

The

GILFORD STORY



THE GILFORD STORY

Compiled for the

Thompson Ames Historical Society

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Acknowledgements

THE PUBLISHING COMMITTEE WISHES TO EXPRESS THEIR SINCERE GRATITUDE TO ALL WHO HAVE GIVEN OF THEIR TIME OR HISTORICAL MATERIAL TO MAKE *THE GILFORD STORY* POSSIBLE.

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REFERENCES

Gilford Town Records; Lancaster's *History of Gilmanton; History of Merrimack and Belknap County; Winnepesaukee Lake County Gleanings*; Gilmanton Town Records; The collected papers of Theo S. Jewett; and Watson's *History of Gilford*.

The Thompson Ames Historical Society wish to extend sincere thanks to all who assisted in the preparation of "The Gilford Story," for the Sesquicentennial. Recognition is due Hector Bolduc whose enthusiasm and effort led to the unearthing of very fascinating material. To Judge Theo S. Jewett, Helen E. Park, Ruth M. Weeks, and Harold B. Smith who as members of the publishing committee gave freely of their time and thought to its preparation; and to Sigmund Lavine who brought it all together in this booklet.

ESTHER PETERS, *President*
Thompson Ames Historical Society

August 25, 1962

Preface

One hundred and eighty-five years ago a band of hardy New Englanders left the security of their Gilmanton homes to settle in the wilderness of the "Upper Parish"—modern Gilford. In time these pioneers were joined by others. As the settlement grew and prospered, the desire to sever the legal ties that bound it to Gilmanton became stronger yearly. Finally, in 1812, after lengthy petitions, longer speeches and a legislative act, permission was granted to organize the community as a separate town.

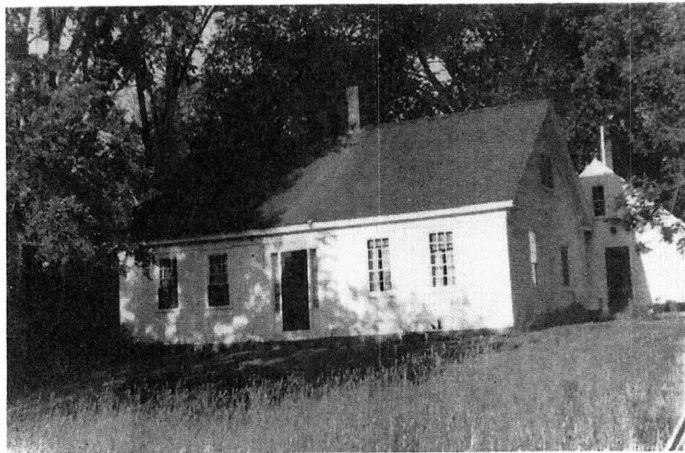
This brief history of Gilford has been compiled under the auspices of the Thompson Ames Historical Society as part of the celebration marking the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of this event. An attempt to give personal credit to all who have contributed material used in this book would be a difficult task. However, we are grateful to all who provided us with data—from scraps of paper tucked away in old books, to carefully written records and documents.

Dedicated to those men and women who settled in the "Upper Parish" in 1777, the pages that follow are by no means a complete history of Gilford. Far more research must be done before such a volume is written, but it is our sincere hope that this booklet will prompt those interested in the history of our town to seek more information so that additional chapters can be added to *The Gilford Story*.

THE PUBLISHING COMMITTEE



THE THOMPSON AMES HISTORICAL BUILDING



THE CAPTAIN GILMAN HOMESTEAD
(Mrs. Solveig Olsen)

THE GILFORD STORY

The strongest incentive to future progress is the knowledge of past achievement in individual, state, or national life. Familiarity with local, state or national history develops civic pride, which is basis for true patriotism, and the surest guarantee of loyal citizenship.

HENRY H. METCALF
(State historian and president of Old Home Week Associations, secretary N. H. Ter-Centenary commission, publisher and editor of the *Granite Monthly*)

EARLY HISTORY OF GILFORD

In 1606 King James I of England granted to the Virginia Company a parcel of land extending to and including southern New Hampshire. In 1620 the northern portion of the Virginia Grant was given to the Council of Plymouth. Part of this grant was bought by John Mason. On March 9, 1621 John Mason and Sir Fernando Gorges purchased a parcel of land adjoining Mason's previous purchase, and called it Laconia. This included the territory on which Gilford now stands.

The first penetration into this region was made in 1652 when a surveying party, composed of Captains Simon Willard, Edward Johnson, John Sherman and Jonathan Ince journeyed into the vast wilderness in order to establish boundaries of the Massachusetts Bay Company Grant, said to be the headwaters of the Merrimack River. These men left the inscriptions on Endicott Rock at the Weirs.

