

Chapter XXI.  
"The Town of Concord."

At the final settlement of the Bow Controversy, it will be remembered that the new name of Concord was qualified by "Parish of Bow," an indignity which continued until the Revolution was accomplished. On January 2, 1784, an act of legislature provided that this community should "be henceforth called the town of Concord, any law, usage or custom to the contrary notwithstanding." With a new pride and self-respect, Concord entered the post-War period.

The struggle for independence had necessitated new governmental machinery for each of the colonies and New Hampshire, in 1775, adopted a temporary constitution, being the first colony so to do. In 1778 Concord's representative to the General Assembly was Col. Thomas Stickney and the town voted to instruct him "to use his influence in order that a full and free representation of the people be called as soon as conveniently may be, for the sole purpose of laying a permanent plan or system for the future government of the State." The Assembly voted to call a convention to be held in June of the same year and because of its central position midway between the coast towns and the growing settlements in the Connecticut river valley, Concord was chosen as the place of meeting. The Meeting-house was furnished up for use of the seventy-three delegates who made up the convention and with such leaders as John Langdon, Matthew Thornton, John Bell, Josiah Bartlett, Joseph Badger, Timothy Farrar and Timothy Walker, the work began. After a year's consideration the document was presented to the people who rejected it.

In 1781 a second convention was appointed and it, too, met in June at Concord. According to tradition sessions were held in the hall over "Merchant" Stevens's store which was a more suitable place for a gathering of less than a hundred men than the great Meeting-house. Possibly this occasion gave rise to the old name "Parliament Corner" long associated with this corner of our present Main St. and Pleasant St. Again the people refused ratification. There was a stubborn suspicion of such terms as

"Governor" and "Council" among New Hampshire men who could not forget the colonial meaning of such terms. At last a plan for a state "President," a legislative council and a House of Representatives found favor and in October 1783 (the year of the peace) a constitution was ratified. It took seven sessions of the convention to bring about the desired result. With amendments, it still serves our State.

It was fitting that the venerable patriot, Meshech Weare, should be elected New Hampshire's first President under the new constitution, and Concord was honored as the place of his inauguration in June 1784. It was a great ceremony. Led by fife and drums a long procession attended the President up our long main street to the Meeting-house, which was none too large for the throng attracted by this event. Members of the legislature, civil authorities of the state and other citizens of dignity and prominence marched that day and, entering the newly repaired edifice, filled its box pews to capacity. Rev. Samuel McClintock, D.D. of Greenland preached our first "Election Sermon". A great public dinner furnished by the state followed and thus New Hampshire's famous "Election" days held for many years in June, and centering about the Meeting-house at the North End, had their beginning. The last of the "Election Sermons" was preached by Rev. Nathan Lord of Hanover in 1831.

During the years immediately following the War, Concord felt the depression attendant upon the depreciation of the currency. Colonial New England had depended for its coin upon Spanish milled dollars and English minted money brought in by the flourishing trade with the West Indies but blockade of our ports during the Revolution had speedily ended that supply of gold and silver. To meet the costs of the War, Congress had issued continental bills of credit with no other guarantee than future taxation. Naturally, people hoarded their coin while worthless paper money flooded the states. Our legislature attempted to meet the situation by passing laws which made bills of credit legal tender and by declaring that if a creditor refused to accept paper money, the debt should be

declared discharged. Naturally this only increased the difficulties.

Bouton gives a vivid picture of the embarrassment of the times because of coin shortage. In 1786 John Bradley was Concord's representative in the legislature, the sessions to be held in Exeter. Mr. Bradley, well-to-do though he was, had no cash to meet the necessary expense so he sent his fourteen year old son over to Timothy Bradley's on the Mountain, to ask the loan of coin for the trip. The lad met his kinsman on the way only to be told that he, in turn, had no cash: indeed, said Timothy Bradley, although he had been promised the only dollar left on the "East Side" in payment of a debt, it had gone instead to an Andover doctor called for an emergency. But, he added, he had heard that a rich spinster in Canterbury possessed a crown and he promised to secure it if possible. The lady in question produced not only the crown but an old pistareen as well, and Judge Walker loaned additional cash so that John Bradley started for Exeter with an easy mind. At his boarding place in that town he was the only one of fourteen representatives who was able to pay in full for board and lodging at the close of the session. A dozen of his fellow members on their way home to the north country, lodged under John Bradley's hospitable roof free of charge, for there "was not a dollar amongst the whole of them."

