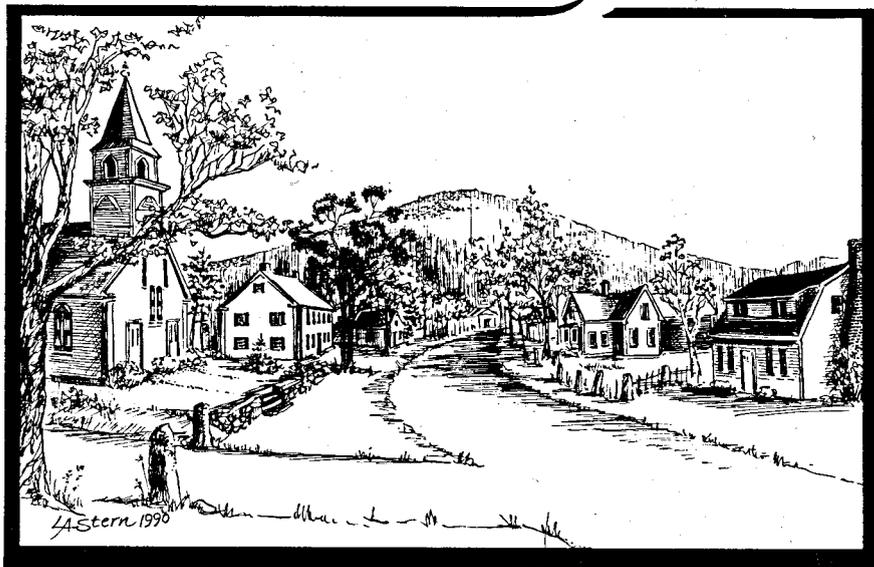
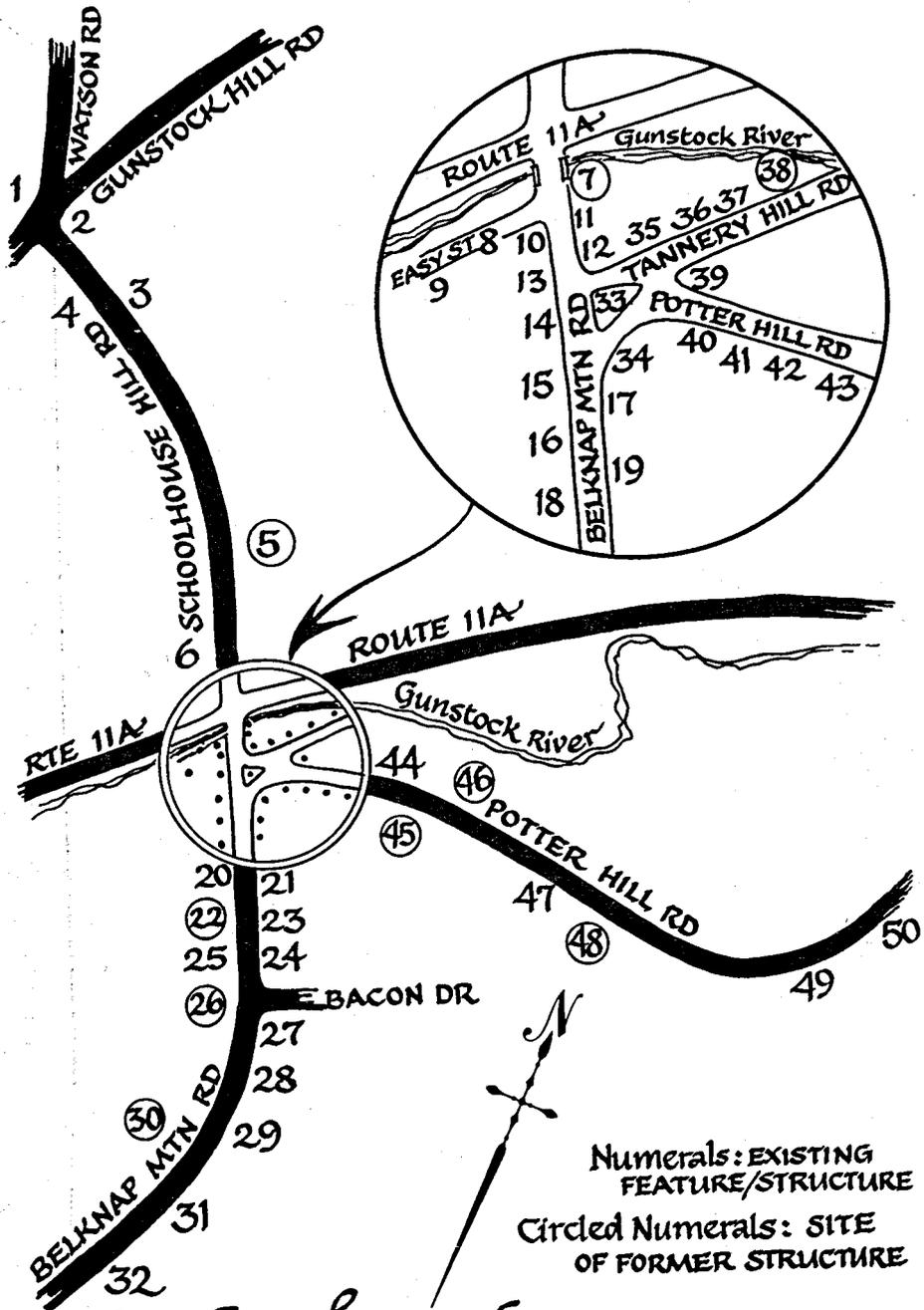


GILFORD VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

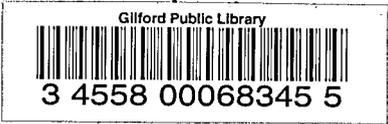
A Walking Tour



PRINT ROOM
GILFORD
GENERAL
OFFICE



Gilford Village Historic District



HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The Town of Gilford was first settled in the late 1770's as the Upper, or Gunstock Parish of Gilmanton. Samuel Jewett, the original settler, built his home in 1777 in an area later annexed to Laconia. Capt. Samuel Gilman followed in 1778, settling on the north side of Gunstock Hill. In 1792, a fine meeting house was built on the summit of this hill, and a store and other settlement rose around it. A sawmill was the only structure in the valley below.