In 1727 Gilman Town was incorporated by 177 persons. Twenty-four of them were named Gilman — hence, Gilman Town. Later, this was shortened to Gilmanton. At first the town flourished, but as it lacked the water power so essential to industry in those days, its growth was soon checked. Yet, strangely enough, Gilmanton was once seriously considered as a contender for the honor of being New Hampshire's capitol city. While Concord was eventually chosen, there are still some elderly residents of Gilmanton who insist that their grandfathers told them that the town was actually the capitol for a short period!

To some townsmen, losing the capitol was not half as important as the great number of Indians in the lake area of the "Upper Parish." Not only was the region the home of several fierce tribes, but bands of savages came from great distances to fish at the Weirs. If these savages could be driven out, it would be possible to erect mills along the banks of the swift-flowing streams that fed the lakes. However, with memories of recent massacres still vivid in their minds, the residents of Gilmanton wisely made no attempt to migrate northward. Then, about

1750, a fort was built at the Weirs on the shore of Lake Winnepesaukee and interest in the "Upper Parish" was revived. When the Indians were brought under control, the area began to be settled.

GILFORD IS SETTLED

While the exact date that the first permanent settlers arrived in what is now Gilford is unknown, the date most historians agree upon is 1777, the year James Ames and Captain Samuel F. Gilman took up land in the "Upper Parish" of Gilmanton. Shortly before this, Samuel Jewett built a house in the vicinity of Province road in present-day Laconia.

Among Samuel's descendants are the late Stephen S. Jewett, the well-known lawyer and his son, Judge Theo S. Jewett, the historian. Judge Jewett has in his possession the drum and rifle used by Benjamin, Samuel Jewett's son, in the American Revolution. He also has a unique bit of Americana — a receipt for gun powder which became wet when the patriots retreated from Bunker Hill and was sent to Samuel Hobart of New Market, New Hampshire to be reconditioned. The powder was later used at the Battle of Bennington.

The receipt is signed by Samuel Jewett who was an employee of Hobart and reads:

"For the purpose of making, pounding, and granulating 217 pounds of gunpowder in the following quantities: Sixty pounds of cannon powder, 108 pounds of musket powder, and 49 pounds of priming powder for pistols."

Family tradition has it that Samuel walked from New Market to Charlestown in order to enlist in the Revolution, only to discover that Cornwallis had surrendered to Washington at Yorktown. For pay, Samuel received a second hand coat, a belt and a used pair of shoes. Upon returning, Samuel settled in the Laconia area.

Captain Gilman homesteaded near Lily Pond and built a large log cabin which his family occupied. Gilman built the house recently owned by Mrs. Solveig Olsen. Because the log cabin stood for many years in an open field across from the Olsen home, in earlier times old-timers would boast of having seen the "first log cabin in Gilford."

History relates that when settlers took up land north of Captain Gilman's property before roads were cut through the forest, they blazed trees from their cabins to the Gilman place. This enabled their womenfolk to find their way to the captain's to bake bannock, as they had no ovens.

Captain Gilman was a businessman and traveled to Portsmouth exchanging produce for molasses, sugar, flour and rum. On one of these trips he returned with James McCoy, an orphaned lad. He adopted James who became a wealthy man and whose name is remembered by the McCoy Cemetery, the McCoy pasture and the McCoy fields.

James and David Ames were also among the early settlers of present-day Gilford, locating just east of the intervale on what is now known as the William Watson farm. The cellar holes of their houses can still be seen in the wooded area near Clay Bank. Both men left Gilford—James to Alton where he dealt in real estate; David to Campton—at an early date.

Legend links the Ames name with the spreading of the Center apple to this part of New Hampshire. According to the tale, the wife of David Ames, Sr., brought scions of the fruit to Gilford in her saddlebags from Londonderry.

Mrs. Ames was evidently a brave woman. While checking his bear traps on horseback, her husband was thrown to the ground his leg landing in a trap. Realizing that her husband might die if he didn't receive proper attention, Mrs. Ames saddled her horse and rode all the way to Londonderry by way of "spotted trees" and returned with a doctor. Although Mr. Ames' life was saved his leg was so badly damaged, that it had to be amputated.

The Hunts settled here early. Abel Hunt arrived in 1783 and built a home in the intervale section. He had, for many years, the only wood lathe in the region and was a skilled cabinet maker. Enoch Hunt settled near Captain Gilman's in 1794 and became a distinguished resident of the community, as were his sons William, Joseph and Samuel.

