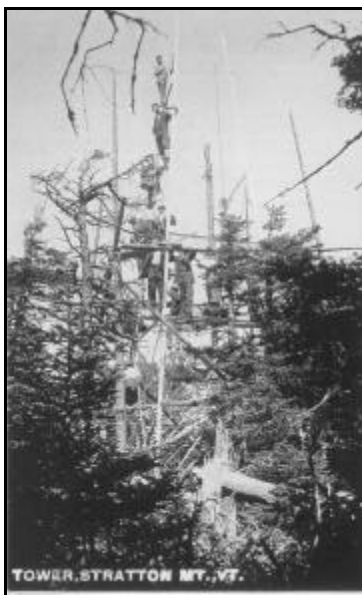
Hermon Eddy addressing the crowd, with James Taylor at his right



Hermon Eddy and James Taylor at left



The Tower under Construction



The Tower under Construction

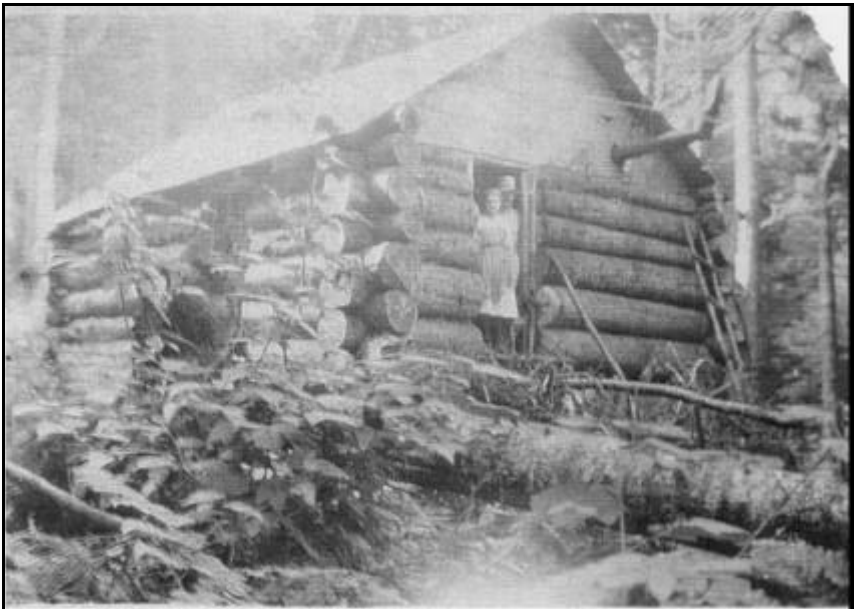


**James Taylor speaking at the
Dedication**

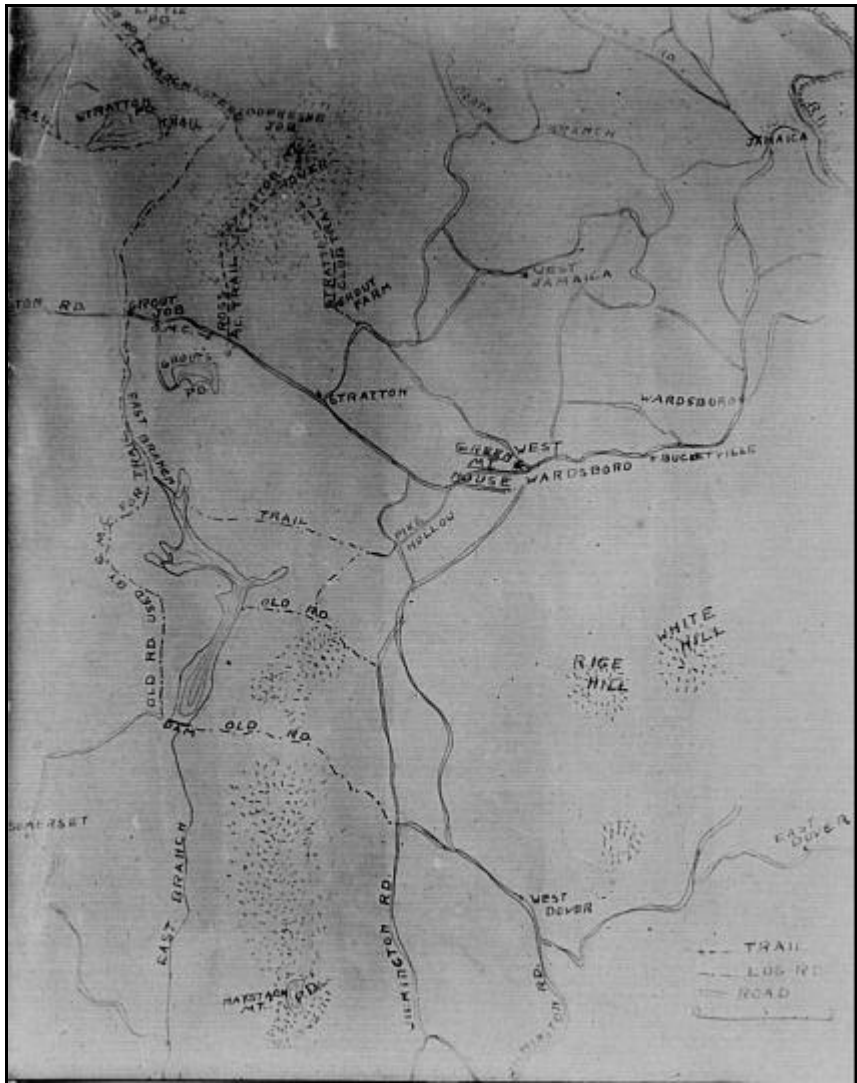


**The Tower
A later photo from 1930**

**Manicknung Cabin
(a.k.a. Porcupine Lodge)
The first Fire-Spotter's Cabin on Stratton**







An Old Trail Map of the General Area including Stratton, Wardsboro, Somerset, Dover, Jamaica and Winhall

Stratton After the Club

In the grand scheme of events that bring this town into the present, the Stratton Mountain Club had played the roll of a medium. It had promoted the idea of recreational hiking trails through the town – trails that continue to outlast the club – an idea that held true with the recreational theme this town currently thrives on. This club also had taken the initiative to help create the vital tools needed to protect the community and its forests, namely a fire tower and the trails necessary for providing routes of access into the forest for the suppression of fires. Although the club has gone, those tools remain and other organizations have moved in to take on the task of maintaining them and using them.

The Fire-Spotters

The fire-spotting season at Stratton begins during the latter half of April and lasts until the beginning of November. Although droughts are always high-risk times for fires, the most dangerous time during any given year is the early spring, once the snow has gone, and prior to the leafing of the trees. Therefore, during the spring and summer months, a fire-spotter was stationed on the mountain. Many people filled that position. Among the early fire-spotters were Elmer H. Eddy, son of the late Hermon Eddy and Rich Holman, Elmer's brother-in-law, both of Stratton. Caroline Parmenter was a fire-spotter on Stratton in 1950 and 1951. Joseph Ruel was a fire-spotter for several years, during the 1950s and 1960's, as was Tony Smith in 1962 and 1963. In latter years, this service was provided by Hugh and Jeanne Joudry from 1968 – 1978, and their successor was Doug Raskin. By 1980, however, the task of fire-spotting was being performed from the air.

Following the Stratton Mountain Club's disbandment, the Vermont Timber Owners' Association and the Vermont State Forestry Department maintained the fire tower and, in 1928, had a second fire-spotter's cabin constructed. This cabin was built approximately 100 feet from the tower. The Association arranged for Leon Stocker of Wardsboro to construct this building for \$150.00. In a letter dated June 19, 1928, Robert M. Ross, Vermont Commissioner of Forestry, approved construction of the camp *“of thoroughly dried, matched Pine boards with two windows, complete with sash, and a door with the necessary hardware. The roof should be so constructed as to withstand a large amount of snow and properly braced to take care of this feature. The roofing material should at least be good three ply roofing paper and a provision should be made for a stove pipe, six inch hole, with the necessary galvanized iron protection around hole. The floor should be double boarded...”* The cabin was constructed that summer – many fire-spotters used it for years to come. This cabin was refurbished in 1951/2, being “modernized” on the interior with a new sink and more cupboards and shelves. A new woodshed and privy also were built at that time. During 1953/4, the telephone system was improved to a two-wire system and a dialing service was put into use. In 1955/6, the cabin roof was covered with

sheet aluminum. The addition for storage was reported in the Forestry Department's 1957/8 biennial report, although the actual addition may have been added several years earlier. Thus, with only a few changes from its original construction in 1928, the little fire-spotter's cabin still stands today, outlasting another log cabin that had been constructed at the summit in 1970.

As for the tower: in the biennial report of 1930-1932, "repairs" were made to the first Stratton Lookout Tower. The next report – 1932-1934 – brought the construction of several "new steel towers with stairs and glass enclosures," including the present tower on Stratton. This construction was again mentioned in the 1934-1936 report, implying that the work was performed during 1934. The tower was erected by the Civilian Conservation Corps. (CCC), which was created in 1933 by the Roosevelt administration. This organization was responsible for "*putting Vermont's state recreational development ahead by 50 years,*" said Perry H. Merrill, the director of the CCC in Vermont. Work performed by the CCC, however, was limited in Stratton since most of Stratton was privately owned at that time. Work accomplished by the CCC included the building of the new 55-ft. Aermotor Tower and installation of a new telephone line from Stratton Mountain to West Wardsboro, presumably to connect a commercial line. This new line ran for four miles down the mountain to the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* and connected into a party-line, shared with the Fort Orange Boy Scouts at Grout Pond and the Town Clerk's office phone.

The old fire tower was brought down in 1936, as stated in the Vermont Forest Service report of 1936-1938 which reads "*Razed old tower. Improved camp – lined interior. Graded area around tower and camp.*" The remains of the old tower can still be seen in the woods not far from the present tower. Some of the remains are twisted or broken. These may be pieces of the tower that fell in the 1920/1 storm. Some of the pieces of the old tower had stenciled thereon "*Robert M. Ross, Deputy State Fire Warden, Jamaica, Vt.*" Ross held that position prior to his appointment in 1917 to Assistant Vermont State Forester; subsequently, he served as Commissioner of Forestry from 1924 to 1928. The stenciling probably was applied to the outermost parts within the bundles, designating the shipping address for the delivery of the tower components. This would have been Wardsboro Station, a railroad station in East Jamaica along the now-abandoned West River Railroad – the closest station to Stratton.

In 1970, another cabin was built atop Stratton, placed between the 1928 cabin and the fire tower. This cabin was a prefabricated log cabin produced by *Green Mountain Cabins* of Chester, Vermont, and it was much larger than the 1928 cabin. It was built during the summer of 1970 from July through September, under the direction of Junior A. Harwood, the supervisor of Vermont Fire District #4. The story goes that the building was purchased from *Green Mountain Cabins*, who guaranteed free delivery to the site "anywhere in Vermont." The contract was signed by all parties before *Green Mountain Cabins* discovered that the site was at the top of Stratton Mountain.

Supposedly, they reluctantly fulfilled their contract and went out of business shortly thereafter. The prefabricated logs were brought to the top of the north summit by tracked vehicle from the base lodge of the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort and then along the ridge to the south summit site. Once the position of fire-watch at Stratton was discontinued, carpenter ants, porcupines and a general assault from Mother Nature quickly deteriorated the new cabin. It was burned intentionally in February 1995 and the debris was removed the following summer.

The Appalachian Trail

Stratton had a part to play in the formation of the Appalachian Trail too. In 1900, Benton MacKaye hiked the mountains between Haystack on Stratton's south side and Mt. Mansfield to the north. He admitted that this trek helped to inspire his idea of a trail along the entire length of the Appalachian Range, and he proclaimed he had a "planetary feeling" while atop Stratton. MacKaye conceived the idea of the Appalachian Trail in 1921, at first referring to the trail as the Appalachian Skyline in an architectural journal published that year. The Vermont portion of the Appalachian Trail was opened by 1930 with the completion of a link between the Long Trail at Sherburne Pass and New Hampshire. The route of the Appalachian Trail coincides with the Long Trail through southern Vermont and over Stratton Mountain.

The Green Mountain National Forest and the Continuing Tale of the Trails

Another significant occurrence in the history of Stratton Mountain was the establishment of the Green Mountain National Forest in 1933. Stratton fell well within its potential boundary. An interesting note concerning the idea of a national reserve in this area can be found oddly enough in the annals of history on the other side of the continent, in Anacortes, Washington. A resident of Anacortes, Velasco Knapp, grew up in this area. He was born in the Great Meadows area of Somerset, now covered by the waters of the reservoir. He spent his early years in Stratton. Following the Civil War, Velasco went west and settled in Washington State. In his latter years, he returned to the east and accepted guard duty on the Capitol police force in Washington, D.C., returning to Anacortes in 1923. During the time he spent in the Capital and in the years following, Mr. Knapp claimed that he used his influence to have the site of his boyhood home made into a National Park. He pointed out that while there were eighteen National Parks west of the Mississippi, there was only one in the east. *"The former site of Somerset has been flooded, while the population of Stratton has dwindled from 580 (should be 360) to 37. The surrounding country is in every way suitable for a National Park, which would be a great boon to people living in Vermont and adjacent states. I have succeeded in interesting Representative Gibson in this matter to such an extent that he says he is going to see the project through."* Velasco did not live to see the creation of the Green Mountain

National Forest – he died in 1930. Although it is not the same as a National Park, the National Forest fulfills the idea of setting aside this area for nature’s sake.

The creation of the National Forest set in motion the systematic purchase of land within the Green Mountains. The International Paper Company, however, continued to own most of the eligible lands within Stratton for yet another 50 years, and their property included the routes of the trails through Stratton. Additionally, private ownership affected the trail system around Stratton in many instances. In 1940, the trail over Stratton Mountain was rerouted westward off the mountain to follow the East Branch of the Deerfield River. A trail remained to the top, but it was known as “the alternate route.” The main route was relocated westward again in 1970 and the intermediate Deerfield River route was abandoned. That year, the USDA Forest Service purchased the corridor through which the new route was located to protect the trail from further dislocation.

In 1979, the Green Mountain National Forest greatly increased their holdings within Stratton with the purchase of the Fort Orange Council Boy Scout Camp that surrounded Grout Pond. Currently, Grout Pond provides campsites, a small recreational area and a large number of nature trails for hikers and cross-country skiers.

The Nature Conservancy purchased the lands around the south summit of Stratton from the International Paper Company in 1985, and they were added to the National Forest lands. Since that time, trails, trail facilities and shelters, such as those at Stratton Pond, are maintained by a joint effort of the Green Mountain Club (GMC) and the U. S. Forest Service. In the summer of 1989, these organizations held a dedication of the Long Trail, which was relocated back to the top of Stratton Mountain in 1987. Soon after that time, Hugh and Jeanne Joudry returned to Stratton Mountain to work, not as fire-spotters, but rather as GMC Summit Caretakers. They continue to reside atop the mountain, within the 1928 cabin during the summer months. Additional GMC Caretakers stay at Grout Pond and Stratton Pond.

In more recent years, the National Forest has acquired several additional tracts of land, including properties previously owned by Melbourne Bills. Currently, the National Forest owns nearly seventy percent of Stratton.

Conclusion

Within less than two centuries, much of Stratton has come full circle – from primeval forest to new forest – interrupted briefly by the failed attempts of an agrarian society – sparsely spread across the mountain. Certainly, most of their accomplishments did not last, now swallowed by the forest and lost within the shadow of the mountain. Those that have chosen to live here now do so for different reasons, but to remain here they all must enjoy nature in all her phases, and they must tolerate her inconveniences. In many subtle ways the current residents are like those first settlers who came to Stratton to tame it, but they should stand fast in the knowledge that it is best left untamed.



The 1914 Fire Tower



The Two Towers circa 1935



**1928 Fire-Spotter's Cabin
resident Marge Holman**



**Stratton's 1934 Fire Tower
in more recent year**

Section III

Land and Property

Chapter XVI

The Geography of Stratton



A distant view of Stratton Mountain from the south

The township of Stratton is situated in the northwest corner of Windham County along the spine of the Green Mountains. It is dominated by the dual summits of Manicknung – Stratton Mountain – a principle, yet isolated member of the Green Mountain Range and the highest point in the southern third of Vermont. The southern summit rises to 3,936 feet above sea level. A saddle descends to 3,830 feet, while the mountain rises again on the north side to 3,875 feet. Stratton Mountain contains a large quartzite vein that extends across the mountain in an east-west direction, somewhat perpendicular to most of the layered bedrock formations of the Green Mountains.

Manicknung is located mostly within the northeast quadrant of town – a rise of land that defines the remainder of the township. The ridge on the mountain's east side, known as the tongue of the mountain, extends eastward into Jamaica, dividing the east half of town – north and south. Here, the terrain extends downward into valleys and hills. The west side of the mountain is dominated by a rough-hewn plateau of approximately 2,500 feet in elevation. Upon this plateau there are three large ponds: Stratton, Branch and Bourn. The East Branch of the Deerfield River also begins in this area and flows southwards.

Little Stratton Mountain, sometimes referred to as Pyramid Mountain, stands at a height of 3,460 feet above sea level on Manicknug's southwest side. South of Little Stratton lies Grout Pond and beyond that is Somerset Reservoir – fed by the East Branch of the Deerfield River; while Dover Mountain – previously called Mount Two Brothers – rises in the Somerset Annex along the border with Dover.

Stratton's rugged topography has created a divide that directs the many brooks and streams that spring forth from these mountains in four different directions that ultimately feed two separate watersheds.

The sources of the Deerfield River – the Main Branch (seen in 1796 as Moose Brook) as well as the East Branch – flow down out of Stratton on the southwestern side of Stratton Mountain. The East Branch is joined by Black Brook, as it progresses toward the northwestern end of Somerset Reservoir – the first of several large bodies of water along the Deerfield Valley as it progresses southward into Massachusetts. Meadow Brook and the runoff of Grout Pond feed the northeast end of the reservoir.

The Winhall River flows northeasterly across the northwest corner of Stratton, delineating the eastern boundary of the Lye Brook Wilderness Area.

On the east side of the mountain, the headwaters of Wardsboro Brook exist northwest of *Old Forrester Rd* and flow in a southeasterly direction. Pike Hollow Brook flows down from Dover Mountain and joins Wardsboro Brook along the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, just east of the Wardsboro line, as this stream progresses toward the West River in East Jamaica.

The headwaters of Ball Mountain Brook flow down the mountain from the center of the township, taking a southeastern path nearly parallel with the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* for about three miles before the brook turns to the northeast, just passed the *West Jamaica Rd.* intersection. This brook, paralleled by the *West Jamaica Rd.*, continues northeasterly into West Jamaica, where it joins with the West River, near Ball Mountain. Additionally, Ball Brook (Chicken Brook) joins Ball Mountain Brook south of Ball Cemetery. The North Branch of Ball Mountain Brook progresses southwesterly from Winhall across Stratton's northeast corner. Styles Brook and Kidder Brook join with the North Branch in Jamaica before it, in turn, joins with the main flow of Ball Mountain Brook.

Stratton Pond

Stratton Pond is located in the northwestern corner of Stratton, with a water level just over 2,500 feet above sea level. At the end of the 20th Century, it is surrounded by National Forest, with the exception of two private lots. At an early time, this pond was referred to as "Jones Pond" or "North Pond." Later, it took the name of "Stratton Pond" – a name previously given to what is now Grout Pond. Stratton Pond, no doubt will remain its name for the foreseeable future.



Stratton Pond circa 1900

Grout Pond

First known as “Dr. Harvey’s Pond” and referenced as such in a deed in 1788, it then became known as “Holman Pond” as noted on a map made in 1810 – named for John Holman who had settled nearby. Captain Ephraim Carter cleared up a farm near the pond, which was later occupied by Hudson Grout. Thus, for a time it was known as “Carter Pond” – so noted in 1856 on McClellan’s Map of Windham County. Beers’ Atlas of 1869, labeled the pond “Grout Pond,” although Hudson Grout no longer lived there at that time (see Appendix A). By 1880, the townspeople apparently referred to the pond as “Stratton Pond,” as indicated by Lyman Knapp in his History of Stratton for Hemmenway’s Gazetteer of Windham County. However, the popularity of Beers’ Atlas apparently was responsible for the fact that the name reverted to “Grout Pond” – a name this body of water, no doubt, will retain for many years to come.



**Hudson Grout
Grout Pond’s namesake**

Photo courtesy of
Frances Grout Brown



Grout Pond



A crew on its way to stock Stratton Pond with trout

Bourn Pond

This pond exists on Stratton's border with Sunderland, in the northwest quadrant of town and within the Lye Brook Wilderness of the Green Mountain National Forest. At an early time, Bourn Pond was referred to as "Musk Rat Pond" as noted on Beers' Atlas of 1869. It may have taken its current name from the Bourn family of Stratton, but no documentation supports this theory. It also is likely that the Bourns for whom Bourn Pond was named resided in Sunderland.

The Pothole

In a depression of the high ridge in the south part of Stratton along Rt. 100 – Dover Mountain – on an acre lot, as detailed by Lyman Knapp in his History of Stratton for Hemmenway's Gazetteer of Windham County, "*exists a large pothole far up on the side of a ledge of solid gneiss, 2,235 feet above sea level. It is peculiar in form and of noted interest. Mr. H. P. Goodall, who visited this site with Charles H. Hitchcock, a member of the geological surveying party, described it as, "10 feet 8 inches deep and 2¹/₂ feet in diameter. Immediately behind the hole, the rock rises 20 feet; some 30 rods further back is an elevation of 200 feet more. The form of the hole is screw-like, the thread making three complete turns before reaching the bottom, which is shaped like a caldron kettle."* The stream that flowed over this spot and created this phenomenon apparently flowed north. The rock is Green Mountain gneiss, dipping 35° East. It is solid without seam or crack and it will hold water like a stone jar. The hole is nearly perpendicular, though it commences at the top from a steep declivity."



Ernest Pike in the "Pothole"

Chapter XVII

Ranges, Lots, Gores and More

This chapter is a study of the old farms that grew out of the first divisions of property within Stratton and its annexes. This study was accomplished by summarizing all property transfers recorded in Stratton before the mid-1850s (the Proprietors' Book and the first five books of land records) with an attempt to group each transfer within its appropriate Lot / Range or other divisional designation. This method brought the study close to the approximate date that the first map of Stratton was drawn, showing the locations of various farms and their owners – namely, *McClellan's Map of 1856*. This map was created after Stratton's infrastructure had become somewhat stabilized. Another map, similar to the first, was *Beers' Atlas of 1869*. References to these maps occur frequently within this work, while copies of these maps can be found in Appendix A. This study also traced a few parcels beyond that time in an attempt to show the continuity of ownership of structures or any remains that have survived since that time.



A distant view of old farms north of the Stratton Meetinghouse possibly the Edward Ball farm or Hescock farm (lower) and the Edwin Grout farm (upper).

The Somerset Annex study was accomplished by reviewing Somerset's land records, currently maintained at the Courthouse in Newfane. The study of the Somerset Annex was not as thorough as that for Stratton Proper, but it provided the information needed to reconstruct the history of the Pike Hollow and *Rt. 100* areas before annexation occurred in 1858.

Stratton's proprietors had divided the town into Lots and Ranges – called the First Division – creating a grid of approximately 200-acre – half-mile by half-mile – parcels for about two-thirds of the lands within the township of

Stratton. This grid is the keystone to the succession of property ownership within Stratton Proper. A later division created 40-acre parcels on the western side of the township, probably to compensate for the first three ranges that were found to be only 160 acres in size. Also, Stratton Gore was divided into approximately 100-acre parcels as was the southern portion of the wildlands, while the West Gore was split into just four large lots. The Somerset Annex reflects a different system of division for its lands, complicated by the transfer of jurisdiction from Somerset to Stratton and by the subsequent disincorporation of Somerset in 1937.

Thus, it would seem more appropriate to delineate these farms by the parcels from which each had developed. Much of Stratton remained undeveloped; hence, parcels that did not produce active farms or businesses are summarized only briefly. This section is best understood while referencing the Lot / Range Grid – provided with this book. This study begins appropriately within the southeast corner of Stratton Proper in the First Lot in the First Range (1L1R).



A view of Stratton Mountain from the hill south of *Old Forrester Rd.*

1L1R

This 160-acre lot was designated as an original right of Augustus Clapp, named upon Stratton's Charter. 1L1R encompasses the area surrounding the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* as it leads eastward into Wardsboro and it extends west, almost to *Willis Cemetery Rd.* 1L1R also includes *Jennifer Dr.* and *Kerry Ann Ln.* in Snow Mountain Farms West. 1L1R's southern border approximately crosses the north end of *Pike Hollow Rd.*, just south of its intersection with the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* The Liller house-lot and the camp at *15 Pike Hollow Rd.* fall just within this lot.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold 1L1R to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot changed hands several times before its first settlers put roots down upon it. Elias Woodcock purchased the western half of this lot in 1795 and built a homestead. The Woodcock farmhouse apparently was located on the south side of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, about a quarter-mile east of *Willis Cemetery Rd.* The old cellar hole still can be found in the woods there. In 1804, Woodcock sold to Hezekiah Fay, who sold to John Wheeler in 1806. Wheeler lost his farm in 1811, but he paid his debts and regained his land. Meanwhile, he had resettled in Chesterfield, New Hampshire. In 1820, Wheeler acquired all of 1L1R. He then sold the eastern half to Moses Day and leased the western half to Day for three years. Day probably settled on the western half for a time, but resold the eastern half back to Wheeler in 1821. It is uncertain who may have rented and resided on this farm for the next several years. In the 1830s, Wheeler resettled in Stratton, apparently back in his original farmhouse or perhaps in a newer house located close to the road (see Mrs. Gates on Beers' Atlas of 1869). John died in the late 1840s and his second wife, Persis, kept the farm. She remarried to Elias Gates and they lived in a house near the road, with Persis' daughter, Louisa, for the remainder of their lives. Elias died in 1865 and Persis and Louisa were killed by a ram in 1868. After that time, this farm fell into ruin and has since disappeared.

Meanwhile, in April 1846, Wheeler sold 46 acres of the western half of 1L1R, located north of the road. The following month, this parcel was purchased by Jonathan Babcock, who apparently built a house upon this site at that time. This house (*356 Stratton-Arlington Rd.*) still exists on the north side of the *Stratton-Arlington Road* – about a quarter-mile east of *Willis Cemetery Rd.* It remained in the Babcock family until Jonathan's death in 1905. During Jonathan's latter years, the family of his third wife, Julia (Maynard) Underwood, occupied this house. John Underwood, Julia's son, was head of this household in 1900, and probably remained there for several years, following Jonathan's death. John and Anna Denker resided in this house after 1920 and into the 1930s. After that time, the Houghton family resided there. Additionally, Schoolhouse #5 existed upon this lot until about 1851.

In 1834, John Wheeler had sold the far eastern half of the east half – 50 acres – to Samuel Rider. Rider had already settled on this lot and probably built the original structure there – called a log house. William Howe briefly owned the lot, then sold it in 1835 to Isaac N. Pike, who settled on this site. In 1841, Pike sold off 30 acres north of the brook to Calvin Taylor, who sold to Ezra Willis in 1850. Willis then settled on this lot. His dwelling was probably upon the same site where the Whitney house stands today – 264 *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* Pike reacquired this lot in 1853. By 1856, Thomas Briggs lived on this site, and then Harvey and Caroline (Babcock) Stiles had settled there by 1869. Following Harvey's death in 1878, Caroline Stiles remained on this farm until her death in 1915. Eventually, Ralph and Rose Pike acquired this farm. It has remained in their family to the present. Arne and Dorothy Lauren rented this house for several years. Its current owner is Charles Whitney, Jr., a grandson of Ralph and Rose Pike.

Ephraim Wheeler, John Wheeler's brother, apparently came to Stratton before 1840. Following John's death, Ephraim evidently inherited the west half of the east half of 1L1R. In 1848, Ephraim lost this land to Daniel Harris, a merchant of West Wardsboro. Harris built a home and settled on this lot during the 1860s. The house was located on the southwest corner of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd. – Pike Hollow Rd.* intersection (see D. Harris on Beers' Atlas). Later, Gene and Hattie Thomas resided on this same site. The original structure burned and the Banks family built the current structure, 277 *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, on this site in 1961.



The Babcock house on 1L1R

Photo courtesy of Arlene Huesman



The Ralph Pike house – 264 Stratton-Arlington Rd.



Photos courtesy of Charles Whitney, Jr.



The Pike farm circa 1923

Photo courtesy of Charles Whitney, Jr.

1L2R

This 160-acre lot was designated as an original right of Joseph Brown, named upon Stratton's Charter. The *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* enters this lot midway along its eastern boundary, about a quarter-mile east of *Willis Cemetery Rd.* and progresses through and exits about an eighth-of-a-mile east of the lot's northwest corner. Landmarks within this lot include Eddy Cemetery, about half of the north-south section of *Willis Cemetery Rd.*, all but the north end of *Knowlton Farm Rd.* and all of *Bills Rd.*. Wardsboro Brook also flows across this lot.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold 1L2R to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780. It appears that no one settled on this lot for many years.

The East Half: Nathaniel Moulton owned the east half of 1L2R by 1808, but he apparently continued to reside in Stratton Gore at that time. Moulton mortgaged the lot in 1808 through John Sanderson and eventually sold it to Sanderson. In the summer of 1817, Phineas Ward Eddy brought his family to Stratton and settled on the east half of 1L2R, where he cleared a farm and built a sawmill. The site of their home was located on what is now the southwest corner of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* and *Willis Cemetery Rd.* intersection, now seen as *399 Stratton-Arlington Rd.*. The remains of the mill dam can be seen just a few yards up the brook from the road, and the old millpond is still obvious beyond the dam. The original house burned to the

ground one winter night with the snow six feet deep. Phineas began at once and rebuilt. Mr. Eddy paid taxes on part of 1L2R in 1829 and in 1832, he purchased the lot at a tax-sale. In 1837, Justus Eddy, Phineas's son, purchased this same lot from the original owners, the Sandersons, although apparently they no longer legally owned it. On August 20, 1844, Justus deeded the land to his father (83 acres of the east half of 1L2R). Justus had resettled at Warwick, Massachusetts before the sale. Lois, who died in 1836, was the first to be buried in the family plot now known as Eddy Cemetery. Phineas Ward Eddy lived on this property through 1860.

By 1869, the east half of 1L2R was owned by the Allen family. Ormando Adams Allen lived there in 1869. Ebenezer Allen, Jr., Ormando's brother, also owned it. Ebenezer may have lived there for a time. After his death, the property went to Ebenezer's son, Elmer, who sold it to his brother, Orville. Orville Allen settled into the house and apparently resided there until 1904. After that time, Fred Wheeler purchased this lot. Fred ran a fern collection business in Stratton from this house. He and his family lived on this lot for many years – the house often still is referred to as the Wheeler place. Currently, the house and parcel are owned by Gloria Moore. Her husband, Roland "Lany," refurbished much of the house and added a front porch to the old structure.



**The Phineas Ward Eddy place – now 399 Stratton-Arlington Rd.
circa 1999**

The West Half: This portion of 1L2R also remained unsettled for many years. Nevinson Grant, an early resident of the town, had moved from town, but returned to Stratton in 1812 and purchased the northwest quarter of 1L2R

at a tax-sale that year. He evidently settled upon this lot at that time. The house apparently was located near the *Bills Rd.* intersection. The Grants remained in Stratton through 1817, but they had moved away by 1820. Nevinson's half-brother, William G. Pike, purchased this property at that time and may have rented it out. By the mid-1840s, Jonas H. Smith apparently resided on this lot. His son, George W. Smith, purchased it from Pike in 1853. Jonas died in 1868 and the following year, William P. Buck began living there. The Bucks left Stratton about 1880. It appears that Wesley Allen resided on this site at the turn of the century. Wesley's wife, Josephine, passed away in 1910. Wesley settled in Wardsboro after that time and the house probably was abandoned. In the 1930s, Lawrence Denker built a home in this vicinity. Currently, *440 Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, exists near this site.

The southwest corner of 1L2R apparently went unsettled for many years. Daniel H. Grant, Nevinson Grant's nephew, probably was the first to settle there after buying and mortgaging this lot from Perez Rice in 1829. Grant probably lived there until 1831, when he sold to Halloway Hartwell. Hartwell immediately sold to Roxanna Pike, who apparently settled there until it was sold in 1833. McClellan's Map of 1856 does not show a dwelling on this site.



**Lawrence Denker's house
on the site of what is now *440 Stratton-Arlington Rd.***

photo courtesy of Milt Denker

1L3R

This 160-acre lot was designated as an original right of Seth Babbit, named upon Stratton's Charter. Currently, nearly all of 1L3R is part of the Green Mountain National Forest. The very southern end of *Old Forrester Rd.* extends into this lot.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. It appears that this lot remained unoccupied until just after the beginning of the 19th Century. In 1802, George Oliver purchased the west half of 1L3R. This lot was associated closely with the east half of 1L4R. A large farm complex was built near the line between these two lots. George Oliver sold the southern half of this lot to his brother, Caleb Oliver, that same year. Caleb apparently settled thereon, but he removed from town in 1804 and sold this land back to his brother. In 1805, George sold the west half of 1L3R to the Newhall family. Then, in 1806, it was sold to David Young. David's son, Reuben, apparently settled there before purchasing it from his father in 1808. He probably lived in a dwelling located beyond the end of *Old Forrester Rd.*, where a large foundation and stonework of a large farm complex still exist. In 1813, Moses Forrester purchased this lot and settled there. Over the years that followed, Moses purchased several adjacent tracts of land, including the east half of 1L3R.



The Forrester Farm beyond the south end of *Old Forrester Rd.*

Photo courtesy of the Forrester family

Moses deeded this farm to his son, Roderick Forrester in 1849, provided Roderick would care for his parents for the remainder of their lives. Roderick remained on this farm until his death in 1889. His son, Hiland, inherited the farm and resided there until 1901. At that time, the Forresters sold their farm to Lucien Read, who lived at what is now the end of *Old Forrester Rd.* (see 2L3R). After that time, the old farm apparently was abandoned, fell into disrepair and succumbed to the elements.

1L4R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Caleb Blodgett, named upon Stratton's Charter. Located directly south of the current Town Hall by more than a half-mile, this lot is now part of the Green Mountain National Forest.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. Timothy Morsman purchased this lot in 1782. The east half was sold to Oliver Morsman, while the west half went to Edmund Gibbs, who lived south of this lot in Stratton Gore. It appears that the east half of 1L4R was associated with 1L3R, while the main farm was built on the line between these two lots (see 1L3R).

The west half of 1L4R remained unoccupied until Gibbs sold it to Hasey Sprague in 1796. Sprague built a house there at that time, evidently on the south part of this land. The Spragues resided there until 1802. In 1800, a road was built across this lot as it extended from Gibbs' house in Stratton Gore to the new Town Common. In 1802, Sprague sold to the Newhall family. William Newhall probably lived there during that year; however, in November 1802, William's son, Joshua, sold this lot to George Oliver. Mr. Oliver apparently settled upon this farm at that time. Oliver subdivided this half further and sold off the north part to Calvin Oliver, a relative. Calvin settled on this new parcel, then sold it to Richard Harris in 1807. Harris apparently settled on this same site, then purchased George Oliver's farm on the remaining southwest corner of 1L4R in 1809. Harris evidently moved into this farm when the Olivers moved out of Stratton around the beginning of 1811. At that same time, Harris sold his home on the upper part of the lot to David Cummings, who settled there. By 1814, Moses Forrester had purchased all of 1L4R and the farms thereon were soon abandoned.

1L5R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Joel Hunt, named upon Stratton's Charter. Its northeast corner is located about a mile southwest of the current Town Hall, while its southwest corner falls very near Somerset Reservoir. This lot is now part of the Green Mountain National Forest.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. Thayer sold this lot to Jacob Stevens of Ward, Massachusetts. Jacob apparently did not settle in Stratton; however, Israel Stevens, whom I believe was Jacob's son, apparently built a log house on the west half of this lot and settled there in the mid-1780s. Stevens was no longer a resident of Stratton in 1791. This parcel was subdivided out and resold through tax-sales by the town, but it appears no one else built or resided upon this lot after that time.

1L6R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of John Smith, named upon Stratton's Charter. This lot surrounds the northern extent of Somerset Reservoir, south of Grout Pond. It is now property of the Green Mountain National Forest and USGen, owner of Somerset Reservoir.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. Although, the lot exchanged hands many times over the years, it appears that no one resided here at any time in Stratton's history.

1L7R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Joseph Hill, named upon Stratton's Charter. This lot lies directly south of Grout Pond and it is now property of the Green Mountain National Forest and USGen, owner of Somerset Reservoir.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. Stratton's first road into Somerset crossed 1L7R's western edge. James Knox may have settled on this lot about 1785. John Ramor purchased the northeast quarter of this lot in 1790 and apparently settled there – possibly in the same house Knox had occupied. Ramor sold his home in 1814 and left town. Other families apparently occupied this homestead before and after the Ramors, including the family of John W. Kelley, who lived there in 1847. Carlos Knapp may have lived there from about 1852, until he moved from town in 1856.

1L8R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Caleb Strong, named upon Stratton's Charter. The East Branch of the Deerfield River crosses its eastern half. This lot is now property of the Green Mountain National Forest and USGen – owner of Somerset Reservoir.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot apparently was not settled until Lucius Smith established a Chair Shop and Sawmill in the last years of the 1860s. Later, this lot was purchased by the Tudors, who bought 1700 acres in this area and operated the

Upper Tudor Mill on this site until 1902. The remains of the mill site and homestead now are covered by Somerset Reservoir.

1L9R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of William Lyman, named upon Stratton's Charter. It is now property of the Green Mountain National Forest.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. 1L9R apparently was never settled.

2L1R

This 160-acre lot was designated as an original right of Jonathan Basscomb, named upon Stratton's Charter. It lies on the Wardsboro border between *Canedy Rd.* and the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* and it includes most of *Leon Stocker Dr.* in Snow Mountain Farms West.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. While the west half of this lot was never occupied, a farm was built on the eastern half by Stephen Thayer, who had purchased 50 acres in the northeast corner of this lot in 1788. Thayer apparently settled on this lot at that time. Eventually, he acquired all of 2L1R. In 1796, the *South Rd.* was built by the town, beginning at the Wardsboro line on this lot and near Thayer's dwelling. The Thayers remained on this farm until 1798. After that time, Thayer sold to Asahel Kimball of Newfane. Kimball did not live in Stratton and so this farm was either rented out or it remained vacant until 1803. That year, Thomas Rand purchased the farm and settled there. In 1805, Thomas' brother, Richard purchased the lot and apparently settled there for a year or so. Between 1807 and 1810, Zephaniah Davis owned it and resided on the farm there. Amasa Bixby purchased the east half of 2L1R and resided there until 1816. That year, David Holmes and Sanford Holmes of Woodstock, Connecticut purchased this lot. Sanford settled there, remaining until about 1822. In 1821, the Holmes family sold half of the lot, including the house and barn, to Royal Mason. Mason sold to Zebina Pratt in 1823. The Mason's mortgaged this lot for Pratt and in return Pratt agreed to care for them. The Mason's lived on the east half of this lot until about 1825. After that time, it was owned by the Fitts family of Wardsboro. The farmhouse may have been abandoned soon after that time. No dwelling was shown to exist there on McClellan's Map of 1856. Recently, the Cersosimos subdivided a large part of the eastern half of 1L1R, creating Snow Mountain Farms West

2L2R

This 160-acre lot was designated as an original right of Oliver Wendell, named upon Stratton's Charter. The *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* cuts across its southwestern corner about half way between *Bills Rd.* and *Old Forrester Rd.* *Knowlton Farm Rd.* also extends just up to, and within, its southern boundary.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. Oliver Wendell attempted to reclaim the lot, but an agreement was made and William McFarland of Worcester, Massachusetts repurchased it from him. In 1784, the proprietors ordered a road to be built through this lot to Wardsboro. McFarland sold the lot to his son, James, in 1789. James apparently had already settled on this lot by that time, but he no longer was in Stratton in 1791. In 1796, the *South Rd.* was built and it evidently progressed through this lot also. Two cellar holes exist on this lot, along the old road, some distance north of the end of *Knowlton Farm Rd.* The westernmost ruin appears to have been on the west half of the lot while the second ruin stands on the east side of the boundary. McFarland may have occupied one of these dwellings. The western dwelling probably belonged to the Randall family (see 2L3R).

In 1817, Ebenezer Wellman purchased land in the east half of 2L2R. He occupied a farm there, probably the eastern dwelling mentioned above. At the time of Ebenezer's death in 1840, his son, Hartford Wellman, owned the entire east half of 2L2R. Hartford may have built a house for himself. Remains of another dwelling exist east of what is now *Knowlton Farm Rd.* Later, Hartford sold to his brother, Pardon, with the understanding that Pardon would care for him for his remaining years. Pardon Wellman sold the farm to Melvin Knowlton in 1851.

At this same time, Melvin's parents, Justice and Chloe Knowlton, settled into a smaller house located west of the main farmhouse. This house was rumored to have been a haven for escaped slaves heading north before and during the Civil War years. By 1868, Justice and Chloe had passed away and in 1867, Melvin had sold this house to Jerome Temple. Jerome died in 1907 and Matilda died in 1914. After that time, this house was owned by Ward Burns and then his daughter Mae Burns, for many years. Currently, it is seen as *54 Knowlton Farm Rd.*, the home of the Montemagni family.