In spite of post-war difficulties, Concord's growth was steady. In 1775 her census showed a population of 1052 and ten years later it was 1400. The next decade brought increase to 1900. During the war utmost economy in all town expense had limited school costs, but the increasing number of children now made imperative a new schoolhouse. In 1785 a new one was built on the main street at a point on the west side directly north of the Joseph Hall (Thorndike) farm. Isaac Shute (b. 1775) who lived on the Shute farm at the corner of West St., reminisced thus about that school:

"I first went to school in this building to a Master Shepard, who

was teacher there for some time. The school was small in numbers and the attendance irregular, the large boys working when work could be had to aid their struggling parents. School books were few in number. The primer and Dilworth's spelling book were all the books I first had. Samuel Butters" (born the same year as Isaac Shute)" had a Psalter, and in those days it was considered a great thing to own one. In their homes then, the people had hardly any books. My father" (John Shute)" used to stitch the almanacs together in bunches of six years each, and we read them through and through. Dea. Joseph Hall and Mr. Lot Colby together took a Boston weekly paper, and we sometimes had it at our house. I think at that time no other newspaper was seen among the Eleven Lots people. The post went once a week to Boston carrying the mail on horseback."

The North End needed a schoolhouse as urgently as did the South End and the thrifty town fathers inserted in the warrant for the 1790 town meeting an article "To see if the Town will Vote that the Pest-house should be moved into the Town Street, near the Meeting-house for the Use of a School-house." It was so voted, and, cleansed by the suns and winds of fifteen years, the strange little building was moved to a spot at the foot of our present Church St. where it stood until Fiske St. (now Bouton) was opened across its site in 1820. In this school-house the Minister was wont to visit on Saturday mornings to instruct the scholars in the catechism preparatory to Sunday meeting. It was only at much later date that religious instruction in public schools came to be feared as a breach of the separation of church and state. A school boy of that long ago time referred thus to the building: "Old low-studded, hip roofed school house that stood near the old elm tree between Main St. and the road that went up by the Old Worth Church to the left in 1818."

1790 was the year when Concord began a really ambitious project, in voting at town meeting one hundred pounds "to build a house for the accomodation of the General Court\*\*\*\* to be set on the land of Mr. W<sup>m</sup>.

Stickney near Dea<sup>n</sup> David Hall's ". It was also voted "that Capt<sup>n</sup> Reuben Kimbal be an Agent to build s<sup>d</sup> house & that the Dementions of s<sup>d</sup> house be 80 feet long & 40 wide & 15 feet post." By fall the building was completed and on November 27, the citizens of Concord had the satisfaction of holding a town meeting therein. This was the third public building in town, the first being the old log fort and the second, the Meeting-house. Thereafter all town meetings and local sessions of the General Court were held within its walls until the State House was erected for use of the legislature.

The Town House was one story in height, as shown in the drawing, and it stood on the north side of our present Court House lot. Its cupola was topped by one of Ephraim Potter's weather vanes and the community was duly proud of so imposing a structure. It contained two rooms—one for the House of Representatives in the north end, and one for the Senate in the south end. A stairway led to a small gallery for spectators and on the west side of the building there were several committee rooms.

Long years afterward this Town House, enlarged in the meantime, was discarded and moved to a site off Bridge St. where it ended its days as a humble storehouse and finally, in 1883, went up in flames. Woodbridge Odlin (b. 1810) writing his memories of the old building, recalled the days when Rev. Joshua Abbot (b. 1782) kept a Lancastrian school in the south room in 1820 and when Rev. Asa McFarland used to give Sunday evening lectures in the north room. This latter room boasted a chandelier—"two transverse sticks hung by a tow string which passed through a pulley in the wall overhead and extended down the side through another pulley, with a brick on the extreme end to overcome the force of gravitation, at the centre. The extreme arms of the chandelier contained four tallow candles in wooden sockets, which when lighted cast their lurid glare across the room. I well recall how quietly Mr. Philbrick would occasionally take his snuffers, lower the chandelier, and snuff the wicks."

