



HISTORIC HOMES OF KEENE

by Marjorie Whalen Smith

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Heaton House

1. HEATON HOUSE : 500 Marlboro Street *Circa 1750*

The Seth Heaton House bears a plaque designating it as the oldest house in Keene. Until recent years it was occupied by a descendant of its builder, Seth Heaton, one of the proprietors of Upper Ashuelot. The house has been extensively remodeled during the passing years.

Low framed and cape styled, the house was built across the pathway from Heaton's first home, a log cabin, burned by Indians in 1747.

Before he died at his home in 1787 Seth Heaton owned several hundred acres of land in the Beech Hill area. In his will, dated January 1783, he bequeathed his house and all his lands to his youngest son, Samuel, along with his stock of cattle, horses, sheep and "outdoor moveables and indoor moveables" with the exception of his wearing apparel. That he left with eight pounds of lawful money to his son, William, who was evidently of similar proportions.

During his lifetime Seth Heaton witnessed the clearing of the wilderness and the growth of a town amidst Indian depredations. He was included in the Alarm List of Keene in 1773 and signed the Association Test in 1776. Four of his sons were Revolutionary soldiers.

2. THE BAKER HOUSE: 86-88 Baker Street *Circa 1750*

Captain Ephraim Dorman's house stands in remodeled form at 86-88 Baker Street as one of the oldest houses in the city. It was

later called the Baker House. Present owner is Philip Moran.

Dorman arrived in Upper Ashuelot from Massachusetts as early as 1739 to become a leading man in the settlement. In 1740 he was given 10 acres of upland for hazarding his life and estate by living here "to bring forward the settling of the place."

Dorman received eight dollars for his services in traveling to Portsmouth in 1753 on business relating to the charter for the new township. He was also one of the original proprietors to call the first legal town meeting in Keene.

In 1781, following his wife's death, Captain Dorman signed over his house and property to a close friend, Thomas Baker, with the provision that Baker support and maintain him at his homestead for the remainder of his life. He died there in 1795, aged 85, and was buried in the old south-yard.

Baker, a man 20 years younger than Dorman, came to Keene about 1760. He established the first tannery in town and was a farmer and magistrate.

On the 1750 map of Upper Ashuelot Captain Dorman's house is shown standing just north of the Boston Road, the only house on the east side of Main Street. It was later moved to the "sand knoll"



Baker House

on the street named for Baker. Wide flooring and some paneling remain, but remodeling plans do not include their preservation.

3. OLD DAVID NIMS HOUSE : 29 Page Street *Circa 1754*

This house, dating to about 1754, is regarded by historians as the third oldest in Keene. Now owned by Rupert Robinson, it is the old David Nims Place, moved in 1885 to its present location from Washington Street.

Ten by eight inch beams were probably cut at Upper Ashuelot's first sawmill on Beaver Brook. Wide board flooring has boards up to 21 inches wide. Two of the widest boards were discovered beneath two layers of linoleum during renovation of the house.

David Nims, first scribe of the proprietors, came to Upper Ashuelot from Deerfield, Mass. as one of the first settlers. Chosen first town clerk after the incorporation of Keene in 1753, he continued as clerk, treasurer, selectman and moderator for the next 23 years.

His first log cabin was burned by Indians when the settlers abandoned the village in the spring of 1747. **He** returned three years later and helped ready the place for resettlement.

David and Abigail Nims' son, Captain Alpheus Nims, lived with his parents on the home farm and continued there after his marriage to Abigail Briggs. Lucian B. Page was the next owner and operated a large milk farm there.

4. THIRD MEETINGHOUSE [Half]: 26 Maple Street *Circa 1754-60*

The house at 26 Maple Street dates to 1754-60, when it was raised as the town's third meetinghouse and later used as a court house before being moved and converted into a dwelling.

Sometime after 1836 the building was cut in half : one section was moved to the old Depot Square for use as a wool house and the other half taken to Maple Street. The original cornice on the Maple Street dwelling was preserved intact.

The building of the meetinghouse began in 1754 but was not completed until 1760 because of Indian troubles. It stood at the south end of Central Square's Common, a little east of the present Soldiers' Monument. Its location was described as on the road that "goeth from the town street to the mills, on the highest ground between the causeway and the bridge by the clay pits."

There was neither bell nor steeple on the 45 x 35 foot long meetinghouse, which was probably the first building erected between the present railroad tracks and the north side of today's Central Square.



Third Meetinghouse (one-half)

Doing duty as both church and court house, it saw the first session of the Inferior Court for Cheshire, held there October 1771, and of the Superior Court in September, 1772. It was also the rallying place for the muster when word came of the Lexington alarm in 1775.

By 1786 attention turned to the erection of a new meetinghouse to the northwest of the older house, which was subsequently offered to the county for a court house if it were moved and the town allowed to use it for meetings.

The next year it was moved to the northwest corner of Central Square in what now would be the middle of the roadway to Court Street. In 1796 a new wooden court house replaced the former meetinghouse, then in a state of disrepair.

The historic building was moved to 256 Washington Street by six yoke of oxen. Its two owners, Silas Angier and Eliphalet Briggs, fitted it up as a two-family dwelling. Briggs, carpenter and joiner,

was the master mechanic who moved, repaired and finished the meetinghouse in 1828 and later built the Cheshire House.

Forty years later, in 1836, John H. Fuller bought the house, cut it in half and utilized one section for his wool house. The other half was purchased by H. Pierce, who lived there a number of years before moving it to Maple Street. The present owner is Robert Partridge.

5. WYMAN TAVERN: 339 Main Street *Circa 1762*

Wyman Tavern, Keene's most historic house, was built by Captain Isaac Wyman in 1762 and used as an inn for many years. Plaques on the front of the house, placed there by the Ashuelot Chapter, DAR, commemorate the two historic events for which the house is noted.

In the north front parlor trustees of a newly-chartered Dartmouth College met at 9 A.M. on Oct. 22, 1770 to begin the administrative work of the college. At sunrise in April, 1775 Keene patriots gathered in the dooryard, with Innkeeper Wyman as commander, to march to Lexington to repel the British.

In 1799 a 21-year-old John Prentiss was a boarder at the tavern when he established the *New Hampshire Sentinel*. The house was then kept by Captain Wyman's son-in-law, William Ward Blake, and his wife, the former Roxana Wyman.

Rev. Zedekiah Smith Barstow, the last minister to be settled by the town, occupied the tavern as a parsonage from 1818-1873. There he kept the first daily weather records in Keene. The north and south wings on the house were added by Dr. Barstow in 1822, the north being used as his study. During his occupancy the finest theological library in Cheshire County was housed there.

Rev. Barstow held a "family school" for some years at his home and included amongst his pupils was Salmon P. Chase, afterwards a Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

Mrs. Richard Sullivan Perkins, born Susan King Adams and a daughter of Dr. Charles Goldthwaite Adams, bought the old tavern in 1874 and was owner and occupant for the next 50 years.

Clifford L. Sturtevant, a Keene banker, bought the house in 1925 from the executor of the estate of Mrs. Perkins, who had died in 1924.

No drastic alterations have ever been made to destroy its value historically. Plans are being made to operate it as a community museum by the Historical Society of Cheshire County.



Wyman Tavern

6. JESSE CLARK HOMESTEAD: Hurricane Road Circa 1768

The 1768 homestead of Jesse Clark is notable for being in the midst of a locale that at one time gave promise of becoming the center of Keene. The house was the first in the vicinity built by the "square rule."

Clark and his son, Jesse Jr., operated the house as "Clark's Tavern" for many years. It was sold in 1804 to Joseph Brown, another enterprising West Keene businessman, who kept a general store nearby. Brown ran the tavern for only a year before selling the house and 83 acres to Major George Ingersoll of Boston for \$4,000.

Mrs. Ingersoll, the former Martha Goldthwaite of Boston and sister to Mrs. Daniel Adams and Mrs. James Lanman of Keene, renamed the house "Whitebrook." It was more commonly referred to as the Ingersoll Place.

General Ingersoll died the following year but the family retained the property until 1833, when it was sold to Sumner Carpenter. In 1899 it was known as the "Gillett Place." It has had nearly a dozen owners in the intervening years. The Frederick Ellsworth family has owned it since 1959.

Many old features remain, including a ballroom across the front of the second floor with a spring floor, arched ceiling, two fireplaces, sliding Indian shutters, and built-in benches along three sides of the room.

7. DEACON HENRY ELLIS FARM : Wyman Road *Circa 1771*

In 1771, the summer following his marriage to Melatiah Thayer of Mendon, Mass., Henry Ellis built a house on land bought two years earlier from Dr. Obadiah Blake, another early settler in West Keene.

In 1778 Henry Ellis sold his farm to Ezra Harvey, and it later passed to Joseph Brown, and then to Joshua Durant.

The Thomas Baker family owned the property from 1807 to 1891, when it was sold to Professor John C. Bracq of Vassar College. Arthur Olson Jr. bought the house and seven acres of land from heirs of Professor Bracq in 1953.

