

Ionia County, Michigan Keene Township History



Source: "History of Ionia & Montcalm Counties, Michigan . . ." by John S. Schenck, Philadelphia, Pa., D. W. Ensign & Co., 1881; transcribed by Genealogy Trails Transcription Team

KEENE

Keene, one of the western townships of Ionia County, is designated in the United States survey as township 7 north, range 8 west, and has for its boundaries Otisco township on the north, Boston on

the south, Easton on the east, and Kent County on the west. The only stream of any consequence in the town is the Flat River, which passes across the northwest corner. It is a sluggish water course, without mill-power, and serves only for the transportation of saw-logs. Keene has never had a mill or village within its borders, and until the fall of 1880 was without a church-edifice. The soil is diversified, but productive. There is but little waste-land aside from what is known as the Cranberry Marsh, in the northeast corner. That is, however, reclaimed in the greater part, and promises in time to be completely so.

The First Settlers of Keene

Prior to Aug. 5, 1839, the lands in township 7 north, range 8 west, were not offered for sale by the general government, and although settlers came on, pre-empted, and occupied tracts before that period, and set forward at once to clear and improve the lands so occupied, they were, technically speaking, simply squatters, although, as a matter of fact, they had come to stay, and were settlers just as much as though they had owned their lands. Of course, they had no more legal rights than others had, as concerned the ultimate purchase of the land, and were liable to be ousted by designing persons (and such persons were by no means lacking in Michigan in those days), but the Keene pioneers knew their moral rights in the matter and proposed to maintain them. They formed an association for mutual protection, and chose Asa L. Spencer, of Otisco, to represent them. Such a move was necessary, since there were always hordes of land-speculators about

land-offices ready and eager to pounce upon and buy lands improved by squatters or preemptors at the earliest opportunity, and then the original occupant, finding himself liable to be cast out of his place that another might reap the benefit of what improvements had been made, had no alternative but to make the best terms he could with the scheming speculator.

The early settlers in Keene knew how matters were liable to work in that respect, and not only took concerted action to protect themselves, but gave it freely to be understood that it would not be very healthy for any speculator, or anybody else, to turn his energies towards depriving the actual possessors of the lands they had already selected and commenced to improve. The consequence of such positive action was that when the land-sale took place at Ionia, in August, 1839, there was no attempt made to disturb the Keene settlers.

The first "commencement" made in Keene was on section 25, and on that section the first permanent settlement in the town was effected. The commencement alluded to was made in the fall of 1837 by two young unmarried men, by names Orrin Owen and Charles Hickox, of Monroe Co., N. Y. They doubtless intended to make a settlement at some time, for they put up a shanty and chopped away as though the only object in life were the hewing down of forests. Whether they grew tired of the business, whether they concluded that pioneering was not much fun after all, or whether they determined to pioneer in some other locality,

cannot be said; but it can be said that they did not become very early permanent settlers in Keene, and so may be briefly dismissed.

The first actual settler in the town was Edward Butterfield, who, with Cyrus Rose, cleared some land in 1837, and Feb. 2, 1838, settled with his family on section 25. In the following December, Mr. Rose settled with his family on section 36. In 1838, also, what is still known as the "Canadian Settlement" was founded by James Monk, who came in from Canada and in March of that year located on section 26. In April, Morton Reynolds, also a Canadian, came to section 27, followed by John Follett, another Canadian, who made his home on section 35. In the same year John Conner, from Oakland County, pitched his tent on section 35; James Crysler, from Canada, on section 26; Samuel Wells, from St. Lawrence Co., N. Y., on section 23 (in May); and Dexter Cutler, in June, near Flat River, on section 6. Charles Higgins settled about the same time in Cutler's neighborhood, on section 7.

In 1838 or 1839, William Lott, a bachelor, came to section 30, and there in a little while opened what he was pleased to call a tavern, but which was nothing more than a place where travelers were treated to such refreshment as poor whisky could provide, and where, on a pinch, they were kept over-night. The occasion of Lott's embarking in the enterprise was the opening of a stage-route between Ionia and Grand Rapids over the road on which Lott's shanty stood. The stage-route was a popular highway before the opening of the Detroit and Milwaukee

Railroad, and for a time two four-horse coaches passed over it daily, while there was considerable other travel as well. With the completion of the railway, in 1857, the traffic of the road fell to the ordinary country-road level. Until that time, however, Lott flourished as a dispenser of fire-water on the route. In addition to that distinction, he won the perhaps better one of being the first person to erect a framed house in Keene, his lumber coming from the Fallasburg mill, in Kent County. His house was put up in 1842, and, the year following, Samuel Wells built on section 23, where D. C. Johnson now lives, the first framed barn in the township. He got his lumber at the Bellamy mill, in Easton.