Lot 10, Range 13, the 100-acre lot upon which most of present-day Gilford Village now sits, was reserved for the ministry until 1806, when it was sold at auction to Barnard Morrill and Henry Sleeper. When this land became available for development, a small-scale industrial community quickly grew around the attractive water power offered by the Gunstock River. By 1841, the focus of life in Gilford had shifted completely to the valley, and the hilltop meeting house was taken down. To this day, Gilford Village remains the nucleus of town affairs and the only major cluster of nineteenth century historic houses in the town.

When Gilford was incorporated as an independent town in 1812, the honor of naming the new town went to a local Revolutionary War veteran and legislator who had fought in the battle of Guilford Courthouse, North Carolina. According to Alvah Hunter, a clerk in the statehouse misspelled the name in the recorded copy of the town incorporation act, hence Gilford it became.

Gilford Village's various industries served a largely local market, and included shoemaking, blacksmithing, brickmaking, tanning, and cooperage. Barrels made from local oak were sent to the West Indies to carry rum and molasses. Iron ore was mined for a short time on Gunstock Mountain and processed in Lakeport. Outside the village, Gilford's economy was closely linked to agriculture until the early 20th century.

Two events in the latter half of the 19th c. greatly affected Gilford's influence and prosperity. Around 1854, extensive fires in the Belknap Range resulted in a decline in water levels and loss of water power for most of the village's industries. In 1893, Laconia, a prosperous textile town and county seat since 1840, split from Gilford with Lakeport, leaving Gilford a primarily farming community once again. However, after 1890, when the railroad reached Gilford, already favored as a resort destination, the area along the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee experienced rapid development.

1. FRANCIS GILMAN HOUSE c. 1786

Levi Gilman built this house six years before the original meeting house was built nearby at the top of Gunstock Hill. The Gilman family settled much of the Gunstock and Schoolhouse Hill area, including #2,3, and 4. The house is a well-preserved late 18th-19th c. farmstead of simple design. Francis Gilman probably added the Greek Revival-style entrance surround and partial sidelights after he inherited the property from his father, Samuel Gilman 3d, in 1857.

The barn, with its hinged doors and double row of transom lights above the 9/6 sash, was enlarged at an early date. The farm remained in Gilman ownership until the early 1900's.

2. SALLY BLAISDELL HOUSE c. 1795

This house, built by John Allen, is likely the most intact early building within the district. It was owned for much of the 19th c. by Sally Gilman Blaisdell. She was married 1841-1856 to John Blaisdell, whose blacksmith shop stood on the lot.

The house is simply designed, with a 4 panel door and 4 light transom above. Historic photographs (1908) show a porch added to the south side. At one time, an orchard, joiner's shop, wood house, and carriage house also stood here.

3. SAMUEL GILMAN, JR. HOUSE c. 1796

Samuel Gilman, Jr. was one of four men of the same name who settled on this hill between 1778 and 1850. Samuel, Jr., brother of Levi Gilman (#1,4) built this house, and it remained in his family until 1914. He probably added the Greek Revival entrance between 1850 and 1869 before he sold his homestead to Anna Gilman Sargent... "for and in consideration of the love and affection I bear my daughter...and \$400"!

A fire in the mid 20th c. severely damaged the wing and barn, and the current owners moved and reconstructed another early barn on the site. The property's first barn had been located across the road.

4. LEVI GILMAN HOUSE c. 1795

This early house has probably evolved more than any other in the district, while still retaining its integrity as an historic structure. Levi Gilman's original three-room cabin had a single window on each side of a simple plank door. A century later, the windows were paired and the roof was raised to 2 1/2 stories to accommodate a growing family. A porch wrapped around the south and east sides, shaded by lush vines. Still later, the porch was removed and an elegant Federal style entrance surround with sidelights was salvaged and added to the facade. Finally, in the mid-1980's, the ell was raised to 2 stories and a sunroom replaced the old pantry.

Outbuildings at one time included large and small barns and a cider house. George Crosby and his family occupied the farm for much of the late 19th-early 20th c., and also owned the Village Store, where they sold their produce.

5. SITE OF FIRST DISTRICT #8 SCHOOLHOUSE c.1806-1892

Upon this tiny wedge of land sat the first schoolhouse to serve the village district. With 60-75 pupils taught together during Gilford's mid-century heyday, it is little wonder that Alvah Hunter remembered it as a difficult school to manage! Students attended a late-summer/early fall session and a winter session, so they could help with spring and summer farm chores. The one-room building was rebuilt in 1854, with a raised platform at the south end for the instructor, graduated double desks for the students, and benches along the side for the littlest ones.

After a new schoolhouse was built in the village center, Charles Gove towed this building down the hill and added it to his blacksmith shop at #27.

6. MORRILL FARM c. 1798

This extended farm complex was home for over a century to Gilford Village's most influential family. Barnard Morrill came to Gilford as a tanner and shoemaker in 1806, and quickly established himself as owner of the village sawmill and major developer of the village. His son, John Jay Morrill, was a member of the House of Representatives, built the tannery (#38) and a store (#12), and expanded the family farm. He died here in the room in which he was born. John Barnard Morrill, his son, served the town in all its high offices, and was a Belknap Co. judge of probate. He acquired much of the fine farmland around Gilford Village, including the Village Fields and the Rowe Farm.