8. DEACON KINGSBURY HOUSE: Aldrich Road *Circa 1771*

The Deacon Daniel Kingsbury house, located at the end of the Aldrich Road, was built in 1771 and conveyed to the town of Keene in 1830 for use as the Town Poor Farm. At the turn of the century it was owned by Edwin V. Aldrich and called Monadnock View Farm House.

Daniel Kingsbury, a native of Wrentham, Mass., bought 104 acres of land in West Keene in 1769. Twelve children were born to



Deacon Kingsbury House

Daniel and Molly (Thurston) Kingsbury during the next quarter-century.

Joel Kingsbury, next eldest son, remained the "home boy." As a farmer and land surveyor, he continued at the farmstead with his wife, Olive,

Ammi and Joseph Brown sold it to the town in 1830.

The date "April 21, 1773" was cut on one of the braces in the barn and is believed to commemorate the day the barn was raised, two years after construction of the house.

In later years the two-story house, measuring 32 x 41 feet, had an ell added at each side. Sweeping views of Mount Monadnock, distant hills and meadows and the valley of the Ashuelot are visible from the front porch.

9. HURRICANE FARM: Hurricane Road *Circa 1773*

Close to two centuries have passed since the stone slabs of the 5-foot thick cellar walls and massive chimney base were set in place at Hurricane Farm on the Hurricane Road in West Keene.

Asa Ware opened the clearing there and built the barn and house, long known to the older generation as the old Ellis Homestead. A beam in the barn was inscribed "1773."

Since the turn of the century the property has been owned by the Faulkner family—first by Robert E. Faulkner, then, since 1942, by his nephew Charles S. Faulkner.

Originally built as a story-and-a-half house with timbers scored and hewn by hand, it was not until 1900 that the roof was lifted and rooms and porches added which disguised its former cape-styled appearance.

Many of the great stones used in the foundation and for the fireplace hearth in the old "keeping room" came from the nearby Timothy Ellis quarry. Visible in the chimney base is an amazing 10 foot long stone.

In 1814 the property was sold to Gideon Clark.

Eugene Ellis purchased the house in 1848 and it remained in the Ellis family for the next half century.

In 1942 it was purchased by the Charles Faulkners.

Charles Faulkner, who died in 1965, was one of the first in this area to carry on extensive modern forestry practices and became one of the first accredited tree farmers. Many forestry demonstrations have been conducted in his woodlots by the Extension Service.

Mrs. Faulkner still makes Hurricane Farm her home.



Luther Nourse Place

10. LUTHER NOURSE PLACE: Jordan Road *Circa 1773*

The Luther Nourse Place on the Jordan Road, owned by Theodore Kalb since 1947, is one of the few standing "saltbox" type homesteads in Keene. The barn, which formerly stood on the property, was raised the day of the Battle of Bunker Hill. It stood until 1959 when its weatherbeaten condition was beyond bracing. It was burned after its collapse.

Jacob Stiles was the first known owner of the land and it was from him that Abraham Wheeler Jr. bought the property in 1771. He built the house in 1773 on a base of heavy oak timbers with a large central chimney. All the old features of the house have been preserved wherever possible.

In 1792 Colonel Wheeler sold the house to Peleg Sprague. In 1823 it was conveyed to the Nourse family who occupied it for the next half-century. Since 1832 it has retained the name of the "Luther Nourse Place."

11. HOWLETT HOME: Chapman Road *Circa 1775*

Davis and Mary Howlett appear to have been the first occupants in the house that was raised in 1775, or possibly a few years earlier.

It was there Davis died at the age of 80 in 1817. As a captain, Davis Howlett had raised a company of men in the spring of 1777 and marched from Keene to reinforce the Continental Army at Fort Ticonderoga.

Cornelius Howlett with his wife, Jemima, continued the homestead. He died there in 1834.

John Lawrence was the farm's most colorful owner. Active in stockraising, he frequently advertised his stock in the newspaper in poetry form and signed himself as the "Bashaw" of Beech Hill.

In 1879 his estate was sold to his wife's brother, Charles Davis, who lived there until 1890. Davis sold to Horace L. Goodnow, who owned the house for 21 years. Goodnow's name was given to Horatian Park and the 35-foot-tall observatory on Beech Hill during the time he speculated in land development there.

Charles Wellman came in 1911. Present owners are Mr. and Mrs. L. William Slanetz, who have made vast improvements in the place.

12. JABEZ DANIELS HOUSE: Court Street *Circa 1775*

The Jabez Daniels place was built prior to 1775. Daniel Willson, Revolutionary War soldier, is the first name associated with it.

In the first half of the 1800's Jabez Daniels lived in the house, then painted red, and carried on his blacksmith business in a shop a few rods south of his dwelling.

Later the house was popularly referred to as the Glue Shop House, when used as a boarding house for workmen at the Keene Glue Co., founded by Edward E. Lyman in 1871 and which became a flourishing business by 1888, when it employed "20 assistants."

The house is now owned and rented by Gordon Sargent.



Jabez Daniels House

13. CHAPMAN FARM: Chapman Road *Circa 1775*

Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Lantz bought and moved into the old Chapman Farmhouse in the fall of 1965.

James Willson settled the land and enlarged the house in stages from an original one-room shelter. The present two-story house was the third section, built during or shortly after the Revolutionary War.

Captain Willson's son-in-law, Captain Calvin Chapman, carried on the farm for him. As years passed it became an outstanding stone-fenced farmstead with sugar and apple orchards. The captain's wife, Sarah Willson Chapman, bore 15 children before her death in 1834 at the age of 56. When the captain died in 1855 he made provisions for his second wife, Betsey, to enjoy a third part of the farm.

Calvin's son, King B. Chapman, continued the farm. The property was sold to Edwin Parks in the 1880's but was soon transferred to Charles Davis, who owned over 500 acres in the area. His eldest son, Herbert, born in 1860 and died 1924, went to the Chapman Farm in 1886 and resided there with his wife, Ethel, and family until he sold to the Keene Woodenware Company in December of 1922. He had turned the main part of the house around to its present position in 1902-03. He also removed older portions of the house and rebuilt an ell and woodshed.

There have been other owners, and a time when it was proposed as the site of a golf course.

14. WYMAN HOUSE : Wyman Road *Circa 1777*

Built in 1777 by Captain Isaac Wyman, the Wyman homestead was occupied continuously by his male descendants until recent years. Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Mackenzie, present owners, have been there 10 years.

The homestead passed from Captain Wyman to his youngest son, Charles, to a second Charles, and then to John E. Wyman, before breaking the 175-year-pattern of Wyman occupancy.

15. GOODNOW TAVERN: Old Walpole Road *Circa 1777*

The first owner of the Goodnow Tavern on the Old Walpole Road was Benjamin Archer, who had fought at Bunker Hill. **In** 1786 he served as architect and master carpenter of the town's new meetinghouse.

He appears in Keene records as early as 1767, when he was appointed to help build the stairs and lay the gallery floor of an

earlier meetinghouse. In 1769 he was chosen "collector of the minister's Firewood."

Archer's house dates to 1777 and has been owned since 1953 by Charles L. Larsen.

During the early 1800's a sign swung at the corner of the drive and offered warmth and companionship at the Eagle Tavern, as it was then known, although it appears to have been more familiarly called Goodnow's Tavern, with Henry Goodnow as host. The Third New Hampshire Turnpike passed within a few yards of the front of the house.

Goodnow's father had bought the house in 1799 and it passed from father to son to grandson until 1864. Emerson A. Winchester moved there in 1872. He and his heirs owned it for over half a century.

Present owners discovered wall stencilling in the upstairs hall and traces of it on bedroom walls. An upstairs ballroom has long been partitioned into three bedrooms.

16. EPHRAIM WRIGHT HOMESTEAD: Off Old Concord Road

Circa 1781

The old Ephraim Wright homestead, built in 1781, boasts occupancy in a line of descendants of one family for eight generations.

Ephraim Wright, son of Nathaniel and Martha Winship Wright of Lancaster, Mass., was only 19 years old when he came to Keene with his brother, James, and started to clear land and give thought to raising a homestead. He finished his house and barns in 1781 in spite of wagers that, being so young, he would abandon interest.

In 1783 Ephraim married Mary Beals of Packersfield, now Nelson. They had no children of their own but brought up their young niece and nephew, Lucy and Ephraim Wright, children of Ephraim's brother, Aaron, of Fitzwilliam.

Lucy married Perley Eveleth in 1818, and the previous year her brother had married Charity Nourse and continued occupancy of the house. Seven children were born to Ephraim and Charity.

From 1859 Albert Wright continued ownership. The farm next descended to Albert's son, Frank, two years after his marriage to Florence Rodgers.

Their daughter, Jennie Charity, continued on the home place after her marriage to Walter Moore in 1905. It was the first time the house had not passed to a male Wright descendant.

Until his death in 1942, Frank C. Moore, son of Jennie and Walter, carried on a successful farm partnership with his father.

Frank Moore's son, Frederick, now lives at the farmstead. His children are the eighth generation of the family to be brought up there.