There was another so-called tavern on the south town-line road, in section 35, over which one Johnson held sway as landlord. That road was at first the main traveled road between Ionia and Grand Rapids, but upon the opening of the stage-route north of there the tide of travel was transferred, and Johnson's occupation as a Boniface fled forever.

A prominent member of the Canadian Settlement in Keene was Elijah Sprague, who in the summer of 1839 made a settlement with his family, followed closely by Philip Monk and James Baird, likewise from Canada.

This year of 1839, in which the lands of Keene were put upon the market, saw a material accession to the settlement, and the town began to develop rapidly. Thomas Beattie and his son Nathaniel came to the county in 1839, and at the land-sale, in August, Nathaniel bought a place in Keene, to which father

and son removed in the fall from the Dye farm, in Easton, where they had been temporarily abiding. In 1840 the elder Beattie bought a farm (now occupied by his son Robert), where he died in 1860. James Beattie, brother to Robert, is also a resident in Keene, on section 25. When Nathaniel Beattie came to the town with his father, he found David and Stephen Shaul, two bachelor brothers, keeping house, each in a shanty, on the place now owned by Hiram S. Lee. Other settlers of 1839 were John L. Covert, Jennison Henry, Simon Heath, and Nathaniel Davenport.

In June, 1840, Zelotus B. Frost, William Sparks, and Ephraim Abbott, of Courtland Co., N. Y., came to Michigan in search of land, and, finding in Keene what they wanted, made locations on section 15 - Sparks and Frost each a forty- and Abbott an eighty-acre lot. All went back to New York as soon as they had completed their land purchases, and in October, 1840, Abbott, Frost, Ephraim Abbott, Jr., and Stephen Sparks, with their families, set out in company for Keene. Abbott, leaving the rest of the party at Buffalo and pushing on through Canada (while they proceeded via the lake to Detroit), reached Keene some days before them, and, moving into an abandoned shanty on section 24, he and his son Ephraim began at once the work of clearing and cabin-building upon the Abbott eighty in section 15. Eight days after Abbott's arrival along came his friends, and into the old shanty they went; so that, all told, the occupants of that exceedingly small habitation numbered a total of twelve persons, and in it they managed to live two weeks. At night

the floor of the one room was just about covered with the beds necessary for the twelve, but in the morning, by piling the beds in a heap, sufficient room was made to allow the women folks to get about in the performance of their household duties.

In the northern half of the town there were but few settlers when Abbott, Frost, and Sparks came upon the scene. Schools they had none, and, indeed, needed none, for school-children were scarce, and when they wanted to go to meeting they could not get there short of the Welch school-house in Easton. Sparks became a famous hunter, and as a slayer of deer and bears was known all over.

In the spring of 1846, Ephraim Abbott, Jr., set up a shop on section 15 and began to make barrels, tubs, and sap-buckets, much to the convenience of his fellow-settlers, and much, it is hoped, to his own profit. In 1848 he changed his business location to section 22, his present place of residence, and, building a more commodious and convenient factory, added chairs, rakes, and grain-cradles to his list of manufactures. In 1868 he added the manufacture of patent horse-pokes, and still carries on with his son, under the firm-name of E. & A. H. Abbott, the only manufacturing interest Keene ever possessed. The Messrs. Abbott have likewise a general repair-shop, and latterly have opened a store in connection with their factory.

James Day, a settler in Oakland County in 1825, moved to Keene in June, 1841, accompanied by his two grown sons, Cyrenus and Allen, each of whom, as well as the father, had made a land purchase in

the town - the father two hundred and forty acres on section 28, and the two sons smaller tracts on section 27. The road to their land, afterwards a part of the Ionia and Grand Rapids stage-road, had just been laid out, and they got in without much trouble. East of the Days, James Baird and Prindle Hubbell were living in gloomy solitude the lives of bachelors on section 26; north, the nearest neighbor was Nathaniel Beattie; west, William Lott, on section 30; and south, Aaron Hardenburgh, on section 33. There was a mill at Vergennes, in Kent County, only a few miles distant, and so getting a supply of family flour, provided the grist was obtainable, was by no means the troublesome task experienced in a similar direction by many of the early settlers in neighboring towns.

Zaccheus H. Brower, a New Yorker, came to the town in 1840, and made a commencement on an eighty-acre lot in section 13. He got up the body of a log house, and in 1841 went back to New York after his family. Joseph Brown had got in before Brower and was living on section 13, and about then the Widow Electa Ann Lee, accompanied by her sons Amasa and Archelaus, occupied the Shaul place (the Shaul's having returned to Canada), upon which now lives Hiram S. Lee, a son of the Widow Lee, and himself one of the earliest settlers in the town of Odessa.