Meanwhile, Melvin Knowlton remained in the larger farmhouse until 1880. After that time, Evander Willis acquired the property. The Willis family may have resided there until 1887. At that time, this farm was sold to Franklin Lackey, who remained in Stratton into the first decade of the 1900s. By 1910, this dwelling apparently was unoccupied. It fell into ruin and has since succumbed to the elements.

The west half of 2L2R was more closely associated with the east half of 2L3R and will be discussed with that parcel.

2L3R

This 160-acre lot was designated as an original right of the Reverend John Searl, named upon Stratton's Charter. The *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* cuts across this lot nearly diagonally, with the *Old Forrester Rd.* intersection near the center. This road ends just beyond this lot's southern boundary. The headwaters of Wardsboro Brook exist here also, just west of *Old Forrester Rd.*

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1798, the Randall brothers purchased the east half of 2L3R and later acquired the west half of 2L3R, the west half of 2L2R and the southeastern corner of 3L3R. One of the brothers probably built a farmhouse along the *South Rd.*, on the eastern half of the lot, but the exact location of this farmhouse is not known – it may have been the same seen as A. Lowe on McClellan's Map of 1856. Several smaller lots with homes developed out of the Randall farm. One of the Randall brothers, Matthew, probably built on the western side of the lot, possibly the same seen as David Eddy on McClellan's Map of 1856. The Randalls left Stratton about 1832.

William Howe briefly owned the eastern half of 2L3R before selling it to Samuel Rider in 1834. Rider also purchased several surrounding parcels before his death in about 1842. Much of the farm was sold at that time. The house was sold to Joseph Smith in 1844. Hiram Ames purchased it in 1848 and probably lived there. He sold it to Aaron Lowe in 1853. The Lowes remained there for the remainder of their lives. Schoolhouse #5 was built on this farm on the south side of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, opposite Aaron Lowe's house in 1851. Lowe deeded the land under the school to the school district in 1853, so long as a school remained thereon. By the turn of the century, Maurice Lowe, Aaron's son, was head of this household. Maurice died at Stratton in 1922. Various families probably occupied the house over the next three decades. Elmer Tuttle bought this farm in 1950. At some point, the old farmhouse burned and the Tuttles built a small house on the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* (now 498 *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*). Later, their son, Kenneth, built a home on the site of the old farm, currently known as 502 *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* The schoolhouse, used by the town as a meeting place for many years, was moved in 1972 to its present location beside the Stratton Meetinghouse.

Meanwhile about 1843 and following her husband's death, Ama Rider, wife of Samuel Rider, kept a 13-acre lot with a house. It was located on the south side of the farm; therefore, it may have been the house located at the end of *Old Forrester Rd.* McClellan's Map shows Stephen Forrester living in this house in 1856. She sold this lot to Moses Forrester in 1843. By 1869, Evander Willis lived on this lot and by the turn of the century, Lucien Read had settled there. This house was located in the vicinity of 71 *Old Forrester*

Rd.. Read, who built a sawmill on this site, remained in Stratton for several years. Sometime after 1910, the Reads left the area.

In 1835, Reuben Holton apparently had settled where Matthew Randall had lived on the western half of 2L3R. Pardon Wellman was probably the next to live there from 1838 to 1841 and Isaac N. Pike may have lived there from 1841 to 1846. Pike split this lot. David Eddy bought the northern part and Orrin Eddy bought the southern part – both houses are indicated on McClellan's Map of 1856. The house owned by David Eddy existed on the north side of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, east of Stratton's Meetinghouse. Orrin Eddy's house was located on the southwestern corner of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd. – Old Forrester Rd.* intersection, now the location of *2 Old Forrester Rd.*

By 1869, Preston Knapp apparently lived in the house previously occupied by David Eddy and, by the turn of the century, Clarence Lowe resided in this house. Meanwhile, in 1853, James H. Johnson had purchased 10 acres of the west part of 2L3R and probably built a home there, along the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* James died during the Civil War, but his wife, Almira (seen as Mrs. Johnson on Beers' Atlas of 1869), continued to live there. This house is probably the same that still exists just east of the Stratton Meetinghouse, now seen as *618 Stratton-Arlington Rd.* Dr. Ralph Parsons, who ran his business from his home until his death in 1891, also occupied this house. This was also the home of Herbert and Irene French. Irene was Stratton's Town Clerk for a time. It is rumored that this house was half of a larger house that had been literally split in half and half of it moved. Supposedly, the other half is in West Wardsboro on the northwest corner of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd. – Rt. 100* intersection.



618 Stratton-Arlington Rd.

Burt Perry lived on this lot, probably on the old Randall farm, between 1903 and 1910. He was Stratton's Postmaster at that time and his house was called the Stratton Post Office. This may have been the same house previously occupied by Charles Lowe.

Meanwhile, Samuel Allen, Jr. apparently settled into the house on the southwest corner of the intersection of *Old Forrester Rd.* and the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* (2 *Old Forrester Rd.*). By the turn of the century, the Lackey family resided there. Later, it was owned by Ray Lyman and in 1924, Addie (Leno) Griswald purchased the house and settled there. This house burned about 1940 and a new structure was built in its place. Joy Lewis owned this lot for many years and Greg Steiner currently owns it. The house opposite this lot (now *556 Stratton-Arlington Rd.*) was brought to this site from the Boy Scout Camp on Grout Pond by Bob Mesick, the current owner.

2L4R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Joseph Hill, named upon Stratton's Charter. This lot is located directly south of the Town Hall. The *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* cuts across only the very edge of 2L4R's northeast corner. A road built in 1800, that progressed from the western side of the old Town Common south to Somerset, passed through this lot, but it was discontinued before 1850.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1784, John Blood purchased the entire lot. John sold the west half to his brother, Jared, in 1788, and he kept the east half, but lost it due to back-taxes in 1791.

The West Half: The west half of 2L4R exchanged hands several times before it was purchased by James Thurston who settled there in 1797. Thurston sold off 30 acres on the north end and 30 acres on the south end of this lot. Francis Davis probably settled on the south end and Bille Mann owned the north end.

In 1802, Hasey Sprague purchased the west half of 2L4R, except for 30 acres on the north end and 30 acres on the south end. He must have resettled on this lot. In 1805, Sprague sold most of the lot to Joshua Newhall. In 1810, William Newhall purchased the 30-acre parcel on the southwest corner and apparently settled there. By 1813, James Ballard purchased most of the west half. It again exchanged hands between men who apparently never resided in Stratton, until it was purchased by Stephen Ballard at a tax-sale in 1821 (see S. Ballard on McClellan's Map of 1856). Ballard remained on this lot for many years.

The East Half: This parcel exchanged hands several times before it was purchased by Asahel Burt in 1808. Burt apparently settled on this lot for a short time. It exchanged hands a few more times before it was acquired by

Stephen Ballard. The entire lot was referred to as the Ballard lot over the following years. By 1850, the road that passed through this lot was discontinued and by 1869, no dwellings remained there. Currently, this lot falls entirely within the Green Mountain National Forest.

2L5R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of William Blunt, named upon Stratton's Charter. Meadow Brook flows through the western half of this lot.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1782, Phineas Stevens purchased this lot and, in 1787, Abner Graves bought this lot and settled there. He is said to have built the first Gristmill in Stratton on this lot on Meadow Brook in 1788. This area still is referred to as Graves Meadows. Abner apparently left Stratton in 1789, when he sold off 50 acres of the lot. By 1796, the remainder of the lot was sold at a tax-sale. All of 2L5R exchanged hands several times over the years that followed, probably as a timber lot. A surveyor's map of 1921 labeled an "*old clearing, old farm*" at its midsection near its southern boundary. It is currently property of the Green Mountain National Forest.

2L6R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Nathaniel Phelps, named upon Stratton's Charter. The southern end of Grout Pond falls within its northwestern corner.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. It appears that no one settled on this lot until 1807, when Aaron Lyon, a millwright, purchased the west half of this lot and settled upon it. By 1809, most of the lot was sold off at tax-sales, but Aaron Lyon retained the northwest 50 acres. Isaac Shepardson paid the taxes on this 50-acre parcel over the next several years and, in 1835, Baxter Lyon finally sold this same parcel. The remainder of 2L6R probably remained a timber lot. No dwellings were shown existing upon it by 1856 and nothing was built there after that time. 2L6R currently belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

2L7R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Eleazer Hannum, named upon Stratton's Charter. It is located on the southwest side of Grout Pond.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. It was bought and sold on occasion over the next decade, but it was

confiscated due to back-taxes and sold at vendue in 1795. Russell Haynes appears to be the first to have a farm on this lot – on the east half. The Haynes family resided there from 1808 to about 1819. Ephraim Carter apparently settled on this same farm about 1820 and resided there until about 1832. Others may have resided elsewhere on this lot, although by 1856 all of 2L7R was unoccupied. McClellan's Map of 1856 shows a nameless house south of Carter Pond (Grout Pond). This was probably the Carter homestead.

2L8R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Mansur Bunbury, named upon Stratton's Charter. It is divided east and west by the East Branch of the Deerfield River as it flows into Somerset Reservoir.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot apparently was never occupied. It had become part of the Jacob Allen farm by 1795 and it was acquired by Phineas White of Putney in 1832. 2L8R was bought and sold as a timber lot after that time and, currently, it is property of the Green Mountain National Forest and USGen.

2L9R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Benning Wentworth, named upon Stratton's Charter.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot apparently was never occupied. It was bought and sold as a timber lot after that time and it is currently property of the Green Mountain National Forest.

3L1R

This lot was designated as an original right of Jacob Wendell, named upon Stratton's Charter. *Canedy Rd.* cuts across this lot from its southeast corner to its northwest corner.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. The first road into Stratton probably followed the same route as *Canedy Rd.* through this lot. John Moffett purchased the east half of this lot in 1784 and apparently built the first farm there. Sampson Bixby purchased this farm in 1788 and his family remained there until 1818. Bixby sold to David Holmes in February, 1818 and Holmes sold to Samuel Mascraft in September, 1818. Samuel Mascraft resided there briefly, then sold to Joseph Mascraft in April, 1820. Sometime after 1822, Joseph apparently settled on this farm. He sold it in 1829 to John Fox. John did not reside there, but he sold the lot to his son, Nehemiah Fox, in 1830. Nehemiah brought his family to Stratton and settled on this farm at that time. He sold this lot to Stillman

Smith in 1836. Smith briefly may have settled on this farm, but he sold it to Levi Fitts of Wardsboro within the year. Fitts probably did not settle there. He sold it to Nathaniel Boyden in February, 1838. Boyden probably lived there before selling it to Amos Parsons, Jr. in September, 1838. This farm remained the home of Amos and his family for many years. Amos's sons, Otis and Alfred, resided on this farm apparently for the remainder of their lives.

Currently, there are buildings that exist on the site of the old Parsons farm – *177 and 183 Canedy Rd.* – located on the north side of the road, on Parsons Hill, near the Wardsboro border. In 1921, H. W. Thomas resided on a small four-acre parcel cut out of this farm. Currently, it is the Kilborn property, seen as *183 Canedy Rd.*, – old deed descriptions indicate that this building was built by John Powers (about 1901). The Powers lot was owned and occupied by the Lyman Davidson family.

In 1921, William A. Brown owned two acres east of the H. W. Thomas farm and Clarence T. Canedy also owned property along the road now named for him, while Fred Willis occupied a dwelling on the south side of the road, opposite the Powers lot, at the beginning of the 20th Century. By 1920, John Davidson lived on the Willis lot. A surveyors' map drawn in 1921 indicates that the Thomas's house was the only building left standing on all of 3L1R at that time. During the 1930s, Earl Upton lived on this site. In recent years, 3L1R has been subdivided further and a number of homes and camps have been built there.

3L2R

This lot was designated as an original right of William Rawson, named upon Stratton's Charter. It is located midway between the routes of *Canedy Rd.* and the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to William McFarland of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1782. In 1784, McFarland repurchased this lot from William Rawson, the original grantee, for a small sum. It appears that this lot was never developed and became part of the Parsons' farm in the last half of the 1800s.

3L3R

This 160-acre lot was designated as an original right of John Hill, named upon Stratton's Charter. The *West Jamaica Rd.* progresses across its northwest corner just south of *Ball Farm Rd.* In 1804, a road was built from the Town Common down to the northwest corner of this lot. The *Stratton Rd.* of 1825 also cut across this lot.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts. Rawson sold to John Blood in 1781 and Blood sold to Jonathan Phillips in 1784. Phillips established a farm north of this lot on 4L3R. In 1786, Reuben Phillips purchased the east half of

3L3R from his father and settled there. He probably built the first house on this lot and he apparently operated a sawmill there. Reuben's brother, Asa, purchased the west half of 3L3R from their father in 1793.

The West Half: Apparently, Asa Phillips kept this lot with his main farm on 4L3R. It is uncertain when a dwelling was built on this site, but it seems that the Phillips did build on 3L3R – in the northwest corner. In 1804, Anthony Sigourney, who had married Asa Phillips' widow, lived there. In 1823, Charles Fay purchased the northwest corner of 3L3R and he apparently settled his family there. Fay sold to Philip Thomas, Jr. in 1838, who apparently settled on this lot and lived there until about 1846. That year, Thomas sold the lot to Benjamin Moon, who lived north of the brook on an adjacent lot to the west. McClellan's Map of 1856 does not show a dwelling on the west half of 3L3R, but Beers' Atlas of 1869 shows Cheselton Allen living on this lot, north of the brook. By 1900, Phineas Eddy lived on this farm. Remains of the old foundation still can be seen there on the west side of the road.

The East Half: Reuben Phillips sold the east half of this lot in 1787 to Nathan Patch and left town. In 1795, this half-lot was sold at a tax-sale to Clark Stone. On February 9, 1797, James Randall of Orange, Massachusetts purchased 60 acres of the east half of 3L3R, with a mill, from Nathan Patch. The Randalls, however, remained in Orange and on November 7, 1797, James purchased all (or the remainder) of the east half of 3L3R from Clark Stone. The Randalls settled in Stratton after this purchase and James evidently operated the sawmill there for several years. Little is mentioned of this mill, but the Randalls may have continued its operation for several years. It apparently went out of operation when Batchellor's Mills were started in 1802. It may have been located on a six-acre parcel of 3L3R that was set to the Phillips farm on 4L3R and remained with that farm for many years. James Randall's son, Matthew, established a farm on 2L3R and 20 acres of the southeast corner of 3L3R were included with that farm. Later, it was called the Rider farm.

In 1845, William H. Stiles purchased the east half of 3L3R and his son, Orrin, evidently resided on it. William had settled on the adjacent Phillips farm, but was forced to move to his property in 3L3R in 1850. By 1856, this dwelling evidently had fallen into disrepair and was abandoned. It was not included on McClellan's Map of 1856.

3L4R

This lot was designated as an original right of Ruggles Woodbridge, named upon Stratton's Charter. 3L4R includes what is now Stratton's Town buildings. The *West Jamaica Rd.* intersection with the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* is located on the east side of this lot. 3L4R extends westward to what is now

Plimpton Rd. and northward along the *West Jamaica Rd.* to the area of the Ball Mountain Brook crossing.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. Rawson sold to Benjamin Ware in 1781, who sold it to his son, Benjamin Ware, Jr. in 1799. It was referred to as the Ware lot on occasion in the Town Records, but it does not appear that the Wares settled in Stratton. In 1808, Ware sold 126 acres on the east side of this lot to Lewis Guild and he sold 60 acres on the west side to Richard Scott.

The East Half: Lewis Guild established a farm in the area where the current Town Hall and Town Office now stand. The Guilds remained in Stratton until 1834. This was about the same time that the *Stratton Turnpike* was completed and the extension of the turnpike to Wardsboro was routed through this farm (the current path of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*). The Guild farm exchanged hands several times, beginning in 1835. Thomas Sprague settled on this lot and became Stratton's first Postmaster. He remained in Stratton until 1836. Thomas Jones may have settled into this same house in 1837. Luther Holbrook purchased the east half of 3L4R – 109 acres – in 1837. In late 1838, Holbrook established a hotel there and Town Meetings began to be held at the hotel. The farmhouse and hotel were located where the Town Hall now stands. Holbrook also ran the Stratton Post Office from his home from that time until 1843. The Holbrooks moved away in 1843 and sold the farm with the hotel to William Cummings. Freeman Wyman, Cummings' son-in-law, took over the hotel in 1843 and eventually purchased this lot in 1848. Wyman served as Town Clerk from 1849 to 1854.

It appears that, beginning in 1852, Wyman turned over the hotel to Cheselton Allen. The hotel was referred to as the Cheselton Allen Inn in Town Records at that time. Cheselton operated the inn until July 1858, when it burned. Cheselton apparently had given up on the hotel business after the fire, but the Wymans built a new hotel on this site.

After Freeman Wyman died in 1870, his wife, Lorena, kept the farm and hotel, buying it back from Freeman's estate in 1875. After that time and until her death in 1887, she and her second husband, Willard Shepard, operated the hotel, apparently residing within it after 1885. Once the stagecoach stopped running between Wardsboro and Arlington in 1888, the hotel went out of business. Shepard moved to Jamaica the following year.

The area of the hotel eventually was purchased by Melbourne Bills, who sold it to the Hendricksons in 1957. In 1959, the town purchased a small parcel of this lot and the Town Hall was built on this site, with construction beginning that same year. Town Meetings were first held in the Town Hall (688 *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*) in 1966. A storage building for the road crew and the town's dumpsters were located behind the Town Hall for a time. The Town Office (9 *West Jamaica Rd.*) was built there in 1988.

The Union Church: In 1847, the Wymans had allowed the Stratton Union Church – the meetinghouse – to be built on their property. It was used as a meeting place for the Union Congregationalists in Stratton and later Stratton’s Free-Will Baptist congregation. Shortly after the church was built, a road also was built on its eastern side. Before 1856, the road was rerouted between the hotel and the church. In an indenture made on October 22, 1872, the estate of Freeman Wyman leased the area around the Stratton Meetinghouse to the town “*for as long as a meetinghouse was maintained on the premises.*” In 1972, Schoolhouse #5 was moved to this lot. Both structures remain there to this day. The Meetinghouse and schoolhouse are numbered 684 and 680 *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, respectively.



Stratton’s Union Church built on the Wyman’s property in 1847

The Parsonage: By 1855, another house (now seen as 685 *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*) had been built on a ten-acre parcel on the south side of the road across from the hotel. Hollis Shelley occupied this house from that time to about 1859. Orrin Eddy owned this house for a time, and then sold it to Wyman in 1866. The Wymans apparently settled into this house, but they sold it to Daniel Harris on April 1, 1868. Beers’ Atlas of 1869 shows that the Wymans still lived in this house at the time the map was drawn. They probably continued to live there years after Harris’s purchase. In 1880, Harris lived with Willard and Lorena Shepard in this same house.

In 1885, Daniel Harris sold the house on the south side of the road to the Free-Will Baptist Society. The house became that Congregations’ parsonage. Orlando Palmer settled into the parsonage in 1890 and remained there until 1903. Besides his duty as minister, Palmer also was Stratton’s Town Clerk, Treasurer and Postmaster for many years. Once the Palmers had left Stratton in 1903, the little village that had developed on 3L4R was all but abandoned.



The Parsonage circa 1948



685 Stratton-Arlington Rd. (once the parsonage) 1999

There is a popular local story about Stratton, told by a traveler who stayed in the old abandoned parsonage in the 1920s. In this story, he referred to this little village as a ghost town. Lyman Green later occupied the old parsonage, probably in the 1930s and 40s. Irene French sold this property as executor of Lyman Green's estate in 1953 to Dominic and Mercedes Monico. The parsonage has since been restored. Currently, it is owned by the Monico's daughter, Lorraine (Weeks) Newell and seen as *685 Stratton-Arlington Rd.*



**A far-off view of the old Wyman farm
with the church at the right and the large old hotel
behind the parsonage**

Additional Parcels: In March, 1849, Wyman sold the southeast corner of 3L4R to Albert Eddy, but Eddy sold it back to Wyman in October, 1849. The Eddys may have settled on this lot for that brief period.

Meanwhile, in 1830, Guild had sold 17 acres on the north side of the brook to Benjamin Moon. Moon built a shanty there next to the brook. The Moons moved away to Ohio about 1833 and their daughter and her husband, Marena and Silas Jones, apparently resided in the shanty for a few years. The Moons returned in the early 1840s and again resided in the shanty on the brook. McClellan's Map of 1856 does not show the Moon home. Benjamin Moon died before 1869 and he was buried beside the brook.

The West Half: In 1808, Richard Scott had purchased 60 acres on the west side of 3L4R. He apparently established a home there at that time. In 1809, however, he bought a two-acre parcel beside the Town Common and apparently settled there. Records do not indicate who might have lived on this 60-acre parcel over the next 25 years. In 1835, Richard's son, William, may have lived on the farm. William was Stratton's Postmaster from 1836 to 1838. He moved away at that time and sold 30 acres of the original 60 acres back to his father. In 1841, Richard Scott sold this 60-acre parcel to James Sprague. Sprague sold the house to his son-in-law, LaFayette Sheldon, in

1844. Sheldon served Stratton as Town Clerk for many years, until his death in 1891. He also served as Postmaster and he operated a Blacksmith Shop on this site. Several houses were built on this lot. In the 1860s, the Sheldons began to subdivide the original 60-acre lot and additional houses were built on various smaller lots. One house was built just west of the Sheldon house and on the north side of the road. Abigail Sheldon's brother, Isaac Sprague, settled there. A second house was built on the south side of the road. Lyman Sprague, another brother of Abigail Sheldon, occupied it. By 1900 this house was occupied by Jeremiah Styles.

The Town House: Before 1898, a house was built or moved to a site on the south side of the road, west of the J. Styles' house. Originally, part of the Isaac Sprague lot, this 4-acre lot was deeded to the town by Alva Styles, Jeremiah's son, in 1898. A Town House for the Town of Stratton – a place for Town Meetings – was established there. A later deed indicates that the town built the Town House upon it. The old Town House still stands, now seen as *761 Stratton-Arlington Rd.*. It was sold by the town in 1956.



***761 Stratton-Arlington Rd.* – the old Town House in 1999.**

Presently, several homes have been built within 3L4R, along the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* upon small parcels. The small village that had deteriorated into a ghost town by the 1920s since has been revitalized.

3L5R

This lot was designated as an original right of John Lyman, named upon Stratton's Charter. The *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* cuts across its northeast corner, with *Plimpton Rd.* heading north approximately along 3L5R's eastern border.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot was reclaimed by John Lyman, the original grantee in 1789, but his interest was purchased by William McFarland. Sales that had occurred prior to Lyman's claim continued to be recognized by the propriety.

The East Half: In 1787, Bille Mann purchased the east half of this lot and evidently built his farm thereon. His dwelling was probably the same seen as R. Scott on McClellan's Map of 1856. The Mann farm was located west of the intersection of the *West Jamaica Rd.* and the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, near the top of the ridge there. Evidently, this was located along the road that ran by the Town Common heading south to Somerset. Bille Mann probably resided on this farm until his death in 1852. Bille's daughter and son-in-law, Mary and Richard Scott, settled into Bille's home about 1841. Richard died in 1855 and Mary may have remained on this farm, but apparently it was abandoned following her death in 1864. At some point, another house was built on the northeast corner of this lot, on the north side of the road. A map dated 1921 indicates that an old house still existed there at that time.

The West Half: Benjamin Hobbs owned the west half of 3L5R in 1791 and he may have lived there. He sold this parcel to Elkanah Miller that year. Miller probably lived there too. In 1792, Miller sold to Phineas Lamb, who may have settled on this lot briefly. Lamb sold it to Simon Davis in 1798. Davis settled there, then sold this parcel in 1801. In 1802, John Oliver purchased this parcel and possibly settled there before selling it in 1804. The west half of 3L5R exchanged hands several times over the next several years. It appears that no one resided there after John Oliver moved away. In 1841, Bille Mann added this parcel to his farm.

By the beginning of the 20th Century, much of 3L5R was owned by Taft and Stewart – a lumber business. Near the beginning of the 1900s, they sold land to Joe Jelly, a lumberman; thus, since that time, the hill that dominates this lot has been known as Joe Jelly Hill. In recent years, 3L5R has been subdivided and more homes have been built within it, along the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*

3L6R

This lot was designated as an original right of Gideon Clark, named upon Stratton's Charter. It includes the central section of Grout Pond with the southwest corner falling just a few yards west of the pond. The eastern half of this lot falls around Meadow Brook.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times and, on occasion, it was sold at

tax-sales. In 1852, James H. Johnson and George W. Smith purchased the entire lot. They may have settled on 3L6R briefly, but it seems more likely that they did not. It appears that no one settled on this lot after that time.

3L7R

This lot was designated as an original right of Charles Mathers, named upon Stratton's Charter. It includes the northern part of Grout Pond and extends midway between the pond and the East Branch of the Deerfield River. The first main road built through Stratton cut across the west side of this lot as it passed the north side of Grout Pond and headed south along the Deerfield River.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1784, Isaiah Harvey purchased five acres of this lot on the north side of the pond. Harvey also owned 4L7R and he apparently built a house on the north side of the pond. Harvey sold this lot to William Boutell in 1790 (see 4L7R for further information). The remains of an foundation still exists on this site. It may have been Harvey's original building site. This dwelling apparently succumbed to the elements between 1808 and 1856, since no dwelling was shown to exist on McClellan's Map, Beers' Atlas, nor the 1900 Map. During the early 1900s, however, another house, known as the Robinson camp, stood on this foundation. In 1948, the Boy Scouts acquired the building, along with the property, and it was destroyed shortly thereafter.

In 1786, Isaiah Harvey's father, Dr. Zachariah Harvey purchased the remainder of 3L7R. He probably built a house on the north half of the lot along the old road. It was located above the pond and at the top of the road that presently descends down to the parking lot. At that time, Grout Pond was called Dr. Harvey's Pond. In 1792, John Holman purchased the north half of 3L7R, except for the above-mentioned five-acre parcel. He apparently settled on Dr. Harvey's farm. Whitelaw's Map of Vermont in 1796 calls the pond "Holman's Pond." Holman sold the north half of 3L7R to Clark Stone in 1795 and Jacob Allen purchased it in 1798.

In 1791, Hezekiah Gibbs purchased the south half of 3L7R and settled on this lot. A foundation exists on the opposite side of the ridge on the pond's western edge. This was likely Gibbs' home. Gibbs sold to Jacob Allen in 1794. Allen probably settled into the Gibbs' homestead, then in 1798, Allen purchased the north half of 3L7R and probably settled into the old Harvey homestead. The Allens left Stratton in 1802 after Jacob had sold his property to Bezaliel Lawrence of Leominster, Massachusetts. It appears that either Daniel Wetherbee or more likely Sampson Wetherbee resided in this homestead as evident from the survey of this road made in 1804 which described the road from Boutell's house down to Wetherbee's house and over to the Deerfield River. Lawrence sold 3L7R to Josiah Lyon in 1807. Lyon settled there until he sold the lot to Peter Howe and William Wheeler in 1808.

Howe and Wheeler both, apparently, settled into the main house, as they were listed together there with their families in the 1810 census. In 1811, Wheeler sold his half-interest to Howe. In 1815, Howe sold this property back to Lawrence and moved from town. The farm remained unoccupied or perhaps it was rented out for several years. In 1828, Lawrence deeded this property to Leander Carter, whose father owned the farm to the south of this lot. The Carters apparently settled on this lot in the main dwelling overlooking the pond. At that time, Grout Pond was called Carter's Pond. The Carters moved to Ohio in 1832 and Lawrence, who held a mortgage on the farm, foreclosed. In 1836, Abel Grout, Jr. purchased this farm. His brother, Hudson Grout, settled on the farm overlooking the pond (thus the name Grout Pond). Hudson remained there until about 1870. This lot was abandoned after that time.

This lot has since been property of the Fort Orange Council Boy Scouts and a scout camp was built around the west end of the pond. The Boy Scout Council also built a barn in the vicinity of the old farmhouse, as a shelter for the donkeys used as pack-animals by the scouts. Additionally other buildings were added including an infirmary and a caretaker's cabin. The Boy Scouts sold all their property in Stratton to the Green Mountain National Forest in 1979.



**Grout Pond about 1950 as part of the Boy Scout Camp
The dock was located on the south side of the pond**

Photo courtesy of the Ethel Eddy Collection



**The Caretaker's cabin at Grout Pond
This building was intentionally destroyed in 1999.**

Photo courtesy of the Ethel Eddy Collection

3L8R

This lot originally was designated as a School Lot (see leaselands). A corner marker for this lot can be seen along *the Grout Pond Access Rd.*. 3L8R contains the confluence of Black Brook and the East Branch of the Deerfield River.

In 1842, NJ Shaw and Steven Moultrip started a mill on 3L8R and 3L9R and the town built a road down to this mill in 1844. Shaw kept an interest in this mill for several years. In 1845, Shaw and Moultrip sold their mill rights to Chester Allen and George Fowler, but Shaw repurchased them in 1846. Shaw then sold the rights to Orrin P. Torrey. In this agreement, it mentions that Pliny Fisk Grout occupied the buildings at the mill, but that Shaw would have the right to occupy the buildings after that time. By 1848, Freeman Wyman had a financial stake in the mill. Shaw was killed in 1850 and, after that time, Abner and Gridley Gurney operated this mill for a brief time. In 1853, Alvin Goodell leased and operated the mill. By 1856, Jesse Sage lived and worked at this mill site and in 1869 it was called the C. Birch Sawmill. By 1900, this site had been abandoned. Later, it was leased by the Barlow family and then by the VanVleck family. The VanVlecks have remained leaseholders of 3L8R and 3L9R to the end of the 20th Century.

3L9R

This lot originally was designated as a Church of England Lot (see leaselands). Since the Selectmen began leasing out this lot, it has been, and continues to be, associated with 3L8R (see 3L8R above for details).

4L1R

This lot was designated as an original right of Nathan Lyman, named upon Stratton's Charter. It extends from Stratton's eastern border, where Wardsboro and Jamaica meet, to a location slightly west and south of *Mountain Rd.* Its northern boundary approximately follows the *West Jamaica Rd.* in that same area.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands several times and apparently remained undeveloped until just after the beginning of the 1800s. In 1802, Jacob Batchellor built a gristmill and sawmill complex on what is now called Ball Mountain Brook, located on the line between 4L1R and 5L1R (for details see 5L1R). In 1807, Batchellor also purchased 100 acres of the west half of this lot. Jonathan M. Bissell also acquired this half about the same time he purchased the mill in 1823.

Meanwhile, the McFarland family maintained the east half of 4L1R, until Phineas White acquired most of their holdings in the mid-1830s. White sold the east half of 4L1R to Otis Parsons in 1839 and Parsons sold a small parcel of five acres bordering the mill to John W. Bissell, Jonathan Bissell's son, in 1846. Parsons also purchased three acres on the southwest corner – probably near what is now *Canedy Rd.*

In 1850, it appears that most of 4L1R, including the mill, the west half and the northwest corner of the east half of this lot, were purchased by Darius and Joel F. Grout, grandsons of Jacob Batchellor. With the exception of the mill site, it appears that no dwellings existed on this lot before 1900. Since that time, 4L1R has been minimally subdivided and developed.

4L2R

This lot was designated as an original right of the Reverend Jonathan Judd, named upon Stratton's Charter. Its northern border falls approximately along the *West Jamaica Rd.*, beginning a few yards west of the *Mountain Rd.* intersection and extending westward beyond the *Canedy Rd.* intersection by about a quarter-mile. About a half-mile of the northwestern end of *Canedy Rd.* falls within its bounds.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. Israel Stevens purchased this lot in 1784 and built a barn there, but apparently never settled upon it. This lot exchanged hands several times and it was auctioned off at a tax-sale. Eliakim Garfield purchased ten acres of the northwest corner of this lot in 1812. He may have been the first to build a dwelling on 4L2R (see S. Allen on McClellan's Map of 1856). Eliakim sold his farm in 1814. Joseph Garfield, who owned an adjacent lot, bought it in 1815.

Joshua Grant purchased all of 4L2R in 1816. He apparently settled there at that time. Joshua passed away in 1824 and his wife, Betsey, continued to live for many years on this farm. In her last years, Betsey Grant was a ward of the town and fell to the care of Samuel Allen, Jr. in 1837. By that time, much of 4L2R had been sold off for back-taxes. Samuel Allen, Jr. purchased 77 acres of 4L2R with the exception of the widow Grant's dowry in 1829. In 1830, Allen mortgaged the entire 160 acres, but in 1831, Paul Wheeler had acquired 30 acres on the west half. It appears that the Allens had settled into the Grant farmhouse, possibly living with the widow Grant after 1830. This farm was located north of the *West Jamaica Rd.*, across from the *Canedy Rd.* intersection (see McClellan's Map of 1856). Samuel's sons held title to different parcels within this lot and several parcels were sold off. By 1869, Herbert A. Smith lived on this site and remained there until about 1873. At the beginning of the 1900s, Henry M. Hulett lived there, but he had moved from town by 1910. Since that time, the farmhouse has succumbed to the elements and part of this lot has been subdivided into several small house-lots along *Canedy Rd.*.

4L3R

This lot was designated as an original right of Henry Apthorp, named upon Stratton's Charter. Its western half is divided by the *West Jamaica Rd.* as it extends from a point just north of the Ball Mountain Brook crossing to a point just south of the *Shepardson Rd.* intersection. 4L3R includes the intersections of both *Old Town Rd.* and *Ball Farm Rd.* with the *West Jamaica Rd.*. Ball Cemetery also is within the western half of this lot. In 1789, the town built a road (see Road #10 in Chapter VII) in an east – west direction across 4L3R. This road would have connected what is now *Old Town Rd.* to *Canedy Rd.*, passing Ball Cemetery.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780.

The East Half: In 1784, Sylvanus Ballard purchased the east half of 4L3R and settled there for a brief time, but he moved away in 1786. It appears that no one lived there until Joseph Garfield purchased this lot at a tax-sale in 1798. The Garfields remained there until 1816. In 1818, Moses Guillow purchased the east half of 4L3R and settled there. The Guillows remained in Stratton through 1825, but they had moved away by 1830. In 1837, Jesse Wilbur purchased this farm and settled there, but remained for only a year or so. After that time, it appears that the farm fell into disrepair. The south part of the east half became a part of the Allen farm and William G. Howard owned the rest by 1849. McClellan's Map of 1856 shows that there was no dwelling on the east side of 4L3R and the road that passed the cemetery no longer existed.

The West Half: Jonathan Phillips purchased the western half of 4L3R in 1784. He settled on this lot and built a house. The remains still can be seen on the northeast corner of the *Ball Farm Rd. – West Jamaica Rd.* intersection. In 1786, Phillips sold this lot to his son, Asa Phillips, who evidently already lived there, since in 1785, Asa's son, Asa, Jr. was born in this house – the first male child born in Stratton. Asa Phillips, Sr. died in 1802 and his estate was settled in 1808. Meanwhile, his widow married Anthony Sigourney and they may have lived on this farm for a brief time. Various members of the Phillips family remained on this farm. After 1808, Asa Phillips, Jr. owned the property that included the house, while his brother, Jonathan owned the south part of the lot. Asa eventually acquired all of the west half of 4L3R. He served as Town Clerk and Town Meetings were held in this house on several occasions. The cemetery, now known as Ball Cemetery, was established on this lot. In 1834, Phillips sold the farm to Stephen Forrester. Forrester settled there, but the following year he sold it to James Grimes, who remained there only a year. In 1838, Oren Shelley purchased this farm and settled there, but he went bankrupt in 1842 and the farm went back to the mortgagor. Nathaniel Jones purchased the west half of 4L3R in 1844. Jones settled there, but he sold it in 1845 and moved away. Josiah P. Gould settled on this lot in 1846 and lived there for two years. By 1848, William H. Stiles lived on this lot, but he did not own it. In February, 1849, this lot was purchased by Nathaniel Smith who allowed Stiles to live there until April. Joseph Packard, Jr. lived there through to 1851, at which time Smith sold the lot to John R. Thayer. Thayer settled on the old Phillips farm, but remained only until December of 1852. McClellan's Map of 1856 indicates that Nathaniel Smith had settled on this farm. Sometime during the Civil War years, Marena (Moon) Jones, widow of Silas Jones, settled into the old Phillips farm. Marena married Edward Ball and he settled there with Marena. He is the gentleman for whom this farm, the road and the cemetery take their name. This house also was used as a temporary school for District #2 for several years.

In 1904, Curtis Knapp settled into this farmhouse and remained there for several years. The house fell into ruin after the Knapps had moved away. Its cellar hole still is visible on the northeast corner of the *West Jamaica Rd. – Ball Farm Rd.* intersection.

Currently, there is some development on 4L3R, near the cemetery and along the *West Jamaica Rd.*

4L4R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Thomas Hubbard, named upon Stratton's Charter. Currently, the Town of Stratton Recreation Area exists on this lot. About 1786, *Patch's Rd.* (see Road #3 in Chapter VII) was built across 4L4R's center, running east and west – a section that

became part of the *South Rd.* in 1789. In 1800, the *Gore Rd.* was built, progressing from the Town Common southward along the western edge of 4L4R. In 1804, another road was built from the western side of this lot down to its southeastern corner, progressing into 3L3R (see Road #18 in Chapter VII).

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold 4L4R to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1782, Thurston sold this lot to Nathan Patch. Patch deeded it to his son Joseph in 1786. Joseph Patch apparently built the road that ran east to west across this lot. He also built a dwelling on the east half of 4L4R and he ran a tavern from his home. Patch Tavern, as it was called, was located on the north side of the road, just a hundred yards or so up what is now the *Old Town Rd.* trail from the volleyball courts. The foundation still can be seen there. Patch was Proprietors Clerk for a time and proprietors' meetings and Town Meetings were held at the tavern during the 1780s and 1790s. About 1793, Joseph Patch moved away from Stratton and he rented out the dwelling to Eliakim Garfield and sold the property back to his father, Nathan Patch. Garfield lived there at least until May, 1794. In 1798, Patch sold all of 4L4R to Thomas Lathrop, who settled into the dwelling there. Lathrop soon became Town Clerk and again Town Meetings were held within this house. In 1801, Lathrop deeded a four-acre parcel, located midway, north to south, along the western border of the lot, to the town as a Town Common. The next year, Lathrop sold the west half of 4L4R back to Nathan Patch.

The East Half: Lathrop sold the east half of 4L4R to Jedidiah Baker in 1807, but remained in the old dwelling until 1808. Once the Lathrops had moved, Baker apparently settled into this house. He sold a part-interest of a potash house located behind this dwelling on the north side in 1808, but he later repurchased it. That same year, Baker sold 20 acres of the southeast corner to John Franklin. Franklin apparently built a home on this site. The old foundation, currently surrounded by a picket fence, is located in the Recreation Area's picnic grounds, on the south side of the old road.

By 1810, Baker sold the east half of 4L4R back to Lathrop and Baker probably moved away shortly after that time. The main lot of the east half of 4L4R was owned by several non-residents over the next few years and the dwellings thereon probably were occupied by various families during that time. In 1817, Moses Brown owned this lot and apparently settled into the house. He remained in Stratton only a year. By 1820, Luther Torrey had settled into this lot. He probably resided there and ran a tavern from his home. In 1826, Torrey sold this lot and settled on the western side of town, where he opened another tavern near what is now called the Webster Memorial ground. Asa Phillips purchased the east half of 4L4R from Torrey. Some member of the Phillips family probably settled into the old dwelling there. Although Jonathan Phillips, Asa's brother, had a home on the west side of the Town Common, it is possible that Jonathan took up the business of

innkeeper at the old Patch Tavern. Jonathan had a license to keep an inn from 1825 through 1827.

In 1831, Asa Phillips sold the east half of 4L4R to Elias Bassett. Bassett settled there and served as Town Clerk from 1832 to 1834. In 1833, Bassett sold to Benjamin Thatcher, who also served as Town Clerk. Thatcher probably resided in the old Patch house. In 1837, Thatcher sold the east half of 4L4R to his brother-in-law, James Sprague. Sprague remained on this lot until he moved away in 1853. By the time McClellan's Map of 1856 was printed, the only farmhouse left standing on this lot was the one built on the 20-acre parcel in the southeast corner. The map called it the Sprague house. After that time, this farm was purchased by Oliver Hescocock. The farm remained in the Hescocock family until about 1913. After that time, this old farm was abandoned.

The West Half: Meanwhile, the western half of 4L4R remained mostly intact with some small subdivided lots surrounding the Town Common. 4L5R contained the majority of the development within the vicinity of the Town Common and the small subdivided lots to the north and south of the Town Common were associated with larger lots within 4L5R. By 1808, a cemetery, a meetinghouse and a school filled the four-acre Town Common and a very small New England village began to develop around it. Nathan Patch purchased the west half of 4L4R from Thomas Lathrop in 1802. Before that sale, Lathrop had sold a two-acre parcel on the east side of the Town Common, north of the road, to David Stoddard, who may have built and settled there. Stoddard divided this small parcel in half, selling the north-acre to Joshua Robbins and the south-acre back to Thomas Lathrop in 1803. It is unclear who lived on these lots, if anyone, over the next several years. Richard Scott purchased both lots and evidently settled thereon at that time. Scott owned these two acres through to 1837.