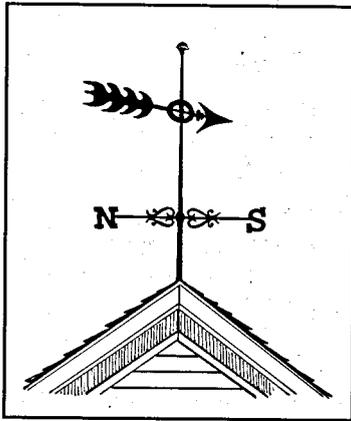
Barnard Morrill purchased a c. 1798 homestead from Paul Stevens in 1806, and probably added the stylish Federal house to the front of it around the year 1810, with profits realized from his sale of village lots. The house features a classically designed entrance architrave, windows with 9/6 sash, molded caps, and interior blinds ("Indian shutters"), a massive center chimney, and a handsome Italianate porch (c. 1870s). A 1 1/2 story shed, built c. 1854 as a second kitchen for John Jay's widowed mother, Judith, joins the ell to the farm's second barn. Elegantly constructed in the early 1900's, this barn has a built-in silo, pig sty, and graduated "three-holer." Judith's loom, with her weaving still on it, remains undisturbed in the attic to this day.

The first barn still stands across the road, a red clapboard barn with corner trim and an early, probably original, sliding door. It is one of

the least altered barns in the district and plays an important visual role in this early farm complex.

Another remaining outbuilding is the white ice house just to the north of this barn, which was enlarged on the north side in the 1930's to become a cottage. The white carriage house sits just south of the red barn, near the tenant house.

The history of the tenant house is unclear. It appears to be a c. 1860 house which incorporates the miller's house, built here c. 1809 by Joseph Thing. Note the wide frieze and corner boards, and the center entrance with full-length sidelights and 4 panel door, all Greek Revival features. The open porch is a common early 20th c. addition in N.H., while the screen door strikes a decidedly Victorian note.



Weathervane, early 1900's barn, Morrill Farm

7. SITE OF FIRST MILL 1789-c.1900

The stonework visible from the bridge is all that remains of Simeon Hoyt's and Esquire Ebenezer Smith's sawmill. The first and most important mill on the Gunstock River, it was for years the only structure permitted on the ministry lot, with the condition that lumber for a meeting house would be sawn without charge. The mill building was set over the river, and the present library site was the millyard. A gristmill for grinding grain, a tannery, and pottery were soon added to the operations here. This mill provided almost all of the building materials for the village which sprang up around it.

8. EASY STREET

Laid out in 1837 and known as the Gully Road, the main route to Meredith Bridge (Laconia) left Gilford Village here and crossed the Gunstock River at Wadley Bridge. This bridge, located just 50 yards southwest of this corner, was named for William Wadley's blacksmith

shop, which stood just beyond the bridge.

The flat land nearby was a popular recreational spot in the 1800's when the millpond behind the sawmill dam beckoned ice skaters in winter and anglers in warm weather. Today the same place attracts tennis players.

9. ROWE ICE HOUSE c. 1860

The former ice house from the Rowe Farm (#32) has found new life as a garden shed. Built some time in the mid 19th c. on a site behind the Rowe barn, it was relocated here in the 1970's. The windows and front door are original. It is one of only two surviving ice houses in the district that retain their original form. Ice cut in blocks from the ponds in winter were once stored in sawdust here for summer use.

10. VILLAGE STORE 1836

The Village Store has been Gilford Village's primary trading post since its construction by Benjamin Jewett, Jr., Albert Chase, and Jeremiah Thing. Although the original proprietors went bankrupt in 1843, the store was quickly taken over by a succession of merchants with old Gilford names such as Munsey, Weeks, and Wadley. For many years at the turn of the century it was known as Wadley's Store and Grange Hall, since the Grange met in the wing before 1909. Other public entertainment, such as traveling Indian shows, took place here as well.

Gilford's Village Store resembles many other commercial buildings of northern New England, constructed at a time of prosperity during the Greek Revival period. The pedimented gable is the most prominent Greek Revival feature here. The 2/2 sash was likely originally 6/6. The first story is remarkable for its intact c.1870's storefront, with central doorway and flanking windows with 4 large panes of glass. The 1870's upstairs porch and covered stairway were altered again in the 1930's.

The main building originally had a porch similar to that of the Grange (#12), supported on round columns. The columns were replaced by iron posts in the late 1800's, and in the 1950's the porch disappeared altogether.

For many years the Village Store competed with John Sleeper's store, which was located between Easy St. and the river. Apparently this latter store fell into ill favor because it sold liquor at a time when the Temperance movement was gaining strength, and the building was gone by 1892. The shoe shop behind it, built from the cabin of a wrecked lake steamer and reputed to host midnight card games, had the same fate.

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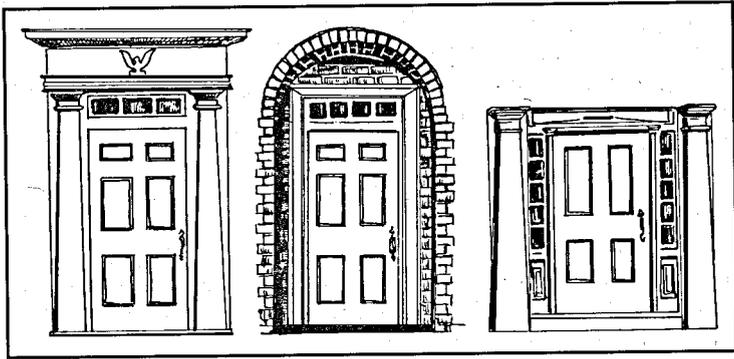
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11. GILFORD LIBRARY 1926

This Bungalow-style building is the third home for the public library. The library was first organized in 1894 and housed in the Deacon Hunter House (#21), before moving to the Town Hall.

The original 1-story hip-roof building with pedimented front portico and Doric columns has partial sidelights around the door (see ill.). The three-part windows with 12/1 and 6/1 sash reflect the original interior plan of a central hall and flanking reading rooms. The large addition on the north side was built in 1984.

