

CHAPTER XVI

ROADS AND TAVERNS

THE OLD BOSTON AND KEENE ROAD

For the history of the first traveled road through the Monadnock wilderness, for many years legendary in the southeast part of Jaffrey and the northeast part of Rindge, little information is to be found in the records of these towns. Before the town of Jaffrey there was Middle Monadnock, and before Middle Monadnock there was Rowley Canada, and before Rowley Canada there was wilderness, traversed by "a clear^d Way to Ashawelott," now Keene, from Townsend in the province of Massachusetts Bay. The beginning of the Ashuelot township is to be found in the record of a group of promoters and speculators in townships whose place of meeting in 1732 was in the town of Concord, on a road from Boston that ended at the newly incorporated town of Townsend, twenty-two miles from Concord and forty miles from its beginning at Boston on Massachusetts Bay. At this period, with the river for a road, settlement had advanced from Springfield on the Connecticut River, one of the earliest inland settlements in New England, founded in 1636, to Northfield in 1673, and from that place the lure of rich intervals led settlers up the valley of the Ashuelot River from its confluence with the Connecticut, and in 1732, more than one hundred years after the settlement at Boston and nearly sixty years after the settlement at Northfield, the road's end had reached Upper and Lower Ashuelot townships, now the city of Keene and town of Swanzey in New Hampshire; and, settlement having begun, the proprietors of the upper Ashuelot Township met at the tavern of Ephraim Jones in Concord, Province of Massachusetts Bay, on the last Monday in May, 1735, to consider plans for a road to their new township. It appears that they had already a clear knowledge of the lay of the land and the shortest route from their home towns, the sources of prospective settlers and supplies, to the new townships, and a committee was appointed "to joyn with such as the lower town [Swanzey] proprietors shall appoint to search and find out whether the ground will admit of a Convenient Road from the two townships [Upper and Lower Ashuelot, now Keene and Swanzey] on the Ashuelot River to the town of Townshend." At that date (see old map, page 42) the Townsend grant extended farther north and west than in later

years and embraced about 800 acres now included in the southeastern corner of New Ipswich.

In its account of the proceedings of the proprietors of Upper Ashuelot Township, at their meeting in Concord, the *History of New Ipswich* names Jeremiah Hall, a leading man in the settlement, as the man appointed to explore and report upon the feasibility of the proposed new road; while the *History of Keene* (Griffin) states that Captain Samuel Sady and Lt. Joseph Hill were the men named for this service. It is probable that Jeremiah Hall served in place of Lieutenant Hill, as by later record at a meeting held "at the meetinghouse frame" in Upper Ashuelot two years later, on June 30, 1737, "Jeremiah Hall was recompensed for this service," and by record as stated in the *History of Keene*, at the same date and place of assembly it was "voted that there be the sum of twenty-seven pounds paid out of sd Proprietors treasury to Captain Samuel Sady for Searching and Laying out a Road from this Township down to the Town of Townshend Employed by said proprietors so to do." The evidence seems clear that both Captain Sady and Jeremiah Hall were employed in this important and laborious undertaking.

The cooperation of the Lower Ashuelot Township (Swanzey) is indicated by the record of a meeting of the proprietors of that place (see *History of Swanzey*, N. H.) on June 11, 1735, a few days after like action in the Upper township, when it was voted "That there be a man chosen to joyn with the Committee of the Upper Township to look out a convenient way to the Two Towns on the Ashawelot River. Voted that the man that shall be chosen be allowed Ten Shillings a Day for his Services Looking Said Way. Voted that Mr. Jonathan Miles be the Man to Joyn the Committee of the Upper Township to Look out the Way as above laid." Further action upon the undertaking is recorded on October 27, 1736, when it was "Voted that Mr. Jonathan Miles be allowed for his service in looking out and Marking a Way to Townshend the sum of 25 pounds one Shilling," which at the approved per diem rate of ten shillings would indicate not less than fifty days' or two months' employment. Upon the location of the road thus provided, the historian of Swanzey, the Honorable Benjamin Read, expressed the opinion that "This road to Townshend was doubtless built about this time and is what is referred to in later records as the 'Boston Road' extending from Upper to Lower Ashuelot, and through the southern and eastern parts of the town substantially where the old Troy Hill road now is, passing the J. W. Murphy farm, the old Clark place (now in Troy) which

was for many years a hotel, through the western part of Troy, the entire length of Fitzwilliam and through Winchendon to Townsend." This conclusion is not supported by more extended research than is apparently here given to the subject. At this date, 1735-6, the course of the later "Boston Road" from Upper and Lower Ashuelot to Winchendon, was ungranted territory, and the distance to Townsend by such a course would have been many miles greater than through the at that time ungranted territory of the present towns of Marlborough, Jaffrey, and New Ipswich, where a road, also called the "Old Boston Road," was laid out at this time as will appear. The conclusion is hardly avoidable that the historian of Swanzev has here confused the original Keene and Townsend road with the Boston Road from Keene by the way of Winchendon of later date. The territory traversed by this early road to and from the Ashuelot townships to Townsend was at the date named under the unquestioned jurisdiction of the Massachusetts General Court, by which the two townships of Upper and Lower Ashuelot were granted in 1732, and it is to be borne in mind that Townsend was known for a hundred years thereafter as the half-way stopping place on the main traveled road through Jaffrey and New Ipswich from Keene to Boston. Townsend was in the direct line between Concord and the Upper Ashuelot township through the later granted town of New Ipswich. Unquestioned evidence of the Townsend and Ashuelot road, also called the "Old Boston Road," is found in the earliest records of New Ipswich, the next neighbor of the town of Townsend on the wilderness side, granted by Massachusetts on January 15, 1735/6, at the very time when the committee of the Ashuelot proprietors was looking out and marking its way to "Ashawelot." From the lay of the land a road laid through the unsettled territory between Townsend and the town of Upper Ashuelot (now Keene) could hardly avoid passing through the intervening territory now occupied by the towns of New Ipswich, Rindge, Jaffrey, and Marlborough.

If we turn now to the *History of New Ipswich* (Chandler, page 1) we find derived from the Massachusetts Archives an ancient map of the newly granted township of New Ipswich, on which a straight dotted line through its center bears this explanatory note: "This Single Prick^d line is the Clear^d way to Ashawelott." With the course of the road through the center of New Ipswich thus established, there would be no advantage in its taking the roundabout course as conjectured by the historian of Swanzev. In 1738 a large section of the territory between New Ipswich and Upper Ashuelot, bounding the

New Ipswich township on the west, was granted as the Massachusetts township of Rowley Canada, previously described on these pages. At this point reference may be had to another early map of New Ipswich (*N. H. State Papers*, Vol. XXV, page 368) which shows in the general direction of the former pricked line a "road to Rowley Canada." This road, which crossed the mountain ridge (now known as Wapack Range), is plainly that to which reference is made in the *New Ipswich History*, page 7, where a vote of the town is quoted, "to turn the Road that goes to Rowley Canada through Oliver Proctors lot to the road that was formerly laid out and traveled in." As no mention is found on the town records of such a previous road to Rowley Canada, the historian here concludes that "the road formerly laid out and traveled in" was no other than "the broad road extending due west before mentioned as shown on the map of the Massachusetts grant, and then over the mountain between Barrett and Pratt peaks practically as shown on the map." Conceding this to be the course of the Townsend and Ashuelot road as laid out and cleared in 1735-36 through New Ipswich, its further course, varying only as irregular ground and convenience of construction required from a straight line between the two terminal towns, may be followed with practical certainty by sections still in use and by traces of sections abandoned from the New Ipswich border through the northeast part of the present town of Rindge and in the same general direction from the southeast corner of the present town of Jaffrey to about the center of its western border line north of Gap Mountain at that part of the original town of New Marlborough now incorporated as Troy. Beyond this point no attempt has been made to trace its course for the short remaining distance to its fixed destination at Keene, the Upper Ashuelot township. The loss of the records of Rowley Canada and Middle Monadnock townships, which we have often had occasion to deplore, has probably deprived us of many references to this old road through the territory of Jaffrey. Its best evidence is found in traces of the old road itself following the trend of that portion established by record. In the earliest traditions of the region it was called the "Boston Road," as in the Swanzey historian's account, and to this day the point of its crossing of the ridge of the mountain in New Ipswich at an elevation of 1700 feet, is marked by a signboard bearing the words "Old Boston Road."

Of the roads of Rowley Canada and Middle Monadnock no record remains, but the course of the Townsend road through their borders may be inferred from its effect upon the settlement of both towns.

By this road it had access to New Ipswich and Townsend as sources of supplies, and beyond these points there were open roads to Lunenburg and to Boston and the older towns in Essex County, Rowley, Boxford, and Andover, whence many of its settlers came. It is a reasonable inference that a waterfall by the side of this road near the center of Rowley Canada township, in the section now Squantum Village in Jaffrey, accounted for the location of the first saw and grist mill in Rowley Canada thirty years before the town of Jaffrey was incorporated. It was this road through what is now the south central part of Jaffrey which made that section the thickest settled part of both Rowley Canada and Middle Monadnock. It was this old road, called the "Great Road" and the "Main Road" in later years that made Francis Wright a tavern keeper before there was a town government in Jaffrey, and because of its accessibility by such a road as this to the greatest number of inhabitants, Wright's Tavern was chosen for the place of assembly for the first town meeting in Jaffrey. The sawmill and the tavern presuppose a road for their very existence, and there was of necessity a road between 1743 and 1746 when Richard Peabody and John Hale hauled logs, corn, and rye to mill and returned with lumber for the good houses and barns they built and the corn and rye meal upon which they lived. This road was the basis of the earliest system of town roads, previous to the incorporation of the town when its course is indicated by references to the "Great Road," the "County Road," the "Main Road," also the "Road to New Ipswich," and "to New Marlborough." In the Rowley Canada period or in that of Middle Monadnock, it is not to be supposed that this road was used for wheeled vehicles except rude ox carts and in winter for sleds and pungs, but that it was a clearly marked road and served for travel on horseback and by ox teams there can be no doubt.