Delos Gibson, now living on section 11, settled in Eaton County in 1837, and in 1841, buying a forty-acre tract in Keene of Stephen Shaul, moved to it that year. In that neighborhood there had been no

other attempt at settlement, and from Potter's Corners Mr. Gibson had to hew his road through the timber a distance of two miles. His nearest neighbor was Zaccheus Brower, on the south; north he had no neighbor nearer than four miles; east no nearer than two; and westward he had to travel six miles before sighting the smoke of a settler's cabin.

George W. White came to the town in the spring of 1841, and still lives where he then located. In the same year A. C. Smith settled on section 25, where Mrs. Alexander Kinney now lives. Ira Pinckney, a settler in Oakland County in 1826, joined the settlers of Keene in the fall of 1842, in which year J. W. Sprague and Harlow Sprague (brothers) came to section 29. Shortly after J. W. Sprague's arrival he concluded that a post-office was one of the needs of the community, whereupon he circulated a petition for names. Himself being requested to name it, and urged to give it an Indian name, he said that he could not just then think of a good Indian designation, but he could think of Rix Robinson, the Indian trader, and, that being something as near to Indian as he could well get, he would ask to have the office called Rix. Rix it was called accordingly, and Sprague was made postmaster. Just before that, in 1845, Avon post-office was established, near the eastern line of the town, and given in charge of Asaph C. Smith. The office was ultimately removed to Easton.

Silas Sprague, father of the Spragues' named above, came in some time during 1844 and brought his family for a permanent stay, having, however, been

in previously with his son Jared and done some work on the place covering the northwest quarter of section 29.

In addition to the already mentioned Canadians who became settlers in Keene at an early day may also be included Joseph Gardner, C. C. Sayles, George Sayles, Elias Sayles, Chas. Sayles, George Denton, Harvey H. Vinton, Philip Marble, G. N. Jackson, and the Carr's, including the father and his sons James, John, and George, each of whom bought a farm.

Apropos of the Canadian Settlement, there was the neighborhood in which the Monk's, Robert Taylor, James Chrysler, John Follett, and Cyrus Rose lived, to which the name of Dickertown was given by reason of the fact that the settlers there out-Yankeed the veriest Yankee that ever lived in their extraordinary passion for trading, or "dickering," as it was then called. They dickered with one another at dewy morn, at gentle eve, and at high noon.

Although the proof is not at hand, yet it is gravely asserted, so strong was the passion for dickering upon the innocent and peaceful Canadians, that cases were known where members of the little community were frequently aroused from midnight slumbers to open, discuss, or close a trade. They were, forsooth, a noble band of traders, trading in anything that by any manner of means could be made to serve the purpose of a trade. That some of them must have grown pretty sharp and quick in due time as to matters appertaining to their favorite pastime follows of course, and it follows equally as a matter of course that there must have been a vast

deal of rivalry and getting up early o' mornings in that vicinity in the general wild and yearning desire to get the better of somebody in a trade. Dickertown is now simply a remembrance, and those who remember it are able to tell some amusing stories of the locality and the weakness of the inhabitants thereof.

In 1844 came Gilbert Ayers, and, in 1845, Vine Welch, Roland Hull, Israel Bowen, Oliver Bowen, James Bowen, and Alpheus Bowen, the spring in which they came being conspicuous as a time when there was a rapid rush of settlers to Keene. In 1846, C. G. Hunter came from Oakland County, where he had been since 1826, and settled on section 34. Two years before that time William H. Pearsall, also from Oakland County, had come on and located in section 33, just west of where Hunter afterwards built his cabin. D. W. Woodman was an early settler just south of Roland Hull, his mother keeping house for him until he married, some little time afterwards. More recent settlers in Keene included Mathew Brown, William Clark, William N. Higgins, W. Campbell, William Cannon, Pierce Jenkins (an earlier settler in Easton), Joseph Long (who opened at the centre about 1850 the first blacksmith's shop in the town), R. Russ, Harvey Batson, and Aaron Pratt.

The first birth in Keene is said to have been that of Berilla, daughter of Morton and Alvira Reynolds, May 17, 1838; the first death, that of Mary, wife of Robert Rose, who came from Canada intending to settle, but, his wife and daughter dying soon after his arrival, he abandoned his purpose and returned to

Canada. January, 1840, Keene saw its first wedding when Alvin Butterfield and Ilena Phipps were married by Squire George Dexter, of Easton. The first pair of horses owned in the town by one of the town's settlers belonged to Jennison Henry, who in the fall of 1845 bought them of William Higgins, then just in that way after having carried Amos Sparks and his family, from the East, over to Charles Sparks', on Flat River.

