

Gilmanston was incorporated in 1727. On account of Indian Hostilities, it was not settled until Dec. 1761. The Proprietors employed the Rev. William Parsons of South Hampton to preach to the settlers for the first ten years. He moved into town, Aug. 1st, 1763, about 1 year and 8 months from the time the first family arrived; and from this period, there has been no time when the people of the town have been destitute of a minister.

Rev. William Parsons was the son of the Rev. Joseph Parsons of Salisbury, Ms. and was born April 21st, 1716. His father's family was literally a ministerial family. Of 4 sons, 3 lived to graduate and enter the Ministry, viz. Rev. Joseph Parsons of Bradford, Ms., Rev. Samuel Parsons of Rye, and Rev. William Parsons, the subject of this notice. The only daughter, Elizabeth, married Rev. Jeremiah Fogg of Kensington. The youngest son, John, died in 1740 while a member of the Sophomore class in Harvard College, then in his 16th year. William graduated, B. C. 1735, at the age of 19, and was settled in South Hampton in 1743. After a ministry of almost 20 years, he was dismissed Oct. 6th, 1762. On the 16th of May, 1743, he was married to Sarah Burnham a native of Durham, by whom he had six children, Sarah, William, Elizabeth, John, Joseph and Ebenezer. Having relinquished preaching, he was employed as an instructor of the youth in town for many years. So far as is known, none of his sermons were published, and none of his papers are preserved. Had his Diary, in which he entered a great variety of matters as they occurred from day to day, been preserved, it would have been a valuable historical document. But this together with his sermons have probably been destroyed. He died in Jan. 1796, aged 80 years. His widow survived him one year and one month. She died in Feb. 1797, at the age of 75. They were both buried on their own farm, a little eastward of the spot where they built their camp in 1763.

The Rev. Isaac Smith was the son of Mr. Lemuel Smith of Sterling, Ct., and was born Nov. 30th, 1744, and was the fifth son in a family of 11 children. His brother John Smith became a minister, and settled at Dighton, Ms. in 1772, where he continued until December, 1801, when he was dismissed. He died in the state of Pennsylvania some years since. Rev. Mr. Smith began to fit for college in 1766, entered 2 years in advance in 1768, and graduated at Princeton in 1770. After leaving college, he passed some time with Dr. Hart of Preston, and afterwards spent six months with Dr. Bellamy, a celebrated Divine of Bethlem, Ct. in the study of Divinity. Having taken license to preach, he supplied several destitute places in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, where his labors were favorably received, in some of which he received an invitation to settle, particularly in Ipswich Ms. and South Hampton, N. H.