

## V.

### Pennycook Plantation Becomes the Town of Rumford.

Confident in the progress made at Pennycook, the Proprietors petitioned the General Court for the right of self-government as enjoyed under "the Priviledges of other Towns within this Province:" that is, Massachusetts Bay. The official reply declared Pennycook "to lye in the County of Essex" and directed the inhabitants to assemble themselves at their Meeting-house with Henry Rolfe as Moderator, for the election of their first town officers.

This historic town meeting was held March 29, 1731 and its records were kept by Benjamin Rolfe, son of the Moderator. Young Rolfe was just of age, a graduate of Harvard college and a resident now upon his father's claim in Pennycook. Appointed as clerk at this first town meeting, he began a long career as one of the town's most prosperous and public-spirited citizens. Another new name in the record is that of Stephen Farrington of Andover who became a Proprietor by purchase of the right of Thomas Blanchard in 1734. Before that date he married Abraham Bradley's daughter, Apphia, and they made their home on the south corner of the highway known today as Pleasant St. At this first town meeting, Farrington was elected tax collector and the assessors chosen were Jeremiah Stickney, Nathaniel Abbot and John Chandler, Jr. (Lieut.)

Two matters of business seem quaint to a later generation: the vote that hogs should run at large and plan for the town pound on Pond hill with Nathaniel Abbot as pound keeper. All stray domestic animals were driven into the pound and kept there until claimed by their owners. Mr. Abbot's home was conveniently near at the foot of present Pearl St. The most significant piece of business was left for an adjourned meeting held two days later, when it was "Voted that ten pounds be levied on the grantees to be laid out for the instruction of the children in reading &c" and "that school be kept in two of the most convenient parts of the township." Such concern indicates the arrival of more women and

children as the spring of 1731 opened. No details of these pioneer schools are to be found, but it is assumed that they were held in two of the more roomy cabins.

Long ago an ancient text book was given to the N.H. Historical Society by a descendent of the pioneers. Its title was-"The Compleat English Scholliar by E. Young Schoolmaster in London. 1704." On the fly leaf was the name of its owner, "Hannah Abbot". Now Hannah was, in 1731, a spinster just past thirty and, being an Abbot, she doubtless shared the scholarly tastes of her family. Two of her brothers were early settlers; and we may surmise that she, perhaps, taught this first school in the new town. Brother Edward was living near the foot of present Montgomery St. and brother George then or a few months later, purchased the right of Samuel Grainger whose claim he had developed. His house lot was No. 22, Range 2 at the foot of present Fayette St.

In anticipation of future meetings, this first town meeting made provision by which ten Proprietors might call a session by posting a notice with their signatures, two weeks in advance. There was a delay on part of the General Court in granting the full rights to the town so that Henry Rolfe from his home in Newbury, renewed the petition in behalf of the Proprietors. At length an act of incorporation under the name of Rumford was passed by the General Court and the settlers became fully self-governing under the laws of Massachusetts Bay. The first official record of the town of Rumford, bears date of June 3, 1734 and thereafter all legal documents bore that name; but the settlers and their neighbors still clung to the old name "Pennycook" for years to come. The origin of the name "Rumford" is unknown.

In 1731, preliminary to the grant of self-government, the General Court had ordered a final survey of Pennycook Plantation to ascertain whether the grantees had met the conditions of the grant. Dated October, 1731 the report shows that nearly seventy per cent of the one

hundred Proprietors had met their obligation and had houses built and occupied. Of the remainder, seventeen had houses up but not completed while a few had no houses, but their fields were ploughed and other conditions were fulfilled. Only five grantees forfeited their shares by failure, and such failure may have resulted from the process of transfer of Proprietor rights. Each Proprietor began on an equal basis as far as ownership of land was concerned, but this equality was short lived. Already, before the 1731 survey was made, the more enterprising men had begun to acquire additional land by purchase from those pioneers who were willing to sell, with the result that the actual number of land owners became less than one hundred.