THE ROADS OF MIDDLE MONADNOCK

It was a provision of the grant of the township of Middle Monadnock "to have all Necessary Roads layd out threw them free from Charge as Hereafter there shall be Occasion." A further condition pertaining to "settler's rights" was that the grantee in accepting title to his right obligated himself "to maintain all highway work for the said right or share Untill the Town shall be incorporated." Under such conditions, with every settler a law unto himself and the township "settled with more than forty families" scattered to its remotest borders, a tangle of roads resulted of which no description or record

is found until after the incorporation of the town in 1773, when they were adopted by wholesale upon such meager descriptions as "the way is now trod," or following "the trod way as marked trees direct." They were as random as nature itself and very few show any mark of the surveyor's compass and chain. Within forty years of the incorporation of the town one hundred and twenty roads had been accepted, often with the condition attached that they should be without expense to the town. Some are overlaid in sections by modern improved roads; some are abandoned but may still be traced by their enclosing stone walls and by pathetic reminders of lost habitations, marked by half-filled cellars and tumbled walls, by fragments of brick scattered about, decayed and dying apple orchards, and, most poignant of all, the rose bush still blooming by the door stone. For those with taste and leisure for antiquarian research, two out of many early roads are here offered.

A road Beginning near Solomon Turners at the Road that Leads from Rindge Beginning at a heap of Stones at the Corner of the log fence Comming throw apart of Solomon Turners Lot and Gowing throw Williams and Samuel Emerys Land and Down Behind Mr Joseph Hoggs Barn to the Road formerly Leid out s^d Road two Roods wide.

Jaffrey April ye 5th 1780.

Jaffrey September 9, 1816.—Then laid out a road beginning at an ash tree about a road south of the bars south of Azeal Gowing's house across the corner of his orchard in a winding direction down the hill to a stake and stones by the log fence on the line between sd Gowing's land and Benjamin Lawrences then through said Lawrence pasture to the north east corner of said Lawrences wheat field on the best ground, then by the east side of said field and wall to some stones on the wall about five rods north of some grape vines then across said Lawrences orchard to a Balm gilead tree then to the road between his house and barn, said road is laid out thre rods wide, and we do apprise the damages as follows to Azeal Gowing forty Dollars and Benjamin Lawrence one hundred & seventy Dollars

Oliver Prescott	}	Selectmen
Jonathan Fox		of
David Jwett		Jaffrey.

In December, 1743, Major Jonathan Hubbard, of the later "Proprietary" of Middle Monadnock, Nathan Heywood (Surveyor of Rowley Canada), and Captain Jonathan Bradstreet were appointed to lay out a road from Lunenburg to Dorchester Canada (Ashburnham) "and the new towns above" (New Ipswich and Rowley Canada).

Six years later, when the town of Middle Monadnock was granted, Jacob Lawrence and Wm. Spaulding were appointed a committee "to lay out a road from No. 2, (Wilton) throu Peterborough Slip to

this Township." An old road plainly visible at many points fifty years ago, as described by Kendall N. Davis, an old resident and native of Sharon, born in 1831, was probably the Lawrence and Spaulding road, as traveled by Colonel Joseph Blanchard and other proprietors from Dunstable and Hollis in the period of settlement. It entered Sharon (Peterborough Slip) from the direction of Wilton and Temple, through Spofford Gap, a few rods south of the present traveled road, in places over bare ledges, after which it passed the "Old Blood Place," and thence across the township to the James Newell place on the Turnpike, where, a few rods north of the present buildings, its exact location is, or was in Mr. Davis' day, shown by the cellar and well of Joel Adams, an early settler in the vicinity. From that point unmistakable signs of an early road have been found around the east side of the present Garfield Hill, leading in the direction of the old sawmill and gristmill, and Boston Road in the south-east part of Middle Monadnock (Squantum Village) as previously described.

COUNTY ROADS

The first roads in a New England township were laid out for local convenience, with little consideration for social and business relations with adjoining towns. But the towns no more than the individual settlers could long remain independent when their borders touched and their common interests compelled unity of action. As their population increased the coast towns became markets for country produce and direct roads were needed in the interests of trade. At the same time adjoining towns were combined into counties for the regulation and control of their regional relations. Roads were the first public utilities of the new towns, and, as they necessarily passed the township boundaries, they could only be laid out and regulated by the superior authority of the Courts of County and State.

Soon after the Revolution, with the great increase of farm to market traffic, there began to be talk in Jaffrey and Rindge of a "County Road" through their borders. With this object in view, a special town meeting was called in Jaffrey in May, 1785, at which it was "voted to choose a Committee of three to join the Rindge Committee to petition the Quarter Sessions for a County Road through Jaffrey on to the County of Hillsborough." It seems not to have been recognized by the two towns of Jaffrey and Rindge, when they voted to join with each other in their appeal, that owing to their relative geographical positions and the location of the inhabitants to be served,

their interests in the attainment of the object sought, a convenient road to Boston, were incompatible. To save expense they must follow, with such variations as required by local conditions, previously used roads, which in Jaffrey called for the improvement of existing roads from west to east by the meeting-house to the southeast corner of the town and thence through the sparsely settled northeast corner of Rindge to New Ipswich in Hillsborough County. On the other hand, existing roads in Rindge and the accommodation of the largest number of its people called for a road diagonally through the center of the township from its southeast to its northwest corner, leaving in the lurch the entire town of Jaffrey except a few families in its southwest corner. To promote this enterprise, so vital to the prosperity of the township, three of the ablest citizens of Jaffrey were chosen. They were Colonel Jedediah Sanger, the dominant citizen and leading business man in the southwestern part of Jaffrey, Captain Roger Gilmore, from the Center, and Lieutenant Benjamin Prescott, from the eastern section near the County line. Many town meetings were held, and the unanimous purpose to secure a road through the center of the township where it would accommodate the largest number of inhabitants was not left in doubt.

On March 14, 1786, the committee to present the case of Jaffrey before the Court's Committee was increased by the addition of two men of judgment and character, Captain William Pope and Lieutenant Joseph Bates, and, to secure their cooperation, though of another county, it was voted that the Selectmen of New Ipswich be notified so that they might be represented at the hearing. As further indication of Jaffrey's desire for a central road the town voted that half the highway money for the year's expenditure should be worked out on the County Road, "provided the Courts Committee lay out a County Road through this town on from the west side of the sd town to the east side or otherwise where another committee chosen by the town shall think best." In anticipation of the favorable action of the Court's Committee on their petition two road surveyors, Captain Spaulding for the west side and Captain Benjamin Prescott for the east side, were chosen with the somewhat dubious charge "to see the same is worked out or collected and Lay out the same to the Best advantage."

At the Court of General Sessions of the Peace holden at Keene on the first Thursday following the Third Tuesday of March, 1786, "the Petition of Jedediah Sanger and others for a road from the southeast part of the County to Keene and Charlestown through Jaffrey and

Marlborough, was heard by the Court and a committee consisting of Isaac Wyman, Benjamin Hall, and Josiah Willard was ordered to examine the premises, notify the selectmen of all the towns concerned, and report accordingly assessing all necessary damages, provided no charge arise to the County." Here at the start was an entirely different proposition submitted to the Court from that proposed by the Jaffrey representatives. It does not appear that the petition of the town of Jaffrey for a road from west to east through the township to the Hillsborough County line, repeatedly voted by the town, was presented to the Court or submitted to the committee appointed for its consideration. With the point of beginning fixed at the extreme southeast corner of the county, its diagonal course through the town of Rindge and the southwestern corner of Jaffrey was inevitable. The road was laid in general over existing highways except for variations as recommended by the committee. The name of Colonel Sanger on the petition is not explained. The road as laid out passed his house and store and through a section where he had a large "potash." He was also a hotel keeper, and is said to have had a large trade with Boston in country produce as well as the product of his "potash." The road as laid out best served his personal interests and that of his neighborhood where he was a leading citizen and large landholder. It appears, however, that he retained the confidence of his fellow citizens to such an extent that he continued to serve on committees chosen to remedy the condition created by the miscarriage of the town's purposes relating to the County Road. The original County Road through Jaffrey and Rindge here described is in part the improved main road through Rindge at the present time, while the section extending to the village of West Rindge from the west line of Jaffrey is a back road now little used, but still with natural attractions to reward the search of the nature lover, who finds time to trace its winding course on a pleasant day in summer or fall. An abstract of the Court's record is here given with brief notes:

"Beginning at the Marlborough Meetinghouse and running on the road as it is now trod near to the dividing line below Mr. Cummings' house," then in new ground, fully described, the road continued about twenty rods to the old road again. Then crossing a bridge by a sawmill and again across new ground in pasture and woodland to Mr. Howard's house, it followed "as the road is trod in Winter by Dea. Floods and so north of the pond to the Marlborough line." From this point (now in Troy) it entered Jaffrey "through the northerly part of a piece of new cleared land now owned

by Capt. Bullard and into the woodland again to the road southwest of a small round hill in the cleared land west of Mr. Page" (Sargent Page). The point of entrance to Jaffrey of the road here described was near the northwest corner of lot 1 in range 6, north of Gap Mountain and thence it followed on or near the course of the present Troy road along the foot of Gap Mountain to the road by the so-called Daniel Adams farm, then as the road is now traveled by the brick house owned by Chester Champney and by the house formerly owned by Jonathan Jewett, now occupied by Hugh Morgan, and onward to the so-called Priest Corners, then the farm of Daniel Priest. To this point the road followed generally a southeasterly course, substantially that of the "Old Boston," or "Great Road." Here it turned at nearly right angles, "through a pair of bars into the cleared land of said Jewett," and "through land of Simon Whitcomb to the road south of said Whitcomb's house, then across said road south of Simon Warrens house," of which traces of the cellar remain on the east side of the road, then southeasterly "along the valley to the old road again to the bridge near Mr. Wilder's house" (Ezra Wilder) and from there "as the road is now traveled to the Jaffrey line." From the Priest Corner, so far as known, this road followed its present course to the town line and crossed into Rindge at the so-called In-gall's Corner. The first house named after crossing the town line was that of John Henderson, who was shortly before this time a resident of Jaffrey. From here the road led over the hill by the present so-called Liberty Jewell place through a region of fine scenic attractions, substantially on its present course, to the south end of Pool Pond near present West Rindge. Among the landmarks mentioned on the way from the Jaffrey line are Lieutenant Adams' house, perhaps on the present Jewell farm, and the house of Lieutenant Jacob Gould, brother of Oliver Gould of Jaffrey. After passing Lieutenant Adams' barn on the south side it crossed new land "coming to the road again on the east side of the hill on the westerly part of Lt. Gould's land," then "turning south of the hill near the north part of Perley Pond through land of said Gould and land of Mr. Colburn and land of Mr. Platts to the road again near Abel Platts Junior's new frame; then as the road is traveled to the east line of Rindge, being the east line of Ebenezer Muzzy's land." This description, however unintelligible to modern understanding, is substantially that of the present road over Jewell hill to West Rindge Village, and thence by the present State Road through Rindge Center to the Massachusetts line at Ashburnham, as now traveled. Abel Platts Junior's house, we are

told, was south of Pool Pond and the Mr. Colburn named, we learn from the *History of Rindge*, was Deacon Ebenezer Colburn, of honored memory, whose homestead was in the region traversed by this road. Ebenezer Muzzy's land at the end of the road in lot 1, range 1, was in the extreme southeast corner of Rindge which is also the southeast corner of Cheshire County, approximately the terminus of New Hampshire State Highway No. 119 at the Massachusetts border. It may be noticed that in the ancient record here cited the name of the pond generally known as Pearly Pond is "Perley Pond," which suggests its derivation from the Perley family of Boxford, Massachusetts, who were among the principal promoters of the former Rowley Canada township, which included this part of Rindge.

The record of the first County Road through Jaffrey and Rindge considerably abbreviated in the abstract given above, closes with the signature of the committee and the notation of acceptance by the Court as follows:

Said road to be three rods wide, all of which is humbly submitted by
 Isaac Wyman [of Keene]
 Josiah Willard [of Keene]

Which report is accepted by the Court and the road ordered to be opened accordingly.

Recorded from the minutes on file by

O. Sparhawk
 Clerk Com. Pleas.

But troubles did not end with the building of the road. Always there was the upkeep, and for what?—to serve Rindge and Marlborough and Keene and Vermont, and all the towns north and south that chose to pass over the County Road without toll but with a monstrous talent for complaint if a horse went lame or a faulty wheel broke down from a defect that could be laid to the road. The general public was not satisfied with a free road as long as there were rocky and marshy sections to rebuild to suit the whim of travelers. In 1787 the long causeway on the County Road on the Jaffrey side of the Marlborough line was a source of complaint, and Colonel Sanger and Jonathan Stanley were chosen agents to mend it.

Again in 1792 complaint was made to the selectmen, Roger Gilmore and Abel Parker, concerning 220 rods of the north part of the County Road in Jaffrey, which was said to be "exceeding rough, rocky and uneven and will require great cost to repair fit for travel." The alternative was to move the road to the east onto better ground. This was done, "Beginning at the east end of the long causeway at a stake and stones in Jaffrey which is near the town line and from thence

southeasterly by the side of the hill by marked trees and stumps to the southeast corner of Lot No. 1, in the 4th range [a point which may be described as just west of the present so-called Stanley house west of the Mountain] thence southerly by marked trees as the best ground will admit 236 rods to the county road." At a legal meeting of the town's voters, called for the purpose, the road then laid out and still traveled was accepted in place of the former section of the County Road complained of and now abandoned.

But the end was not yet. The whole course of the County Road along the foot of Gap Mountain was rough and rocky, and a better road was demanded by the good people of Rindge. They now applied to the County Court for an entirely new section of road, all in Jaffrey territory, running from Lieutenant Alexander Milliken's tavern, now the summer estate of the Pope Yeatman family of Philadelphia, directly across new country in a southeasterly direction to Priest Corner, where it would at a great saving of distance and grade rejoin the formerly laid out part of the County Road. To such a proposition the town of Jaffrey was unanimously opposed. Strong committees were appointed "to prevent the town of Rindge from altering any part of the County Road in Jaffrey."

The following year, November 21, 1794, when the guardians of liberty were again called into session "to see what the town will do in regard to Rindge or any other town altering the County Road through Jaffrey or laying out any new road and act anything thereon as shall be thought proper," determined action was taken. Abel Parker was appointed "agent to prevent there being a committee to make alterations in the county road through this town to Rindge." It was also "Voted to remonstrate against the report of a committee laying out a road through a part of this town, and Adonijah Howe, Abel Parker, Esq., and Coln B. Prescott were appointed to Draught sd remonstrance." With the determined front thus assumed by Jaffrey nothing more was heard from the Rindge Selectmen until 1795, when, on April 20, a town meeting was called on the subject of the County Road and an agent was appointed to attend the Court of Common Pleas "to prevent any alteration in the county road that leads through the west part of this town into Rindge." Again there was a truce until March 7, 1797, when the town chose Joseph Thordike, Esq., and Ensign Simeon Butters agents "to prevent the County road in this town being altered." Upon reading a request of the selectmen or town of Jaffrey to alter the old County Road, and "lay out a new Road from L^t Alex^r Milliken's to Daniel Priests: Voted that

if the town of Rindge will pay all damages and make said piece of Road as good as the Old Road is, when that is completed the town of Jaffrey will lay out and maintain Same. Voted to choose a Com^{ee} to treat with the gentlemen from Rindge being part of their Com^{ee} and Report to the town. Choose Jereme Underwood and Moses Worster for said Com^{ee}. who Reported that they made the afforesd proposals to the said Com^{ee} from Rindge who answered that they had not power to treat with the said Com^{ee} on the subject but said that they took it for granted that the way and manner that the town of Jaffrey had instructed their Com^{ee} to treat with them was a polite Refusal of their Request."

On May 22 of the following year, 1798, it appears that in spite of Jaffrey's polite refusal progress had been made toward the attainment of their goal by the selectmen of Rindge, through an appeal to the Court and by the regular course for such action made and provided, the troublesome road had been laid out according to the petition of the town of Rindge. On this date, May 22, in action upon transcripts of roads brought before the meeting, the selectmen were directed "to enquire of the selectmen of Rindge whether the Road viewed by them from Lt. Milliken's to David Jewetts will give satisfaction to the town of Rindge provided the same be recorded." Apparently no answer having been vouchsafed to their polite inquiry, on August 11, the transcript of the Rindge Road being up for consideration, it was "voted that the transcript of the Rindge Road be pased over and Capt. William Pope be appointed agent to prevent any action Rindge may take to make alterations in the County Road leading to Rindge," the town "leaving the entire matter discretionary with their agent." But it was not until August 15, 1801, that Jaffrey accepted the inevitable and laid out the County Road as demanded by Rindge upon the verdict of the court. It is described as "beginning about six rods westerly of Esq. Milliken's house and thence running in a straight line by stakes 20 rods apart through land of Alex Milliken, David Gilmore, David Jewetts and Daniel Priests land to the old Road west of said Priests buildings, in a straight line one mile and 66 rods long," a mathematical feat of some difficulty, making this road, with one exception, it is believed, the longest stretch of straight road in the township to this day. But even this action did not end the opposition.