About this time the following item was written into the Town Records (March 10, 1819)--"Voted that Isaac Eastman and James Hoit take Legal measures to ascertain the names of those persons who have during this meeting injured or damaged the seats, candlesticks &c. belonging to the Town House and report their names, and that said Eastman and Hoit prosecute the same." The only relic of the ancient Town House still in existence is the weathervane or "potter" which <sup>is in possession</sup> may be found in the Old Building of the N.H. Historical Society.

A new school in the central part of our growing town was urgently needed to replace the old original schoolhouse near Tanyard brook a little to the south of the new Town House. Sometime prior to 1795 such a schoolhouse was built, probably by private subscription, on the lot now occupied by Parker School. <sup>\*</sup>The lot had little to recommend it except its central location for it was low land and the building had to be placed near the line of present State St. The west end of the lot was part sand bank and part frog hole and there was stagnant water near the school all through the summer season. Approach to the new school was by way of a lane now School St.

The drawing shows the architecture of the building which "was a wonderment in its day, and people came miles to see it." Its cupola with a weather vane, its gable window with curved top, were considered remarkable indeed for a schoolhouse. Its two rooms were of unequal size: the Master's room on the east end was the larger while the small room at the west end was for the youngest pupils presided over by a Mistress. In the Master's room the boys sat on the south side and the girls on the north side facing them. The building was named Union School House until a bell purchased by popular subscription, was hung in its cupola. Thereafter it was commonly known as the Bell School House. In 1846 the building was discarded, removed to South St. and eventually torn down. On its original site was erected Concord's first High School as shown in

<sup>\*</sup> Now Mechanics Nat. Bank

our picture.

The material development of the town was important but of even greater importance was the choice of a Minister to succeed the late Rev. Timothy Walker. After some weeks of "supply," the committee in charge was directed by town vote "to procure a candidate on probation, the first opportunity." Jonathan Wilkins, native of Marlborough, Mass., was engaged and after trial, was given a "call" in December 1786. The church vote was unanimous but the town vote revealed some dissent. For this reason, Mr. Wilkins, quite properly, declined to accept. He did not leave Concord, however, for he had fallen victim to the charms of Dea. Joseph Hall's granddaughter, Sarah, whom he forthwith married. Active in all town affairs, he also served as deacon in the church from 1811 until his death in 1830.

The next choice for Minister was Rev. Israel Evans who accepted the "call" of church and town and was ordained at the Meeting-house in midsummer of 1789. Israel Evans whose portrait is copied from a miniature was born of a line of Welsh ministers and graduated from Nassau Hall (Princeton) in 1772. Licensed to preach as a Presbyterian in Philadelphia three years later, he entered the Continental Army as a chaplain in 1776 and in the next year he was assigned to a brigade of New Hampshire troops. It is probable that the contacts there made led to his ministry in Concord.

Generally known as "Washington's chaplain", Mr. Evans had the distinction of being the only army chaplain who served continuously throughout the Revolution and this fact may have influenced Washington to choose him to preach the thanksgiving sermon before the assembled French and American troops after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown. The text of that sermon was—"Hitherto/<sup>hath</sup>the Lord helped us." The chaplain knew first hand whereof he preached for his own service had included all the perils and hardships known to our patriot soldiers. He had marched to

Quebec, endured the tragic winter at Valley Forge and was with Sullivan in the awful campaign of destruction of the "Five Nations". Mentally keen, dauntless in spirit, flaming with patriotic zeal, Chaplain Evans had made inestimable contribution to the morale of the patriot army.

Transplanted to this quiet corner of New England, his spirit must have been somewhat ill at ease. The town was poverty stricken by the war: there was much to be done and little to do with. The conservative and self-contained villagers found something alien in Israel Evans's impulsive temperament while he, on his part, must have found it difficult to understand his parishioners. At the end of eight years he resigned the pastorate but he continued to live in Concord until his death in 1807. His successor was Rev. Asa McFarland whose service is so largely identified with the opening of the nineteenth century that his record will be reviewed in a later chapter.

