

THE  
HISTORY OF GILMANTON,

EMBRACING THE

PROPRIETARY, CIVIL, LITERARY, ECCLESIASTICAL,  
BIOGRAPHICAL, GENEALOGICAL, AND  
MISCELLANEOUS HISTORY,

FROM THE

FIRST SETTLEMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME;

INCLUDING WHAT IS NOW

GILFORD,

TO THE TIME IT WAS DISANNEXED.

~~~~~  
By DANIEL LANCASTER.  
~~~~~

GILMANTON:  
PRINTED BY ALFRED PRESCOTT.  
1845.

lectmen were to appoint a sub-Committee in each school district to seek out persons and families in distress.

The Spotted Fever again made its appearance in the North part of the town, in the month of December, 1814. Mr. Jonathan Sanborn lost a child aged eight years on the 15th, another aged seventeen years, taken sick the 17th and died the 18th, and they were both buried *the same day, and in the same grave*. Mr. Theophilus Sanborn had a child taken sick the 17th, and died the 19th, another was taken on the 18th, and died on the 20th. They were both buried on the 21st, and in the same grave. Several other families were exceedingly distressed with this fatal disease, and the number of deaths was considerable.

#### TOWN PAUPERS.

March 14th, 1815, the following rules were adopted in respect to the poor of the town, viz.: "It shall be the duty of the Selectmen or Overseers of the Poor, to put up at auction the present year that part of the town paupers who bring themselves or their families to want by intemperance or other vices, and whereas many persons misspend their time and property at the grog-shop or tavern, and thereby become poor and indigent, in consequence of which the number of the town's poor have been and may continue to be greatly increased; therefore to remedy this evil as far as may be, it shall be the duty of the Selectmen to refuse license to such taverners and retailers as permit persons to drink to excess in their stores or houses, or sell without a license.

And the Selectmen or Overseers of the Poor may likewise put up at auction such other of the town paupers as in their discretion they may think proper; provided, that no person shall bid off the keeping of said paupers unless in the opinion of the Selectmen, he is able to provide comfortably for them during the year for which he is paid for keeping them by the town at the rate at which he bid them off."

This method of supporting the poor of the town prevailed until the year 1830, when the farm originally owned by Jotham Gilman, was purchased of Lewis W. Gilman, his grandson, and has ever since been the *home* of the poor of Gilmanton.

At the annual town meeting, March 12th, 1816, it was voted, that "it shall be the duty of the Selectmen to refuse license to

such retailers and taverners as are in the habit of permitting persons to drink to excess in their stores or houses or appendages thereof, and to prosecute at the town's expense, not exceeding 50 dollars, all such as sell without license." Reuben Page, one of the Selectmen, died of Typhus Fever. On the 3d of May, the town met and chose Ezekiel Hoit to supply his place in the board of Selectmen.

On the 11th of March, 1817, Joseph Jackson in the 1st collection district, Andrew Mack in the 2d, and John Wells in the 3d, were appointed a *Visiting Committee* to inspect the schools, and were to be allowed one dollar per day for their services.

On the 9th of March, 1819, the following rule was voted, viz.: "that the Selectmen erect one or more sets of stocks at the House of Correction in the town, and all persons who shall neglect their lawful employment, and misspend their time and earnings at the taverns and grog-shops, shall be sent to the House of Correction, and be detained there according to the rules of said House." And a Committee consisting of Winslow Page, Thomas Parsons, Joseph Gilman, Jr., David E. Sanborn, William Hutchinson, Jeremiah Sawyer, Jonathan Hill, Josiah Farrar, Ebenezer Eastman, and Israel French, was appointed to report to the Selectmen cases of drunkenness, and taverners and retailers, who encouraged or permitted drunkenness on their premises.

Stephen Moody and Daniel Gale, 2d, were also appointed to sell the Parsonage lands.