17. WINDING BROOK FARM: Maple Avenue *Circa 1785*

The home of Mr. and Mrs. Clinton Wilder on Maple Avenue was built in 1785 by John Colony, who came from Ireland, and lived first in Massachusetts, where he served in the French and Indian Wars of 1755-60 and was one of Robert Rogers' Rangers. Family anecdotes tell of his bravery as a ranger and pioneer settler.

In 1761 John and his wife, Melatiah, came to Keene to settle on land which continued to shelter three generations of their descendants before being sold out of the family after over a century and a half of Colony ownership.

Owners were: John, from 1761 until his death in 1796; his son, Timothy, born in 1764; John Colony 2nd, born at the present house in 1795; and Mrs. Martha Colony Towne Woodward, who died in 1907.

Martha Colony, great-granddaughter of John, married George E. Towne in 1847 at the age of 19. After his death and that of her infant son, she married William H. Woodward in 1853.

Sidney J. Wilder, uncle of the present owner, purchased the farm after Woodward's death in 1919. He started a dairy business and gave the farm its present name, *Winding Brook Farm*, derived from Black Brook which meanders through a side field.

Jedd Wilder was in partnership with his brother for a few years before buying out the business. He continued to operate it with his son, Clinton, until the former's death in March, 1955.

Formerly a 72-acre-farm with four barns, there are now only 9 acres and no barns. It ceased dairy operations in 1958.

18. ASA DUNBAR HOUSE (Crystal Restaurant) : 81 Main Street
Circa 1785

In 1785 Asa Dunbar built a house on house lot #28, which had been the most northerly of the house lots on the west side of the street, when laid out by the surveyors of Upper Ashuelot in 1733.

Born in Bridgewater, Mass., in 1745, Dunbar served as minister to the First Church in Salem, Mass., for 12 years prior to his coming to Keene because of ill health. He changed his profession to law and was admitted to the bar the same year that his house was built. He was the first master of the Masonic Rising Sun Lodge, No. 4 at

Keene. His death occurred while town clerk in 1787, age 41, and he was buried in the first burial ground on lower Main Street.

His wife, Mary, supported her five small children by opening the house as a tavern after Asa's death. The building then had five rooms on each floor, a 40-foot barn, sheds and outbuildings.

Asa's youngest child, Cynthia, was born in the house just a month before her father's death. Cynthia became the mother of Henry David Thoreau, the celebrated writer of Walden fame.

Widow Dunbar sold the property in 1795 to Daniel Watson, a saddler, leather fire bucket maker, and one of the principal stockholders in the New Hampshire Glass Factory. He occupied the house as his residence until his death in 1837.

Samuel Robinson of Surry, and John H. Fuller were the next owners before it was conveyed to the Cheshire Railroad in 1846. For the next half century the railroad leased the house to various tenants.

According to a brochure issued by Dino N. Houpis, a lunch business was opened there about 1894 by Peter G. Marrion, a barber. A covered platform was built on the street side and customers were served through the windows. By September, 1894, the lunch business was so prosperous that Marrion retired from barbering to devote full time to his luncheon clientele. The interior was opened and customers were invited to sit around a counter.

Rudyard Kipling, who lived for a time in Brattleboro, Vt., used to be a regular Saturday night baked beans customer.

After several interim owners, the Doukas Brothers sold the business to Nicholas J. Houpis in 1922. He enlarged the restaurant and continued to operate it. Land and building were officially transferred from the railroad to Houpis and his son, Dino, in 1947.

Remodeling changes have been numerous. In 1963, during extensive renovations, some of the earliest known roll-type wallpaper imported to this country, possibly from France, was discovered when workmen were tearing down a wall. One panel of the paper has been kept intact, framed and is seen today for a touch of authenticity in the Thoreau Room at the restaurant.

19. NIM5 HOMESTEAD: Nims Road *Circa 1790*

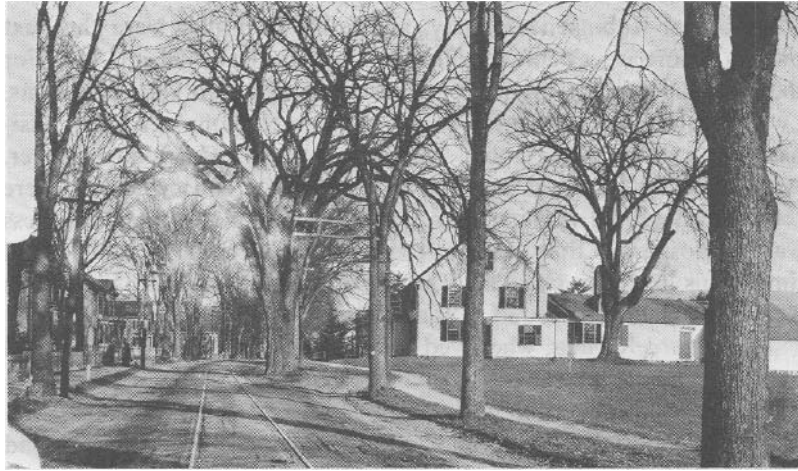
Since 1947 William Coates has owned the old Nims homestead which housed successive generations of the Nims family from 1813 on. The original builder was Levi Woods, who cleared the land and built the house entirely of pine.

Roswell and Sally Nims of Sullivan bought the house in 1813.

Chester Nims, born there in 1817, succeeded his father on the property. Married to Cynthia Wilder in 1843, he was selectman for many years and served as moderator of town meetings. One of their children, Charles Roswell, also farmed the land and died there at home in 1885. The youngest sons of Chester and Cynthia then came into ownership.

Fred and Hattie Nims were the last owners before it was sold out of the family.

In past years much timber on the property was sold to the Impervious Package Co. in Keene for use in making kerosene and oil buckets.



Noah Cooke House

20. NOAH COOKE HOUSE: 136 West Street Circa 1791

Built in 1791 by Noah Cooke, one of Cheshire County's early and most distinguished lawyers, the house was the home of some member of the Colony family from 1906, when it was purchased by Horatio Colony, Keene's first mayor, until 1966. For some time it was the home of Major General James A. Frye and his wife, Kate Colony Frye.

Fine paneling and wainscoting, old hinges, random width flooring, a beehive oven and a 5 x 5 foot stowaway room within the chimney are a few of the interesting features of the old house.

During the last year of his life Noah Cooke kept his law office at his home. He helped establish the first court house in town, served

as town clerk for 10 years, was an incorporator of the Cheshire National Bank and in 1808 gave land on which to erect a fire station. As one of the largest donors of the "Proprietors of the Fire Engine" he was unanimously chosen president of Keene's first fire company.

For years the road at the front of the house separated and ran on both sides of the old Cooke elm, which was long identified with the house and its first owner.

21. CAPTAIN STEPHEN CHASE TAVERN: 712 Court Street

Circa 1794

The Captain Stephen Chase Tavern on the old Third New Hampshire Turnpike is owned by Captain Chase's direct descendant of the fifth generation, Elizabeth Shaw, and her husband, H. Bramwell Shaw. Mrs. Shaw is the only daughter of the late Mrs. Emily Chase Young, the eldest daughter of Joseph Chase.

Stephen Chase came to Keene about 1785. That winter he bid 8 pounds 10 shillings for a pew in the gallery of the new meeting-house, which the town fathers were soon to erect. In 1787 he married Betsey Batcheller, daughter of a noted Tory of Roxbury.

The house is believed to have been built in 1794. It served as a tavern for over a quarter of a century and was probably discontinued as a public house after Captain Chase's death in 1830.

Stephen and Betsey's son, Stephen Jr., remained on the homestead. He married Louisa Dickinson in 1832. Joseph Chase, eldest son of Stephen Jr., born in 1836, was the third generation to live there.

22. POND FARM: East Surry Road *Circa 1795*

The old Pond Farm on the corner of the East Surry Road and Gunn Road was occupied by five generations of Pond descendants before being sold out of the family 10 years ago to Mr. and Mrs. Frederick A. Farrar.

Jonathan Pond built the house in 1795 or earlier.

The Pond family descended from Robert and Mary Pond, who were amongst the original settlers of Dorchester, Mass. Their great-great grandson, Jonathan, was born in 1749 at Wrentham, Mass. It was he, with his wife, Thankful, who continued the Pond name in New Hampshire.

In 1812 the farm became the property of Phineas Pond, eldest son and second child of the builder, Jonathan, who died in 1817 of apoplexy.

Jonathan's grandson, Levi, and his wife, Sophronia Emerson, continued as third generation Ponds on the farm after their marriage in January of 1826. They raised four children, two sons having died in infancy.

Albert Emerson Pond, born in 1838, married Eliza Ann Stone in 1838 and took over ownership of the home farm in 1856. The homestead was appraised for \$2000 in 1876.

The last Pond to occupy the homestead, called Rock Haven for many years, was Frank L. Pond, a watchmaker in Keene.