Mr. Evans had married Huldah Kent of Charlestown, Mass.--a lady some sixteen years his junior--and she outlived her husband for many years. Their home was in the house shown in the picture, which had been built by Stephen Kimball shortly before their arrival in Concord. It stood then, and for nearly a century to come, opposite the Town House. Its original roof was <sup>of</sup> the hip roof type. The Evanses were people of distinction in this rural town and always lived with some elegance. They kept a chaise and later, a four-wheeled carriage drawn by a span of horses, and it was no uncommon thing for them to make a journey to Boston. Madam Evans was wont to tell how these trips took two days each way, and how, on one occasion, on their return darkness overtook them in Bow, and she walked ahead of the horse with her white handkerchief thrown over her bonnet so that Mr. Evans could see to keep the chaise out of the gutters.

Mr. Evans was a gentleman of fine personal appearance, of dignified and martial manner. On all public occasions he wore his tri-conerred hat. He was fond of a good horse, good music and good living. "It was his influ-

ence which persuaded the parish to introduce instrumental music into the services at the Meeting-house. This much distressed certain of the congregation who felt that fiddle and flute profaned the worship of God and who therefore felt constrained to absent themselves from the service. The flute players who initiated this venture were Master Flagg and Simeon G. Hall, dressed in small clothes with knee buckles. A violin was added later and eventually a bass viol and clarinet. Hall was the son of Dea. David Hall and Flagg was doubtless the schoolmaster.

The writer was told by a lady whose mother lived near Fryeburg, Me. many years ago, of a jingle handed down from generation to generation in that locality:

" I've been up to Pennycook  
And since God's law they have forsook,  
They have changed Pennycook to Concord  
Because they would not serve the Lord."

No one has an explanation for this indictment so one may wonder if it had anything to do with the instrumental music in the Meeting-house. Communication between Fryeburg and Concord was constant, for many families had relatives in both towns. Until the present generation, an ancient sign-board stood at the intersection of the Conway road and the highway branching to Fryeburg, bearing this inscription-"77 miles to Concord." The fact that the above ditty omits the old name of Rumford signifies little, for except in legal papers it seems never to have been commonly used. Pennycook was the town name used up to the date when the name was changed to Concord.

For fourteen years prior to his death, Rev. Israel Evans was a trustee of Dartmouth college and his will contained a bequest for a professorship at that institution-the largest money gift to the college during the nearly forty years of Dr. John Wheelock's administration. The gift has been absorbed into the present Evans Foundation. Always militant in spirit, tradition illustrates this quality in "Washington's Chaplain" by the story of his prayer before the army assembled on the eve of battle

"O Lord of Hosts, lead forth thy servants of the American army to battle, and give them the victory! Or, if this be not according to thy sovereign will, then we pray thee stand neutral, and let flesh and blood decide the issue!" Dying, this minister of God was still the patriot, and when his young successor, Asa McFarland, kneeling by his bed, prayed that "being called from this to the eternal world, he might sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven," Israel Evans interrupted: "and with Washington, too." With the death of Rev. Israel Evans sadate Concord lost one of the most colorful personalities of her history past or for the future.

The Evanses were responsible for the coming to Concord of a young man destined to become one of the town's most successful and public-spirited citizens. William Austin Kent, brother of Mrs. Evans, was born in Charlestown, Mass., the son of a sea captain who died in foreign parts when his son was only a year old. The widowed mother, hard put to keep a home for her baby and three older children, opened a small store to provide for the family. When William was ten years old the British fired Charlestown and home and store were destroyed (1775). Homeless, the family wandered away for refuge to an inland town until the red-coats evacuated Boston and then they returned to Charlestown.

At fourteen William was apprenticed to a Boston storekeeper, with a wage so meagre that when, at the age of twenty-one, he was free, he had barely money enough to pay the toll over the Charlestown bridge as he trudged home. Unable to find work he spent weeks of idleness so that he welcomed the chance to return as a journeyman to the employ of his former master. He worked long enough to accumulate a little money which he invested in a set of tools, a few boxes of tin, a barrel of sugar, a barrel of molasses, a keg of coffee and a chest of tea. With this stock in trade he sought and found transportation with one of the slow produce teams bound for Concord, the home of his sister, and here began, at the age of

twenty-four, his long and honorable business career. Although his education was only fragmentary, his mind was so keen, his sense of values so sound and his spirit of such natural dignity that he became reckoned a gentleman of culture and refinement.