Bouton's History gives a complete list of the original Proprietors with the lots which they drew, but so few of these men became permanent settlers in Pennycook that their names mean little in this story of the making of Concord. Some of these Proprietors turned over their claims to sons or nephews or other relatives: some sold to purchasers approved by vote of the Proprietors, while others left the development of shares to men hired for the purpose. Among the inhabitants of 1731 was one negro, probably a slave of John Peabody in whose house he lived, and from that time on, slaves both blacks and Indians were fairly common in town.

There is an old deed of transfer of an original right dated Dec. 28, 1731 in which Proprietor Nathaniel Abbot of Andover, gave to his son, Nathaniel, Jr. (b. 1696) - "For & in consideration of y<sup>e</sup> Love and Good will I bear to my Dutiful Son, Nathaniel Abbot, Resident at y<sup>e</sup> Plantation called Pennicook \*\*\*\*\*all right and title and interest I obtained in y<sup>e</sup> township of Pennicook \*\*\*\*\* Houselot No. 12 Second Range with the Dwelling House now standing." The survey record of October 1731 shows that Nathaniel, Jr. and his wife, Penelope Ballard, and the first three of their large family of children were already living in the log house near the foot of Pearl St.

The records for the years 1731-49 show the surnames of not more than twenty of the original Proprietors and this indicates the extent of transfer of shares. A few of the original Proprietors definitely settled in Pennycook: John Ayer (for a short time) Joseph Davis, Ebenezer Eastman, Ephraim Farnum, Joseph Hall, David Kimball, John Merrill, Dea. John Osgood, Richard Urann, Ebenezer Virgin and Isaac Walker. Among the young men who settled on grants belonging to father or uncle, were Nathaniel Abbot, Jr., David and William Barker, John Chandler, Jr. and his brother Abiel, Isaac Foster, Henry Lovejoy, Onesiphorous Page, Benjamin Rolfe, Aaron Stevens. Numerous members of the Abbot, Chandler, Eastman, Farnum, Kimball, Rolfe and Isaac Walker families joined the settlers and bought original shares as they became available. In addition to these family names there were new ones: Bradley, Carter, Chase, Farrington, Hoyt, Haseltine, Potter, Webster and West - all of whom had an active share in building a Capital for New Hampshire.

Among the lots forfeited at an early date was No. 19, Range 2 which lay on the south corner of present Capitol St. This became the homestead of Joseph Eastman, cousin of Capt. Ebenezer. He was born in Salisbury in 1692 and the Eastman genealogy lists him as an early settler in Concord. He is probably identical with that Joseph Eastman who was constable of Pennycook in 1731, signed (as Proprietor) a petition for a meeting in 1731, was selectman in 1733 and held town offices until about 1746. At that time he moved to Hopkinton where he died in 1761. He had a son, Joseph 3rd, so called to distinguish him from Capt. Ebenezer's son of the same name who was called Joseph, Jr.

Mindful of the broken mill crank and of the general need for a town blacksmith in this isolated village, inducements were offered to one, Cutting Noyes, to settle in Pennycook for a period of at least ten years. He was given fifty acres of land, ten acres of which lay on the west side of the main street near present Warren St. This lot had a wide

frontage of sixteen rods giving ample room for both home and smithy in this central location.

Encouraged by its new status as a self-governing town, Rumford pushed west into the forest wilderness in 1733, to establish a mill on Turkey river. Hitherto dependent upon Ebenezer Eastman's grist mill across the river, this plan was welcome news <sup>to</sup> townsfolk. The new mill privilege included a grant of one hundred acres of land with liberty to flow the swamp for a mill pond - the same pond around which St. Paul's School came into being more than a century later. This mill privilege was taken over by Henry Lovejoy of Andover and Barachias Farnum, the latter being active partner in the enterprise. There is no evidence that Lovejoy ever located in Rumford, but his son, Capt. Henry, came as a settler in town about 1745. A condition of the mill grant was that the grist mill should be run on Monday and Friday of each week and on additional days if the amount of grist demanded.