The Adams House

23. ADAMS HOUSE: 324 Main Street *Circa 1795*

The Adams House was built in 1795 by Dr. Daniel Adams, a leading physician in Keene for nearly 50 years.

Dr. Adams is credited with being the first in town to introduce the sugar maple as an ornamental shade tree. He came to town on horseback in 1788 with his bride, Sarah Goldthwaite Apdaile of Boston. Named postmaster in 1799, Dr. Adams kept the post office at his home.

The Beedle family has owned the house for many years.

24. OLD MASONIC HALL: 110 Court Street *Circa 1797*

Several of Keene's most distinguished families have lived at 110 Court Street in a house that was built as a Masonic Hall and for a time used as a school.

Originally built in 1797 by the Rising Sun Lodge of Freemasons, the stately structure then stood on the east side of Main Street along what was then called Federal Row (vicinity of Dunbar Street).

In the *Rising Sun* for Dec. 9, 1797 may be found the item: "We understand that the members of Rising Sun Lodge have postponed dedicating their lodge, an elegant building erected solely for their use by the society, till sometime in May or June next."

The Masons used their Hall for about nine years before being overrun by financial troubles. A mortgage was foreclosed and the building came into the possession of Jehosophat Grout. About this time the rooms of the Hall were used as a subscription school run by Phineas Cooke, who in 1808 married Sophia Grout, his landlord's daughter. Four years later they were awarded the "Masons Hall" on Main Street and land on the Third N.H. Turnpike from the division of her parents' estate.

The Grouts decided to transform the building into a dwelling and soon arranged to have it removed to their land on the turnpike.

The structure was moved up Main Street, swung onto Washington Street and then headed across the vacant land toward the pike. Mid-way it became mired and froze there before it could be moved farther, spending the winter frozen in open fields at the corner of today's Union and Pleasant Streets.

In the spring the house finished its trip and was converted into a residence. The Grouts were its first occupants and remained there for about 10 years.

In 1822 Dr. Joseph Wheeler bought the house. He had married Hepsey Wilder in 1813 and their three children were born in Westmoreland. Dr. Wheeler's son, Joseph, became a prominent portrait painter and for many years a number of his portraits remained in the house.

In 1825 the doctor's daughter, Harriet, married George Tilden, who had come to Keene in 1817 to practice the bookbinding trade. The young couple continued at the family home, as later did their son, George H. Tilden.

Harriet Wheeler Tilden's grandson, Robert Tilden Kingsbury, lived in the house for 81 years, until his own death in 1955.

Many additions and changes have been made over past years. However the high vaulted ceiling of the Masonic Lodge room remains in its original state.

Perry A. Kiritsy is now owner.



John Grimes Homestead

25. JOHN GRIMES HOMESTEAD: Stearns **Road** Circa 1800

The homestead of John Grimes on the Stearns Road was always occupied by a member of the Grimes family until its recent purchase by the B. Harold Erskine family. The house is believed to have been completed around 1800.

Seventeen years later an itinerant artist and decorator, named Jotham Stearns, from Hopkinton, Mass., was hired to stencil the parlor walls at the Grimes house. Typical of the day, he may have accepted his pay in food and shelter. During his stay he fell in love with John Grimes' 22-year-old daughter, Mary, and the Vital Statistics of Keene record Mary and Jotham's marriage on March 16, 1817.

After Jotham's death in 1832, Mary Grimes Stearns returned to her parents' home with her five children. The last family descendant to occupy the house was Margaret Pollard Smith, the great-great-granddaughter of John Grimes. Wall stenciling remains in a front room.

26. NEWCOMB'S LAW OFFICE: 320 Roxbury Street *Circa 1800*

The home of Mr. and Mrs. Donald P. Chace at 320 Roxbury Street was built originally about 1800 as a law office for Daniel Newcomb. The small building, then located on the east side of Main Street, where the railroad tracks now lie, served for several years as the Keene post office and for nearly 50 years as a law office.

In 1808 Samuel Dinsmoor moved into Judge Newcomb's small law office. When Dinsmoor went to Congress in 1811, his law partner, Booz Atherton, succeeded him and in 1813 another lawyer, Joe Buffum, continued the office in the same building.

Dinsmoor, comparable to Judge Newcomb as a public-spirited leader in town and state affairs, became the Democratic governor of New Hampshire in 1831 and served three consecutive terms.

When the railroad came through Keene in 1847, the small law office was moved to 320 Roxbury Street. Rooms were added on the east and north sides to enlarge it into a cape-styled home.

As a private home it has known few owners. Occupants for many years were the Poole family. The front hall stairway, noted for its hand-turned balustrades, was made by George E. Poole, a skilled woodworker.

George and Harriette (Sherman) Poole were married January 29, 1862. They celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1912. Mr. Poole died in 1921, and Harriette Poole in 1931 at the age of 91. The house remained in the family until the surviving daughter, Mary Poole, sold it in the early 1940's.

27. JAMES WRIGHT JR. HOUSE: Old Concord Road *Circa 1802*

This house was built in 1802 on land that was an original holding of Colonel Isaac Wyman. It became the property of his granddaughter and in 1802 her husband, Dr. Joseph Wheeler, sold 200 acres of it to James Wright Jr.

Big fireplaces and a steep roof with a ridgepole 20 feet from the attic floor were part of the commodious two-story frame farmhouse he built there.

James Wright Jr. and Lucy Nims were married March 24, 1803. James was the eldest son of Lieutenant James Wright, who settled on the hill in a log cabin in 1769. He soon built a frame homestead and became an extensive real estate owner and prosperous farmer.

Ten children were born to Lucy and James between 1804 and 1823. Their oldest son, James III, continued on the farm after his father's death in 1851. For a time his youngest sister, Eliza, widowed

young, also lived there with her five children and kept house for James. He died unmarried in 1877.

Asahel Nims owned the house for two years. In 1866 Jacob (Jake) Green, a Keene apothecary and Civil War veteran, became owner. Miles Davis bought the property in 1874 and farmed it until 1900, when the Impervious Package Co. bought the farm to cut off the timber. They sold to Henry Woodbury in March, 1904. A deed was recorded on October 6, 1924, when the house and land were bought by Fred L. Bedaw from Woodbury's widow. It again changed hands in 1933 when purchased by William W. Stone. The present owner, Clarence Parker, has made it his home since February, 1935.

28. AARON SEAMANS HOUSE: 72 School Street *Circa 1804*

One of Keene's most enterprising businessmen, Aaron Seamans, built a house in 1804 at what is now 72 School Street. A "ginn" distillery and pot and pearlash works, in which Seamans was a partner with Moses Johnson, were located on lower land northwest of the house. Seamans also joined Ebenezer Daniels in tanning, _currying and morocco-dressing at a tannery on Main Street.

Joseph Wheeler, a popular Keene physician, who came from Westmoreland in 1810, was the second occupant of the house and resided there until 1822. While living there, the doctor had a bowling alley in his backyard, a feature "sufficiently out of the ordinary to attract the notice of the villagers."

Later occupants included the Simeon Cook family, then Herbert C. Aldrich who married Clara Josephine, a daughter of Simeon Cook.

Now owned by Cornelius W. Schenck, it was previously the home of the Edwin Ellis family for over half a century.

29. OLD BOND HOUSE: 251 Main Street *Circa 1805*

The Old Bond Farm, a Federal style mansion now owned by Keene State College and known as the President's House, was built about 1805 by John G. Bond as a part of his 20 acre farm. Bond was a storekeeper and early postmaster.

From 1824 to 1844 it was used as Miss Catherine Fiske's Female Seminary. The house again became a private home in 1845.

Manufacturer Madison Fairbanks resided there and later Mr. and Mrs. Edward C. Thayer. This structure and Hale House were the two original buildings made available for Keene Normal School in 1909.



The Old Bond House

30. MT. PLEASANT TAVERN: 456 Marlboro Street *Circa 1806*

By 1806 Deacon James Lanman and his wife, the former Susan Goldthwaite of Boston, were keeping tavern at Mt. Pleasant. The house is said to have been built by Joseph Brown sometime prior to 1806.

Deacon Lanman had served as deacon of the Brattle Street church in Boston and his wife was sister to Mrs. Daniel Adams and Mrs. George Ingersoll of Keene.

Deacon Lanman died on June 21, 1809, aged 60, but in 1825 his widow was still keeping the tavern there. In 1828 the property was offered for sale: "To be sold on easy terms to the purchaser, that Valuable Farm known as Mt. Pleasant-150 acres, all well watered and in good repair."

Henry Dorr, one of the early wits of Keene, lived in the house when he first came to town.

By 1851 Thomas Thompson was occupant. He owned the house for a number of years and died there in 1857.

The next year Asa and Sarah Cole from Gilsum bought the farm which became known as the Cole Farm from father, son and grandson occupancy. Asa Cole died there in 1900 at the age of 96.

His son, Daniel, was brought up as a farmer's boy in Gilsum where he had been born in 1835. At an early age he was employed in the Gilsum mills and knew the woodworker's and millwright's trades.