Of Keene's earliest settlers, Orrin Owen died in the town in 1874; Cyrus Rose, aged upwards of ninety, lives in Saranac; Charles Hickox died in Greenville in 1873; Joseph Brown was killed by the running away of his oxen, John Conner and Jennison Henry by falling trees - Conner in 1849, and Henry in 1851. To the list of deaths by falling trees may also be added that of a Mr. Weller, who was killed at a chopping-bee held on the place now owned by W. E. Hull.

About 1850, Hiram Fuller came to his death in a singular and sudden manner. Being at the raising of a barn on the Lee place, he was moved, in a spirit of mischief, to attempt to pull from a load of hay passing on the highway a young man whom he knew, who lay upon the hay kicking his heels in the air and rather inviting Fuller to have some fun. Fuller ran quickly to the rear of the wagon and attempted to leap up, that he might lay his game by the heels, but in leaping he leaped squarely against the tines of an unseen pitchfork (lodged at the bottom of the hay), and was so badly hurt that he lived but five minutes afterwards.

Religious History

Keene has but little religious history. Churches and religious organizations were ready to hand in convenient places over in adjoining townships, and so the need for home organizations was not considered a pressing one. Indeed, such has continued to be the case in Keene to a more or less degree to the present time. There is but one church-building in the town (and that was not erected until 1880), and but one religious organization - Methodist Episcopal. It is known as the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Keene, and includes what were formerly three separate classes worshiping at Marble's, South Keene, and Potter's Corners. The classes joined their forces and means for the purpose of erecting a common house of worship, and the result is a church-edifice costing, with organ, bell, etc., about two thousand dollars. The eldest of the three classes is the South Keene Class. The present aggregate membership is about fifty; the leaders, Thomas Daniels of South Keene, Harvey Lampkins of Marble's, and Mrs. Vine Welch of Potter's. The church trustees are Charles Taylor, Philip Dutt, Harvey Lampkins, John Denton, William Covert, De Witt Johnson, and Jared Sprague.

