

The first Congregational Church in Gilmanton, was formed, Nov. 30th, 1774, consisting of five members, and the same day, Rev. Mr. Smith was ordained their Pastor. Dr. McClintock of Greenland preached the sermon from 1 Cor. ii : 2. " For I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." Rev. Mr. Foster of Canterbury, his brother-in-law gave the Right hand of fellowship, and the Rev. Mr. Walker of Concord gave the charge. Mr. Smith's ministry continued 42 years, in which time 114 were added to the church. The number of baptisms was 312, of marriages, 396, of Deaths, 1141. On the 23rd of Jan., 1777, Mr. Smith married Mary, daughter of Gen. Joseph Badger, sen. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Nathaniel Porter, then of New Durham, afterwards Dr. Porter of Conway. Their children were 6, Ebenezer, Isaac Coit, Joseph Badger, Martha, Hannah, and an infant son only a few days old. Mrs. Smith died Aug. 18th, 1788, aged about 30 years. His second wife was Sarah, the third daughter of Dea. Joseph Eaton of Haverhill, Ms. whom he married, Nov. 10th, 1791, and by whom he had three children, Francis Peter, Lemuel, and John. The Rev. Mr. Smith fitted several young gentlemen for college, among whom were Samuel Hidden, Nath'l Cogswell, Stephen Bean, Aaron Bean, Joshua Bean, Samuel Cartland and his son Francis P. He received the degree of A. M. at Dartmouth College 1785. His publications are a Sermon at the Ordination of Rev. Ethan Smith, a Sermon at the Ordination of Rev. Josiah Prentice, a Sermon at the funeral of Rev. Mr. Hazeltine of Epsom, a funeral Sermon of a woman killed by lightning, a charge at the ordination of Rev. Enoch Corser, and a 4th of July Address. He died, March 25th, 1817, in the 73rd year of his age, and 43rd of his ministry. The Sermon at his funeral on the 27th was preached by the Rev. Josiah Carpenter of Chichester, the oldest minister in the Association. A revival was enjoyed by the church soon after Mr. Smith's death, under the labors of Mr. Jesse Stratton, then recently from the Theological Seminary at Andover, and 45 were added to the church in 1818. The Rev. Luke Ainsworth Spofford, the second Pastor, was son of Eleazar Spofford of Jaffrey. He studied Divinity with the Rev. Seth Payson D. D. of Rindge ; at which place he was married to Grata Rand, sister of Rev. Asa Rand, Oct. 5th, 1816. He was licensed by the Monadnock Association, and preached as a candidate in Gilmanton early in 1819. During his ministry of about 6 years, 30 were added to the church most of whom were fruits of a revival in 1823. On leaving Gilmanton, Mr. Spofford was installed in Brentwood, Feb. 22nd, 1826, and dismissed from that church in 1829. The same year he was settled in Lancaster, and dismissed in 1831. He was settled again in Atkinson, April 18th, 1832, and afterwards in Scituate, Ms. Thence he removed to Amherst, where he remained while his sons were connected with the College. On the 2nd of Feb. 1842, he was installed in Chilmark, Martha's Vineyard, from which place he was dismissed Aug. 5th, 1845, and now resides in Newburgh, N.Y. His oldest son Richard Cecil, born, Dec. 22nd, 1817, graduated at Amherst College in 1839, studied Divinity with Dr. Ide of Medway, preached only a few times and died of consumption, May 25th, 1843. His second son, Henry Martyn, born, Sept. 8th, 1821, graduated at Amherst College, 1840, was Tutor 1842-4, and is now preceptor of an Academy in Minden, La. The other children were Mary Susan, Elizabeth Jane, and Ainsworth Rand.

In 1827, about one year after the settlement of the third Pastor, the Rev. Daniel Lancaster, another revival was enjoyed, and 40 were added to the church, and in 1831, another revival which resulted in the addition of 35, to the church. In the six years of the Rev. Mr. Lancaster's Ministry, 85 were received into the church. The Baptisms were 118, and the funerals more than a hundred. The whole number which have been received into this church from its formation, is 311. Since Mr. Lancaster's dismissal, the pulpit was supplied one year by Rev. Francis P. Smith, son of the first pastor, and one year by Rev. Josiah Carpenter of Chichester. For a few past years it has been supplied by students of the Theological Seminary in this place.