Dr. Charles W. Hunt, a graduate of Dartmouth Medical College, was assistant surgeon to the 12th New Hampshire Volunteers during the Civil War, serving at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville as assistant surgeon. At Gettysburg, he remained at the operating table for three consecutive days and nights—an ordeal that so weakened him, that when he contracted typhoid fever shortly afterwards, he had no resistance and died.

Thomas E. Hunt, brother of Dr. Hunt also served in the Civil War and was a hospital assistant at the Battle of Fredericksburg. After the Rebellion he taught school in Gilford and was a representative to the State Legislature.

Charles W. Hunt, son of Dr. Hunt, had three children, Julia W., Thomas W. and Harriet E. Hunt. Julia taught in several Gilford schools including the "back of the mountain school" and the intervale school.

Perry E. Hunt was active in Gilford affairs. Three of his four children became teachers. Stanley at Meredith, Tilton and Laconia; Eunice, who first taught elsewhere and then served for many years in Gilford at both the Lily Pond and New Grade schools; and Marion. Eunice also compiled a great deal of material dealing with Gilford's history as did her father and grandfather. Marion (Hunt) Atwood now lives in Sanbornton and represented that town for several terms in the State Legislature—the sixth generation in her family to be a member of that body.



THE WADLEIGH BLACKSMITH SHOP



MARTIN ALONZO HAYNES

In 1789, Benjamin Jewett, II, took up land west of Gilford Village. The family became very prominent in town affairs, Benjamin Jewett, Jr., being postmaster for many years as well as a justice of the peace. A store in Gilford Village — Jewett & Chase — was another family interest. Town records also show that at one time the Jewetts were Gilford's largest landholders.

Several Jewetts of this branch of the family were well-known for their ability as public speakers and frequently represented the town in debates. Maurice Jewett, one of their direct descendants, who was born in the house now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Ena Morin, was postmaster in Gilford for eleven years.

The Davis family also arrived early. Malachi Davis homesteaded here in 1792, while Eleazer Davis purchased Governor's Island (then Davis Island) in 1799. The story of his development of the island is related in detail in the section of this book dealing with the history of Governor's Island. Eleazer and his son were the first to use *gundalows* — large flat-bottomed boats with a tapered three-cornered lateen sail and two large steering oars — to carry produce to various part of the lake.

Captain James Follet was a contemporary of the Davises, homesteading on Gunstock Mountain near the old church in 1792. Follet had been tax collector in Gilmanton and was also the first in Gilford to hold that office, as well as constable and a captain in the militia. He ran a tannery as well, travelling frequently to Portsmouth and Exeter to trade, bringing back heavy loads in his large wagon.

The name Weeks was, and still is, common throughout Gilford. Benjamin Weeks, Esq., settled at the foot of Mount Gunstock in 1787 and other members of the family homesteaded at the base of Mount Belknap where their descendants still live. Murray Weeks occupies the farm known as the George Morrill place, situated at the foot of the road leading up Belknap. The Arthur Weeks farm, at the end of Weeks road, was built about 1802 and was purchased from the Sleeper family. Peter Arthur, son of Arthur Weeks is the fifth generation of Weeks in this farm. Hazen Weeks built the so-called Grace M. Weeks house on the top of Hoyt road about 1800. It has also been in the family and six generations have lived here: Hazen Weeks, John Murray Weeks, Willis Ed Weeks, L. Murray Weeks, Benjamin Edwin Weeks and Roger Murray Weeks.

John F. Weeks, a selectman and owner of Gunstock Hill Farm, is a descendant of the family line native to Greenland, New Hampshire. He operates a number of dairy bars in New Hampshire and has a large herd of Guernsey cattle that have won many awards.

In 1784 Major Jabez James, a soldier in the Revolution, settled on Cotton Hill on what is now the W. Lyman Peters Farm. A cemetery on the property contains the major's grave and those of many of his descendants.

Gilford's first blacksmith, Samuel Blaisdell, went to Lily Pond in 1789 and his homestead is presently the residence of W. F. Bartlett. He had six sons, William, John, Daniel, Enoch, Philip and Samuel, and all were active in church affairs. Mrs. Samuel Blaisdell served the community as nurse and doctor before the arrival of a resident physician.

The Morrills took up land on Liberty Hill and Barnard Morrill worked for several years in the tannery owned by Jeremiah Thing. He later purchased the Hoyt-Smith Mill at Gilford Village and operated a lumber and grist mill. After his death, the mill was run by his son John J. Morrill. The mill was abandoned and the property taken over by Judge John Morrill.