In 1853 Daniel married Adelzia Jones of Marlow. He was employed in Osborne and Hale's furniture factory in the chair making department and later operated a grain store with his son, as well as

carrying on the farm work with his father and later with his son, Frank. James T. Wyman is present owner of the old house.

31. SAWYER TAVERN: 63 Arch Street *Circa 1806*

A recorded history of the Sawyer Tavern dates to 1803 when Peter Hobart transferred land and holdings in Ash Swamp to Colonel Abraham Wheeler. It is thought that the house, or a part of it, was standing when he bought the property.

Wheeler obtained a tavern license about 1806 and the house was opened to the public until 1840 or later.

Josiah Sawyer and his wife, Jane Wheeler Sawyer, continued the tavern after the colonel's death.

Descendants of Colonel Wheeler occupied the house until the estate was sold in 1922 to Horace W. and Lillian Sawyer, unrelated to the former Sawyer occupants. Identified by a stagecoach in the front yard, it was again opened to the public as Sawyer Tavern.

The present owner, Robert K. Wood, is the administrator of the Elliot Community Hospital.

32. ABEL BLAKE HOUSE: 199 Main Street *Circa 1806*

The home of the late Mrs. Charles T. Colony and her son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Horatio Colony, at 199 Main Street dates to 1806 when it was built by Abel Blake, son of the first proprietor of Upper Ashuelot to build a permanent home in the frontier settlement.

Captain Blake lived here 27 years and in 1833 sold to Elias Joslin, whose descendants continue to make it their home today.

Elias, a blacksmith, lived there until his death 60 years later. He married Maria Eames of Dublin, N.H., and their only daughter, Emeline, married Horatio Colony in 1863.

Just before the turn of the century Mrs. Colony made extensive renovations in her old home. The old ell was also replaced and barns torn down. After her death in 1907 from typhoid fever contracted while visiting the Jamestown Tercentennial Exposition in Virginia, the house passed to her husband; from him it descended to their son, Charles T. Colony in 1918; then to his wife and son, Horatio.

In spite of renovations the house retains the atmosphere of an early 19th century homestead and is distinguished for its antique furnishings and decorative accessories of quality and rarity.

33. DANIEL BRADFORD HOUSE: 70 Bradford Road *Circa 1808*

Built by a sea captain, Captain Daniel Bradford of Duxbury, Mass., prior to 1808, the house is noted for its meticulous details of handcarving on the exterior, as well as on inside mantels, chair rails and ceiling mouldings. Fireplaces, found in every room, each have different carving motifs.

The property was originally a parcel of 280 acres, now reduced to an acre and a half. A cupola, atop the hipped roof with four tall chimneys, was fashioned after a pilot house aboard a ship.

Captain Bradford was "inspector of schools", treasurer of the Cheshire Agricultural Society, a selectman, a high priest of the Royal Arch Masons, and one of the principal stockholders in the local New Hampshire Glass Factory. He was also guardian of the daughters of William Wyman and took the two children into his home when they were orphaned in 1813.

Harry Colony bought the house in 1896 and made many renovations. In the 1930's Alfred T. Colony (son of Harry Colony) and his wife, Beatrice Booth Colony, ran the house as a tearoom and guest house, known then as Bradford Inn.

In 1935 the Keene Summer Theater opened there under the efforts of Mrs. Colony, who was a well-known actress and a descendant of John Wilkes Booth. Colony was an actor for many years and was one of the first to join the old Fox Movie Company. After his death in 1964 the house was sold to Mr. and Mrs. Henry Frechette.



Elliot Mansion

34. ELLIOT MANSION: 305 Main Street *Circa 1811*

The Elliot Mansion, now Elliot Community Hospital, was built in 1811 as a private home by Captain William Wyman. Construction on the "finest house in town" was started in the summer of 1810 but its owner died the following April, just before the commodious brick house was completed. Tradition says that just before Captain Wyman died he was taken to the window of his childhood home next door, the old Wyman Tavern, and saw the blinds being hung on the new house. Three large barns were erected at the same time.

His widow and two daughters moved into the house, which was then only two stories high with a hipped roof and wooden fence at the street. Within two years Mrs. Wyman died, and the children, Sarah, aged eight, and Mary, six, went to live with their guardian, Captain Daniel Bradford, in West Keene. The following year the brick house and 20 acres of land were sold at auction.

James Wilson, the highly educated son of an immigrant Scotch-Irish settler of Peterborough, was the next occupant of the then "unfinished Wyman mansion." He remained there 24 years until his death at the age of 72 in 1839. The funeral expenses for the "richest man in town" amounted to \$30.75. His mahogany coffin, costing \$20, was the largest portion of the bill.

James Bixby Elliot, later manufacturer of the Clipper Mowing and Reaping Machines in South Keene, bought the property in 1845. He lived there with his family for nearly half a century.



Interior—Elliot Mansion



Interior—Elliot Mansion

After Elliot's death his brother, John Henry Elliot, deeded the then-called Elliot Mansion and part of the land to the City of Keene for use as a hospital in memory of their aunt, Miss Keziah Bixby Appleton. Thus the house passed from private ownership. Since 1892 its history has become the story of thousands of people within the community—of their births and deaths, illnesses and healings, and of the doctors and nurses dedicated to service.

In 1902 the trustees accepted a memorial gift of \$12,000 from heirs of Edward Joslin for the erection of the Edward Joslin Home for Nurses.

35. THADDEUS METCALF HOUSE: 677 West Street *Circa 1814*

Known for many years as Mountain View Farm because of the view of Mount Monadnock, the former Captain Thaddeus Metcalf homestead was probably erected in 1814.

Thaddeus Metcalf, second child of Michael and Anna Metcalf, was born in 1758 and died in April of 1823. He is buried in the Bradford Road cemetery where his epitaph reads: "There is Rest in Heaven." About 1782 he married Hepzibah Baker, daughter of Thomas Baker, the tanner.

Thaddeus started buying land in 1803 and in 1814 bought acreage from his brother on which to erect the present house. Stone underpinnings of the house are from the Timothy Ellis quarry off the Hurricane Road.

An auction of the property was held on the premises on the 24th day of January, 1824. It was then described as the "well-known homestead farm, 2 stories high with barns, sheds and good watering privileges." Also up for auction was "half a horse shed back of the Meetinghouse."

Joseph Ingalls came in 1838. Nearby railroad tracks across West Street have always been known as Ingalls Crossing. William B. Read and the Keene Development Co. were later owners. The large barn on the property burned July 23, 1945 and nearly 50 tons of hay and a few livestock were lost.

Harry C. and Blanche Bassett Hastings occupied and owned the house from the early 1920's. Their daughter, Mrs. James W. Hawkins, has continued at the house which is presently for sale.

36. GENERAL JUSTUS PERRY HOUSE: 25-27 Roxbury Court

Circa 1816

Although the interior of the Justus Perry house has been greatly altered, hints of a former grandeur are revealed by the handsome proportions of the house and decorative exterior features of carved cornice, window caps, pilastered ends, and Palladian windows above fanlighted doorways. The house originally stood on Washington Street on the site of the present Keene Junior High School and was moved to Roxbury Court in 1912.



General Justus Perry House

Perry lived there 26 years, giving generously of time, money and talents. He married twice and raised five children. He turned the Marlboro Street Glass Works into a profitable business after its initial failure under another management.

A severe attack of typhus fever and later neuralgia curtailed General Perry's activities in the militia and in social functions he so enjoyed. He died in 1842, aged 53. He was buried in the tomb that had been built on the property after the death of his mother and first wife. The tomb was later taken down and his remains reburied in one of the city cemeteries.

Reverend William Orne White was a later occupant of the house. In May, 1890 Henry O. Coolidge presented the house and part of the land to the city. For some years the property, referred to as Coolidge Park, was the proposed site for a library building. In 1912 a high school building (now Keene Junior High school) was built there.

37. HIGH ACRES: Old Concord Road *Circa 1817*

One of three Wright homesteads on Beech Hill, the house now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Harold A. Goder, was built in 1817 by Ephraim Wright and lived in by Wright descendants for over a century.

Lieutenant James Wright settled the land in 1769. His homestead, of which there is no description other than "an upright dwelling house", burned May 22, 1817, six years after his death. His son, Ephraim, who had grown to manhood on the farm, was occupant at the time.

Most of the furniture was saved from the fire, but nearly 50 bushels of grain in the garret and all provisions, including a large quantity of cheeses in the cellar, shared the fate of the house along with two valuable barns. Ephraim's loss was estimated at \$2,000.

He built a new house at the site that same year.

From Ephraim the "new" house was inherited by his eldest son, George Kendall Wright, and then by Ephraim's granddaughter, Sarah Elizabeth Ellis.

Ownership then passed out of the family. William and Ida Maude Gibney set up a gasoline pump, roadside stand and overnight cabins on the property which they named High Acres.

The Gibneys had come to Keene in 1929. In May, 1941, they celebrated their golden wedding anniversary by welcoming more than 150 friends and relatives to the house.