One of the problems of the day was the upkeep of highways. The 1726 survey provided for four roads leading westerly to the unsurveyed hills. These roads corresponded to Penacook St., Franklin St. (west of State St.), Centre St. and West St. A fifth highway was reserved at a point between present St. John's church and its rectory, and this was officially accepted in the town records of 1736, as "a Road Two Rods in Weadth on the North Side of Daniel Chase's Homestead." For a century or more this highway was maintained and its outline may still be traced by the line of elms extending from So. Main St. to So. State St. The record of this old road introduced to Concord history the name of Daniel Chase who became a Proprietor by purchase and was prominent in town affairs.

The mill on Turkey river necessitated a road from the village street for use of its patrons. Midway the street the land was ill-suited to road building for it was swampy in the low land and the hillsides beyond were full of running brooks. It was decided to open our present

Pleasant St. and it was established in 1734 as "the road which leads from ferenton's (i.e. Stephen Farrington's) to the mills". The pioneers and their sons and grandsons called it "Mill Road" and, except for minor changes, it is the present road to Millville

Originally the Mill Road ran through the grounds of the School turning south at the flag pole, to the dam where the mill stood. When settlers moved into Dunbarton, the Mill Road was continued across the dam and westerly between the two Turkey ponds. When Hopkinton was settled, a highway was opened from the Mill Road, directly past the site of the present Infirmary. A few years ago this section of Hopkinton road was re-routed to the slope of the hill some rods to the north, as a safety measure for the School. Much longer ago a change was made on Pleasant St. in town, where the original highway turned south near the present entrance to the State Hospital grounds, circled the hill, turned into So. Fruit St. and returned to its present route as Pleasant St.

One road to the mill was not enough for a village strung along our main street and a "Highway from the Meeting-house to the mills" was opened from the block house near the foot of present Chapel St. It followed a course two rods wide along present No. State St. until it reached present Washington St. Thers it touched the ten rods wide reservation for a highway made in the 1726 survey, but not as yet opened south of present Franklin St.. A portion of this reserved land eight rods wide had been allotted to Joshua Bayley, Proprietor, as part of his twenty acre lot, but a strip two rods wide was left and that was used for the new road to the mills. Continuing up Franklin St. and following present High St., it continued through what is now West Washington St., avoiding the Whale's Back, and joined the Mill Road near Fruit St.

The Whale's Back was a glacial moraine, twenty to thirty feet high, mostly of coarse gravel, which extended through the vicinity of Pine and Liberty Sts. from Washington St. on the north to Pleasant St. on the south. Most of it has been leveled off to open up building lots at the West End.

Penacook St. is an ancient highway, opened as early as 1734 when it was called "the highway leading from Bradley's to Little Pond." This was an important road because it led to one of the sections of undivided land (known as "Common land") where, by general consent, Rumford men cut such wood as they needed. Branching north from this highway was the rangeway which gave access to the Island Range west of Horseshoe pond. We now call it Rumford St. but in the old days it became a part of the Boscawen road and the highway to all settlements north of Concord.

On the intervale called Great Plain, several roads were opened and two of these are in use today - the Fan road and the Fort Eddy road next parallel on the south (now Intervale road). In 1736 the road from the main street to Hale's Point was accepted and through the years since it was maintained as Ferry St. until blocked by a new wing of Rumford Press. Three years later a new highway four rods wide was opened "from where they usually land the great boat coming from Sugar Ball (i.e. at Hale's Point) to the highway that leads to the old fort" (Fort Eddy). This road was swept away by the great freshet of 1831, during which the Merrimack so changed its course to the west that Hale's Point disappeared.

The 1726 survey provided the road around Horseshoe pond which we call Eastman St. today. From a point just south of Federal bridge a road two rods wide was reserved running west through Wattanummon's Field to join the Boscawen road near the present Prison. Charles H. Farnum (b. 1837) recalls how, when a youth, he cut timber with his father near Farnum's Eddy and they discovered traces of this ancient road long lost to memory. Using this road, earlier Farnums and their neighbors, the Abbots, had easy access to the ferry and to Ebenezer Eastman's grist mill.

In 1736 common land remote from the village street was surveyed and apportioned to the Proprietors in "the eighty acre division." Here the purpose of the pioneers is nearing fulfillment for it was the hope for sizable farms which had lured them to this valley. In planning these large lots it was customary to lay them out in rectangular form wherever possible, with reserved roads which gave access to each lot. Such reserved roads were called Rangeways and usually they ran parallel to the town lines. Rangeways paid little heed to hill, forest, swamp, pond or river and so, when the time came to develop them into permanent roads, it often was necessary to deviate from the original straight lines.