In January, 1808, John Coes purchased the remainder of the west half of 4L4R. He apparently settled there, along with Susannah Gale, but he sold this parcel at the end of that year and moved from town. By 1837, the Town Common and the surrounding parcels had been abandoned.

In recent times, all of 4L4R, with the exception of the Town Common, had been acquired by Anthony Cersosimo, who sold it to the town for use as a Recreational Area in 1992. Since that time, the town has developed this area with a basketball court and skating rink, a playground, picnic grounds a baseball field and cross-country ski trails.

4L5R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Martin Phelps, Jr., named upon Stratton's Charter. 4L5R lies west of the old Town Common. Ball Mountain Brook runs across this lot from its northwest corner to a point

a few yards north of its southeast corner. Currently, the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* cuts across its southwest corner. At an early time, the *South Rd.* continued through this lot; and, in 1800, the *Gore Rd.* skirted the eastern side of 4L5R, as it headed south to Stratton Gore (see Roads in Chapter VII).

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold 4L5R to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot was purchased by John Blood, who sold it to his father, Isaiah. Isaiah split the lot and sold the west half to James Knox in 1785 and the east half to his son, Jared Blood in 1786. Jared Blood probably settled on this lot briefly, before moving from town in 1789. In 1797, he sold the east half of 4L5R to William Morsman, who sold it to Thomas Williams in 1798. Taxes evidently had not been paid, and so, in that same year, the east half of 4L5R was sold at vendue to Samuel Boutell.

James Knox may have settled on the west half of 4L5R briefly. In 1785, Jonathan Upham, Jr. purchased this half-lot and apparently settled there. By 1791, the lot had been abandoned and sold for back-taxes. In 1796, it was purchased by Richard Bartlett, 3rd, who apparently settled there, but removed from town in 1800.

Beginning in 1800 and with the establishment of the Town Common on the west side of 4L4R, 4L5R began to be subdivided into small farms. That year, Asahel Kimball of Newfane, who owned most of 4L5R, sold off a number of parcels. The following paragraphs describe these parcels, beginning on the east line of 4L5R.

The Stoddard Parcel: This parcel was a 40-acre strip all along the eastern boundary of 4L5R. Kimball sold this land to David Stoddard in March, 1800. Stoddard apparently settled on this lot – an old foundation exists there, about 100 yards west of the old meetinghouse foundation on the north side of the road. Stoddard also purchased an additional 12 acres that fell along the road heading to Stratton Gore. Stoddard sold this lot to Nathan Patch in 1802. Following Nathan's death in 1808, his son, Joseph Patch, sold the upper portion of this parcel with additional acreage in 4L4R north of the Town Common (a total of 26 acres) to Asahel Burt. In 1810, the Burts had moved away and the lot exchanged hands twice before Joshua Robbins purchased it that same year. Robbins apparently remained on his other farm on 4L5R. In 1815, Thomas Millet purchased this lot. He was Stratton's Town Clerk for most of that time period between 1808 and 1822. Although they owned property in the north part of town, the Millets may have settled into the house on this lot after the Burts had left town. Millet sold this lot in 1823 – just before that time, Millet's son-in-law, David Holmes, may have been living there. In 1826, Jonathan Phillips purchased an undivided half of this parcel and in 1831, Samuel Marble purchased the other half. The entire east half was abandoned by 1831. That year, Phineas White of Putney, Vermont, purchased the entire east half of 4L5R at a tax-sale.

The Hale Parcel: This parcel was another 40-acre lot entirely within the north part of 4L5R and adjacent to Stoddard's purchase (above). Kimball sold this parcel to Jacob Hale in March, 1800, and the Hales settled on this lot. The house was apparently located north of the *South Rd.* that crossed this lot. In 1801, Hale purchased an additional small parcel that extended this farm south to the brook on the southwest corner of his original purchase. Hale sold this to Nathan Patch in late 1802, then sold the rest of the farm to Isaac Balcom in 1803. The Balcoms may have settled on this farm briefly, but within the year, Balcom had sold it to Sampson Wetherbee. In May of 1806, Wetherbee sold this farm to Aaron Lyon. Lyon may have settled on this lot. Aaron Lyon expanded his lands in 1809, by purchasing an additional 50 acres on the southwest corner of 4L5R, including a small amount of acreage on the south side of the Town Common in 4L4R and a seven-acre parcel adjacent to the west side of the 50-acre lot (probably the same that Hale had purchased before). It appears that a house stood on this seven-acre parcel, south of the *South Rd.*. Its remains still are visible there. Lyon sold all of this land to Polly (Phillips) Sigourney in 1812. In 1818, Polly's son, Asa, sold this lot to his brother, Jonathan Phillips. The Phillips family apparently occupied one or more dwellings on 4L5R. By that time, the Phillipses owned most of the east half of 4L5R which probably contained three dwellings. They also owned much of 4L4R and part of 4L3R, including several dwellings – most of this land was in the name of Asa Phillips, so it is difficult to determine just who lived where on these lots.

The Robbins and Greenleaf Parcels: The next lot on the west side of 4L5R was a 60-acre parcel – part of the land that Kimball had purchased from Richard Bartlett. Kimball sold this parcel to Joshua Robbins in 1803. Robbins made this lot his home for several years. He sold off 25 acres of the northwest corner to John Hale, within a few days, and two months later, Joshua sold another 20 acres of this lot to Hale, leaving himself 15 acres. The next year, Hale sold 35 acres along the *South Rd.* to Zerah Greenleaf – 15 acres on the north side of the road and 20 acres on the south side of the road. Greenleaf settled on this lot. Greenleaf remained there until about 1813. He sold much of his land to Robbins in 1808, then in 1813, he sold his remaining 15 acres to James Fuller. Meanwhile, Robbins had purchased additional acreage so that his farm included 60 acres. In 1813, Robbins sold this lot to Wm. Newhall. Robbins remained in Stratton until 1815. This lot changed hands several times before it was purchased by John Atwood in 1822. The Atwoods settled on this farm, but they had moved away before 1830.

The Davis Parcel: There also was a five-acre parcel of 4L5R that bordered both the old road that cut across the southwest corner of this lot and also the road that ran south to the Gore. This small parcel was located on the southwest corner of the east half of 4L5R and it was purchased by Simon Davis in 1801. Davis apparently settled there briefly. This, along with much

of the southwest side of 4L5R, later was owned by James Fuller and associated with the following parcel.

The Fuller Parcel: Asa Pratt purchased 35 acres of the southwest corner of 4L5R from Kimball in 1803 and settled there. He sold this lot to James Fuller in 1812. The Fullers settled there and remained until about 1816, when they moved to Dover. They returned to live on this lot in 1834. This parcel again was sold in 1838 to Travis and Stephen Smith. Travis apparently settled there until 1840. That year, Smith sold this lot back to the Fullers. The Fullers and their children occupied this lot for many years. Mrs. Fuller passed away in 1867 and it appears that Jesse Jones resided there in 1869. Isaac Sprague was there about 1900. This house, the last of the dwellings to survive on 4L5R, no longer existed in 1921.

4L6R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Governor Benning Wentworth, named upon Stratton's Charter. The *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* cuts across its northeast corner, while Meadow Brook flows south through its western half.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half the township, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot changed hands several times, but it does not appear that anyone settled upon it before 1855. Dennis Tennant purchased 26 acres north of the road in 1851, but apparently he resided on adjacent property in 5L6R.

Evidently, this 26-acre lot is the same lot that Chester Prescott, Stratton's first Free-Will Baptist Minister, purchased and built upon in 1857. This house was located 1.2 miles west of the *West Jamaica Rd.* intersection with the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*. The Prescotts moved away in 1860. By 1869, Milon Perry resided on this lot. In 1900, the farm there was probably the same shown occupied by Jesse Sage. Recently, the area around the old foundation there has been cleared, leaving it visible from the road.

In 1948, the Boy Scouts of America purchased the remaining portion of 4L6R. It has been part of the Green Mountain National Forest since 1979.

4L7R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Oliver Wendell, named upon Stratton's Charter. It is located directly north of Grout Pond and the *Grout Pond Access Rd.* skirts its western boundary. Its northeast corner is a bog with a small stream that feeds into Meadow Brook. Its northern boundary lies well south of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, but at an early time, the main road cut across this lot as it progressed around the pond.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. Dr. John Campbell of Oxford, Massachusetts purchased this lot in 1782. Campbell sold it to Isaiah

Harvey in 1784. Oliver Wendell of Boston attempted to reclaim his lot in 1784, but the issue was settled by one of the proprietors, William McFarland, at that time and Harvey remained the owner of 4L7R. Harvey also purchased five acres on the north side of Grout Pond and he built a dwelling overlooking the pond. Isaiah sold the west half of the lot to Daniel Harvey in 1787. Daniel sold it to Joel Hale of Stratton in 1791, while Isaiah had sold the east half to William Boutell in 1790. Boutell apparently settled into the dwelling overlooking the pond there at that time. In 1805, Boutell sold the east half of 4L7R to John Franklin who probably settled thereon. Franklin sold this property in 1808 and moved to another lot in Stratton. After 1808, it appears that no one settled on this farm. The east half exchanged hands on several occasions over the years and the west half was often associated with the Hale farm on its western side. The entire lot has seen little development since that time. At one point, the Robinsons had a camp, apparently located where the Harvey dwelling originally stood. The Boy Scouts also owned this lot, beginning in 1948 and the Green Mountain National Forest purchased it in 1979.

4L8R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of Martin Phelps, named upon Stratton's Charter. The *Grout Pond Access Rd.* skirts 4L8R's eastern boundary and it includes the National Forest's wildlife viewing area designated along that road. The East Branch of the Deerfield River runs north to south through the western half of this lot.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. After exchanging hands between proprietors, the east half of 4L8R was sold to Levi Hale, who built a farm there. The remains of the farm can still be found within a thicket at the wildlife viewing area along the road. The Hales remained on this farm for most of the remainder of their lives. In 1834, they sold the farm to their son-in-law, Joseph Pike. The Hales may have remained on their farm for a few more years, but they likely spent their last years in the home of Joseph Pike in Somerset. Levi died in 1842 and Joseph Pike sold the farm to Othniel Temple in 1851. The Temples resided on this farm until 1860. That year, they sold the east half of 4L8R to Jesse Sage, who may have settled there briefly. By 1869, this farm was occupied by John C. Covey and by 1900, the farmhouse no longer was standing.

The west half of 4L8R apparently was not developed. In 1819, Martin Field of Newfane donated the northwest corner of this lot to Middlebury College. The remainder probably was sold as timberland over the years.

In 1948, the Boy Scouts of America had purchased this lot. This lot was purchased by the Green Mountain National Forest in 1979.

4L9R

This 200-acre lot was designated as an original right of John Holden, named upon Stratton's Charter. The northeast corner of this lot falls near the edge of the East Branch of the Deerfield River, about a quarter-mile south of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* The Long Trail also progresses southward into this lot, before turning west to cross Black Brook.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times over the years. Apparently, 4L9R never was settled and it probably exchanged hands many times as a timber lot. Currently, 4L9R is part of the National Forest.

5L1R

This odd-sized lot was first thought to be 240 acres, but later it was determined to be only 190 acres. 5L1R was designated as an original right of Josiah Brewer, named upon Stratton's Charter. It is located on Stratton's eastern border with Jamaica and includes the intersection of the *West Jamaica Rd.* with *Mountain Rd.* and all of the *West Jamaica Rd.* from that point northeastward. Currently, the Town Garage is situated within this lot.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half of Stratton, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. It appears that the first buildings on this lot were Jacob Batchellor's gristmill and sawmill, constructed in 1802.

The Mill Site: The mills were built upon Mill Brook (Ball Mountain Brook) on a five-acre parcel split between 4L1R and 5L1R, south of what is now the *Mountain Rd.* intersection with the *West Jamaica Rd.* Jacob's son, Calvin, may have resided at the mill site for the next few years. The miller's house probably stood on the site of the house that stands there now, seen as 448 *West Jamaica Rd.* Batchellor sold the mill to David Newman in 1818, but Newman sold it back to Batchellor in 1821. In 1823, Jonathan M. Bissell purchased the mill. It was called Bissell's Mill after that time. He kept the mill until his death just before 1850. After that time, the mill was no longer in use. McClellan's Map of 1856 and Beers' Atlas of 1869 do not show a building on this site; however, by 1884, Arthur Allen had settled his family into a dwelling there, where they remained until about 1890. After that time, the old mill site became the location of another lumber mill operation called Parsons Mill and two buildings or camps were built on either side of the *West Jamaica Rd.* The building on the north side of the road no longer exists. The building on the south side of the road was struck by lightning and burned. It was rebuilt in the 1940s by Stub Samson, now seen as 446 *West Jamaica Rd.* The Miner family resided there for a time. Eventually, this site was purchased by Robert Penn Warren and a second house (448 *West Jamaica Rd.*) was built east of the older camp.

The North Half: Jacob Batchellor purchased all of 5L1R in 1803. Although this lot was sold at vendue in 1808 for back-taxes, Batchellor sold 100 acres of the north part of 5L1R to Joshua Robbins in 1810. A few months later, Robbins apparently mortgaged the property and may have built on this lot, but it is unclear who (if anyone) resided there. An old foundation exists along the road about $\frac{1}{3}$ mile southwest of the Jamaica line. This appears to be the older of the two foundations on this lot; therefore, it may have been the house built by Robbins. Robbins sold this lot in 1816. The north half of 5L1R exchanged hands several times over the following three decades. In 1845, the north 100 acres were purchased by John Baldwin. Baldwin built a house on this lot in 1846, near the Jamaica border and on the northwest side of the *West Jamaica Rd.* A large foundation exists on a flat above the road. No remnants of a fireplace exist, suggesting that the house was heated by an iron stove – new technology in the 1840s.

In 1849, Baldwin sold this lot to Samuel Wing. Wing may have settled there briefly, but in 1850, Ezra Willis, John Baldwin's nephew, had purchased the north part of this lot and by 1856, the Baldwins had returned to live there. John died in 1862, but his wife, Ruth, continued to live there. Beers' Atlas of 1869 shows Mrs. Baldwin living in the house on the border while the building on the road stood abandoned. In 1880, Mrs. Baldwin was living in this same house with her sister, Sylvia Willis, and her nephew, Ezra Willis. Ezra died in 1881, Sylvia died in 1887 and Ruth died in 1889. This old farm probably was abandoned after that time.



A Grout Family Reunion held at the old Joel Grout farm

Courtesy of the Grout family

The South Half: In 1812, Batchellor sold 87 acres of the south part of 5L1R to his son-in-law, Joel Grout. Grout built a farm on what is now the northwest corner of the intersection of the *West Jamaica Rd.* and *Mountain Rd.*. The barn was located at the intersection, while the house was located north of the barn. Joel died in 1839, but Lucy remained on the farm for most of the remainder of her life. She shared the house with the family of her son, Darius, for many years. Lucy moved away in 1866 and Darius and family moved to Wardsboro in 1880.

The Magoon family settled into this farm about 1890. They moved away about 1905. This farm apparently fell into disrepair and succumbed to the elements in the following decades. Currently, a small building, 870 *Mountain Rd.*, stands on this site on the corner of the *West Jamaica Rd.* and *Mountain Rd.* intersection. In 1975, the Town Garage was built on this lot, north of the above-mentioned property.

5L2R

This lot was designated as an original right of Daniel Lee, Jr., named upon Stratton's Charter. It is located northwest of the *West Jamaica Rd.* – *Mountain Rd.* intersection. A small portion of this lot falls on the south side of the *West Jamaica Rd.*, just a few yards west of the *Mountain Rd.* intersection, while *Mountain Rd.* skirts its northeastern side. Greenwood Brook flows across this lot from its southwest corner to its northeast corner and *Bear Creek Rd.* intersects *Mountain Rd.* just north of this brook.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands several times before Oliver Morsman purchased it. Morsman split the lot east and west and sold it to residents of Chesterfield, New Hampshire, where he had settled.

The West Half: In 1795, Thurston Holman of Sutton, Massachusetts purchased the west half of this lot and may have settled there. In 1801, Holman was called "of Stratton" when he sold this parcel to Ira Scott, who owned an adjacent farm on 5L3R. This part of the lot became associated with the Scott farm for many years. The Scotts may have added an additional dwelling on this parcel and perhaps Scott or one of his children settled there for a time. The west half of 2L5R was sold to William Allen in 1837. Allen apparently resided there through to 1844. His father, who owned the farm south of this parcel, purchased a portion of William's lot – a central 50-acre north to south strip of 5L2R in 1846.

The East Half: Jonas Woodward of Stratton purchased the east half of 5L2R in 1803. Arnold Cook purchased the south part of the east half in 1806 and then he purchased the remainder of the east half in 1809. The north part of

this parcel went to the Scott farm in 1815, while the south part went to Joel Grout, who owned the adjacent farm in 5L1R.

In 1846, Leander Allen purchased the northeast corner of 5L2R and apparently settled there. The dwelling was located on the west side of *Mountain Rd.*, along Greenwood Brook. Allen sold a half-interest in this lot to his father-in-law, Samuel Wing, in 1847 and the Wings evidently settled in with the Allens. Wing purchased Allen's half in 1848. He also purchased the adjacent north half of 5L1R. The Wings evidently remained with the Allens on 5L2R. In 1852, the northeast corner of 5L2R was sold to John Baldwin who also had purchased the adjacent farm on the north half of 5L1R. In 1856, the house apparently stood empty and soon succumbed to the elements.

By 1921, Douglas Forrester had purchased much of 5L2R. Currently, this lot is minimally subdivided. It contains a man-made pond in its southeastern corner, which was created and owned by the Cole family.

5L3R

This lot was designated as an original right of Daniel Lee, Sr., named upon Stratton's Charter. It includes the intersection of *Shepardson Rd.* with the *West Jamaica Rd.*, located about midway within its southern half. Greenwood Brook flows across this lot from its northwest corner down along *Shepardson Rd.* and over to its southeast corner.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1786, Phineas Stevens of Ward, Massachusetts sold the lot to Isaac Chase and Sampson Bixby, both of Sutton, Massachusetts. Isaac Chase settled on the east half of this lot, while Bixby took the west half.

The East Half: Chase's farm was located northeast of what is now the above-named intersection. In 1790, the town built a quarter-mile road from the Chase farm west to the *North Road*, as that portion of the *West Jamaica Rd.* and *Shepardson Rd.* was called then. Chase sold this farm in 1795. That year, John Holman purchased this farm and apparently settled thereon. In 1800, Ira Scott purchased the east half of 5L3R. Scott settled on this farm and remained there for many years. In 1833, the Scotts signed over the farm to Ira Scott, Jr. who agreed to care for his father and step-mother for the remainder of their lives. In 1843, Ira, Jr. signed over the farm to his daughters, Luthera and Lucy. Ira remained on this farm until his death in 1863. In 1869, Nelson Willis lived on this farm (see Beers' Atlas of 1869). In 1881, David Wilder purchased the east half of 5L3R and apparently settled into the house there. In 1890, Wilder leased part of this farm to WH Taft who began a milling operation there. The Wilders apparently removed from

town about that same time. By 1900, the farm had fallen into ruin and succumbed to the elements, but its old foundation still can be seen there.

The West Half: This parcel was sold to Samuel Marble, Jr. in 1796. Marble built a farm along the east side of the old *North Rd.*. The remains of this farm were located beside the old Forrest Tuttle place, near the bridge that crosses Greenwood Brook (now seen as *54 Shepardson Rd.*). The old foundation was filled in and graded over in 1999. The old barn was located on the opposite side of the road on what is now property of Paul Sargent. The Marbles remained in Stratton until about 1812. At some point, probably in 1807, Samuel's parents moved in with them. The older couple remained on the farm for several years. In 1826, Marble sold this farm to Moses Stacy. Stacy may have resided there briefly with the Marbles, but in 1828, he sold this lot to Isaac Shepardson. Shepardson's son, Isaac Shepardson, Jr., apparently lived there with the Marbles. Samuel Marble sold this lot in 1834 and he died in 1836. Next, Amos Scranton purchased the west half of 3L5R and settled there briefly. Scranton lost the farm in a judgment against him. In 1838, William Cummings acquired this farm. The following year, he sold it to his daughter Lorena. The Cummings probably settled on this lot with their daughter. Lorena married Freeman Wyman in 1842. At that time, the Wymans and the Cummings probably lived together on this parcel. Lorena and her husband sold the west half of 3L5R to Freeman's brother, Amasa Wyman, in 1844. Amasa probably settled there until 1846. That year, Amasa sold it back to Freeman Wyman, who then sold it to William G. Howard, their uncle. The Howards lived on this farm through 1860, but moved from town shortly after that time. By 1869, Isaac Shepardson, Jr. again had settled on this farm. It appears that Calvin Shepardson, possibly a relative, resided there in 1880 and in 1900, Calvin's widow, Helen, lived their with her family. The house apparently was abandoned before 1910 and it fell into ruin after that time.

Schoolhouse #2 was built on 5L3R. A schoolhouse stood on the northwest side of the *West Jamaica Rd. / Shepardson Rd.* intersection. In 1901 and 1902 a new schoolhouse was built to replace the old building. It was built on the southeast side of the road, across from the intersection. This schoolhouse became the "Town Hall" in the 1930s and early 1940s. It still exists as a privately owned camp – *258 West Jamaica Rd.*

Charles and Sadie Samson settled on 3L5R on the northeast corner of the intersection, probably in the 1930s. Later, their son "Stub" Samson established a mill on the brook near there and settled into his parents' home. Stub Samson and his wife, Ruth, remained in Stratton for most of the remainder of their lives. Stub died in 1991. After his death, the house was intentionally burned. In recent times, this lot has been minimally subdivided and several homes have been built within it, along *Shepardson Rd.* and the *West Jamaica Rd.*

5L4R

This lot was designated as an original right of William Parson, named upon Stratton's Charter. It includes the end of *Shepardson Rd.* approximately where the road bends sharply to the west. *Forest Road 345* extends westward across this lot as it curves to 5L4R's northwest corner. Chicken Brook (now referred to as Ball Brook) flows down into this lot's northwest side and through to its southeast side.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780 and Thurston sold it to Oliver Morsman in 1782. Morsman, one of Stratton's first settlers, built his house on this lot. His first home may have been a log home on the west half of the lot. In 1787, he sold this half to Nathan Patch. A cellar hole exists there, approximately a half-mile west of the Batchellor farm, on the north side of *Forest Road 345*.

The East Half: Morsman apparently built a frame home on the east half of the lot before 1788. This house stood on the north side of the road. Its remains still can be seen beside the gate at the end of *Shepardson Rd.*, while the larger barn foundation exists just east of the house. Morsman sold this lot to Nathan Patch in 1788 and the town built a road passed this house in 1790. About this same time, a corn mill was constructed on Chicken Brook near the border with 4L4R. The remains of this mill can be seen along the brook.

In 1791, Jacob Batchellor purchased the east half of 5L4R. He settled into the house there and operated the mill as well as a blacksmith shop at this location. Batchellor sold this farm to his sons in 1808 and it remained in the Batchellor family for several more years. In 1822, this lot was sold to Sanford Holmes, who settled on the farm there. Holmes set aside a cemetery in 1827 – an acre lot, located east of the barn and on a knoll overlooking the brook. This burying ground since has been forgotten and no gravestones remain there. It appears that it existed near the current road, where gravel since has been taken out of the knoll. Holmes sold the east half of 5L4R to John Glazier in 1827. Glazier's daughter and son-in-law, Lucy and Nelson B. Jones, settled on the farm and lived there through 1830. Eventually, Glazier settled on this lot. In 1839, Glazier sold this parcel to Tyler Waite. That same year, Waite sold this parcel to Charles Fay, who settled there. The Fays spent their last years in this house. Charles is shown as the owner of this house on McClellan's Map of 1856. By 1864, Fay's son-in-law, Edwin Grout, was head of the household. The Grouts remained on this farm for many years and abandoned it in 1902. The buildings remained for many years and they were used as a place for hikers to park their carriages before hiking up the Stratton Mountain Club trail. A map dated 1921 indicates a house still existed there at that time, but it has since succumbed to the elements.

The West Half: Meanwhile, the west half of 5L4R was sold at vendue, but remained with the Patch family. Descriptions of the road that connected this farm to the Town Common indicate that Jacob Batchellor (probably Jacob Jr.) lived there in 1800 and Josiah Lyon lived in this house in 1809. Nathan Patch probably resided there after Batchellor and before Lyon. Patch died in 1808.

In 1803, Asa Pratt bought 50 acres of the north part of the west half of 5L4R, and in 1810, Susannah Gale of Worcester purchased the remainder of the west half. Susannah apparently settled in the Patch house with John Coes at that time. Gale and Coes were married soon after that time. They remained in Stratton until about 1820, then moved to Arlington. John apparently died soon after and Susannah married Ira Scott, Sr.. Susannah sold an acre of the lot to Austin Bissell, who built a furnace on the lot in 1823. She sold the rest to her son-in-law, Lyman Batchellor. It remains unclear who lived in the dwelling there during those years. Susannah reacquired the lot and finally sold it in 1833. In 1834, Jesse Wilbur bought this parcel and apparently settled there. William Knight probably settled there about 1837 and remained thereon until 1839. Joseph Packard probably was the next to settle his family on this lot, doing so in 1841. By 1856, Alonzo Robinson had settled on the west half of 5L4R. Henry Knapp purchased this lot and sold it to Hiram Draper by 1869. Draper settled there at that time, but moved away before 1870. A map drawn about 1900 does not show a house on this parcel, although another map, drawn in 1921, indicates that an old house still existed there. This dwelling has since succumbed to the elements.

Currently, all of 5L4R belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

5L5R

This lot was designated as an original right of John Downing, named upon Stratton's Charter. It includes the end of *Forest Road 345* that extends from *Shepardson Rd.* Chicken Brook (or Ball Brook as it is now called) flows across its northeast corner. In 1784, the *Great Road* from Jamaica to Bennington cut across this lot and, supposedly, Stratton's earliest public cemetery was located here.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half of Stratton, including this lot to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1790, Alexander had to repurchase this lot from John Downing of Williamstown, Massachusetts, who claimed that it was his original right. Meanwhile, in 1784, Abraham Rugg purchased 5L5R and built a farm on the west half. He sold the east half to Nathan Patch in 1788 and moved from Stratton. In 1794, Rugg sold the west half of this lot to the Stones, although the Stones had already acquired it through a tax-sale. That same year, Jacob Ames purchased this farm and settled there. Ames moved away in 1796. In

1797, Alexander Joslin apparently settled here, but he did not purchase this parcel.

In 1798, Thomas Williams apparently resided on the east half of this lot. 5L5R exchanged hands several times before James Potter settled there in 1811. Potter and his family remained on this farm until about 1814. It is unclear if anyone settled on this lot immediately after the Potters left town. In 1832, Ebenezer Allen purchased 30 acres of the east half of 5L5R and may have settled thereon for a few years. In 1842, Joseph Packard, Jr. purchased this same lot and settled there. By 1856, no one lived on 5L5R. No development has occurred there since and, currently, all of 5L5R falls within the National Forest.

5L6R

This lot was designated as an original right of Oliver Lyman, named upon Stratton's Charter. The *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* cuts across 5L6R's southwest corner. In 1790, three roads converged on this lot – the *North Rd.*, the *South Rd.* and the *Somerset Rd.* The *Somerset Rd.* headed south from Hale Bridge, as it was called. Apparently, this bridge crossed the East Branch of Meadow Brook (Torrey Brook), west of the convergence of the other two roads.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half of Stratton, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1800, the descendants of Oliver Lyman sold this lot to Asahel Strong. Strong sold it in 1805; however, neither of these transactions appears to have been credible. Before those transactions, another series of land sales established the true ownership of this lot. In 1782, Thayer sold to Jonathan Hawes, who sold to John Campbell that same year. In 1790, Campbell sold 5L6R to James Haile of Putney, Vermont. Haile died and several of his children had this lot divided among them. James' son, John, also passed away and his share was divided further between his sons, Nathan and Richard. Phineas White purchased all of this lot from the Hailes in 1818 and 1819. It appears that no one resided on 5L6R before that time.

Timothy Richardson purchased the west half and 50 acres of the east half of 5L6R in 1821 and settled there. The house apparently was located midway between the east and west lines of 5L6R, and along the road. An old foundation exists beside the current path of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, where an old path of the Long Trail once existed. Richardson, his wife and his sons resided in this house for several years. The Richardsons moved away in the first years of the 1830s. It is unclear who might have resided on this lot for the next twenty years.

Hudson Grout purchased 50 acres on the northeast corner of 5L6R from Phineas White in 1824. A map made in 1921 indicates that there was an old foundation on this parcel. This was likely the remains of Hudson Grout's dwelling. In 1851, the east half of 5L6R was purchased by Dennis Tennant,

who briefly may have settled in either this dwelling or perhaps in the Richardson dwelling.

It seems likely that the dwelling in the northeast corner would have been abandoned about the same time that the *Stratton Turnpike* was completed; thus, Tennant probably settled into the Richardson house. Before 1856, Chester Allen settled into the old Richardson place and he probably remained there until his death in 1877. A map drawn about 1900 indicated that the Allen place still remained there, while a map drawn in 1921 called the old house the Dunlap place. Chester's daughter, Sarah, had married John Dunlap. Their children still may have owned this old farm at that time.

This land has since been property of the Somerset Land Co. used as timberland. Currently, it is part of the National Forest.

5L7R

This lot was designated as an original right of Benoni Danks, named upon Stratton's Charter. The *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* cuts across the center of this lot and its junction with the *Grout Pond Access Rd.* is located a very short distance from 5L7R's western boundary.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1785, Samuel and John Boutell purchased the west half of 5L7R. Samuel settled on the west half of this lot. His home was located a short distance east of what is now the *Grout Pond Access Rd.*, on the west side of Meadow Brook (Torrey Brook) and on the north side of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* The old foundation is barely distinguishable in an overgrown clearing along the trail east of the Kelly Stand parking area. In 1791, Boutell repurchased this lot at a vendue. Boutell, one of Stratton's most prominent citizens at that time, remained on this farm for most of his life. In his later years, after the death of his first wife, Samuel married his neighbor, the widow Jane Hill. Jane settled on this lot, but in 1819/20, they sold the farm on 5L7R to Phineas and John Alden and moved back to Jane's farm. Phineas Alden, Samuel's son-in-law, settled into the farmhouse there for about two years. In 1821, Phineas sold this farm to Paul Wheeler of Wardsboro and removed to Dover, Vermont. By 1826, Luther Torrey settled into the Boutell farmhouse and he established a tavern within his home, which he kept for many years. In July 1840, Daniel Webster stayed at Torrey's Tavern, following his historical speech at Stratton, which took place just a few hundred yards west of the tavern. In 1841, Torrey finally purchased this parcel, along with his son, Orrin. The Torreys probably gave up the tavern business in 1845. At that time, Luther and Orrin went into the lumbering business. Luther died in 1851 and his widow remarried and moved out of Stratton in 1854. The dwelling known as Torrey's Tavern apparently was abandoned at that time and succumbed to the elements in the years that followed. In the early 1900s, a sign existed along

the road, stating that Webster had slept in the tavern that once had stood there.

Meanwhile in 1786, James Haile of Putney, Vermont purchased the east half of 5L7R. It appears that Haile may have developed this lot. Hudson Grout apparently settled into a house on the east half of 5L7R about 1829. That year, Grout had a license to operate an inn. In 1830, it appears that Ebenezer Allen and his wife settled in with the Grouts and, in that same year, Allen received a license to run this inn. Phineas White purchased the east half of 5L7R in 1830 and apparently allowed the Grouts and Allens to remain there. This was called the Hudson Grout house when the road to Sunderland was discontinued in 1832, after the turnpike was built. Ebenezer Allen apparently settled in with the Grouts and obtained a license to run an inn there in 1830. Ebenezer Allen may have continued to reside here for many years. In 1844, he purchased this lot from Phineas White. The house on this lot remained in the Allen family for many years. Following Ebenezer, Sr.'s death in 1854, Ebenezer, Jr. became head of this household. In 1851, he had received a license to sell liquor and probably ran a tavern from his home. McClellan's Map of 1856 and Beers' Atlas of 1869 show Ebenezer Allen still owning this lot; however, by 1869, Allen had moved to Pike Hollow. The east half of 5L7R continued to be known as the Allen place for many years. A map drawn in 1921 shows that a house may have been standing on this site, but it has since succumbed to the elements. The old foundation can be seen on the west side of *Forest Road 341's* intersection with the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*. The old barn associated with this farm was located on the south side of the main road.

5L8R

This lot was designated as an original right of Joseph Pincheon, named upon Stratton's Charter. The *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* cuts across the center of this lot and the East Branch of the Deerfield River flows along its western boundary.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780.

The East Half: In 1784, Joel Hale of Leominster, Massachusetts purchased the east half of this lot and he established a farm thereon. The farmhouse apparently was located on the south side of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, directly across from the present site of the Webster Memorial. Before 1800, Hale moved out of Stratton. This lot was acquired by Matthew and Valentine Randall, probably in 1806. They sold it to Benjamin Rider in 1811 and Rider sold it to Joshua Greenwood in 1820. This lot often was referred to as the Greenwood lot, although it does not seem that he ever settled there. In 1831, Greenwood sold the east half of 5L7R to Eli Hale. Hale or his brother, Elias, may have settled on this lot. By 1840, this lot was part of a 300-acre clearing

owned by Phineas White. That year, the Whig Party of Vermont's First Congressional District held its convention on this site, across the road from the Hale farm. An estimated 15,000 people attended this convention to hear Daniel Webster speak.

In 1841, Hiram Baldwin purchased this lot and probably settled there. In 1849, the Baldwins sold this lot and left Stratton. By 1856, the east half of 5L8R was abandoned. The farmhouse apparently still stood there and a log cabin of the Whig convention still remained there, beside a lone tamarack tree. By 1869, Jane Grout, widow of Pliny Fisk Grout, had settled into the old Joel Hale farm. Beers' Atlas of 1869, indicated that Chester Holden owned a dwelling on the north side of the road across from the Hale farm. This may have been the log cabin on the convention grounds.

The West Half: This parcel exchanged hands several times, but apparently it was not developed until 1801. That year, Benjamin Hawkes and Daniel Wetherbee purchased a small parcel on the west side of 5L8R and built a mill there near the road. These gentlemen remained in Stratton for only a brief time. This mill probably continued to operate for many years. The property exchanged hands several times, but most of the owners were not Stratton residents. During the 1840s, Calvin and Orrin Torrey, Hudson Grout and Stephen Forrester all had bought and sold part of the west half of 5L8R. In the 1870s, John F. Hubbard and Albert Metcalf operated a mill on this site. In the late 1870s, they sold this mill to EW Bowker. In 1880, Bowker sold this site to Joel F. Grout. The mill became known as the Grout Job or officially – *Joel F. Grout & Sons' Saw and Shingle-Mill and Chair-Stock Factory*. Joel sold the mill to his sons, Joel F., Jr. and Edgar Irving, in 1885. The Grout Brothers operated the mill until 1902. During those years, the mill site developed into a large complex, housing many workers. Schoolhouse #3 also was moved from its original site westward onto this complex, probably in the 1890s and operated as a school until 1902.

After 1902, the site kept the name Grout Job. It continued to be used as a lumbering camp for many years, but it did not retain the village atmosphere it held as property of the Grouts.

Another business that used this site collected ferns that were transported south to New York and Boston. Several small buildings were constructed to house these workers. Since the 1920s, 5L8R has exchanged hands several times, mainly as timberlands. Currently, the Appalachian Trail and Long Trail cross the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* at the site of the old mill complex.

Currently, this area is property of the Green Mountain National Forest with exception of a one-acre parcel surrounding the Webster Memorial. This acre was part of the lands held by the American Realty Company in 1940. That year, it was deeded to the Historical Society of Windham County. In 1954, it was deeded to the Vermont Historic Sites Commission and in 1999 it was deeded to the town.



The Grout Job
The Grout's house in foreground with the Boardinghouse behind it

5L9R

This lot was designated as an original right of Joel Hunt, named upon Stratton's Charter. The *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* cuts across the center of this lot, the East Branch of the Deerfield River flows along its eastern boundary, while Black Brook passes by its southwest corner and the Long Trail cuts across this lot heading north to Stratton Pond.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold half of Stratton, including this lot, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot was a timber lot associated for the most part with the mill site known as the Grout Job. Currently, 5L9R belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

6L1R

This lot was designated as an original right of Benoni Danks, named upon Stratton's Charter. *Mountain Rd.* progresses north and south across this lot.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. Even though, in 1784, the first road across Stratton began on this lot on the Jamaica border, this lot exchanged hands several times over before it was developed.

In 1802, Joel Estabrook purchased all of 6L1R. Estabrook owned this farm for many years and lived there most of that time. He sold this farm to his son-in-law, Warner Thayer, about 1840. In 1841, Thayer agreed to deed the farm to Rollin Witt, if Witt paid the full amount by 1847. Witt settled there at that time and paid off the farm by 1847. In 1848, Witt leased this farm to James Copeland, who settled his family thereon. McClellan's Map of 1856 shows the farmhouse standing on the west side of the road. Copeland probably remained there until his death in 1867. By 1869, Nathaniel Hart resided in the dwelling there (see Beers' Atlas of 1869). By the turn of the century, the farmhouse was abandoned and soon succumbed to the elements. 6L1R has since been minimally subdivided and developed.

6L2R

This lot was designated as an original right of John Holden, named upon Stratton's Charter.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1784, Stratton's first major road, *the Bennington Rd.*, cut across this lot in an east – west direction. Edward Rawson purchased this land in 1784, but he had to repurchase it from the original grantee, John Holden of Mendon, Massachusetts in 1788. It appears that this lot was never developed. It was likely a timber lot and may have been associated with the surrounding farms.

6L3R

This lot was designated as an original right of Nathaniel Cudworth, named upon Stratton's Charter. An old road cut across this lot's northwest corner, while another progressed midway on its south line and up to the first road.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. David Cook purchased the north half of 6L3R in 1794, along with half of 7L3R. Cook built his farm on 6L3R, beside the road and opposite a farm on 6L4R. Cook sold this lot to his son, Arnold Cook, and son-in-law, Archibald Pratt. Pratt sold his share to Arnold Cook and Cook sold it all to Isaac Shepardson in 1808. In 1812, John Shepardson purchased the northwest corner from Isaac Shepardson. The north half of 6L3R remained a part of the Shepardson farm for many years. Evidently, it was sold to Joseph Potter, a nonresident, in 1821. Members of the Shepardson family probably occupied this lot at various times. In 1849, James Moran apparently resided in the old Cook farmhouse.

In January 1795, Jacob Batchellor, who lived on the adjacent 5L4R, purchased the south half of 6L3R. Two months later, he sold this half to Cook and Cook sold 50 acres of this south half to his son, Arnold. In 1805, Batchellor had acquired the entire lot at a tax-sale. He sold some of this lot back to Arnold Cook in 1807. It appears that the Benjamin Reid family

resided on the south part of 6L3R between 1803 and 1807. A road built in 1804 connected this farm to David Cook's farm on the north part of this lot. By 1821, Sanford Holmes had acquired this same parcel and sold it. The Kimball family, relatives of Moses Stacy, owned the south half of this lot in the 1820s and 30s. They sold it to Orrin Eddy in 1840, who may have settled there. Eddy sold this lot to Justus Holden in 1845 and the following year, Holden sold it to Hiram Knapp. Here, the Knapps settled and remained for several years. By 1856, Hiram's son, S. Knapp, probably Squire Henry Knapp, was considered head of this household. Hiram died in 1859 and the Knapps all went their own ways following the Civil War. By 1867, Preston Knapp had purchased the farm, but he sold it to N. W. Mason the following year (see Beers' Atlas of 1869). Since that time, this lot has become timberland. Remains of the old farm can be seen along the old road that headed north from *Shepardson Rd.* (see Road #26 in Chapter VII). Currently, no development exists on this lot.

6L4R

This lot was designated as an original right of William Lyman, named upon Stratton's Charter. An old road progressed down along 6L4R's eastern border and Greenwood Brook flows across this lot from the northwest corner to its southeastern corner.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands several times before anyone settled there. It was sold for back-taxes in 1795, but by that time, Samuel Matthews apparently had settled on the northeast quarter of this lot. He purchased it in June of that year. The remainder of 6L4R was purchased by Jacob Batchellor and Nathan Patch at that same time. Matthews probably built the farm on this parcel on the west side of the old road there. Matthews sold this farm in 1797 and left Stratton. The northeast quarter of 6L4R exchanged hands several times between nonresidents before it was purchased in 1803 by Archibald Pratt and Arnold Cook. Cook may have settled his family on the old Matthews farm. In 1808, Pratt and Cook sold this lot to Isaac Shepardson and in 1812, Isaac settled on this farm. He apparently remained there for the remainder of his life. His son, Isaac, also resided on this lot for several years.

Other Stratton residents who purchased parts of 6L4R at one time or another before 1850 were Joel Hale, Orrin P. Stiles, Jotham Pike and Caroline Fay, but no one apparently settled there after the Shepardsons were gone. Since that time, this lot has been used as timberland. Currently, 6L4R falls within the Green Mountain National Forest.

6L5R

This lot was designated as an original right of the Church of England. Chicken Brook (Ball Brook) flows across this lot from the northwest corner down through the southwest corner and into 5L5R.