12. GRANGE 1857

The Mt. Belknap Grange Hall is one of only two structures in Gilford listed on the National Register of Historic Places. John J. Morrill built it as a store for Levi Thompson. It was later S.L. Jones' store and the post office, until c. 1900. Morrill's son sold the store to the local grange in 1909, its first permanent home since its organization in 1875.

The Grange was an important feature of village life for much of the 20th c.; ceremonial meetings and agriculturally-related programs took place in the second floor hall, while large socials were held downstairs. In 1990 the building was given to the Thompson-Ames Historical Society. First on this site was the dwelling of trader Jonas Sleeper. A blacksmith shop stood just to the north.

Perhaps Gilford Village's best example of Greek Revival architecture, key features of the Grange are the wide corner boards that end in molded caps, deep eave returns that suggest a pediment, wide frieze boards, and 6/6 sash. Large, c. 1870's 4-paned windows flank central, narrow paired doors. The porch over the once-wooden walkway is now supported by simple, stick-like brackets which replaced earlier, more fanciful scrolled brackets. These in turn replaced the original round pillars.

The north wing was once an open horse stall, later a wood shed, and finally enclosed for use by the Junior Grange.

13. DR. GEORGE MUNSEY HOUSE c. 1814

This house was probably built by Dr. Munsey, a highly respected local physician, who practiced in Gilford for many years. Later occupants included many town clerks, including two tanners and Simon Rowe, a shoemaker, who lived here before he inherited his grandfather's farm (#32) in 1865.

This is one of five 2 1/2 story Federal houses in the district. Like most, it is simply detailed: molded window casings, and narrow, flat trim boards. The open porch on the south dates c. 1900 and is all that remains of a full-width porch that appears in 1930's vintage photographs of an Old Home Day parade.

14. ALBERT CHASE HOUSE 1840

The most stylish of eight 1 1/2 story Greek Revival houses in the village, this house maintains the basic form of a Federal house: lateral siting, 5-bay facade, broad gables, and end chimneys. However, the wide corner boards, broad frieze, entry surround, and especially the elegant applied molding on the entry entablature (see ill., facing page) show strong Greek Revival influence. Sash was likely once 6/6. The front yard is enclosed by a wooden fence constructed in a wheatsheaf pattern and supported by granite posts with pyramidal caps. 1930's photographs show a deep c. 1900 front porch. The 1-story ell was once connected to a barn.

This house was built by Albert Chase, who established the Village Store with two partners. When the business went under 3 years later, he was forced to abandon the house, but not before taking out three eleventh-hour mortgages.

15. OTTO PAGE HOUSE 1935

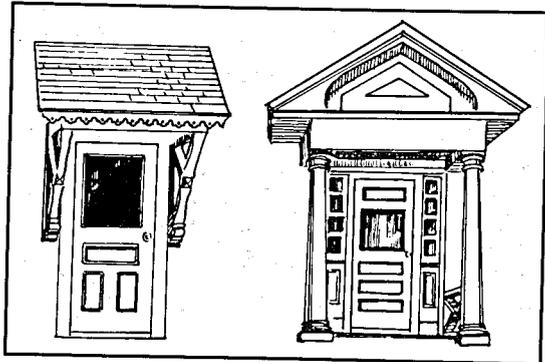
This is the only Craftsman style house in the district. Its distinguishing features include the truncated hip roof, shed dormer that continues the main roof line, shingled walls, and vertical-paned windows. The gabled entry has a curved wooden inset with stick brackets, and the entry door has four beveled glass panels.

Selected Gilford Village

Entry Styles

Facing Page, left to right: Federal (c. 1816, #36); Late Federal (1836, #24); Greek Revival (1840, #14).

This Page, left to right: Stick Style (1879, #20); Bungalow (1926, #11).



Otto Page built this house on the site of Esquire Ebenezer Hunt's fine 2 1/2 story Federal house, which appears in a large photograph in the library. Squire Hunt was the son of one of the original settlers and a prominent local citizen; it is likely that his cooperage was also on this site. His house, which was built in 1823, burned in 1925.

16. DOLLY GILMAN HOUSE c. 1805

Levi Gilman (#1,4) built this house, presumably for his daughter, Dolly, who lived here until 1828. Many of the house's owners over the years have been single women, probably attracted to its convenient village location and modest size. In addition to the house, the lot had a blacksmith shop and millinery shop around the 1830's. A barn once stood where the garage is now. The doorway surround was added several years ago.

A fire c. 1925 resulted in major Colonial Revival rebuilding, reflected in the gambrel roofline and full-width dormer. Ray Watson, of the Potter Hill family (#49), rebuilt the house in 1926. Known as an inventive man who introduced a mechanical ice-harvesting method to the region, Watson was also a skilled carpenter who renovated several other homes in the village (#21, 28,35).

17. HENRY SLEEPER/JOSEPH SANBORN HOUSE c. 1810/1820

This house is the only one in the village built in two main sections. The earliest section of this house is the northern half, which was built by Henry Sleeper, a carpenter, co-developer of the ministerial lot, and owner of the sawmill. For a while, he operated the corrections and poorhouse here. The garage doors may have replaced an earlier entrance and windows by about 1900. The porch dates from c. 1909.

The southern half of the house was built c. 1820 by Joseph Sanborn, Jr., who ran a store and cooperage on the site. The original, elaborately carved entrance surround, unique in the village, exhibits strong early Greek Revival influence, and may have been copied from Asher Benjamin's pattern books.

The 1 1/2 story wing is rebuilt from a shed moved from Old Lakeshore Rd., and replaces an earlier c. 1820 double shed. Until the mid-20th c. a barn stood just south of the wing.

An ambitious rehabilitation effort in the 1980's rescued the house and uncovered interior blinds and other early features.

For over 100 years, this house was actively associated with trading, blacksmithing and coopering. During the 1930's, the north half was the Five Corners Tea Room, a local landmark.