On the 9th of March, 1824, an additional law was passed by the town as follows, viz.:

"That from and after the time when this law shall be approved by the Court of Sessions, no horse, horse kind, mule, jack, neat creature, sheep, or swine, shall be suffered to *go at large at any season of the year*, within one half mile of the Academy, nor within the like distance from any store or tavern, (excepting and reserving in all cases the necessary time for horses, cattle, and sheep to go to water,) on penalty of one dollar for each offence. Provided, however, that any poor person owning a cow, and unable to pay for pasturing the same, may be exempted from the penalty by obtaining permission from the Selectmen for such cow to run at large."

**THE  
HISTORY OF GILMANTON,  
NEW HAMPSHIRE**

embracing its  
Civil, Ecclesiastical, Literary and  
Biographical History  
to 1875

and including

**THE HISTORY OF BELMONT**

Written By  
**WILLIAM BADGER**

as a continuation of the work of the  
**REVEREND DANIEL LANCASTER**

published in  
1845

Edited by Philip M. Zea  
New Hampshire Historical Society  
1976

made my best courtesy at Judge B.'s the other day & was introduced to the picture of our President. It was hung veiled in the sitting room that it might be seen if wished and might not be seen to annoy. My worthy entertainers descanted on his various merits which I heard with an air of great cleverness, professing the truth my utter ignorance of politics or the too intricate character of Politicians."

---

At the annual meeting on March 9, 1830, William Badger reported that in the opinion of the committee it was necessary to purchase a farm for the poor and to combine it with the House of Correction. Jeremiah Wilson, Josiah Copp, Charles Smith and William Badger were appointed to act with the selectmen in this matter. They purchased the farm originally owned by Lewis W. Gilman and appointed Daniel Ayers, the present owner, as overseer.

At the annual meeting on March 8, 1831, a committee was appointed to supervise the town farm at their own expense, to visit the place twice a year and to submit an annual report.

---

Before the institutionalization of medicine, the elderly, sick or insane, alone with no means of support, were sent to the town poor farm.

Andrew Mack to Thomas B. Mack, Gilmanton, 6 May 1851. (NHHS Collections).

"I suppose you may have heard of the calamity befallen Mrs. Vaughan. Her health is much impaired, and she is and has been deranged for sometime past."

---

At the annual meeting on March 13, 1832, the town clerk was instructed to furnish the clerk of each school district with a copy of the state laws governing the duties of school superintendents. All of the teachers were required to produce annually a certificate of their qualifications from the superintending committee. Upon the report of the committee for the enforcement of the laws regarding animals in public highways, it was voted to repeal the laws of 1824. A new set of by-laws was passed.

At the annual meeting on March 12, 1833, an affirmative vote was obtained for revising the state constitution. The selectmen were instructed not to license the sale of liquor. Any person selling liquor without a license

was to be prosecuted without delay, showing the desire of the townspeople for temperance.

At the annual meeting on March 11, 1834, the votes for governor were William Badger-412, William Weeks-1, Allen Hackett-1 and Daniel Kelly-1. The Honorable William Badger of Gilmanton won the election. There was no opposing candidate.

At the annual meeting on March 10, 1835, the townspeople voted to hold the next annual meeting at Iron Works Village, probably to aggravate the voters in the Upper Parish who wished to divide the town.

At the annual meeting on March 8, 1836, the votes for governor were Isaac Hill-273 and Joseph Healey-1. The people decided to choose the electors the following November at Elder Clark's meetinghouse in the Upper Parish and to hold the next annual meeting in Iron Works Village.

At the annual meeting on March 14, 1837, the citizens voted to accept the town's portion of the public money from Congress deposited with the state, according to the act of the legislature on January 13, 1837. Joseph Parsons was appointed to receive the same. This money was later known as the Surplus Revenue Fund. The townspeople also voted to hold the next annual meeting at Gilmanton Academy.

At the annual meeting on March 13, 1838, it was voted to open the meeting with prayer. A poll was then taken to learn the sentiment for dividing Stratford County into three counties. There were 431 affirmative votes and none opposed.