This lot was not claimed by Giles Alexander because it was among the leaselands (see leaselands). Following the establishment of the settlement, however, the proprietors rewarded Timothy Morsman with 6L5R for being one of the first to settle Stratton. Morsman sold 6L5R to a nonresident in 1787 and it was again sold in 1793. After that time, 6L5R once again was considered a Public Right. In 1846, Charles Fay made an agreement with the Selectmen of Stratton to lease 6L5R for 20 years, provided he clear three-quarters of an acre each year and seed it with grass for 20 years. This agreement apparently was not carried out for the full 20-year period. By 1921, 6L5R was leased by the Champlain Realty Co.. Currently, it falls within the Green Mountain National Forest.

6L6R

This lot was designated as an original right of Martin Phelps, Sr., named upon Stratton's Charter. The northern line of this lot falls along the southern foot of Little Stratton Mountain. An old section of the Long Trail also progressed north to south across this lot.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands several times over the next decades, but it apparently was not settled on at an early time. In 1821, Abel Grout, Jr., who owned an adjacent farm, purchased the west half of this lot. 6L6R was associated with that farm for many years.

In 1827, Zerah Ford purchased the east half of 6L6R. Apparently, he settled on this lot and remained there until about 1836. Hiram Baldwin purchased six acres of the east half of 6L6R in 1839. Baldwin may have lived there also for a short time. He, apparently, was the last to establish a dwelling on 6L6R. The east half of this lot was purchased by the Fuller family in 1842, but it seems, they did not settle there.

6L6R has since been used as timberland and it is currently part of the Green Mountain National Forest.

6L7R

This lot was designated as an original right of William Brattle, named upon Stratton's Charter. The northern line of this lot falls along the southern foot of Little Stratton Mountain. The old road called *North Rd.* passed through the southern half of this lot as it progressed around the mountain. Currently, the Long Trail progresses across this lot from the southwest to the northeast.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1786, Clark and Eliab Stone

purchased this lot and apparently settled there. Eliab Stone died at Stratton, while Clark remained in Stratton until 1796. That year, Clark Stone split the lot and sold the east half to Andrew Adams and the west half to John Adams.

The East Half: Andrew Adams may have settled here for a brief time, but he sold this lot to Samuel Blodgett within the year and moved away. Blodgett settled his family on the east half. This farm, apparently, is the same that can be seen on McClellan's Map of 1856 as A. Grout. In 1800, Blodgett sold a 30-acre parcel of this farm (apparently with the house) to his son, Samuel, Jr., while the remaining 70 acres were sold to his son-in-law, Ebenezer Vinton of Wardsboro. Blodgett purchased some of Vinton's land, but he sold all of his lands – 55 acres – back to Vinton in 1803. Vinton sold this parcel to Abel Grout in 1807. This lot remained in the Grout family until the death of Jacob B. Grout in 1874. His widow sold it to the Sage family, but apparently, the Sages never lived there. It was abandoned after that time. The remains of this old farm apparently are the same found in the southeast corner of this lot, a short distance up the first snowmobile trail that splits off to the east from *Forest Road 341* (near a large iron culvert) and on the north side of this trail.

The West Half: The west half of 6L7R was purchased by Thomas Hill in 1796. Hill settled on this lot. The old foundation along the Appalachian Trail just west of the trail's intersection with *Forest Road 341* is the remains of Mr. Hill's home. Following Thomas's death in 1807, his sons, Eber and Jonathan kept the farm. Thomas's widow remarried to Samuel Boutell, a neighbor, and lived on his farm until 1820. That year, Samuel and Jane settled in with Jane's children on the west half of 6L7R. Samuel died in 1822. Jane and her sons remained on this farm for many years. They were called "*charges of the town*" and several citizens attempted to care for them. In 1834, Luther Purrington took on this task with an agreement that he would get their farm after the Hills had died. By 1836, all of the Hills had died and Purrington claimed title of this farm. He settled there, where he remained until about 1839. That year, George Pond purchased this parcel and settled there. In 1840, Hiram Baldwin purchased this lot and may have settled into the old farmhouse. He probably was the last to live on this portion of 6L7R. Melvin Knowlton purchased these lots about 1844.

After 1874, 6L7R evidently became timberland. A map made in 1921 shows two old pastures that still existed at that time. Apparently, the Hill farm had existed in the vicinity of the northwest pasture and the Grout farm had stood near the southeast pasture. In 1921, the New England Power Co. owned this lot. Currently, 6L7R belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

6L8R

This lot was designated as an original right of Jonathan Basscomb, named upon Stratton's Charter. The East Branch of the Deerfield River runs down along this lot's western border.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times over the years, but it appears that no one settled there. It is currently part of the Green Mountain National Forest.

7L1R

This lot was designated as an original right of Richard Wibird, named upon Stratton's Charter. *Mountain Rd.* runs through the west half of this lot, north to south, while *Forrester / Half Mile Rd.* extends down from 8L1R into the east half of this lot and into Jamaica.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. Samuel Marble purchased this lot in 1782. The Marbles may have settled on this lot at that time. It was sold at vendue in 1792, but Marble reacquired the lot and sold the east half to his son, Samuel, Jr., in 1793 and the west half to Sampson Bixby in 1794. Samuel Marble, Jr. sold the east half of 7L1R in 1797. For several years after that time, this lot exchanged hands many times and it was sold at vendue on occasion. In 1824, David Rice purchased the west half of 7L1R and settled there. The Rice family remained on this lot until about 1843. In 1833, Ezekiel Estabrook also purchased 12 acres of this half. In 1845, John S. Williams purchased Rice's lot and apparently settled there. John moved from town about 1848 and his brother, Thomas, acquired the lot and settled thereon. By 1856, Thomas Williams had moved from Stratton. McClellan's Map does not indicate that a farmhouse existed on this side of the lot then. By that time, Schoolhouse #4 existed there, along the west side of *Mountain Rd.*, where its foundation can still be seen. By 1869, F. F. Cook resided on this lot on the east side of *Mountain Rd.*. Cook may have settled into the Rice farmhouse. Maps after that time no longer indicate that a dwelling existed on that site.

Meanwhile, the east half of 7L1R apparently remained unsettled until the Hudson family purchased this parcel in 1838. Benjamin and Sarah Hudson settled there at that time and remained there for many years. Benjamin died after 1840 and Sarah maintained the farm with the help of her sons. One lease from Benjamin Hudson, Jr. allowed his mother, Sarah, to keep the east half of 7L1R as long as she kept the buildings in repair and he allowed her to have enough wood cut to make 60,000 shingles. The farm remained in the Hudson family until James Hudson died in 1855. At that time, James' wife, Mary, acquired the farm and remarried to George Eager. In 1867, Leander Allen purchased this farm from the Eagers. The Allens settled on this farm and kept it for many years. The farmhouse remained intact into the 1970s.

At that time, Walter Forrester, the current owner, tore it down and built a new house on the site, now seen as *124 Forrester / Half Mile Rd.*. The Forresters remain there to the present.



Mrs. OH Palmer and child at the Leander Allen Farm



The Doug Forrester Family at the Leander Allen farm on 7L1R

Photos courtesy of the Forrester family

7L2R

This lot was designated as an original right of Curtis Leomis, named upon Stratton's Charter. This lot is situated slightly west of *Mountain Rd.*. At one time, an old road cut across this lot from west to east, within its northern half.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1786, John Greenwood of Sutton, Massachusetts purchased the west half of 7L2R and built there. Later, he acquired the remainder of this lot. About 1788, Greenwood brought his family to Stratton and settled on the west half of 7L2R. In 1789, the town built a road passed his house, down to the Morsman house (at the end of what is now *Shepardson Rd.*). The Greenwoods may have remained on this farm until about 1823, but it is also likely that they moved to the east half of 10L2R in 1809. Since 1823, 7L2R has changed hands several times, but apparently it was not settled upon again.

7L3R

This lot was designated as an original right of Joel Lee, named upon Stratton's Charter. In 1789, a road was built across this lot from its southwest corner to about the midpoint of its eastern border.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1786, Jonas Woodward purchased the east half of 7L3R and built a farm there. Woodward maintained this farm until 1816. That year, he sold this farm to General David Holmes. Another David Holmes, apparently the General's nephew, settled into the Woodward farm and remained there until about 1821. By 1826, Jonathan Morse had settled upon this farm with his family and in 1829, Morse's brother-in-law, Baxter Lyon, apparently settled into an adjacent farmhouse built on this same lot. Morse died in 1835. His family and the Lyons moved from Stratton that same year. In 1837, Thomas Stacey purchased this farm and settled there. Stacy remained on this farm until 1841.

Meanwhile in 1787, David Cook purchased the west half of 7L3R along with the north part of 6L3R. Cook settled into a house along the road in 6L3R. David mortgaged the west half of 7L3R on occasion and sold it to his son, Arnold, in 1806. Arnold may have settled there briefly. David Cook reacquired this parcel and he sold it to John Shepardson in 1812. Shepardson apparently settled there about 1814 and he remained there until 1816. At that time, Shepardson sold this farm to William Cobb, who apparently did not settle in Stratton. Cobb sold this parcel in 1822 to Joseph Potter, another nonresident. After 1816, this farm may have been lived in for a few years, but after 1830, it apparently was abandoned.

7L4R

This lot was designated as an original right of Nathaniel Burt, named upon Stratton's Charter.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. Phineas Lamb purchased 100 acres of the east part of this lot with 50 acres of the west half in 1790 and settled there in 1791. Lamb probably built a farm in the southeast corner of this lot. In 1791, he sold 50 acres on the west side to Moses Garfield. In 1792, Lamb sold 50 acres of the southeast corner to Elkanah Miller of Stratton. Miller probably did not settle there. Instead, Lamb remained in Stratton (probably on this same farm) until 1793. That year, Lamb sold 100 acres of this lot to Moses Garfield. Miller sold his 50 acres to Nathaniel Garfield in 1795. Moses and Nathaniel Garfield probably settled on 7L4R about 1795 – possibly within the same dwelling Lamb occupied on the southeast corner. Moses sold the last of his holdings – 56 acres of the northeast corner of 7L4R – in 1796 and apparently moved from town. Nathaniel sold the southeast corner and moved in 1801. Archibald Pratt purchased this parcel in 1803 and apparently settled thereon. He sold it in 1808 to Isaac Shepardson, along with the adjacent parcel in 6L4R. Some members of the Shepardson family may have settled into the farm there, but Isaac Shepardson resided on 6L4R. In 1834, Isaac Shepardson also purchased the northeast quarter of 7L4R and he mortgaged it in 1837. Apparently, this parcel was not lived on. In 1830, the Shepardsons had sold the southeast corner of this lot to Joel Hale. This parcel changed hands several times, but apparently, it was never again settled upon. Since that time, 7L4R probably was used as a timber lot. Currently, it is part of the Green Mountain National Forest.

7L5R

This lot was designated as an original right of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPGFP) (see Leaselands). Currently, 7L5R falls within the Green Mountain National Forest.

7L6R

This lot was designated as an original right of Nathaniel Phelps, Jr., named upon Stratton's Charter. It includes all of Little Stratton Mountain.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands several times among the proprietors, but it was never settled. It has belonged to various timberland companies over the years. Currently, it is part of the Green Mountain National Forest.

7L7R

This lot was designated as an original right of Nathaniel Phelps, Jr., named upon Stratton's Charter. *Forest Road 341* cuts across this lot, north to south.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands several times among the proprietors, but it was never settled. It has belonged to various timberland companies over the years. Currently, it is part of the Green Mountain National Forest.

7L8R

This lot was designated as an original right of Isaac Searl, named upon Stratton's Charter. The East Branch of the Deerfield River flows down along its western border.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands several times among the proprietors, but it was never settled. It has belonged to various timberland companies over the years. Currently, it is part of the Green Mountain National Forest.

8L1R

This lot was designated as an original right of Elisha Mather, named upon Stratton's Charter. *Mountain Rd.* meanders across this lot, north to south and *Forrester / Half Mile Rd.* heads south from *Mountain Rd.* into 7L1R.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands several time and it was sold at a tax-sale in 1795 to Clark Stone. Stone sold this lot to Ezra Estabrook and John Glazier in 1797. Estabrook's and Glazier's wives were sisters. Estabrook settled on the south half of this lot and Glazier settled on the north half. They remained on their respective farms for many years and in 1819, each deeded the other their undivided half of 8L1R so that each man owned his own farm outright.

The South Half: The Estabrooks' farm was located on *Mountain Rd.*, west of that road's intersection with *Forrester / Half Mile Rd.*. The Estabrooks lived out the remainder of their lives on this farm. Before his death, Ezra deeded the farm to his son, Ezekiel, in 1827. Ezekiel also spent his last years on this farm and deeded it to his son, Abel Kidder Estabrook. Abel lived out his short life on this farm. He died in 1867. By 1869, John Dunlap had settled into this farm and remained there through 1870. During the 1870s, Henry Forrester purchased this farm and settled his family thereon. The Forrester family lived on this farm for many years. Henry died in 1916, but the farm remained within the family. The old farmhouse intentionally was burned by the Forresters, Henry's great-grandsons, in the 1960s. The Forresters have since sold some of this farm, including the parcel where the farmhouse had

stood Another house, designated as *468 Mountain Rd.*, was built on this site in 1998/9.

The North Half: The Glaziers' farm was located along a road that ran northwest from *Mountain Rd.*. This road is still used as an access. Another road was built westward toward the Samuel Gleason house in 1801, connecting it to the old *East Rd.* The remains of the old farm's foundation still exist there. The Glaziers remained on this farm for many years. In 1827, John sold the farm to his son, John N. Glazier, but John apparently remained on this lot until his death in 1856. John N. Glazier lived here until 1867. That year, he resettled in Wardsboro. In 1869, Rufus Brooks had settled into the Glazier's old farmhouse. The Brooks remained there until Rufus's death in 1880. Later, this lot was called the Brown farm. Apparently, it was abandoned before 1900 and the dwelling and barns have since succumbed to the elements.

8L1R is privately owned and has been partially subdivided and developed.



The Henry Forrester farm on the south half of 8L1R

Photo courtesy of the Forrester family

8L2R

This lot was designated as the School Lot on Stratton's Charter (See leaselands for early details). In 1791, the town voted to sell the lot with certain requirements for improving the lot, attached to the sale. Timothy Morsman agreed to the terms, but he was unable to fulfill them. In 1795, Samuel Matthews took on the terms. He too was uneasy with the stipulations and gave it up the following year. Next, Samuel Gleason was given a lease of the lot in 1796. Gleason also had trouble with the lot. He was ordered to give up the house there and to turn the land back to the town; however, the Selectmen agreed to lease Gleason the west half of the lot during that same meeting and he apparently remained in the house. He continued to work this lot until 1803. In 1797, Stephen Pratt leased the east half of the School Lot. Over the years, several people leased this lot; however, most owned and lived on adjacent farms. In 1811, the arrangements for lease changed and the owner of the rights to these lots paid the town rent while the rights were bought and sold privately. There is no indication of when the house on this lot was abandoned or who might have lived on the lot. Currently, 8L2R is owned by the Green Mountain Power Co..

8L3R

This lot was designated as an original right of Asael Clapp, Jr., named upon Stratton's Charter.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. Elkanah Miller purchased half of this lot in 1787. He may have settled there, briefly, but it appears he lived elsewhere in Stratton by 1791. That year, David Cook purchased the north half at a vendue and in 1793, Jonas Woodward purchased the south half of this lot at a vendue. After that time, this lot appears to have been associated with the farms on 7L3R and 7L4R. Currently, most of this lot is privately owned, but minimally developed. The Green Mountain National Forest owns a small portion of the northwest corner of this lot.

8L4R

This lot was designated as an original right of Caleb Strong, named upon Stratton's Charter.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. After that time, 8L4R exchanged hands many times, but evidently, it was never settled upon. It has since been a timber lot. It was called the Adams lot on a map made in 1921 and a small camp existed there. Currently, 8L4R is part of the Green Mountain National Forest.

8L5R

This lot was designated as a right to be awarded to the first settled Minister, according to Stratton's Charter (see Leaselands). Apparently, the proprietors wished to put him as close to God as possible, for this lot includes most of the east side of Stratton Mountain, just shy of the top. No minister obtained the lot and no one settled there. It exchanged hands several times before the town considered it a Public Right in 1846. It was leased by the town after that time and apparently it was used as a timber lot. Currently it falls within the Green Mountain National Forest. Porcupine Lodge – the first fire-spotter's cabin on Stratton – would have been located on the west side of 8L5R.

8L6R

This lot was designated as an original right of Spencer Phelps, named upon Stratton's Charter. Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot contains the top of the south peak of Stratton Mountain, where the fire tower stands. 8L6R exchanged hands often and probably went up for sale at every tax-sale held by the town. Obviously, 8L6R was never developed. Currently, it falls within the Green Mountain National Forest.

8L7R

This lot was designated as an original right of William Rawson, named upon Stratton's Charter. *Forest Road 341* cuts across this lot – north to south.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to William McFarland of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. McFarland had to repurchase this lot from the original grantee, William Rawson of Saratoga, New York, in 1784. This lot exchanged hands several times, but it apparently was never developed. This was a timber lot for various mill operations and lumber companies over the years. Currently it is part of the Green Mountain National Forest.

8L8R

This lot was designated as an original right of Samuel Wentworth, named upon Stratton's Charter. The East Branch of the Deerfield River and two of its tributaries flow toward 8L8R's southwest corner.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times over the years, but apparently it remained unsettled. It was a timber lot for various mills and lumber companies over the years. Currently, it belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

9L1R

This lot was designated as an original right of John Smith, Jr., named upon Stratton's Charter. Kidder Brook flows west to east across this lot, very near its northern border and the old *Stratton Rd.*, as it meandered from Stratton into Jamaica and back into Stratton, cut across this lot heading north.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands several times mostly by those that owned adjacent farms. In 1819, the Kidders purchased the east half. The Glaziers purchased 25 acres of this lot in the southwest corner, while Abraham Wheeler also owner an eleven-acre parcel within this lot. It appears that most of 9L1R was not settled upon during those early years. During the 1830s, Jonas Blodgett apparently built a home on the eleven-acre parcel owned by the Wheeler family. This homestead does not appear on McClellan's Map of 1856, but it can be seen on Beers' Atlas of 1869. Currently, this lot is privately owned, but minimally developed.

9L2R

This 160-acre lot was designated as an original right of William Brattle named upon Stratton's Charter. Kidder Brook progresses through this lot, flowing down the Mountain, eastwardly.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1785, Solomon Gale purchased 9L2R and he built a house, probably about 1795. Its remains still can be found north of Kidder Brook and along the trails that progress southwest of North Cemetery. Gale established a sawmill on the brook (probably just within 9L3R). A mine also existed on this lot – apparently an iron mine.

In 1799, Gale sold this lot to Jacob French. French died in 1810 and his family moved away. Shortly after that time, the lot was sold to John Greenwood. In 1816, Jared Howard purchased this lot. By that time, the mill was called a ruin, but the Howards split the mill rights with Greenwood. Howard sold this lot to his brother, Nahor Howard, in 1819. Nahor brought his family to Stratton and settled on this lot at that time. The Howards lived here for many years, where they operated a mill and possibly worked the mine. In 1837, Nahor sold this lot to his son, Warner, and apparently moved away. Warner lived on 10L2R; therefore, the house on 9L2R probably was abandoned when his parents moved from town. In 1841, Warner sold this lot to his uncle Jared Howard and in 1844, Jared sold it to John Underwood. By 1856, the road through this lot had been discontinued. McClellan's Map of 1856 does not show a dwelling on this site. By 1921, this lot was part of the vast holdings of the Champlain Realty Co.. It is undeveloped and some of it belongs to the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort.

9L3R

This 160-acre lot was designated as an original right of Samuel Wentworth, named upon Stratton's Charter. Kidder Brook progresses through this lot and several tributaries feed into the brook here.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780. Solomon Gale purchased this lot in 1788, as an extension of his lands in 9L2R. In 1799, Jacob French bought Gale's lots. Deeds at this time mention that a dam was built on the brook and water was redirected to part of 9L3R. After French's death in 1810, his family moved away and ownership went to his executor, John Greenwood. In 1816, Jared Howard purchased this lot and in 1819, he sold it to his brother, Nahor Howard. In 1832, most of this lot, with the exception of the six-acre mill site, was sold for back-taxes and purchased by Reuben Holton. Holton came to Stratton at that time and may have settled there, but he probably remained there only a year or two. Reuben sold this lot to his brother, Wranslow, in 1835 and Wranslow sold to Bradford Moultrip in 1839. By 1847, William S. Stiles owned this lot. Since that time, 9L3R has been a timber lot for various lumber operations. Currently, it belongs to the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort.

9L4R

This lot was designated as an original right of Mansur Bunbury, named upon Stratton's Charter. Kidder Brook dominates the southern half of this lot, making the terrain of this lot very harsh. Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands on many occasions, mostly at tax-sales. It was never developed, but used as a timber lot by lumber operations such as the Champlain Realty Co.. Currently, 9L4R belongs to the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort.

9L5R

This lot was designated as an original right of Joseph Pincheon named upon Stratton's Charter. The headwaters of Kidder Brook can be found in its southeast corner, at one time, supposedly, this area was surrounded by a growth of 120-ft. spruce. 9L5R's southwest corner falls at the top of Stratton's southern peak, near the fire tower. 9L5R's southern and western border mark the boundary between the Green Mountain National Forest and the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort. Dominated by the mountain, this lot was too rugged for early development.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780. 9L5R exchanged hands on many occasions, mostly at tax-sales. It was never developed, but used as a timber lot. At one time, it was owned by the Connecticut Valley Lumber Co.. Currently, 9L5R is owned by the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort.

9L6R

This lot was designated as an original right of James Hill, named upon Stratton's Charter. Its southeast corner falls at the top of the south peak of Stratton Mountain. The Long Trail progresses across 9L6R from the top of the mountain and down its northwest side, toward Stratton Pond.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780. 9L6R exchanged hands on many occasions, mostly at tax-sales during its early history. It was never developed, but used as a timber lot. At one time, it was owned by the Champlain Realty Co.. Currently, 9L6R belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

9L7R

This lot was designated as an original right of Ruggles Woodbridge, named upon Stratton's Charter. It is located in the middle of Stratton's wilderness, west of Stratton Mountain. *Forest Road 341*, progresses across this lot north to south.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. During its early history, 9L7R exchanged hands on many occasions mostly at tax-sales. It was never developed, but used as a timber lot. At one time it was owned by the Champlain Realty Co.. Currently, 9L7R belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

9L8R

This lot was designated as an original right of Jacob Wendell, named upon Stratton's Charter. Located in Stratton's wilderness, west of Stratton Mountain, it lies slightly east of the headwaters of the East Branch of the Deerfield River.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. Like the surrounding lots, during its early history, 9L8R exchanged hands on many occasions, mostly at tax-sales. It was never developed, but used as a timber lot by local mills, such as the Grout Job and, later, by the large lumber companies. At one time, 9L8R was owned by the Champlain Realty Co.. Currently, it belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

10L1R

This lot was designated as an original right of Elias Lyman, named upon Stratton's Charter. Currently, *County Rd.* extends east to west across this lot between *Mountain Rd.* and *Pikes Falls Rd.*. The old course of the *Mountain Rd.* meandered into Jamaica, then reentered Stratton on the east side of this lot, east of the sharp bend of *County Rd.*, as the old road headed northward to become *Pikes Falls Rd.*

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1786, Jonathan Trask and Francis Kidder of Sutton, Massachusetts purchased all of 10L1R. In 1787, they split the lot in half, Trask taking the west half and Kidder taking the east half.

The East Half: Francis Kidder built a home on the east half of 10L1R, probably on *County Rd.* in the vicinity of what is now *Lost Lane*. In 1792, Francis sold this farm to his son, Abel. Abel became head of this household, but he eventually built another house for his family. This new house was located on what is now the south side of *County Rd.*, at the sharp bend of the road and now seen as *167 County Rd.* The Kidders remained there for many years. In 1826, Abel sold this farm to his son, Ashbel, with the exception of the two acres surrounding his house. Abel died in 1831. Ashbel remained on the family farm until about 1853, when they moved to Illinois. After that time, this parcel was occupied by the Holden family in 1856 and William White's family in 1869. George Hurd settled on this lot in 1905 and remained there for several years. The Charles Holman family settled on this farm in 1933 and remained there for a few years. It has since been called the Smith-Buckley place and it is currently the home of Ross Powers. In 2000, the house was moved to a better site, several yards to the west.

Schoolhouse #1 also was built on this lot, north of the house and opposite the old *Mountain Rd.*, *County Rd.* and what is now *Lost Lane* intersections.



**Ray Jones and Floyd Hurd with a 480 pound bear
at Floyd's parent's home (now 167 County Rd.)**



**George and Lettie Hurd at their home
(now 167 County Rd.)**

Photo courtesy of Elizabeth (Hurd) Greene

The West Half: In 1790, Trask sold the west half of 10L1R to John Waite. Waite settled there that year and built a farm thereon. In 1822, Waite sold this parcel to his son, Calvin, but Calvin passed away in 1823. In 1826, Tyler and Luther Waite obtained a deed for this parcel from their brother-in-law, Silas Gleason. Tyler settled on this parcel and remained there until 1846. Prentis B. Putnam settled into the old Waite farm at that time, but he did not purchase this farm until 1851. The Putnams moved from Stratton sometime after 1860. By 1869, Chester Holden lived on this farm, but he was not there in 1870. By 1900, this farm was abandoned. The old stone chimney stood for many years after the house had decayed away. *County Rd.* was called *Stone Chimney Rd.* for many years until it was changed about 1996 to *County Rd.*, while *North Cemetery Rd.* was wrongly dubbed *Stone Chimney Rd.*. The chimney was removed by loggers about 1995.

Currently, 10L1R has been minimally developed, but it recently has been subdivided and it will probably become considerably developed in the near future.

10L2R

This lot was designated as an original right of Isaac Searl, named upon Stratton's Charter. Currently, *Mountain Rd.* cuts across this lot from its southeast corner to its northeast corner. The *County Rd.* intersection is located about midway north to south on the eastern side of the lot, while *Stone Chimney Rd.* heads west from this point. North Cemetery is located on 10L2R's west side, while the Sunbowl Lodge falls into this lot's northwest corner.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot was purchased by Nehemiah Gale in 1785. Nehemiah's son, Solomon, settled on the east half of 10L2R, probably in 1788. Remains of this old house can be seen on the northwest corner of the *Mountain Rd.* – *Stone Chimney Rd.* intersection. About 1795, Solomon settled on 9L2R. At that time, it appears that Solomon's brother, Rufus Gale settled into the house on the east half of 10L2R. Rufus probably remained there for a few years. In 1799, Gale sold all of 10L2R to John Gleason, who settled there. Gleason built another house on the west half of this lot about 1800 or 1801. The remains of this house can be seen near the gate of North Cemetery, on the north side of the road.

In 1801, John Gleason settled into the new house on the west half and he sold the east half to David Holmes. The Holmes family remained on this lot until 1808 and sold it to Rufus Gale at that time. Rufus' sister, Susannah Gale, along with John Coes may have settled there briefly. In 1809, Gale sold the east half of this lot to John Greenwood. Greenwood may have moved to this lot at that time. In 1826, Greenwood sold this lot and in 1827, it was purchased by Warner Howard. Howard settled there at that time. The Howards apparently remained on this lot until 1841. By 1844, John Underwood owned this parcel, as well as the west half of 10L2R and all of 9L2R. By 1856, Underwood had settled into the house on the east half of 10L2R.

Meanwhile, John Gleason sold the west half to Rufus Gale in 1803. Gale immediately sold this lot to Thomas Millet. Millet apparently settled on this lot at that time and probably remained there until 1815. That year, Millet sold this lot to James Greenwood, son of John Greenwood, who apparently settled there. In 1823, Greenwood sold the northwest 40 acres to Nathaniel Russell, Jr., while the south 40 acres were sold to a nonresident. The Russells probably lived in the house on the west half of 10L2R that year. In 1824, Nathaniel sold out and Ira Russell purchased the same 40 acres. They probably lived in that same house until 1828. That year, this lot was sold to John Underwood. Underwood apparently settled into this house at that time. In 1844, John had purchased the remainder of 10L2R and he settled his family into the house on the east half. At that time, John's son-in-law, William S. Stiles, apparently settled into the house beside the cemetery. The

Underwoods remained in Stratton on this lot through 1856, but they had all moved away by 1869. William Stiles may have left after his wife's death in 1852.

By 1869, Lester B. White resided on the east half of 10L2R, but he moved away before 1870. Lewis Foote resided on the west half of 10L2R beside the cemetery at that time, but they moved from town before 1880. By 1900, 10L2R no longer was occupied. It belonged to the Champlain Realty Co. in 1921 and it was a timber lot for many years. Currently, it belongs to the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort, while North Cemetery has been turned over to the town.

10L3R

This lot was designated as an original right of Thomas Sweat, named upon Stratton's Charter. Currently, this lot is covered by some of the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort's trails.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to William McFarland of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history – mostly during tax-sales. It has been used as a timber lot and it was owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for many years. A map drawn in 1921 indicates that this company had a lumber camp on 10L3R at that time. Currently, this lot belongs to the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort.

10L4R

This lot was designated as an original right of Charles Clapp, named upon Stratton's Charter. Currently, this lot is covered by some of the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort's trails.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history – mostly during tax-sales. It has been used as a timber lot and it was owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for many years. Currently, this lot belongs to the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort.

10L5R

This lot was designated as an original right of Samuel Blodgett, named upon Stratton's Charter. It is dominated by the north peak of Stratton Mountain, located in this lot's southwest corner. Currently, 10L5R is covered by the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort's trails.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history – mostly during tax-sales. It has been used as a timber lot and it was owned by the

Connecticut Valley Lumber Co.. Currently, this lot belongs to the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort.

10L6R

This lot was designated as an original right of Richard Stainer, named upon Stratton's Charter. The Long Trail cuts across this lot's southwest corner as it progresses from the mountain down to Stratton Pond.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history – mostly during tax-sales. It has been used as a timber lot and it was once owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for many years. Currently, this lot belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

10L7R

This lot was designated as an original right of Joel Lee, named upon Stratton's Charter. The Long Trail cuts across this lot from its east-southeast side to its north-northwest side, as the trail progresses from the mountain, down to Stratton Pond. *Forest Road 341* also cuts across this lot's northwest corner.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history – mostly during tax-sales. It has been used as a timber lot and it was once owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for many years. Currently, this lot belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

10L8R

This lot was designated as an original right of Oliver Lyman, named upon Stratton's Charter. *Forest Road 341* progresses through this lot's southeast corner.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. In 1799, Oliver Lyman, the original grantee, who was living in Charlotte, Vermont at that time, claimed his rights to this lot and sold them to Asahel Strong, also of Charlotte. Strong also sold the lot in 1805, but no one came to claim it. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history – mostly during tax-sales. It has been used as a timber lot and it was once owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for many years. Currently, this lot belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

11L1R

This lot was designated as an original right of Nathaniel Noyse, named upon Stratton's Charter. This lot contains the *Pikes Fall Rd. – County Rd.* intersection and most of *Acer Rd.*

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands several times before it was purchased by Abraham Wheeler of Bolton, Massachusetts in 1807. The Wheelers settled in Stratton on this lot in 1814. Abraham passed away in 1824, but his widow, Zeresh, continued to live on this farm for many years. She passed away or left Stratton between 1847 and 1850.

McClellan's Map of 1856 does not show a dwelling on this site, nor does Beers' Atlas of 1869; however, this property was owned by Nelson F. Ray in 1888, who had a sugarhouse on this lot. Ray sold to Fred Hulett in 1890 and Hulett sold 11L1R to Henry K. Pike. Pike evidently resided on this lot until his death in 1894. Henry's widow, Sarah, remained on this farm with her daughter and son-in-law, Sarah and Royal Clayton. In 1902, Sarah sold this farm to Royal Clayton, who remained there for many years. In 1926, Clayton sold this lot to Mason H. Jones and Jones sold it to Raymond Styles in 1932. Styles lived on this farm until he sold it to Paul Brazer in 1944. The Brazers settled into the house on this lot and they remained there for the remainder of their lives.

In 1998, after the death of Madeline Brazer, the old house on 11L1R, briefly seen as *319 Pikes Falls Rd.*, was torn down. Much of this lot now belongs to the Brazer's daughter and son-in-law, Caroline and Stewart Underwood, who have built upon this lot and continue to live there.



**The Brazer's house
on *Pikes Falls Rd.***

Photo courtesy of Carolyn Underwood



**The Brazer's house on *Pikes Falls Rd.*,
probably when it belonged to Raymond Styles**

Photo courtesy of Carolyn Underwood

11L2R

This lot was designated as an original right of Samuel Blodgett, named upon Stratton's Charter. *Mountain Rd.* intersects *Brazers Way* on the northwest corner of this lot and the Fire Station and the new Stratton Mountain School stand within the northern boundary of this lot.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot was sold to Anthony Sigourney in 1796. The Sigourneys apparently never settled on this lot, but they continued to pay taxes on it well after 1830. It appears that this lot was not settled before the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort was established. It apparently existed as a timber lot and it was once owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for many years. Currently, much of this lot belongs to the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort.

11L3R

This lot was designated as an original right of Eleazer Hannum, named upon Stratton's Charter.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot was sold to William Stearns in 1801. Stearns apparently settled on this lot at that time. He remained there until about 1816 and sold the lot "with buildings thereon" to Simeon Stearns. In 1817, Calvin Waite purchased this lot, and in 1822, Luther Waite bought it from his brother and settled there. In 1839, Luther sold this lot to his brother, Tyler Waite. John Underwood also owned a part of this lot at that time. After Luther Waite moved off the lot, it appears that it was not occupied. McClellan's Map of

1856 does not show a dwelling on this lot, nor does Beers' Atlas of 1869. After that time, 11L3R apparently existed as a timber lot and it was owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for many years. Currently, much of this lot belongs to the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort and the developments associated with the ski resort.

11L4R

This lot was designated as an original right of Caleb Blodgett, Jr., named upon Stratton's Charter.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history – mostly during tax-sales. It has been used as a timber lot and it was owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for many years. Currently, this lot belongs to the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort and it contains some of the main ski trails.

11L5R

This lot was designated as an original right of Job Searl, named upon Stratton's Charter.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history – mostly during tax-sales. It has been used as a timber lot and it was owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for many years. Currently, this lot belongs to the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort and it contains some of the main ski trails.

11L6R

This lot was designated as an original right of Rev. John Searl, named upon Stratton's Charter.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history – mostly during tax-sales. It has been used as a timber lot and it was owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for many years. Currently, this lot belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

11L7R

This lot was designated as an original right of Richard Stainer, named upon Stratton's Charter. *Forest Road 341* cuts through this lot – north to south, while the Long Trail enters its south border and exits on its western side, as the trail progresses toward Stratton Pond.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many

times during its early history – mostly during tax-sales. It has been used as a timber lot and it was owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for many years. Currently, this lot belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

11L8R

This lot was designated as an original right of Rev. Jonathan Judd, named upon Stratton's Charter. The Long Trail progresses east to west across this lot as it progresses toward Stratton Pond.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history – mostly during tax-sales. It has been used as a timber lot. The lumber operation known as the Dufresne Job was situated on the east half of this lot. By 1921, the entire lot was owned by the Champlain Realty Co.. Currently, 11L8R belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

12L1R

This 160-acre lot was designated as an original right of Charles Mather, named upon Stratton's Charter. The majority of Stratton's section of *Pikes Falls Rd.* falls within this lot, along with its intersections with *North Rd.* and *Brazers Way.* The Stratton Golf School and Blodgett Cemetery also are situated within 12L1R. The North Branch of Ball Mountain Brook flows down from Winhall and joins with Styles Brook (sometimes called Meadow Brook) in this lot.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. John Hill purchased this lot in 1795. After this purchase, John brought his family to Stratton and settled there. In 1809, John sold the west half of the lot to his son, Noah, and the east half to his son, Daniel. In 1810, both brothers were listed as heads of this household, and their parents also lived there. The location of the original farm is unknown. By 1820, Daniel and Noah each lived in their own house on their respective half-lot. In 1821, Daniel sold the east half to Noah and apparently left town. That same year, Noah sold the east half to Daniel Attridge. Attridge apparently settled on this lot for about a year. It is unclear who might have settled on the east half of 12L1R after Attridge moved from town. In 1845, Joseph Blodgett purchased this lot, but he already was residing on the west half of 12L1R.

The farmhouse on the west half of 12L1R was located up the hill on the west side of Blodgett Cemetery and south of Styles Brook. Noah Hill remained on this farm until about 1837. That year, this lot was purchased by Joseph Blodgett. The Blodgetts settled on this farm and remained there for about 20 years. In 1858, Joseph's wife, Irene, died and Joseph apparently moved away after her death. In 1860, their son, Oscar, was living on the farm. By 1865, the Blodgetts had moved from Stratton. Beers' Atlas of 1869

shows that Calvin Newton Pike had settled on this farm at that time. He remained there until 1909. That year, Pike sold the east part of the farm to John Clayton and the southwest corner, south of *North Rd.* and west of *Pikes Falls Rd.* to William P. Styles. Styles Brook evidently took its name from Mr. Styles. Styles may have settled into the old house, but it seems more likely that he settled upon 12L2R and that the old house was abandoned about this time. The remains of the original farmhouse still can be seen south of the brook, near the cemetery.

8 North Rd.: In 1949, Harold Field, who owned a farm on 12L2R, built a camp on the northwest corner of the *North Rd. – Pikes Falls Rd.* intersection for Ralph and Orpha Collie. In 1956, this house was sold to Frieda Cohen. More recently, the Hawksleys purchased this camp and refurbished it. Currently, this dwelling is seen as *8 North Rd.*.



Collie camp now seen as 8 North Rd.

Photo courtesy of Laura Hawksley

CN Pike apparently built another house on the east side of the road, where the Stratton Golf School stands now – seen as *414 Pikes Falls Rd.* John Clayton and his wife, Adah, resided on this farm with CN Pike, before Pike sold the house to the Claytons and moved away. John Clayton died in 1928 and at that time, the Floyd Hurd family moved into the house. Adah remained in this house, living out her last years with the Hurds. The Hurds ran a sugaring business with Scott Nearing, who lived in Winhall for a number of years. The Hurds moved away in the early 1940s after selling to Charles Day. The original house on this site burned in the 1970s. Stratton Corp. built the existing building, very similar to the original structure. It later became a golf school, started by Arnold Palmer. Currently, it is operated by Stratton Corp..

12L1R since has been subdivided, mostly along *Pikes Falls Rd.*, where several homes and camps have been built.



**One of the Hurd children
herding cattle along *Pikes Falls Rd.***

Photo courtesy of Elizabeth (Hurd) Greene



**The Stratton Golf School *414 Pikes Falls Rd.*
on the site of the Hurd farm**

Photo courtesy of Elizabeth (Hurd) Greene

12L2R

This 160-acre lot was designated as an original right of William Blunt, named upon Stratton's Charter. *North Rd.* extends westward into this lot with *Dini Ln.* falling entirely within 12L2R. *Pikes Falls Rd.* catches its northeast corner and *Brazers Way* catches its southeast corner.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history and it appears that it was not settled until the 1830s or later. Noah W. Hill, whose parents owned the farm on 12L1R, bought this lot in 1835. Hill may have settled there very briefly. Amaziah Robinson bought this parcel a few months later in that same year. Amaziah may not have settled there, but his brother, Hiram, apparently did so in 1847. Hiram purchased this lot in 1852.

The East Half: McClellan's Map of 1856 does not show a house on 12L2R; however, Beers' Atlas of 1869 indicates that Francis A. White settled into a house on the Winhall border, west of *Pikes Falls Rd.*, on the north part of the eastern half of 12L2R. In 1900, George Brooks lived on this site. During the first half of the 20th Century, a charcoal kiln existed in this location. Remains of the old kiln can still be seen there.

In 1898, Fred Rawson purchased much of the eastern half of 12L2R and settled thereon, probably within a house near the intersection of what is now *North Rd.* and *Dini Ln.* Within a few years, William P. Styles purchased this land as well as a portion of 12L1R. Styles apparently settled into the dwelling there. Styles sold this farm to the Neamenen family about 1917, who briefly settled thereon. In 1919, the Neamenens sold this lot to Karl Laurens, who lived there with his family for several years. In the 1940s, Harold Field purchased this farm from Laurens. Field subdivided out parcels of this land – one of these parcels was sold to Gordon and Malvine Cole. Field sold the remaining acreage and the dwelling to the Kent family in the 1950s. The main dwelling on this lot no longer exists; however, since that time, additional dwellings have been built on this lot, including the Mattick dwelling on *Dini Ln.*

The West Half: In 1888, Newton Howard purchased this parcel and settled thereon, along with William Henry Gale, at the end of what is now *North Rd.* A map drawn circa 1900, however, does not show a dwelling upon this parcel. Howard's widow sold this land to George Wendland in 1949. The Wendlands settled there and remained thereon until the early 1960s.

In recent years, 12L2R has been partially subdivided and minimally developed.



Dwelling of Harold Field family circa 1947

Photo from the Town's Archives

12L3R

This 160-acre lot was designated as an original right of Benjamin Cudworth, named upon Stratton's Charter. Styles Brook flows eastward through 12L3R and the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort owns much of this lot.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history. James Grant apparently was the first to settle on this lot between 1798 and 1803. Much of this lot was later associated with 11L3R. Currently, the Styles Brook development reaches eastward into this lot.