Mr. Kent was happily married (1792) three years after he came to Concord, to Charlotte Mellen and for nearly thirty years they made their home a place of notable hospitality. Mr. Kent built a mansion house on the site of the present South Church and there every man of note who visited Concord was most graciously entertained. Daniel Webster declared this home to be "one of the first in all the neighborhood in which I met intelligent and cultivated society." Much changed this old house now stands at 24 S. Spring St. In 1820 Mrs. Kent died and family tradition tells that her devoted husband wrote the lines inscribed upon her tombstone in the Old Burying-ground:

" 'Twas hers to give to social life a charm,  
To make her home the residence of joy,  
To close a well spent life without alarm  
In humble hope of bliss without alloy."

The Kents had for near neighbor, Madam Evans who, after her husband's death had purchased the Farrington house where "Merchant" Stevens had lived. With her lived the aged mother who ended her days in peace and comfort, rejoicing in her son's fine character and prosperity.

On Jan. 6, 1790, there was great stir in Concord for upon that day our first local newspaper was issued. Its editor and publisher was George Hough, printer. In his early thirties, Mr. Hough came here from Windsor, Vt. where he had been associated with Alden Spooner in establishing the Vermont Journal. When he arrived in town he brought with him a well worn hand press which he set up in a small one-story building which stood within the limits of the present State House grounds. His first printing was "Christian Economy" in pamphlet form and shortly afterward he printed a sermon preached by Rev. Joseph Eckley, pastor of the Old South Church Boston, at the ordination of Rev. Israel Evans. This was the first printing

done in New Hampshire north of Exeter.

Hough's next venture was a weekly newspaper-"The Concord Herald and N.H. Intelligencer"-a title reduced later to its first three words. A copy of its second issue, dated Jan. 13, 1790, is filed at the N.H. Historical Society. Its four page sheet, fourteen by nine inches, is printed in crude type on unbleached paper, blue-gray in color and coarse in texture. The news was gathered, according to editorial announcement, "from papers from most of the printers in the U.S. from which we will extract the proceedings of Congress and other matters of entertainment and instruction." Foreign news in papers of that day was eleven weeks old from London and older still when coming from the continent of Europe. Reports from Congress were at least a month old.

In the issue of Feb. 1, 1790, appears this advertisement: "Wanted by George Hough as an Apprentice to the Printing Business. A lad about 14 or 15 years of age who is active ingenious and faithful, and who has some acquaintance with English grammar." The lad who applied may have fulfilled the other conditions but he was far from faithful, for, no later than May 9 we find a warning in the Herald against trusting the "runaway apprentice".

In 1792 the postal rates of the new nation were made uniform and the Herald of March 31 carried an advertisement from the General Post Office, Philadelphia, for bids for carrying the mail on the following N.H. post roads:

"Portsmouth by Exeter to Concord	once weekly
Concord to Plymouth and Orford to Hanover	once in two weeks
Concord by Plymouth and Orford to Hanover	once weekly
Concord to Hanover by the new road	once in two weeks."

In June of the same year, George Hough was appointed by the State to be Concord's first postmaster. By that time he had purchased the Kinsman tavern and his printing office was a little one story building with a peaked roof next south of the tavern. Probably he kept the post office in his shop. One token of Concord's first printer may be found in the ~~Old Building of the~~ N.H. Historical Society-his compositor's stick.

Specimens of his work may be found in the Concord Room at the Public Library.

In 1801, Mr. Hough purchased a half acre lot south of the new Union (Bell) Schoolhouse, described as lying "on the east side of high street so-called" (now Green St.). It is uncertain how soon he built his "mansion house" on this site, but in 1817 he sold his property on the main street. Our picture of the Hough house is from an old photograph but it shows modernization of the original building in the steep pitch roof, large windows and ornate porch. With further modernizing it served as a local church for the Christian Scientists and was later torn down to make way for the present church building of that society.