Dr. George M. Munsey was one of Gilford's early physicians. His practice was large and extended to Moultonboro, Center Harbor and Alton. Beloved for his readiness to answer calls for help regardless of weather, time or distance, he was also an excellent speaker and often lectured on temperance in connection with the Washington movement.

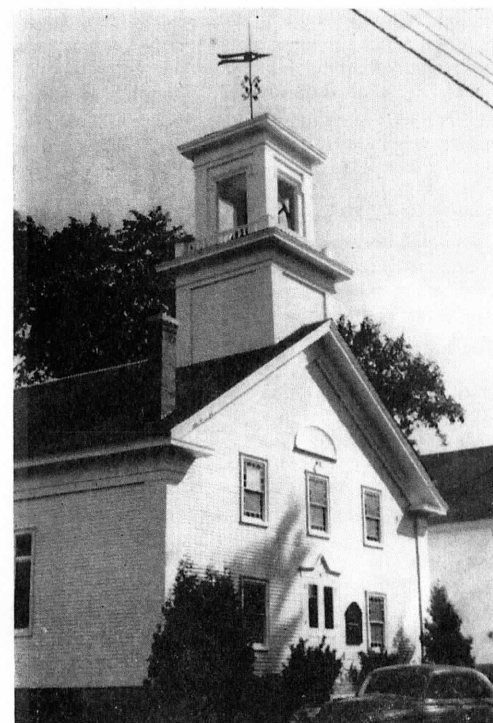
Many other individuals and families pioneered in the settling of Gilford. Unfortunately, space does not permit mention of all. At the risk of omitting some names — records being incomplete — this list of families who homesteaded before 1800 is presented: Thurston, Watson, Whittier, Stevens, Rowe, Smith, Sleeper, Morrison, Morse, Mooney, Knowles, Hoyt, Eaton, Carr, Bennett, Flag, Lovett, Sanborn, Cotton.

"NEW HAMPSHIRE BORN A TOWN"

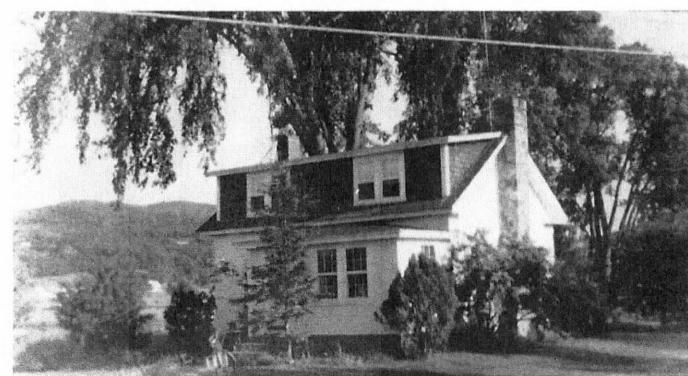
The desire to better themselves which had driven men to take up land in the deep forests, rolling fields and fertile valleys of the "Upper Parish" did not diminish with the passing of years. As these sturdy individuals looked about their community and saw what they had accomplished, they were fired by a new ambition — to live in a town of their own creation. Through back-breaking toil they had created taxable property out of the wilderness, so why, they asked one another, should Gilmanton profit? If the "Upper Parish" could achieve independence such monies could be spent on its needs alone, instead of going into the general funds of Gilmanton. Work soon became action and the following is a copy (complete with signatures) of the document submitted by the residents of the upper parish to the selectmen of the town of Gilmanton requesting incorporation into a separate town in 1811.

PETITION

To the gentlemen selectmen of the town of Gilmanton the petition of us the subscribers inhabitants of the northerly part of Gilmanton humbly sheweth that our situation is so remote from the place of holding our annual and other meetings we have to travel from five to twenty



THE GILFORD COMMUNITY CHURCH — 1833
Rev. Raleigh H. Dutton, Pastor



INTERVALE SCHOOLHOUSE No. 1
(The George Sawyer Home)

miles to said place which renders it expensive and so inconvenient that a large portion of us (at many times) cannot attend said meetings. Therefore, we humbly request your honorable body to call or warn a town meeting of the inhabitants of said Gilmanton at some convenient time between this and the first of May next ensuing to see if the town will pass a vote granting leave for an incorporation of that part of the upper parish (so called) of Gilmanton that lyeth on the northerly part of the eleventh range of hundred acre lots from thence eastwardly in such direction as to follow the ridge of mountains to Alton line covering all the land between the above named lines Alton line, Winnepiseogee Pond and Winnepiseogee River to said eleventh range including the islands in said pond belonging to Gilmanton and your petitioners as in duty bound shall ever pray.

