

History of Hillsborough County Gaol(s) in Amherst, N.H.

compiled by Katrina Holman (research file, rev. Nov. 2023)

This file is organized into the following sections:

- Timeline of Jail Buildings in Amherst – 4 of them
- Brief History of County Gaol/Jail: 1772-1867
- Physical Description of Jail(s)
- End of County Jail Being in Amherst & Destruction of Buildings
- Who's Who of Jailers
- Prisoners' names & tales of escape

Timeline of County Jail Buildings in Amherst

- 1771: (1) Former garrison house (built ca. 1750), used as first county jail in 1771 when it was attached as ell to Robert Read's dwelling house cum tavern-inn at 232 Boston Post Road south of Village, Read being both innholder and jailer. Moved 1924 across street to 233 BPR.
(Only surviving jail in town.)
- 1772: (2) First purpose-built county jail erected, being a wooden structure later known as the County House that also housed jailkeeper's family, at end of Old Jailhouse Road. Sold to private owner 1867; razed 1893.
- 1793: (3) First stone gaol built at end of Old Jailhouse Road next to (west of) County House.
- 1811: (4) Second/final stone gaol built in front of first one, next to County House, utilizing stone from first one. Used as jail until July 1864 upon completion of new county jail in Manchester.
- 1867: County sold land & bldgs into private ownership (including house at 3 Old Jailhouse Road, which had been bought by County in 1860 by deed recorded 328:334).
- 1893: Town of Amherst purchased the stone jail, tore it down, and used granite blocks for culverts and to repair Tuck bridge.
- 1893: Private owners razed the old County House.

1772-1867: County Gaol History in Brief

- by Katrina Holman (rev. 2014)

Lot: Old Jailhouse Road (two rods wide) and the gaol lot were created in January 1772 (Hillsborough County deed 1:215) when Jonathan Smith Sr., innholder, sold half an acre, lying about 10 rods northwesterly from his dwelling house-cum-tavern (building stood at 3 Church Road but Smith owned entire north side of Church Street and more land), to the County of Hillsborough. Twenty-one years after the creation of the gaol lot, the County extended the gaol yard northerly by buying an additional quarter acre from Smith (deed 32:278). In Nov. 1844 and April 1845, when still owned by the County, slivers from the south end of the gaol property would be split off to become part of *1 Old Jailhouse Road* lot.

Buildings: The County House (built 1772) initially served as jail and jailkeeper's office and residence. The first stone jail was built in 1793, costing a master builder of stone gaols from Groton, Mass., his life (the injury and death of "Mr. Parks" were reported in *Columbian Centinel* of Boston, 24 August 1793 and *New Hampshire Gazette* of Portsmouth, 20 Aug. 1793). A strengthened replacement stone jail was built in 1811 on the same property.

Debtors Prison: The very first records of "his Majesty's Gaol at Amherst" (Oct. 1771) show the inmates to be 4 men imprisoned for unpaid debts. By 1818, Amherst's jail was the focus of a *cause célèbre*, Hillsborough County being so benighted as to still imprison debtors for life. Three men were in jail (a vet of the Revolutionary War since Dec. 1814, the others since Dec. 1815 and July 1817), accruing ever greater debts for their 'room and board' and having no way to earn their way out – until Benjamin Pierce, new county sheriff, arranged their release by paying a large sum out of his own pocket, to end this disgrace to New Hampshire.

Escapes: Evidently the jail was never particularly secure, as there continued to be escapees even after 1811. On New Year's Eve 1849/50, five prisoners – "three Frenchman, a Yankee and an African" awaiting trial – "broke out of the Jail ...by soaping their bodies and crowding through a space which they had made between the bars;" they were all soon retaken by the deputy jailer.

Fire: In 1850 fire destroyed the County House's stable and the jail's roof and thereby also the gallows, by which the only execution in Amherst was carried out in 1822, which had been stored in the attic.

End of Jail: The county property was privatized in 1867, and the new owners, brothers residing in Milford, rented out the former County House. Both the clapboarded County House and the stone jail stood until 1893. In June 1893, the former county lot was split in half, each sold for \$100, the east half going to the owner of *3 Old Jailhouse Road* (deed 535:545) and the west half going to the owner of *4 Old Jailhouse Road* (deed 535:545); however, both deeds "reserving all buildings on premises with privilege of removing within five years." The west half was resold in August 1900 (deed 596:168) to a new owner.

Note: Much of this information is in "Development of Old Jailhouse Road Neighborhood: Mingling of Drinkers, Travelers, Lawyers, Worshipers, Shoppers, Jailbirds" by Katrina Holman, Aug, 2014 HSA Newsletter.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY JAIL in Amherst

[1772:] “The first building erected by the county for jail purposes, in 1772, was the house, still standing, known as the county house. The west end of the building was constructed of oak timbers and the inside protected by iron bars; the east end was arranged for the residence of the jailor and for office purposes. This was in use for forty years, but proving insecure and insufficient, a new jail of stone and brick was build in the real of the other and near the brook. ... The building standing as it did, at the foot for the ridge and close by the brook, soon proved by reason of its location, both damp and inconvenient. It was taken down and the material used in building the queer looking little jail now standing ...

[1793:] “Originally a high brick wall enclosed the jail and a balcony ran around at the second story as shown by the iron brackets; while on the end a light of stairs went up to the garret where women were imprisoned. The place where the steps used to be can be plainly seen, and is indicated in the picture by the shading. The brick wall was perhaps ten feet away from the jail walls, and was flat on top. The top was grassy, and strange little yellow flowers flourished [there].

The dimensions of the stone jail are surprisingly small: the outside measurement being 25 feet wide by 30 feet long. The blocks of granite composing the walls are 42 inches thick. There are two cells on the ground floor, and two on the second floor: these little cells measure about 18 feet by 10 feet, and a trifle over 7 feet high. The garret is divided into two rooms. At times there have been 40 inmates crowded into these diminutive apartments, and it is said they would make the night hideous by their howling. ... The floors of the ground cells are huge slabs of stone, and in one of them is fixed a ponderous ring by which refractory culprits were held in subjection. The narrow windows are simply spaces between the great blocks of stone, with no glass, the outside being barred by thick strips of forged iron. ...”

(*Milford Cabinet*, 24 Aug. 1893, front page, “Amherst Jail: The Abandoned Structure Where for Years Hillsborough County Confined Her Criminals. / Built of Huge Blocks of Stone in Historic Town. / It Long Outlives its Usefulness and it to be Torn Down.” With multiple illustrations.)

“Merchant A. J. Hutchinson [of Milford] has been reading the Amherst jail story and he tells us that the padlock that used to hand on the old jail door is in possession of Mrs. D. K. Marvell. It is rusty and big, some eight or ten inches in diameter. Sheriff Marvell, years ago, escorted many to Amherst’s impregnable stone cage.” (*Milford Cabinet*, 31 Aug, 1893, p. 2.)

FIXING LIMITS OF GAOL YARD

1816 Dec.: An act prescribing the manner of fixing the limits of Gaol Yards.

... shall not extend more than 200 rods each way from said gaols; and provided further, that no alteration in the boundaries of any gaol yard shall be made until one session of the said court within the county where application for that purpose may be made do...

1857: Legislature [wording for executions], “commit to jail in said county, and the keeper of said jail is required to re__ and detain him in jail until he pay said fine and lawful fees ...” (*Farmers’ Cabinet*, 19 Aug. 1857)

END of JAIL BEING LOCATED IN/AT AMHERST

1860 County Expenses for the Year, included:

Jail Expenses	\$7,142.72
County Farm expenses	\$8792.71
Pauper expenses off the farm	\$6552.64
Jury pay rolls	\$4,559.31
...	
Treasurer's salary	\$ 126

The expenses exceed those of last year by some \$14,000. as follows:

Jail expenses more than last year	\$1570.65
Jury pay rolls more than last year	\$1665.35
State pay rolls, for witnesses, arrests and keeping	\$2117.75
Miscellaneous bills, such as sheriff's fee, stationery, etc.	\$1020.82
...	

The expenses at the County Farm have been \$371 less than last year, while those helped in the various towns in the County exceed \$2,061.74.

Most of the criminals that are tried are of a class that are too poor to pay the fines imposed upon them by the Court, and will stay in jail until pardoned by the Court, incurring an expense to the County to pay their board, without realizing anything in return, except justice to the offender. ...

AMOS J. WILSON, County Treasurer. December 31, 1860. (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 1 Feb. 1861, p. [2])

1861: Judicial Court of Hillsborough County. ... The Grand Jury bringing the following indictments: ...
"County of Hillsborough for not keeping a suitable jail." (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 13 Sep 1861.)

1861: "HILLSBOROUGH, SS. The Supreme Judicial Court, September Term, 1861, The Grand Jurors having examined the Jail in said County, and having heard the testimony of several persons who are well acquainted with the same have found said jail insufficient, out of repair and too small to accommodate the large number of prisoners usually confined therein, and therefore present the same for indictment at the present term of said Court. Amherst, Sep. 6, 1861. ALBERT H. DANIELS, Foreman of the Grand Jury. A true copy, Attest: E. S. CUTTER, Clerk.