A few of the old Rangeways may be identified today, at least in part. Dimond road (now closed and almost obliterated) is part of a Rangeway, running from the old schoolhouse at the foot of Dimond hill, north to the top of Pine hill in old District No. 5. With very slight deviation it parallels the Concord-Hopkinton line. Silk Farm road running south from the original Dunbarton road at St. Paul's School, to the Bow line, is another Rangeway. West Main St. in Penacook is part of a Rangeway and its continuation to the south through what seems an old wood road, may still be followed (on foot) to the Bog road. Another Rangeway is the stretch of ancient highway running south from the railroad station in Penacook to the Sewall's Falls road ~~north~~ north of Beaver Meadow Golf Club.

For a number of years Col. John Wainwright had given courteous service as clerk to the Proprietors' cause and, in recognition thereof, a rectangular lot of one hundred acres of excellent land on Beaver Meadow was reserved for him in February 1735 (O.S.) Col. Wainwright never developed this tract and years later it was fenced in and claimed by the town. A century later it still went by the name of "Wainwright lot" in deeds of adjacent property. The east boundary of this lot was a Range-

way which, as early as 1734, became a part of the first road to settlements north of Rumford. This is identical with the road which leaves the D.W. Highway at the West Concord cemetery and runs north past Beaver Meadow Golf Club. It was not until 1804 that the present route of the D.W. Highway was cut in a straight line through the forest on Pine Plain—the name given by the pioneers to the section west of Beaver Meadow. Slowly the primeval forest which gave that name, has disappeared, the last remnant being cut by this generation on the site of Concord Manor.

The urge to pioneer soon brought neighbors to Rumford. As early as 1729, a group of Essex County men had petitioned for a grant of land on our northern boundary but the General Court took no action. A second petition was presented by John Coffin and eighty other men of Newbury and, through the good offices of John Chandler, Proprietor of Pennycook, this petition was confirmed in 1732 and named Contoocook Plantation, later Boscawen. Chandler continued to live in Andover and was, at the time, a member of the Massachusetts Assembly. He figured in several other pioneer enterprises besides those in Pennycook and Boscawen and is listed as "Ensign John Chandler" in distinction from his son who was resident in Pennycook. For his service in behalf of the settlement at Boscawen, he was given five hundred acres of land lying along Stirrup Iron brook in the new township. He died in 1740.

Richard Hazzen of Haverhill, the first surveyor of our own town, came once more to the Merrimack valley to survey the new Contoocook Plantation, and Rumford folk eagerly awaited the time when their friends from the old home in Massachusetts should arrive to be their near neighbors. The first of these settlers arrived in 1734, travelling through Rumford and having the advantage of comfortable travel provided by the labor and money of Rumford people.

At this time a few families were settling in Canterbury under a grant from the government of New Hampshire, but the town was so slow in

growth that by 1742 only thirty families were living there. Promise of new neighbors gave hope of increased patronage for local enterprise and so Lieut. John Chandler, son of Ensign John, sought a saw mill privilege on Rattlesnake brook with "liberty to flow the great pond called "Rattlesnake pond" (Long pond).

West of the cemetery in West Concord there is a little rise of ground which has been cut away on one side for the railroad track. Tradition in the Farnum family calls this Birch Knoll and tells that Ephraim Farnum, the Proprietor, found <sup>a</sup> spring near by, built a cabin and lived in it before the main street was actually settled. Certain it is that the young man purchased from the Proprietors one hundred and fifty-five acres of land in this vicinity as early as 1730.

Ephraim Farnum had four brothers who were looking forward to settlement in our town and one of them, ~~James~~ <sup>James</sup> (listed as Varnum) was already here developing the lots of Nathaniel Barker at No. 19, Range 2, recently forfeited by Solomon Martin. It was good judgment for Ephraim to fortify the family interests by purchase of additional land thus early and shortly after he added one hundred and thirty-five acres on fertile Beaver Meadow north of Wainwright lot.