Gilmanton 14th March 1811

Ebenezer Smith
Benjamin Weeks
Daniel Hoit
Phillriese Rand
Samuel F. Gilman
Lowell Sanborn
James Folett
Jacob Randlett
Benjamin Sanborn
John Gilman, Esq.
John Sargent
John Goss
Wm Hunt
Levi Goss
Nehemiah Sleeper
Levi Gilman Esq.
Ephm Brown
Elisha Bean
Malachi Daviss
Tho Sewell
Johon Sewell
Wm Sewell
Josiah Moulton
Joseph Rand
Joseph Libbey
Benj Libbey
John Daviss
Esekiel Currier
Moses Rowell
Henry Plumer Jr.
Jon Nelson Jr.
Noah Weeks

Israel Potter
Wm Libbey
Joseph Sleeper
Jereh-- Bartlett
Benja Weeks Jr
Thos Saltmarsh
Enoch Hunt Jr.
Jon A. Whittier
Jona Sanborn 4th
John L Weeks
Jona Thompson
Noah Danford
Elijah Gove
Levi Gilman
Levi Gilman, Jr.
James Hoit Esq.
Jona Elkens
Ephm Brown Jr
Senior Hoit
Matthias Weeks
Sam Follett
Howel Langley
Ebenezer Smith Jr.
Benja Leavitt
John Smith Jr.
Jones Sleeper
Samuel Thurstin
Joshua Eaton
Andrew Gilman
Paul Stevans
Benja Richardson
Samuel Thurstin Esq.

Geo Theuerson
Lowell Sanborn, Jr.
Enoch Hunt
David Sanborn
Elisha J. Sanborn
Sam G. Sanborn
Benja Wilkinson
Thos Boynton
Barnard Morrill
Jere Gilman
Nathan Hath
Solomon Bean
Ichabod Burrel
Josiah Sawyer
James Bean
Joseph Sanborn
Sam Leavitt
Sam Welch
Robert Carr
Thos - Foster Jr.
Isaac Runnals
Benja Sewell
John Boyd
Eliphalet Blasdel
Richard Sanborn
Benja Morrison
Henry M. Blake
John Meloon
Sam Gilman Esq.
David Gould
Benja Eaton
Sam Connor
Parker Chase
Simon Gilman
Abraham Dearborn
Manaah Glidden
Isaac Buzzel
Joseph Bickford
Geo Buzzel
Andrew Whittiter
Jona Sanborn
John Knowles
Jere Bedee

Frederic Lewis
John Crosby
Rich Martin
Miles L. Thurstin
Jesse Thing
Thos Thompson
James Macoy
Levi Goss Jr.
Jere Gilman
Geo. Rand
Levi Shaw
Ezekiel Gilman
Miles Leavitt
Moses Wilcom
Joseph Potter
David Thurstin
Abel Glidden
David Glidden
Jacob Morse
Joseph Potter Jr.
Henry Hoit
Jeremiah Thing
Sam - - - Hoit
Same Clarke
Samuel Clark
Moses Langley
Jacob Blaisdell
Henry Sleeper
G. N. Munsey
Abraham Gilman
Joseph Thing
John L. Martin
Joshua Gilman
Ichabod Buzzell Jr.
David Thompson
Josiah Clogh
Stephen Leavitt
James Buzzel
John Mooney
Joseph Eaton
Nathan Whitham
John Lamprey

Recorded July 31st 1812 by Wm. Blasdel Town clerk.



OLD GILFORD VILLAGE SCHOOL HOUSE
(Elverton Whitney Home)



EARLY VIEW OF BELKNAP MOUNTAIN SHOWING THE WHITNEY PLACE ON HOYT ROAD
AND THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE AT UPPER RIGHT, ABOUT 1890.

"To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the State of New Hampshire in General Court convened at Concord on the first Wednesday of June, instant:

"We the subscribers, inhabitants of the northerly part of the town of Gilmanton in said state, respectfully represent —

"That said town is so large in point of territory, and the inhabitants so numerous, that it is extremely inconvenient to transact the public business of said town;

"That the undersigned are obliged to travel from five to twenty miles to attend town meeting, which burden, to many, is very inconvenient and oppressive;

"That as the number of legal voters in the whole town exceeds seven hundred, and the territory is so extensive, it would add much to the convenience of a large majority of the inhabitants to have the town divided into two distinct towns.

