

—1737.—

HISTORY
OF
WASHINGTON CO.,

NEW YORK.

WITH

Illustrations and Biographical Sketches

OF

SOME OF ITS PROMINENT MEN AND PIONEERS.

PHILADELPHIA:

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ORGANIZATION.

It is evident from various documents that a district organization existed in Granville for several years prior to the first election of town officers in 1787. This whole country was involved in the difficulties over the "New Hampshire grants."

Many of the citizens of Granville, perhaps a majority, took part in the movement to annex Charlotte county, and other territory, to Vermont, described in the general history, and elected delegates to the Cambridge convention. After this movement failed,—which it did in the course of a few months,—the Granville people, who had engaged in it, as well as those of other districts in the same predicament, were compelled to make submission to the authorities of New York, which they proceeded to do as gracefully as possible by presenting the following paper:

"TO HIS EXCELLENCY, THE GOVERNOR, AND THE HONORABLE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

"The petition of the subscribers, inhabitants of Granville, humbly sheweth: That your petitioners have been exposed to the invasions and depredations of the enemy since the year 1776, and since the evacuation of Ticonderoga have had only a small guard at Skeneborough till in the spring of 1780. Since that, your petitioners have been entirely destitute of any succor, notwithstanding the many petitions and remonstrances repeating the same. That your petitioners have been for the last three campaigns almost constantly in alarm, which hath rendered them in a most deplorable condition, so that there are numbers of families now among us who have scarce one bushel of grain to support them, nor is there any to be purchased within twenty miles' distance. That under these distressing circumstances, and the insinuation of artful and designing men, your petitioners were seduced to swerve from their allegiance, not from any desire of leaving the State, could we have been protected.

"But we trust your excellency and the honorable body will again receive us, and overlook what your distressed subjects have done. Hoping for the future, we shall take care how we are led by any designing men, and remain happy subjects under your protection.

"Your petitioners most humbly pray that your excellency and the honorable Senate and Assembly will take our case into consideration, and not only pardon them of their transgression, but afford them some defense for the ensuing campaign, and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

"Dated Granville, March the 14th, A.D. 1782.

MOSES SAWYER,	JONATHAN HAYDEN,
DANIEL CURTIS,	EBENEZER WALKER,
ASAPH COOK,	LEONARD PARKER,
HENRY WATKINS,	JOHN BATEMAN,
BENJAMIN BAKER,	JAMES OTIS,
DAVID DOANE,	PETER GROVER,
GIBBON ALLEN,	ABRAHAM VANDERBILT,
ELIZABETH PARKER,	JOHN GROVER,
ABRAHAM SMITH,	JOHN BARNES,
MICHAEL GRIFFITH,	DAVID BEANESIDE,
PETER HARRINGTON,	JOHN WALKER,
MOSES POWLES,	JOHN SPRING,
JOSEPH PARKER,	SOLOMON BAKER,
THOMAS GRIFFITH,	THOMAS GILLES,
JOSEPH MIN,	JOSEPH HARRINGTON,
SAMUEL HAYDEN,	EBENEZER GOULD,
JAMES CHASE,	JESSE ATWATER,
DAVID BEANET,	ELIAS WILLIAMS,
THEOPHILUS NORTON,	

The records of the district of Granville are no doubt lost. At all events, the careful search of Hon. Hiel Holister, J. W. Thompson, and others interested in such studies, have failed to discover them. There are some

traces of this prior organization in the old town books, under the head of "Road Surveys of 1781."

Asaph Cook was a representative to the Vermont Legislature under the union effected on May, 1781. In the fall of the same year, Benjamin Baker and Joseph Crary were also representatives, and probably the last to attend the Vermont Legislature. Upon these three pioneers fell the honors and emoluments of official life under the State of Vermont.

Judging from the time of settlement, from the known organization of other districts, from the habits of local self-government peculiar to New England, and evidently derived from their ancient town-meeting system, it is fair to infer a district organization of from ten to fifteen years before 1787, the date of the first town-meeting. The records are supposed by some to have been purposely destroyed, in view of the difficulties of the conflicting allegiance of that period and the danger of prosecution against individuals for participation either on one side or the other. Certainly there is little or nothing left of written annals, either for courts or historians.

The town of Granville is supposed to have received its name through early settlers from Massachusetts, naming their new home after the Granville of the old Bay State. There is no particular proof of this, however. The name is spelled in the older papers, *Granvile* and *Gronvile*.

It is the opinion of Mr. George N. Bates, himself from Granville, Massachusetts, that this town was not named from that.

Granville was organized as a town, by act of the Legislature, in 1786, and the following are the

MINUTES OF THE FIRST TOWN-MEETING:

"April ye 23, 1787.—At an Annual town-meeting (according to a law passed in the tenth session of the Assembly of the State of New York) of the inhabitants of the town of Granville, held at the house of Capt. John Stucking, in said town:

"Meeting being opened, Voted for Town Clerk, Gordon Johnson. Proceeded and chose Capt. Daniel Curtis, Supervisor; Major Thomas Conyers, Capt. John McWhorter, Ebenezer Walker, Assessors; Lieut. Henry Watkins, David Doane, Samuel Hayden, Road Commissioners; Daniel H. White, Constable and Collector; John Walker, Solomon Baker, Poormasters; for Pathmasters, Benjamin Wait, Heppon Austin, James Barnes, Timothy Case, Joseph Andrews, Joseph Morton, Joseph Graves, Benjamin Baker, Daniel Porter, Joseph Woodruff, Zachariah Patterson, Joseph Northrup, John T. Wright, Israel Lamb, Timothy Baker, Kitchel Reek, John Walker, John Crary, Joseph Cook, Elijah White, Ebenezer Chapin; Jonathan Wright, John McWhorter, Amos Beard, Fence-Viewers; Peter Parker, Benjamin Baker, Samuel Hayden, Pound Keepers.

"Voted, that the town clerk procure a book for record, at the expense of the town.

"Voted, that sheep should not be free commoners.

"Voted, that this meeting dissolve."

SECOND TOWN-MEETING.

"April 1, anniversary for town-meeting was on Tuesday, the 5th day of April, 1788. Met, according to former custom, at the house of Captain John Stucking; meeting opened by Esquire Cook. Then Major Thomas Conyers was nominated and chose moderator for the day. The question was put whether to adjourn to the meeting-house; proceeded there and elected town officers. The new names among the officers were Nathan Law, collector; Scottaway Whitecomb,