18. VILLAGE FIELDS

The 1815 Hurricane uprooted much of the virgin forest that once grew on the floodplain of the Gunstock River, and for many years afterwards, the corn, grain, and hayfields that followed were surrounded by a fence made of the stumps and roots of the windthrows. This fine, rich, flat land was largely owned by Squire Hunt (#15), Jonas Sleeper's heirs (#21), Benjamin Jewett, Jr. (#24), and Benjamin Rowe (#32). By 1910, John Barnard Morrill had acquired the fields. They were eventually purchased by the town in the 1970's, and the Weeks Bandstand was added in the Bicentennial Year.

19. THOMPSON-AMES HISTORICAL SOCIETY 1834

The Universalist Society built this church as the Union Meeting House. Only the paneled cornerboards and overall shape suggest its Greek Revival origins. The interior originally had plaster walls and a choir loft. In 1889, after the Methodist Episcopal Church took over the building, it was remodeled in the Carpenter Gothic style, adding paired stained and etched glass windows capped with pointed arch heads, the shingled belfry, and a completely paneled interior. A Victorian paint scheme, with tan clapboards and chocolate trim, appears in a 1903 photograph, but the church was soon repainted white as the Colonial Revival era advanced.

In 1906 Gilford's two congregations merged, alternating between the two buildings until 1924, when this church was abandoned in favor of the Community Church. In the 1930's, it was owned by a free-lance minister before it was given in 1943 to the Historical Society by George Ames, thus ending over 100 years of religious service. The Society's name honors both the Thompson and Ames branches of the philanthropist's family.

20. METHODIST PARSONAGE 1879

Methodist Church records describe the construction of its parsonage to serve its church across the road. The only Stick style house in the district, it features steep shed roofs and sawn vergeboard trim, corner eave brackets, a rectangular bay window, and a door hood supported on oversized brackets (see ill., p. 7). A small side porch is carried on turned posts. Inside are tin ceilings and a distinctively turned newel post. The attached barn, with its early sliding door, is older than the house, and may be the barn that accompanied the Deacon Hunter property across the road (#21).

After the Methodist Church was abandoned, this building became a residence. It may have originally been painted red with white trim, although it was soon painted white as were many other Victorian buildings in the 1920's.

21. DEACON HEMAN HUNTER HOUSE c. 1811

The early origins of this house are not clear. In 1811, trader Jonas Sleeper purchased this land and either erected the building or moved an earlier store here from Gunstock Hill. The store sat gable end to the road with a rear hillside entrance to the upstairs living quarters. Sleeper died shortly thereafter in an epidemic, and his widow soon remarried Benjamin Jewett, Jr., who traded here before establishing the Village Store.

In 1852, Heman Hunter remodeled the old store into the present Greek Revival style dwelling by removing 15 feet off the rear, adding 10 feet on the south side, and turning the roof to face the road. While the Greek Revival style is evident in its entrance detailing, 4-panel door flanked by large sidelights and flat trim, some earlier interior elements remain. The 1-story wing is a rebuilt horse shed which stood near the road until 1853. A 2-story barn attached to its south end remained until the mid-20th c.

Hunter ran a fulling/carding/shingling mill on the Gunstock River about 1/3 mile below the village, and was town clerk and deacon of the Free Will Baptist Church. His daughter managed the town's first library in the northwest parlor. His son, Alvah Folsom Hunter, wrote the only known account of life in mid-19th c. Gilford, including a detailed description of the house, in his memoir, A New Hampshire Boyhood.

22. SITE OF JEWETT-FOLSOM HOUSE c. 1828-1906

Near the flagpole stood the woodframe 1 1/2 story cape house and cooperage built by Benjamin Jewett, Jr.'s brother Moses. Barrels made here from oak cut on the mountainside served the Portsmouth fish and meat packing market as well as local needs. Alvah Hunter's Folsom relatives owned the house for many years. It burned in 1906.

23. THOMAS AYER HOUSE 1849

Early owners of this property were associated with local shoemaking. Thomas Ayer, a shoemaker and harnessmaker, built the house. Later, Samuel Bennett had a cobbler's shop on the site of the present vegetable garden.

One of only two gable-end, side-hall entry Greek Revival houses in the village, its distinctive features include the paneled cornerboards with reverse peaks, the door with molded glass and wood panels, and the ell, unusual for its height and details which mirror the front house. A porch added in the late 1800's, with sawn post brackets, was later enclosed.

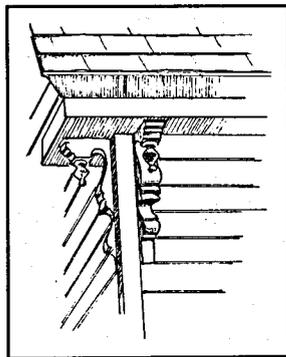
24. BENJAMIN JEWETT, JR. HOUSE 1824/1836

A village landmark, this solitary brick 2 1/2 story house has a fascinating history. The woodframe ell, the earliest portion of this house, was the first house built between the Sleeper store (#21) at the edge of the young village, and Benjamin Rowe's homestead (#32). Squire Jewett was the town's leading tradesman for many years, as well as town clerk, postmaster, and large landowner. In 1836, the year he established the Village Store, he added the main brick house and ell, using bricks from Rowe's kiln. When the business failed seven years later, his house and land were carved up among his creditors; the house remained in divided ownership until 1875. In the 1850's, the house was a stage coach tavern on the Meredith-Gilmanton route. The organizational meeting of the Grange was held here in 1875. A glassworks was on the site at one time.

The brick house is a highly distinctive Federal house, with a recessed, arched central entrance, 6-panel door, and 4-light transom (see ill. p. 6). The brick is laid in the American bond pattern, in which every 8th row of bricks is set with ends exposed. It is locally thought to be the first use of this design in the area. Windows are set between granite lintels and wooden sills, and the foundation is dressed granite blocks. The hipped-roof garage to the north, erected c. 1937, is interesting in itself as the most intact period garage in the district.