"We therefore respectfully pray that the tract of land hereinafter described may be disannexed from the town of Gilmanton, and that the same with the inhabitants thereof, may be incorporated into a town, with town privileges, by the name of Gilford:

"The dividing line to begin on the easterly side of Winnepesaukee river on the northeasterly side of the eleventh range of hundred acre lots, in the second division in said town, running on said eleventh range southeasterly to the end of said range; thence northeasterly on the Lower Parish line (so called) to the easterly corner of lot No. one in the twelfth range; thence north about seventy-five degrees east end of lot No. seven in the first range of Masonian lots in said Gilmanton, (And that each lot of land that may be cut by said division line which is owned by any person in Gilmanton shall be considered belonging to the town in which said owner or owners belongs, but if said owners shall be non-residents then the land shall belong to the town in which it is situated.) Thence northerly on the dividing line between Alton and Gilmanton to Winnepesaukee Lake; thence westerly by said lake to the river running from the same place to a place called Great Wares; thence southerly by Winnepesaukee River to the bounds first mentioned. Including all the islands in said lake and river belonging to said Gilmanton. Agreeable to a vote of the inhabitants of said Gilmanton on Monday, the 27th day of May last, and the reports of their committees, as may appear by said reports.

"We would farther represent that the above contemplated division line would be the most convenient for the inhabitants of said town generally of any that can be drawn; and as the number of legal voters residing within the above named limits exceeds two hundred and twenty, the above described tract would make a very conveniently situated town; — And your petitioners as in duty bound shall ever pray.

"Gilmanton, June 5, 1811.

(Signed by) "Moses Rowell and 146 others."

"State of New Hampshire.

"In the Senate, June 19th, 1811. — Upon reading and considering the petition of the inhabitants of Gilmanton: Voted, that the petitioners be heard on their petition before the General Court, on the first Tuesday of their next session, and that they cause a copy of the petition and order of Court thereon to be posted up in three public places, in said Gilmanton, at least six weeks before the second Tuesday of March next; also that they cause the Town Clerk to be served with a copy of the same, the like term of time before the said second Tuesday in March; that any person or persons may appear and show cause, if any they have, why the prayer should not be granted. Sent down for concurrence.

"Peter Farnum, Assistant Clerk.

"In the House of Representatives the same day, read and concurred.

"A true copy, attest,

Clement Storer, Speaker.

Moses L. Neal,

Clerk of the House of Representatives.

Copy of the act creating the town of Giford:

"STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.

"In the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twelve.

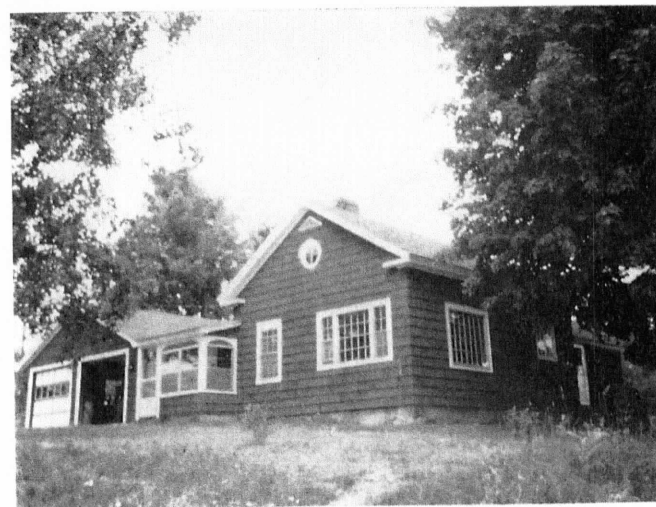
"An act to incorporate the inhabitants of the northerly part (L.S.) of Gilmanton into a separate town with all the privileges and immunities of the other towns of the State.

"Whereas a petition signed by a number of the inhabitants of the town of Gilmanton, praying to be incorporated into a separate town, has been presented to the General Court of the State, and the prayer thereof appearing reasonable: Therefore —

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened, that all the land and inhabitants within the following limits, namely: Beginning at the easterly side of the Winnipisseogee river on the northeasterly side of the eleventh range of hundred acre lots in the second division in said town, thence running southeasterly on said range line to the east end of said range, thence northeasterly to the northeast corner of lot No. one on the twelfth range, thence north about seventy-five degrees east three miles and about ninety rods to Alton line at the east end of lot No. seven in the first range of Masonian lots in Gilmanton, thence north and west on said Alton line to the Winnipisseogee Lake, thence westerly on said lake and river to the first mentioned bounds, including all the islands in said lake annexed to the town of Gilmanton — Be and the same are incorporated into a town by the name of Gilford, and the inhabitants who now reside or shall hereafter reside within the above mentioned bounds, are made and constituted a body politic and corporate and invested with all the



THE WHITE OAKS SCHOOL HOUSE
(Mrs. Dorilla Sargeant)



THE MORRILL SCHOOL HOUSE
(Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Jarvin)

powers, privileges and immunities which other towns in the State are entitled to enjoy, to maintain a district town, to have continuance and succession forever.