Upon the foregoing report being presented to the Court, it is ordered that the Clerk of the Court cause the same with this order thereon, to be published one week in all the newspapers printed in the County of Hillsborough, and in the New Hampshire Statesman, a newspaper printed at Concord, in our County of Merrimack. Attest: E.S. CUTTER, Clerk." (FC, 19 June 1862.)

1862: "Our Manchester friends might be added to the list of things never satisfied. It would seem that they already have their full share in public, but there are still a few things more they desire, such as the State House and State Prison, the Hillsborough County Records and Jail, and it is rumored that a bill is in preparation to include the rest of the State in the suburbs of the city!" (FC, 19 June 1862, p. [2].)

1863: "It is announced in the papers that the County Commissioners have decided to build a new jail at Manchester, and to proceed with the work in the early spring. This announcement has taken the people of the County with no little surprise, ... It is a piece and parcel of the same spirit that sought to scatter the records of the County almost to the four winds, but which met with so signal a defeat by the people. ..." (FC, 1-1-1863, p. [2]; editorial objecting.)

1863: See further objection (FC, 8 Jan. 1863 p [3], from *Peterborough Transcript*)

1863: "Hillsborough County Jail. For many years the Jail in this County has been the topic of general discussion and the subject of almost universal complaint. Its delapidated condition, its entire want of accommodations for the number usually confined therein, and the impossibility of affording prisoners the means of attending to their physical wants, in such limited apartments, have called out the repeated condemnation of the people, and brought disgrace upon the County. ... until the past season, when the County Commissioners, by authority of the court, resolved to appropriate \$20,000 for the erection of a new building. / Then came the question of location, and here was a division of the people, the different interests demanding its location at Amherst or that vicinity, at Nashua, at Reed's Ferry, and in this city. ..." (*Farmers' Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 7 May 1863, p. [2]; copied from *Manchester American*.)

1863: county expense report (FC, 11 June 1863, p [3] – see for expenses by term
Report of Hillsborough County Treasurer for Year Ending with May Term of Court, 1863

JAIL EXPENSES

Paid G. Hills board of prisoners \$1623.49
“ clothing of prisoners \$492.25
board of prisoners \$288.39
keeping prisoners during court \$228
serv. Jail or. & trans. Pris. \$162.06
TOTAL \$2794.19
Paid for new jail \$10K
Pauper expenses ...

1863 Oct: Fire at the County Jail in Amherst

(*Farmers' Cabinet*, ___ and 15 Oct. 1863, p. [2] and p. [3].)
\$500 reward offered (26 Nov. 1863, p. [3])

1864: New Jail in Manchester: The Manchester Mirror and American states that the new jail will be ready for occupation in three or four weeks. Gilbert Hills, Esq., will soon remove from Amherst and take charge of the new building. It is located a half mile south of the City Hall, Manchester on high land and [joining] the “Valley Cemetery,” ...The sightly lot, containing three and a half acres of land, valued at \$3000, was a free gift from the city of Manchester. [describes it in detail] (FC, 21 Jan. 1864, p. [2].)

1864: “At a meeting of the Board of County Commissioners for the County of Hillsborough in the State of New Hampshire held at the Court House in Amherst, in said County, on Thursday the 12 May 1864, all of said County Commissioners, to wit: George A. Barnes, Thomas Chase and James Scott, Esquires, being present, It was resolved and ordered by said Board that the new Jail and Jail buildings recently erected in Manchester, in said County, for a County Jail, being now ready for the confinement of prisoners therein, the same are adopted and established as the County Jail of said County on and after the First day of July 1864, and on and after said day the **present Jail in Amherst in said County be discontinued as the County Jail of said County.**

To Supreme Judicial Court of the State of New Hampshire, now in session at Amherst, in and for the County of Hillsborough. MAY TERM 1864.

The County Commissioners for said County represent that the new Jail and Jail buildings in Manchester are now ready for use and occupation as the County Jail – that the said County Comm. by their resolution and order hereunto annexed, have adopted and established the same as the County Jail, on and after the first day of July, 1864, and they pray for an order of said Court establishing said new Jail as the County Jail of said County on and after said day and discontinuing from that time the present Jail in Amherst as such County Jail, and for such further orders as may be necessary for the lawful removal of the prisoners in custody of the keeper of the County Jail to said new Jail in Manchester, and their detention in custody therein.” [Signed by 3] (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 26 May 1864, p. [3].)

1864: History of Amherst Jail: “Jail to let! The old Jail of this [Hillsborough] County, located in this town [Amherst, N.H.], is now tenantless, and to let. It was built by the County, in 1811, and has been the abode of more guilt probably than any other similar structure in the State. Its records would fill many a volume with facts of thrilling, terrible interest. From its cells never but one has gone forth to the place of execution, but hundreds as guilty as he perhaps, have escaped with a whole neck, to wear the stripped [sic] pants of a higher prison. Probably more females and youth have been incarcerated here than in any jail of the State. This jail was the third built in this place. / The first jail was a wooden structure, and now constitutes the west end of the County building, adjoining the prison walls. The floor was of oak plank, three or four inches thick. It was in this first jail that Keef committed suicide when under sentence to stand in the pillory for setting fire to Atherton's barn at the Rhodes place, and also to the Court House. The stains remained upon the floor until taken up, some 25 years. / The second jail was built north of the present one, between it and the brook, and the stone materials in that were used for the construction of the one now standing. While building the prisoners were removed to Hopkinton jail. ...”
(*Farmers' Cabinet*, 28 July 1864, p. [2].)

COURT NOT JAIL:

1877: “Supreme Court at Amherst. ... Saturday the Court adjourned to Manchester where it will hold three weeks, returning to Amherst on the 26 th for final adjournment. (FC, 8 May 1877)

DESTRUCTION OF STONE JAILHOUSE & COUNTY HOUSE & HISTORY SUMMARY IN NEWSPAPER

1893 April 20: "It is reported that the old jail property will be offered at auction this spring. It contains a valuable amount of stone. As a land-mark Amherst people will regret to see it torn down. It is suggested that a company might be formed to purchase it and convert it into a town reservoir, and attach a wind-mill to fill it. It is too colossal an undertaking for the Improvement Society. (MC, 20 April 1893.)

1893 Aug. 24 with diagrams (reprinted from *Union*) – almost all of front page

1893: Detailed history of stone gaol (*Cabinet*, 24 Aug. 1893, "Old Jail History", whole front page)

1893: "The Manchester *Union* of Saturday, last, [ran] an interesting and elaborately illustrated article on the old jails of Amherst. An unfortunate mistake was made by the artist in photographing the wrong house, and instead of reproducing the picture of the old King George jail, which buildings are now owned and occupied by Wm. Rhoads, a picture of Mrs. H. Hill's house is shown. We have asked permission to reproduce the otherwise valuable article and will probably do so with some additions and corrections, another week." (FC, 17 Aug. 1893)

1893: "Amherst: The selectmen have bought the old jail for the town, of Fred A. Noyes. They will use the stone in building and repairing bridges. A number of our citizens however, favor utilizing it for a reservoir." (FC, 18 June 1893)

1893: "Amherst: A derrick has been placed on the jail lot and the work of razing the old jail begun under the directions of D. W. Trow and J. H. Dodge." (FC, 28 Sep. 1893.)

1893: "George W. Osgood and Robert Atkinson are tearing down the jail-keeper's house owned by them on the old jail grounds. The west end of the building was built originally for a jail, as the large closely fitted timbers bear evidence, and prisoners kept therein until the erection of the stone structure in 1811." (FC, 12 Oct. 1893)

1893: "James Monroe died in Boston the 6 th inst. aged 68 years. Buried here Monday. He was a native of this village and only son of the late Elijah Monroe, Esq., a former high sheriff and jail-keeper. A generation ago he was the popular landlord and stable keeper at the Nutt tavern. Some thirty years ago he moved to Boston where he has since resided. (FC, 12 Oct. 1893.)

1895: "Amherst: Road Agent Dodge is removing stone from the old jail, for repairing Tuck bridge." (FC, 19 Sep. 1895.)

1900 Aug.: "Mrs. George W. Osgood has recently sold a lot of land in the vicinity of the old jail, to Miss Elsie Russell who will erect a house upon it at an early date." (FC, 16 Aug. 1900)

[End of History section]

WHO'S WHO of JAILERS of the COUNTY JAIL at Amherst, N.H.