At the annual meeting on March 12, 1839, the citizens instructed the selectmen to deny licenses for the sale of ardent spirits during the ensuing year. They also released the superintending committee from the duty of visiting the schools, showing that their services cost more than they were worth.

At the annual meeting on March 10, 1840, the selectmen were instructed to destroy the liquor being sold near the town house. Measures were also taken to reduce expenditures and to increase the town tax.

At the annual meeting on March 9, 1841, the townspeople voted to divide the interest accruing from the Surplus Revenue Fund among the school districts. For several years interest from the so-called Literary Fund, amounting to between two and five hundred dollars, was given to the districts, allowing the schools to remain open beyond the time required by law.

At the annual meeting on March 8, 1842, a committee of John K. Dudley, David Hatch, Cabot Webster, Andrew Mack, James Weymouth

and John Brown was appointed to prosecute at town expense all persons selling liquor without a license. The selectmen were asked to refuse licenses to those who had illegally sold spirits, except for medical purposes.

At the annual meeting on March 14, 1843, an uncommon political excitement prevailed, and several balloting were required to elect representatives and selectmen. At a special town meeting on November 14, William Badger was appointed by the town to oppose the construction of the road known as the Hollow Route.

Prior to the annual meeting on March 12, 1844, the state road commissioners were ordered to view the Hollow Route Road. At the town meeting Jeremiah Wilson, Thomas Cogswell, Daniel Gale and Abner C. Clark were appointed a committee to oppose the construction of the road and to arrange for those improvements which better answered public need.

At the annual meeting on March 11, 1845, the subject of building new roads was still before the citizenry. After years of restraint, the town was finally obliged to rebuild some of the worst highways. The selectmen were instructed to lay out a road around Mort's Hill. Fifty dollars was apportioned to Reverend Daniel Lancaster for preparing a map for his *History of Gilmanton*. In September the votes for congressman were John P. Hale-184, John Woodbury-171, Ichabod Goodwin-88 and John White-3. Reuben Page was appointed constable.

At the annual meeting on March 10, 1846, the citizens "resolved that it is the right and duty of the State of New Hampshire to receive her portion of the Surplus Revenue now in the United States Treasury." A copy of the resolution was forwarded to the Legislature. Work was authorized on the road from the foot of Marsh Hill to the Gilford line.

At the annual meeting on March 9, 1847, the report of the school committee was ordered printed. It was voted to reinstate the committee's duty of visiting the schools. The cause of temperance was remembered, and the selectmen were further limited relative to licensing. The townspeople voted to raise ninety cents on each poll and to tax all estates proportionally for the repair of town roads. Since the dwelling at the town farm had burned on October 22, the voters decided at a special meeting on November 10 to sell the property and to buy Moses Stevens' farm for \$3000 if possession could be obtained by June 20, 1848.

At the annual meeting on March 14, 1848, the meeting was dissolved before half of the usual business was finished. A special meeting was

warned for March 31st. There was a unanimous vote that the General Court enact a law prohibiting the sale of spiritous liquors, except for chemical, medical or mechanical purposes. There were 140 votes cast of the 550 on the check list.

At the annual meeting on March 13, 1849, twenty-five dollars was raised to procure an engraving of the map of Gilmanton. Caleb Hurd was paid \$10 for building a dry bridge on the road to Alton. The voters favored the petition of Moses Gilman that a gore of land be disannexed from Alton and joined with Gilmanton. The petition was forwarded to the Legislature.

At the annual meeting on March 12, 1850, the only unusual vote was a resolution "that the Boston, Concord, and Montreal R.R.Co. erect suitable gates on both sides of the highway that said road crosses in Gilmanton." At a special meeting on October 8th, Finley W. Robinson, Sylvester H. French and Peter Perkins were chosen delegates to the constitutional convention in Concord.

At the annual meeting on March 11, 1851, the citizens voted 133 to 33 that "it is expedient for the Legislature to enact a homestead exemption law to the amount of five hundred dollars." They also resolved that the constitutional convention ought to disband because any hope of improvement had been removed.