"And be it further enacted, that each lot of land which may be dissected by the aforesaid divisional line which is owned by any inhabitant of Gilmanton or Gilford shall be considered as belonging to the town in which said owner resides, but if such owner shall be a non-resident in either of said towns, the lot shall be taxed in the town of Gilmanton.

"And be it further enacted, that all moneys or other property on hand or now due, or that shall hereafter become due to or be the property of the town of Gilmanton by virtue of any grant or other act done or performed before the passing of this act, shall be divided between the remaining town of Gilmanton and the said town of Gilford according to their present proportion of public taxes, excepting the parsonage right of land, the improvement of which shall be appurtenant to the town in which said land lies, and excepting the moneys arising from the sale of two lots of land granted by the proprietors of Gilmanton for the use of ministry, which money shall be the property of the town in which said lots respectively lie.

"Provided, always, that nothing in this act contained shall in anywise release said northerly part of the town of Gilmanton from paying their proportion of the support of any poor now residing in other towns, or their offsprings whom by the law the town of Gilmanton may hereafter be liable to relief or support; but the said town of Gilford shall be holden to pay their proportion of such debts, and the relief of such poor in the same way and manner as if this act had not been passed.

"And be it further enacted, that Benjamin Weeks, Esquire, and Simeon Hoit, or either of them be impowered to call a meeting of the inhabitants of the said town of Gilford, for the purpose of choosing all necessary town officers to continue in office until the annual town meeting of said town for the choice of town officers, which shall forever be holden in the month of March, and the said Benjamin Weeks and Simeon Hoit or either of them shall preside in said meeting until a Moderator be chosen to govern the same; which meeting shall be holden in the month of July next, and shall be warned by posting up notifications at all the meeting houses in said town of Gilford fourteen days prior to the days of holding the same. Provided, however, that all town officers residing within the limits of said town of Gilford and chosen by the town of Gilmanton shall continue in their respective offices during the time for which they were elected, with full power to execute the same, and all taxes already assessed or that may during the present year be assessed by the Selectmen of the Town of Gilmanton upon the inhabitants residing within the limits of Gilford shall and may be levied and collected from said inhabitants by the proper officers of the town of Gilmanton.

"And provided further, that all public taxes which the town of Gilmanton shall or may be compelled to assess before a new act of pro-

portioning the public taxes among the several towns in this state shall pass, may be assessed, levied and collected by the proper officers of the town of Gilmanton upon the inhabitants of the town of Gilford, in case the selectmen of the town of Gilford neglect to assess, levy and collect their proportion of such public taxes and pay the same seasonably into the treasury of The Town of Gilmanton in the same way and manner as if this act had not passed.

"any herein to the contrary notwithstanding.

"STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE,

"*In the House of Representatives*, June 13th, 1812. — The foregoing bill having had three several readings, passed to be enacted.

Sent up for concurrence.

Clement Storer, Speaker.

"*In Senate*, June 16th, 1812. — This bill having been read a third time was enacted.

Joshua Darling, President.

"Same day by the Governor approved.

William Plummer.

"Recorded agreeable to the original.

"Attest,

Saml Sparhawk, Sect."

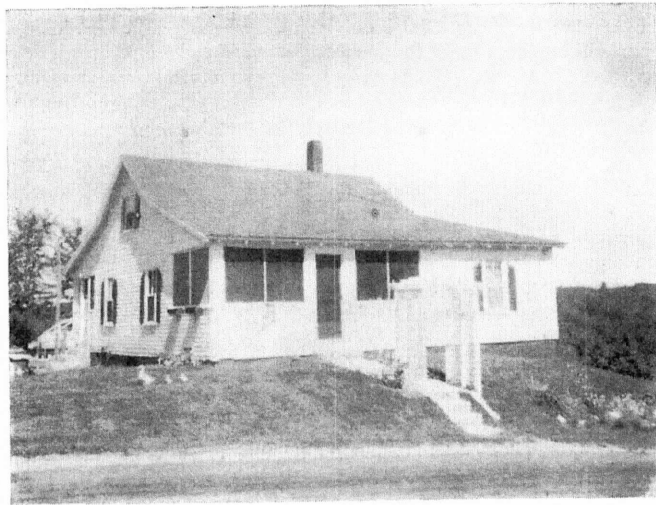
A NAME FOR THE NEW TOWN

Once the "Upper Parish" separated from Gilmanton, its residents were faced with the problem of choosing a name for the community.