RESEARCH NOTE: The biographical sketches below are “rough drafts.” (I have not, for example, checked the deed indexes and vital records for all of them.) Nevertheless, some observations: The men appointed as gaolers/prison keepers for the Hillsborough County jail at Amherst were respectable and respected citizens. Notice too that as a group these men had an affinity for inn/tavernkeeping. - Katrina Holman (Nov. 2023)

JAILERS – INDEX [probably incomplete list]

Baldwin Nahum – 1788, deputy gaoler; otherwise, storekeeper
Buell James F. – 1860, deputy jailer (1860 census, aged 35, wife Permelia, 33).
Converse Josiah – 1804, 1808, prison keeper aka gaoler (7 men escaped May 1804; 1 man escaped again July 1805; 4 men escaped Jan. 1808)
Dane Nathan – 1836-1843, jailer and deputy sheriff (4 men escaped in Dec. 1843)
Danforth Timothy – 1820, prison keeper and deputy sheriff
Ellenwood John – 1813-1814, deputy gaoler (1 man escaped Christmas Day 1813)
Field Henry, Esq, late of Merrimac – 1810, deputy gaoler in Amherst and deputy sheriff for county
Fisk Amos – 1773, gaoler and under keeper
Kendall Nathan – 1792, “deputy sheriff”; otherwise, inn/tavernkeeper.
Mace James C. – 1815-1818, deputy gaoler (1 man escaped Sep. 1815; 1 man escaped March 1818)
Hills Gilbert – 1856-1863, jailer & deputy sheriff, the last jailer at Amherst, continued in office until 1865 (a woman, destined for the State Prison, escaped while he was attempting to hold her, together with two women destined for the Amherst jail, in a Manchester city hotel room overnight)
Monroe Elijah – 1844-1855, jail keeper and county (or high) sheriff
Monroe James – circa early 1850s – deputy sheriff; transported prisoners; assisted his father with jailkeeping
Morrison Samuel – 1795-1799, deputy gaoler (2 men escaped 1795)
Read Robert – 1771, under prison keeper (also innholder since 1759)
Richardson Charles – 1821-1835, deputy gaoler (prison keeper & deputy sheriff) (4 men escaped March 1828)
Whitney Aaron – 1806-1807, deputy gaoler (5 men escaped 4th July 1806; 1 man escaped March 1807); otherwise, blacksmith

JAILERS – Biographical Sketches, in Chronological Order

1771 Jailer: Robert Read (Sr., 1720-1803), who was a resident of Litchfield, N.H. (Provincial N.H. deed 51:226, May 1751) before he moved to Souhegan West by July 1752 (per Provincial N.H. deed 72:123) and built house at 232 Boston Post Road, was an innholder (tavernkeeper) since 1759 (called “Robert Read, innholder in Souhegan West” in *New Hampshire Gazette* of Portsmouth, N.H., 11 and 18 May 1759) and was licensed to keep a tavern (*Amherst Town Records*, vol. 2) until he sold that place in July 1772 to Joshua Atherton, Esquire (Hillsborough County deed 2:528).

(Primary source for Robert Read as “under prison keeper”: “1771 Oct 3: A List of Prisoners in his Majesty's Goal [gaol/jail] at Amherst, County of Hillsborough” in Hillsborough County Court Records, file 8098 at N.H. State Archives in Concord, N.H.; found by Katrina Holman, Sep. 2014.)

(Additional Sources for Read as taverner: *Historical Sketch of the Hillsborough County Congresses, Held at Amherst, N.H. 1774 & 1775 with other Revolutionary Records*, compiled by Edward D. Boylston, 1884, p. 44: “Capt. Robt. Read” was one of 9 men in Amherst granted taverner license by Hillsborough County court in Oct. 1771.)

1773 Jailer: Amos Fisk, “under keeper”

[FURTHER RESEARCH needed]

(Sources: “Province of New Hampshire, Hillsborough ss. General Sessions of the Peace in April 1773: A List of Prisoners detained in his Majesty's Goal in Amherst in County”, Hillsborough County Court Records, file 8098 at N.H. Archives; and “1773 Sep 14: Province of New Hampshire, Hillsborough ss: A list of prisoners in his Majesty's Goal at Amherst in the County of Hillsborough by Amos Fisk, under keeper” in Hillsborough County Court Records, Series A, file 1188, at N.H. Archives, Concord; found by KH, Sep 2014.)

1788 Jailer: Nahum Baldwin (1734-1788), deputy gaoler (sketch in Secomb's *History*, p. 862, 491).

Baldwin was a carpenter and resident of Merrimack in 1763 when he bought his first property in Amherst, 60-acre Lot 29 (Provincial N.H. deed 77:405). Since May 1772, Baldwin owned & occupied house at 6 Mack Hill Road. He was a storekeeper (called a “trader” then): in Oct 1771 and again in Oct. 1772, the court granted Baldwin a retailer

license and ordered that he, and another storekeeper, “be permitted to keep a tavern while the several Courts of Justice are sitting in Amherst, and no other time” (that is, granted a limited-time liquor license to serve alcoholic drinks in his store). In 1781, Nahum Baldwin, “Esquire,” expanded his Mack Hill house lot by 14 acres (deeds 9:47 and 10:142 [FamilySearch image 387], for 570 Spanish Milled Dollars) by taking advantage of the sale of confiscated property of an “absentee” Tory, Zaccheus Cutler, who had been a leading businessman in Amherst Village prior to the Revolution. Baldwin may have opened his house as an inn, because Matthew Patten, Esq., a magistrate from Bedford twice (*only* twice in more than a decade of regularly attending court sessions at Amherst) stayed overnight there, in Oct. 1774 and March 1787

(Source for Baldwin as jailer: “1788 March Term: A list of Prisoners now in Amherst Goal [gaol/jail] in Hillsborough County, State of New Hampshire, by Nahum Baldwin, D. Goaler” in Hillsborough County Court Records, Series A, file 187, at N.H. Archives, Concord; found by KH, Sep 2014.)

(Source for Baldwin as storekeeper with taverner license: Source: *Historical Sketch of the Hillsborough County Congresses, Held at Amherst, N.H. 1774 & 1775 with other Revolutionary Records*, compiled by Edward D. Boylston, 1884. Source for Baldwin as possible innkeeper: *The Diary of Matthew Patten of Bedford, NH, 1754-1788*, published by Town of Bedford, 1903, in which Patten records that he “lodged one night at Baldwin’s” in Oct. 1774 (p. 331) and again in March 1787 (p. 532).)

(Online FamilySearch catalog image 117 in 1771-1849 grantee deed index for Nahum Baldwin: Nahum bought & recorded many properties; image 112 for Cyrus Baldwin. Online FamilySearch catalog image 54 in film of Volumes 3 & 4: Deed 3:100, 1772 May 18, William Jones of Amherst, yeoman, to Nahum Baldwin of Amherst, “gentleman,” for 11 pounds & 19 shillings, 1a and 21 poles on [west side of] “highway leading from the old Meeting House to the New, in Amherst” [now called Mack Hill Road] in County of Hillsborough and Province of New Hampshire; Wm. Jones owned the adjoining land on the north and Jonathan Smith (whose home-cum-tavern was at 3 Church Street) owned the adjoining land on the south.)

1792 Jailer?: Nathan Kendall was “deputy sheriff” so possibly also the jailer, although Kendall had his own house nearby. Nathan Kendall, Esq. (3d, 1755-1846), married since 1779 to Sarah Kendrick (aunt of Franklin Pierce), in 1790 bought Nahum Baldwin’s former house at 6 Mack Hill Road on 67 acres (deed 23:528) and became innholder/ tavernkeeper and storekeeper there (the store being a separate building next door). He was appointed JP in 1806. Kendall sold the place in 1820 (apparently in financial difficulties).

(Source for deputy sheriff: *Life and Times in Hopkinton, N.H.* by C. C. Lord, 1890, p. 77 in section about Abel Rowell who was imprisoned in jail at Amherst.)

1795-1799 Jailer: Capt. Samuel Morrison (d. 1820 aged 64) kept a public house or store in Amherst in the 1790s: *Amherst Town Records Vol. 2* show that he was granted year-long taverner licenses in June 1793 (license to “retail & mix spirituous liquors”, p. 482), July 1794 (p. 488), Mar 1797 (p. 495), and June 1800 (p. 351) – which overlaps with his tenure as jailer. He was a carpenter by trade, and at the time of his death his shop was next to the house of Capt. J. Convers. His wife Jane (Adams) died in Feb. 1814, aged 59, and he died insolvent in June 1820, aged 64, after falling from a scaffold while shingling his barn. His daughter Sophia Morrison (b. 1786) became a milliner in Amherst Village 1825/6. -Katrina Holman (rev. 2014; tweaked Nov. 2023; incomplete)

[FURTHER RESEARCH: Where did he live?]

(Included in “Historic Amherst: What the Prisoners Wore – When They Escaped from the County Gaol in Amherst: Examples of late 18th & early 19th Century Apparel” by Katrina Holman, article in *The Amherst Citizen*, 26 Aug. 2014. Samuel Morrison's genealogy can be found in *Descendants of James and William Adams of Londonderry, Now Derry, N.H.*, 1894; death notices for him and wife in *Farmers' Cabinet*.)