Resident Tax-Payers of Keene in 1844

Ephraim Abbott, sections 15, 22 - 80 acres

Ephraim Abbott, Jr., section 15 - 40 acres

Nathaniel Beattie, section 22 - 120 acres

Thomas Beattie, section 23 - 80 acres

Joseph Brown, section 13 - 80 acres

Z. H. Brower, section 13 - 80 acres

John N. Butterfield, section 25 - 240 acres

James Baird, section 26 - 160 acres

J. Boldman, section 36 - 160 acres

John T. Covert, sections 13, 24 - 80 acres

H. V. N. Covert, section 23 - 40 acres

James Chrysler, sections 35, 36 - 120 acres

Nathaniel Davenport, section 19 - 80 acres

William Devine, section 18 - 84 acres

James Devine - Personal

John Devine - Personal

Cyrenus Day, section 27 - 80 acres

Allen Day, section 27 - 80 acres

James Day, section 28 - 240 acres

William Fallass, section 19 - 80 acres

John Folbert, section 35 - 40 acres

W. H. Gay, section 26 - 40 acres

Delos Gibson, section 11 - 40 acres

Aaron Herdenburg, sections 33, 34 - 240 acres

Jennison Henry, sections 13, 24 - 120 acres

Simon Heath, sections 13, 24 - 80 acres

Prindle Hubble, sections 26, 27 - 80 acres

G. Hall - Personal

Simon Helmer, section 6 - 103 acres

Francis Jones, section 34 - 40 acres

John Jones - Personal

Sebastian Lown, section 6 - 55 acres

Joseph Lown, section 6 - 55 acres

William Lott, section 30 - 120 acres

John Monk, section 34 - 80 acres

James Monk, section 26 - 80 acres

Philip Monk, section 35 - 40 acres

Francis Potter, section 24 - 160 acres

Ira Pinckney, section 28 - 80 acres

Asa K. Phipps, section 27 - 60 acres

Cyrus Rose, sections 35, 36 - 200 acres

George R. Sayles, section 29 - 80 acres

B. W. Soules - Personal

Elijah Sprague, section 10 - 115 acres

Joseph Sprague - Personal

Harlow Sprague, section 29 - 80 acres

Randall Monk, section 35 - 80 acres

A. C. Smith, section 25 - 80 acres

Stephen Parks, Jr., section 15 - 40 acres

William Sparks, section 15 - 40 acres

John E. Conner, section 35 - 80 acres

Levi Strong, section 23 - 80 acres

James Tefft, section 27 - 80 acres

Robert L. Taylor, sections 26, 35 - 80 acres

Martin Vincent, section 19 - 40 acres

Richard Vincent, section 6 - 82 acres

Reuben Vincent - Personal

George White, section 34 - 40 acres

Samuel Wells - Personal

1. B. Frost, section 15 - 40 acres

Township Roads

June 15, 1842, Asa K. Phipps and George W. White, highway commissioners, established a road commencing at the quarter-stake on the town-line on the south side of section 33, and running due north on the quarter-line through sections 33 and 28 and to the centre of section 21, to intersect "the north road, so called." July 14, 1841, Thomas Cornell surveyed a road from the west line of Otisco, "near Mr. Sprague's," and running through the township east to the township of Ionia "near Mr. Henry's." Dec. 25, 1840, Thomas Cornell surveyed a road on the line between Otisco and Boston, and Oct. 16, 1842, Asa K. Phipps, H. V. N. Covert, and George W. White, highway commissioners of Keene, established a road commencing at the corner of section 21, town 7, and running north three and a half degrees west one hundred and fifty-nine rods to the quarter-stake of said section; thence north eighty-six degrees east four hundred and eighty rods to the section corner between sections 23, 24, 14, and 15; thence south three and a half degrees west one hundred and fifty-eight rods to intersect a road running on the quarter-line west from the east quarter-stake of section 24.

Schools

The first school taught in Keene was held in a sixty-dollar log school-house on section 23 by Ruth Hunt, daughter of William Hunt, of Lyons. Just when the school was opened does not seem to be

remembered by living pioneers, but it was probably not until 1842; for, according to the recollection of Mr. Ephraim Abbott, there was no need of a school before that time, since there were no school-children in the town. In 1845 the people of the town concluded to use for other purposes the usual annual appropriation on behalf of public education, for an entry in the town records under date April 6, 1845, reads "Voted to raise no money for the support of public schools."

Organization of School Districts

The first meeting of the school inspectors was held April 12, 1842, at the house of Allen Day, when, after appointing Simon Heath chairman, the board adjourned sine die. At the next meeting (non-dated) the west half of section 27 was taken from School District No. 3 and annexed to District No. 5. June 13, 1842, the inspectors detached section 25 from District No. 3 and attached it to District No. 4. Under the same date notice is made of the fact that the school districts in the town were District No. 3, including sections 25, 26, 27, 34, 35, and 36; District No. 4, including sections 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, and 24; District No. 5, including sections 28, 29, and 30. April 11, 1844, the inspectors formed District No. 1, and described it as beginning at the southwest corner of section 30, running south to the south line of the town, thence east with the line of the town to the east line of section 31, thence north to the southeast corner of section 29, and thence west to the place of beginning.

The annual report of the school inspectors dated Oct. 11, 1845, gave the following: District No. 4: children, 58; District No. 5: children, 40. In No. 4, Samuel Case was the teacher, and received ten dollars and ninety-four cents for one month's teaching. Thomas Congdon taught six months in District No. 5, and received fifty dollars. District No. 6, formed Jan. 21, 1846, included the west half of section 36, the whole of section 35, the east half of section 34, the southwest quarter of section 34, the south half of section 33, the south half of section 26, and the southeast quarter of section 27 in town 7, and the north half of section 4 and the northwest quarter of section 3 in town 6.

May 2, 1846, the school inspectors recorded District No. 1 as containing sections 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, 24, and 25, the northeast quarter of section 26, the northwest quarter of the southeast quarter of section 26 ; No. 2 as containing sections 28, 29, and 30, and the west half of section 27; No. 3 as containing the territory ascribed to No. 1, formed April 11, 1844; and No. 4 the west half of section 36, the whole of section 35, the east half of section 34, the southwest quarter of section 34, the south half of section 33, the east half of the east half of section 26.

Teachers

The first teacher's certificate issued by the school inspectors appears from the records to have been to Miss Betsey Fallass, June 13, 1844.

Certificates were doubtless issued before that, but the records do not say so.