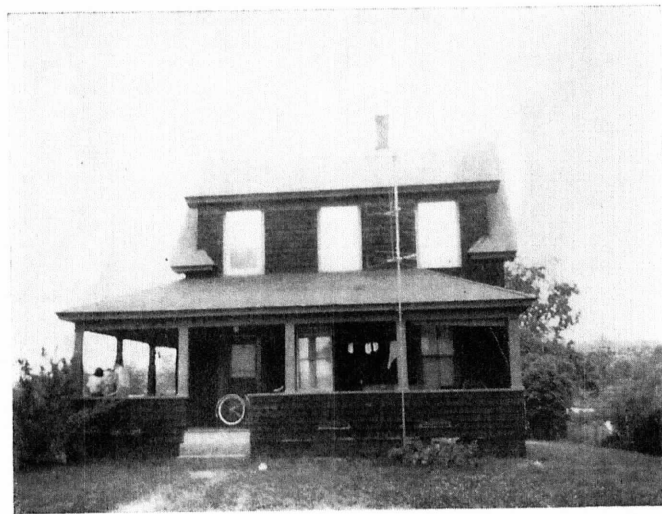
In accordance with the custom of the time, the honor of selecting a name, was bestowed in one of the town's oldest and most famous citizens, Captain Samuel B. Mason. He was an early settler, representative to the State Legislature and a veteran of both the Revolution and the War of 1812.

Because he had taken part in the battle of Guilford Court House in South Carolina during the Revolution, Mason decided to call the settlement *Guilford*.

However, on the petition to establish the new town, the word was spelled *Gilford*. Therefore, the incorporation papers drawn up in Concord contain the same mistake. There are several theories as to the source of the misspelling. Some say that the town clerk was so fatigued after working for hours writing the petition that he became careless; others claim he didn't know a "u" belonged in the word. Still others hold the letter was left out deliberately. However, it is possible that Mason himself was to blame—he had the reputation of being a very poor speller. His descendants for years laughingly excused their inability to spell by explaining they had inherited the trait from the man who well may have misspelled the town's original name.



THE LILY POND SCHOOL HOUSE
(Mr. Arthur Haskell)



THE CARR SCHOOL HOUSE
(Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Moody)

TOWN MEETINGS

One of the biggest events in early New Hampshire communities was town meeting and Gilford was no exception. It was an all day affair. Families from outlying areas attended with picnic lunches packed in lard pails. No town meeting was complete without a jug or two of cider. Early arrivals would watch down the road for the Sanborn wagon; for the best cider came from the cellars of Joe Sanborn and Jonathan Colby. As soon as the wagon appeared word would quickly spread around that two or three jugs were under the seat.

In addition to regular business, state and national elections were also held on town meeting day; and many a long drawn out article on the town warrant was quickly settled on the promise of a fifteen minute recess which would allow the men to break open a jug and wet their throats. Trouble usually started when the "Towneys" arrived, — this was the name given to those voters from the Lake Village and Laconia areas. Fights and brawls were common, especially after the jug had been passed around. A difference of opinion as to the fastest horse always came up and usually ended with a race down the village street between the outstanding rivals.

The day usually ended with a gathering of the men at the village store or tavern, discussing politics, crops, and other matters, while the women visited over a cup of tea and exchanged recipes and gossip.

Before the town was incorporated in 1812, town meetings were held in Gilmanton. Gilford citizens traveled to Gilmanton by way of the old Belknap Mountain road (the Commons). This road led from the Murray Weeks home past the old Bachelder place across to Gilmanton. It is still passable by jeep.

HISTORY OF GOVERNOR'S ISLAND

According to *Winnipesaukee Lake Country Gleanings* "Governor's Island, near the Weirs, was originally a part of the old Gilmantown grant, which formerly included the present town of Gilford, of which the island is now a part. Unlike all other towns in the Winnipesaukee Lake Region, Gilmantown was granted and chartered as a town by the Province of New Hampshire, while Governor Shute, the King of England's appointee, was in power. All other town grants were made by the purchasers of the old Mason grant. When the Gilmantown grant was made in 1727, Governor Shute was in England, and the first John Wentworth, lieutenant-governor, was acting-governor and signed the grant and charter of Gilmantown. One of the conditions of the grant was that '500 acres and a house lot' should be reserved for the governor and equal reservation was to be made for the lieutenant-governor, both reservations to be on the 'southerly shore of Winipisiokee Pond.'