The road was stubbornly fought from November 21, 1794, to October 12, 1802, eight years lacking one month and nine days, when the following terms of surrender are recorded:

This certifies that we the subscribers did meet on the Rindge road, so-called, leading from Esq. Milliken's to Mr. Daniel Priests and did agree with the selectmen of Rindge to accept the same and that Jaffrey should keep the same in as good repair as the other leading roads in Rindge and Jaffrey are in, Turnpikes excepted—

Thomas Adams	}	Selectmen
Rufus Houghton		of
Moses Worcester		Jaffrey

It was a famous victory for Rindge, but what good came of it at last we scarce can say. It was a rough and rugged land and little used in later years. Only the major actions in the contest are recorded here. Minor skirmishes are omitted for want of space and oblivion has taken many more. The following figures are random and incomplete abstracts from the records of Jaffrey:

Ten contractors were paid for building walls on the new County Road	\$88. 62
Ensign Simeon Butters, Expense at Court of Common Pleas	18. 00
Ensign Simeon Butters, agent at Court	8. 50
“ “ “ Com ^o Expense	8. 00
“ “ “ “ “	9. 35
James Mann, Inholder, for expense of the Com ^o settling the road between Jaffrey and Rindge	17. 97
David E. Gilmore, one day's work on County Road and 4 young crows	1. 08
Samuel Buss work on rd through Esqr Gilmore's land	2. 67
William Pope Com on Rindge road	6. 37
“ “ Agent “ “ in full	8. 00
Esqr. Thorndike, Rum to encourage the work through Esqr. Gilmore's land	7. 82
Rum and entertainment, Selectmen of Rindge (?)	8. 88
Aaron Rider, Tavern keeper, for rum	1. 55
Joseph Perkins, Rum found on County Road	1. 40
County Road tax worked out to Jan. 23, 1798	182. 23
Land Damage	478. 50

(A true account Errors and omissions Excepted)

\$853. 94

The extraordinary controversy outlined in the preceding pages, carried on for eight years between the two towns, was happily never repeated. Rindge won a complete victory. For this amazing achievement in compelling Jaffrey to build a road it did not want, we bow to the superior influence and acumen of the selectmen of Rindge, especially to Lieut. Benjamin Foster of the old Rowley and Boxford stock, who served as town clerk and chairman of the board of selectmen for fifteen years in succession, including the years of the road controversy with Jaffrey. According to the history of the town he so ably represented, Lieutenant Foster was, in the good old phrase, a man of parts, and, as a schoolmaster of the old school, he was generally honored with the title of Master Foster.

Another member of the Rindge board at this time was Ebenezer Stratton, a former citizen and selectman of Jaffrey, whose residence before removing to Rindge was in the west part of Jaffrey in the immediate section where the new Rindge road was demanded and laid. It cannot be doubted that Mr. Stratton's knowledge of the lay of the land in Jaffrey and the defects of the County Road, as then traveled, was of great service to his colleagues in their choice of the route for their new road. Notwithstanding the great cost of the Rindge road and the bitter feeling it engendered, it was doubtless a wholesome lesson in the broader obligations of citizenship, in County, State, and National affairs, that was enforced upon the town of Jaffrey in its eight years' contest with its neighbor.

THE SECOND COUNTY ROAD

The decision of the Court's Committee in favor of Rindge upon the location of the first County Road did not quiet the demand of the Jaffrey petitioners for a road through the center of the town. Scarcely had the Court's decision been rendered when a town meeting was called, on August 9th, 1786, to choose a committee to act with New Ipswich and the northeast corner of Rindge, a locality not served by the road recently laid out through that town, "to Vew roads and Report which they judge most proper for the County road." For this responsible service, strange to relate, the old road committee of Jaffrey, which had so completely failed in its former charge, was again chosen, with Joseph Thorndike, Esquire, serving in place of Joseph Bates, and was given full power to petition the Courts of both Cheshire and Hillsborough Counties for such a location as might best meet their needs.

From the west line of Jaffrey, past the meeting-house to Spofford's Mills (now East Jaffrey), there was no difference of opinion upon the location of the projected new County Road. From the latter point two routes were offered for consideration. The first, on the general course of the present so-called Turnpike, found a strong advocate in Colonel Benjamin Prescott, a member of the former road committee. This route led through Tophet Swamp in Sharon to New Ipswich, by the farm of Nathan Merriam, near the north end of Barrett Mountain on the way to the New Ipswich center village. This route apparently had the advantage of shortened distance at the expense of higher construction cost over that by way of the present Garfield Hill and Captain David Sherwin's mills at Squantum. Here the road crossed the line into Rindge and thenceforward followed the course

of the old Boston or New Ipswich road past Hubbard Pond, through the northeast corner of Rindge to the New Ipswich town line. With these two routes in view it was voted to "petition the Selectmen of New Ipswich to lay out a Peice of a Road from Mr. John Browns to Mr. Isaac Howes, also from Mr. Merriams to Slip Line [Sharon] through Tophet Swamp." The pieces of road petitioned for were apparently in the roads later known as the North New Ipswich (Tophet Swamp) route.

The investigation continued for another year when, June 26, 1788, Deacon Eleazer Spofford, Captain Pope, and Captain Prescott were chosen to meet a committee from New Ipswich "to see if Jaffrey can be accommodated with a road through New Ipswich." In September a special town meeting was called to hear the report of the Jaffrey committee, but unfortunately its report, doubtless oral, does not appear on the record. The increasing determination of the town to secure its object is shown by the action of the meeting in enlarging its road committee to eleven members from among the strongest representative citizens of the town. Jaffrey was at this time burdened with extra expense upon its existing County Road, but, not to be defeated in its purpose to have a highway in the County Road class, regardless of the cooperation of its neighbors, it voted at the October 27 meeting in 1792, to expend "one hundred pounds to be Laid on the County road," and "two hundred pounds to be laid out on the road from the long Causaway at Marlborough line across the middle of the town by the meeting house so unto Rindge line at Capt Sharwins on the road leading to Ipswich." It was further voted that the "committee examine the roads, and make such alterations as are necessary where such Sums of money shall be Laid out and to see that the work is faithfully done." For this important service a new committee, consisting of Roger Gilmore, Samuel Buss, and Eleazer Spofford, was chosen, and interesting landmarks were brought to light by its report, dated March 2, 1793.

The improvement of the projected County Road was evidently assigned to responsible persons along its course through the town. At a meeting on March 5, 1793, Lieutenant Milliken was entrusted with "his proportion of the two hundred pound . . . according to the Distance of the way from Mr Sam^l Joslens [east of Adams' corner now abandoned] to Mr Asa Thomsons [summer home of Captain E. W. Hamlen] sd Milliken to make Sd road good to the exceptance of the committee." At the same meeting the committee report was accepted "as far as it extend from the alterations beyound Mr Thom-

sons barn and then to Dⁿ Spoffords old Mills [above present mill dam in East Jaffrey].” Other alterations in the course of the road are found in the report of the town’s committee chosen in conjunction with a committee from New Ipswich, which is here given in full for its record of the ancient landmarks by which it was laid.

We the Subscribers being appointed Committes by the towns of New Ipswich and Jaffrey to act in conjunction to examine and explore the Ground for a more Convenient Road from Dⁿ Spofford Mills in Jaffrey to Mr Nathan Marriams in New Ipswich do report to our Constituants as followes that we have examined the ground for a Road from Colⁿ Prescottts towards Mr. Mansfields and also the old north road—and in our opinions neither of them will accomodate the publick or our Constituants so well as the old Road which is now trod from Dⁿ Spoffords mills by Colⁿ Prescottts and L^t Sharwins to M^r Marriams therefore the Committee give their opinion in favour of Said makeing the Turnings and alterations hereafter mentioned (viz) beginning on the South side of the road about ten rods west of the South east corner of Den^r Spoffords land and from thence South easterly by two green pine trees on the South Side of the Ridge south west of Mr. Keys and from thence easterly as the best ground will admitt to Auther Taylors line and from thence easterly in Said Taylors land on the best ground to the old Road at the west end of the Causey east of said Taylors house again Turning South near the top of the hill west of M^r Haywoods and continuing on the south side of the old road to Said Haywoods house there coming into the old road—again Turning at L^t Sharwins Barn south of the old road and from thence across the the line of Jaffrey town and in again into the old road at the tope of the first hill.

the remainder of the report respects Rindge and N Ipswich

The foregoing report Sighnerd by

Jeremiah Prichard	} Committes
Ephr ^m Adams Jur	
Roger Gilmore	
Sam ^l Buss	

Dated May th 3 1793

No further action appears in relation to the County Road to New Ipswich until at “a Court of General Sessions of the Peace holden at Charlestown within and for the County of Cheshire on the first Thursday following the fourth Tuesday of September Anno Domini 1794”

The Committee appointed to lay out a County road by the meetinghouse in Jaffrey & so forward to the East side line of the County report as follows: beginning at the east side line of the county of Cheshire between the towns of New Ipswich and Rindge on the road a little easterly of Mr. William Waltons [Hall place in Rindge, now abandoned] house & from thence westerly continuing on said road to the west end of a bridge near an old dam which is in the town of Rindge at the easterly part of the plain so called; thence leaving the road & running westerly near a pit where gravel has been taken and forward as the best ground will admit unto the old road at the west part of the said plain at the top of the second hill southerly from Capt. David Sherwins; then northerly on said

road to the south line of Jaffrey and to said Sherwins house; then leaving the old road and running westerly by the potash to the old road by a new rail fence in Mr. Hunts land; then on the old road to the pond and to a green white pine tree near the south end of Lieut. Jacob Pierces land; then leaving the old road and running northerly a little east of a dry white pine tree in said Pierces pasture and along near the east side of said Pierces mowing ground and by the east end of the hill as the best ground will admit into Deacon Spaffords logging path, so-called; then on and near said path to the old road; then on said road by Lt. Amos Stickneys house & to the bridge near deacon Spaffords old mill dam; then on said road to the east line of Esquire Gilmores land and to the long causey, so called; then leaving the old road and bearing westerly by the north point of the swamp as the best ground will admit till it strikes the old road a little south east of John Cutters barn [L. H. Wetherell place]; then westerly on said road to the meeting-house; then northwesterly on said road to John Buckleys house [summer residence of Prof. R. H. George]; then westerly on said road by Mr. Thomas Briants house and by Ensign Joseph Wilders house and north of Samuel Joslins house and to Lieut. Alexander Millikens barn at the south end thereof; then on said road as it is now traveled by Asa Thompsons house [Captain Hamlen's place] until it strikes the Rindge county road so called near the south east corner of lot number one in the fourth range of lots in Jaffrey aforesaid [the Stanley place near the present Troy line]. Said road is to be three rods wide and is reported as a county road.