(Sources for Samuel Morrison as jailer: “Stop Prisoners” notice by Samuel Morrison, deputy gaoler, in *Amherst Journal*, N.H., 10 April 1795. “1799 Sep Term: A List of Prisoners in Amherst gaol by Samuel Morrison, prison keeper, 3 Sep 1799” in Hillsborough County Court Records, Series A, file 187, at N.H. Archives, Concord; found by KH, Sep 2014)

1804, 1808 Jailer: Josiah Convers (1778-1842) had a varied career. In 1799-1801, when he was a cordwainer-shoemaker, he owned & occupied 226 Boston Post Road (which next became tavern of Ephraim French). In 1801 he was appointed sexton of Amherst, his duties being to ring the meeting-house bell at one o'clock and nine o'clock each week day, for pay of \$7 a week. (He was succeeded the next year by Dr. Samuel Curtis, innholder, who received \$24 for bell-ringing services in that year.) (Secomb, p. 445) In the summer of 1801 Josiah started a weekly Amherst-Boston stage coach, leaving from John Watson's tavern-inn at 1 Carriage Road (still standing) on the west side of the Common, in direct competition to Wheat's line which stopped at the Post Office in Curtis's inn-tavern (gone) on the south side of the Common. Then Josiah ran a shoemaking business, advertising in Dec. 1802 to hire two journeyman shoemakers; he returned to this occupation in the 1820s. His career in law enforcement included stints as jail-keeper 1804-'05; and 1808-'09 and deputy sheriff for Amherst 1809-'10. From 1810 to 1814, he was

tavern- and inn-keeper (but not innholder/owner) of Curtis's hotel, which at that time was practically “opposite the meeting-house.” When Convers took over there in July 1810, he promised “to render his [public] house worthy the resort of fashionable company, and of weary travellers,” offering “the best fare for their horses” and “the best liquors constantly kept,” especially for “gentlemen of leisure and ease, who may wish to spend an hour in agreeable recreation” but also entertainments for societies and private parties. He had prior experience as a bar-keeper, having been granted year-long tavern licenses in 1806-1809, but whether for a store or inn is unknown. Meanwhile he was also active in the militia, a Lieutenant by 1806 and Captain from 1808; in 1814, when the U.S. was at war with Britain, Capt. Josiah Convers marched to Portsmouth with Col. Fisk's regiment, ready to defend should the British fleet, cruising nearby, attack. He had 12 children including sons named Alexander Hamilton (the one who took over his shoe shop in 1827) and George Washington and short-lived twins, the last child born in 1818. He left Amherst in the 1830s, moving to Hooksett where he died. (Biographical sketch by Katrina Holman, rev. 2017.)

1806-1807 Jailer: Aaron Whitney, blacksmith, in 1801 bought one acre with 10 rods of frontage on the west side of the new Second New Hampshire turnpike [comprising roughly today's 95 BPR lot and most of 93 BPR lot] for \$140, on which he built a blacksmith shop and his dwelling house (although the house may have been built a few years after the smithy, but it nevertheless appears that he was the first resident on this block). In 1815, fire destroyed Whitney's blacksmith shop, causing near financial ruin (“thrown out of business” according to *Farmer's Cabinet* 1815-04-15); the blacksmith shop was rebuilt. In 1815 Nov., Aaron Whitney (1772-1847), blacksmith and postmaster, bought adjoining “1.75 acres” with 20 rods of frontage along the turnpike [comprising roughly today's 89 and 91 Boston Post Road lots and a small portion of 93 BPR lot] for \$100 (Hillsborough County deed 122:390). Either Whitney's house or his shop served as the town's post office from 1812-1819. Whitney moved away from Amherst to Milford in 1819. His former house still stood at 95 BPR in 1837, but had disappeared from that site by 1854. - Katrina Holman (rev. 2018 from my house history file for 89 BPR)

(Sources as jailer: “Broke from Amherst gaol [signed] By order of Moses Kelley, Sheriff, Aaron Whitney, D'y Goaler [sic, gaoler/jailer]” in *Farmer's Cabinet*, 29 July 1806, p. [4]. “100 Dollars Reward! Broke from Amherst Goal ...” newspaper notice signed jointly by “Moses Kelley, Sheriff, and Aaron Whitney, Amherst, March 16, 1807” in *Farmer's Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 24 March 1807, p. [1]. Also, Whitney gets a shout-out in the memoir of someone who several times was an inmate of the jail at Amherst, namely in *The Life and Adventures of Seth Wyman: Embodying the Principal Events of a Life Spent in Robbery, Theft, Gambling, Passing Counterfeit Money &c &c Written by Himself*, published posthumously in 1843, the year of Wyman's death.)

1810 Jailer: “This certifies that HENRY FIELD, Esq. late of Merrimac, was this day appointed Deputy Gaoler in Amherst, and also a Deputy Sheriff for the County of Hillsborough, and at the same time he took charge of the Prisoners, and the keys were delivered to him by me. B. PIERCE, Sheriff. May 28, 1810.” (*Farmer's Cabinet*, 5 June 1810, p. [3].)

1813-1814 Jailer: John Ellinwood/Ellenwood (1777-1856) as a newlywed, having married Jane Stanley in 1799, built the house at **54 Old Manchester Road** circa 1800 (between 1800 census, when he & his young family were living with his parents, and tax invoice of April 1801, when he was taxed on “wild land & buildings”) on land of the farm owned & occupied by his father, Ebenezer Ellinwood 3d. John & Jane Ellinwood had five children, the first born in Sep. 1799, probably in his parents' home on Old Manchester Road (gone by 1858), and the next three between July 1803 and Sep. 1810, probably in the house at 54 OMRd.

1809 Amherst tax invoice [northern part]: John Ellinwood – 1 poll; 1 horse, 2 oxen, 4 cows, 1 2-yr-old [neat stock]; half [acre] orcharding, 1 [acre] arable land, 3 [acres] mowing, 8 [acres] pasturing; value wild land & bldgs \$100; total valuation \$555.

The John & Jane Ellenwood family moved to Amherst Village in 1811 or 1812, and John obtained a tavern license in March 1812 (*Amherst Town Records* vol. 2, p. 370, unclear whether for inn or store). He was “deputy gaoler” 1813-1814; and their youngest child, John Morris Ellenwood, was born June 1814 in the County House next to the Stone Gaol in Amherst Village (according to letter of/by H. Shattuck of N.Y. In *Milford Cabinet*, 21 Sep. 1893). After the death in April 1814 of Samuel Stanley, possibly/probably the father of Mrs. John Ellenwood, her sister Sally Stanley (b. 1789) came to live with the Ellenwood family in the jailer's residence – at which time she surely met her future husband while he was “imprisoned” – nights, anyway – for debt. (Widower Nathaniel Shattuck, Esq. & Miss Stanley would marry in 1816 after he had built the little house next to the jail at **3 Old Jailhouse Road**.)

In 1812-1814, John Ellenwood was Town Clerk of Amherst. From Oct. 1814-1815, John Ellenwood was innkeeper at 1 Carriage Road (leased); he obtained a year-long taverner license in Feb. 1815 (vol. 2, p. 373). He offered his 150-acre farm with 2-story on OMRd for sale in April 1815 (*Farmer's Cabinet*, 15 April 1815) and his brother-in-law, who owned & occupied another farm nearby, took it off his hands. In mid-1815 the John Ellenwood family moved to New York; in 1825 they moved to Michigan, where John Ellenwood was a farmer and prominent pioneer and where he died.

1815-1818 Jailer: James C. Mace (d. Feb. 1824, aged 47) was a hatter by trade. In 1803, Mace bought house at 306 Boston Post Road (“R. P. Hall” on 1858 map) with 150 acres for \$1300 (deed 57:450). Mace obtained a year-long tavern license in Jan. 1804 (*Amherst Town Records*, vol. 2, p. 358) but the experiment must have been short-lived because that house is not shown as a tavern on 1806 map. The 1805 and 1813 Amherst Tax Invoices for southern ‘third’ part of town (*Amherst Town Records* vol 2, p. 216 & 259), in which taxpayers were listed in geographical order, corroborate that he resided there (because he is listed between Ephraim French of 226 BPR and Maverick Smith of 324 BPR). Mace sold 306 BPR farm in 1814 for \$2000 (deed 103:191). In 1815, he obtained another tavern license (*Amherst Town Records* vol. 2, p. 372), whether for store or inn is unclear, but presumably he was living in the jailer’s quarters next to the County Gaol in the Village. In March 1817 James C. Mace bought farm with house at 369 Boston Post Road which he owned & occupied until his death. In 1818, James C. Mace’s occupation was “gaoler” (per deeds 118:227 and 120:152), which must have been for/at the County Jail on Old Jailhouse Road in Amherst Village, but he continued his occupation as hat-maker in Cricket Corner district. When neighbor Robert Gibson (1780-1822), the tavern/innkeeper at 382 BPR, died, James C. Mace obtained a tavern license in May 1823 for “house lately occupied by Robert Gibson” (*Town Records* vol. 2, p. 472) and a newspaper advertisement of Oct. 1823 proves that he did indeed run a tavern at this time.) He died soon after.

1820 Jailer: Timothy Danforth, Esq. (1778-1855) was the proverbial Jack of all trades:

“[He was] a merchant, taverner, farmer, brick-maker, and whip manufacturer by turns. He was also a well-known auctioneer, deputy sheriff, and crier of the courts many years. Toward the close of his life he was appointed post master which office he held a short time. Gentlemanly in his manners and peaceable in demeanor, he maintained a respectable standing in society in all the various occupations in which he was engaged.” (Secomb’s *History of Amherst*, p. 880)

Secomb neglected to mention: first securities broker in town (at age 22!), blacksmithing and chaisemaking, livery stable proprietor, justice of the peace ... and jailer for the County gaol. Tim just so happened to be the nephew of the high (county-wide) sheriff Benjamin Pierce of Hillsborough. This same family connection may have helped him land the position as postmaster when his cousin Franklin was US President.