At the annual meeting on March 9, 1852, the three percent required by law on the school money was raised for the support of a teachers' institute in Belknap County. At a special meeting on November 2, the townspeople voted 117 to 17 in favor of a bill "for the suppression of drinking houses and tipping shops."

---

Town Meeting was a social affair and a forum for decisive action. Nahum O'Neil Wight (1834-1852), "Spring Term Composition" Gilmanton Academy. ( Gilmanton Historical Society Collections)

"Town meeting is now over and I have seen a great number of people, some sober and some not sober. Two men in particular had drank rather too freely of hard cider and began to wrestle. One threw the other and was not satisfied and tried it over again. They both fell. One of them dislocated one shoulder by the fall, and after some of the strongest men in town tried their strength to set the shoulder right, and doing nothing towards it, he came to my father's office and my father laid him upon the floor, took his own boot off, placed his foot under his arm and put the bones in place. He then was put into a sleigh and went from the office, and that was the last I saw of him and hope I shall never see him again unless I can see him a sober man."

---

enrolled man of this town subject to the draft, in order to fill the quota of 500,000 men called for on July 18. The townspeople also voted to pay one, two or three hundred dollars to any man who might enlist for one, two or three years respectively. At a subsequent meeting on August 30, two hundred dollars were allocated to those draftees mustered for one year and one hundred dollars per year to each substitute. At a special town meeting on September 6, the number of men required to fill the quotas had not been obtained, so it was voted to pay \$500 for each year's service up to three years, including the sum appropriated on August 13. Eight hundred dollars were also offered to each resident of Gilmanton who would volunteer for one year to fill the balance of the previous quotas.

At the annual meeting on March 14, 1865, the citizens voted to raise \$5000 to reduce the town debt and to pay the interest.

---

President Lincoln's murder shocked the town and the nation.

Diary of Harriet Tappan (1853-1927), Academy Village, 19 April 1865.  
(Gilmanton Town Vault)

"The President was shot Friday 14th about eleven o'clock at night. His funeral (sic) services were in our Church from twelve till two. The Church looked beautiful. They had the flags festooned up and had a foot of black around it. The pulpit was covered with black crape and had a Cross and reathes (sic) on it and looked very handsome. Mr. Blake had a beautiful sermon. The Church was well filled."

---

At the annual meeting on March 13, 1866, another \$5000 was raised to reduce the town debt and to pay interest.

At the annual meeting on March 12, 1867, the townspeople appropriated \$5000 to pay the interest on the town debt. Twenty dollars was also authorized for the benefit of the Belknap County Teachers' Institute. The town farm was sold because it was too expensive to maintain for the small number of paupers.

At the annual meeting on March 10, 1868, it was resolved that Congress be requested to enact a law subjecting United States bonds to Federal taxation because similar property was taxed on the state, county and local levels.

At the annual meeting on March 9, 1869, the citizens raised \$4000 to reduce the town debt.

At the annual meetings on March 8, 1870 and March 14, 1871, five

thousand and six thousand dollars respectively were raised to reduce the town debt.

At the annual meeting on March 10, 1872, another \$4000 were allocated to reduce the town debt. The selectmen were instructed to appoint a committee of three to care for the old part of the burying yard at Smith's meetinghouse and to authorize the committee to assign lots to anyone desirous of a lot. John B. Batchelder, Thomas Cogswell and William A. Swain were appointed to the cemetery committee. Twenty thousand dollars were then appropriated to buy stock in the railroad proposed between Alton, Gilmanton and Franklin, if built within one and a half miles of the Iron Works or Academy Village during the next three years.

At the annual meeting on March 11, 1873, four thousand dollars were raised to reduce the town debt and to pay interest.

