

forest, making it into timber, boards, &c., which were extensively used at home, as well as in foreign markets. At his decease, these mills, with occasional improvements, descended to his son Eli, and then to Timothy, and then to Abraham. The eternal years have wrought changes—the Bunkers “are not.” Their mills are grinding still.

M A I L S .

The first mail was brought into Barnstead by one Bragg, on horseback, on his route from Dover to Plymouth, a distance of sixty-five miles. His saddle-bags contained oats for his horse, as well as the news of the day. Sometimes he used but three pints of oats in the whole distance. One day Bragg was interrogated thus: “How did you get along in using so few oats?” “Ah!” said he, “I dealt them out with discretion.”

The first postmaster in Barnstead was Charles Hodgdon, Jr. His office was kept in his private house, on the Province road.

In 1808 another mail route was established. The driver carried it in saddle-bags and on horseback. It started from Gilmanton Ironworks on Mondays, and returned on Tuesdays of each week.

On this route the first mail carrier was John S. Shannon of Gilmanton. His wife was a daughter of Moses Rand. His saddle-bags were full of newspapers—none, however, could obtain papers other than subscribers. At first the New Hampshire Patriot was the only paper. After-

wards the New Hampshire Statesman made its appearance. At the winding of the horn, crowds would cluster around Shannon to learn the news—the old saddle-bags would be unstrapped, and the news, foreign, domestic and political, would be unfolded. Subscribers were supplied for the week, and a newspaper was regarded as one of the great luxuries of the age. Shannon, independent of his papers, was well versed in what was going on from abroad; he always had great news for the crowd, and a good word for all who came to make inquiries.

After a while the mail route was extended from Dover to Concord, through Barnstead, when Shannon, instead of going on horseback, drove a horse and wagon. Newspapers began to increase. The New Hampshire Patriot, edited by Isaac Hill, continued to be the principal political medium by which the democracy of Barnstead were educated and trained. Shannon also acted as our first express man in the transmission of the mails and newspapers, and in the doing of errands, and sometimes carried a passenger. John I. Tuttle, Samuel G. Berry and others, were the successors of Shannon in this business.

At Barnstead Centre, a second post office was soon afterward established, with John Peavey as postmaster. Another, also, was started at North Barnstead, of which S. G. Webster was the keeper.

THE STAGE COACH.

The first coach was started here May 23, 1823, and run from Portsmouth to Meredith Bridge, up one day and