In 1731 Ephraim had a house built on his lot, No. 15, Range 1, opposite our present Court House. That year he was chosen as the second deacon of the newly organized church and until his death more than forty years later, he was commonly known as Dea. Farnum; this in spite of the fact that he resigned the office in 1746 and George Abbot was chosen to fill his place. In all probability Dea. Farnum resigned because he had moved from the village to his farm on Rattlesnake Plain, the first acres of which he purchased in 1740. He and his descendants occupied this farm for two hundred years to come. As the Indian terror settled down upon Rumford, Dea. Farnum's family took refuge in a nearby garrison and the dangerous travel conditions may have been the cause of his resignation of his office.

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An adequate highway north to the new neighbors in Contoocook Plantation was a necessity and such a road should be planned with a ferry in view across the Merrimack to Canterbury. As early as 1737 such a ferry was operating at the mouth of the Contoocook river near present Canterbury bridge and for many years, it served the towns of Rumford, Boscawen and Canterbury. The Rangeway, already described, on Beaver Meadow, was the logical route for the new road and tradition in the old families of that part of the town, declares that this was the choice. Certainly it was the most direct route to the ferry at the mouth of the Contoocook. Crossing the town line and running along the edge of the bluffs, an old road leads today direct to Boscawen Plain. The bluffs have eroded during the years and the road has lost much of its original direct line northward.

Dr. Bouton believed that the original road to Boscawen turned west from Beaver Meadow and made a great loop through Borough road and present Penacook. It was another generation before there was any settlement at the Borough or at Penacook and our forefathers were not in the habit of spending toil or money on unnecessary road building. Moreover, in ancient deeds of land on Beaver Meadow or thereabouts, the "Old Road to Boscawen" is referred to as a boundary running north and south, while Borough road runs east and west. *[Note by E.L.P.] An early description of the road to Boscawen is bounded on the south by the Plainwright lot, so Bouton in Rumford village, there was no highway connecting the main street with our State St., between present Chapel St. and Penacook St. Travel to Boscawen ordinarily left the main street just south of the Fiske house, 213 No. Main St., mounted the little rise east of Walker School and followed present Bouton St. to the highway now called Penacook St. Turning west by Abraham Bradley's house some twenty rods or more, it turned north through what is now Rumford St., avoiding the gully through which Wood's brook flows, by taking a course along the slope of Blossom Hill. Thence it followed practically \* south west. See Proprietor's Record (1735), vol. 2, p. 186.*

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 the line of the D.W.Highway to West Concord where, to avoid another deep gully, it turned up present Knight St., crossed Hutchins St. to proceed through woods. Until the 1938 hurricane destroyed the woods, its course could still be traced there. Arriving at Birch Knoll, the road turned toward Beaver Meadow, crossing the north section of the present cemetery. Tradition in both the Farnum and Abbot families tells of this ancient road, the first one north of Rumford.

Wood's brook near the entrance to Blossom Hill Cemetery, takes its name from David Wood, Proprietor, whose land lay along the brook.

With the close of the French and Indian Wars, three Abbot brothers settled on Beaver Meadow and a road was opened from the site of the present Golf Club house, which ran in a straight line to the river where Nathan Abbot's house stood a short distance above the present Sewall's Falls dam. Circling back toward the north it passed Jesse Abbot's house on our present Sewall's Falls road and then to Jabez Abbot's home which still stands on Abbot road. It is possible to find traces of this old road between the Golf Club house and the river.

In the early days when the eighty acre lots were apportioned, the intervale land from Farnum's Eddy (opposite the State Prison) north to the river bluffs beyond Beaver Meadow, was officially named Rattlesnake Plain and, as has been stated, the forest upland west of the intervale was called Pine Plain. The Boscawen road ran through heavy woods from Wood's brook clear through to the site of West Concord. Near the railroad crossing just north of the State Prison, there was a deep ravine called "the gulf". A log bridge crossed the brook in its depth but the descent was hazardous. The upland north of Beaver Meadow through which this ancient highway passed, was named Contoocook Plain.