To 1860 subsequent certificates were issued to the

following persons: Dec. 5, 1844, Thomas Congdon; Sept. 22, 1845, Electa A. Lee; Dec. 27, 1845, Thomas Congdon; April 30, 1847, Electa A. Lee; May 19, 1847, Helen M. White; May 10, 1848, Lucy Ann Vinton; Nov. 18, 1848, Thomas Congdon, Silas Sprague, E. R. Peck, Harriet J. Abbott, and Sarah M. Atwood; April 19, 1849, Helen M. White; July 10, 1849, Clorinda Robinson; Nov. 3, 1849, A. C. Lee, Mary L. Woodman; Nov. 27, 1849, B. F. Woodman, Louisa Melvin; Dec. 13, 1849, A. C. Smith; April 13, 1850, Julia D. Miles; April 29, 1850, Nancy Goodsell, Sarah Peasley; Nov. 16, 1850, Elizabeth English; Dec. 3, 1850, A. F. Chapin, Sarah S. Fisk, and Oliver L. Littlefield; Dec. 6, 1850, Joel Andrews, J. A. Alsworth; Nov. 1, 1851, B. F. Woodman, D. W. Richards; Jan. 17, 1852, Alfeta Fallass; April 10, 1852, Miss Smith, Miss Marble; May 1, 1852, Miss B. Potter, Adelia Potter; July 17, 1852, Miss E. Stevens, Eliza Chipman; Nov. 13, 1852, Alfred A. Proctor; April 9, 1853, J. Andrews, Mary L. Woodman; May 14, 1853, Hannah I. Davenport; June 4, 1853, Mary Worcester; Nov. 5, 1853, S. P. Curtiss, Levi Nash; March 13, 1854, Cynthia Hardenburgh; April 8, 1854, Ahby Abbey, Caroline Marble; May 13, 1854, Miss Ford, Celeste Gibson; May 23, 1854, Sarah A. Underbill ; Nov. 4, 1854, Mrs. Adelia A. Potter; Nov. 20, 1854, W. Yonge, Mrs. Ingalls, and Mrs. H. A. Thompson; March 27, 1855, Clorinda T. Webber, Laura Dupee, Elizabeth Coons; Nov. 10, 1855, Harvey S. Curtiss, George D. Wood, Charles Morse, Frank T. Jacques, S. P. Curtiss, Elizabeth Wakeman, and Mary Rogers; Nov. 15, 1855, Edwin Shaw; Nov. 24, 1855, E. R. Smith; Feb. 13, 1856, Joel Andrews; March 8, 1856, Frances

Parks and Rose T. Hanson; May 24, 1856, Cordelia Petit, Ann Beckwith; June 30, 1856, Asa W. Slayton; Nov. 1, 1856, Carrie Fallass, Samuel B. Young, George F. Whitfield; Nov, 18, 1856, Lucy Fairchild, Edwin Abbey, Charles A. Warner; March 23, 1857, Lois Mudge, Elizabeth Mudge; April 11, 1857, Mary C. Davenport, H. J. Davenport, Elizabeth Ackley, P. A. Stannard; June 11, 1857, Mary Benton; June 15, 1857, Lydia Abbott; Aug. 17, 1857, Betsey Ann Gould; Nov. 7, 1857, W. W. Kirkland, A. Heath; Nov.14, 1857, Miss Smoke; Nov. 17, 1857, Mary Rogers; Nov. 24, 1857, Wallace Davenport; Dec. 5,1857, J. J. Whitfield ; April 10, 1858, Mary Rogers, Martha Vosper, Caroline Bowen, Cynthia Gardner, Edwin Abbey ; May 3, 1858, Sarah L. Cole; Nov. 6, 1858, O. A. Warner, D. B. Sage, S. P. Curtiss, S. S. Hull; Nov. 20, 1858, Hannah M. Hough, William Fallass, Isaac Unsworth; Dec. 30, 1858, Stephen B. Knapp; Feb. 21, 1859, Harriet Houghton; April 9, 1859, Louisa Knapp, Miss J. H. Davenport, Catharine Niles, Julia Heath, Caroline E. Moyer, Mary C. Davenport. Mary E. Misner, Eliza M. Sayles, Betsey Fallass, Mary E. Trumbull, Olive Sayles, J. B. Trumbull; May 7 , 1859, Mary J. Barker and Margaret Dunsmore; May 13, 1859, Clarissa Holding; Aug. 10, 1859, Betsey Ann Gould; Nov. 5, 1859, Harvey S. Curtiss, Elizabeth A. Wakeman, Reuben Tower, J. B. McWithey; Nov. 26, 1859, William G. Sayles, Walter B. Morrison.

Appended is a synopsis of the school report for 1880:

Directors - Enumeration - Average Attendance - Value of Property - Teacher's Wages

Dist. 1 - William Cannon	35	34	\$1,500	\$169
Dist. 2 (fractional) - J. G. Kennedy	37	29	800	184
Dist. 3 - J. W. Rickert	37	34	1,000	168
Dist. 4 (fractional) - E. Hancorn	35	25	250	157
Dist. 5 - J. D. Loucks	41	30	250	118
Dist. 6 - P. Jenkins	67	60	400	136
Dist. 7 - C. Jepson	41	43	570	145
Dist. 8 - L. Warner	49	43	150	162
Dist. 9 - M. Frost	31	27	500	80
Totals:	373	325	\$5,420	\$1,319

Township Organization

Town 7 north, in range 8 west, was a part of Otisco until Feb. 16, 1842, when that portion of the town lying on the east side of Flat River was organized as the town ship of Keene. Subsequently the fraction was attached to Keene. Feb. 29, 1844, that portion of Boston lying north of the Grand River was set off to Keene, and March 17, 1849, was again restored to Boston.