Sometime after 1798, Mr. Hough had moved his printing establishment to the site of present <sup>44 N. Main St.</sup> ~~Phoenix Block~~ and there, in a building owned by Abel Hutchins, he continued his printing and publishing until his death in 1830. One of his publications was "The Concord Observer" (1819), the first religious newspaper in New Hampshire. Associated with Mr. Hough and in the same building, was Daniel Cooledge, the bookbinder, into whose "wonderful bow window the school boys were accustomed to look to gaze upon prints of Daniel Lambert and 'Lord Timothy Dexter' in a three-cornered hat, and his little dog following in the footsteps of its illustrious predecessor."

In 1828, Mr. Hough had a part in forming an association of local mechanics in which members of various trades banded together, and he served as its first president. This gentleman was respected and beloved throughout the town, for his integrity, ability and enterprise, to which he added a sincere Christian faith. Asa McFarland, Jr. as a youth, knew Mr. Hough well and describes him thus: "Mr. Hough was small in person, deliberate in motion and a gentleman by instinct. He could no more have been made to perform an unkind act than to run a foot race. I shall never forget the deliberation and care with which, seated at our fireside, he prepared an

apple for eating, nor the moderation with which he told a story. Col. Kent often put the nub upon and raised a laugh at the conclusion of the stories of Mr. Hough, which, but for Col. Kent's assistance, would have been rather pointless."

Bouton describes him as precise and methodical to such a point that the saying became common—"Mr. Hough seems to put a comma after every step he takes." His habit of Irishisms was the delight of his friends" says the historian, "and he himself seriously explained it thus: 'I don't know how in the world it happened, unless it is because I served my time' (as apprentice) 'with a Scotchman.'" The classic of this trick of expression was the reply Mr. Hough made to a friend who inquired for his wife's health: "Mrs. Hough got up down sick, and she has been abed ever since she got up." During a century of service in this community the First Church produced among its young men, nineteen ministers of the Gospel. One of these was George H. Hough, only child of the pioneer printer. He served the Baptist denomination as a missionary in India and seems to have been the first person from Concord to enter the foreign mission field. He set up the first printing press in Burma for the famed missionary, Adoniram Judson.

George Hough soon had rivals in the newspaper field in Concord. In the fall of 1792 a small sheet called "The Mirror", fourteen by eight inches, was published "by Elijah Russell, at his office near Mr. Hannaford's tavern.\*\*\*Price five shillings per annum. One shilling to be paid yearly in money, on receiving the first paper of every year, and the remainder in country produce, at the market cash price any time in the course of the year." Mr. Russell had decided advantage over Mr. Hough in that he could write editorials and the latter could not. "The Mirror" editorials often provided the sensation of the day in their frank comment upon men and cases local.

To identify the location of the office of this newspaper, one must

first locate Hannaford's tavern. Benjamin Hannaford's first home in town had been north of Stickney garrison, but about 1790 he purchased the large lot at the corner of present Church St., extending west to State St. Since he was a joiner by trade, he probably built his house at this location and later he opened it as a tavern. For many years it stood, a large and roomy two story building with its front door in the middle and long sheds and barns stretching back almost to State St. Like many houses of that day it seems never to have had a coat of paint. One who remembers visiting there in her childhood, says the back door still had its latch string. It is recorded that the Proprietors sometimes held their meetings at Hannaford's tavern.

Next south of the tavern was the homestead of Capt. David Davis (b. 1741) extending south to present Franklin St. and west to State St. Capt. Davis's sister, Polly, had married Elijah Russell and a brother, Moses Davis, was associated with Russell in publishing "The Mirrour". What more natural than that the printing shop should be on the Davis property? "The Mirrour" was discontinued in 1799 and Russell moved to Hanover where he established the "Gazette". In 1801 we have evidence as to the location of "The Mirrour" printing shop when Capt. Davis sold a house lot off the northeast corner of his homestead to David George, Jr. This lot was next south of the tavern property and had a frontage of two rods and more on the main street, and the deed specifies "with building called a printing office thereon." Mr. George built a house on his new lot - now the building of the League of N.H. Arts & Crafts. The ell of the house is quite evidently of greater age than the rest and during repairs it showed evidence of having been originally one large room on its second floor. It still has a very large chimney suitable for a fireplace adequate for heat, and many paned windows on its north side. Mr. George, like any thrifty person of his generation, utilized the old building in his new construction.