The earliest road on the east side of the river was the Mountain road and like most of our ancient roads, it probably followed an Indian trail to the north country. This seems to be the route followed by the

pioneers to Canterbury who built their cabins and their meeting-house on the hillside in the westerly section of the township. Diverging from Mountain road directly north of the little bridge over Bowen's brook, are traces of the first road opened to the easterly section of Canterbury where the Morrills settled about 1750. The old road follows a fairly straight course toward Snow's pond, crossing the southeast corner of the Country Club and merging into the present highway directly south of the pond. Before the memory of living man this section of the Canterbury road was abandoned for the newer one (Shaker road) which parallels it on the east. Snow's pond is the only local reminder of an original Proprietor, Zerubbabel Snow, whose eighty acre lot bordered the pond.

Road building was a strain upon the resources of Rumford men but they did not neglect more intimate home interests on that account. They continued to provide money for school to be kept in winter and spring and, in 1734, stipulated that a master (rather than a mistress) should be employed as teacher. In 1736 the town granted fifty pounds to be paid in two annual installments, to the Minister to enable him to clear a pasture and bring it to English grass. This community of farmers took pride in the fact that their Minister was a practical farmer as well as a college bred theologian. The Meeting-house received due attention and Edward Abbot was "empowered to repair and fit up the seats" and to "make a door to the pulpit, and put up the windows."

In 1739 a real advance was made in education, when the town voted to hold school from October to April inclusive. Perhaps this was due to the influence of schoolmaster James Scales who had been in town the past two years. Graduating from Harvard college in 1733, Mr. Scales and his bride came to Rumford and joined the church July 5, 1737, upon recommendation from the church in Boxford, Mass. In recognition of his standing in the community two years later, he was given permission "to build a pew in one half of the hindermost seat at the west end of the

meeting-house, that is next to the window." Pews were evidently an innovation in the Meeting-house and the personal property of those privileged to construct them. When we realize the cold drafts in a log building which, if heated at all, had only a fireplace, a high box pew sounds most desirable.

Mr. Scales was a man of parts, an ambitious student who found time outside his teaching, to prepare himself for the ministry and to study law and medicine. In 1742 he left Rumford for Canterbury where he was licensed to preach and where he served as well, in the office of town clerk and justice of the peace. From Canterbury he moved to Hopkinton and was ordained first minister of the church in 1757. While living in Hopkinton, he took up a claim in the new town of Henniker and built a cabin on Foster hill, thus establishing himself as an original Proprietor. Rev. James Scales is buried in the old cemetery on Putney hill, Hopkinton, near the site of his church.

Having overcome the first stress for food, shelter, highways and a school, the minds of Rumford men turned to matters political. Proprietor Henry Rolfe of Newbury was authorized "to use proper means to get the County of Essex divided into Counties." Apparently this was the result of the annual agitation at town meeting over the question of sending a representative to the Great and General Court in Massachusetts, but such objective was not to be attained.

Faith and courage, toil and thrift, had won a measure of the prosperity of which Rumford dreamed, but security was still in the far future. Indian alarms were so frequent in 1739 that the town voted to build "a good and sufficient garrison" around the Minister's new house and granted five pounds to Barachias Farnum to build a flanker to defend his mills on Turkey river. This grant was with the proviso that Farnum "give security to the town that in case he shall not keep a garrison at his dwelling house, the town shall have liberty to take

said flanker and convert it to their use." This indicates that settlers had arrived in the neighborhood of Turkey river mills and that a garrison was deemed necessary for the families so remote from the village street.

Additional reason for insecurity was the revival of the old boundary dispute between New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Conditions in the New Hampshire government were so unsettled and the Indian danger so threatening that the two Provinces agreed that Gov. Belcher of Massachusetts should act as governor of New Hampshire. Rumford being nominally a town in Essex County, Massachusetts, there was no assurance that this arrangement would secure her rights, especially since Lieut. Gov. Dunbar of New Hampshire and a majority of the Council and House of Representatives were relentless in opposition to the claim of Massachusetts to territory in the central Merrimack valley.