Present owners bought the house six years ago. After extensive



High Acres

renovations, their home was chosen by *New Hampshire Profiles* as a "Home of the Month" feature.

38. HON. HORATIO COLONY RESIDENCE: 104 West Street
Circa 1819

One of Keene's finer older homesteads stands at 104 West Street, owned by the grandchildren of Horatio Colony, Keene's first mayor.

The house was built in 1819 on the site of Draper's Bake Shop. This building had been erected by Ichabod Fisher, a dealer in dry goods and believed to have been Keene's first merchant. Every fall his store would be boarded up as high as the windows and insulated with leaves to keep out the winds.

John Draper died in August of 1816, 83 years of age. The bake shop was removed by Timothy Hall when he purchased two acres of land in November, 1818.

Timothy Hall took \$7000 from his business to build his brick house the following year. For half a century the A. & T. Hall Store supplied the medical needs of the doctors of Keene and neighboring towns. Formed in 1813 by Captain Aaron Hall and his "distant relative", Timothy Hall of Connecticut, the establishment also kept dry goods, West India imports and finest of liquors. The first flour offered for sale at a store in Keene came from their shop in 1822.

The firm also owned many houses in town, was a large owner in the old Phoenix Hotel and subscribed heavily toward building the Cheshire House. Prominent in all civic endeavors, they helped build Keene Academy, and Timothy gave the blinds and bell for it. It is said that anyone who had an extra dollar to save took it to Aaron and Timothy Hall for investment with their promise to pay with 6% interest annually.

Ann E. Hall, only daughter of Timothy, taught a private school for young ladies in her father's house. She later married Lieutenant-Governor Hayden of Massachusetts.

The house eventually became the residence of Horatio Colony, and his heirs continued occupancy there until recent years.

Colony, a lawyer and manufacturer, was born in Keene in 1835, the youngest of seven children of Josiah and Hannah Taylor Colony. Educated at Keene Academy, he went to law school and was admitted to the bar in the states of New Hampshire and New York. He practiced in Keene until 1867, then turned to the wool manufactory of Faulkner and Colony. He became president and treasurer at its incorporation and was later at the head of the Cheshire Mills in Harrisville.

He was elected Keene's first mayor for two terms when it became a city in 1874.

On December 10, 1863 he married Emeline Eames Joslin of Keene. Their children were John J., Charles T. and Kate. Colony was killed in an auto accident at the Goshen Bridge in 1917, aged 81.

John J. Colony, eldest son of Horatio and Emeline, married Charlotte Whitcomb in 1907 and they continued occupancy of the house. Colony was treasurer of the Harrisville Woolen Mills.

Beautifully kept lawns and gardens and a splendid fanlight of 13 stars at the front entrance were distinguishing features of the property. The fanlight has recently been removed to the Harrisville home of Colony's grandson, John Colony III.

39. MICHAEL METCALF HOUSE: 16 Bradford Road *Circa 1820*

The home of Mr. and Mrs. Ross Warren, 16 Bradford Road, originated as the Michael Metcalf place in 1820 and was continued as the Spaulding Farm from 1862 until 1923. It then became the summer home of writer Sewell Ford for 20 years before being purchased in 1948 by the present owners.

"Valley Farm-1820" is inscribed on a rock in the front yard.

In 1772 Benjamin Archer sold the land to Ensign Michael Met-

calf, who had built a house about 1768 on the east side of the road. Ensign Metcalf was killed in the Battle of Bennington. His son, Michael, built the brick house of locally made bricks in 1820. It was an eight room structure. A sizable wooden ell was added in 1889 according to a *Sentinel* news item. In later years the roof line was altered and raised two more stories to its present four-story height. The large dooryard barn was removed about 1924.

Michael Metcalf, builder of the house, died in 1847 and his son, Michael, continued the property until his death in 1851. The house was bought the next year by Ashley Spaulding of Sullivan.

Three generations of the Spaulding family occupied the house: Ashley until 1885, Henry O. until 1903 and D. Minot until 1923.

The house gained central heating after 128 years. Many of the old features of the original homestead remain.

40. JOSIAH COLONY HOUSE: 90 Castle Street *Circa 1823*

In 1823 Josiah Colony commenced construction of his homestead on West Street which stands today at 90 Castle Street.

Four years after Josiah's death in 1867 at the age of 76, his son, Alfred T. Colony, moved the house to its present location and built on its site his Victorian mansion, now numbered 191 West Street.

An existing photo of the house, taken prior to 1871, shows its grandeur, set behind a white picketed fence and multitudinous shrubs.

Born in Keene in 1791, Josiah Colony was the eldest son of Timothy and Sarah Colony. He early displayed an aptitude for mechanics and in early manhood was employed in running the saw and gristmills where he and Francis Faulkner later established the Faulkner and Colony Woolen Mills.

Josiah was 24 years of age when he formed his partnership with Faulkner in 1815. Together they bought all the mills and water privileges where Colony had formerly been employed.

Two years later he married Hannah Taylor of Stoddard. Seven children were born between 1819 and 1835.

Hannah Colony died June 30, 1846. After seven years as widower Josiah married Mrs. Jane Buell, by whom he had one son, Josiah, born in 1855. A public-spirited businessman, one of the incorporators of St. James' Episcopal Church, he was also a member of the Keene Thief Detecting Society. In 1850 he was one of the 12 highest taxpayers in town.

41. MILL HOUSE: 210 West Street *Circa 1825*

The brick house on the east side of the old Faulkner and Colony mill has been closely associated with mill history since 1825.

The house has been fully renovated for business and family occupancy since it was bought by Barker Realty Company, Inc. in 1954. Prior to Sheldon Barker's ownership, it had been utilized as a three-apartment dwelling, following many years' occupancy as a boarding house for mill personnel.

Mention of the brick house first appeared in August of 1838 when a report of a fire destroying the factory, dye house and other buildings said that the "valuable brick house on the east was saved."

42. HANDERSON HOUSE : 124 Washin^gton Street *Circa 1827*

Abel Wilder, called the "happiest man in town", settled in Keene near the close of the 18th century, kept a wheelwright shop, was jail keeper, and built several houses on what was then called Prison Street.

The one numbered 124 Washington Street was built by Wilder and bought in 1833 by Phineas Handerson, the first to practice law in Chesterfield. Handerson was president of the Cheshire County bar at the time of his death in 1853.

In June 1845 Handerson's daughter, Ellen, married Dr. William H. Thayer of Boston. Several years later they came to Keene with their young son, Abbott, and for a time resided in Mrs. Thayer's girlhood home. The young son, Abbott Handerson Thayer, later became the distinguished painter who discovered protective coloration of the animal kingdom which led to the use of military camouflage.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Randall-Burr are present owners.

43. LEWIS J. COLONY HOUSE: 70 Court Street *Circa 1828*

The Keene Senior Citizens' Center was known for many years as the "house with the front door on the back side." The house was built in 1828 by John Prentiss, founder of the *New Hampshire Sentinel*. In his autobiography he wrote: "**In** 1828 I built the brick house south of my own premises . . ." Originally the front door was on the north side of the house.

Prentiss, prominent in Unitarian affairs, lived next door in a two-story white colonial structure built in 1808. His home was razed in 1877 to make room for the brick house now owned by George E. Holbrook.

The house was occupied as a Unitarian parsonage for the Rev.

Thomas R. Sullivan until 1835. It was later occupied by John W. Prentiss, who succeeded his father in the *New Hampshire Sentinel* and died August 17, 1863. Prentiss had married Elinor May, an English girl whose father was bookseller, publisher and writer.

In 1867 Lewis J. Colony sent a telegram to his wife, who was visiting her parents in Walpole, to tell her he had bought the house. Ownership continued for 20 years.

Colony was the eldest son of Joshua and Frances Colony. Born in Keene in 1832, he married Dr. Jessenia Kittredge's daughter, Sarah, in 1858. A few years later he purchased the Munson cotton mill at Munsonville and remained in business there until 1871. He was also part owner of several stores in Keene.

Colony was one of the first manufacturers to introduce large office chairs and rockers. He engaged in making splint-seat chairs at Munsonville soon after 1877 and erected a paint shop and storehouse on Wilson Street in Keene where the products were brought, finished and shipped.

Ormand Colony, then the Fred E. and Fanny (Colony) Barrett family from 1895 to 1936, followed Lewis Colony ownership. It then became the home of Dr. Fred A. Almquist, who sold it in late 1961 to Emile Legere, who, in turn, sold it to the Keene Senior Citizens, Inc., in the spring of 1962. The purchase and enlargement of the house by this organization was made possible through a donation of \$45,000 by the Kingsbury Trust Fund.

44. THE STEWART HOUSE: 103 School Street *Circa 1828*

Land on which the Stewart house stands is a part of 100 acres drawn by Morse, October 26, 1737, his original property now comprising what is the most compact part of the city. The Morse "pitch" (or land) is shown by dotted lines on the 1850 map of Keene.