Whereupon it is ordered by the court that so much of the foregoing report as describes the road between Lt. Amos Stickneys and David Strattons be accepted.

Attest: Thos. Sparhawk, Clerk

Rec. by S. Hale, Clerk.

In the foregoing description the "old dam" mentioned was that at the outlet of Hubbard Pond for the storage of water for the Squantum mills. In early deeds it is called the "old Leland dam," probably from the name of the builder, either Isaac Leland, who lived near Contoocook Lake, a Revolutionary soldier killed in battle September, 1777, or his son, John, who removed from town in 1790. As it was called the "old dam" at an early date, it is probable that it was built by Isaac Leland. The "plain" above Squantum Village has borne that designation from the first settlement of the region. It is the tract now occupied by the Civilian Conservation Corps Camp No. 118, and extends from the camp site to Hubbard Pond. Captain David Sherwin's house then stood on the site of the Annett Homestead, with the barn on the opposite side of the road. The buildings were removed by John A. Prescott and are now owned by Mrs. Anna E. Robbins in Squantum Village. Captain Sherwin's "potash" was on the town line at the rear of the Robbins Homestead, near a never-failing spring that furnished water for leaching the ashes in the manufacture of potash and pearlash, then important articles of commerce. Mr. Hunt's "new rail fence" was on the eastern boundary of the farm now owned by Frederick A. Stratton, and the proposed

change of highway through Jacob Pierce's pasture was on the general course of the present Squantum Road, which was laid out nearly a hundred years after it was ordered by the Court's Committee, to avoid the steep grade on the north side of Pierce's hill, by the present home of William Oscar Howard. Lieutenant Amos Stickney lived on the place now called Red Mill Inn, and the bridge near Deacon Spofford's "old mill dam" was near the present buildings on the river bank owned by Louis Cournoyer. The "Long Causey" was not so long as might be inferred, it being the filled ground on the road between the present homestead of Delcie D. Bean and the rising ground near the home of Chester Chamberlain. The further landmarks on the newly laid County Road are explained by interpolations in the record.

The County Road, as now laid out by the Court's Committee, seems to have followed the course intended by the first petitioners for a road through Jaffrey and Rindge to the Hillsborough County line at New Ipswich, as the old road was then traveled. From the New Ipswich line the road, instead of bearing south to its former mountain crossing, between Barrett and Pratt summits, now took a more northerly course, by a road in part abandoned, to the house of Nathan Merriam, on or near the place now owned by E. Koski, and thence followed the road as now traveled past the former Brown homestead at the height of land (the site of the present Wapack Lodge) to New Ipswich Center village.

The Court's decision was a disappointment to Benjamin Prescott, who had advocated the Tophet Swamp route through Sharon, regardless of the expense involved. But not to be deprived of the advantage of the County Road in his business as taverner, with great courage and enterprise he built a direct road for himself from the road near his house through new and difficult ground a mile and more to a point of intersection with the County Road east of Saddle Hill near Hubbard Pond. This hill, one of the earliest named landmarks in the vicinity, apparently took its name from a depression, or saddle, in the ridge of which it formed a part. There was another explanation that came from far back in the old families of the vicinity, of a drover murdered for his money and of a decayed saddle and the skeleton of a man unearthed near this hill many years later.

The purpose of Prescott's road was to divert travel from the County Road to his tavern and thence to Spofford's Mills and the main County Road. In 1797 it was accepted by the town and continued in use until after the building of the turnpike road, when it was abandoned. Tradition tells of an immense volume of traffic

over this newly improved County Road, which is not improbable in consideration of the fact that Rindge, New Ipswich, and many other towns along the line all the way to Vermont then had more inhabitants than at the present time, and that before the coming of the railroad all the traffic of an extensive inland territory tributary to the Boston market converged upon this road. Tavern keeping became a profitable business. Nathan Hunt kept tavern on the farm at present owned by Frederick A. Stratton; Captain Sherwin was a licensed innholder at his house in Squantum Village; and farther on the road in Rindge Levi Mansfield kept a public house for many years. The business so established continued in lessening volume after the building of the turnpike along a nearly parallel course. The explanation in a measure is found in the aversion of the traveling public to the payment of tolls. It is said that the first stages between Keene and Boston often passed over this road, but, like many other roads of the period, it was laid out with too little consideration for grades, which became a severe handicap with the growth of heavier traffic in later years. The first and second "Rindge Hills"—then and now so-called—between Captain Sherwin's and the plain, were much steeper than at present, as may be seen by the elevated banks beside the road, and they were nearly prohibitive to heavy loads, notwithstanding the custom of the freighters of traveling together and "doubling" on the hills.

When Rindge demanded a road through the southwest part of Jaffrey, Jaffrey paid the cost, but when the public good required a new road through the northeast corner of Rindge, Rindge demurred at the expense involved and refused to meet the road already built by Jaffrey to the extent of its territory. The change was, nevertheless, made, to the great advantage of the traveling public during the succeeding years of its use.

The petition for final alteration of the second County Road tells its own story:

Levi Mansfield & others of the town of Rindge and Jaffrey, April 1, 1800, shew that the town of Jaffrey have some time since laid out a new road, beginning at the County road leading from an old potash near Ingalls mills to the south east corner of said Jaffrey till the same meets the north line of said town of Rindge, that said road as it is now laid out is much for the public good and will greatly accommodate and ease the travel to Boston as that said new Road is wrought upon and almost rendered fit for travelling as that said hew road will be useless & the labor thereon expended lost unless a road is laid through a barren corner of said Rindge so as to strike the County road on the east side of Saddle hill so called as that the inhabitants of said Rindge have been requested to lay out a road through the same Rindge in so far as it [is] necessary to lead from said

Jaffrey line that the same shall come to said Saddle hill but utterly refuse to do so wherefore the petitioners pray that a committee of the honourable court lay the road as above and assess damages &c

This petition was presented at September term 1798 at which time the court ordered Jeremiah Stiles, Phinehas Farrar & Joseph Frost Esqr, committee at Expense of the petitioners to act upon the premises and to notify the selectmen of Jaffrey & Rindge that they assess damages if any are likely to arise and report accordingly petition continued from term to term to April term 1800, and now committee report that they have laid out a road. Beginning at a potash . . . [by courses as recorded to the Rindge line] and then to where it intersects the old road as may be seen by a plan of both roads on file as the new road being 336 rods & half and the old being 436 rods & half makes a saving of 104 & a half. 3 rods wide.

Committee Estimate damages	Benj. Prescott	\$10.00
	Widow Gould	5.00

Court order that sd road be opened by the first day of October next.

Attest: Thos Sparhawk

S. Hale Clerk.

The road as here laid out and made a part of the County Road is still in use. It follows the left fork of the roads above Squantum Village, and entering Rindge at the Southeast corner of Jaffrey, re-joins the road over the plain near the so-called Mud Pond.

Following the Civil War the hill country traversed by the improved County Road through Rindge, once a region of prosperous farms and many attractions of nature, rapidly declined in population. Not a house along its course remains standing. Its hills and valleys have yielded their harvest of second growth forest to the mills and now in part a State Forest Reservation it has been for nearly three years the location of a Civilian Conservation Corps Camp, by whose labor its roads have been restored and a new interest in its recreational features has been created.

THE DUKE OF KENT

With the improvement of the main thoroughfare in Jaffrey, travel through the town greatly increased. Tavern keeping became a business of importance, and the attention paid to the care of the County Roads is ample evidence of their use and value.

In 1794 the long road through Jaffrey was accepted and recorded as a "County Road," and the same year it was associated with an incident unique in Jaffrey history. At this time the Duke of Kent, otherwise known as Prince Edward, son of George III of England, and father of the future Queen Victoria, was commander of the British forces in Canada, and once had occasion to travel the roads of New England in winter. In the *Farmers' Weekly Museum*, a newspaper published in Walpole, N. H., February 7, 1794, is found the

following news item: "Prince Edward, son of King George III of England, on Tuesday last [February 4th] passed through this town [Walpole] on his way from Canada to Boston from which place he is to sail for the West Indies to take command of His Majesty's troops there."

It is conjectured that this overland journey in mid-winter was necessitated by ice closing the St. Lawrence River to navigation by war vessels, which might otherwise have been placed at the Royal Duke's disposal in Canada for his voyage. It is said that the party passed through Keene on the next stage of their journey, and were entertained over night at the Richardson Tavern on the site of the present Y. M. C. A. building in that city. Their next stopping place was in Groton, Massachusetts, where a Grand Ball was given in honor of the Duke and his retinue at the Groton Inn, an event which has remained of social and historical interest in that town to the present day.

As the shortest and most traveled road from Keene to Groton at that time was through Jaffrey it is a fair assumption that the gay cavalcade passed along our roads and through our great woods, then matching anything to be seen on their long journey, and our sturdy farmers, who still remembered Bunker Hill and Bennington, had their first and only glimpse of the nobility of England as the well-mounted company of the Royal Duke sped by our familiar landmarks—Asa Thompson's barn, Lt. Milliken's farm, the meeting-house, Danforth's Tavern where very likely they stopped for a warming cup, according to the custom of the road, Deacon Spofford's sawmill, the old gristmill by the road at Captain Sherwin's, and onward over the mountain ridge to New Ipswich, leaving no names behind, but only a bit of pageantry and a vague wonder that lingered long as to whence they came and the manner of men they were.