As a newlywed, having married Mary “Polly” Nevins in 1798, Tim Danforth built the cape at **117 Ponemah Road** in 1799 on land purchased in March 1799 (deeds 49:37 and 49:38), but sold the place in Dec. 1800 to his brother Jesse Danforth (1776-1826), blacksmith like their father. [FURTHER RESEARCH: Where else lived?] Timothy Danforth built the elegant brick house at **117 Boston Post Road** in the Village – with his own bricks – in 1823, just a couple years after his gig as jailer.

(A detailed timeline of all his activities is in *AmherstWalkTour_CaptFletcherHouse_V142.doc* which is research file compiled by KH when working on *Walking Tours of Amherst Village* book published in 2010.)

1796 Mar. & 1797 Nov. : Timothy Danforth obtained year-long tavern license (*Amherst Town Records* vol. 2, p. 492, 497) as did his father, David Danforth, innholder = owner of tavern at 107 Ponemah Road. Was Tim assisting Pa in the years just prior to his marriage?

1820: For Hillsborough County, Sheriff was Benj. Pierce of Hillsboro; Deputy Sheriff & Prison Keeper in Amherst was Timothy Danforth. (*New-Hampshire REGISTER and United States’ Calendar for 1820* ... published by Hill and Moore, Concord, N.H., p. 54 for deputy sheriffs, p. 55 for prison keepers, online.familysearch.org/library.)

1829 Nov.: Timothy Danforth obtained year-long license as “taverner at his dwelling house one and a half miles from the plain on the Holles road” (*Amherst Town Records* vol. 2, p. 341).

1841: Timothy Danforth obtained year-long license as “retailer at store lately occupied by David Underhill near meeting house” [in the Village] (*Amherst Town Records* vol. 2, p. 532).

1821-1835 Jailer: This Charles Richardson (1791-1878) ran a commission store 1816-'18 at “5A” Church Street (now gone) when he first came to Amherst, and subsequently was deputy sheriff and jail-keeper in Amherst for about 15 years, until 1836, when he moved out of town (to Manchester, later Worcester where he died). His wife was Mary Locke (1791-1875; m. 1812), with whom he had 11 children, the youngest born after they left Amherst. He bought **4 Old Jailhouse Road** land in July 1832, then built the first house there using the original newspaper printing office as an ell, which burned in the 1850 fire that destroyed the carriage house and stable of the county jail.

(Included in “Historic Amherst: What the Prisoners Wore – When They Escaped from the County Gaol in Amherst: Examples of late 18th & early 19th Century Apparel” by Katrina Holman, article in *The Amherst Citizen*, 26 Aug. 2014.)

1821: For Hillsborough County, Sheriff was Benj. Pierce of Hillsboro; Deputy Sheriffs at Amherst were Timothy Danforth & Charles Richardson; & Prison Keeper at Amherst was Charles Richardson (*New-Hampshire REGISTER and United States’ Calendar for 1821*, published by Hill and Moore, Concord, N.H.; deputy sheriffs on p. 53; online.familysearch.org/library/books/viewer)

1822: New Hampshire Prison Keepers – Hillsborough County: Charles Richardson, Amherst; Andrew

Leach, Hopkinton. (*Hill and Moore's Improved Edition of the New-Hampshire REGISTER and United States' Calendar for 1822*; online HathiTrust.org)

1830: Hillsborough County – county crier was Timothy Danforth, county crier for Court of Common Pleas at Amherst was Charles Richardson; prison keeper & deputy sheriff at Amherst was Charles Richardson (1830 *New-Hampshire ANNUAL REGISTER and United States' Calendar* by John Farmer, published at Concord by Marsh, Capen and Lyon, p. 46 for prison keepers; p. 61 for deputy sheriff; online HathiTrust.org)

1835: Hillsborough County – Charles Richardson was jailer & deputy sheriff at Amherst. (*The New-Hampshire ANNUAL REGISTER and United States' Calendar for 1835* by John Farmer, published at Concord by Marsh, Capen and Lyon, p. 67 & 72; online HathiTrust.org)

1836-1843 Jailer: Nathan Dane (who probably lived 1805-1866) was born in New Boston, N.H., but was “of Lowell, Mass.” when he was married in Feb. 1831 to Hannah Parker (1808-1865) of Amherst (but born in Hollis), daughter of Josiah Parker (Jr., 1760-1845). Nathan Dane was a tavernkeeper in Mont Vernon in the early 1830s. He became deputy sheriff in Amherst in 1836, and his daughter Emily was born in town that year, until he resigned as keeper of the county jail and deputy sheriff in Dec. 1843 or Jan. 1844. Dane also was tax collector and auctioneer in Amherst in late 1830s and early 1840s. He did pretty well for himself financially. From 1846-Jan. 1848, Nathan Dane & Co., partnership with Jacob Hildreth 2d, leased the store by the NW corner of the Common (known as Read store, located where now stands Soldiers Monument/statue) from a Boston landlord. The post office was in the store as Dane was also postmaster. At this time, Dane occupied/rented the Wm Read House across the street (now located at 14 Middle Street). These partners were related by marriage as cousins-in-law with Amherst roots: Nathan's wife's brother, Thomas B. Parker was married to Mary Hildreth who was first cousin of Jacob Hildreth 2d. From 1848-Feb. 1849, Col. N. Dane continued in store as solo proprietor, still postmaster until Spring 1849. He derived his title as officer in the 5th Regiment of N.H. Militia, where he commanded a new voluntary cavalry company as captain in 1842 and was “division inspector” in 1843 when they paraded at a muster in Nashua. After Nathan's stint as proprietor of the Read store, the Dane family moved to Groton, Mass., where he was a farmer in 1850 with six children ranging in age from 1 to 19, and then moved to Minnesota, where he again was a farmer, with five children at home in 1860 ranging in age from 6 to 22. Nathan & Hannah died in Minnesota. -Katrina Holman (rev. 2015)

1837: Hillsborough County – jailer & deputy sheriff at Amherst: Nathan Dane (*The New-Hampshire ANNUAL REGISTER and United States' Calendar for 1837* by John Farmer, published at Concord by Marsh, Capen and Lyon, p. 52; online HathiTrust.org accessed Nov. 2023)

1840: Hillsborough County – jailer & deputy sheriff at Amherst was Nathan Dane (*The New-Hampshire ANNUAL REGISTER and United States' Calendar for 1840* by Jacob _ Moore, published at Concord by Marsh, Capen and Lyon, p. 58; online HathiTrust.org)

(Included in “History of the Read Store (c. 1790-1858) in Amherst Village, N.H. (Part 2)” by Katrina Holman in April 2015 newsletter of Historical Society of Amherst, Dane being on p. 7-8. Sources for Dane mailly are Amherst tax invoices and news items in *Farmers' Cabinet*”, captured in Katrina's research file Amherst_Store_Read_SoldiersMonumentCommon.doc (rev. Feb. 2015).)

1844-1855 Jailer & High/County Sheriff: Elijah Monroe (1797-1878). “At the age of twenty he had the misfortune to lose his left hand. Having received the appointment of jail-keeper for Hillsborough County, he removed to Amherst in 1844, and occupied the county buildings. In 1845 he received the appointment of Sheriff of the county, which office he held until 1855. He was a good officer and a good citizen. He died in Boston.” (Scomb's *History of Amherst*, p. 702.)

(As a resident of Hillsborough in 1840, Monroe had been appointed Justice of the Peace.)

His son was: James Monroe (1825-1893) who married first 1851 Anna H. Nutt (d. 1856), daughter of local innholder/tavernkeeper. James Monroe was commissioned Justice of the Peace in May 1852 (FC, 27 May 1852) and was tax collector for Amherst the same year.

1844: “Elijah Monroe, Esq. of Hillsborough has been appointed keeper of the county jail, in place of Nathan Dane, Esq., resigned.” (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 11 Jan. 1844.) He was appointed Justice of the Peace same year.

1846: Hillsborough County – Elijah Monroe was county sheriff and jailer at Amherst (*The New-Hampshire ANNUAL REGISTER and United States' Calendar for 1846* by G. Parker Lyon, p. 69; online HathiTrust.org)

1850 Census – Amherst, N.H.: Elijah Monroe, 53, High Sheriff, real estate worth \$3000; Matilda, 42; Susan M. Munroe, 18; James [Munroe/Monroe], 25, occupation “none”; Margaret Peaslee, 25 [following practice of this particular census, female occupations were not listed]; Charles B. Leavitt, 17, laborer; [followed by list of prisoners].

1853 April: “AMHERST JAIL. Our County Jail now contains only 15 inmates, the smallest number there at any time just before Court for the last seven years. Last year at this time it had 27 inmates. There is one thing worthy the notice of medical men, pertaining to this jail. During the nine years the present Jailer has had charge of

it, High Sheriff Monroe, there have been over 600 inmates, and not a single case of fever or dysentery, or any other disorder, except what they brought with them. Of that number only two have died while here – one, a woman, hung herself, and the other, a man, died of delirium tremens in a day or two after he came there. What is the cause of this unusual prevalence of health? The most obvious answer is, regular meals, healthy food, cleanly and airy apartments and plenty of rest. Mr. Monroe takes the very sensible ground that the fattest beef and good food, generally, are the cheapest, as they contain so much more nutriment, and hence the inmates have excellent fare. The Jail itself is a small, old-fashioned, narrow-contracted, bad-planned, stone-jug of a thing, and a disgrace to the County. - *Manchester Mirror*. (*New Hampshire Patriot and Gazette*, Concord, 27 April 1853, p. [2].)