25. JOHN P. DAVIS HOUSE c. 1900

The only Homestead style house in the district, this house features a front porch with turned posts, square balusters, and sawn brackets. The eave corners are defined by drop pendant brackets.



Eave Detail, c. 1900, John P. Davis House

Porches became the rage around the turn of the century, and were added to many old houses in the district. Some spanned just the front, and others wrapped around one or more sides. Porches cooled the house in summer, added a stylish Victorian note, and, because one

could visit easily with passersby from the comfort of a porch rocker, helped bind the community together. Most of these porches were removed by the time of World War II, as people grew tired of Victorian flourishes, although they remain on this and a few other houses built around the same time.

Hay is still cut on the land just south of the house, just as it once was over all the fields beyond.

26. SITE OF TOWN HEARSE "HOUSE"

Just opposite the present Bacon Dr. entrance stood a shed that housed the fringed, horse-drawn town hearse... another one of the necessities of local life which has no counterpart in the modern world.

27. BENJAMIN WADLEY HOUSE 1848

The only broad-gabled Greek Revival house in the district, this features a center entrance with narrow, nearly-full length side-lights and an original 4-panel door and flat surround. The original windows were probably 6/6 panes. The barn has 6/6 sash and an early 20th c. multi-paneled sliding door. A 1988 addition replaced a one-story ell and shed.

This property was associated with blacksmithing for over a century. Benjamin Wadley, a prominent local citizen who was a blacksmith and stonemason, built this house when he took 16 year old Jerusha Stevens as his second wife. He also built the cottage next door (#28) for her mother. His blacksmith and ferrier's shops were located near the site of Gilford Village Knolls. Charlie Gove, the next owner, made horse-drawn sidewalk plows here that were sold all over New England and as far west as Chicago.

28. SAPHRONIA STEVENS HOUSE 1847

This 3-bay cottage has an unusual, wide trim board above its granite foundation. The later 1-story ell connects the house to a barn which, other than the overhead door, appears little changed. The small gable over the front entry is a later addition.

Benjamin Wadley built this house for his mother-in-law, Saphronia Stevens, who had followed her husband west to California and returned to Gilford after he died there. She supported herself by making clothing, most notably burial garments. Many Gilford Village probate records carry notations such as "Mrs. S. Stevens...\$2.50, burial robes".

29. JOSEPH GOSS HOUSE 1837

One of several 1 1/2 story 5-bay Federal houses in the district, this is modestly detailed. As in many old houses, the original 9/6 paned windows were lost when improvements in glass production by

the turn of the century allowed owners to "update" their homes with 2/2, 2/1, or even 1/1 sash. The early windows were often moved to outbuildings, in this case the barn. The 6-panel door appears original, while the dormer windows are c. 1930.

Joseph Goss' son, S. Lafayette Goss, occupied the house for many years and was a shoemaker and town clerk. His daughter, Emily Goss, moved next door (#28) after marrying a Mr. Foss, probably confusing the neighborhood gossips.

30. SITE OF REV. JEREMIAH VEASEY HOUSE c. 1825-1870

Across from the Goss House was Rev. Jeremiah Veasey's 2 1/2 story frame house, with an attached shed and barn. On a July night in 1870, the squeals of a pig woke the family to a fire set in the barn. The children had to be dropped from upstairs windows and the family escaped with only the clothes on their backs.

31. GILFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 1939

The third schoolhouse to serve the district, this replaced the one-room school at #35. Newspaper accounts indicate that town leaders had become concerned with possible fire hazards and "unhealthful conditions" of the traditional "little red school". Therefore, the new school's running water, modern toilets, steam heat, and elaborate ventilation system were sources of great excitement. At the time, it was a very ambitious project; many townspeople thought it was too ambitious, and grumbled about the extravagance of so much unnecessary space, according to a village resident who had taught in the earlier building.

The Georgian Revival style building was intended to resemble recently-built halls at Harvard University and U.N.H. The square cupola, designed for ventilation, has a bell-cast copper roof. The 1 story brick wings were added in the 1960's.

32. BENJAMIN ROWE HOUSE 1810/1838

The Benjamin Rowe House may be unique in New Hampshire. Not only is it an historic house with computer capability, but examples of early 19th c. brick farmhouses are rare, and this is the only one known in the entire state that has four chimneys arranged around a central hallway.

The house is an excellent example of Greek Revival architecture, with its sidelights around the center entrance, granite lintels, some surviving 9/6 windows, and American bond brick pattern. Inside, an almost unaltered Greek Revival interior survives, with original paneling, doors, hardware, floors, fireplaces, and other features. The cellar is walled and largely floored in brick, with graceful brick arches supporting the chimneys.

Layers of additions have masked the early appearance, however: mid-19th c. wooden ell, early 20th c. porches, 1930's dormers, and an even later milk room and barn built when the early barn burned in the 1960's.

The farm was first settled in 1810 by Jesse Thing, who built a 1 1/2 story homestead, probably on the site of the house's present 2-story ell. Benjamin Rowe arrived 5 years later and his family remained here for a century. Rowe built the unusual cape as an addition c. 1838, with bricks he made himself near the stream below the house. A village landmark for years, it is referred to in more than one old deed as "Benjamin Rowe's Brick Howse".

The 150 acre farm, second largest in the village, included grain and hayfields across the road, pastures, and a sugar bush on the slopes of Mt. Rowe, named for the family. In 1840, Rowe planted mulberry trees along the fence, three of which still survive, in hopes of founding a silk industry.

Pine Grove Cemetery was established in the 1850's at the death of Benjamin's great-grandson, Albanus. Four generations of Rowes now lie just beyond the pines Albanus's father, Simon, planted to hide the grave from the gaze of his wife. After Simon's death, Ernest Sawyer had a dairy farm here. Sawyer's son-in-law, Alvah Wilson, who is said to haunt the house, sold it to the Town in 1969. Town offices were located in the homestead until 1988.