THE TURNPIKE



The Third New Hampshire Turnpike Road was incorporated by act of legislature in 1799. The incorporators were Frederick W. Geyer, Benjamin West, and John Bellows, of Boston, Benjamin Bellows, of Walpole, New Hampshire, and Amasa Allen, Daniel Newcomb, Peleg Sprague, and Josiah Richardson, of Keene, New Hamp-

shire. By the act of incorporation the parties were empowered to lay out and keep in repair a turnpike road, four rods wide, from Bellows Falls, in Walpole, on the Connecticut River, through Keene, toward Boston, to the Massachusetts line, a distance of fifty miles, with the usual privileges pertaining to such a corporation.

Upon the question of the location of the road through Jaffrey and New Ipswich the old controversy of the north and south New Ipswich routes again burst into flame. At the first meeting of the incorporators, held in Keene, September 26, 1800, Daniel Hawkins, Ezra Pierce, and Roger Thompson were chosen a committee to survey and lay out the route for the proposed road and report at a later meeting. Subsequent meetings were held at Keene and New Ipswich, and at the inns of Jacob Danforth and Benjamin and Oliver Prescott in Jaffrey. After these hearings the committee reported in favor of the "south New Ipswich route with variations as shall be found convenient." The report was accepted and it was voted to lay out the road accordingly. Under this vote, the road would have followed the former County Road through Squantum Village, with such minor variations as local conditions might require.

But Colonel Prescott was still set upon the "turnpike" idea of a straight road regardless of obstacles. *The History of New Ipswich* records that the project as advocated by Prescott for the Tophet Swamp route was very strongly opposed by those in the western part of that town through whose land it was to pass, who wished to have it take a more southerly route." Under such circumstances it was more than a nine days' wonder by what powers of persuasion and what mighty magic it was that at their next meeting, October 31, 1800, the directors reversed their former action and voted "that the road be laid on the north New Ipswich route instead of the south as formerly established." This controversy is clearly that to which allusion was made by Judge Joel Parker in his Centennial Address in Jaffrey in 1873, when, in referring to the location of the turnpike, he said that "in a poetical New Year's address, sent from Parnassus to New Ipswich soon after, it was said that the muse could relate

'How Prescott and Merriam made a stand
And ranged the road to suit their land'."

This they undeniably did to the good of future generations. In further comment the orator gave his boyhood recollection of Colonel Prescott as one "of the tall men of Jaffrey, of powerful frame, and an influential man in the town. If any man," said the orator, "could bend a turnpike, he might be expected to do it." Upon this point

it should be stated, in the interest of historical accuracy, that Colonel Prescott did not bend the turnpike; he straightened it, a feat of even more difficulty, for which Time long ago found for him credit and justification. No further complaint upon this score is found in the records of Jaffrey, but in New Ipswich the building of the road is said to have given "rise to riotous proceedings by no means creditable to those concerned." One party sustained the contractors in breaking through private lands, while another did what it could, by threats and annoyances, to drive off the working crew. "Ploughs, shovels, and other implements were carried off or mutilated, and not a few bruised heads and lawsuits resulted." (*History of New Ipswich.*)

By terms of its charter the Turnpike Corporation was authorized to erect gates or turnpikes on the road, appoint toll gatherers to collect the tolls, at rates specified, from all persons traveling the road with horses, carts, and carriages, and to stop any person or persons using the road by riding, leading, or driving any "horse, cattle, hogs, sheep, sulkey, chair, chaise, phaton, coach, chariot, cart, wagon, sley, sled, or other carriage of burthen or pleasure, from passing through the said gates or turnpikes until they shall respectively have paid the same, that is to say that for every mile of said road and so in proportion for a greater or less distance, etc. . . . for every fifteen sheep or hogs one cent, for every fifteen cattle or horses two cents, for every horse and his rider, or led horse, three-fourths of one cent, for every sulkey, chair or chaise with one horse and two wheels, one-and-one-half cents, and for every chariot, coach, stage, wagon, phaton, or chaise with two horses and four wheels, three cents . . . and for other carriages of Pleasure the like sums according to the number of wheels and horses drawing the same."

By a further regulation, the toll gates were to be left open when the toll gatherers were absent; and exceptions were made of persons passing with horse or carriage to or from public worship, or to or from any mill, or on the common or ordinary family concerns in the same town.

The admittance of the road to the town was for some time a matter of sharp contention in Jaffrey, but here again the town found itself overridden by the authority of the State. When the petition of Frederick W. Geyer and others concerning a right of way through the town was presented at a special town meeting, November 18, 1799, it was promptly voted to pass over the article, and the following year, when action was called for upon the question of allowing the turnpike corporation the use of so much of the old road through the town as might be necessary for its purpose, this proposal received

like summary treatment. The experience of the town with its County roads seems to have predisposed the voters against the interference of County or State in what they regarded as a town affair. It was the first experience of the town of Jaffrey in dealing with corporate powers. The gates erected on public highways were a nuisance, and the demand for tolls was a constant affront to a people unfamiliar with such an intrusion upon the freedom of the road to which they had been bred. Unfortunately, as a first move, it served the purposes of the corporation to erect a gate south of Deacon Spofford's mills, on the location of the present bridge over the dam by White Brothers' Mills in East Jaffrey, a strategic point where it was possible for The Turnpike Company to hold up the entire travel through the town. Upon complaint a town meeting was called at which it was voted that the corporation have thirty days to remove the gate, which motion was then amended to extend the time to the tenth of January, when, if not removed, the selectmen were "directed to move sd gate." In justification of its action the town claimed that it was a violation of the act of incorporation "to erect a gate across any part of any road which was at the time used as a public highway." Winter passed and the offensive gate remained in place until March 1, 1803, when action was taken rebuking the selectmen for their dilatory tactics in allowing the gate to remain in defiance of the orders of the town. In a stirring resolution adopted in town meeting "the pernicious consequences" of allowing any set of men "such influence that the laws of the State cannot be duly executed" was suitably characterized. An entirely new board of selectmen was elected and, in unmistakable language, they were "solemnly enjoined . . . to remove the gate aforesaid with every thing appertaining to the same which said inhabitants view to be a public nuisance within twenty-four hours from this time. . . . and the sd inhabitants hereby pledge themselves that they will support and save harmless the Selectmen for doing their duty as prescribed by this vote."

The mandate of the people was obeyed. That night, by persons unknown, the toll gate, with everything pertaining to the same, was torn down and thrown into the river. As might be supposed, lawsuits followed. In May a town meeting was called to see what action should be taken in "defence of the action of the Proprietors of the Third New Hampshire Turnpike against the Selectmen of Jaffrey." The inhabitants again coolly voted to pass over the article. David Smiley, attorney at law and member of the board of selectmen, represented the town in this action, and after a year and a half he

was paid "forty-five dollars in full for money expended in defence of the action of the Proprietors of sd New Hampshire Turnpike Road against the selectmen for removing the gate near Dea. Spoffords."

In 1803 the town ordered a survey of the former County Road from the Marlborough line to Colonel Prescott's, "particularly noting the several places in said road covered by the turnpike & likewise those places which are shut up or despoiled in consequence of making said turnpike road." The survey was duly made, and revealed so many places of contact as to complicate greatly the problem of the care and repair of the road and to be a constant source of irritation between the turnpike corporation and the town.

Following the removal of the turnpike gate from the bridge near Deacon Spofford's mill it was set up in Sharon, where traces of the cellar of the toll house may still be seen on the north side of the present road, about one hundred rods east of the Jaffrey and Sharon town line, and opposite a walled-in field of eight by twenty rods, generally known in the vicinity at that time as "Gleason's Acre." In its new location the turnpike gate, though less offensive to the inhabitants of Jaffrey, was easily evaded by the traveling public which soon learned the various means of passing it by. To accomplish this many teamsters continued to use the County Road through Squantum Village, and at a considerable outlay of labor and expense some one thought to perform a public service by cutting a road, enclosed by gates and bars, across from the County Road near Saddle Hill to a point beyond the newly erected gate in Sharon, and thus to gain free passage through Jaffrey and New Ipswich to the next gate on the turnpike east or west. To stop this leak of revenue the gate was again moved eastward into the town of New Ipswich near Barrett Mountain.

But, notwithstanding its defects and lack of popular support, the turnpike brought a greatly increased volume of travel through Jaffrey that was of considerable advantage to the town. Colonel Prescott, who was a contractor in building the road, was also a stockholder and director in the enterprise, and agent for the sale of its stock. For a few years the business paid small dividends, and promised larger results as its connections extended northwestward and brought in a constantly increasing traffic over its road. The Third New Hampshire Turnpike was an integral part of the old "straight road to Boston," which ran through Townsend, Pepperell, Groton, Littleton, Acton, Concord, Lexington, and Cambridge. By a later Massachusetts charter the turnpike was extended to Townsend, and by a like extension in

New Hampshire, from Hale's Bridge in Walpole, it was laid out and chartered to Charlestown on the road to Hanover and Dartmouth College. In the rapid extension of the stage service, after 1800, it became a part of the post road from Boston by way of Keene to Walpole, Rutland, Middlebury, Burlington, Montreal, and Quebec.