12L4R

This lot was designated as an original right of Benjamin Cudworth, named upon Stratton's Charter. The Stratton Mountain Ski Resort owns much of this lot.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. Anthony Sigourney of Oxford, Massachusetts owned 12L4R from 1796 to 1808, and he apparently settled there in 1797. Sigourney probably moved from this lot in 1803. This lot exchanged hands on occasion during the following years. It was used as timberland and it was owned for many years by the Champlain Realty Co.. Currently, the Base Lodge, Stratton's Resort Village, most of the condominiums, lodging and associated development exist upon this site.

12L5R

This lot was designated as an original right of Jonas Cutler, named upon Stratton's Charter. Some of the development associated with the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort exists here.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold part of this lot to Paul Thurston of Ward, Massachusetts and part to Timothy Rawson of Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history. 12L5R was owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for a time and it was used as a timber lot. Currently, the North Brookwood development, which includes many single-family homes, exists on this lot.

12L6R

This lot was designated as an original right of Charles Clapp, named upon Stratton's Charter. A small amount of development associated with the Stratton Mountain Ski Resort exists here, but most of this lot falls within the National Forest, while a trail leads through this lot from the developed area, heading toward Stratton Pond.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history. 12L5R was owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for a time and it was used as a timber lot. Currently, the majority of this lot belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

12L7R

This lot was designated as an original right of Nathaniel Noyse, named upon Stratton's Charter. This lot falls within the National Forest, while a trail leads across it, east to west from the Stratton Mountain Ski resort, heading toward Stratton Pond. *Forest Road 341* also crosses this lot, north to south.

Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history. 12L5R was owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for a time and it was used as a timber lot. Currently, this lot belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

12L8R

This lot was designated as an original right of Job Searl, named upon Stratton's Charter. Following Giles Alexander's purchase of Stratton, he sold this lot, along with half of Stratton, to David Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1780. This lot exchanged hands many times during its early history. 12L5R was owned by the Champlain Realty Co. for a time and it was used as a timber lot. Currently, the majority of this lot belongs to the Green Mountain National Forest.

Wildland Lots

Stratton's 40-Acre Lots, the Governor's Lot and the West Gore

These lands encompass the area west of Range Nine from Lots one through five and west of Range Eight in Lots six through twelve. The Winhall River flows north across the northwest corner of Stratton, splitting the Governor's lot in half. Stratton Pond sits in 40-acre lots 12, 13, 21 and 22, while Bourn Pond lies along the border with Sunderland. The headwaters of the Deerfield River begin in the southwest corner of Stratton, in the wildlands and flow south into Stratton Gore and Somerset. The 40-acre lots of Stratton's third division, lie north of the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* Each lot was assigned to an Original Grantee – apparently to compensate the owners of the smaller 160-acre lots within the first three ranges. The larger unassigned lots of the wildlands extend down the southern third of Stratton's western side between the main lots and the West Gore to Stratton Gore, while the West Gore runs the entire length of Stratton's western border (about 1,092 acres).

Very little, if any, development existed on these lands at an early time even though the *North Rd.* extended through much of this area as it progressed toward Manchester. These lots most often were considered timber lots and were logged by Stratton's mills and lumber operations. The Deerfield River Railroad penetrated the southern part of this area and the Rich Lumber Co. rails extended to the northeast corner of Stratton.

The issue of the Governor's Lot became interesting with attempts by the Governor's heirs to reclaim his rights to the lands he designated as his own in each New Hampshire Charter. The following records found within the fourth book of Stratton's Land Records highlight this effort: *Page 69 – Ben Porter of Newbury, Vermont to Martha Wentworth of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, widow of the late Colonel Michael Wentworth and of the late Governor Benning Wentworth, Esq., her former husband, all right and title derived by virtue of any deed or deeds from said Martha Wentworth or any other persons of all or any part of 500 acres or two rights granted to Governor Benning Wentworth in all and any New Hampshire Charter in the now State of Vermont on May 8, 1804; Page 70 – John Wentworth of Portsmouth, New Hampshire and wife, Martha, have appointed Isaac Shepard of Portsmouth, New Hampshire their attorney to prosecute sue for and recover all and every right reserved for his Excellency Benning Wentworth – 500 acres more or less in every town in Vermont granted by New Hampshire. October 4, 1808; Page 71 – John Wentworth and Martha Wentworth of Portsmouth, New Hampshire to Henry Randall of Portsmouth, New Hampshire two shares of each town called the Governor's Rights (500 acres) on September 3, 1813; Page 72 – Henry Randall of Rockingham, New Hampshire appoints Isaac Shepard of Portsmouth, New Hampshire his attorney to reclaim governor's rights of several Vermont towns in his name on June 21, 1814; and Page 73 –*

Henry Randall of Portsmouth, New Hampshire to David Sumner of Hartland, Vermont governor's rights of several Vermont towns on October 25, 1817.

The Governor's last will and testament can be found in Book 4 of Stratton's Land Records, beginning on page 495, followed by the last will and testament of Martha Wentworth and on Pages 501 and 502 – Isaac Shepard, late of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, deceased who purchased all the rights to the Governor's right in Vermont towns intended to claim these lands and conveyed some to Henry A. Randall and David H. Sumner of Hartland, Vermont. Royal Shepard, heir of Isaac Shepard, then quitclaims these rights to Sumner on July 28, 1835. Sumner repurchased 267.5 acres of the Governor's Lot in Stratton at vendue in 1847 and it was deeded to him in 1849.

Currently, all of this area falls within the Green Mountain National Forest, while the northeast corner belongs to the protected area within the forest called the Lye Brook Wilderness.

Stratton Gore

Stratton Gore extends along Stratton's southern border (see Stratton Gore in Chapter VI). Officially, it was added to the town in 1799. Willis Cemetery exists within the Gore. The east-to-west section of *Willis Cemetery Rd.* was at one time called the *Gore Rd.* and it extended for more than two miles through the gore to the Wardsboro line, while the north – south section of *Willis Cemetery Rd.* was once the *Winhall–Somerset Rd.* or *Stratton Rd.* *Pike Hollow Rd.* passes through the Gore beginning about where it intersects with the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.*, extending southward through the Gore, exiting its southern boundary near the intersection of *Penny Ave.* West of this point, a stone wall extends along much of the Gore's southern border.

The Gore was 550 yards wide on the east end and 616 yards wide on the west end with a total of 1,270 acres. This means that a one-mile strip equaled about 200 acres. The original survey of 1785 divided the Gore into six lots (1 – 6) east to west. Originally, these lots were sold in halves (for the most part). The 4th division of Stratton in 1793 reversed the numbering order and divided the lots in half. This survey also included the wildland division so that the wildlands were lots one through seven (north to south) and the Gore consisted of lots 8 (westernmost) to lot 20 (easternmost). These lots were each about 100 acres. Lot #8, the westernmost lot, apparently fell in with the wildlands originally, so that lots 9 and 10 made up what had been lot 6 of the Gore in the original survey.

The earliest records of property transfers in the Gore indicate that this strip of land was divided between Timothy Morsman, Jonathan Phillips and Oliver Morsman, sometime before June 1, 1787. On that date, Oliver Morsman sold the west half of Lot #2 to Elijah Gibbs – the first transaction of land in Stratton Gore recorded in Stratton's land records. These earliest

recorded transactions, however, do not include those made by Jonathan Phillips. In 1788, Solomon Gale sold a lot in the Gore and by 1801, Nathaniel Moulton, Jacob Goodell, Joshua Grant and Nevinson Grant owned lands within the Gore. Nothing within Stratton's records show how these gentlemen held title to these lands, but it seems likely that they had purchased some of their land from Phillips.

Stratton Gore, west of Lot #2, remained mostly undeveloped. However, one of the earliest Gore deeds indicates that Timothy Morsman sold the west half of Lot #4 and the east half of Lot #5 in 1789 – land that included a log cabin. This land was located south of 1L7R and west of what is now the north end of Somerset Reservoir. This lot and the others west of Lot #2 exchanged hands several times over the years and it seems likely that just before 1800, William Newton and Simon Phillips settled on their respective parcels, but after that time, it appears that no one settled west of Lot #2 within Stratton Gore. The following paragraphs detail each of the eastern lots of Stratton Gore:

Lot #17

It seems best to begin the farm descriptions of the eastern part of Stratton Gore by beginning with Edmund Gibbs' farm on the west half of Lot #2 (seen as Lot #17 of the 4th division of Stratton). Although Gibbs already owned land east of this lot, it appears that he settled here about 1797 after purchasing this lot from his father, Elijah Gibbs. In 1800, a road was built down from the Town Common to Gibbs' house. From that point, it turned eastward and extended to the Wardsboro line. This east-west section was called the *Gore Rd.*. Neat stone walls about 3 rods wide still mark the turning point of this road – the Gibbs farm stood on the southeast corner of this location. Gibbs sold this farm to Joshua Newhall in 1802. Newhall evidently lived there until 1805. At that time, Hasey Sprague purchased this farm and settled thereon. The following year, Sprague donated a small parcel, just 165 feet from his house for the District #4 schoolhouse. The Spragues remained on this lot for many years. In 1834, Sprague and his sons sold this farm to Samuel Willis – essentially trading farms with the Willises. The Willises moved into this farm at that time and remained there until about 1845. In 1844, the Willis's son-in-law, John Baldwin, lived with them. At that time, Samuel mortgaged this farm through his son-in-law, James T. Perry of Wardsboro. In some references, it is called Perry's farm after that time. John Baldwin and his wife, Ruth, apparently remained in this house until 1846, at which time, Amos Knights purchased this lot. The Knights family evidently did not settle on this farm, thus after 1846, it appears that this house was abandoned and the road was discontinued in 1860. The old farm has since succumbed to the elements, but its remains can still be seen along the intersection of the trails that follow the old roads through this area.

Several additional parcels were divided out of this lot, but they apparently were not settled upon. Instead, they mostly were associated with the adjacent

farms in both Stratton and Somerset. Currently, Lot #17 is part of the Green Mountain National Forest.

Lot #18

The next lot heading eastward through Stratton Gore was the east half of Lot #2, also seen as Lot #18. Edmund Gibbs purchased this lot in 1789. A cemetery, later called Willis Cemetery, was established on this lot before or during 1795. Anna Moulton Grant, a daughter of Nevinson Grant, was buried there that year and her stone still exists there. This strongly indicates that a farmhouse existed nearby at that time. Edmund and Elijah Gibbs sold all of lot #2 to Ebenezer Cutler in 1794. In 1795, Cutler sold both halves back to Edmund. Cutler apparently did not settle in Stratton and Gibbs did not settle in town until about 1797; thus, perhaps Nevinson Grant had settled there and built a farmhouse there at that time.

In 1801, Gibbs sold this parcel to Sampson Wetherbee and Zerah Greenleaf. These men apparently settled their families (or some part of their families) on this lot. If the main house did not exist there before that time, then they may have been the ones who built there – the farmhouse on this lot can be seen as the D. Willis farm on Beers' Atlas of 1869. By 1808, Levi Robbins apparently had settled into this house. He remained there until about 1809, but his lands were confiscated in 1811. By 1813, this parcel had been sold at a tax-sale. It seems unclear who lived here during those years, but by 1817, it was owned by Joshua Sprague. Sprague settled into this house and remained there until 1829. That year, Sprague sold it to Charles Morse. Morse settled there, remaining until 1833. In 1833, William and Richard Crowningshield settled on this lot and they remained there until 1838. That year, Daniel Willis purchased this same farm and settled his family there. The Willis family remained on this lot through to the end of the century. After 1900, the Willis house was abandoned and it too has since succumbed to the elements. The old foundations of this farm can still be seen several yards west of Willis Cemetery. Currently, most of this lot falls within the Green Mountain National Forest.

Lot #19

The next lot heading eastward through Stratton Gore was the west half of Lot #1, also seen as Lot #19 in the 4th Division of Stratton. The Moulton, Grant and Pike families settled this lot. Pike family tradition claimed that Anna Pike with her sons, Jotham and William settled into a log cabin located east of the sharp bend of what is now *Willis Cemetery Rd.*. At the beginning of the 1800s this was a crossroads between the *Gore Rd.* and the *Winhall – Somerset Rd.*. An old dwelling still exists there, seen as *99 Willis Cemetery Rd.*, currently owned by the Harlow family. This location seems to have been the main building lot on this parcel. If that is the case, then Joshua Grant

probably first occupied this site before and during 1791. Anna Pike and her sons settled here in 1795.

It appears that additional dwellings were built on this parcel. The camp east of the main farm site appears to fall within this lot. The *Gore Rd.* passed this second site as it progressed into Pike Hollow. Later, this site was the location of a sugarhouse associated with the main farm named above. The possibility exists that this was the location of a dwelling before that time. In 1801, Grant also sold 25 acres of lot #1 to Jotham Pike. This lot was directly east of the Moulton house. Two months later, Jotham sold this lot to his mother, Anna Pike, who settled there. The location of this site remains unknown, although it very well could have been on the site of the sugarhouse or perhaps it was the Pike homestead. Mrs. Pike resided there with her son, Jotham until 1802. That year, Jotham sold this lot to his brother-in-law, Levi Robbins. Levi and Rhoda Robbins and Anna Pike lived on this site for a few years. About 1808, Samuel Pike, Anna's husband, came to Stratton and apparently settled in with her. The Robbins may have moved out about that same time. In 1810, Levi Robbins sold this 25-acre parcel to William Pike.

Additionally, it appears that some portion of this lot, #19, south of the road, was associated with the main farm on Lot #20.

The Moulton family evidently settled on this lot, west of the road and east of Willis Cemetery. Anna Moulton, wife of Nathaniel Moulton, was Joshua Grant's sister and half-sister of William and Jotham Pike; therefore, it seems likely that the Moultons arrived about the same time and settled on this site sometime between 1791 and 1795. The location of their homestead has not been determined.



99 Willis Cemetery Rd. (circa 1999)



**A distant view of the farm of William Henry Eddy
from the south (circa 1910)
now the site of 99 Willis Cemetery Rd.**

From 1807 until 1842, records are so sketchy and intertwined with land records of surrounding lots, that it is difficult to guess who might have lived on this site during those years. In 1842, Amos Knights of Sunderland purchased this lot – 108 acres – from William Pike. The Knights settled into the house there. The Knights home stood on the site previously known as the Pike homestead. No records indicate whether the Knights family settled into a pre-existing structure or built a new dwelling there. This family remained on this farm until 1852. That year, Knights sold this farm to Halloway Hartwell. The following year, Halloway sold the house to his son, George Hartwell. The Hartwells remained there with their son until 1856. That year, George moved away and the Hartwells' daughter and son-in-law, Sarah and William "Henry" Eddy settled into this house, living there along with Sarah's parents and her grandmother. The Eddys remained there for many years. Henry apparently owned this property until his death in 1908. After that time, this land remained in the Eddy family for many years. It was sold to some of the more recent landholders by Henry's niece, Ethel Eddy, during the 1950s and 60s. The old sugarhouse discussed earlier, was (and often still is) referred to as the Henry Eddy sugarhouse. The actor, E.G. Marshall owned the sugarhouse in the 1960s and used it as a camp. Currently, it is designated as 79 Willis Cemetery Rd., owned by the Gagner family.

Lot #20

The easternmost end of Stratton Gore – the east half of lot #1, also seen as Lot #20 in the 4th Division of Stratton – is split in half by the northeastern end of *Pike Hollow Rd.*. This road's intersection with the *Stratton-Arlington Rd.* is very near the northern boundary of the Gore, while its intersection with *Penny Ave.* marks the Gore's southern boundary. The exact northern boundary falls at the southern property lines of the Liller's house lot and the camp at *15 Pike Hollow Rd.*.

In 1789, Oliver Morsman sold the east end of the Gore to Joshua Farr of Chesterfield, New Hampshire. No record exists in Stratton indicating that Farr ever sold this lot, but by 1800 transactions for this land can be found in the records. Early deeds seem to indicate that there were three separate farms established on this site. The main farm stood west of what is now *Pike Hollow Rd.*, opposite and north of the *Penny Ave.* intersection. The house that currently exists there, *90 Pike Hollow Rd.*, owned by Luz Williams, is the refurbished barn of this farm. The old farmhouse apparently stood on the northeast side of the *Pike Hollow Rd.* and *Penny Ave.* intersection.

Jacob Goodell purchased 100 acres of this lot from Nevinson Grant in 1801, but Goodell apparently already lived thereon. He may have mortgaged the lot through Grant, previously. If so, that transaction went unrecorded in Stratton. It seems likely that Goodell occupied the main farm in the general vicinity of what is now *90 Pike Hollow Rd.*. This parcel was confiscated from Goodell in 1809 and it was awarded to Ebenezer Bill. Bill sold this lot to Aaron Draper at that time and Draper sold it to Oliver Wellman in 1811. Wellman may have lived there for about a year. By 1813, William Pike owned the entire lot.

In 1801, Jotham Pike also purchased 30 acres in the southeast corner of Lot #20 from Nevinson Grant. This lot evidently fell opposite the Goodell farm on the southeast side of the brook and eastward to the Wardsboro border. The house on this lot apparently stood southeast of what is now the *Penny Ave.* bridge over Pike Hollow Brook – on the site called the Lyman farm – now seen as *218 Penny Ave.*. Nevinson Grant may have lived on this site prior to Pike. In 1802, Jotham sold this 30-acre parcel to his brother, William Pike. At that time, Jotham resettled down the road in Somerset. In the next few years, this lot exchanged hands between William and Jotham Pike. William apparently built a mill there in 1805. It was sold to Hezekiah Fay, and then sold back to William Pike by 1809. William also had acquired an additional 60 acres of the northeast section of this lot, previously owned by Goodell, in 1813, so that by that time, he owned all of Lot #20.

About 1813, Pike apparently settled into the main farmhouse on this lot – the Goodell farm described above (located in the vicinity of what is now *90 Pike Hollow Rd.*). In 1817, the town paid William for putting in water bars on the road that ran between his house and the house of his brother, Jotham, who lived in Somerset at the end of the road (now *241 Pike Hollow Rd.*).

In 1821, William Pike sold the southeast 30-acre lot (*218 Penny Ave.*) to his son-in-law, Levi Knight. Knight built a sawmill there at that time. In 1825, Pike repurchased this lot and he may have resettled into the house above the mill, living there with the Knights or he may have resettled in a house across the Somerset line. That same year, Pike sold the farm on the west side of the road (*90 Pike Hollow Rd.*) to Levi Hale, Jr., William's brother-in-law. Hale apparently lived there at least until 1830. That year, he sold this lot to William Howe, a son-in-law of William Pike. Howe and his wife may have settled there briefly, possibly living there with the Hales. Later that year, Howe sold this parcel back to Hale. In 1837, Hale sold this farm to Warren Higley. Higley settled there and farmed this lot until 1844. That year, Higley leased this farm to Hiram Ames for five years, for a rent of half the produce of this farm, but by 1848, Ames apparently had settled elsewhere in Stratton. In 1850, Higley sold this same lot to Rufus Lyman, another of William Pike's son-in-laws.

Meanwhile, in 1835, William Pike repurchased the sawmill and the farm east of the brook (*218 Penny Ave.*). At that time, he built another mill on the site where Levi Knight's mill had stood. In 1844, Pike sold the mill and much of the surrounding land to his son-in-law, Rufus Lyman. The following year, Pike repurchased this lot with the understanding that the Lymans would care for the Pikes for the remainder of their lives. This deed states that the farm included a house, a barn, a lime house and a sawmill. As stated above, Lyman also purchased the Higley farm in 1850. McClellan's Map of 1856 does not indicate the existence of a dwelling on the northwest side of *Pike Hollow Rd.*; however, Beers' Atlas of 1869 shows the house there. Perhaps the first house had been destroyed, then rebuilt after 1856. Apparently, sometime after 1869, the house above the mill on the east side of the brook was destroyed or demolished for some reason and the Lymans moved the dwelling on the Higley lot over to this site. In 1989, during the refurbishment of the old house, the workmen noted that the house must have been modified to fit the foundation.

Three generations of the Lyman family remained on this farm and a fourth generation was born there. Rufus Lyman's son, William, and grandson, Ray, resided there and operated the sawmill on the brook until 1922. That year, Ray Lyman and his family removed from Stratton. After that time, the house was owned and occupied by Ernest Tuthill. In the 1930s, Elmer and Peg Eddy lived with Mr. Tuthill there. What may have remained of the old mill after the Lymans left town, probably washed away during the hurricane of 1938, as did the bridge. Since that time, this house has been owned by the Banks and Babbitts families. It was refurbished in recent years and currently belongs to the Jepson family.

The old Higley lot, now seen as *90 Pike Hollow Rd.*, was owned for a time by Andy King. The barn that remained thereon was moved a few yards from its original site, placed on a proper foundation and refurbished into a dwelling. Currently it is the home of Luz Williams.

For many years, the town kept a small garage on the west side of *Pike Hollow Rd.*, until the Town Garage was completed in 1975. In recent years, Lot #20 has had only minimum development upon it.



The Lyman farmhouse – now 218 Penny Ave.



Barnyard at the Lyman farm (1919)



Swimmers in the Lyman Millpond, on the southwest side of what is now the Pike Hollow Rd. – Penny Ave. intersection.

Photos courtesy of Ellen Lyman

The Somerset Annex

The northeast two-mile by two-mile section of the town of Somerset did not fall under the jurisdiction of Stratton until 1858 (see Chapter VI). Before that time, land transactions and vital records for this area were kept by the Somerset Town Clerk. Since Somerset's disincorporation in 1937, that town's records have been kept by the County at the Courthouse in Newfane. Somerset's records apparently were not as well organized as Stratton's records and the original division of Somerset did not fall into a neat grid layout like Stratton. With these obstacles in place, I was unable to complete a detailed analysis of the Somerset Annex's early deeds, at least not for the entire four square mile area included therein, but I did try to determine how the more populated area of Pike Hollow developed over those early years.

The map of the Somerset Annex incorporated on the "*Lot / Range Grid Map of Stratton, Vermont*" is a portion of the "*Plan of the Township of Somerset*" copied from the original plan of John Marks or a copy thereof. Attest E(phraim) Rice Town Clerk (of Somerset). It was traced by William P. Granger on April 24, 1884, and this copy apparently belonged to Reuben B. Grout. The Somerset records also refer to "*William Williams' second survey*" – an apparent reference to Colonel William Williams of Wilmington, Vermont; but it is not apparent that Williams' survey is the same called the "*Plan of the Township of Somerset.*"

Most of the parcels within the Somerset Annex were lots of Luke Knowlton. The lots within and surrounding the Pike Hollow area included a 150-acre parcel in Somerset's northeast corner, on the Stratton and Wardsboro lines. This lot was owned by Knowlton, but this fact was not noted as such on the map. Heading west, the next three lots, all about two hundred acres in size, were properties of Goss, Kimpton and Sage, respectively. The two-mile annexation boundary fell near the western boundary of the Sage lot. Other lots of particular interest include the John Jones and P(erez) Rice lot on the Wardsboro border as well as the two lots to the south of this lot.

On March 12, 1804, the town of Stratton voted on the following article: *"To see if the town will accept of a number of families belonging to Somerset to see if they can be set off to Stratton legally."* The town then *"Voted to accept of Jotham Pike, William Pike, Marshall Baker, Micah Balcom, Benjamin Sawtell, Ebenezer Waste, David Babcock, and Robert Allen together with their lands...."* The gentlemen listed upon this article all lived within northeast Somerset, upon the lands later annexed by Stratton in 1858. Only the Pikes and Balcom, named above, have been matched to the farms they lived upon at that time. The following paragraphs, however, detail the divisions of the Somerset Annex and describe the farms with the inhabitants known to have lived upon them:

Northeast 150 Acre Lot (Knowlton's Lot)

On June 22, 1803, William Pike purchased the northeast corner of Somerset – 150 acres – from Luke Knowlton. This lot was located just south of the east half of Lot #1 (Lot #20) in Stratton Gore. By 1807, Pike had settled there. The main farmhouse for this lot evidently existed a few yards southwest of what is now the intersection of *Penny Ave.* and *Pike Hollow Rd.* Pike probably built on the same site now known as *122 Pike Hollow Rd.*, currently occupied by the Marcucci family (see AH Pike on Beers' Atlas of 1869). Pike did not remain on this site and, in 1838 or before, he split up this lot. That year, William Crowningshield purchased an "L" shaped parcel of land that surrounded the northeast portion of the lot that Pike had kept for himself. The Crowningshields settled on this site, probably within the farmhouse Pike previously had occupied. William Crowningshield died in 1846 and his widow, Tirzah, remained there for several years. Their daughter, Sarah, may have resided on this farm as late as 1855; however, McClellan's Map of 1856 indicates that the dwelling no longer existed there at that time.

William Pike apparently sold the westernmost portion of the original 150 acres to his brother, Jotham. The development of this lot, as well as the continued development of Crowningshield's lot, are best detailed with the development of Jotham Pike's lands in Somerset – the Goss lot.

The Goss Lot

As noted on the original plan of Somerset, Zebulon Goss (1737 – 1821) of Mendon, Massachusetts owned about 200 acres along the Stratton border, in what is now Pike Hollow. This lot's eastern border was marked by the *Winhall–Somerset Rd.*, that progressed down from Stratton Gore, at what is now the sharp bend in *Willis Cemetery Rd.* Goss split this lot in half, north and south. The north 100-acre parcel was purchased by Seth Davenport (1739 – 1813) of Mendon, Massachusetts (Goss and Davenport's mother-in-laws were sisters). The south 97-acre parcel was sold to Jotham Pike in 1805. The dividing line began at a point south of *Pike Hollow Rd.*, across from what is now *192 Pike Hollow Rd.* and near the brook. It continued westward to catch *Pike Hollow Rd.* as it passed Pike Cemetery, just north of what is now the Bills family property, then it continued westward to its western boundary. Further discussion of the Goss lot falls into the following categories:

Jotham Pike's Lands

Jotham Pike built a farmhouse and settled on the south half of the Goss lot soon after his purchase in 1805. Pike's house probably was the same structure that stands on this site today – *241 Pike Hollow Rd.* This farm is located near the end of *Pike Hollow Rd.* – previously occupied by Lee and Inez Bills (see M. Pike on Beers' Atlas of 1869).

Jotham remained on this lot for more than 30 years. He sold the farm to Hosea Mann in 1834 (possibly just a mortgage), but Moses Pike, Jotham Pike's son, purchased the house in 1839, after Jotham had moved from the area. Moses Pike remained on this farm for the remainder of his life. He sold it to his son, Abel Pike and remained there with his son's family until his death in 1882. Abel lived there until his death in 1917. After that time, Abel's wife Belle continued to reside there, with her son, Ernest Pike's family. Belle died in 1933 and Ernest died in 1935. Next, this farm was purchased by Ernest's niece, and her husband, Bob and Mirth (Pike) Hromada. The Hromadas settled there about 1939. About 1948, the Hromadas sold this farm to Ralph and Claton Quillinan. About 1950, Melbourne Bills bought this house and in 1952, his son and daughter-in-law, M. Lee and Inez Bills, settled there. The Bills lived there for the remainder of their lives. Currently, this farm belongs to the children of Lee and Inez.

Martin and Fitts Lime and Cement Co.

Henry A. Fitts owned a $4\frac{3}{4}$ -acre lot south of the Pike farm (*241 Pike Hollow Rd.*). Upon this site was established the Martin and Fitts Lime and Cement Co., owned by Clarke C. Fitts and James L. Martin, both of Brattleboro, Vermont. Here they built a three-furnace kiln (for details see Chapter 11).



A view of the west end of Pike Hollow from the fields *behind 171 Pike Hollow Rd.* Center left is E. A. Eddy's Steam-driven Sawmill, upper left is the Abel Pike farm (241 Pike Hollow Rd.), center right is the millworkers' house, above the millpond and upper right is the Estabrook farm.



***241 Pike Hollow Rd.* – the Pike Farm circa 1900**



**Wilma Pike in the backyard of the Pike Farm in 1903
now seen as *241 Pike Hollow Rd.***



Calves on the Abel Pike farm (*241 Pike Hollow Rd.*)

A. H. Pike's Lands (combined portions of Knowlton's and Goss Lots)

Alexander "Hamilton" Pike apparently built three houses on different sites along *Pike Hollow Rd.*. The first house stood where *182 Pike Hollow Rd.* currently stands, the second was *171 Pike Hollow Rd.* and the third was *122 Pike Hollow Rd.*.

By 1834, Jotham Pike had acquired a considerable amount of property in Somerset. That year, he deeded to his son, Alexander "Hamilton" Pike, a half-interest in the parcel located east of his house (described above) and south and east of the northeast corner of the old Goss lot. This included land east of the *Winhall-Somerset Rd.* (previously part of the William Pike lot) and the eastern part of Pike's original purchase from Goss, probably from a point just south of Willis Cemetery. At that time, Hamilton Pike, as he was called, built his first house at the intersection of the *Winhall-Somerset Rd.* and *Pike Hollow Rd.*. This structure stood on the site of *182 Pike Hollow Rd.*. In 1837, Jotham Pike deeded the other half-interest of this property to Hamilton. In 1844, Hamilton Pike built a sawmill and dam on the brook opposite this house. The sawmill stood downstream (southeast) of the dam. The dam and mill foundations are still visible today. The resultant millpond caused the *Winhall-Somerset Rd.* to be rerouted downstream of the dam. Apparently, about this same time, Hamilton built his second home southeast of the mill, on the south side of the brook (see AH Pike sawmill on Beers' Atlas of 1869).

In 1850, Hamilton sold his first house (described above) and 75 acres to his father, Jotham Pike, who had returned to live in Stratton. Jotham sold this lot to Henry and Sarah King in 1853. The Kings lived there through 1856, but had moved away before 1860, selling to Charles H. Ryder. Hamilton Pike repurchased this lot and in 1868, he sold it to Ebenezer Allen, Jr.. The Allens lived there until about 1871. That year, they sold this house to Daniel Willis, but Willis never settled there. This house was occupied for a time by Franklin and Hannah Prentiss, who had resettled down the hill from their first home. During the early 1930s, the old farmhouse burned. Frank



Hannah Prentiss beside the first house built by AH Pike

Brownell purchased a one-acre parcel surrounding this site in 1935 and he built the cabin that stands there now – *182 Pike Hollow Rd.*. Bill Gordineer owned it for many years. This was also the home of Vera Efron who passed away there. After her death, it was sold to DR Holton in 1994 – the current owner.



An early photo of 182 Pike Hollow Rd.

As previously stated, Hamilton Pike built his second home, now seen as *171 Pike Hollow Rd.*, on the south side of the brook, probably during the last half of the 1840s. He settled there about 1850 and remained there for several years.

Before 1869, Hamilton resettled into his third home (described below). Apparently, after that time, Hamilton's daughter and her husband, Russell and Viola Willard, resided in this house. In 1877, Mr. Willard had either left Stratton or he had passed away. That year, Viola moved into her father's house across the brook and road. In 1878, Hamilton Pike rented this house and the sawmill to William H. Parsons for two years. The Parsons moved out after the lease expired. Pike rented the house and sawmill to Elmer A. Eddy in 1881. In 1884, Eddy bought the house and continued to rent the sawmill and 75 acres. EA Eddy and his wife, Inez, continued to rent this property until 1894. That year, the Eddys bought this parcel from Pike and lived there for the remainder of their lives. EA Eddy eventually abandoned the waterpowered sawmill and established a steam mill upstream of the dam, directly across from what is now *192 Pike Hollow Rd.*

Following EA Eddy's death in 1936, this farm became the property of their daughter, Ethel Eddy. She kept the farm as a second home for many years and retired there in the mid-1950s. She also had run the farm as a Bed and Breakfast for several years, calling it Manicknung Farm. In November, 1965, Ethel sold the farm to Richard and Carol Steiner – the current owners.



The A. H. Pike farm now *171 Pike Hollow Rd.*





**Ethel Eddy on a bridge over the millrun from the old
waterpowered mill built by AH Pike in Pike Hollow**



**Ruin of the Dam at the AH Pike mill in Pike Hollow
with water coming over a beaver dam behind it.**



A Mowing in Pike Hollow



EA Eddy on his farm



EA Eddy on his farm



A waterfall on the EA Eddy farm in Pike Hollow



**The EA Eddy Steam-driven sawmill
located on the brook, across from *192 Pike Hollow Rd.***



**Eddy sawmill and mill yard
(note the old millpond, downstream of this site)**

192 Pike Hollow Rd.: There was another small lot that originally fell within the 75-acre parcel that Hamilton Pike deeded to his father, Jotham Pike, in 1850. It was located between the Goss lot's east line and the west side of the *Winhall-Somerset Rd.* (as it turned eastward to meet *Pike Hollow Rd.*) and on the northwest side of this road. This lot was first the site of a camp for loggers operating the Eddy steam-driven sawmill. By 1893, a two-story house on a one-and-a-quarter-acre lot owned by John H. Martin existed here. That year, he sold it to Hattie and Alva Styles. The Styles remained there until 1906, when they sold it to Elmer Eddy. In 1911, this house was rented out to Merle and Birdie Putnam, who lived on the lower floor of the house. At that same time, Perle and Rose Robinson lived on the second floor. This house either burned or it was torn down. About 1914, EA Eddy and his son, Hermon, built a hunting cabin on this site. This cabin was used by the Eddy family for many years. Before 1950, this house was refurbished for Hermon Eddy's widow, Bernice, and her third husband, LeRoy Wagner. At that same time, an additional acre was added to provide the property with a good spring. The Wagners lived there for several years. LeRoy passed away in 1964 and Bernice remained there during the summer months until her death in 1973. Eventually, this cottage became the property of Bernice's grandson, Hermon Eddy. It was refurbished and currently it is the home of Hermon's daughter and son-in-law, Siobhan and Kent Young.



**The millworkers' house
built on the site of *192 Pike Hollow Rd.***



A photo in Pike Hollow of the Sam and Alice Goodale place (center) and the Eddy Camp, now 192 Pike Hollow Rd. (right)

122 Pike Hollow Rd.: Meanwhile, before 1858, Hamilton Pike also purchased the Crowningshield property (described above). Sometime before 1869, Pike built his third new home on this parcel, now seen as *122 Pike Hollow Rd.*, apparently upon the same site where the Crowningshield home had existed – perhaps the old house had burned or it was torn down. Hamilton remained on this farm to his death in 1902. Pike’s heirs deeded this property to his widow, Miranda. Following her death, Miranda’s son, Cheselton Allen, and his family resided there into the 1920s and probably through to Cheselton’s death in 1926. At that time, the Allen’s daughter and son-in-law, Lorra and Forrest Vose lived on this farm with the Allens. This property was left to them and they sold it in 1928 to Fred Field and Charlotte Tuthill. In 1930, Millard and Doris Johnson purchased this farm and settled there. The Johnsons lived there until 1939. That year, the Johnsons sold this farm to Doris’s sister and her husband, Richard and Marge Holman. Following the war, Marge’s brother, Elmer H. Eddy, and his son, Hermon, lived there with the Holmans. On October 25, 1950, the Holmans sold this property to Allen and Florence Gould. The Goulds sold it in 1965 to Andy King, who lived there for the remainder of his life. Following King’s death, Greg and Rayleen Marcucci – the current owners of this parcel – purchased this property in September, 1992.



AH Pike's third home – now 122 Pike Hollow Rd.



***122 Pike Hollow Rd.
with 171 Pike Hollow Rd. in the background***

146 Pike Hollow Rd.: Another parcel was subdivided from this lot. It is located southwest of the main house lot, and along *Pike Hollow Rd.*. During the 1940s, Richard Holman and his brother-in-law, Elmer Hermon Eddy built a camp on this property. It has since been refurbished and it belongs to Ann Byron.

The Samuel Willis Farm (the Northeast quarter of the Goss lot)

On April 11, 1801, Seth Davenport sold the north 100 acres of the Goss lot to Samuel Willis, who settled there with his family in 1806. The east line of this lot extended down from the Stratton Gore border along the *Winhall-Somerset Rd.*, then along the wall directly behind what is now *192 Pike Hollow Rd.*. The Willises built a farm on the east half of the lot, near this road (see F. J. Prentiss on Beers' Atlas of 1869). About 1824, Samuel sold the west half of the lot to Jotham Pike, while the Willises remained on the east half until 1834. That year, Samuel sold the remaining half of the farm to Hasey and Israel Sprague, essentially swapping farms with the Spragues who owned a farm in Stratton Gore. Before this sale, Willis sold 42 square-rods to Jotham Pike for a cemetery – a lot where the Pikes had already buried two of their grandchildren (Pike Hollow Cemetery). The Spragues remained there for a decade. In 1844, Hasey Sprague died. His son, Israel was said to have been insane and so he was sent to the asylum in Brattleboro. Levi Knight was charged with selling Sprague's property.

In 1844, Jonas Allen purchased this lot. He sold it to Adams Allen Grout in 1848. The Grouts remained there until 1858. That year, they sold this farm to Joseph Pike. Pike apparently rented out the farm to his sister and her husband, Hannah and Franklin Prentiss. The Prentisses remained on this farm until about 1870, when they resettled down the hill, along *Pike Hollow Rd.*. Once the Prentisses had moved out and before 1900, the old farmhouse there was abandoned. It has since succumbed to the elements, with only a cellar hole remaining to mark the site. This lot belonged to the Eddy family for many years. Ethel Eddy sold it to the Banks family in the 1960s. Currently, most of this lot belongs to the Rigolout family.

230 Pike Hollow Rd.: Additionally, a schoolhouse was built on this site on its southwest corner during the late 1850s, while the Grouts owned it. Once Stratton annexed this area, it became Stratton's Schoolhouse #6. In 1918 the school closed for the last time and on September 10, 1936, the town sold it to Abel Daniels. By the late 1940s, Bob and Mirth Hromada had settled into the renovated schoolhouse. Their daughter and son-in-law, Wilma and Red Fletcher, also lived there. Once Bob and Red passed away, Mirth and Wilma continued to live there together. Following Mirth's death in 1983, the schoolhouse was sold. Currently, it is the vacation home of the Baird family.



Schoolhouse #6 remodeled as a dwelling

Photo courtesy of the Ethel Eddy Collection

The Joseph Pike Farm (The northwest quarter of the Goss lot)

In 1824, Joseph Pike purchased the west half of the Willis farm from his father, Jotham Pike. Joseph built a home northwest of his father's home. Joseph's farm stood at what is now the very end of *Pike Hollow Rd.* as it turns to the northwest – well beyond what is now *241 Pike Hollow Rd.* (the Bills' farm). Although McClellan's Map of 1856 does not show a farm there, one definitely existed there at that time. In 1858, Joseph sold this farm to his son-in-law, Henry Estabrook (see Estabrook on Beers' Atlas of 1869). The Pikes remained there with the Estabrooks for the rest of their lives. The Estabrooks may have briefly moved away about 1880, but they returned and remained on this farm beyond 1910. Since that time, the old farmhouse and outbuildings have succumbed to the elements, but the old cellar hole still exists. Currently, ownership of most of this farm is split between the Green Mountain National Forest and the Bills family. A one-acre parcel surrounding the site of the old farmhouse was occupied by the Crafts family in the 1960s. The Crafts continue to own this parcel.



The Estabrook Farm on the northwest ridge above Pike Hollow

The John Jones / P. Rice Lot

The lot located south of the 150-acre Knowlton lot, along the Wardsboro border was called the John Jones / P. Rice lot on *the Division of Somerset*. Perez Rice was a son of Ephraim Rice, an original grantee named on Somerset's Charter of 1761. Apparently, an early division of Somerset that assigned lots to the New Hampshire Grantees did not exist; therefore, Perez gained title of this lot after he had settled in Somerset in 1778. This Perez also owned land adjacent to this lot in Wardsboro South District and that is where he settled (northeast of what is now *Blue Brook Rd.* on *Upton Rd.* in Dover – called the Ellis place on Beers' Atlas of 1869). Perez had custody of the children of his deceased brother, John, including a boy named Perez. The older Perez died in 1807 and the younger Perez remained with his Aunt Chloe on this farm until 1824. That year, Perez and his wife of two years, Emily, daughter of Jotham Pike, settled on the western side of Uncle Perez's farm in Somerset.

This farm was located on the southern end of what is now *Penny Ave.*, on the ridge above Pike Hollow and on the site now designated as *21 Penny Ave.*. Over the years, Perez purchased adjacent parcels so that the Rice farm consisted of 258 acres, with a sugar orchard of 500 trees. Following his death in 1863, Perez's widow, Emily, remained on the farm until about 1880. In 1870, the Rice's daughter, Chloe, and her husband, Albert Eddy, lived there with Emily. That same year, the heirs of Perez Rice deeded the farm to the Eddys. This family remained there until 1876. That year, Albert and Chloe deeded the farm to their son, Elmer Albert Eddy. In 1880, E. A. Eddy lived there alone, briefly before his marriage in that same year to Inez, daughter of Moses Pike. In 1881, the Eddys settled down the hill in Pike Hollow (*171 Pike Hollow Rd.*). After that time, the Eddys rented the farm to Chloe's sister, Melissa, and her husband, Orrin Johnson. The Johnsons remained on the old Rice farm for many years. The road from Pike Hollow up to the farm was called the *Johnson Farm Rd.*. By 1920, the Johnsons had resettled in Jamaica, Vermont. Once the Johnsons had moved away, the old house was abandoned. The farm remained the property of the Eddy family and eventually it was deeded to Elmer Hermon Eddy. E. H. Eddy built a small hunting camp on this lot near the old farmhouse. The old farmhouse deteriorated over the years and fell into the cellar hole. In 1940, the *Johnson Farm Rd.* from the Eddy farm in Pike Hollow, up to the Johnson farm was closed and the current route (which follows the course of an older road) was created by the town. During the 1940s, E. H. Eddy sold the property around the old farmhouse, but kept about 160 acres. The Horrigan family purchased one of these lots and settled along the road. Penny Horrigan is the namesake of *Penny Ave.*, the current name for the old *Johnson Farm Rd.*. The Pickerings purchased a parcel of this farm that included the site of the old farmhouse and they built a home over the cellar hole. The foundation of the old barn still can be seen a short distance down the hill and on the opposite side of the road. Route 100 was laid across this farm and the area around the intersection of *Rt. 100* and *Penny Ave.* has since been minimally developed. E. H. Eddy's son, Hermon A. Eddy, currently owns the majority of this old farm.