In like manner, when Abel Hutchins retired from management of the

Phenix Hotel property in 1832, he moved a shop building to State St. and remodelled it into his new residence at 19 N. State St. It is quite possible that this shop was the one where George Hough and Daniel Coolidge carried on their business long ago.

In December 1792, the "Mirrour" announced "that a number of wealthy gentlemen of respectability have it in contemplation to erect a bridge over the Merrimack near Mr. Butters' ferry", but the project did not materialize at once. In January 1795, Esq. Peter Green headed a group of citizens who procured from the legislature the exclusive right to build the proposed bridge, and the "Proprietors of the Concord Bridge" held their first meeting the following month at Butters' tavern, when one hundred shares of stock were issued. By fall of that year, the first bridge across the Merrimack within Concord limits, was completed and opened with great rejoicing. It was a double track wooden structure with piers and abutments of wood and its cost was \$13,000. It was somewhat below the site of the modern bridge at the end of Water St. which was removed to make way for the present bridge, and a remnant of one of its original piers was still to be seen recently. In common with all bridges built by private funds at the time, Concord bridge was a toll bridge and the drawing is a faithful representation of both bridge and toll house. An old toll house—not the original one—still stands as pictured at the end of Water St.

On October 29, 1795, Concord held a festival day to open the new bridge. A procession formed to lead the way for the first public crossing of the structure, with the building committee at its head, followed by the treasurer and clerk of the corporation, Rev. Israel Evans, who was the largest share holder, ~~came next~~ <sup>with</sup> the ministers of Boscawen and Canterbury followed by the "Proprietors of the Bridge". The workmen with the master workman in the lead, had a place and lastly "the spectators in regular order." The parade marched to fife and drum played by Maj. William Duncan and Capt. David Davis, and "after spending the day in conviviality and mirth, by pas-

sing the bridge &c "the occasion closed with a dinner at Stickney tavern next north of the Town House.

Since 1785 Lemuel Tucker had owned the exclusive right to the ancient ferry to East Side, but ferrying days were nearly over and in January 1796 the success of Concord Bridge led citizens at the North End and from the East Side, to plan the Federal Bridge. The group met at the house of Ebenezer Eastman, Inn-Holder (East Side) <sup>to</sup> launch this project. Capt. Benjamin Emery was chosen moderator and Stephen Ambrose, clerk, and the corporation was formed to build the bridge at Tucker's ferry. It stood near the toll keeper's house which is still on the north bank of the river west of the present bridge (picture in Chapter XIII). Within four years the Federal Bridge was swept away by freshet and its successor suffered a like fate, so the third bridge was built on the site of the present bridge.

Toll rates established for Federal Bridge picture the traffic of the last years of the eighteenth century:

"For each foot passenger, one cent; for each horse and rider, three cents; for each horse and chaise, chair or sulky, or other riding carriage, drawn by one horse only, ten cents; for each riding sleigh, drawn by one horse, four cents, for each riding sleigh, drawn by more than one horse, six cents for each coach, chariot, phaeton, or other four-wheeled carriage for passengers, drawn by more than one horse, twenty cents; for each curriole, twelve cents; for each cart or other carriage of burthen, drawn by <sup>s</sup>two beats, ten cents, and three cents for every additional beats; for each horse or meat creature exclusive of those rode on or in carriage, two cents; for sheep and swine, one half cent each; and to each team one person shall be allowed as driver to pass free of toll.

This record of rates brings a vivid picture to the mind of the type of travel to and from East Concord in the old days. In 1798 the Proprietors made a special concession by which "all persons going to or returning from public worship on Sundays, between the hours of nine o'clock in the morning, and five in the afternoon, were allowed to pass the bridge

free from paying toll."Perhaps there were those who made the toll an excuse for staying away from meeting.