Few of the turnpike companies of New England were organized with better prospects of success than the Third New Hampshire. The states of Vermont and New York, extending to Canada and the Great Lakes, were being rapidly developed, and it was freely predicted that this was to be one of the great roads of America. But, as soon appeared, it had one serious drawback. As in the layout of the County Road too little consideration had been given to the avoidance of grades or choice of ground, and as the new sections were much of the way laid over soft earth, it was handicapped both by quagmire and mountain. The grades through Marlborough and over the south shoulder of Monadnock in Jaffrey were especially difficult, and the same may be said of its course through New Ipswich, where, as Chandler's *History* quotes the statement of an early resident: "Its location was as bad as could well be, and was laid out on the idea that the most direct course was both the shortest and most expeditious, hence there was tugging over the summit of steep hills when it would have been as near to go round them on nearly level ground." This condition soon had its natural effect.

In 1805 the Fitzwilliam Turnpike was built, which in 1807 connected with the newly incorporated Rindge Turnpike, extending from the Center of Troy through Fitzwilliam and Rindge to the southeast corner of that town, on the course of the first County Road through Rindge. This road, without the handicap of the excessive grades of the Third New Hampshire Turnpike through Jaffrey, greatly reduced the traffic over the latter road, which, with its high cost of maintenance, soon ceased to meet expenses, and in a few years its shares were reduced to a small fraction of their nominal value, a condition that soon became common with nearly all the turnpike companies of New England.

In May, 1813, the turnpike having ceased to be remunerative, a meeting of its stockholders was held at Oliver Prescott's tavern in Jaffrey, "to see if the proprietors will petition the legislature for leave to discontinue the whole or any part of the road, or if they will tax the shares to defray the expense of repairing the road." The meeting adjourned, apparently without action, to Mellen's Tavern in Keene on the twentieth of the same month. From this time there

is evidence of neglect of the care of the road, and at the same time the improvement of town roads. Competition with the more favorably laid turnpikes to the south and the constant and increasing evasion of tolls had so depleted its revenues that much of the time gates unfavorably located were left untended and long sections of the road practically abandoned.

On December 8, 1823, an auction was held at New Ipswich of the shares of the Third New Hampshire Turnpike, "or such number as may be sufficient for the payment of a \$15.00 assessment on each share," and two hundred to two hundred and fifty shares were offered for sale beginning with number 2 and ending with number 296, with some gaps in the series. It seems to have been the policy of the Prescotts at this time to acquire control by the purchase of shares at a low price and to turn the road over to the towns, on the assumption that a free road, maintained by the towns, would be of sufficient advantage to their tavern business to warrant the expense involved.

In 1822 a proposal was made to the town of Jaffrey, which was accepted, to keep the road in good repair for two years on condition that the gates be removed, and about the same time, by a similar arrangement, the road was opened in New Ipswich and Keene.

In August, 1823, a meeting was called at Colonel Oliver Prescott's tavern in Jaffrey to consider "in addition to ordinary business the subject of opening the gates and abandoning the road." This was followed on September 5, by an advertisement in which "The Citizens of Vermont and New Hampshire are notified that the gates are removed from the Third New Hampshire Turnpike Road and no toll taken from Bellows Falls through Keene, Jaffrey, New Ipswich and Townsend to Boston."

In 1824 the two year limitation in which the town was to keep the turnpike in repair was removed, and it was laid out as a town road.

Up to the opening of the turnpike the use of wheeled vehicles other than the rude ox cart had been found impracticable throughout northern New England, but now, in rapid succession, came the latest creations in the carriage maker's art. The first to appear was the chaise, in common parlance the "two-wheeled shay." In 1804 there were five of these vehicles in town which were taxed to the following owners: David Gilmore, Alexander Milliken, Robinson Perkins, Eleazer Spofford, and Joseph Thorndike. In 1805 Deacon Spofford was taxed for a pleasure carriage valued at one hundred dollars, which plainly indicated a latest model.

STAGE COACHES AND TAVERNS

In 1802 Dearborn Emerson started a line of stages over the middle Post Road, in part the Third New Hampshire Turnpike, from Boston through Concord, Groton, New Ipswich, Jaffrey, Marlborough, and Keene, to Walpole, running twice a week and carrying both express and passengers and connecting at Hale's Bridge, Walpole, for points beyond. Previous to this time the fare from Boston to Keene had been \$6.00, then \$5.00, and now by the new line it was reduced to \$4.50, and the fare to New Ipswich became \$3.25. On the first day's



ALEXANDER MCNEAL'S TAVERN—THE FIRST TAVERN IN JAFFREY

travel these coaches reached New Ipswich, and the next day completed the journey to Walpole, returning on the two succeeding days. A new age of progress had dawned. Barriers were being cleared away and men were brought into a wider acquaintance with each other.

There were taverns in Jaffrey in 1773, before the town was incorporated, but it was not until the dawn of the nineteenth century, with its new era of road building, that taverns in the modern sense were known outside of the larger towns. In 1802 the road from Boston to Keene was a recognized thoroughfare recorded in *The Old Farmer's Almanack* for that year, in a list headed,

ROADS

To the principal Towns on the Continent, from *Bofton*, with the Names of those who keep Houfes of Entertainment.

Road from <i>Bofton</i> to <i>Keene</i> in <i>New Hampshire</i> .		
To Cambridge	Brown	3
Lexington	Munroe	8
Concord	Richardfon	8
Littleton	Kidder	9
Groton	Richardfon	10
Warren		9

Townfend	Stone	1
Jaffray	Prefcot	15
Part of New-Ifwich	Mulliken	5
Marlborough	Sweetfer &	
	Longley	13
Keene	Wells & Edwards	6
		<hr/> 87

At this time, Benjamin Prescott had been keeping tavern for several years at his house on the farm now owned by Benjamin G. Wilson, and, as a part of his equipment in 1779, he had built a malt



THE PAINTED ROOM AT PRESCOTT'S INN

house, (see page 104), the first for many miles around. With the turnpike under construction, Benjamin Prescott and his son, Oliver, just coming of age, with great courage and enterprise, in 1802, built the Prescott's Inn on the turnpike on land adjoining the original homestead. This house, completed in 1803, was of brick, two stories in height, and with its barns and outbuildings was one of the largest and best known taverns on the turnpike. The house and its main barn, one hundred and two feet in length, are still standing, but many other outbuildings, including two barns and a hoghouse, said to have been one hundred feet in length, have in the course of years been torn down or sold for removal to other farms.

The Prescott sign, which swung from a crossbeam over two upright posts in front of the house, was elliptical in form and about four feet by two in its longer and shorter diameters. After its closing as a public house the Prescott Inn remained in possession of the



family until after the death of the builder and his son, when it passed into other hands and has remained a farmhouse to the present time.

Another important tavern on the road in Jaffrey, at the building of the turnpike road, was Danforth's Tavern at Jaffrey Center, a col-

lection of buildings consisting of a dwelling house, a tavern with dance hall and all accessories, barns, sheds, and blacksmith shop, practically filling the triangular lot on the head of the main street, now known as Cutter Park. Another early tavern was built by Benjamin Cutter at the northeast corner of the Common, of which the main building is now the summer residence of Endicott Marean. This also had extensive barns and outbuildings, filling the space from the main house to the gateway of the cemetery at the east end of the horsesheds connected with the meeting-house. The Cutter sign, bearing the name J. CUTTER, who succeeded his brother Benjamin as proprietor, with the date, 1802, and also bearing the device of a demure fox scanning all who approached the door, is still a prized possession of the town, having been received in 1930 as a bequest from a descendant of Joseph Cutter living in California.

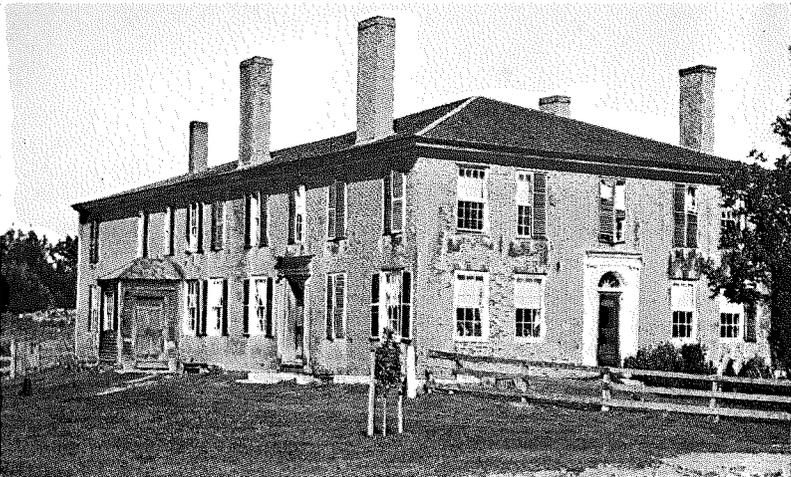
Another important tavern of the turnpike days was the Milliken Tavern on the foothills of Monadnock, now the summer residence of the Pope Yeatman family of Philadelphia. This house, erected by Alexander Milliken, an early settler, is said to have been the first brick house built in the township. In February, 1808, the Milliken Tavern, then offered for sale, was advertised as follows:

A farm in Jaffrey, 220 acres, on Turnpike Boston to Canada, Large dwelling-house of which the outside is of brick. 3 barns, 33 x 28, 42 x 30, 70 x 40. Blacksmith shop. Large number sheds and outhouses, in good repair. Water brought in logs to the buildings. Well situated for a tavern and has been improved as such for several years.