1855: Hillsborough County – jailer & county sheriff at Amherst was Elijah Monroe; deputy sheriff at Amherst was James Monroe. (*The New-Hampshire ANNUAL REGISTER and United States' Calendar for 1855* by G. Parker Lyon, published at Concord, p. 77; online familysearch.org)

1893: AMHERST. “James Monroe died in Boston the 6 th inst. aged 68 years. Buried here Monday. He was a native of this village and only son of the late Elijah Monroe, Esq., a former high sheriff and jail-keeper. A generation ago he was the popular landlord and stable keeper at the Nutt tavern. Some thirty years ago he moved to Boston where he has since resided.” (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 12 Oct. 1893.)

1856-1863 Jailer: In Oct. 1859, **Gilbert Hills**, jailkeeper and sheriff, bought house at **3 Old Jailhouse Road**, known as the Nathaniel Shattuck House, on half-an-acre for \$350 from Sarah Shattuck, Nathaniel's wife (deed 305:485); the County bought it from Hills three months later (deed 328:334, \$350), essentially reimbursing him to provide housing for him while in the County's employ. In 1863, when the county jail function moved to the newly-constructed purpose-built jail at Manchester, Hills moved there too, retaining his position until 1865.

1856: Hillsborough County – jailer & deputy sheriff at Amherst was Gilbert Hills. (*The New-Hampshire ANNUAL REGISTER and United States' Calendar for 1856* by G. Parker Lyon, published at Concord, p. 86; online familysearch.org)

1858: Hillsborough County – jailer & deputy sheriff at Amherst was Gilbert Hills. (*The New-Hampshire ANNUAL REGISTER and United States' Calendar for 1858* by G. Parker Lyon, published at Concord, p. 87-88; online familysearch.org)

1860 Census – Amherst, N.H.: Gilbert Hills, 47, jailkeeper & sheriff, value real estate \$11,200/ personal estate \$10,000 [wow!], & wife Sarah J., 37; James F. Buell, 35, deputy jailer, \$1200/\$200, & wife Permelia, 33; Betsy Nevins, 81, widow, b. Vt.

[End of JAILERS section]

Prisoners in Gaol/Jail of Amherst, N.H.

Compiled by Katrina Holman. It appears that there are no complete surviving records of prisoners confined to the county jail in Amherst 1771-1863, so the following names were gleaned from a variety of sources: The earliest – not many – from court records held in the State Archives, most from newspapers, especially those who escaped; a few from books. One can get a good sense of the times of crimes and punishments that were prevalent in this county.

1771 Oct 3: A List of Prisoners in his Majesty's Goal at Amherst, County of Hillsborough
Peter Eads for Debt; Jonathan Eads for Debt; John Templeton for Debt; Zela Holt for Debt. = 4 debtors
Signed: Robert Read, under prison keeper
(Hillsborough County Court Records, file 8098 at N.H. State Archives in Concord, N.H.)

Gaol: This jail surely was the former garrison house attached as ell to Robert Read's tavern at 232 Boston Post Road; de-attached 1924 and moved across street to 233 BPR.

Jailer: This was Robert Read (Sr., 1720-1803), who had arrived in Souhegan West after May 1751 (per Provincial N.H. deed 51:226) and by July 1752 (per Provincial N.H. deed 72:123) and built house at 232 Boston Post Road which he turned into a tavern-inn by 1759 (called "Robert Read, innholder in Souhegan West" in *New Hampshire Gazette* of Portsmouth, N.H., 11 and 18 May 1759) and was licensed to keep a tavern (*Amherst Town Records*, vol. 2) until he sold that place in July 1772 (Hillsborough County deed 2:528, to Joshua Atherton). An original garrison house (a fortified building intended to protect settlers from Indian attack so built ca. 1745-'50) was attached to Read's home-cum-tavern.

1773 April: Province of New Hampshire, Hillsborough ss. General Sessions of the Peace in April 1773. A List of Prisoners detained in his Majesty's Goal in Amherst in County, viz.

Prisoners for Debt:

David Gilmore of New Almsbury in s[ai]d County, Yeoman
Jona Johnson of Holles in sd County, Felt-maker
James Robinson of Amherst in sd County, Shop-Joiner
Peter Edes of Holles, Yeoman
Ephraim Foster of New Ipswich in sd Country, Yeoman
George Wilson of Amherst, Cordwainer
David McKillen Jr [sp?]

Prisoners for other Matters, viz:

Israel Wilkins of Holles, Yeoman for homicide
Jonathan Fish of Mason for Criminal Conversation with one Molly Foster
Molly Foster resident in Mason, singlewoman & spinster for Criminal Conversation with ye s[ai]d Fish a married man.

Signed: Amos Fisk, Gaoler.

(Hillsborough County Court Records, file 8098 at N.H. Archives; transcribed by Katrina Holman)

1772-1774: JONATHAN FISH & MOLLY FOSTER both of Mason, adultery

Genealogy: Jonathan Fish (b. 24 Nov. 1738) was married to Dorothy (Butterfield), with whom he had 5 children born in Mason, N.H.: Jonathan Jr. (Sep 1762); Ebenezer (1765); Hannah (April 1767); Levi (March 1769); Asa (Sep 1772). Mrs. Dorothy Fish died at Mason 11 May 1800. (Children's births in Vital records of Mason, N.H.; online genealogies of descendants list wife's maiden name but I could not find their marriage; death of Mrs. Dorothy Fish in *History of Mason*, p. 179.)

Nathan Fish (b. Groton 1708/9) of Groton m 1730 at Newbury, Mass. Patience Shattuck of Groton. They had 8 children whose births were recorded in Groton, including Jonathan Fish in 1738. (A genealogy of a family descendant posits that Nathan & Patience moved to Mason, N.H.; that he died before 1769 and she around 1791; I could find no death record.)

1769: On first tax list, Patience Fish (18-0-0), Jonathan Fish (6-8-2) and widow Mary Jefths were on East side of Mason; Lt Obadiah Parker (19-0-2) and Jonathan Foster (6-0-0) were on West side. (*History of Mason*)

1779 April Mason Town Meeting warrant article: "To put out Asa Fish, by vendue, to the lowest bidder, till he is 21 years of age." (*History of Mason*, 1858, p. 95.)

1779: Jonathan Fish of Mason [likely Jr. aged 17] joined 5th Regiment of N.H. Militia sent to Portsmouth, led by Hezekiah Lovejoy of Amherst. (*Provincial & State Papers*)

1773 March: Complaint & Warrant Parker vs. Fish.

Province of New Hampshire, Hillsborough ss: To Reuben Kidder Esq. One of his Majesty's Justice of the peace within & for sd County humbly complains on his Majesty's behalf Obadiah Parker of Mason in ye same county Gentleman against Jonathan Fish of sd Mason yeoman [crossed out "and Molly Foster residing in sd Mason singlewoman..."].

For that whereas the sd Jonathan being a person of ye age of discretion and a married Man on ye night of ye 20 th day of November Last past with force & arms did ___ in a lascivious and unlawful manner Lodge with One Molly Foster a single woman and had Criminal Conversation with her ye said Molley, lying with her in ye same bed being both stript of their common wearing apparel – and also for that ye said Jonathan there afterwards ___t on ye night of ye 21 st day of ye same November in Like manner as aforesd did Lodge with ye sd Molly in naked bed, then & there had carnal knowledge of the body of her ye sd Molly – against ye peace and ye Law of sd province in such case made & provided wherefore ye your complainant prays process hereon. [Signed:] Obadiah Parker. March 27 , 1773.

(Hillsborough County Court Records, file 8098, 1773-1774, complaint & warrant and indictment against Jonathan Fish and Molly Foster both of Mason for adultery; indexed and housed at N.H. State Archives on Fruit Street in Concord.)

Note: "force and arms" does not mean rape.

1773 March: Complaint & Warrant Parker vs. Molly Foster.

Province of New Hampshire, Hillsborough ss: To Reuben Kidder Esq. One of his majesty's Justice of ye peace for ye sd County humbly complains on his Majesty's behalf Obadiah Parker of Mason in sd county Gentleman against Molly Foster ["of" crossed out] now residing in Mason singlewoman & spinster __ & that ye sd Molly being of the age of 14 years & upwards at Mason aforesaid with force & arms did in a lacivious and unlawful manner on ye night of ye 20 th day of last November lodge in naked bed with one Jonathan Fish of sd Mason yeoman being a married Man – and there & then the sd Molly had criminal Conversation with him ye sd Fish – & also for that ye sd Molly there afterwards tavit [sp?] on ye night of ye 21 st day of ye same November in like manner as aforesd did Lodge in Naked bed with him ye sd Fish & then & there had Carnal Knoledge of his body - & also for that the sd Molly there afterwards trevit on the night of the 22nd day of November aforesd in like manner as aforesd did strip off her wearing apparell & go naked into bed to him ye said Fish who was then & there lying naked in sd Bed and continued in ye same bed with ye same Fish ye whole of sd Night – all which doings of her the sd Molly are highly Criminal against ye peace and ye good & wholesome Laws of ye Land in such case made & provided wherefore your Complainant prays process against ye sd Molly ___ [Signed:] Obadiah Parker, March 27, 1773.