19th	George Sanders to making chains 23 lbs. ....	2.00
	Samuel Tomson to shuing hors. ....	.50
	to mending chains. ....	.08
20th	Samuel J. Sanborn to shuing oxen. ....	.67
	to mending chains. ....	.06'

John E. Page and Isaiah Piper posted a warrant on July 18, 1859 for the first town meeting of Upper Gilmanton, following the act of incorporation granted by the General Court on June 28. Held on August 6, the citizens of the new town elected Benjamin P. Lamprey, moderator; Nicholas D. Garmon, town clerk; John W. Wells, treasurer; and John L. Keasor, Lyman B. Fellows and Jeduthan Farrar, selectmen.

At the first annual meeting on March 13, 1860, the townspeople of Upper Gilmanton elected new town officials.

Nothing exceptional occurred at the annual meeting on March 12, 1861. At a special town meeting on October 23, the citizens voted to raise no more than \$1000 to aid the families of volunteers.

At a special meeting on August 9, 1862, one hundred dollars were allocated to each volunteer who would enlist for three years in the service of the United States prior to the draft in order to meet the quota of 300,000 men. Fifty dollars were also raised for each citizen who would volunteer for nine months. At a special meeting on September 1, an additional \$200 were authorized for each citizen who would enlist for three years. An extra \$50 were voted to each nine-month volunteer. A hundred dollars were appropriated at a meeting on October 1 for each man who would or had enlisted for nine months. On October 20 each drafted man or his substitute was allocated \$300 payable after his muster into the service.

At a special meeting on December 1, 1863, two thousand dollars were raised to pay the volunteers who had enlisted to meet the President's quota of 300,000 men. The selectmen were also instructed to appoint an agent to obtain volunteers. Joseph M. Folsom accepted the task and reported on February 20, 1864 that six men had accepted the call at \$585 each and another five men at \$590 each.

At the February 20th meeting, \$2000 were authorized to pay for volunteers to fill the February 1 quota of 2000 men. The people of Upper Gilmanton voted to hire the money, and the selectmen were instructed to raise the best men in the interest of the town.

At another special meeting on June 22, 1864, the citizens voted "that the selectmen borrow any sum, not exceeding \$2000, and appropriate the same in obtaining such a number of volunteers as they may think best and at such a time as they think proper to answer any call that may be made on the town by the President of the United States."

At the annual meeting on March 14, 1865, an extra tax of \$6000 was authorized to reduce the town debt and to pay the interest.

At the annual meeting on March 13, 1866, it was decided after three ballotings not to send a representative to the General Court. The vote was 112 to 108.

At the annual meeting on March 12, 1867, the townspeople voted to raise \$300 in addition to the sum required by law for the common schools, notwithstanding the high tax rate.

At the annual meeting on March 10, 1868, another \$300 were raised for the common schools above the sum required by state law. At a special meeting on May 2, the selectmen were instructed to borrow a sum of money, not exceeding \$400, to procure a spur of railroad from Alton or New Durham through Upper Gilmanton to Franklin and if possible to obtain a charter. Joseph Sanborn was chosen agent.

At the annual meeting on March 9, 1869, the men voted to change the name of the town to Belmont. They obtained the approval of the Legislature on July 5. Three thousand dollars were allocated to reduce the town debt and to pay the interest. The treasurer was instructed not to disperse any more money for the railroad. Two hundred dollars were raised above the state minimum for the district schools.

At the annual meeting on March 8, 1870, three hundred dollars were allocated above the state minimum for the district schools. Three thousand dollars were raised to reduce the town debt.

At the annual meeting on March 13, 1871, three thousand dollars were raised to reduce the town debt.

At the annual meeting on March 12, 1872, another \$3000 were allocated to reduce the town debt and to pay the interest. Special meetings were held during the year to consider subscribing five percent of the town's valuation for stock in the railroad contemplated from Franklin through Belmont to Alton. No decision was reached.

At the annual meeting on March 11, 1873, fifteen hundred dollars were raised to reduce the town debt.

Nothing unusual occurred at the annual meeting on March 12, 1874.