Appeal to His Majesty, King George II, brought a royal order for a commission to adjust the conflicting claims and the first session of this commission was held with pomp and ceremony at Hampton, during the summer of 1737. Benjamin Rolfe of Rumford was appointed one of the clerks for the meeting. The Assemblies of the two Provinces sat, one at Salisbury, the other at Hampton Falls and there, five miles apart, the question so vital to Rumford and to other Massachusetts settlements within the disputed territory, was argued. Gov. Belcher professed to be neutral, and during his official attendance at the conference, he made a three days trip into the Merrimack valley, coming no nearer Rumford than Skeag (Amoskeag). In spite of much discussion and showy military escort attending the governor, in spite of the two Assemblies in special session, nothing was accomplished and the problem was passed on to agents representing each Province with instructions to carry the question to His Majesty's Council in London.

The following burlesque appeared in print at the time:

"Dear Paddy, you ne'er did behold such a sight,  
As yesterday morning was seen before night;  
You, in all your born days saw, nor I didn't neither.  
So many fine horses and men ride together.  
At the head, the lower house trotted two in a row,  
Then all the higher house pranced after the low;  
Then the Governor's coach gallop'd on like the wind;  
And the last that came foremost were troopers behind:  
But I fear it means no good, to your neck or mine,  
For they say, 'tis to fix a right place for the line."

The agent representing New Hampshire's claim was an exceptionally able and well-informed man as to his clients' claims. The agent for Massachusetts, while perhaps able, died before action was taken and his substitutes were ill-informed, poorly prepared and at serious disadvantage. The vital question as to whether the Massachusetts charter granted by Charles I, was confirmed in every detail by the later sovereigns, William and Mary, was allowed to be smothered under a confused mass of detail presented in behalf of New Hampshire. The decision was rendered in 1740 and was entirely to the advantage of New Hampshire, in fixing the boundary line essentially as it remains today. The result was disastrous to Rumford and to every other Massachusetts settlement north of the new line.

Rumford men were intensely disquieted. Not only were affection and loyalty centered in their old home Province, but they had ample reason to fear that the government of New Hampshire might not deal justly with their town. In this year of 1740, Benjamin Rolfe was sent as their first and only representative to the General Court of Massachusetts, with the desperate hope that their cause might be renewed. They voted in town meeting to petition the King directly, "setting forth their distressed estate, and praying to be annexed to the said Massachusetts."

All to no avail for a District Act soon declared that eight towns, including Rumford, were transferred in whole or in part, from Massachusetts to New Hampshire.

In this year of disappointment and apprehension, Rumford had one piece of good fortune in the arrival in town of her first physician, Dr. Ezra Carter. A native of South Hampton, he had studied medicine with a Salisbury doctor and was twenty-one years of age. He was a great asset to Rumford for he served not only in his professional capacity but also as Justice of the Peace. So even was his temper, so excellent his judgment, that he came to be known among the townfolk as "the peacemaker." His ethical standards were those of the highest type physician and he was known for the generosity with which he served those who had little money to repay him in the lean and troubled years ahead. Genial and witty, as well as noble in spirit, he should have lived long to bless Rumford, but, as Bouton records, "his convivial habits were unfavorable to long life". He died in his prime at the age of forty-eight. His gravestone in the Old Burying Ground, bears his name "Ezra Carter, Esq." without sign of his profession.

With Dr. Carter when he came to Rumford, was his father, Ephraim Carter; a brother Daniel, arrived in town a few years later. From these three men descended many good and valuable citizens of Concord. According to family tradition, Ephraim brought with him, his youngest, an eleven year old daughter named Abigail. All the distance from South Hampton to Rumford she rode on the pillion behind her father. "When the family left South Hampton", says Bouton, "the neighbors expressed great sympathy for them; gathered around and wept, when they bid them farewell, to go so far into the wilderness." Reaching Sugar Ball hill, they chained the wheels of the cart, loaded with their goods, in order to negotiate the hill safely; transported those goods across the river in a canoe, swimming the oxen; then, fastening the bed-cords to the

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tongue of the cart, they dragged that across the river. Re-loading  
their goods, they carted them to their house which stood a short dis-  
tance south of Ferry road and nearly opposite the Meeting-house.