[On same sheet, below Complaint:] Province of New Hampshire, Hillsborough ss:

To the Sheriff of sd County, his under Sheriff or deputy or either of ye Constables of Mason in said County, Greeting, The foregoing complaint having been made these are therefore in his Majesty's Name to Require you to Apprehend ye body of ye said Fish if he may be found in your precinct ... and forthwith bring before me or some other of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for said County to be examined touching the Subject Matter of said Complaint and to be dealt with according to Law. Also notify ye complainant of time & place of Trial and Summon as witnesses for the King, Benjamin Jefts & Martha Jefts. Given under my hand and seal at New Ipswich in sd County the 27 th day of March in the 13 th year of his Majesty's Reign anno D. 1773. [Signed:] Reuben Kidder, Justice of Peace [end]

[Also On back of same sheet] ye Respondent pleaded not guilty / [Signed:] Oliver Eliot, constable for Mason in sd County /

after a full hearing, it is considered that ye sd Respondent is Guilty as alleged in ye Complaint, as__ that he recognise in __ with sureties to appear at ye next Court of General Sessions of ye peace to be held at Amherst within & for ye County of Hillsb'o on ye Thursday next following ye 1 Tuesday in April 1773 to appear to such matters and things as should then & there be objected against him on his Majesty's behalf

[On same sheet, below Complaint:] Province of New Hampshire, Hillsborough ss:

To the Sheriff of sd County, his under Sheriff or deputy or either of the Constables of Mason in said County, Greeting, The foregoing complaint having been made these are therefore in his Majesty's Name to Require you to Apprehend the Body of said Molly if she may be found in your precinct ... and bring before me or some other of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for said County to be Examined touching the Subject Matter of sd complaint and to be dealt with according to Law[.] Also notify complainant of time & place of Trial and Summon as witnesses for the King, Benjamin Jefts & Martha Jefts.

Given under my hand and seal at New Ipswich in sd County the 27 th day of March in 13 th year of his Majesty's Reign anno D. 1773. [Signed:] Reuben Kidder, Justice Peace [end]

[On back of same sheet] Province of New Hampshire, Hillsb. ss. 29 March 1773. I have apprehended ye within named Molly Foster and summoned ye said Witnesses – and have all ready for Trial before ye worshipful Reuben Kidder Esq. [Signed] __ Laurance Jr., Constable for Mason in sd County

[Also On back of same sheet] ye sd Molly pleaded not guilty / after a full hearing __ – it is considered that ye sd Molly is Guilty of ye Complaint & __ & that she Recognize to appear at next Sessions in __ with sureties to answer unto such matters and things as shall then & there be objected against her on his Majesty's behalf (Hillsborough County Court Records, file 8098, 1773-1774, complaint & warrant and indictment against Jonathan Fish and Molly Foster both of Mason for adultery; indexed and housed at N.H. State Archives on Fruit Street in Concord.)

1774 Sep: "Indictments Jonathan Fish & Molly Foster Sept 1774."

Hillsborough ss At his majesty's superiour court of judicature held at Amherst in & for the County of Hillsborough on the fourth Tuesday of September in 14th year of the reign of George the third by the grace of God ... 1774. The jurors for our said lord the king upon their oaths do present that Jonathan Fish late of Mason in said county yeoman at Mason on 20 Nov. 1772 and at divers other days & times between the first day of Jan. 1773 not having the fear of God before his eyes but being moved & seduced by the devil with force & arms did consort with one Molly Foster late of Mason, a single woman, he the said Fish then & there being a married man & during all the time aforesaid Fish did keep company with Molly & at his pleasure has often as he desired during the time aforesaid at Mason did he with Molly with her free will & consent & by and with her free will & consent Fish had carnal copulation with Molly in breach of his marriage vow & covenant & then & there Fish & Molly did commit the crime of adultery against the peace of our lord the king his crown & Dignity & in evil example to all others in like case offending. Sam Livermore ___ this is a true bill. Paul Dudley Sargent foreman.

On reverse: Sept. Term 1774 Jonathan Fish being arraigned at the Bar pleaded that he would not contend with our Lord the King but submit himself to his grace. Molly Foster [pleaded the same].

(Hillsborough County Court Records, file 8134, 1774, housed at N.H. State Archives on Fruit Street in Concord; transcribed by Katrina Holman, 2014)

1773 Sep 14: Province of New Hampshire, Hillsborough ss A list of prisoners in his Majesty's Goal at Amherst in the County of Hillsborough by Amos Fisk, under keeper:

Israel Wilkins for Homicide [of Hollis, for striking Israel Wilkins Sr. on the head, mortal wound; jury decided manslaughter; branded with hot iron T on thumb of left hand & forfeited all goods and chattels to the king.

(Hillsboro Co. Superior Court of Judicature Vol 1, 1772-1785, p. 27, N.H. Archives, Concord.)]

Benja Wilkins for Debt

William Karr for Debt

John Rans Esq'r for Debt

Ebenezer Cummings for Debt

Samuel Currier for Debt

John Davis for Debt

Joseph Kelly for Breach of prison & for Debt

Samuel Parker for Debt

Jonathan Stevens for Debt

Alexander Scott for Debt

(Hillsborough County Court Records, Series A, file 1188, at N.H. Archives, Concord; found by KH, Sep 2014)

1774 Jan. 14: JOSEPH KELLY'S PETITION – Hillsborough County (original in NH Archives).

To his Excellency John Wentworth Esq., Capt General and Commander in Chief in and over his Majesty's province of Newhampshire & the Honorable his Majesty's Counsel [sic, Council] and House of Representatives, The petition of Joseph Kelly now prisoner in his Majesty's goal at Amherst in the County of Hillsborough humbly showeth that your petitioner had Sentence pass against him at the Superier Court held at Amherst about 17 months ago that your petitioner should suffer three months imprisonment pay a fine of 10 pounds and caust [sic, cost] of prosecution for your petitioner's defending himself against the force or striking a Deputy Sheriff in the Execution of his office as apeared to the Court by the Testimony of said Deputy Sheriff; that your petitioner has been for the most part of the times since confined to close goal and cannot obtayn the Liberty of being admitted to bail for Liberty of the prison house in which citivation your prisoner now Remains Loaded with Jorms [germs?] on hand & feet without fire candel of daylight or the Liberty of wife being admitted to speak to him even the outside of the goal or any friend being suffered to see or speak to him in which unhappy and unprecedented citivation your petitioner must perish unless aided and relieved by your Excellency and Honors; that your [petitioner] has severel actions for pretended Debts & Damages Depending at the Court of Common pleas which set at Amherst for the County of Hillsboorough after your petitioner's confinement which actions were all Defaulted and nonsuited for nonappearance when confined and judgment past against your petitioner for Debts and caust [cost] and execution granted against him for several larger sums of money which he never owed; that your petitioner has no friend to seek recourse for

him nor Duse he know to whome to aply for Relief unless your Excellency & Honours consider your petitioner's present and unhappy circumstances and provide some way for his relief; that your p. is poor and not able to pay said fine or caust or any part of the demands against him that a sentence of Deth wood be much less tereble than your petitioner's persent citation was it not for the hope your petitioner has placed in your Excellency and Honors clemency that such Relief may be granted as in your Excellency & Honours wisdom and known Equity and Justice shall see meet to order ... Signed: Joseph Kelly.

Considered in Council Jan. 25, 1774 [but I didn't see their decision on the document].
(record found at N.H. State Archives 4 Sep 2014)

1774 Nov: [ESCAPE] [Two years after erection of first purpose-built county gaol, a wooden frame building] Sheriff of Hillsborough County, Benjamin Whiting, put a notice in the newspaper (*Essex Gazette*, Salem, Mass., 29 Nov. 1774) about four escapees, three men and one woman, who “Broke out of his Majesty's Gaol in Amherst, in the County of Hillsborough, and Province of New Hampshire, on the night of the 15th inst.,” viz:

- James Danely, in prison for committing an Assault and Battery, is a tall well set fellow near six feet high, dark short hair, had on a blue short Jacket, light-colour'd Waistcoat, and claret colour'd Breeches.
- Thomas Clark, in prison for aiding and assisting one Joseph Kelley make his escape from prison, is about 5 feet 10 inches high, thin favoured, dark hair tied behind, had on a cloth colour'd Coat and Breeches.
- Jonathan Fish, convicted of the crime of Adultery, is about 5 feet 9 inches high, well set, had on a light colour'd serge Coat, red Waistcoat and new leather Breeches.
- Mary Foster, convicted of the crime of Adultery, is about 5 feet 4 inches high, black hair and black eyes, wore a green calimanco Gown and a red quilted Petticoat.