33. THE TRIANGLE

William Wadley's blacksmith shop first stood on this triangle in the early-mid 1800's, and later D.H. Munsey's cobbler shop (moved from #44). At other times, the triangle was a favorite play area for village youngsters and a gathering place during Town Meetings. The large blue spruce was lit for Christmas for many years until it outgrew the ambition of those who decorated it.

34. HENRY F. HUNT HOUSE c. 1900

This is the only Queen Anne house in the district. Its most distinctive feature is the square tower, which contains the main entrance. Fishscale shingles ornament the tower below its flared, pyramidal cap. Also note the verandah, decorative corner eave brackets, and corbeled chimney. An early 20th c. photograph shows this house decorated in a true Victorian color scheme, with dark trim and medium toned siding. At one time it also had bright striped awnings.

This house sits on the site of the Meshach Sanborn Homestead, a local landmark erected by the 1810's. The homestead came into the Hunt family in 1875; the house and stable burned in 1900. The existing house was probably built by owner Henry F. Hunt, a contractor who also built the Laconia High School.

35. DISTRICT #8 SCHOOLHOUSE 1892

Originally built as a one-room schoolhouse, this building had two entrances in the gable end facing the road and a stove chimney at the north end. In 1940, it was substantially remodeled into a house, featuring details common to the period: paired 6/6 sash on the first story, full-width roof dormers, a semi-circular louvered gable window, and a pedimented, partially enclosed porch.

This schoolhouse replaced the little school on Schoolhouse Hill Road, and was in turn replaced in 1939 by the current elementary school.

36. NATHANIEL DAVIS/GEORGE W. MUNSEY HOUSE c. 1816

The Davis/Munsey House is the most stylish Federal house in the district. Characteristic features include the entry surround with pilasters and a 3-light transom (see ill. p. 6), molded window casings, original sash (9/6 and 6/6), a Palladian window, and flush siding in the south pedimented gable end. The rear 1 1/2 story ell appears late 19th c., but probably incorporates an earlier ell. A salvaged late 19th c. cast iron fence encloses the front yard.

John Blaisdell constructed a house on this site in 1816-17; this may have been the rear ell. Nathaniel Davis Jr., a leader in local political affairs, purchased the house in 1817. He took out a substantial mortgage in that year, possibly to construct the stylish front portion of the house. In 1856 it was purchased by George W. Munsey, son of Dr. Munsey (#13) and proprietor of the Village Store at the time. It remained in the Munsey family into the 1900's.

37. JOHN G. WEEKS HOUSE c. 1835

This was apparently built as a 1 1/2 story cape house. On the exterior, little survives from the original construction period. The paneled wooden and glass entry door, gabled portico, and sunporch are early 20th c. additions. The rear roofline was raised and a front and side porch removed, probably at the same time. An animal shed with double hinged doors and original sash extends to the north.

This house was associated with local industries throughout the 19th century. Weeks, a hatter, later sold to William Wadley, a blacksmith. John J. Morrill, who owned the adjacent tannery, purchased it in 1854, and for the next 33 years the house was occupied by carriers employed at the tannery.

38. SITE OF TANNERY c. 1850-1900

John J. Morrill's tannery operated in a large building just across the river. Animal hides were processed into leather here. The abutments of the Tannery Hill Road bridge can still be seen. Until

Route 11A was built, this road was the main route from Gilford Village to the lake.

39. BENJAMIN F. WEEKS HOUSE c. 1840

This Greek Revival style house is laid out around a sidehall plan, a configuration that proved to be very popular in the later 1800's throughout New England. The early 20th c. porch was recently enclosed. The barn is one of two adjacent barns with unusually sophisticated architectural features: corner pilasters, 6/6 gable windows, sliding doors, and clapboard siding. The barn at one time had scales large enough to weigh a carriage and team.

Benjamin Weeks was a trader whose father was one of the original settlers of Gilford. Between 1858 and 1861 the house was occupied by the minister of the Free Will Baptist Church across the road, before it was purchased by John P. and Sarah Smith, who were prominent in the Grange and other local affairs.

40. TOWN HALL 1841

The old Town Hall, originally built in the Greek Revival style, had a single large room with a north gallery. Interior walls had wainscot consisting of two horizontal boards, later covered or replaced by matchboard, and the ceiling was gently arched. The original builders knew their trade: extra reinforcement was built into the floor under the aisles. Later additions included a stage, brick vault with an elaborate cast iron door, several offices, and openings and partitions that came and went through the building's history. While all of the building's original architectural features, except for the timber framing and recessed front entry, have been lost over the years during various remodelings, it has regained its position with relationship to the adjacent church. In 1990, it was moved back from its original granite foundation near the road and annexed to the Community Church with a 1 story connector.

Before 1841, town meetings were held in the meeting house on Gunstock Hill. Construction of this building completed the shift of village activity from the hilltop into the valley below. It was used for town offices until 1988, although town meeting moved to the Middle High School in the 1970's. It now functions as a community center.

41. GILFORD COMMUNITY CHURCH 1834

The Free Will Baptist Church was erected in the same year as the Universalist Church (#19), and dedicated on New Year's Day, 1835. To finance its construction, pews were sold. Both churches replaced the late 18th c. meeting house atop Gunstock Hill, which was abandoned because it was located far from the village growing up around the mills in the valley below, and because the town had divided

into several religious sects, each of which wanted its own church building. In 1906 the church merged with the local Methodist Episcopal Church, and in 1924, these congregations settled here for a permanent home because of its better roof, furnace, and parking (horse sheds).

Several Greek Revival features remain, including wide corner pilasters, frieze band, and entry entablature. The two stage tower received a bell in 1857, and, over a century later, a pyramidal steeple. In the 1890's major interior remodelings included a new tin ceiling, new pews (replacing pews similar to those still in use in the Melvin Village Church in Tuftonboro), Queen Anne windows, and a new bell. In 1970 the building was moved back 20 feet to its current site and two bays were added to the rear. In 1990 the old choir loft was reopened as a gallery.