In spite of poor roads, trade between the towns north of Concord and the coast was steadily increasing. As early as 1776, Salisbury, Claremont, Lebanon, Plymouth and Hanover were prosperous, lively communities and carted their potash, pearlsh, flax-seed and other products to ports like Haverhill and Newburyport in Massachusetts which were engaged in foreign and West Indies trade. Until 1780 much of this traffic passed through Concord in slow ox-carts, since horse drawn vehicles could scarce negotiate the ill-kept highways. Even the mail was carried by post riders on horse-back until, in 1792, a stage wagon undertook to run from Concord to Haverhill, Mass. via Chester. The "Concord Herald" in January of that year advertised that "it will put up in Concord at Mr. Robert Harris's". The following year a Haverhill stage ran twice weekly to connect with the stage from that town to Boston, but travel was still slow and hazardous.

Esq. Green, earlier suspect as a Tory, seems to have redeemed himself in the eyes of the townspeople and was now active in public affairs. He promoted a turnpike road to faciliatate travel between Concord and Portsmouth, which latter town then rivalled Boston in importance. As a result the legislature in 1796 passed the necessary act of incorporation for the First N.H. Turnpike, in order "that the communication between the sea-coast and the interior parts of the State might be made much more easy, convenient and less expensive." The turnpike was thirty-six miles long from the new Federal bridge to the famous half-mile long bridge across the Piscataqua river at Durham. The present highway to Durham follows much of the old turnpike route and when it was widened some years ago, some of the original milestones were found and properly reset. Shortly after this turnpike was opened a Branch Turnpike was opened at a point on the Plains, which may still be traced toward the south-west to Concord bridge. The First N.H. Turapike was a toll road and it served the state well.

New Hampshire's most significant political event in all her history took place during these late years of the eighteenth century, and Concord was the scene. The Federal Constitution was adopted when New Hampshire as the ninth state ~~was~~ ratification, made that document the standard of the nation, on June 21, 1788. During the preceding summer, a group of statesmen whose like this land has never since known, had labored to produce a form of government which might weld thirteen proud and independent states into a United States of America. The need was most urgent: earlier efforts at confederation had proved impotent and the new nation faced chaos—financial, commercial and political. The task was most difficult for already jealousy had developed among the states and a fear that any central government must inevitably nullify states' rights. Thousands of citizens followed Sam Adams in his refusal to stand for any document which did not contain a specific "Bill of Rights" as a guarantee against official tyranny.

It was a hot summer when the convention labored for weeks in Philadelphia to draft this document. Wise old Ben Franklin suffered physically during those sessions, but he lent to them both philosophy and humor as differences of opinion arose. George Washington as presiding officer, seldom spoke in debate, but his austere dignity and dispassionate justice held the delegates together during those trying weeks. In one of his rare utterances, at a time when the outlook was particularly dark, he spoke a challenge prophetic of the final result of the convention:

"Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest may repair: the event is in the hand of God."

Would that this generation were both wise and honest enough to hold inviolate the great document bequeathed to us by this convention.

According to the provision made in the draft, nine of the thirteen states must ratify the Constitution before it could become the fundamental law of the land. Ratification was slow and difficult and when New

Hampshire called her convention at Exeter on February 13, 1788, the entire nation waited and listened. Eight states had ratified: Would New Hampshire be the ninth? For ten days the delegates debated and then, fearing lest an immediate vote would bring rejection, the delegates favorable to adoption succeeded in carrying a motion to adjourn to meet in Concord the following June. The adjourned session was held in the historic Meeting-house and there the Constitution was ratified by a vote of fifty-seven to forty-seven.

The news from New Hampshire brought relief and joy to all those citizens of the new nation who built their hope for the future upon this Federal Union. In the files of the N.H. Historical Society there is a copy of the "N.H. Gazette", the only newspaper then printed in our state. Under date, June 26, 1788, it contains a full account of the celebration of this event at Portsmouth and the article is headed "The Ninth and Sufficient Pillar Raised." The Salem, Mass. "Mercury" expressed the satisfaction of our sister state under the heading-

"The Ninth Pillar Up! Laus Deo!"