Here was a typical New England tavern of the better class of that period. No sale having been consummated, the tavern remained under the control of the Milliken family until 1823, when it became the property of Tilly Whitcomb of Boston, who may be counted our first summer resident.

Tilly Whitcomb, an innholder on Court Street, and one of the best known citizens of Boston in his day, was proprietor of a famous Concert Hall at the corner of Hanover and Court Streets. This hall, considered the first of its class in the city, was a fashionable resort for dances, theatricals, dinners, and other assemblies of social consequence from before the Revolution well into the nineteenth century. It was in its early days headquarters for the "Sons of Liberty," and before and during the siege of Boston plays were given there by British officers. After the Revolution it became the quarters of the Society of the Cincinnati.

It is probable that Mr. Whitcomb came to Jaffrey on account of



MILLIKEN TAVERN (above)
PRESOTT TAVERN (below)

ill health. The town was no longer isolated, and Boston stages passed his door every day. But unfortunately he came too late to lend his fame to the attractions of Jaffrey as a resort for health and pleasure. Tilly Whitcomb died in Jaffrey, March 14, 1824, aged 56. He was succeeded by John C. Felt, not a taverner, but a greatly respected citizen of the town for many years.

In 1807 a line of mail stages began making regular trips from Boston to Keene in a day, leaving Boston at four A. M. and arriving in Keene at eight P. M. At this time the horses were changed at Concord, Groton, Townsend, New Ipswich and at Jaffrey. Townsend was the half-way stopping place between Boston and Keene, and there horses were changed and the passengers dined at noon—(*History of Townsend*). At this time the schedules in the stage register, like the railroad time-tables of later years, were subject to delays due to weather and road conditions, and the stages were often many hours late. In 1827 there were two competing mail and passenger lines between Keene and Boston. One followed the route of the Third New Hampshire Turnpike to Keene, and thence to Middlebury, Burlington, and Montreal, and the other the Branch Road Company's line through Rindge and Fitzwilliam, crossing the first line at Keene and going through Surry and Charlestown to Woodstock and Montpelier.

In 1829 the stages of The Old Mail Line, through New Ipswich and Jaffrey, left Boston and Keene at four A. M., on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and returned to the places from which they set out the following Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. In 1832 The Old Mail and Despatch line of stages left Brigham's Tavern, 42 Hanover Street, Boston, and Keene at the same hour every morning, running Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from Boston through Jaffrey, and returning Monday, Wednesday, and Friday over the south road through Rindge. During the continuance of this service it was customary for the returning stages through Jaffrey Center to stop at Cutter's Hotel, on the site of the former Danforth and Brigham Taverns, for breakfast and a change of horses.

George and Robert ("Bob") Nicholas, the latter familiarly and affectionately called "Old Nick," were drivers of great renown along the turnpike in those days, and it was an ambition exalted enough for any healthy boy that he might grow up to fill such an honored place. With a trumpet or bugle sounding his approach, the skilled driver, with his six horses on a gallop, rounded up at the door of the inn, to the admiration of all the boys in the vicinity, who came run-

ning to share in the excitement and to hear every word that fell from their hero's lips. He had been over the mountain and far away to the ocean where there were ships and great towns. Besides, he carried the mail, and people on the road going to mill or to the store, especially women and boys, must look out for the stage and get far out of the road when it came in sight, because everybody knew it was against the law to delay the United States mail.

Stage lines at this time covered New England in a network comparable to that of the railroads in later years. Shattuck's *History of Concord, Mass.*, published in 1835, after describing the principal road through that town as running from "Boston, through Lexington and Concord to Groton and to New Hampshire," states, "There are now (1833) on an average 40 stages which arrive and depart weekly, employing 60 horses, between Boston and Groton, and carrying about 350 passengers, 150 have passed in one day."

A newspaper published in Pepperell, Massachusetts, in 1933, in reminiscences of the staging days, has an even more striking account of the traffic over "The Great Road from Boston to Keene, N. H.," in which the statement is made that "in 1831, 15,000 passengers were carried over this road by the Boston and Keene stages." This statement is in full measure supported by the *History of Keene, N. H.* (Griffin, page 400), in which, after mention of the two daily stage lines from Boston to Keene, the author continues, "The companies often furnished six horses to a coach, and for many years staging was a lively and important business. It was not uncommon for sixty to one hundred passengers to arrive and depart in a day, and nearly all the coaches stopped for the night in Keene . . . The quickest time recorded between Boston and Keene was made on the 27th of December, 1831, in nine hours and twenty-seven minutes from the toll house in Cambridge to Harrington's tavern in Keene, stopping eight or nine times to shift mail and horses. The passage was made from Concord, Mass., on runners."

But the stages were not the whole show on the road from Boston. Bellows Falls, with its natural attractions, then unimpaired by the works of man, was considered one of the most marvellous of nature's works for beauty and grandeur in America, and descriptions of its famous falls rivaled those of Niagara. In the staging era it became a fashionable resort for people of wealth and culture from Boston. Among its principal supporters was Frederick W. Geyer, an Englishman by birth, and a wealthy merchant of Boston. It was his custom to go over the Turnpike Road, of which he was a leading promoter

and director, with a coach and four horses, often with mounted postilions, in the best English fashion. There were also on the road the other vehicles specified in the schedule of tolls posted at each turnpike gate, chariots, and coaches of the wealthy, and of the lesser sort, curricles, sulkies, and chaises, without number. There was also the chair, called a "cheer," made on more delicate lines, especially for ladies' use. But most numerous of all were the freight teams of every kind that filled the road, especially in fall and early winter, some with oxen and some with four and six horses, and wagons or sleds loaded with beef, pork and country produce of every sort to be exchanged for city goods, such as molasses and sugar, New England rum, tobacco, coffee, tea, nails, silks, and broadcloth, and all the articles usually carried by a country store. In addition to domestic articles for transport there were manufactured goods from an increasing number of woodworking and textile mills, which required the use of heavy teams. Elias Taylor of Jaffrey, who lived in the Goodnow house opposite the Baptist Church, carried on the business of teaming to Boston, largely in store goods and the product of the cotton mills, and his tax account showing ownership of ten horses, one cow, and two sheep is unmistakable evidence of the character of his business. At its height the taverns could hardly find accommodations for the increasing traffic, and trustworthy tradition states that the Prescotts had completed plans and had lumber in readiness for a third story to their already commodious establishment, when a sudden decline in business warned them to postpone the undertaking.

In the busy season of travel the old road through Jaffrey presented a panorama of constant interest and change, surpassing in variety even the motor traffic of the present day. Old men who lived in the parts when the business of the former turnpike was at its height have told us of the wonders of that day, of which one declared that Barnum's greatest show on earth was never a circumstance to the caravans that passed along the turnpike in his boyhood.

A picturesque element that thronged the taverns was made up of the teamsters from Vermont, often ten or fifteen together. A lively "rastlin' crew," they were held accountable for most of the mischief that was perpetrated along the road. There were droves of cattle and razor-backed hogs, flocks of turkeys and sheep, farmers with their loads of truck and provisions out for their annual week's journey to Boston. It was a common custom for the teamsters, especially the farmers, to carry their own supplies, even hay and oats for their horses and cattle, but the etiquette of the road re-

quired that they should "do something for the house" by a liberal patronage of the bar at the taverns where they spent the night. In cold weather they resorted in full force to the barroom where they regaled themselves before the great fireplace on home made doughnuts and Johnnycake, after which, with flip aplenty, the fun grew fast and furious until a late hour, when the landlord banked the fire, and all but the well-to-do guests who were favored with rooms fell asleep with no other couch or covering than the barroom floor and a blanket brought from home. The extent of this patronage may be judged by a report given in January, 1844, at a meeting held in Keene, to consider a railroad through the town, in which the statement was made that on the previous Friday (January 5) between sixty and seventy Vermont sleighs loaded with beef, pork, venison, and other country products passed through Keene on the way to Boston.

As the railroads came nearer, the business of the roadside taverns declined. In 1837 the Boston and Lowell Railroad was opened and stages that formerly ran over the turnpike to Boston now ran from Keene to Lowell by way of Peterborough. Two lines of direct coaches from Keene to Boston continued until about 1840, one from the New Cheshire House in Keene, through Fitzwilliam, Rindge and Ashby, and the other through Winchendon, Fitchburg, and Waltham.

In March, 1845, the Fitchburg Railroad began its service to Fitchburg, and in 1847 the Cheshire Railroad was completed from Fitchburg to Winchendon. From that time the Winchendon Station became the freight and passenger terminal for Jaffrey, and the road to that place through Rindge became Jaffrey's main traveled road. In 1849 stage service between Winchendon and Jaffrey was begun by Whitcomb and Fairbanks, of Winchendon, who, in September, made the following announcement to the public: "Stages leave Winchendon daily for Rindge and Jaffrey, at 2 p. m., also at 2 p. m., Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, for Peterborough, Dublin, Harrisville, Munsonville, and return on opposite days." About the same time a stage coach owned by James L. Bolster began making round trips with passengers and mail from Jaffrey through Rindge to Winchendon; the service was continued by R. A. Hubbard and Aaron Perkins until the railroad reached Jaffrey in 1870.

The staging days in Jaffrey continued for nearly seventy years from the building of the turnpike in 1800 to the arrival of the railroad in 1870, and it is a remarkable record that during this entire period not a fatal accident is recorded or remembered in connection with the stage service in Jaffrey.