There is also reference in the Somerset records to a 57-acre lot within Somerset, along its eastern border – called half of Lot #4 in William Williams' second survey. It was owned by John Holbrook who sold to Jotham Pike in 1807. This lot was located east of what is now *Penny Ave.*, apparently in the John Jones / P. Rice lot. It apparently became part of the Perez Rice Farm (above).



The Johnson farm at the top of what is now *Penny Ave.*



The Route 100 Corridor

South of the Rice farm and along the old road into Dover stood the Newell Akeley farm as indicated on Beers' Atlas of 1869. This was most likely the home of J. F. Bogle in 1856. Remains of this farm apparently are the same that exist off of what is now *Forest Heights Rd.*

At the time of the annexation of the northeast corner of Somerset, Milo Hall lived on the east side of the intersection of the *Upper Handle Rd.* with the road between Dover and Wardsboro. This farmhouse apparently no longer existed by 1869. Additionally, another Hall family farm was located between these two roads. This farm was occupied by the Martin Leonard family in 1869. McClellan's Map of 1856 shows the Cobb family living opposite this intersection. This farm may have been the same occupied by Hosea Mann in 1869. By 1900, none of these farms continued to exist.

Years later, much of this area was owned by Eleanor B. (Alexander) Roosevelt, wife of Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. – grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt. Eventually, Stephen Greene, owner of the Stephen Greene Press in Brattleboro, purchased this land, which included most of what is now the Stratton Town Forest. This forest was donated to the town by the Greene family, via The Nature Conservancy in 1979. Later, it was dedicated to the memory of Stephen Greene.

Much of the land along *Rt. 100* as it progresses over Dover Mountain has been minimally subdivided and developed in recent years.

The Western Side of the Somerset Annex

Before Stratton annexed the northeast portion of Somerset, some farms had developed there. The Kimpton lot – a 200-acre parcel located west of the Goss lot – may have been property of Oliver Kimpton (born in 1750), his wife, Relief (November 9, 1766 – March 29, 1807) and their four children. The Kimptons were residents of Somerset during the 1790s and to at least 1807. Evidently, this lot developed into two farms – later called the Read farm on the western side of the lot and the Hartwell farm on the eastern side. Both farms were located near the Stratton line. The Hartwell farm was located west of Joseph Pike's farm and about a quarter-mile south of the Gibbs farm in Lot #17 of Stratton Gore. During the early 1800s, the road from Stratton's Town Common down to Edmund Gibbs' house in the Gore continued into Somerset as the old *Somerset Rd.*, progressing southward passed the Hartwell farm. Good stone walls still exist along both sides of these roads at this intersection and two of these walls continue south along that road to the old Somerset line. A good trail parallels this road as it heads southwest and continues to the Hartwell farm, passing between the remains of the old barn and house. Halloway Hartwell bought this farm in 1837. Before that time, it belonged to Isaac Lincoln. Although Isaac purchased this farm only in 1836, his parents, Isaac and Kezia Lincoln, initially may have settled there in the first decade of the 1800s.

Hartwell apparently abandoned this farm in 1852, while the lot became the property of their son-in-law, W. Henry Eddy. The old farmhouse no longer existed in 1856 and the road to it was discontinued in 1860.

The old road down from the Gore continued south from Hartwell's farm to another road that connected the Joseph Pike farm, located east of this intersection, with the Read farm, located slightly west of that point. The Read farm (apparently the farm of Benjamin and Fanny [Granger] Reid) can be found along a trail through the National Forest, heading west from the gate at the end of *Pike Hollow Rd.* that stands at the location of the old Joseph Pike farm. This trail follows the old road that connected Pike's farm with the Read farm. The main trail turns south to follow the old *Somerset Rd.*, while another trail continues westward. The remains of the old farmhouse exist a short distance west of this intersection, on the north side of the trail, with the remains of the barn located a few yards to the west.

Benjamin Reid apparently settled on this site in 1807 and remained there until his death in October 1845. The buildings of this farm no longer existed in 1856. Joseph Pike purchased this lot sometime before 1860. That year, the road from Pike's main farm to the old Read lot was discontinued.

Another lot, called the Moon lot existed in the southwest corner of the Somerset Annex, south of the Read farm. This apparently had been a farm owned by the Moon family. The old *Somerset Rd.* crossed this area as it progressed over the mountain and down into the Great Meadows that now lie on the bottom of Somerset Reservoir. Currently, the Fisher family owns this land. Recently, the Fishers have built camps thereon.

The majority of the western side of the Somerset Annex is public land owned by the Green Mountain National Forest. Additionally, USGen is the current owner of the Somerset Reservoir and the lands immediately surrounding it.

Chapter XVIII

Cemetery Listing

The following pages detail graves known to exist within each of Stratton's seven cemeteries. A format indicating the last name of an individual, followed by the first name and initial (if applicable) was used here. For family stones, the last name is given for the first individual listed thereon. If a stone has any member listed with a surname other than the predominant family surname, then that surname is slightly indented. Relationships between individuals on a family stone or as indicated on individual stones have been included, and some relationships are given although they were not noted on the stone. Abbreviations used here are: y – year(s), m – month(s), d – day(s).

Ball Cemetery

Listings are in order by gravestone, starting at the southwest side of the old section, facing the cemetery from the north side of *Ball Farm Rd.*, then following each row.

Row 1

Knapp, Hiram	(died 9/18/1859 - age 56y, 7m, 11d)
Knapp, Alvira S. Stearns (wife of Hiram Knapp)	(died 3/12/1881 - age 76y, 6m, 2d)
Jones, Jesse C.	(died 6/4/1918 - age 82y)
Jones, Sarah E. (wife of Jesse Jones)	(died 11/15/1892 - age 62y)
Jones, Everett (child of J and S Jones)	(died 11/13/1875 - age 18y)
Willie C. (child of J and S Jones)	(died 5/21/1862 - age 5m, 9d)
Jones, Mrs. Sarah S. (mother)	(died 3/5/1896 - age 92y, 6m)
Jones, Silas L.	(3/7/1834 - 11/15/1863)
Magoon, Lillia L. (wife of EN Magoon)	(died 12/23/1883 - age 20y, 10m)
Wilder, Cora (daughter of DF and FA Wilder)	(7/20/1883 - 1/23/1884)
Knapp, Nellie G. (daughter of CO and FM Knapp)	(1901 - 1903)
Knapp, Curtis O.	(1862 - 1955)
Fannie M. McDermott (wife)	(1876 - 1939)
Knapp, Cyrus C.	(12/8/1891 - 2/17/1965)
Knapp, Ira A.	(1913 - 1982)
Ora M. (wife)	(1921 - [still living in 2000])

Row 2

Knapp, H. Pitman	(died 10/22/1863 - age 30y)
Knapp, Luella (daughter of CHP and MA Knapp)	(died 8/7/1862 - age 2y, 11m, 20d)
Sprague, James (son of I and P Sprague)	(died 8/23/1863 - age 6y, 2d)
Sprague, Lafayette (son of I and P Sprague)	(died 9/13/1863 - age 8y, 3m, 3d)
Sprague, Elmer L. (son of I and P Sprague)	(died 11/23/1865 - age 1y, 6m, 13d)
Brown, (George) (father)	(1833 - 1899)
Stella (mother)	(1868 - 1938)
George H. (son)	(1876 - 1876, age 7m)
William J. (son)	(1877 - 1901)
George, Jr. (son)	(1897 - 1919 - died in WWI)
Willis, Maud (daughter of EH and LA Willis)	(died 10/14/1886 - age 7y)
Green, Lyman	(1875 - 1951)
Tuttle, Elmer E.	(1907 - 1973)
Vivian G. (wife)	(1913 - 1978)

Row 3

Parsons, Amos, Capt.	(died 6/7/1847 - age 88y, 9m, 17d)
Parsons, Rhoda (wife of Amos Parsons)	(died 8/12/1865 - age 80y, 3m, 13d)
Parsons, Alfred	(1818-1896)
Mary Sprague (wife)	(1827 - 1878)
Aden O. (son)	(1863 - 1900)
Ralph A., Dr. (son)	(1861 - 1891)
Parsons, Oren	(died 6/17/1888 - age 72y)
Parsons, Rebecca (wife of Oren Parsons)	(died 2/18/1874 - age 51y, 6m, 18d)
Parsons, Otis F. (son of O and R Parsons)	(died 7/3/1868 - age 4y, 7m, 18d)
Cullinan, Emily L. Richards (wife of MH Cullinan)	(8/14/1842 - 4/18/1894)
Shepardson, Calvin D.	(3/28/1823 - 6/18/1895)
Helen E. Darlin (wife)	(4/4/1842 - 1/16/1902)
Forrester, Henry P (father)	(9/4/1834 - 8/23/1916)
Lucy A. Sprague (wife/mother)	(9/4/1834 - 11/12/1905)
Douglas H. (son)	(1861 - 1945)
Walter E. (son)	(1865 - 1883)
Eddy, Minnie Forrester (daughter)	(1859 - 1885)
Forrester, Reynold T. (grandson)	(1892 - 1892)
Alene L. (granddaughter)	(1895 - 1896)
Walter E. (grandson)	(1885 - 1936)
Emily Price (wife of Walter)	(1884 - 1970)
Douglas H. (son of Walter and Emily)	(1923 - [still living in 2000])
Elinor L. Whalen (wife of Douglas)	(1930 - [still living in 2000])

Row 4

Allen, Elmeda (wife of Leroy Allen)	(died 8/25/1870 - age 25y, 6m)
Allen, Mary A. (mother)	(died 2/19/1888 - age 50)
Allen, Leslie E. (son of OA and MA Allen)	(died 5/25/1869 - age 12y, 2m)
Allen, Chester	(died 8/29/1877 - age 60y)
Allen, Miranda A. (wife of Chester Allen)	(9/1/1820 - 10/26/1907)
Allen, Charlie G. (son of C and M Allen)	(died 12/24/1867 - age 3y, 10m, 13d)
Allen, Lula B. (daughter of CJ and VM Allen)	(1873 - 1874)
Andy M. (son of CJ and VM Allen)	(1882 - 1885)
Allen, Cheselton	(died 10/20/1899 - age 77y)
Sarah Parsons (wife)	(died 2/22/1897 - age 70y)
Amos Ebenezer (son)	(died 10/1865 - age 5m)
Allen, Amos E. (son of C and S Allen)	(died 8/25/1863 - age 4y, 3m, 25d)
Allen, Wayne Arthur (son of AF and AE Allen)	(9/8/1882 - 10/16/1882)
Copeland, Mariette M. (wife of James Copeland)	(died 8/30/1867 - age 29y)
Copeland, Lula (daughter of J and M Copeland)	(died 3/21/1863 - age 3y, 3m, 5d)
Copeland, Andrew J.	(died 1/1/1865 - age 29)
Copeland, James	(died 9/1893 - age 56y)

Row 5

Grout, Gerald Edwin (son of CH and FE Grout)	(8/14/1896 - 11/9/1896)
Grout, Edwin L.	(5/20/1829 - 2/2/1913)
Charlotte Fay (wife)	(2/23/1833 - 1/16/1895)
Hudson (father)	(4/27/1800 - 5/18/1878)
Silence (mother)	(5/6/1799 - 3/14/1859)
Carrie S. (daughter)	(7/27/1859 - 11/14/1884)
Fay, Charles	(???)
Allen, Ebenezer	(died 2/17/1854 - age 58y, 7m)
Lucy (wife)	(died 1/27/1892 - age 93y, 9m)
Wing, Samuel	(died 1/11/1872 - age 71y, 3m)
Wing, Lucinda (wife of Samuel Wing)	(died 12/25/1858 - age 65y)
Hudson, James B.	(died 2/4/1855 - age 29y, 10m, 12d)
Hudson, James R. (son of J and M Hudson)	(died 2/5/1863 - age 9y, 8m, 2d)
Estabrook, Deacon Ezekiel	(died 8/19/1852 - age 47y)

Estabrook, Betsy B. (wife of E. Estabrook)	(died 8/5/1867 - age 60y)
Estabrook, Abel K.	(died 5/21/1867 - age 35)
Estabrook, Adelia S. Pike (wife of AK Estabrook)	(died 2/5/1913 - age 79)
Estabrook, Little Willie (son of AK and AS Estabrook)	(died 7/17/1862 - age 2y, 5m)
Estabrook, Jotham (son of AK and AS Estabrook)	(died 7/21/1865 - age 1y, 12d)
Estabrook, Sarah (wife of Ezra Estabrook)	(died 12/5/1863 - age 78y)
<i>Row 6</i>	
Fay, Charles	(2/6/1798 - 10/4/1875)
Fay, Asenath (wife of Charles Fay)	(died 9/3/1854 - age 55y, 5m, 11d)
Fay, Otis R. (son of C and A Fay)	(died 1/30/1848 - age 24y, 8m, 9d)
Fay, Paul W. (son of C and A Fay)	(8/31/1836 - 12/19/1862)
Fay, James T. (son of C and A Fay)	(10/11/1828 - 8/30/1864)
(A Civil War marker also exists for James T. Fay - Co. D, 8th Vt. Inf.)	
Allen, Sylvia A. (daughter of L and L Allen)	(died 5/20/1849 - age 2m)
Allen, Leander L.	(died 6/29/1902 - age 79y)
Louisa W. (wife)	(died 7/24/1901 - age 72y, 3m, 21d)
Elias D. (son)	(died 3/21/1893 - age 25y)
Mary J. (daughter)	(died 9/21/1863 - age 3y, 10m)
Martin J. (son)	(died 5/2/1868 - age 20y)
Dwight (son)	(died 11/6/1865 - age 8y, 3m)
Allen, Dana P.	(1862 - 1940)
Angie E. Starr (wife)	(1867? - 1898?)
Williams, Daniel	(died 7/10/1849 - age 54y)
Glazier, Deacon John	(died 8/6/1856 - age 82y)
Glazier, Dorothy (wife of J Glazier)	(died 10/26/1849 - age 72y)
Bourn, Hattie E. (daughter of N and L Bourn)	(died 10/24/1862 - age 8y, 3m, 21d)
<i>Row 7</i>	
Jones, Augustus F.	(11/3/1855 - 9/3/1921)
Mary A. (wife)	(1857 - 1934)
Prentiss, Harold Orlean	(12/28/1889 - 7/14/1967)
Prentiss, Mary Rose Chappron (wife of HO Prentiss)	(5/31/1894 - 7/25/1977)
Grout, Jacob B.	(died 5/13/1874 - age 45y, 11m, 17d)
Moon, Betsy E. (wife of Benjamin Moon)	(died 7/12/1862 - age 69y, 1m, 22d)
Moon, Melvin L. (son of B and B Moon)	(died 3/26/1832 - age 2y, 8d)
Moon, Mansfield (son of B and B Moon)	(died 5/14/1832 - age 5y, 8m, 20d)
Glazier, John N. Esq.	(died 10/21/1888 - age 83y)
Glazier, Phebe (wife of JN Glazier)	(died 9/11/1856 - age 47y)
Shaw, N.J.	(died 11/6/1850 - age 29y)
Shaw, Julia (wife of NJ Shaw)	(died 2/23/1856 - age 23y, 8m)
Glazier, Frank J. (son of JN and PC Glazier)	(3/21/1854 - age 25y)
Hescock, Frank E.	(died 11/1/1940 - age 81y, 4m, 11d)
Hescock, Oliver P.	(died 4/20/1896 - age 86y, 9m, 9d)
Aurilla G. Fay (wife)	(died 12/11/1897 - age 76y, 6m, 27d)
Hescock, Eliza C. (daughter of O and A Hescock)	(died 8/23/1863 - age 11y, 2m, 22d)
Hescock, Otis W. (son of O and A Hescock)	(died 9/11/1863 - age 7y, 3m, 3d)
<i>Row 8</i>	
Lincoln, Sarah (daughter of O and A Lincoln)	(died 6/10/1863 - age 16y)
Lincoln, Matthias (son of O and A Lincoln)	(died 4/6/1864 - age 20y)
(Civil War marker - Co. H 8th Vt. Vol. died at Algiers, La.)	
Sheldon, LaFayette	(died 12/25/1891 - age 74y)
Sheldon, Abigail B. Sprague (wife of L. Sheldon)	(died 4/13/1903 - age 81y, 7m, 26d)
Sheldon, Isaac S. (son of L and A Sheldon)	(died 4/18/1847 - age 4y, 7m, 2d)
Benjamin L. (son of L and A Sheldon)	(died 11/23/1843 - age 3y, 3m, 17d)
Grout, Abel (Mass. Revolutionary War Soldier)	(dates not given [2/19/1758 - 1/18/1841])
Grout, Joel	(died 2/24/1839 - age 51y)
Grout, Lucy (wife of Joel Grout)	(1793 - 1878 - buried in Manchester, Vt.)

Row 9

Sprague, Laura J. Lincoln (wife of Lyman Sprague)	(1837 - 1915)
Sprague, Lyman	(died 10/2/1882 - age 50y)
Sprague, Walter (son of L and L Sprague)	(died 8/29/1859 - age 3m)
Sprague, Luke (son of L and L Sprague)	(1864 - 1867)
Sprague, Lucy E.	(died 12/17/1878 - age 80y, 1m, 4d)
Sprague, Nelson (son of James and Lucy Sprague)	(died 9/13/1837 - age 3m, 9d)
Sprague, Sarah	(died 9/15/1869 - age 28y, 1m, 10d)
Sprague, Hannah	(died 10/14/1901 - age 64y, 8m)
Sprague, James T.	(1828 - 1895)
M.L. (Mariah L. - wife)	(1835 - 1890)
A.L. (Archie L. - son)	(1877 - 1887)
Scott, Ira	(died 4/4/1863 - age 75y/3m/16d)
Scott, Sophia (wife of Ira Scott)	(died 7/8/1872 - age 82y, 2m, 25d)
Scott, Nelson O. (son of I and S Scott)	(died 8/7/1849 - age 19y, 3m)
Mann, Bille Esq.	(died 1/19/1852 - age 97y)
Mann, Mary (wife of Bille Mann)	(died 7/29/1839 - age 79y)
Scott, Richard Esq.	(died 4/9/1855)
Scott, Mary (wife of Richard Scott)	(3/26/178? - 3/24/1864)

(two unmarked graves in this vicinity are probably those of Sarah Maria Fuller who died in 1856 and her husband Davis Brown [12/22/1807 - 10/18/1872])

Fuller, James	(died 12/18/1849 - age 63y, 29d)
Fuller, Sally Heaton (wife of James Fuller)	(died 6/18/1867 - age 81y, 5m)
Fuller, Albert F. (son of J and S Fuller)	(died 7/20/1838 - age 16y) (died at Onondaga, N.Y.)
Payne, Benjamin	(died 4/19/1871 - age 38)
Payne, Melissa (wife of Benjamin Payne)	(died 8/22/1863 - age 32y)
Payne, Marilla (daughter of B and M Payne)	(died 8/11/1863 - age 4y, 3m, 2d)
Payne (infant) (son of B and M Payne)	(died 9/19/1867)
Willis, Ezra	(died 6/5/1881 - age 50y)
Willis, Martha Whipple (wife of Ezra Willis)	(died 2/20/1862 - age 34y)

Row 10

Stiles, Annie L. C.	(8/24/1878 - 1/12/1973)
McCullock, Reva Stiles	(8/18/1917 - 11/29/1966)
Styles, W.P.	(1870 - 1948)
Styles, Melvin (child of JD and ME Styles)	(died 10/4/1863 - age 11y)
Levina (child of JD and ME Styles)	(died 10/23/1863 - age 7y)
Leno, Pvt. Harry	(died 9/21/1918 - age 24y, 2m) (1st Co 4 Motor Mechanic Regt. Signal Corp. Died in France - WWI)
Leno, Ernest	(1/30/1886 - 1/30/1934)
Leno, Gardner T. (Pvt. 212 Eng. 12 Div. WWI)	(15/9/1897 - 4/4/1949)
Griswald, Addie J. Leno	(3/17/1867 - 5/13/1952)

Row 11

Babcock, Jonathan M. (Civil War Veteran - Co. I 8th Vt. Vols)	(died age 96)
Babcock, Olive H. Fuller (wife of Jonathan Babcock)	(died 10/21/1885 - age 73y)
Babcock, Harriet A. (daughter of J and O Babcock)	(died 2/4/1844 - age 1y, 7m, 10d)
Stiles, Caroline S. Babcock (wife of Harvey Stiles)	(5/12/1835 - 9/29/1915)
Stiles, Dora F. (daughter of H and C Stiles)	(6/9/1872 - 5/23/1915)
Edwards, HW	(died 7/7/1886 - age 73)
Rhoda E. (wife)	(died 11/30/1886 - age 56y)
Stiles, George (son of H and C Stiles)	(died 9/20/1862 - age 13d)
Stiles, Cornelia M. (daughter of H and C Stiles)	(died 3/30/1865 - age 7m)
Stiles, Frank A.	(died 2/22/1869 - age 7 weeks)
Lowe, Alice M. (wife of Maurice Lowe)	(died 8/8/1893 - age 27y)

Lowe, Maurice C.	(died 4/15/1922 - age 61y, 4m)
Perry, Joseph (child of RS and E Perry)	
Julia (child of RS and E Perry)	
Perry, Richard (son of R and S Perry)	(died 2/15/1845 - age 5y, 9m)
Richard F. (son of R and S Perry)	(died 12/7/1848 - age 3y, 11m)
Perry, Frank O. (son of R and E Perry)	(died 5/11/18?? - age 9y, 3m)
Wellman, (Ebenezer?)	(died 9/12/1840 - age 68y, 4m, 8d)
Wellman, Eunice (wife of Ebenezer Wellman)	(died 12/4/1863 - age 93y)
Wellman, Hartford	(died 12/4/1846 - age 52y, 5m, 16d)
Canedy, Clarence T.	(1873 - 1959)
Lesjczenko, Adam	(1891 - 1940)
Cook, Ida R. (daughter of Arnold and Fanny Cook)	(died 3/12/1855 - age 1y, 5m, 16d)

Row 12

Knapp, Evangeline A. (daughter of H and E Knapp)	(died 7/26/1856 - age 5d)
Knapp, Elliot I. (son of H and E Knapp)	(died 6/24/1862 - age 3y, 1m, 16d)
Knapp, Rosella E. (daughter of H and E Knapp)	(died 5/19/1868 - age 10y, 9m)
Knapp, Bertie (son of H and E Knapp)	(died 10/30/1869 - age 6m, 5d)
Shepardson, Isaac	(died 1/24/1879 - age 75y, 2m)
Mary (mother)	(died 3/1/1852 - age 80y, 7m)
Cummings, Stephen W.	(died 2/18/1849 - age 23y)
Cummings, Elsie (wife of Stephen Cummings)	(died 3/23/1881 - age 70y)
Howard, Orrison S.	(10/8/1824 - 7/12/1907)
Lucinda B. (wife)	(died 12/28/1882 - age 70y)
Howard, (infant son) (child of O and L Howard)	(died 4/23/1845 - age 2m, 25d)
(son) (child of O and L Howard)	(died 1/9/1847)
(daughter) (child of O and L Howard)	(died 6/6/1848)
(daughter) (child of O and L Howard)	(died 3/2/1849)
Allen, Samuel	(died 2/23/1870 - age 77y)
Allen, Betsey E. Hill (wife of Samuel Allen)	(died 11/18/1881 - age 89y)
Allen, Martin F. (son of S and E Allen)	(died 9/3/1842 - age 15y, 2m, 1d)
Allen, Sylvia (daughter of S and E Allen)	(died 1/12/1835 - age 4y, 1m, 12d)
Allen, Jon (son of S and E Allen)	(died 10/16/1835 - age 1y, 1m, 12d)
Johnson, Mary E. (wife of Moses Johnson)	(died 11/1/1863 - age 24y, 4m, 12d)
Johnson, Cora E. (daughter of M and M Johnson)	(died 11/10/1863 - age 2y, 2m.)
Johnson, Willie (son of M and M Johnson)	(died 11/22/1865 - age 2y, 7m, 22d)
Johnson, Lizzie G. (daughter of M and M Johnson)	(died 10/20/1867 - age 8y, 10m, 14d)
Frank Symmister - no marker (Civil War Veteran)	(2/1835 - 12/5/1915)
<i>(A veteran's flag is all that marks the above grave)</i>	
<i>IC 77 (possibly Israel Canedy aged 77 years)</i>	
Woodcock, James W.	(died 10/14/1882 - age 73y)
Woodcock, Mary T. Wade (wife of James Woodcock)	(died 3/14/1882 - age 58y, 9m)

Row 13

Cummings, Willie O. (infant son of John and Mary Cummings)	(died 5/3/1867)
Paine, Rebecca (wife of Joseph Paine)	(died 5/1/1825 - age 75y)
Torrey, Orrin P. (Civil War Veterans marker Co. K 14th Vt. Vol.)	(7/22/1817 - 4/30/1894)
Torrey, Herbert H.	(7/31/1853 - 10/2/1873)
Ward, Artemas (son of Artemas and Betsy Ward)	(died 1/26/1848 - age 23y, 10m, 25d)
Ward, Lucy S. (daughter of A and B Ward)	(died 7/7/1849 - age 22y, 2m, 5d)
Torrey, Luther	(died 1/10/1851 - age 65y)
Torrey, Emma (wife of Luther Torrey)	(died 3/14?/1870? - age 80y, 8m)
Torrey, Calvin E.	(died 10/1/1851 - age 31y, 8m, 22d)

New Section Burials

Samson, Stanley C.	(2/16/1905 - 4/17/1991)
Samson, Ruth C. (wife of Stanley Samson)	(8/24/1910 - 11/8/1997)
Romano, Thomas James	(11/27/1932 - 6/16/1995)
Ruth M.	(8/14/1930 - still living in 2000)

Koolis / Kurimai (a multi-family stone)	(1916 – 5/17/2000)
Koolis, Michael J.	(1942 - still living in 2000)
Koolis, Michael F.	(1918 - 5/18/1995)
Kurimai, Frank (also an individual marker)	(1911 - still living in 2000)
Kurimai, Edna W.	(11/3/1900 – 3/13/1985)
Monaghan, Gerald M.	(1/4/1904 – 10/13/1999)
Lucy M.	(12/16/1947 - 12/28/1997)
Weeks, Lawrence R.	(July 28, 1950 - still living in 2000)
Lorraine M.	(May 24, 1910 - January 6, 1998)
Tuttle, Forrest L.	

A total of 236 gravesites

Blodgett Cemetery

Blodgett, Horace A. (son of Jonas and Lucina Blodgett)	(died 1/20/1858 - age 7y, 3m, 27d)
Blodgett, William A. (son of J. Jr. and L. Blodgett)	(died 2/15/1845? - age 1y, 3m)
Blodgett, Irene P. (wife of Joseph Blodgett)	(died 3/10/1858 - age 46y, 15d)
Blodgett, Cornelia (daughter of J and I Blodgett)	(died 2/21/1854 - age 20y, 6m, 6d)
Blodgett, Cirene (daughter of J and I Blodgett)	(died 3/18/1841 - age 6m)
Blodgett, Llewellyn (son of J and I Blodgett)	(died 8/5/1859 - age 8y, 5m, 3d)
Hurd, (a son of Floyd and Zoe Hurd - lived 4 hrs.)	(unmarked - about 1936)
Hurd, (a stillborn daughter of Floyd and Zoe Hurd)	(unmarked - 3/21/1939)

A total of 8 gravesites

Eddy Cemetery



Knight, Herman G.(son of George and Lucy Knight)	(died 5/4/1863 - age 1y, 5m, 15d)
Eddy, Newton W.	(10/23/1864 - 1/18/1902)
Eddy, Clarissa A. (daughter of O and MJ Eddy)	(dates not readable - but should read 11/19/1861 - 2/7/1864)
Eddy, Orrin	(died 12/26/1893 - age 77y, 7m, 5d)
Mary J. Moran (wife)	(died 3/10/1911 - age 80y, 7m)

Eddy, William Henry (Phineas) Emery (brother)	(2/4/1829 - 2/24/1908) (5/30/1830 - 2/29/1880)
Eddy, Lucy E. (daughter of PW and L. Eddy)	(died 3/28/1851 - age 31y)
Eddy, Lois (wife of Phineas Ward Eddy)	(died 3/20/1836 - age 46y)
Goddard, Mary (wife of Asa Goddard of Orange, MA)	(died May 19, 1855 - age 89y)

A total of 10 gravesites

North Cemetery

Kidder, Sarah	(died 2/29/1844 - age 77y)
Kidder, Wright (son of Ashbel and Mary Kidder)	(died 10/13/1833)
Kidder, Ezra (son of Ashbel and Mary Kidder)	(died 5/20/1842)
Estabrook, Adelbert E. (son of Ezekiel and Betsy Estabrook)	(died 5/13/1848 - age 10m, 6d)
Angela M. (daughter of Ezekiel and Betsy Estabrook)	(died 6/1/1846 - age 2y, 10m, 19d)
Lyman W. (son of Ezekiel and Betsy Estabrook)	(died 9/8/1831 - age 2y, 2m, 6d)
Styles, Mary S. (daughter of William and Mary Styles)	(died 7/1/1858 - age 12y, 6m, 4d)
Styles, Mary (wife of William S. Styles)	(died 4/3/1852 - age 24y, 2m, 9d)
Johnson, Olive (wife of Elisha Johnson)	(died 9/20/1846 - age 71y)
Brazer, Paul E.	(3/31/1911 - 8/18/1989)
Madeline	(9/3/1917 - 11/22/1997)
Estabrook, Ezra	(died 2/3/1851 - age 80y)
Estabrook, Eunice (wife of Ezra Estabrook)	(died 4/4/1841 - age 57y)
Jo F. (<i>Joanna French, infant daughter of Jacob and Sarah French – died 9/21/1802</i>)	
Calvin Waite (the stone no longer remains)	(died 7/16/1823)

A total of 15 gravesites

Old Town Cemetery

Although many graves exist here, stones remain for the following individuals only:

Millett, D. R. (child of TW Millett)	(died 3/1820 - age 21d)
Hill, Dysa, (wife of Eber Hill)	(died 12/3/1814)

A total of 2 marked gravesites

Pike Hollow Cemetery

Listings are in order by gravestone, starting in the northwest corner and ending in the southeast corner, following the rows and starting from the north end of each row. Although more graves are evident here, the following graves are known to exist within this cemetery:



The Northwest Corner

Johnson, Millard O.	(2/23/1897 - 7/21/1979)
Doris Eddy (wife)	(7/23/1903 - 7/20/1966)
Barbara Johnson Dennis (daughter)	(9/3/1925 - 6/6/1979)
Eddy, Elmer Albert	(3/4/1855 - 7/2/1936)
Inez T. Pike (wife)	(9/12/1855 - 11/1/1928)
Hermon Elmer (son)	(6/13/1881 - 2/23/1917)
Bernice Wagner (wife of Hermon)	(2/10/1883 - 6/12/1973)
Ethel Ann (daughter)	(1/16/1887 - 5/13/1969)
Mabel Inez (daughter)	(9/6/1885 - 2/16/1886)
Styles, John C. (son of Alva R. and Hattie W. Styles)	(8/18/1898 - 5/2/1899)
Styles, Alva R.	(1/31/1861 - 8/5/1920)
Hattie M. Winslow (wife)	(8/8/1862 - 2/10/1935)

Row 1

Pike, Abel J.	(8/6/1846 - 10/28/1917)
Isabel R. (wife)	(8/30/1847 - 10/7/1933)
Edith A. (daughter)	(12/3/1870 - 4/30/1894)
Lackey, Irma (daughter of H.W. and E.I. Lackey)	(age 1 y, 7 m)
Lackey, Emeline I. Pike (wife of Henry W. Lackey)	(9/6/1881 - 8/12/1912)
Pike, Herbert E. (son of EC and AM Pike)	(6/28/1908 - 3/2/1913)
Pike, Ernest C.	(6/21/1876 - 11/30/1935)
Reid, Minnie J. (daughter of JW and M Reid)	(died 1/19/1863 - age 1 y, 9 m)
Higley, Otis W. (son of Warren and R. Higley)	(died 2/5/1843 - age 1 y, 2 m, 2 d)

Row 2

Pike, Dorcas C. (wife of Moses Pike)	(died 9/27/1881 - age 69 y, 8m, 7d)
Grout, Abel, Jr.	(10/10/1786 - 11/4/1875)
<i>Theodocia (Batchellor) (wife)</i>	(2/14/1791 - 2/28/1868)
<i>(no stone exists - the grave site is indicated by the stone of daughter, Dorcas C. Pike which has the following inscription, "buried beside one of the best of mothers. Theodocia, wife of Dea. Abel Grout." There exist two unmarked graves beside that of Dorcas Pike.)</i>	
Pike, L.B. (Civil War marker - Co. E, 10th Vt. Inf.)	(1/15/1837 - 7/9/1864 dates not noted)
Pike, Moses	(died 12/7/1882 - age 74y, 7m)
Pike, Joseph G.	(died 5/27/1853 - age 2y, 5m, 4d)
Pike, (Infant son)	(died 8/18/1832 - age 14 hours)
Moses Wesley	(died 3/19/1852 - age 7y, 10m, 2d)
Grout, Caroline A. Pike (wife of James Grout)	(7/24/1833 - 10/23/1861)
Grout, James (Civil War marker - Co. K, 9th Vt. Inf.)	(9/29/1831 - 3/1863 dates not noted)
Pike, Edward F. (son of AH and Mary E. Pike)	(died 8/27/1872 - age 16y, 2m, 23d)
Pike, Sarah M. (daughter of AH and Mary E Pike)	(died 11/1/1865 - age 18y, 3m)
Pike, Mary R. (daughter of AH and Mary E. Pike)	(died 2/11/1863 - age 14y, 18d)
Eugene P. (son of AH and Mary E. Pike)	(died 2/13/1854 - age 4y, 7m, 18d)
Pike, Philetus, (son of AH and Elvira Pike)	(died 11/22/1854 - age 2y, 4m, 1d)
Pike, Elvira (wife of AH Pike)	(died 1/16/1844 - age 27y, 8m)
Pike, Alexander H.	(died 7/9/1902 - age 92y, 5m)
Pike, Mary E. (wife of AH Pike)	(died 8/29/1877 - age 50y, 11m, 11d)

Row 3

Holman, Richard	(8/1/1912 - 5/11/1997)
Holman, Marjorie Eddy (wife of Richard Holman)	(5/28/1907 - 2/18/1969)
Holman, Charles E.	(10/21/1878 - 7/23/1941)
Jennie E. (wife)	(12/19/1880 - 5/21/1962)
Holman, Laurretta C. (daughter of Charles and Jennie Holman)	(4/18/1905 - 2/5/1967)
Holman, Mildred Cannon (wife of Kenneth Holman)	(2/20/1910 - [still living in 2000])
Holman, Kenneth B.	(1/27/1908 - 3/22/1996)
Prentiss, Orlando J. (son of FJ and HM Prentiss)	(died 3/9/1860 - age 7m,23d)
Prentiss, Carrie A. (daughter of FJ and HM Prentiss)	(died 7/7/1858 - age 5m, 3d)
Pike, Hannah (wife of Jotham Pike)	(died 9/22/1836 - age 56y)
Pike, Jotham	(died 5/30/1858 - age 78y, 2m, 9d)

Row 4

Estabrook, Henry W. (deacon)	(1/16/1836 - 6/11/1919)
Rose H. Pike (wife)	(7/15/1837 - 8/19/1891)
Ralph E. (son)	(8/13/1873 - 10/14/1873)
Roscoe T. (son)	(8/13/1873 - 4/12/1910)
Arthur A. (son)	(3/8/1861 - 6/14/1915)
Joseph H. (son)	(11/18/1859 - 9/24/1918)
Lyman, Fidelia L. (daughter of R and T Lyman)	(died 12/8/1869 - age 29y)
Pike, Morilla M. (daughter of J. and S. Pike)	(died 11/22/1861 - age 20y, 6m, 13d)
Pike, Joanna R. (daughter of J. and S. Pike)	(died 4/29/1837 - age 1y, 4m, 2d)
Emily A. (daughter of J. and S. Pike)	(died 4/7/1852 - age 5y, 8m, 15d)
Pike, (twin infants) (children of J. and S. Pike)	(died 4/22/1828)
	(died 1/8/1830)
Pike, Salome (wife of Joseph Pike)	(died 2/22/1884 - age 79y, 6m, 14d)
Pike, Joseph	(died 9/11/1877 - age 75y)
Cushman, Marena J. (wife of Leicester Cushman)	(2/25/1839 - 8/4/1921)

Row 5

Johnson, Addie M. (daughter of O. and M. Johnson)	(died 8/3/1865 - age 1y, 10m, 8d)
Rice, Jotham P. (son of P. and E. Rice)	(died 3/3/1844 - age 11y, 4m, 20d)
Rienzi P. (son of P. and E. Rice)	(died 2/17/1844 - age 4y, 4m, 22d)
Rice, Sydney (son of P. and E. Rice)	(died 10/5/1836 - age 1y, 5m, 20d)
Cevinda H. (daughter of P. and E. Rice)	(died 4/4/1839 - age 1y, 9m, 15d)

Rice, Emily (wife of Perez Rice) (died 1/24/1886 - age 82y)
Rice, Perez (died 12/29/1863 - age 65y)

New Section Burials (on west and north sides of the old cemetery)

Hromada, Robert (11/10/1896 - 12/9/1977)
Hromada, Mirth (wife of Robert Hromada) (12/12/1896 - 4/10/1983)
Alexander, Irma (Hromada) (1917 - 5/4/1998)
Fletcher, Wendell (8/16/1914 - 6/24/1974)
Fletcher, Wilma (wife of Wendell Fletcher) (2/2/1922 - 7/14/1994)
Therault, Marjorie Elizabeth "Betty" (Johnson) (2/7/1929 - 7/4/1997)
Bills, Melbourne Lee (7/30/1927 - 5/2/1999)
Inez Alice (wife) (8/26/1927 - 2/4/1998)

A total of 79 gravesites

Willis Cemetery

Listings are in order by gravestone, starting nearest the gate and progressing back and forth through the rows. Although more graves are evident, the following graves are known to exist within this cemetery:



Back Left Corner

King, Andrew Willis (4/22/1914 – 3/1/1992)

Row 1

Gates, Mrs. Persis (wife of Elias Gates) (died 11/16/1868 - age 86)
Louisa (daughter) (died 11/16/1868 - age 56)

(field stone - unknown) (possibly Elias Gates)

Willis, Daniel (9/18/1814 - 12/24/1897)
Willis, Abigail (wife of Daniel Willis) (9/26/1814 - 4/18/1900)
Willis, Clifford (son of D and A Willis) (died 7/15/1859 - age 3y, 6m, 8d)
Willis, Alton E. (son of D and A Willis) (died 3/2/1863 - age 5y, 9m, 12d)
Willis, Frank S. (son of D and A Willis) (died 5/24/1863 - age 12y, 3m, 5d)
Willis, Anna (wife of EA Willis) (died 9/10/1881 - age 23y, 7m)

Row 2

M. (or W.) S. W.H.S. (field stone) (died in 1833)
 (possibly Mary Sprague, wife of Hasey Sprague)
 M.S. W.I.S. (field stone) (died in 1842)
 (probably Mary Sprague, wife of Israel Sprague)
 H.F.S. (field stone) (died in 1844)
 (possibly Hasey Floyd Sprague)
 (field stone - unknown)

Row 3

Hartnell, Holloway (should read "Hartwell") (died 11/25/1866 - age 66y, 9m, 6d)
 Pike, Capt. Wm. G. (died 9/9/1865 - age 87y, 10m, 19d)
 Pike, Myranda (wife of William G Pike) (died 10/21/1852 - age 71y)
 Pike, Samuel (died 11/6/1815 - age 85y)
 Anna (wife) (died 2/20/1825 - age 85y)

Row 4

Grant, Anna Moulton¹ (field stone) (died in 1795)
 Pike, Priscilla E. (daughter of W and M Pike) (died 9/16/1816 - age 12d)
 Knight, Philomela E. (daughter of L. and FA Knight) (died 8/16/1825 - age 11m, 2d)
 Pike, Mary F. (daughter of W and M Pike) (died 10/4/1825 - age 4y)
 Ballard, Sarah (wife of Stephen Ballard) (died 9/5/1871 - age 73)
 (stone is broken and on the ground)
 Ballard, Stephen (died 9/11/1863 - age 73)

Row 5

Hale, Levi (died 7/15/1842 - age 77y)
 Mercy (wife) (died 10/19/1853 - age 79y)
 Hale, Israel (son of Levi Jr. and Cynthia Hale) (died 10/20/1825 - age 18d)
 Sarah M. (daughter of Levi Jr. and Cynthia Hale) (died 2/2/1836 - age 10y)
 Lucien (son of Levi Jr. and Cynthia Hale) (died 10/21/1831)
 Forrister, Moses Esq. (died 10/25/1868 - age 89)
 Forrister, Patty (wife of Moses Forrister) (died 5/6/1864 - age 80y, 3m, 18d)
 Forister, Eliza (wife of Oliver P. Hescocock) (died 11/9/1850 - age 38y, 11m, 4d)
 Forrister, Stephen J. (died 6/14/1863 - age 53y)
 Forrister, Elizabeth P. (wife of Stephen Forrister) (died 9/28/1894 - age 85y, 6m)
 Forrister, Stephen B. J. (son of S and E Forrister) (died 3/28/1844 - age 5y, 4m, 13d)
 Forrister, Mariette E. (daughter of S and E Forrister) (died 6/21/1863 - age 15y, 5m)
 Forrister, Roderick B. (died 7/30/1890 - age 68y, 6m, 12d)
 Forrister, Caroline A. Adams (wife of Roderick Forrister) (died 7/22/1907 - age 77y, 5m, 21d)
 Forrister, Laura Ann (daughter of R and C Forrister) (died 8/24/1867 - age 16y, 3m)
 Forrister (infant son of R and C Forrister)
 Warren, Eleanor Clark, (wife of Robert Penn Warren) (born 7/6/1913 in Los Angeles, CA.)
 (died 2/16/1996 in Boston, MA.)
 Warren, Robert Penn (born 4/24/1905 in Guthrie, KY.)
 (died 9/15/1989 in Stratton, VT)

1) A book called Cemetery Inscriptions from Wardsboro, Stratton, Jamaica, and Dover, Vermont written by Wyer and Ward and published in 1918 states that this fieldstone was interpreted to read "ANNA OULIOH G N" died 1795. The lettering definitely has been worn down since 1918. Anna clearly is visible; as are letters of the last name; however, upon consideration of the circumstances, I believe that an "M" came before the "O" and that the "I" was actually a "T" and the "H" an "N," – MOULTON. The G and N no longer are visible, but these letters obviously were there in 1918. The G and N probably were the remnants of GRANT; therefore, it is very likely that this is the gravestone of Anna Moulton Grant – who was very likely a daughter of Nevinson and Sarah (Moulton) Grant, a girl apparently named for her grandmother, Anna Moulton.