When John Covert and Simon Heath agitated the project of applying for township organization, there was difficulty in obtaining the suggestion of a town-name. In the dilemma someone moved that Edward Butterfield, the oldest man in the town, be allowed to supply the name. Butterfield, being called upon, promptly replied that he would bestow the name of his native town in New Hampshire, and Keene it stood accepted.

The first meeting in Keene was held at the house of Nathaniel Beattie, April 4, 1842. John L. Covert was chosen moderator, Edward Butterfield, Nathaniel Beattie, Ephraim Abbott, and Aaron Hardenburgh inspectors, and Simon Heath clerk. After organizing and choosing path-masters the meeting adjourned to Allen Day's house, where the election was held.

Thirty-nine votes were cast and the following officials chosen: Supervisor, Asaph C. Smith; Clerk, Cyrenus Day; Treasurer, Samuel Wells; Justices of the Peace, John L. Covert, Joseph W. Sprague, Aaron Hardenburgh, Z. H. Brower; Highway Commissioners, Henry V. N. Covert, George W. White, Asa K. Phipps; School Inspectors, Simon Heath, James Chrysler, Asaph C. Smith, James Baird; Overseers of the Poor, Granson L. Hall, John L. Covert; Associate Assessor, Elijah Sprague; Constables, Prindie Hubbell, Loren Sprague, George W. White; Highway Overseers, John Covert, W. M. Lot, E. Butterfield, H. V. N. Covert, E. Abbott, E. Sprague, John Devine.

Following is a list of names of those chosen annually from 1843 to 1880 to serve as supervisors, clerks, treasurers, and justices of the peace:

Supervisors

1843, A. C. Smith; 1844, S. Heath; 1845, A. C. Smith; 1846, no record; 1847, S. Heath; 1848, A. C. Smith; 1849, S. Heath; 1850, Z. B. Frost; 1851, S. Heath; 1852, G. R. Sayles; 1853, A. C. Smith; 1854, T. Jacques; 1855, A. C. Smith; 1856, S. Wells; 1857 [a total of one hundred and twenty votes cast this year], G. R. Sayles; 1858-59, J. Sprague; 1860, S.

Wells; 1861-62, J. B. Sprague; 1863-64, O. Bowen; 1865, J. Sprague; 1866-67, C. Cowlcs; 1868-76, A. P. Lee; 1877-78, R. Hardy; 1879-80, V. Welch.

Clerks

1843-44, C. Day; 1845, A. K. Phipps; 1846, no record; 1847, S. B. Knapp; 1848, A. W. Corlis; 1849, G. R. Sayles; 1850, A. W. Corlis; 1851, C. Day; 1852, H. V. N. Covert; 1853, Z. B. Frost; 1854, H.V.N. Covert; 1855, J. Andrews; 1856, E. Abbey; 1857-63, R. N. Covert; 1864-65, E. Abbey; 1866, T. Lowden; 1867, Vine Welch; 1868-70, T. Daniels; 1871, W. Covert; 1872-74, T. Daniels; 1875, H. H. Batson; 1876-77, T. Daniels; 1878-79, H. N. Lee; 1880, F. Bowen.

Treasurers

1843, Z. B. Frost; 1844, N. Davenport; 1845, J. N. Butterfield; 1846, no record; 1847, E. Abbott, Jr.; 1848, N. Beattie; 1849, D. Gibson; 1850, J. N. Butterfield; 1851, N. Beattie; 1852, I. Pinckney; 1853, B. Covert; 1854, E. Abbott; 1855, D. W. Woodman; 1856, J. Sprague; 1857-58, C. Day; 1859-60, A. F. Lee; 1861, J. Pritchard; 1862-63, L. Hart; 1864, J. W. Gardner; 1865-66, W. N. Higgins; 1867, J. W. Rickert; 1868-70, S. Strong; 1871, W. E. Hull; 1872-74, E. Abbott; 1875, W. Covert; 1876, R. Hardy; 1877, A. Brown; 1878-79, C. N. Hunter; 1880, F. P. Hunter.

Justices

1843, E. Abbott; 1844, A. Hardenburgh; 1845, Z. B. Frost; 1846, no record; 1847, J. H. Hart; 1848, C. G. Hunter; 1849, J. W. Sprague; 1850, A. C. Smith; 1851, E. Abbott, Jr.; 1852, E. Wilkerson; 1853, J.

Gardner; 1854, Z. B. Frost; 1855, L. C. Goodwin; 1856, N. H. Batson; 1857, N. Davenport; 1858, C. Rexford; 1859, G. R. Sayles; 1860, E. Abbott, Jr.; 1861, W. A. More; 1862, C. Rexford; 1863, F. J. Whitfield; 1864, W. Clark; 1865, W. H. Davenport; 1866, S. Wells; 1867, J. Long; 1868, W. Clark; 1869, D. P. Ransom; 1870, L. Belgrave; 1871, L. E. Jones; 1872, E. Morrison; 1873-74, W. H. Davenport; 1875, W. Hawley; 1876, J. Sprague; 1877, E. Morrison; 1878, Vine Welch; 1879, P. Bozung; 1880, J. W. Rickert.