In 1806 a large tract of land on the west side of the 3rd New Hampshire Turnpike was owned by Jehoshaphat Grout. In May he sold John Prentiss one-and-one-fourth acres of it, with frontage on both the turnpike (Court Street) and the "old road up the river," now School Street.

Prentiss erected a homestead in 1808 on the turnpike frontage and occupied it until his death in 1873. In 1828 he erected a small one-and-a-half story brick dwelling house with four rooms on the first floor and three above. It was located at the rear of his property, now numbered 103 School Street.

A local newspaper in April of 1831 advertised the house for sale

or rent. With it came a barn, shed, and "excellent" well of water and small garden.

It appears that Prentiss found a tenant for his brick house for about six years. Then, in January of 1837, another advertisement appeared offering "the brick house built thoroughly in 1828" for sale or rent.

The first conveyance of the property was to William Willson from John Prentiss in September of 1837. Willson was a noted mechanic who built the covered bridge on West Street across the Ashuelot, the steeple of the First Congregational Church at its remodeling in 1828-29, and made what was perhaps the first pipe organ in Keene for Miss Fiske's school for young ladies.

In 1848 Willson sold the property to Asa and Elmira H. White. For six years they occupied the house before offering it for sale "at a price that cannot fail to suit one wishing to purchase." Said house was in good repair, with good water and in a pleasant location.

After selling the property to Roswell and Rhoda Weeks, the Whites went to Kansas where their home there was destroyed and they were driven from the Territory by the "Border Ruffians". In 1856 White returned to Keene and addressed the citizens at the Town Hall with a "plain, unvarnished account of his wrongs and sufferings while in the Territory."

Roswell Weeks, at the time he bought the house, was a member of the firm of Norwood and Weeks, which sold stoves and manufactured tinware.

Frank Weeks, only son of Roswell and Rhoda, continued at the house with his wife, Julia. A wooden addition at the rear was converted into a "cottage" for his mother.

In 1921 Julia D. Weeks sold the house to James E. Stewart and family who came to Keene from Canada. His daughter, Miss Hilda Stewart, was owner and occupant until 1967.

45. THE BINNEY HOUSE: Avon Street *Circa 1828*

A small brick house, built in 1828 by John Walker Binney for his wife, Susan, now provides quarters for the sales executive offices of Sprague and Carleton, Inc. on Avon Street.

In February, 1828, John W. Binney of New Ipswich bought 15 acres of low land on the road "leading from Main Street in Keene to Ash Swamp" on the west side of the Ashuelot River. Later the house was numbered 424 West Street.

Keene's first directory in 1831 listed John Binney (misspelled

as "Benny" **in** the directory) as a "boxmaker" in Ash Swamp.

Binney was appointed as the 11th deacon of the Congregational Church in 1832. After that his brick house was commonly called the "Deacon Binney Place." There he lived for 34 years.

In 1872, 10 years after the deacon's death, his wife sold the property to Charles Faulkner and Josiah Colony. It was occupied by various tenants. Mrs. Clara A. Holbrook later owned the house and about 1910 removed it to Norton Street near the railroad tracks.

Sprague and Carleton Inc. bought the house in 1940 and moved it in 1951 to its present location opposite the company factory.

The house was restored and from that time until November 1963 it was furnished with authentic stylings of traditional pieces of Sprague and Carleton's rock maple furniture and opened to visitors during the summer months.

46. STATIA FARM: Silent Way *Circa 1833*

The old brick house, remodeled in 1966 by Mr. and Mrs. Richard F. Walsh, was built in 1833 at the end of Silent Way by Daniel and Sally Putnam Thompson.

Daniel drew the brick and materials for its construction with his ox team during the winter of 1832-33. He paid \$3 per thousand for the locally made brick.

Located near the first station in the survey of Upper Ashuelot in 1733 and the site where seven proprietors camped overnight on the banks of the Ashuelot River in September of 1734, the property has long been known as Statia Farm or Station Farm.

The road to the farm was officially laid out in 1838 as the Daniel Thompson Road, although the locale had been cleared and settled as early as 1816 by John Lebourveau and even then called Statia Farm.

Lebourveau saw service with Keene patriots in the Revolutionary War struggle.

Daniel Thompson was son of Samuel Thompson who had come to Keene soon after 1782. One of eight children, he bought the Statia Farm property about 1823 where he spent the remainder of his life. For many years it was a self-sustaining farm.

On October 24, 1851, members of the Forest Tree Society transplanted seven elms from the Statia Farm to "ornament" the Common.

Daniel Thompson died on August 23, 1876, aged 82 years. His son, Benjamin Franklin Thompson, born in the house on February 25, 1841, carried on the farmstead for many years.



Blake House

47. **BLAKE HOUSE:** Corner of Winchester & Main Street *Circa 1833*

The brick east end of the Blake House was built in 1833 by Captain Abel Blake, who for many years was one of the highest taxpayers in Keene. The house stands on the site of the first permanent log cabin built in Upper Ashuelot by Nathan Blake.

Isaac Gray conveyed to Nathan Blake the present Blake property and other land in 1743 for 60 pounds, old tenor. The old deed is very handsomely written in a fine hand.

Milton Blake was the last of the family to live in the house before it passed from private ownership and was deeded to the state in 1926 for use as a home economics department building for the college.

48. **BATCHELDER HOUSE:** 85 Washington Street *Circa 1833*

In 1833 great blocks of Marlborough granite were brought to Keene by ox teams under the direction of Aaron Parker. Unloaded on Washington Street at the site of Oliver Heaton's blacksmith shop (which for a time had served as a sleigh shop), the granite was used to build a handsome stone house which has been the home of Mrs. Nathaniel Batchelder since 1922.

Thomas Edwards transferred the land on which the house stands to Aaron Parker. An old deed records it was bounded on the north by the "burying ground" and on the south by "the Lane" (now Taylor Street) which went down to Beaver Brook.



Batchelder House

Each of the massive granite blocks is 17 inches thick, which gives deep recessed window sills inside the house. Hand wedge markings on the blocks are visible and show the early method of stone cutting.

A Palladian window, triple with the taller arched middle window, sets above a gracious entrance and gives a well-lighted upper hallway. Seven fireplaces remain from an original eight.

A curiosity of the house is the secret closet under the attic stairs, entered from within another closet.

Thomas L. Leverett bought the property in 1836 and sold to John H. Fuller in 1839. An extensive property owner, who was responsible for draining and developing land for house lots between Court and Washington Streets above Cross Street, he was the first president of the Ashuelot Railroad, as well as of the Keene Five Cents Savings Bank and the Winchester National Bank.

In 1856 Dr. Thomas Kittredge bought the house. He was a founder of St. James' Parish.

The mayor of Keene, Asa Smith, had occupied the house for three years at the time of his election to that office in 1887. About this time the house reputedly began to be haunted. Its location beside the old burying ground partially accounts for the ghost stories.

Smith's estate sold the house to Bertram Ellis in 1902. There were three years of occupancy by tenants prior to ownership by Nathaniel Batchelder in 1922. The house was then in a state of disrepair, and remodeling enhanced the original beauty of the place.

49. "JAILER'S HOUSE": **82 Washington Street** *Circa 1833*

In 1833 a "handsome brick jailer's house" was built adjoining Keene's stone prison on Prison Street, now Washington Street, at the corner of Mechanic Street.

The house became a private home when the old prison was taken down in May of 1884, and it is now the chiropractic office and home of Dr. and Mrs. Clifford W. Bullock.

50. KEENE ACADEMY BOARDING HOUSE: **44 Court Street** *Circa 1837*

Abijah Wilder Jr. built the brick house at the corner of Court and Summer Streets for a boarding house for the Academy students. Keene Academy opened in the spring of 1837 under the auspices of a committee of the First Congregational Society. The Academy building stood on the lot now occupied by the Winter Street parking lot.



Stoneholm

51. STONEHOLM: **SUMMIT Road** *Circa 1844*

The house was built in 1844 by Elijah Blake, the third genera-

tion of Blakes to have continued occupancy of the land settled by Dr. Obadiah Blake, an early inhabitant of Upper Ashuelot and its second doctor.

Dr. Blake was followed by his son, Obadiah Jr., who was also a doctor. When the elder Dr. Blake died in 1810, 92 years of age, he willed Obadiah Jr. his saddlebags, vials and lancet.

Elijah and Mary (Baker) Blake continued occupancy and in 1844 replaced the former homestead with the present stone structure. The walls were laid up with stone blocks, drawn to the site from the Marlborough granite quarries by ox teams over a period of two or more winters. **In** 1876 the house and surrounding 150 acres were assessed for \$9,000.

Justin S. Blake continued ownership until his death on July 11, 1900. His daughter, Mrs. Walter Pitcher, was the last of the Blake descendants to live there.

Henry and Julia Pearl Barrett bought the house about 1919. For some years rooms and "home cooking" were available to summer tourists. Their son, Evans Barrett, and his wife, Dorothy, have made it their home since 1950.

52. MASONIC TEMPLE: 91 West Street *Circa 1859*

Erected by Henry Pond as a private residence in 1859, the house was conveyed to the Keene Order of Free and Accepted Masons by Mrs. Herbert Pond in 1918.