Row 6

Lowe, Sarah E. (wife of Clarence A. Lowe)	(died 9/26/1893 - age 24y, 2m, 10d)
Lowe, (?) (daughter of William and Mary Lowe)	(died 7/24/1844 - age 2y)
Lowe, Aaron	(died 1/19/1898 - age 74y, 26d)
(Lowe), Elvina A. (wife of Aaron Lowe)	(2/28/1841 - 5/20/1900)

(stone is broken and unreadable)

Row 7

Lackey, John J.	(3/8/1816 - 3/31/1898)
Lackey, Rosanna L. (wife of John Lackey)	(1/15/1843 - 5/28/1901)

A total of 49 marked gravesites

Epilogue

In June of 1992, I visited Stratton for the first time. That evening, I sat in front of a roaring fire within the fireplace of what later became our home. At that time, my father-in-law, Hermon Eddy, revealed several suitcases filled with old photographs of the Eddy family's ancestral homes within Stratton. This was the photo collection of Ethel Eddy. Immediately, I was caught up in a sense of the past of this place – amplified by the thought that the forests that surrounded this little house once had been open farmland, with farmhouses and old barns scattered all about this little valley. Who lived here? What happened to them? My curiosity was aroused!

During that same trip, we hiked to Somerset Reservoir, while my father-in-law explained that the surrounding area was once the town of Somerset and that a part of it had since become part of Stratton. Subsequently, we hiked Stratton Mountain and there we climbed the old fire tower for the magnificent view of the surrounding landscape. Later, we visited Pike Hollow Cemetery, and I discovered that no fewer than twelve of my wife, Siobhan's ancestors were buried within this small remote knoll. Later, I learned that she was descended from several families of this town, of whom as many as nine generations had called Stratton their home. The first of several of those bloodlines had settled within Stratton in 1790. Certainly, this was fascinating material to a genealogy and history buff like myself. I had no idea, however, that within a few short years I would take on the project that is presented here.

Upon completion of the History of Stratton, Vermont, I decided that this effort should be dedicated to the lady who had started that very collection of Stratton memorabilia – the same collection I had browsed through back in 1992 – a collection begun over 100 years ago by Ethel Eddy. I never had the pleasure of meeting her, as she had died many years before I met Siobhan. Yet, it was her dedication to this town that had inspired me to pick up where she had left off – to tell the story behind those photographs. Much of her collection can be found among the pages of this history. She too is mentioned several times within this text for her many contributions to the town. Ethel had weathered those most difficult years of Stratton's existence and she helped to hold the town together during much of that time. I hope and believe that she would have been well pleased with this book had she been here to see it through.

If you have read this book or perhaps only skimmed its pages, then you must have some interest in learning of Stratton's past. If that is the case, I hope I was able to satisfy all of your questions and curiosities, for I have included most all the information I could find about this secluded little town set upon the wonderful landscape of the Green Mountains of Vermont.

I also wish to give special thanks to the following individuals for any and all of their support, efforts and contributions toward this project:

My wife, Siobhan
Hugh and Jeanne Joudry
Steve and Rosanna Scully
Hermon A. Eddy
Dan Hescoock
Jim and Lissa Hescoock
Ellen Lyman
Donald Smith
Ora Knapp
Terri (Bills) Garland
Pat Coolidge
Laura Hawksley
Elizabeth Greene
Ilse Mattick
Carolyn Underwood
Doug Forrester
Jennie Forrester
Wayne Rowell
Arlene Huesman
David Greenwalt
Gregory Sanford
Paul Carnahan

DK Young

Appendix A

Old Maps of Stratton



Stratton within James Whitelaw's Map of 1796

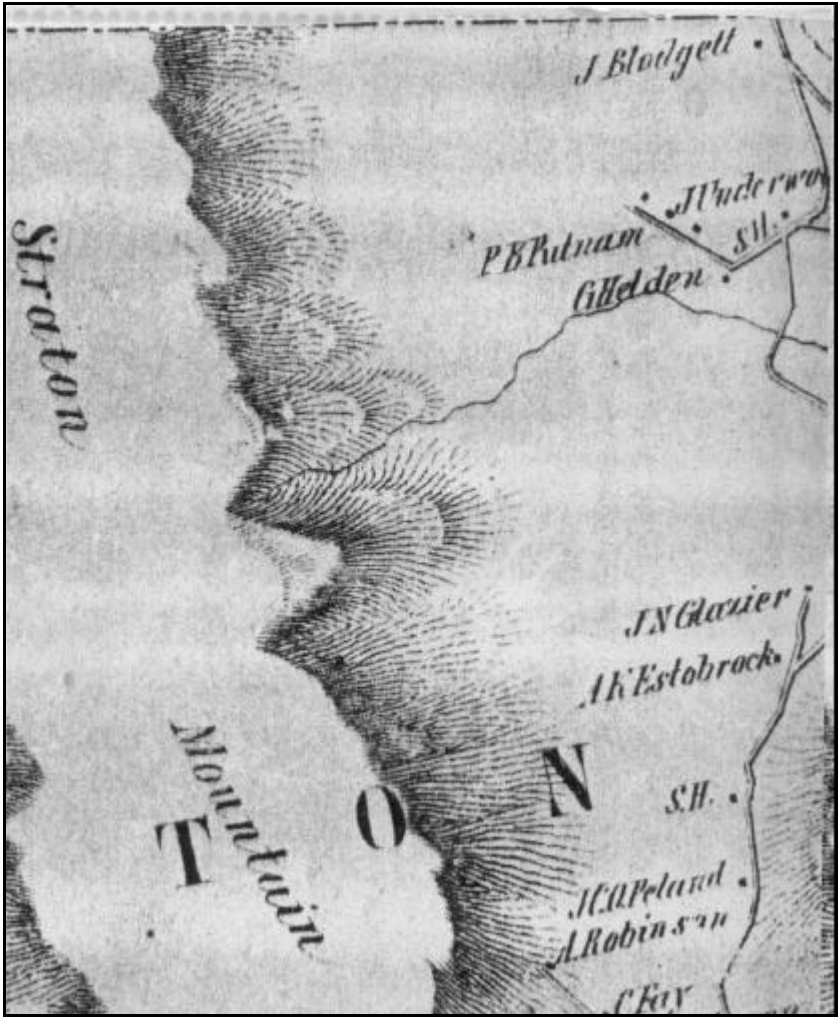
There are a number of interesting place-names given on this map. Manicknung is given as the mountain's name, what is now Grout Pond was called Holman's Pond, while Stratton Pond was called Jones Pond. This map shows Stratton Gore all along Stratton's southern boundary, while the rise of land located in what later became Stratton's Somerset Annex is referred to as Mt. Two Brothers, with a place called Podunk lying where Somerset Reservoir now exists. One final note of interest – the only road within Stratton shown upon this map is the *North Road* that crossed Stratton, from Wardsboro to the northwestern corner of Stratton as it continued toward Manchester.



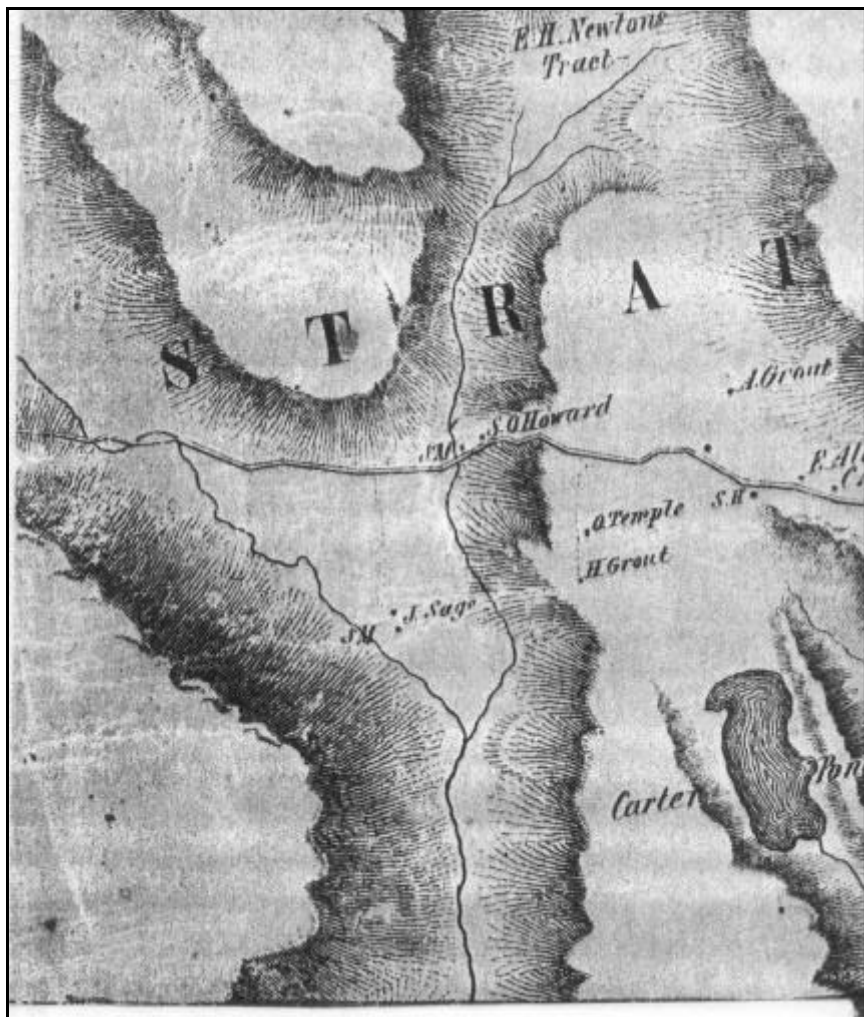
McClellan's Map of 1856
Southeastern Stratton
and the Northeastern corner of Somerset
(before it was annexed by Stratton)



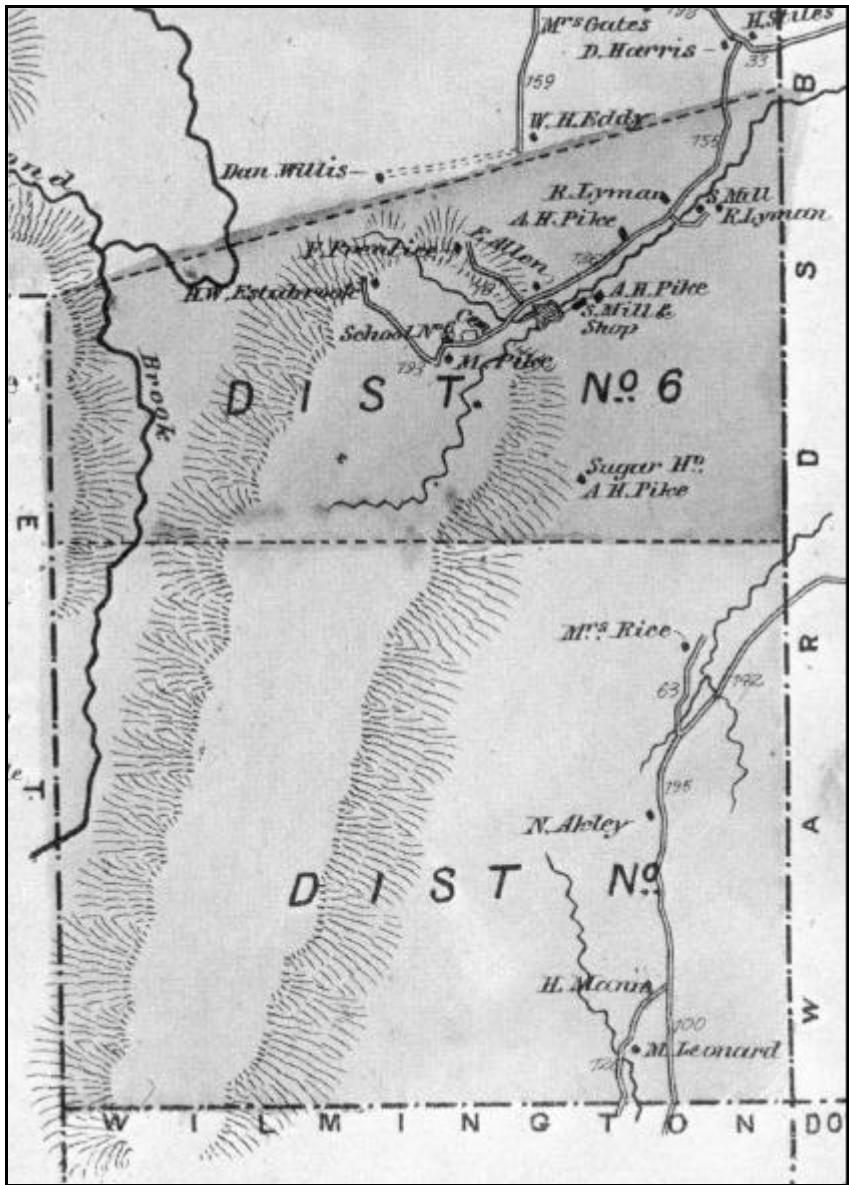
McClellan's Map of 1856
East-Central Stratton



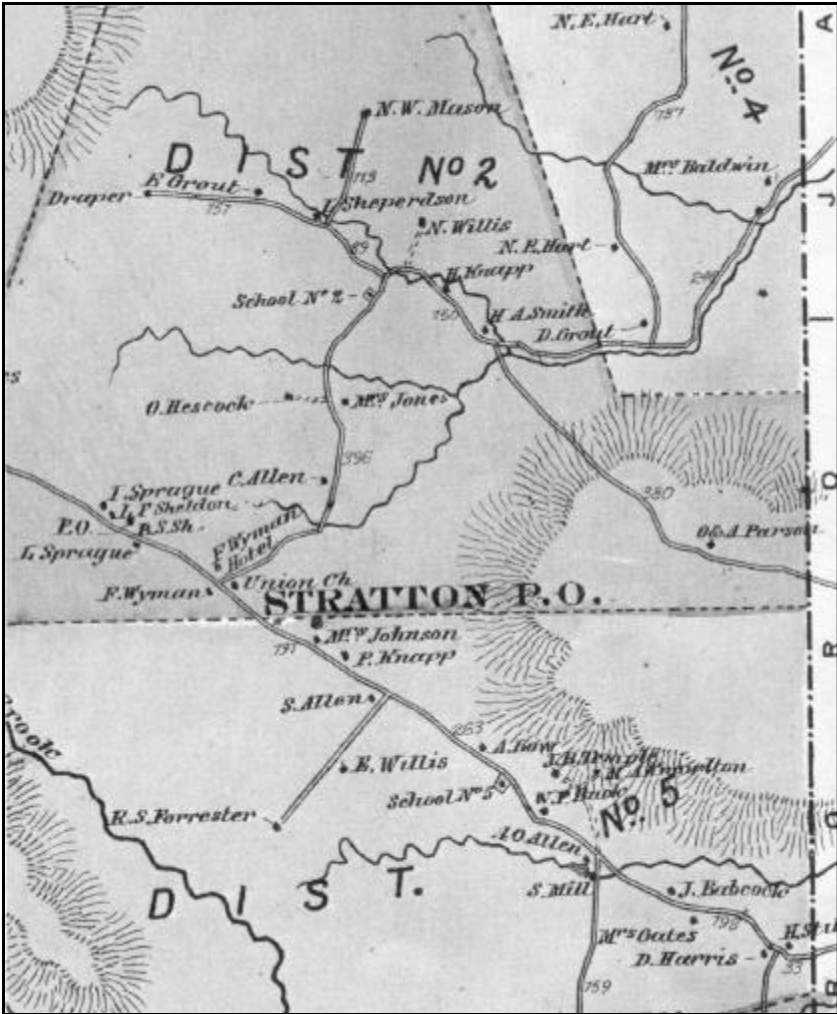
McClellan's Map of 1856
Northeastern Stratton



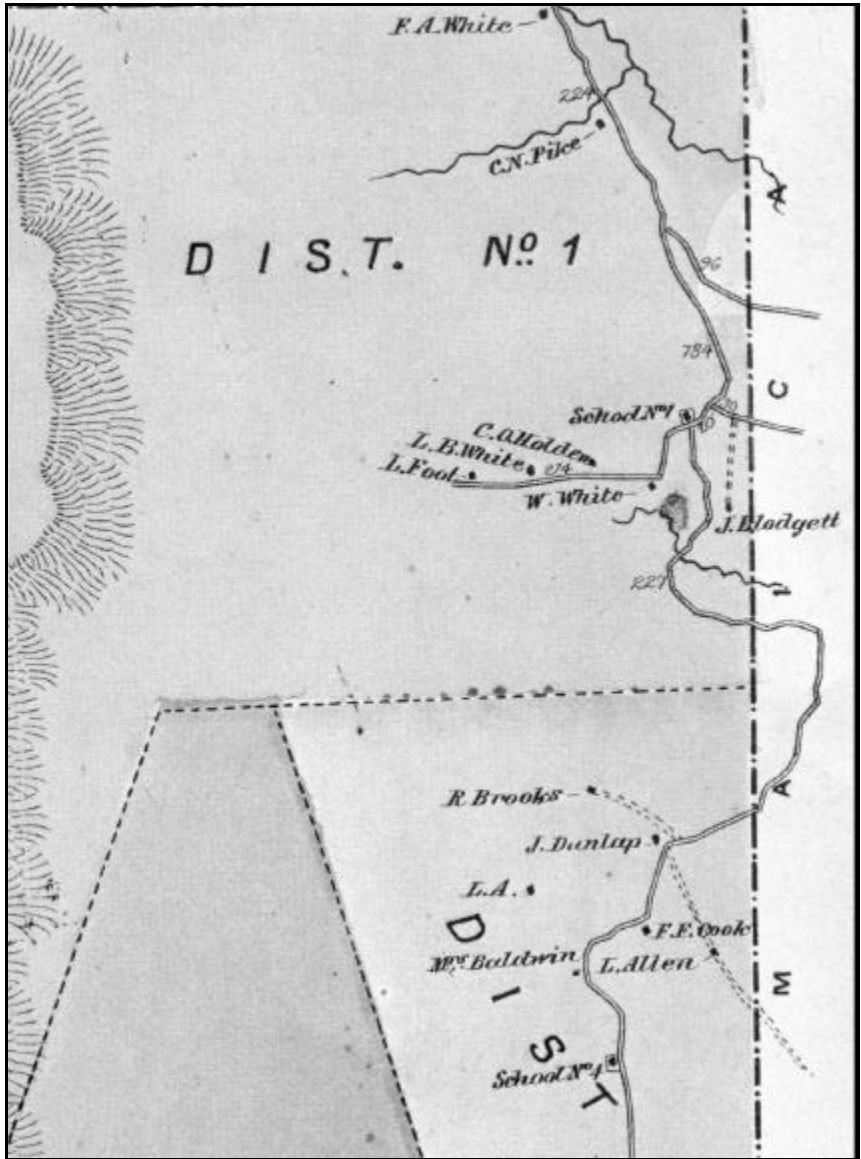
McClellan's Map of 1856
Western Stratton



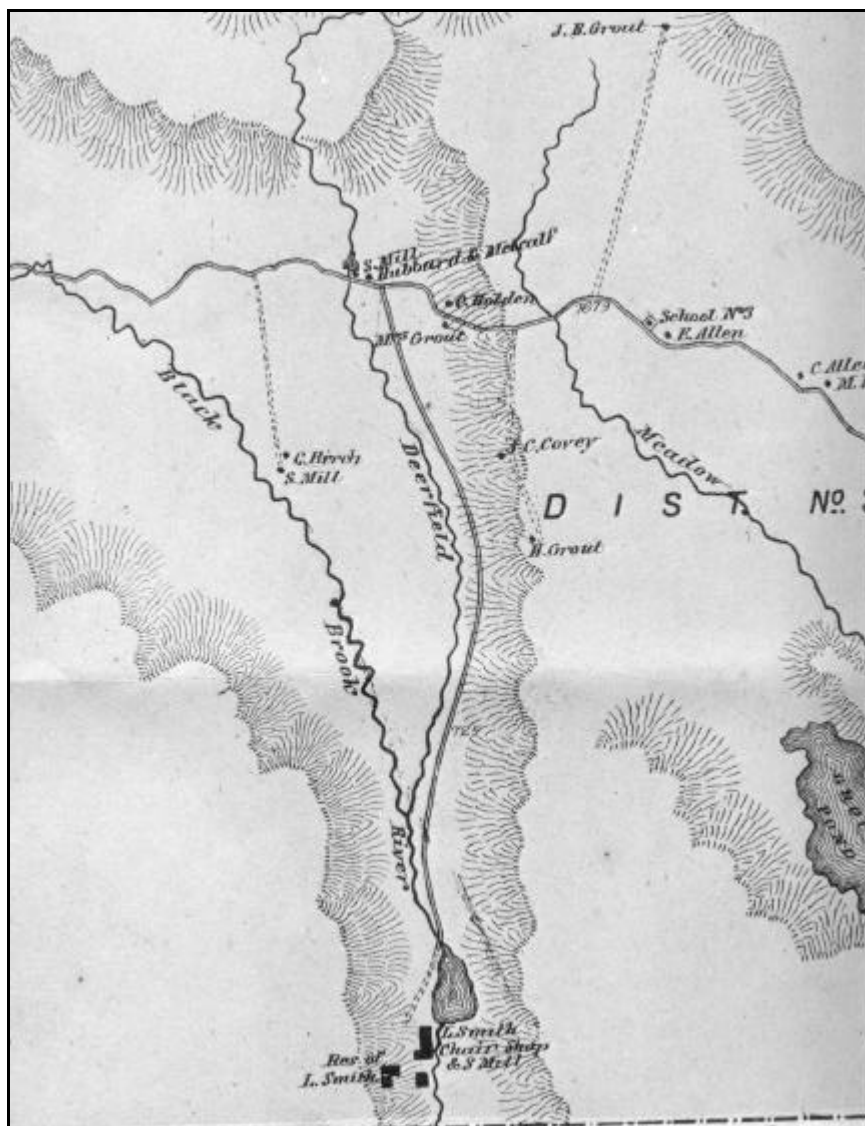
Beers' Atlas of 1869
The Somerset Annex, the eastern part of Stratton Gore
and southeastern Stratton



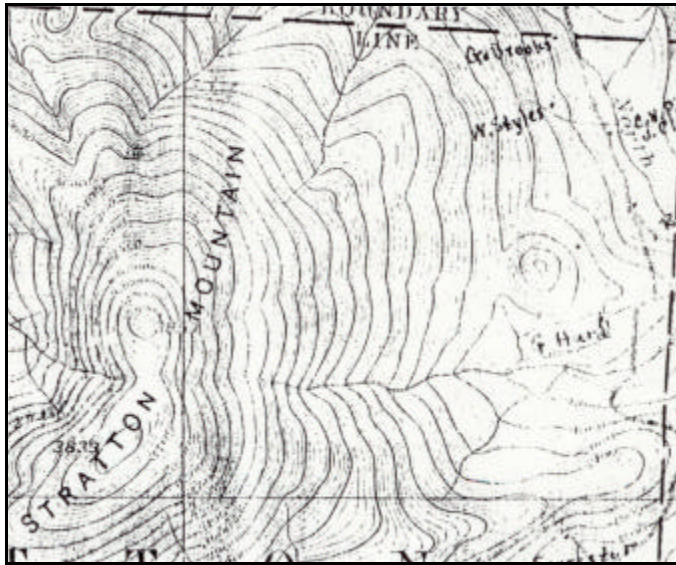
Beers' Atlas of 1869
East-Central Stratton



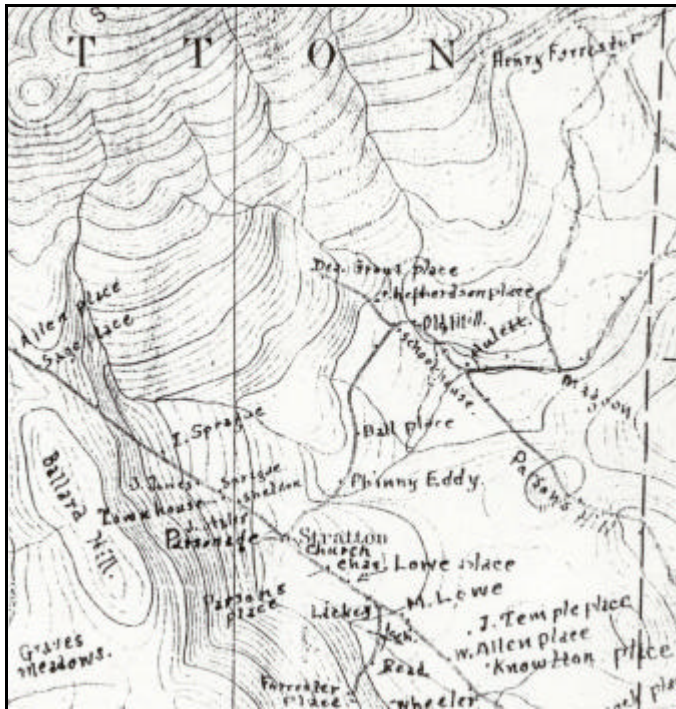
Beers' Atlas of 1869
Northeast Stratton



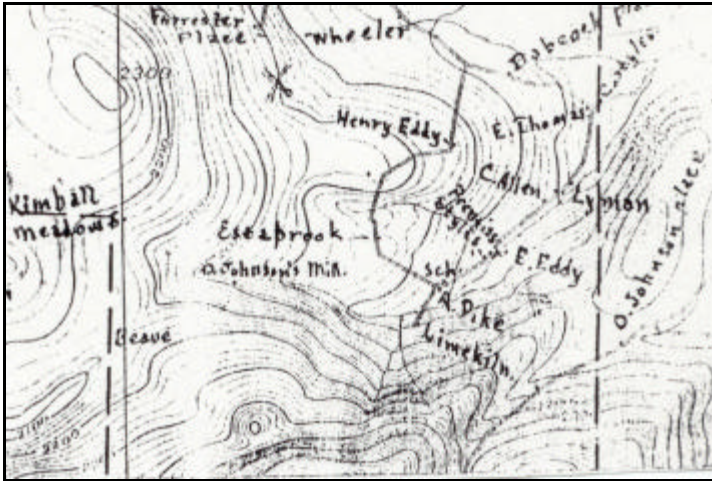
Beers' Atlas of 1869
Western Stratton



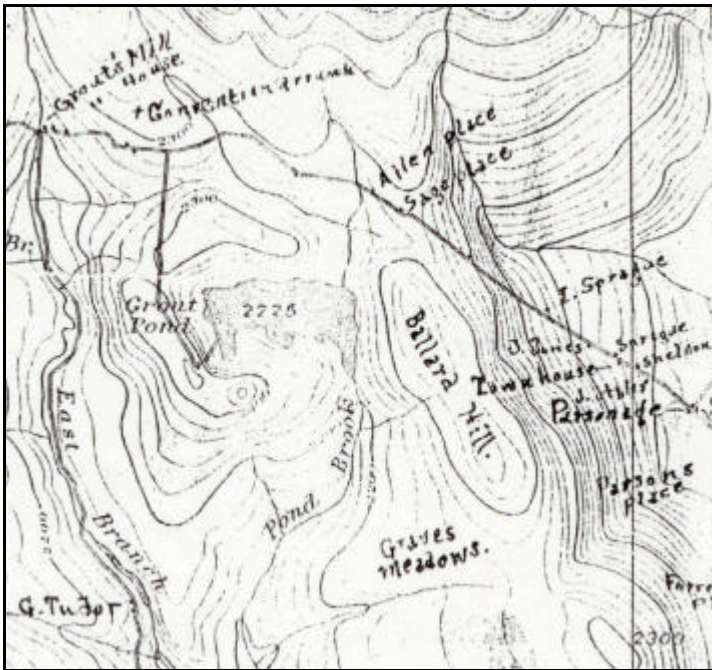
Northeast Stratton circa 1900



East Central Stratton circa 1900



Southeastern Stratton circa 1900



Along the Stratton-Arlington Rd. from the West Jamaica Rd. to the East Branch of the Deerfield River circa 1900.

Key to Maps in Index A

Page # As seen on Map		Proper title
Pg. 443	Manicknung Mt. Two Brothers Jones Pond Holman Pond Gore <i>The road</i> (no label)	Stratton Mountain Mount Two Brothers a. k. a. Stratton Pond a. k. a. Grout Pond Stratton Gore <i>The Great Rd. or North Rd.</i> or <i>Manchester Rd.</i> – see Rd #4 in “ The First Town Roads ”)
Pg. 444	F. Wyman Hotel Union Church SM SM SM R. Scott H. Shelly S. Ballard F. Wyman D. Eddy O. Eddy S. Forrester R. Forrester A. Lowe J. Knowlton JH Smith PW Eddy D. Willis G. Hartwell R. Lyman A. Pike H. King A. Grout M. Pike T. Briggs P. Rice JF Bogle	The Wyman Hotel The Stratton Meetinghouse (<i>built in 1847</i>) AH Pike Sawmill PW Eddy Sawmill The Lyman Sawmill Richard Scott Hollis Shelley Stephen Ballard Freeman Wyman David Eddy Orrin Eddy Stephen Forrester Roderick Forrester Aaron Lowe Justice Knowlton Jonas H. Smith Phineas Ward Eddy Daniel Willis George Hartwell Rufus Lyman Alexander Hamilton Pike Henry King Adams Allen Grout Moses Pike Thomas Briggs Perez Rice J. F. Bogle

Pg. 445	JN Glazier AK Estabrook J COPeland A. Robinson C. Fay S. Knapp WG Howard I. Scott Mrs. Grout JT Baldwin S. Allen N. Smith A. Parsons J. Sprague F. Wyman's Hotel D. Eddy H. Shelly L.F. Sheldon Mrs. Fuller Rev. C. Prescott C. Allen E. Allen R. Scott SH SH F. Wyman Hotel Union Church BS	John N. Glazier Abel K. Estabrook James Copeland Alonzo Robinson Charles Fay S. Knapp <i>(unidentified – probably Squire Henry Knapp)</i> William G. Howard Ira Scott Lucy (Batchellor) Grout <i>(Mrs. Joel Grout)</i> John Baldwin Samuel Allen Nathaniel Smith Amos Parsons James Sprague Freeman Wyman David Eddy Hollis Shelley LaFayette Sheldon Sally (Heaton) Fuller <i>(Mrs. James Fuller)</i> Rev. Chester Prescott Chester Allen Ebenezer Allen Richard Scott Schoolhouse #4 Schoolhouse#2 The Wyman Hotel The Stratton Meetinghouse <i>(built in 1847)</i> LaFayette Sheldon's Blacksmith Shop
Pg. 446	SH SH J. Blodgett J. Underwood PB Putnam G. Helden (sic) JN Glazier AK Estabrook	Schoolhouse #1 Schoolhouse #4 Joseph Blodgett John Underwood Prentis B. Putnam Chester Holden John N. Glazier Abel K. Estabrook

	J. COPeland A. Robinson C. Fay	James Copeland Alonzo Robinson Charles Fay
Pg. 447	SM SH SM Carter Pond EH Newton tract A. Grout O. Temple H. Grout J. Sage S.O. Howard (sic)	White's Sawmill site Schoolhouse #3 The Shaw Sawmill a. k. a. Grout Pond EH Newton's lands Abel Grout Othniel Temple Hudson Grout Jesse Sage Orrison Samuel Howard
Pg. 448	S. Mill AH Pike S. Mill and Shop Sugar Ho. AH Pike School No. 6 Cem. Mrs. Gates H. Stiles D. Harris WH Eddy R. Lyman (2 listings) D. Willis AH Pike (3 listings) E. Allen F. Prentiss M. Pike HW Estabrook Mrs. Rice N. Akley H. Mann M. Leonard	The Lyman Sawmill AH Pike Sawmill AH Pike Sugarhouse Schoolhouse #6 Pike Hollow Cemetery Persis (Newton) Gates (Mrs. Elias Gates) Harvey D. Stiles Daniel Harris William Henry Eddy Rufus Lyman Daniel Willis Alexander Hamilton Pike Ebenezer Allen, Jr. Franklin Prentiss Moses Pike Henry W. Estabrook Emily (Pike) Rice (Mrs. Perez Rice) Newell Akeley Hosea Mann Martin Leonard
Pg. 449	School No. 2 F. Wyman Hotel Union Church PO B.S. Sh.	Schoolhouse #2 The Wyman Hotel The Stratton Meetinghouse (built in 1847) The Stratton Post Office LaFayette Sheldon's Blacksmith Shop

School No. 5	Schoolhouse #5
NE Hart	Nathaniel E. Hart
Mrs. Baldwin	Ruth (Willis) Baldwin <i>(Mrs. John Baldwin)</i>
NW Mason	Nathaniel W. Mason
D. Grout	Darius Grout
HA Smith	Herbert A. Smith
H Knapp	Henry Knapp
N. Willis	Nelson E. Willis
I. Shepardson	Isaac Shepardson
E. Grout	Edwin Grout
Draper	Aaron Draper
Mrs. Jones	Marena (Moon) Jones <i>(Mrs. Silas Jones)</i> <i>(a. k. a. Mrs. Edward Ball)</i>
O. Hescock	Oliver P. Hescock
C. Allen	Cheselton Allen
F. Wyman	Freeman Wyman
L. F. Sheldon	LaFayette Sheldon
I. Sprague	Isaac Sprague
L. Sprague	Lyman Sprague
Mrs. Johnson	Almira (Smith) Johnson <i>(Mrs. James H. Johnson)</i>
P. Knapp	Preston Knapp
S. Allen	Samuel Allen
RS Forrester	Roderick Forrester
E. Willis	Evander Willis
O & A Parsons	Otis Parsons
A. Low	Amos Parsons
JB Temple	Aaron Lowe
MA Knowlton	Jerome B. Temple
WP Buck	Melvin A. Knowlton
AO Allen (sic)	William P. Buck
J. Babcock	Ormando Adams Allen
Mrs. Gates	Jonathan Babcock
H. Stiles	Persis (Newton) Gates <i>(Mrs. Elias Gates)</i>
D. Harris	Harvey D. Stiles
	Daniel Harris

School No. 1	Schoolhouse #1
School No. 4	Schoolhouse #4
FA White	Farnum A. White
CN Pike	Calvin Newton Pike
CO Holden	Chester O. Holden

	W. White	William White
	J. Blodgett	Jonas Blodgett
	L. Foot	Ezra Lewis S. Foote
	LB White	Lester B. White
	R. Brooks	Rufus Brooks
	J. Dunlap	John Dunlap
	Mrs. Baldwin	Ruth (Willis) Baldwin (Mrs. John Baldwin)
	L. Allen, also L.A.	Leander Allen
	FF Cook	Frederick Francis Cook
Pg. 451	S. Mill	Hubbard and Metcalf Sawmill
	School No. 3	Schoolhouse #3
	Grout Pond	Grout Pond
	L. Smith Chair Shop and S. Mill	Lucius Smith Sawmill
	JB Grout	Jacob B. Grout
	Hubbard and Metcalf	John F. Hubbard
		Albert Metcalf
	C. Holden	Chester O. Holden
	E. Allen	Ebenezer Allen
	C. Allen	Chester Allen
	JC Covey (sic)	John B. Covey
	C. Birch	C. Birch
	H. Grout	Hudson Grout
	L. Smith	Lucius Smith
	Mrs. Grout	Jane (Crowningshield) Grout (Mrs. Pliny Fisk Grout)
Pg. 452	G. Brooks	George Brooks
	W. Styles	William P. Styles
	CNP	Calvin Newton Pike
	JC	John Clayton
	G. Hurd	George Hurd
	Henry Forrester	Henry P. Forrester
	Dea. Grout place	Edwin Grout place
	Hulett	Henry M. Hulett
	Magoon	Edward Magoon
	Shepardson place	Calvin Shepardson place
	Ball place	Edward Ball place
	Phinney Eddy	Phineas O. Eddy
	Allen place	Ebenezer Allen place
	Sage place	Jesse Sage place
	I. Sprague	Isaac Sprague
	J. Jones	Jesse Jones

Sprague	Lyman Sprague
Sheldon	Abigail (Sprague) Sheldon <i>(Mrs. LaFayette Sheldon)</i>
J. Styles	Jeremiah Styles
Chas. Lowe place	Charles Lowe place
Parsons place	Ralph Parsons place
Lackey	John Lackey
M. Lowe	Maurice Lowe
Forrester place	Hiland Forrester place
Read	Lucien Read
J. Temple place	Jerome B. Temple place
Knowlton place	Melvin A. Knowlton place
W. Allen	Wesley Allen
Wheeler	Fred Wheeler
Schoolhouse	Schoolhouse #2
Old Mill	Taft and Stewart Mill
Stratton Church	The Stratton Meetinghouse <i>(built in 1847)</i>
Parsonage	Parsonage
Town House	Town House
Sch.	Schoolhouse #5
Pg. 453	
O. Johnson Mill	Orrin Johnson Sawmill
Sch.	Schoolhouse #6
Limekiln	Martin and Fitts Lime and Cement Co.
Grouts' Mill House	The Grout Job
Town House	Town House
Parsonage	Parsonage
Forrester place	Hiland Forrester place
Wheeler	Fred Wheeler
Babcock place	Jonathan Babcock place
Henry Eddy	William Henry Eddy
E. Thomas	Eugene Thomas
C. Stiles	Caroline Stiles <i>(Mrs. Harvey D. Stiles)</i>
Lyman	William Lyman
C. Allen	Cheselton Allen
Prentiss	Franklin Prentiss
Styles	Alva Styles
Pike	Abel Pike
O. Johnson place	Orrin A. Johnson place
Estabrook	Henry William Estabrook
Allen place	Ebenezer Allen place
Sage place	Jesse Sage place

I. Sprague

J. Jones

Sprague

Sheldon

J. Styles

G. Tudor

Isaac Sprague

Jesse Jones

Lyman Sprague

Abigail (Sprague) Sheldon

(Mrs. LaFayette Sheldon)

Jeremiah Styles

George Tudor

Appendix B

Stratton's New Hampshire Grant

(with certifications as indicated upon the town's 1793 copy)

(Front)

Stratton

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 Persons to whom these Presents shall come,

Greeting

Know ye that We of our special grace, certain knowledge and mere motion, for the due encouragement of settling a new plantation within our said Province, by and with the advice of our trusty and well beloved *Berning* Wentworth, Esq. our Governor and Commander in Chief of our said Province of New-Hampshire, in New-England, and of our council of the said Province, HAVE upon the conditions and reservations herein after made, given and granted, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do give and grant in equal shares, unto our loving subjects, inhabitants of our said Province of New-Hampshire, and our other Governments, and to their heirs and assigns forever, whose names are entered on this Grant, to be divided to and amongst them into *Sixty-nine* - equal shares, all that tract or parcel of land situated, lying and being within our said Province of New-Hampshire, containing by admeasurement, *Twenty Three Thousand and Forty* acres, which tract is to contain *Six* ~~~~ miles square, and no more, out of which an allowance is to be made for high-ways and unimproveable lands by rocks, ponds, mountains and rivers, one thousand and forty acres free, according to a plan and survey thereof, made by our said Governor's order, and returned into the Secretary's office, and hereunto annexed, butted and bounded as follows, viz. ---- *Beginning at the North East corner of Sunderland, from thence due East, six miles, from thence due South six miles, from thence due West six miles to the South East corner of Sunderland, thence due North by Sunderland aforesaid to the bound first mentioned*

And that the same be, and hereby is incorporated into a Township by the name of *Stratton* ~~ And the inhabitants that do or shall hereafter inhabit the said Township, are hereby declared to be enfranchized with and intitled to all and every the privileges and immunities that other towns within our Province by law exercise and enjoy: And further, that the said Town as soon as there shall be fifty

families resident and settled thereon, shall have the liberty of holding two Fairs, one of which shall be held on the ~~~~~ and the other on the ~~~~~ annually, which Fairs are not to continue longer than the respective following the said ~~~~~ and that as soon as the said Town shall consist of fifty families, a market may be opened and kept one or more days in each week, as may be thought most advantageous to the inhabitants. Also, that the first meeting for the choice of Town Officers, agreeable to the laws of our said Province, shall be held on the *First Wednesday of October* next which said meeting shall be notified by *Isaac Searl* ~~ who is hereby also appointed the Moderator of the said first meeting, which he is to notify and govern agreeable to the laws and customs of our said Province; and that the annual meeting forever hereafter for the choice of such officers for the said Town, shall be on the *Second Tuesday* ~~ of March annually, To Have and to Hold the said tract of land as above expressed, together with all priviledges and apurtenances, to them and their respective heirs and assigns forever, upon the following conditions, viz.--

- I That every Grantee, his heirs or assigns shall plant and cultivate five acres of land within the term of five years for every fifty acres contained in his or their share or proportion of land in said Township, and continue to improve and settle the same by additional cultivations, on penalty of the forfeiture of his grant or share in said Township, and of reverting to us, our heirs and successors, to be by us or them re-granted to such of our subjects as shall effectually settle and cultivate the same.
 - II That all white and other pine trees within the said Township, fit for masting our Royal Navy, be carefully preserved for that use, and none to be cut or felled without our special license for so doing first had and obtained, upon penalty of the forfeiture of the right of such Grantee, his heirs and assigns, to us, our heirs and successors, as well as being subject to the penalty of any act or acts of parliament that now are, or hereafter shall be enacted.
 - III That before any division of the land be made to and among the Grantees, a tract of land as near the center of the said Township as the land will admit of, shall be reserved and marked out for Town Lots, one of which shall be allotted to each Grantee of the contents of one acre.
 - IV Yielding and paying therefor to us, our heirs and successors for the space of ten years, to be computed from the date hereof, the rent of one ear of Indian Corn only, on the *Twenty-fifth of December* annually, if lawfully demanded, the first payment to be made on *the 25th day of December 1762* .
 - V Every proprietor, settler or inhabitant, shall yield and pay unto us, our heirs and successors yearly and every year forever, from and after the expiration of ten years from the above-said *Twenty-fifth day of December* namely, on the *Twenty-fifth of December* which will be in the year of our Lord 1772~~~ one shilling proclamation money for every hundred acres he so owns, settles, or possesses, and so in proportion for a greater or lesser tract of the said land; which money shall be
-

paid by the respective persons above-said, their heirs, or assigns, in our Council Chamber in Portsmouth, or to such Officer or Officers as shall be appointed to receive the same; and this to be in lieu of all other rents and services whatsoever.