The Voters in Keene in 1852

Ten years after the township organization of Keene - that is to say, in 1852 - the votes cast at the annual election numbered one hundred and forty-two. The names of the voters were William Pearsall, Nathaniel Davenport, Thomas Beattie, Amasa F. Lee, Z. H. Brower, Peter Covert, Harlow Sprague, Arnold Wooley, Theodore Prosser, Ira Pinckney, Robert Diamond, Albert Wooley, Cyrenus Day, Israel Bowen, James A. Cain, Hiram Lee, Hiram Weller, Henry Hart, Daniel Weller, Charles Sayles, A. C. Lee, Benjamin Covert, Harvey Walker, Prindle Hubbell, James Day, John P. Latta, G. L. Hall, Ira Corlis, Jr., Silas Sprague, Jr., George Rose, Allen Day, William Sparks, J. W. Bunnell, Samuel W. Johnson, T. Jacques, John T. Hopkins, Anthony T. House, Henry Sherman, C. C. Sayles, Oliver Bowen, B. W. Soules, William H. Rose, Samuel Hart, Peter Hart, A. J. Hunter, Francis Potter, Pharos Rose, Samuel Wells, Jacob Snyder, Orrin Owen, A. C. Smith, William Lott, Delos Gibson, Nathaniel Beattie, Peter Snyder, J. W. Butterfield, James W. Myers, Z. B. Frost, Samuel C.

Johnson, Charles G. Hunter, Peter Muna, Rufus N. Belknap, Milo Abbott, Joel Andrews, James Trumans, Samuel Ackley, Erastus Hull, Francis Wooley, Thomas L. Barry, Isaac Barry, David Miesner, B. F. Woodman, Abel Cutter, David Nevers, John McCarty, William Campbell, John Shaw, Thomas Lowden, James Tefft, James Chrysler, Cyrus Rose, John Vandrear, George W. White, James Beattie, DeWitt Wooley, J. W. Sprague, Silas Towles, Ahab Sayles, Jesse Hollenshead, Enoch Wilkerson, Thomas J. Congdon, Stephen Sparks, Jr., George Wooley, John Snyder, John Follett, Samuel Crawford, Elijah Sprague, Charles J. Keeler, Peter Shindorff, H. V. N. Covert, N. D. Strong, George R. Sayles, Henry Croup, Ira C. Corlis, William Potter, Nelson Irwin, James Stephens, Eli T. Corlis, Robert N. Covert, Andrew Barry, John Brumhall, Asher Lane, George Denton, Levi Goodwin, Lewis Hart, Washington Howe, Randall Monk, Cyrus Clark, Joseph Long, James B. Sprague, Silas Sprague, Jared Sprague, Amasa Davis, Oziel Davis, Obadiah Lane, A. R. Wakes, Stephen Sparks, Ruel Lamberton, Ephraim Abbott, Joseph Gardner, Elias Sayles, D. W. Woodman, Daniel Proctor, Dudley Marble, D. C. Dupee, William Day, James Bowen, Joseph Brown, William Ayers, Loren McDonald, Hugh Dodge, J. H. Henry.

Keene Grange, No. 270

Keene Grange was organized in 1875, and in 1876 built a nice hall. It has been prosperously sustained since the beginning, and numbers now fully one hundred and fifty members. The Masters who have served since 1875 have been Vine Welch, Dexter

Cutter, Ed. Hancorn, Myron Kreiger, and Thomas Brown. The officers for 1880 are Thomas Brown, M.: Myron Kreiger, O.; Ed. Hancorn, L.; DeWitt Johnson, Sec.; George Denton, Treas.; D. W. Woodman, Chaplain; Merrit Sayles, Steward; Albert Gunn, Assistant Steward; Mrs. Albert Gunn, Stewardess.

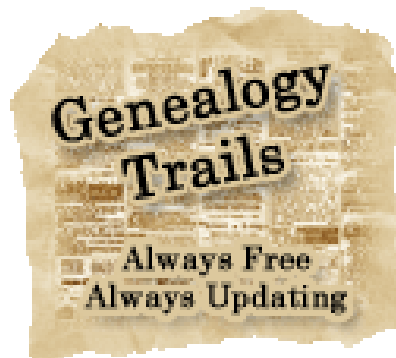
Biographical Sketches:

James Bowen

Mathew Brown

Aaron B. Pratt

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