Two generations of the Pond family previously occupied the house, which was built on a lot that was formerly the garden of Rev. Aaron Hall's parsonage. It is said that Judge Joel Parker set out many rare plants and shrubs there.

Henry Pond, born in Keene in 1818, was the fourth son of Philaster and Rhoda Pond. He became a successful Keene businessman. In 1842 he married Amelia Willson, and after her death he took her younger sister, Harriet, for his second wife. A son, Herbert, was born in August of 1848.

In January of 1866 the *Sentinel* reported a "Melancholy Occurrence": the 48-year-old Henry Pond was found, a victim of suicide by hanging, in an unoccupied house in Roxbury, Mass. He had been boarding with his wife and son in Boston for several weeks.

Herbert Pond was then 18 years old. He returned to Keene and took up residence at the homestead after studying at a business college in New York City. In 1897 he married Mrs. Mertie Eliza Tyler.

Old photos of the house show an elegant wooden fence sur-

rounding the property. The mansard roof was once topped by an ornate railing.

53. HALE HOUSE: Main Street, corner of Winchester St. *Circa 1860*

Hale House, the administrative building at Keene State College, was originally built in 1860 for Ex-Governor Samuel Dinsmoor. It was later the home of Governor Samuel W. Hale. In 1909 it was presented to the state by the City of Keene when the Normal School was established.

An item in the *Sentinel* of July 12, 1860 states: "Buss and Woodward have just commenced on a new dwelling for Governor Dinsmoor on Main St. This will be one of the most elegant homes in the county."

Samuel Dinsmoor, called "the younger Governor Dinsmoor" was the son of Samuel and Mary Dinsmoor and was born in Keene in 1799. In 1849 he was elected governor of New Hampshire and, like his father, served three consecutive terms.

After Dinsmoor's death in 1869, his home on Main Street was bought by Samuel W. Hale, who had come to Keene in 1859 from Dublin, N.H. With Stephen Osborne he opened a chair manufactory which evolved into the South Keene Chair Company. He was active in many business enterprises, including railroading and banking, and promoting gold and silver mining properties. He was also instrumental in the construction of the Manchester and Keene Railroad.

Representative to the legislature in 1866-67 and a member of



Hale House

the governor's council in 1869-70, Hale became governor of the state in 1883.

Hale House, as it is called, was the governor's home until his death in 1891, aged 69. The house was richly furnished and its library one of the largest in the county. Grape raising was carried on to a large extent; the conservatory and grapery were a great attraction.

54. HENRY COLONY HOUSE (Now Keene Public Library) :

79 West Street Circa 1869

The home of Henry Colony at 79 West Street was built in 1869



Julia Hall's School (later site of Colony House and Keene Public Library)

and given to the city for a public library building by Edward C. Thayer in 1898.

The home of Rev. Aaron Hall, minister of the First Congregational Church for nearly 40 years, occupied the site from 1783. The roof of Rev. Hall's house was raised on a Friday by special order of the parson in an effort to discourage superstition.

Every winter parishioners sledged 40 to 50 cords of wood to the yard as "donation" to Rev. Hall's comfort. The Social Library Society, of which Rev. Hall was librarian during its early years, kept its books in his home at this time.

In September 1864 the property was sold to Henry Colony by Julia E. Hall, a granddaughter of Rev. Hall and administrator of the estate. The two-story house was taken down and its ell moved to 63 Castle Street.

The "elegant Colony residence" was then constructed in the best Victorian manner with turret, black walnut woodwork, stairway skylight, and heavy ornamentation. A ballroom was fitted up on the third floor under the mansard roof.

Henry Colony, son of Josiah and Hannah Colony, was born March 23, 1823 in Keene. He learned the carpenter's trade as a young man in Danvers, Mass., at the insistence of his father, who demanded that each of his sons learn a trade.

Returning to Keene he joined Timothy and Joshua D. Colony in the manufacture of window glass and operated the old Perry store for about three years.

November 24, 1848 he married Mary L. Hayward. The couple had five children.

Colony became treasurer and active business manager of the Cheshire Mills in Harrisville and lived there until construction of his West Street residence in Keene.

In 1882 he helped establish a large Colony Brothers flannel



Henry Colony House (Keene Public Library)

mill at Wilton with his sons, Fred, Frank and James. He was in Wilton at the time of his sudden death July 18, 1884, having that same morning been in Keene, where many persons saw him about the Square and conversed with him. His wife, a semi-invalid for some years, had died three months earlier after a short illness.

Colony's funeral took place at his home, attended by many friends and relatives. He was one of Keene's most influential and wealthy citizens.

At the time of the dedicatory exercises of the Soldiers' Monument in Central Square in 1871, visiting dignitaries were entertained at Colony's "new house". During the evening the house and General Griffin's home (where the post office on West Street stands) were serenaded by the Keene Military Band.

The remodeled homestead was dedicated as the Keene Public Library in February 1899.

55. THE COLONY HOUSE: 191 West Street *Circa 1871-2*

The Laurence Colony house stands as the finest Victorian architectural landmark in the city. No expense was spared in its construction.

Exterior features are typical of the period—ornate trim, a high tower, mansard roof and great, round-headed windows. Sometimes mistakenly called the "old" Colony house, it is actually the "youngest" of the Colony estates.

The site was first occupied by Josiah Colony, who built his house there in 1823. It was bought and moved to the corner of Castle Street in 1871 by his son, Alfred, and construction was begun on the larger, more elegant house, on the same site. It took a large crew of workmen a year to complete it.

In 1873 Mr. and Mrs. Alfred T. Colony, with their three sons, Alfred Jr., Harry and the one-year-old Laurence, moved into their new home with its "20 or more" rooms.

Three years later Colony died unexpectedly. In May of 1880 his widow, Fanny, died at the age of 47.

In September 1895 Laura May Maxham married Laurence D. Colony and the following year he bought his brothers' shares of the home place and took up residence there.

The couple had one son, Laurence Jr., who is the present owner.

A semi-curved free-flowing staircase, perhaps the most magnificent feature of the interior, ascends to the third floor. The light shaft in the stairway area extends to the roof where it is terminated by a stained glass skylight.

Much of the interior woodwork is black walnut. The drawing room has a delicately carved Carrara mantel. There is also a crystal chandelier, originally gas lit, and inside folding blinds at full length windows.

A black marble fireplace in the library came from the Josiah Colony house.

Impressive 12 foot high ceilings, massive doors, carved marble fireplaces, built-in wall speaking tubes to summon servants, a billiard room, and mammoth rooms and closets all illustrate and perpetuate a way of life few have ever known or remember.



Charles E. Joslin House

56. **CHARLES E. JOSLIN HOUSE:** 150 Court Street *Circa 1889*

In 1889 Charles E. Joslin bought from Horatio G. Parker of Boston the Old Parker Place at 150 Court Street for \$8500. He razed the old house, which had been built in the early 1800's by Luther Smith, clockmaker, and erected a "thoroughly modern and elegant" Victorian home on the site.

The architect was Frank Smith of Boston and the builder was

Cassius M. White of Keene. There are 14 rooms, including four bedrooms on the third floor, and seven fireplaces, including one in the front hallway. Interior design is Victorianism at its best.

Charles E. Joslin and his wife, Julia Ann Manning, had one son, Edward Herbert, born in 1875. Joslin was actively interested in the Keene Light Guards and Masonry and was treasurer of the Cheshire Chair Company, which manufactured "cane-seated chairs and splint reed-seated and chestnut wood seats." He was in partnership with his father, Edwin Joslin, and George W. McDuffee.

Joslin's son, Edward, and widow sold the property to Frederic A. Faulkner in 1909. It was later the home of the Philip H. Faulkner family. Owners since 1948 have been the David F. Putnams.

The earlier house on the site is pictured in Griffin's *History of Keene*. When built, it was one of the largest houses in town and one of the few on Court Street. It was owned by the Elijah Parker family until sold to Joslin in 1889. The material of the old Parker house was purchased by the Patterson brothers who used a portion of it to construct a barn.

57. ARMAND PAQUETTE HOME: Maple Acres *Circa 1960*

Representative of the modern homes in present-day Keene is one built in 1960 by Armand Paquette, president of Pako Homes, Inc.

Taking advantage of a pine-shaded sloping lot, the Paquette home is built on four levels, a satisfying blend of modern architecture and site. Overall, the house measures 180 feet; the 60-foot sides enclose 2400 square feet of living space. Seven of the nine rooms are multi-angular. Furnishing problems were solved by using several custom-designed built-in pieces.

The exterior is redwood with cobblestones (from Railroad Square in Keene) and has large window areas, roof overhang and an abundance of angular lines.

58. ALL-ELECTRIC HOME : Marguerite Avenue *Circa 1961*

Keene's first all-electric home was built on Marguerite Avenue in 1961 by building contractor James Mugford. There were then 70 all-electric homes in New Hampshire and about 700,000 nationally.



Armand Paquette House