In Testimony whereof, We have caused the Seal of our said Province to be hereunto affixed. Witness *Benning Wentworth* Esq. our Governor and Commander in Chief of our said Province the *Thirtieth day of July*~~~ in the year of our LORD CHRIST, One Thousand Seven Hundred and *Sixty-One* and in the *First*~~~~ year of our Reign. *B Wentworth*
By his Excellency's Command,
With advice of Council, *Theodore Atkinson, Secy.*

Province of New Hampshire, July 30th, 1761
Recorded from the Original under Province Seal
Theodore Atkinson, Secy.

(Back)

The Names of the Grantees of Stratton

<i>Isaac Searl</i>	<i>Nathaniel Burt</i>	<i>Gideon Clark</i>
<i>John Lyman</i>	<i>Samuel Blodget</i>	<i>Jonathan Basscomb</i>
<i>Job Searl</i>	<i>Caleb Blodget</i>	<i>Curtis Leonis</i>
<i>Nathan Lyman</i>	<i>Rev^d John Searl</i>	<i>Oliver Wendal</i>
<i>Eleazer Hannum</i>	<i>Daniel Lee Jun^r</i>	<i>Caleb Blodget</i>
<i>Charles Clapp</i>	<i>Cap^t Benoni Danks</i>	<i>Benj^a Cudworth</i>
<i>Daniel Lee, Esq.</i>	<i>James Hill</i>	<i>Joel Hunt</i>
<i>Elisha Mather</i>	<i>Joseph Hill</i>	<i>Seth Babbit</i>
<i>Martin Phelps</i>	<i>John Hill</i>	<i>Richard Starer</i>
<i>Caleb Strong</i>	<i>John Holden</i>	<i>Joseph Brown</i>
<i>Spencer Phelps</i>	<i>Josiah Brewer</i>	<i>Joseph Pincheon, Esq.</i>
<i>Martin Phelps, Jun^r.</i>	<i>Jonas Cuttler</i>	<i>Monsieur Bonbury</i>
<i>Asael Clap, Jun^r.</i>	<i>William Rawson</i>	<i>William Pearson</i>
<i>Oliver Lyman</i>	<i>John Smith</i>	<i>Henry Apthorp</i>
<i>Joel Lee</i>	<i>Rev^d Jonathan Judd</i>	<i>Jacob Wendal, Esq.</i>
<i>Nathaniel Cudworth</i>	<i>Lieut Thomas Sweat</i>	<i>William Brattle, Esq.</i>
<i>Nathaniel Noyse</i>	<i>Nath^l Phelps</i>	<i>Thomas Hubbard, Esq.</i>
<i>Augustus Clap, Esq.</i>	<i>Nath^l Phelps, Jun^r.</i>	<i>Richard Wibird, Esq.</i>

<i>Charles Mather</i>	<i>John Smith Jun^r.</i>	<i>John Downing, Esq</i>
<i>Ruggles Woodbridge</i>	<i>William Lyman</i>	<i>Sam^l Wentworth of Boston</i>
<i>Elias Lyman</i>	<i>William Blunt</i>	<i>Benning Wentworth</i>

One tract of land to contain five hundred acres for His Excelency, Benning Wentworth, Esq. as marked: B.W. in the Plan, which is to be accounted two, of the within shares, one whole share for the incorporated Society for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, one whole share for a Glebe for the church of England as by law established one share for the first settled Minister of the Gospel & one share for the benefit of a School in said Town ~~~~~

*Province of New Hampshire July 30, 1761
Recorded from the back of the original
Charter under the Province Seal.
Theodore Atkinson, Secy ~~~*

*Province of New Hampshire July 30th, 1761
Recorded with the original Charter and from
the back thereof.
Theodore Atkinson, Secy*

State of New Hampshire~

Secretarys Office Sept 16, 1793.

This certifies that the within and the above is a true copy of the Charter of Stratton as recorded in the book of Charters, Vol. 2 Folio 89 and onwards.~~

Attest Joseph Pearson, Secy.

(Included to the left of the Grantees listed on the charter is a drawing of Stratton, six miles by six miles, with a 500-acre block in the northwest corner labeled B.W. and it shows that the township of Stratton is bounded on the west by the township of Sunderland.)

Appendix C

STRATTON -- A Confirmatory Patent [N.Y. Land Patents, vol. 17, pp. 80-92]

George the third by the Grace of God of Great Britain France and Ireland King Defender of the Faith and so forth *To all to whom* these Presents shall come *Greeting Whereas* Our Province of New York in America hath ever since the Grant thereof to James Duke of York been abutted and bounded to the East in Part by the West Bank or side of Connecticut River *And Whereas* of late Years great part of Our said Province lying to the Westward of the same River hath nevertheless been pretended to be granted by divers Instruments under the Great Seal of the Province of New Hampshire as tho' the same lands had then belonged to and were within the Bounds and Limits of the said Province of New Hampshire and within the Powers and Jurisdiction of the Government thereof *And Whereas* among others the Tract of Land by these Presents hereinafter granted Part of Our said Province of New York as aforesaid hath been so pretended to be granted and to be erected into a Township of the said Province of New Hampshire by the name of Stratton *And Whereas* Our loving Subject Isaac Searles in behalf of himself and his associates by his humble petition¹ presented unto Our trusty and well beloved William Tryon Esquire Our Captain General and Governor in Chief in and over Our said Province of New York and read in Our Council for Our said Province of New York on the Thirteenth day of November which was in the Year of Our Lord One thousand seven hundred and seventy one did set forth That the Petitioner and his Associates owned a considerable Part of the said Tract of Land lying in the County of Albany on the East side of Hudsons River granted under the Great Seal of the Province of New Hampshire by the Name of Stratton which Tract of Land is bounded Southerly by a Tract of Land commonly called and known by the Name of Somerset and Westerly by a Tract of Land commonly called and known by the Name of Glosenbury That a Settlement of the said Tract of Land known by the Name of Stratton would be attended with many inconveniences under Title derived from Our Government of New Hampshire and did therefore humbly pray that Our said Captain General and Governor in Chief would be pleased to Grant Our Letters Patent to him and his Associates for such apart of the said Tract of Land last mentioned as they were intituled to under the pretended Grant aforesaid on such Considerations Restrictions and Reservations as other Lands were granted in like Circumstances *Which Petition* having been then referred to a Committee of Our Council for Our said Province of New York Our said Council did afterwards on the fifteenth day of June which was in the Year of Our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy two in Pursuance of the Report of the said Committee humbly Advise and Consent that

whenever Our Instructions would permit a Grant to be made of the said Tract of Land last mentioned Our said Captain General and Governor in Chief should by Our Letters Patent grant to the Proprietors thereof under the said Grant of Our Province of New Hampshire and their heirs the said Tract of Land known by the Name of Stratton under the Quit Rent Provisoes Limitations and Restrictions prescribed by Our Royal Instructions Except the Share and Proportion thereof allotted under the said pretended Grant to Benning Wentworth Esquire which is to remain Vested in Us That the several Shares thereof theretofore intended for Publick Uses should be granted in Trust as follows That is to say one such share for the Use of the incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts A like Share for a Glebe for the Use of the Minister of the Gospel in Communion of the Church of England as by Law Established for the time being residing on the Premises A like share for the Use of the first settled Minister of the Gospel on the said Tract and one hundred Acres for the Use of a Schoolmaster residing on the said Tract *And Whereas* Our loving Subject Edmund Fanning in behalf of himself and his Associates by his humble Petition² presented unto Our said Captain General and Governor in Chief and read in Our Council for Our said Province on the thirty first day of July now last Past reciting the Proceedings aforesaid did set forth among other things in Substance That the Petitioner putting all due Faith and Confidence in the Honor and Justice of Our Government of Our Province of New York that a Confirmation of the New Hampshire Title would be made to the said Isaac Searl and his Associates or their Assigns Agreeable to the Prayer of their Petition and the Report of the Committee thereupon did sometime in the month of December then next following actually and bona fide Purchase and pay for all the Lands contained in the said Tract of Land known by the Name of Stratton except the Public Rights mentioned in the said pretended Grant of Our said Province of New Hampshire That the Petitioner being possessed of the Original Charter and the Mesne Conveyances to him from the Claimants under Our said Province of New Hampshire and intending to Solicit a confirmation of the Title of the said Tract of Land under the Great Seal of Our said Government of New York to him and # his Associates the whole of the said Conveyances were unfortunately consumed in the late Fire at Fort George *All* which several Facts by reference to the Exemplification of the Charter and Certified Depositions which accompanied his said Petition would more fully and at large appear That the Petitioner and his Associates under the Peculiar Circumstances of their Situation being thus unfortunately deprived of their Title Deeds under Our Province of New Hampshire most humbly solicited a Confirmation by Our Letters Patent of a Title for the whole of the Lands in the said Tract of Land known by the Name of Stratton except the Public Rights to the Petitioner and his Associates a list of whose Names were to his said Petition annexed under the Limitations Reservations and Restrictions as to Our said Captain General and Governor in Chief in his great Wisdom and Justice might seem meet on due Consideration of which said last recited

Petition Our said Captain General and Governor in Chief to grant Our Letters Patent for the Tract of Land prayed for to the said Edmund Fanning and his Associates in the Schedule to the said Petition named under the usual Quit Rent Provisoes Limitations and Restrictions that the several Shares of the said Tract of Land which by the Grant or Charter from Our Government of New Hampshire were intended for Public Uses be granted in Trust pursuant to the Order of that Board of the said fifteenth day of June that the share or Part of the said Tract formerly allotted to Benning Wentworth Esquire remain Vested in Us And that the whole of the said Tract of Land be Erected into a Township by the Name of Stratton and Vested with the usual Privileges *In Pursuance* whereof and in Obedience to Our said Royal Instructions Our Commissioners appointed for the setting out all Lands to be granted within Our said Province have set it for the said Edmund Fanning and his Associates to wit John Moore, William Jauncey, Thomas White, David Mathews, Thomas Barrow, James Barrow, John Woods, John Blagge, Edward Blagge, John Bowles, Francis Panton, Moses Marden, John Fowler, Davis Hunt, Henry Broadwell, Benjamin John Johnston, Malcolm McIsaac, Ennis Graham, James Shaw, John Kelly, Samuel Avery, John Elliot and Christopher Blundell *All* that certain Tract or Parcel of Land (except the five Lots hereinafter mentioned) Situate lying and being on the West side of Connecticut River in the County of Cumberland called and known by the Name of Stratton and Beginning³ at a Beech Tree marked S S 8 standing at the Southwest corner of a Tract of Land known by the Name of Windhall and running thence along the South bounds thereof South eighty degrees East four hundred and eighty chains then South ten degrees West four hundred and eighty chains then North eighty degrees West four hundred and eighty chains and then North ten degrees East four hundred and eighty chains to the Place where this Tract of Parcel of Land first began Containing Twenty one Thousand nine hundred and forty three Acres of Land and the usual Allowance for Highways including the five Lots hereinafter described and Containing exclusive of the said five Lots Twenty thousand three hundred and eighty three Acres of Land and the usual Allowance for highways One of which said Lot is to remain Vested in Us and begins at the Beech Tree Marked S S 8 where the said larger Tract begins and runs thence along the North bounds of the said larger Tract South eighty degrees East seventy two chains then South ten degrees West seventy three chains then North Eighty degrees West Seventy two chains to the West bounds of the said larger Tract and then along the same North ten degrees East seventy three chains to the Place where this first Lot first began Containing five hundred Acres of Land and the usual allowance for highways And Also Our said Commissioners have set out to be granted in Trust for the Uses and Purposes hereinafter mentioned the following four Lots of Land Parts and Parcels of the said larger Tract so set out as aforesaid that is to say For the use of the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign parts *All* that certain Lot or Parcel of Land distinguished by the Name of the second Lot and begins in

the West bounds of the said larger Tract at the Southwest corner of the above described Lot and runs thence South eighty degrees East fifty eight chains then South ten degrees West fifty eight chains then North eighty degrees West fifty eight chains to the said West Bounds and then along the same North ten degrees East fifty eight chains to the place where this second Lot first began Containing three hundred and twenty Acres of Land and the usual Allowance for highways for a *Glebe* for the use of the Minister of the Gospel in Communion of the Church of England as by Law established for the Time being residing on the Lands hereby granted *All* that certain Lot or Parcel of Land distinguished by the Name of the third Lot and beginning in the said West bounds of the larger Tract at the Southwest corner of the last above described Lot and runs thence South eighty degrees East fifty eight chains then South ten degrees West fifty eight chains then North eighty degrees West fifty eight chains to the said West bounds and then along the same North ten degrees East fifty eight chains to the Place where this third Lot first began Containing three hundred and twenty Acres of Land and the usual Allowance for highways For the first settled *Minister of the Gospel* on the Lands hereby granted *All* that certain Lot or Parcel of Land distinguished by the Name of the fourth Lot and begins in the West bounds of the said larger Tract at the Southwest corner of the last above described Lot and runs thence South eighty degrees East fifty eight chains then South ten degrees West fifty eight chains then North eighty degrees West fifty eight chains to the said West bounds and then along the same North Ten degrees East fifty eight chains to the Place where this fourth Lot first began Containing three hundred and twenty Acres of Land and the usual Allowance for highways And for the use of a *Schoolmaster* residing on the Lands hereby granted *All* that certain Lot or Parcel of Land distinguished by the Name of the fifth Lot and beginning in the said West bounds of the larger Tract at the South West corner of the last above described Lot and runs thence South eighty degrees East thirty two chains then South ten degrees West thirty three chains then North eighty degrees West thirty two chains to the said West bounds and then along the same North ten degrees East thirty three chains to the Place where this Lot first began Containing one hundred Acres of Land and the usual Allowance for highways And in setting out the said larger Tract and the several Lots and Parcels of Land last described Our said Commissioners have had regard to the Profitable and unprofitable Acres and have taken care that the length of any of them doth not extend along the Banks of any River otherwise than is conformable to Our said Royal Instructions as by a Certificate thereof under their hands bearing date the Eighth Day of this Instant Month of August and entered on Record in Our Secretary's Office for Our said Province of New York may more fully appear Which said Tract of Twenty one thousand nine hundred and forty three Acres of Land and the usual allowance for highways so set out as aforesaid according to our said Royal Instructions We being willing to grant to the said Edmund Fanning and the other Persons his said Associates their heirs and Assigns for ever (Except as hereinafter is excepted)

with the several Powers and Privileges and to and upon the several and respective Use and Uses Trusts Intents and Purposes Limitations and Appointments and under the several Reservations Exceptions Provisos and Conditions hereinafter expressed limited declared and Appointed of and concerning the same and every Part and Parcel thereof respectively *Know Ye* that of Our especial Grace certain Knowledge and mere Motion We have given granted ratified and confirmed and do by these Presents for Us our Heirs and Successors give grant ratify and confirm unto them the said Edmund Fanning, John Moore, William Jauncey, Thomas White, David Mathews, Thomas Barrow, James Barrow, John Woods, John Blagge, Edward Blagge, John Bowles, Francis Panton, Moses Marden, John Fowler, Davis Hunt, Henry Broadwell, Benjamin John Johnston, Malcolm McIsaac, Ennis Graham, James Shaw, John Kelly, Samuel Avery, John Elliott and Christopher Blundell their heirs and Assigns for ever All that the aforesaid large Tract or parcel of Land set out abutted bounded and described by Our said Commissioners in manner and form as above mentioned (Except therout as hereinafter is Excepted) and including all those the aforementioned several smaller Tracts or Lots of Land severally and respectively set out by Our said Commissioners as Parts and Parcels of the same large Tract for the Use of the incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts for a Glebe for the use of the Minister of the Gospel in Communion of the Church of England as by Law Established for the first settled Minister of the Gospel as aforesaid and for the use of a Schoolmaster residing as aforesaid together with all and singular the Tenements Hereditaments Emoluments and Appurtenances to the same and every Part and Parcel thereof belonging or appertaining And also all Our Estate Right Title Interest Possession Claim and Demend whatsoever of in and to the same Lands and Premises hereby granted and every Part and Parcel thereof Except and always reserved out of this Our present Grant unto Us Our heirs and Successors for ever All that the aforesaid certain Lot or Parcel of Land containing Five hundred Acres of Land with the usual Allowance for Highways hereinbefore mentioned to be set apart and remain Vested in Us abutted bounded and described as aforesaid and distinguished by the Name of the first Lot as aforesaid together with all and every the Appurtenances thereunto belonging the same Lot being included within the Bounds and Limits of the larger Tract of Twenty one thousand nine hundred and forty three Acres of Land hereinbefore described and within the Township by these Presents hereinafter Constituted And also Except and always reserved out of this Our present Grant unto Us Our heirs and Successors for ever *All Mines of Gold and Silver* And also all White or other Sorts of Pine Trees fit for Masts of the Growth of Twenty four Inches Diameter and Upwards at twelve Inches from the Earth for Masts for the Royal Navy of Us Our heirs and Successors *To have and to hold* all and Singular the said Lands Tenements Hereditaments and Premises by these Presents granted ratified and confirmed and every Part and Parcel thereof with their and every of their Appurtenances (except as is hereinbefore

excepted) unto them Our Grantees above Named their heirs and Assigns for ever To for and upon the several and respective Use and Uses Trusts intents and purposes hereinafter expressed limited declared and appointed of and concerning the same and every Part and Parcel thereof respectively And to and for no other Use or Uses Intent of Purpose whatsoever that is to say

(For details of Reservations of Tracts granted to Society for Prop, Glebe, Schoolmaster see Brattleborough patent [page 48 of NY Land Patents])

*And as for and concerning All the rest residue and remainder of the said Tract of Land Tenements Hereditaments and Premises hereby granted ratified and confirmed To have and to hold one full and equal twenty fourth Part (the whole into twenty four equal Parts to be divided) of the said rest residue and remainder and every Part and Parcel thereof with all and every the Apputenances to the same belonging or in any wise Appertaining (except as is hereinbefore excepted) unto each of them the said Edmund Fanning, John Moore, William Jauncey, Thomas White, David Mathews, Thomas Barrow, James Barrow, John Woods, John Blagge, Edward Blagge, John Bowles, Francis Panton, Moses Marden, John Fowler, Davis Hunt, Henry Broadwell, Benjamin John Johnston, Malcolm McIsaac, Ennis Graham, James Shaw, John Kelly, Samuel Avery, John Elliott and Christopher Blundell their heirs and Assigns respectively To their only proper and separate Use and Behoof respectively for ever as Tenants in Common and not as joint Tenants and to or for no other Use or Uses Intent or Purpose whatsoever All and Singular the said Tract of Land and Premises hereby granted and every Part and Parcel thereof To be holden of Us Our heirs and Successors in free and common Socage as of Our Manor of East Greenwich in Our County of Kent within Our Kingdom of Great Britain Yielding rendering and paying therefore Yearly and every Year for ever unto Us Our heirs and Successors at Our Custom House in Our City of New York in Our said Province of New York unto Our or their Collector or Receiver General there for the Time being on the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary commonly called Lady Day the yearly rent of Two Shillings and six pence Sterling for each and every hundred Acres of the above granted Lands and so in Proportion for any lesser Quantity thereof saving and except for such Part of the said Lands allowed for highways as above mentioned in Lieu and stead of all other Rents Services Dues Duties and Demands whatsoever for the hereby granted Lands and Premises or any Part thereof And We do of Our especial Grace certain knowledge and mere Motion create erect and Constitute the said large Tract Containing Twenty four thousand nine hundred and forty three Acres of Land hereinbefore mentioned and every Part and Parcel thereof a Township for ever hereafter to be continue and remain and by the Name *Stratton* for ever hereafter to be called and known*

(For details of Elections of Officers, etc., see Patent of Princetown [page 27 of NY Land Patents])

Provided further and upon Condition also nevertheless *And* We do hereby for Us Our heirs and Successors direct and appoint that this Our present Grant shall be Registered and entered on Record within six months from the date thereof in Our Secretary's Office in Our City of New York in Our said Province of New York in one of the Books of Patents there remaining and that a Docquet thereof shall be also entered in Our Auditors Office in and for Our said Province of New York and that in Default thereof this Our present Grant shall be Void and of none effect any thing before in these Presents contained to the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding *And* We do moreover of Our especial Grace certain Knowledge and mere Motion consent and agree that this Our present Grant being Registered Recorded and a Docquet thereof made as before directed and appointed shall be good and effectual in the Law to all intents Constructions and Purposes whatsoever against Us Our heirs and Successors notwithstanding any misreciting misbounding misnaming or other Imperfection or Omission of in or in any wise concerning the above granted or hereby mentioned or intended to be granted Lands Tenements Hereditaments and Premises or any part thereof *In Testimony* whereof We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent and the Great Seal of Our said Province of New York to be hereunto affixed *Witness* Our said Trusty and well beloved William Tryon Esquire Our said Captain General and Governor in Chief in and over Our said Province of New York and the Territories depending thereon in America Chancellor and Vice Admiral of the same At Our Fort in Our City of New York the Twenty second day of August in the year of Our Lord One thousand seven hundred and seventy five and of Our Reign the Fifteenth.

1. Vol 30, p.37.
 2. This petition is not located in the Land Papers; affidavits of Isaac Searl, John Grunley, Edmund Fanning and Whitehead Hicks, Mayor of New York City, relative to the purchasing of the New Hampshire rights in the township of Stratton, together with an exemplified copy of the New Hampshire charter and a map of Stratton, are in vol. 35, pp 80-82.
 3. Return of survey with map, vol. 35, p. 83.
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Appendix D

Censuses of Stratton (1791 - 1920)

The following people were listed as heads of families in Stratton during the censuses of Vermont taken from 1791 to 1920, with the exception of the 1890 census, which was destroyed by fire.

In most cases, detailed accounts of these individuals and their families can be found in *Echoes in the Forest, The Family History Supplement to the History of Stratton, Vermont*. Statistical information can be found in this book, on page 144, in **Chapter VIII Local Government and Politics**.

The Census of 1791

This census was added to the U. S. Census of 1790. The names included here were listed as found in the typed version of the census. Erroneous names apparently existed in this version; therefore, I have included in parentheses names of the individuals whom I believe the census-taker actually had interviewed. Also included in parentheses are the full spellings of abbreviated names.

Bowtwell, Saml (Samuel Boutell)
Burch, Warren (possibly William Boutell)
Bixby, Sampson
Chase, Isaac
Cook, David
Grout, Joshua (Joshua Grant)
Grout, Denison (Nevinson Grant)
Greenwood, Jona (John Greenwood)
Gale, Solomon
Gleason, Saml (Samuel Gleason)
Holman, John
Hale, Joel
Hobbs, Benja (Benjamin Hobbs)
Kidder, Francis
Lamb, Phinehas (Phineas Lamb)
Mann, Wm. (Bille Mann)
Morseman, Timo (Timothy Morsman)
Miller, Elkanah
Patch, Joseph
Philips, Asa (Asa Phillips)
Stone, Clark
Thayer, Stephen
Wait, John (John Waite)
Woodward, Jaras (Jonas Woodward)

Censuses of 1800 to 1920

The remaining censuses were copied from microfilm of the actual census-sheets. Only heads of families are listed here, even though, beginning with the 1850 census, all family members' names were documented upon the census..

Census of 1800

Allen, Jacob
Balcom, Isaac
Bartlett, Richard
Batchellor, Calvin
Batchellor, Jacob
Bayley, Benjamin
Bill, Ebenezer
Bixby, Sampson
Blodgett, Samuel
Blodgett, Samuel Jr.
Boutell, Samuel
Boutell, William
Cook, David
Davis, Simon
Estabrook, Ezra
French, Jacob
Garfield, Eliakim
Garfield, Nathaniel
Gibbs, Edmund
Gleason, John
Gleason, Samuel
Goodell, Jacob
Grant, James
Greenwood, John
Hale, Jacob
Hale, Levi
Hill, Jonathan
Hill, Thomas
Holman, John
Kidder Francis
Kidder, Abel
Lathrop, Thomas
Mann, Bille
Marble, Samuel
Marble, Samuel Jr.
Moulton, Nathaniel
Phillips, Asa

Pike, Jotham
Pike, William
Pratt, Asa
Pratt, Stephen
Ramor, John
Randall, James
Robbins, Levi
Sigourney, Anthony
Sprague, Hasey F.
Stoddard, David
Thurston, James
Waite, John
Woodcock, Elias
Woodward, Jonas

Census of 1810

Batchellor, Jacob
Bixby, Sampson
Boutell, Sam'l
Coes, John
Cook, David
Davis, Zephaniah
Estabrook, Ezra
French, Jacob
Garfield, Joseph
Glazier, John
Greenwood, John
Grout, Abel
Guild, Lewis
Hale, Levi
Harris, Richard
Haven, Jackton G.
Haynes, Russell
Hill, Eber
Hill, Jonathan
Hill, Noah & Daniel
Howe & Wheeler
Kidder, Abel
Lyon, Aaron

Lyon, Josiah
Mann, Bille
Marble, Samuel
Marble, Samuel Jr.
Millet, Thomas W.
Moulton, Nathaniel
Newhall, William
Oliver, George
Page, John
Phillips, Asa
Ramor, John
Randall, James
Robbins, Joshua
Scott, Ira
Sprague, Hasey F.
Stearns, William
Wait, John
Wheeler, John
Wheeler, William
Woodward, Jonas

Census of 1820

Alden, Phineas
Bennet, Allen O.
Boutell, Samuel
Carter, Ephraim
Estabrook, Ezra
Estabrook, Joel
Forrester, Moses
Frost, Joseph
Glazier, John
Grant, Daniel
Grant, Joshua
Greenwood, James
Greenwood, John
Grout, Abel
Grout, Abel, Jr.
Grout, Joel
Guild, Lewis
Guillow, Moses
Hale, Levi
Hill, Daniel
Hill, Noah
Holmes, David

Holmes, Sanford
Howard, Nahor
Kidder, Abel
Mann, Bille
Marble, Samuel
Mascraft, Isaac
Mason, Royal
Millet, Thomas W.
Newman, David
Phillips, Asa
Pike, William
Randall, Matthew
Rice, David
Richards, Elijah
Rider, Rufus
Scott, Ira
Scott, Ira, Jr.
Scott, Richard
Shepardson, Isaac
Shepardson, Moses K.
Sprague, Hasey F.
Sprague, Joshua
Stiles, William
Stimpson, Thomas L.
Torrey, Luther
Waite, Calvin
Wellman, Ebenezer
Wheeler, Abraham

Census of 1830

Allen, Abiel
Allen, Samuel
Ballard, Stephen
Bissell, Jonathan M.
Carter, Ephraim
Eddy, Phinehas
Estabrook Ezekiel
Estabrook, Ezra
Estabrook, Joel
Ford, Zerah
Forrester, Moses
Fox, Charles
Fox, Nehemiah
Glazier, John

Glazier, John N.
Grant, Betsey
Grant, Daniel H.
Grout, Abel
Grout, Abel, Jr.
Grout, Hudson
Grout, Joel
Guild, Lewis
Hale, Levi
Hale, Levi, Jr.
Hartwell, Holloway
Hill, Jennie (Jane)
Hill, Noah
Howard, Nahor
Howard, Warner
Jones, Nelson B.
Kidder, Abiel
Kidder, Ashbel
Lyon, Baxter
Mann, Bille
Marble, Samuel
Mason, Royal
Moon, Benjamin
Morse, Charles
Morse, Jedidiah
Morse, Jonathan
Phillips, Asa
Pike, William
Randall, Matthew
Rice, David
Richardson, Timothy
Scott, Ira
Scott, Ira, Jr.
Scott, Richard
Shepardson, Isaac
Sprague, Hasey F.
Stimpson, Thomas
Torrey, Luther
Underwood, John
Wait, Luther
Wait, Tyler
Wellman, Ebenezer
Wheeler, James

Census of 1840

Allen, Ebenezer
Allen, Samuel, Jr.
Baldwin, Hiram
Ballard, Stephen
Bissell, Jonathan M.
Blodgett, Jonas
Blodgett, Joseph
Bugby, Cyrus
Cannon, George
Cummings, Wm.
Eddy, Phineas W.
Estabrook, Ezekiel
Fay, Charles
Felt, George E.P.
Forrester, Moses
Forrester, Stephen
Fuller, James
Glazier, John N.
Grout, Abel, Jr.
Grout, Hudson
Grout, Lucy
Higley, Warren
Holbrook, Luther
Holton, Reuben
Howard, Warner
Hudson, Benjamin
Joy, Royal
Kidder, Ashbel
Lawrence, Abram
Lyman, Rodolphus
Moultrip, Alford
Parsons, Amos
Pike, Isaac N.
Pond, George
Porter, Abel
Rice, David
Rice, Shadrack B.
Rider, Samuel
Scott, Ira
Scott, Richard
Shelley, Oren
Shepardson, Isaac
Smith, Travis

Sprague, James
Stacey, Thomas
Thomas, Philip
Torrey, Luther
Underwood, John
Waite, Tyler
Wellman, Ebenezer
Wellman, Pardon
Wheeler, John
Wheeler, Zeresh W.
Williams, Daniel
Willis, Daniel
Willis, Samuel

Census of 1850

Allen, Chester
Allen, Ebenezer
Allen, Samuel
Ames, Hiram
Babcock, Jonathan
Ballard, Stephen
Blodgett, Jonas
Blodgett, Jonas
Blodgett, Joseph
Cook, Arnold
Copeland, James
Eddy, David
Eddy, Orrin
Eddy, Phineas W.
Estabrook, Ezekiel
Estabrook, Ezra
Fay, Charles
Forrester, Moses
Forrester, Stephen
Fuller, Sally
Gates, Elias
Glazier, John N.
Grout, Abel
Grout, Hudson
Grout, Lucy
Grout, Pliny Fisk
Hale, Joel
Howard, William G.
Hudson, Nathaniel P.

Kidder, Ashbel
Knapp, Hiram
Knights, Amos
Lyman, Rufus
Moon, Benjamin
Moore, Peter
Packard, Joseph
Packard, Joseph
Parsons, Alfred
Parsons, Amos
Perry, Jeremiah
Perry, Richard
Putnam, Prentis B.
Robinson, Hiram
Scott, Ira
Scott, Richard
Sheldon, LaFayette
Shepardson, Isaac
Smith, Jonas H.
Smith, Nathaniel
Sprague, Isaac
Sprague, James
Stiles, William H.
Stiles, William S.
Torrey, Calvin E.
Torrey, Luther
Underwood, John
Wellman, Pardon
Williams, Thomas L.
Willis, Daniel
Wing, Samuel
Wyman, Freeman

Census of 1860

Akeley, Newell
Akeley, Newell H.
Allen, Cheselton
Allen, Chester
Allen, Ebenezer
Allen, Leander
Allen, Orlando
Allen, Samuel
Babcock, Jonathan
Baldwin, John

Ballard, Stephen
Blodgett, Jonas
Blodgett, Jonas
Blodgett, Oscar
Bourn, Nelson
Clough, George
Copeland, James
Eager, George
Eddy, David
Eddy, Orrin
Eddy, Phineas W.
Eddy, William (Henry)
Edwards, (Henry) Willard
Estabrook, Abel
Estabrook, Henry
Fay, Charles
Forrester, Henry
Forrester, Roderick
Forrester, Stephen
Fuller, Leander
Fuller, Sally
Gates, Elias
Glazier, John N.
Grout, Darius
Grout, Edwin
Grout, J(acob) B.
Grout, Pliny Fisk
Hale, Joel
Hall, Milo
Hescock, Oliver
Holden, Chester
Howard, William G.
Johnson, James
Jones, Jesse
Knapp, Elvira
Knapp, Henry
Knapp, Pitman
Knight, George
Knowlton, Justice
Knowlton, Melvin
Lowe, Aaron
Lyman, Rufus
Moon, Benjamin
Mundell, Joseph
Parsons, Alfred

Parsons, Amos
Parsons, Orrin
Perry, Milon
Perry, Richard
Pike, Alexander
Pike, Joseph
Pike, Moses
Prentiss, Franklin J.
Putnam, Prentiss
Rice, Perez
Ryder, C(harles) H.
Sage, Jesse
Scott, Ira
Sheldon, LaFayette
Shepardson, Isaac
Smith, Alonzo
Smith, Jonas H.
Sprague, Isaac
Sprague, Lyman
Stiles, Harvey
Stiles, William
Torrey, Orrin
Underwood, John
White, Francis
Willis, Daniel
Willis, Ezra
Wyman, Freeman

Census of 1870

Akeley, Martin
Akeley, Newell
Allen, Cheselton
Allen, Chester
Allen, Ebenezer
Allen, Elizabeth
Allen, Leander
Allen, Leroy
Allen, Lucy
Allen, Orlando
Babcock, George
Babcock, Jonathan
Baldwin, Ruth
Blodgett, Jonas
Bounds, Daniel

Brooks, Rufus
Brownell, John
Buck, William P.
Cook, Francis
Dunlap, John
Eddy, Albert
Eddy, William Henry
Edward, Henry
Emmons, Amzi B.
Estabrook, Henry
Foot, Mary
Forrester, Roderick
Grout, Abel
Grout, Darius
Grout, Edwin
Grout, Jane
Hale, Chloe
Harris, Daniel
Hart, Nathaniel
Hescock, Oliver
Howard, Samuel
Hubbard, John
Jones, Jessie
Knapp, Elvira
Knapp, Emma
Knapp, Henry
Knight, (Andrew) Dexter
Knowlton, Melvin
Lowe, Aaron
Lyman, Rufus
Mundell, Joseph
Parsons, Alfred
Parsons, Orrin
Perry, Milon
Perry, Richard
Pike, Alexander
Pike, Calvin
Pike, Joseph
Pike, Moses
Prentiss, Franklin J.
Sheldon, LaFayette
Shepardson, Isaac
Smith, Herbert
Sprague, Isaac
Sprague, Lucy

Sprague, Lyman
Stiles, Harvey
Stiles, Jeremiah
Temple, Jerome B.
Torrey, Orrin
White, William
Wilder, Emery
Wilkinson, George
Willard, Russell
Williams, George
Williams, Hiram
Willis, Daniel
Willis, Ezra
Willis, Nelson
Wyman, Freeman

Census of 1880

Akeley, Martin
Akeley, Newell
Allen, Arathusa M.
Allen, Cheselton
Allen, Chessie J.
Allen, Ebenezer
Allen, Leander
Allen, Leroy
Allen, Lucy
Allen, Norman D.
Babcock, Jonathan
Baldwin, Ruth
Ball, Edward A.
Baybrook, H. G.
Bowker, E. W.
Brooks, H. M.
Brown, George
Centor, John
Cobb, Elias
Dunlap, Sarah J.
Eddy, Elmer A.
Eddy, Orrin
Eddy, William Henry
Edwards, H. W.
Forrester, H. P.
Forrester, Roderick
Grout, Edwin L.

Hall, Frank C.
Hescock, Oliver P.
Johnson, George W.
Jones, Jesse C.
Kent, William P.
Knight, Andrew D.
Lackey, Franklin S.
Lowe, Aaron
Lowe, Charles
Lyman, Rufus
Nichols, Charles
Nichols, Charles M.
Parsons, Alfred
Parsons, Orrin
Pike, Abel J.
Pike, Alexander H.
Pike, Calvin
Prentiss, Franklin J.
Sage, Jesse
Sheldon, LaFayette
Shepard, Willard
Shepardson, Calvin
Sprague, A(lfred)
Sprague, Isaac
Sprague, J. S. T.
Sprague, Lyman W.
Stiles, Caroline S.
Styles, Jeremiah D.
Temple, Jerome B.
Torrey, Orrin
Wheeler, Alonzo L.
White, William
Wilder, Lewis J.
Willis, Daniel
Willis, Evander H.
Willis, Herbert
Woodcock, J. W.

Census of 1900

Allen, Dana
Allen, Leander
Allen, Norman
Allen, Orville E.
Allen, Wesley

Armstrong, Charles
Atwood, Hattie
Baybrook, George
Bills, Lyman O.
Boyd, Lorezo
Drury, Warren
Eddy, Elmer A.
Eddy, Phineas O.
Fish, Franklin
Forrester, Henry
Forrester, Hiland
Grout, Charles
Grout, Irving
Grout, Joel
Herrick, George W.
Hescock, Norman
Hollingsworth, William
Hulett, Henry
Johnson, Orrin
Jones, Mason H.
Kidder, H. E.
Knight, Andrew
Lackey, Frank
Lackey, Frank
Lackey, Fred
Lackey, James
Lackey, John
LaFontaine, Adolphus
Longe, Fred
Longe, Oscar
Lowe, Charles
Lowe, Maurice
Lyman, William R.
Magoon, Edward
Palmer, Orlando
Parsons, Emery
Payne, Henry L.
Perry, Burt L.
Pike, Abel J.
Pike, Alexander H.
Pike, Calvin
Pike, Sarah
Powers, John M.
Pratt, Herbert
Rawson, Fred

Richardson, Hugh
Robinson, Edward
Ross, Elmer
Sheldon, Abigail
Shepardson, Helen E.
Stiles, William
Styles, Alva R.
Temple, Jerome B.
Thomas, Eugene
Thomas, Henry W.
Tudor, George
Underwood, John
Williams, Adrill
Williams, Eli L.
Williams, George
Willis, Fred E.
Woods, Frank E.

Census of 1910

Allen, Chessie
Allen, Dana P.
Baybrook, George H.
Clayton, John A.
Clayton, Royal M.
Eddy, Elmer A.
Eddy, Phineas O.
Forrester, Henry P.
Hescock, Norman J.
Hurd, George M.
Lowe, Maurice C.
Lyman, William R.
Moore, George W.
Pike, Abel J.
Powers, John M.
Read, Lucien E.
Stiles, Caroline S.
Stiles, Charles R.
Styles, William P.
Thomas, Henry W.
Thomas, Milton Eugene
Wheeler, Fred H.

Census of 1920

Allen, Chessie J.
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