42. PARSONAGE c. 1825

This 1 1/2 story Greek Revival house has retained its distinctive entrance, characterized by the molded door surround, corner blocks, and sidelights. The chimney is probably a later replacement of a larger, centrally-positioned chimney.

The house was probably built by Aram B. Smith between 1821 and 1830 on a 2 acre lot. In 1862 it was purchased by the Free Will Baptist Society, and has served as its parsonage ever since.

43. LAURA WEEKS HALL 1938

Noteworthy features of this parish hall building are the small Queen Anne windows flanking the main entry, and the arched niche in the gable. This is the site of the Free Will Baptist Church's horse sheds, and former barn of E.H. Sanborn, who lived in the parsonage. These buildings were torn down and the present building erected for Sunday School classes. A shed connection to the parsonage has since been removed. Church benefactor Laura Weeks was a member of the locally prominent Weeks and Gilman families, and lived on Gunstock Hill.

44. DAVID HALE MUNSEY HOUSE c. 1812

The original part of this house, a small cape erected by Dr. George W. Munsey, is now the ell. Munsey built a larger house for his family of 13 children in the village center (#13), and his son, David Hale Munsey, lived here. Hale was a shoemaker, and had a shop across the road. The house remained in the Munsey family for over 120 years.

The west end of the cape was raised into the gable-end house with a porch in the early part of this century. Look for matchboard siding, simple pilasters, and a curved eave line. The elegant barn

features corner pilasters, 9/6 sash, sliding doors, and still retains its clapboard siding.

45. SITE OF JEWETT/HATCH HOUSE c. 1830-1900

Close to the road and just west of the early 20th c. house on the knoll, stood a 1 1/2 story frame house, which probably resembled the parsonage nearby. It was owned by members of the Munsey family when it burned c. 1900-1910. The family rebuilt the present house above.

46. SITE OF FIRE STATION

Gilford's first fire station was a c. 1850 shed that also housed three snow rollers, used in the days when snowy roads were packed and not plowed. The town purchased its first fire truck, a model T Ford, in 1936. The shed, torn down in the early 1980's, abutted a c. 1930 gambrel roofed highway department garage that was removed several years later.

47. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN HATCH HOUSE 1867

This house, built by George W. Gilman, was occupied by the Hatch family for a number of years, who also occupied #45. The house is a traditionally designed 5-bay, center chimney house with flat trim. A shed dormer and 1-story add-on in the rear post-date the original house, as does the front door.

48. SITE OF PROHIBITION-ERA DANCE HALL

Even Gilford had its racy elements, and the woods here on the fringe of the village saw some lively times as moonshine was concocted and merrymakers frequented a dance hall located some 50 yards up from the road. The hall, built on simple concrete pilings, was taken down in the 1950's but ferns and saplings still grow among old bottles and rusting steel drums.

49. WATSON FARM 1798

David Watson, "husbandman", erected his family's homestead on a 100 acre lot. It remained in the family until 1946 (except from 1926-44), and was farmed for most of that time. David's son Job divided the farm into 13 shares among his children, but Mercy Watson, who never married (and is said to haunt the house), eventually purchased the shares from her siblings to re-establish the farm. Her brother, Rev. John P. Watson, compiled the town's first written history, published in 1885.

Like a number of the houses in Gilford Village, this property has undergone successive historic remodeling over the years. The original house was sited gable-end to the road. Circa 1849 the two

cross gables were added. It is not known whether the existing gable end entrance, with its Georgian architrave, was always in this location or moved from the south side when the gables were added. Later alterations include repositioning of windows, semi-circular lunettes in the gables, a full-width early 20th c. porch, and a 1989 garage addition. The house retains a number of early features.

50. POTTER FARM 1785

The earliest and one of the most intact farm complexes in the district, this property consists of a late 18th c. main house and diverse outbuildings on both sides of the road. Extensive open fields, stone walls, mature trees, and views of the village and Lake Winnepesaukee must be much the same now as they were 150 years ago, except that some of the landscape has now returned to forest.

The main house reflects Georgian and Federal influence in a vernacular way: narrow window casings with molded edges, 5-light transom, flat corner trim. Historic photographs show a variety of porches at various times. The ell appears early 19th c. Behind the attached garage, which was once a shed, is the ice house.

Nathan Hoit built the homestead on 100 acres of land. In 1794, Joseph Potter purchased the farm and it remained in his family for four generations until 1944. His great-grandson, Fred Potter, donated many of his family's early household and farming implements to the historical society. Joseph Potter was a shoemaker and cordwainer, as well as inspector of leather for the town.

Potter Hill Road was laid out in the late 1780's as the main route from the sawmill to the "back of the mountain" section of Gilford (the southeast side of Gunstock Mountain). Another road, laid out in 1807 from Potter Farm to the Gould Farm (now part of Pine Grove Cemetery), is now a footpath.

The Gilford Village Historic District was established by the action of Town Meeting on March 6, 1972, with the boundaries described in Article 14 of the Gilford Zoning Ordinance.

This brochure is adapted from an architectural and historical survey of the Gilford Village Historic District, which was completed in September, 1990. The project was supported by a U.S. Department of the Interior grant matched by Town Appropriations and in-kind assistance. The State Historic Preservation Office administered this grant, # 40168-CLG-02, through the Certified Local Government Program. Architectural historian Elizabeth Durfee Hengen conducted the survey, with the invaluable assistance of many local volunteers.

For further reading, see the following resources available at the Gilford Library:

Watson, J.P. **The History of Gilford, 1885** (Reprinted by the Gilford Bicentennial Commission, 1976)

Hunter, Alvah Folsom, **A New Hampshire Boyhood** (c. 1928; bound unpublished manuscript)

Bolduc, Hector, **The Gilford Story** (pamphlet)

The Granite State Monthly, July, 1898

A Walking Tour: Produced and edited by Adair Mulligan

Illustrations by Gilford artist Linda Stern

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