Rewards offered: \$10 per prisoner re-apprehended; “also whoever will give information of any person or persons that aided or assisted the Prisoners in making their Escape, so that he or they are legally convicted thereof, and brought to punishment, shall receive \$20 reward.” All masters of vessels and others were cautioned against “conveying, harbouring, entertaining or carrying away” any of these prisoners.

1775 Nov 22: [ESCAPE of TORIES] The Committee of Safety of the State [N.H.] met in order to take care of a new company of tories brought from New York – Ordered 23 of them to sent to Exeter jail, 7 to Portsmouth, 19 to Dover, and 14 to Amherst. Those confined in Amherst jail soon made their escape. Among them was one named, Hitchcock, a man of some poetical talent, who left behind, or wrote immediately after his escape, the following song, which was long sung in the vicinity by the disaffected, and ever by the more moderate whigs. Its principal aim seems to ridicule to the fears and officiousness of one of the town committee of safety, who in his measures against the disaffection and in several instances governed by a zeal disproportioned to their offences: Come all ye people, hear the rout, / The jail is broke, the pris'ners 're out / Resolving to be free; / So mount your horses, load your guns, / And see you catch them every one, / And bring them back to me. (“Revolutionary Reminiscences”, *Farmers' Cabinet*, 19 May 1875, p. [2].)

1788 March Term: A list of Prisoners now in Amherst Goal in Hillsborough County, State of New Hampshire, by Nahum Baldwin, D. Goaler:

Samuel Parker for Debt
Oliver Wilder for Profane Swearing

(Hillsborough County Court Records, Series A, file 187, at N.H. Archives, Concord; found by KH, Sep 2014)

1790 May: [SUICIDE] Michael Kieff [Keif] (who previously resided on the east side of lower Mack Hill Road) committed suicide in jail by severing his jugular vein and windpipe with his own knife, on the day after his trial and conviction for (1) traitorous and seditious letters and (2) arson of Joshua Atherton's barn. (Secomb's *History of Amherst*, p. 349.)

1792/1793: “On May 8, 1789, the town [of Hopkinton] voted to forgive Abel Rowell for his offence in burning the [first] meeting-house, upon condition that his father bind him to labor for the town to the satisfaction of the claim ... [Which evidently did not happen.] On the following 8th of June, the town voted [to] “carry on the lawsuit or cause against Abel Rowell,” who was ultimately convicted and imprisoned in the jail at Amherst. The last action of the town in regard to this matter appears to have been on December 6, 1793, when the following vote was passed:

Voted to Discharge and forgive Abel Rowell all the Cost that the Town Was at in Recovering the Execution by Which he is now held a Prisoner in Amherst jail before Said Execution Was Given to Nathan Kendall Deputy Sheriff for Service.”

THE PETITION OF ABEL ROWELL (Confined in Amherst jail, 1792.)

To the Inhabitants of the Town of Hopkinton:

The petition of Abel Rowell, a prisoner in the great stone jail at Amherst:

Gentlemen: Being confined in a gloomy prison, oppressed with prospects still more gloomy and dismal, and covered with shame and confusion for my crimes, the sole cause of my present suffering, I should be driven to a state of desperation, had I not some ground of hope in your benevolence and generosity. My offense is known to all, but my miseries and sufferings are past description ... In my last imprisonment, cold, hunger, wants, sickness and remorse were added to the improbably burden of my chains. I am now deprived of the light of the sun, except the scanty ray which passes the grates of my melancholy apartment. A stone is my pillow and straw both my bed and covering. Being naked and friendless, I must fall a sacrifice to the inclemency of the season ensuing, unless your humanity send me release ... But since nothing but an increase of suffering can possibly be the result, I, in the most humble and sincere manner, beg and implore relief, which, if you refuse, this horrid mansion must be my home for life – a life of necessity shortened by the unhealthy dampness from those walls with which I am surrounded. I wait for your answer with impatience and subscribe myself the sufferer, Abel Rowell

(*Life and Times in Hopkinton*, N.H. by C. C. Lord, 1890, p. 77 and 529)

1795: [ESCAPE] “Stop Prisoners” screamed the headline of a notice by deputy gaoler Samuel Morrison in the local weekly newspaper, the first & only one in Hillsborough County (*Amherst Journal*, N.H., 10 April 1795). The following two men had broken out of “the Gaol in Amherst, New Hampshire” five days earlier, at that time a stone building separate from the clapboard County House:

- Oliver Hale, about 31 years of age, 5 feet and 10 or 11 inches high; had on when he went away, a blue strait Coat, a pair of Corderoy Breeches, and a pair of black velvet shoes. He has a light complexion, with sandy hair, and is a blacksmith by trade. (Hillsborough County court records indicate that Hale was “of Peterborough.”)

- John Hokes, about 27 years of age, 5 feet 8 or 9 inches high; had on a light colored great Coat; has brown hair and is round favoured, and is a thick set fellow.

Rewards offered: \$10 for Hale and \$5 for Hokes, with all necessary charges to be paid by the deputy gaoler.

1799 Sep Term: A List of Prisoners in Amherst gaol by Samuel Morrison, prison keeper, 3 Sep 1799:

William Robb Inne [sp?] for Debt

Isaac Bowen for Debt

Eli Ames for Debt

Charles Hart for Debt

Capt. Seath Headley for Debt

Nathl Cooledge for Debt

Jacob Lehut [sp?] for Debt

Samuel Gorge in for Burgulore

(Hillsborough County Court Records, Series A, file 187, at N.H. Archives, Concord; found by KH Sep 2014.)

1803: “Portsmouth, April 9. We conversed with a gentleman yesterday who informs us that he came through Amherst on Tuesday last, that a gang of forgers had been detected, to the number of 30 or 40 most of whom had been secured in Amherst jail. They had circulated counterfeit bills of New Hampshire bank (20 dollars) and of Westerly bank (5 dollars) to a large amount. Those who were confined in the jail had succeeded in destroying the inside of the building, and it was found necessary to station an armed guard round to prevent their escape. It appears that a combination of these villains extends from Dunstable to Coos, perhaps farther. They had also counterfeit dollar; the plates, &c. were also discovered and taken possession of. [Salem Gaz. April 1.” (*Farmers' Museum or Literary Gazette*, Walpole, N.H., 19 April 1803, p. [3].)

1804: [ESCAPE] “*Rogues gone !* On the night of Wednesday last, the prisoners confined in the Gaol of this town, for making counterfeit money, made their escape. The doors were unlocked by some person without and left open, and were found in this situation by the Gaol, the next morning. The names and description of the persons escaped, may be seen in the advertisement in the succeeding column; and it is requested that the editors in the Northern States, particularly, would take such notice of it, in their respective papers, as will assist in having the villains arrested. Their escape had undoubtedly for some time been premeditated, as several of them left manuscripts behind them, of a taunting threatening nature. Among other threats of their file leader, the noted *Timothy Call*, was one, that they would “soon be in a situation the furnish the public with *thousands*, and perhaps, *millions*” of this genuine paper money. Yesterday a pewter key, which was used in unlocking the outer door, was found a few rods from the Gaol, between that and the bridge below the prison.” (*Farmer’s Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 5 June 1804, p. [3].)

“300 Dollars Reward! Broke from Amherst Gaol on the night of Wednesday, May 30 th, *Timothy Call, David Call, William Gilman, John Silver, John Stewart, William F. Ayers, and Ephraim Bailey*; the five former, convicted of counterfeiting money, were under the sentence of the Court for that crime, the two latter were confined to answer for the same offence.

TIMOTHY CALL is about five feet five inches high, stout built, dark complexion, sandy hair, considerably freckled, middle aged.

DAVID CALL is about six feet high, dark complexion, black eyes, and dark hair, about 40 years old.

WILLIAM GILMAN, about five feet six inches, fair countenance, black eyes and hair, about 25 years of age.

JOHN SILVER, about five feet seven inches high, light complexion, bald on the top of his head, middle aged.

JOHN STEWART, about five feet eight inches, brown hair, blue eyes, about 24.

WILLIAM J. AYERS, about five feet eleven inches, dark hair and eyes, middle aged.

EPHRAIM BAILEY, about five feet five inches, black hair, black eyes, swarthy complexion, a deep scar on his cheek, about 27 years old.

Whoever will apprehend either of any of the above names persons and return them to Amherst Gaol shall receive 30 dollars for each returned and all necessary expenses; and anyone who will detect those who assisted them in breaking gaol shall receive, on their conviction, ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS REWARD.

JOSIAH CONVERS, Prison Keeper, Amherst, June 2, 1804.

As it is evident that the above persons were assisted in their escape by their accomplices without, several individuals in Amherst have offered an additional reward of 150 Dollars tot he above mentioned 100, to the person who shall discover and prosecute to conviction, the person or persons who assisted in breaking gaol.” (*Farmer’s Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 5 June 1804, p. [3]; and 12 June 1804, p. [1].)

1805: [ESCAPE] “Broke from the Gaol in Amherst, on the night of 24 July 1805:

John Silver, imprisoned under sentence of Court, about 5 feet 9 inches high, light complexion, considerably balled [sic] on his head. \$10 reward for his return to gaol [offered by] Josiah Converse, Prison-Keeper, Amherst, July 25, 1805.” (*Farmer’s Cabinet*, newspaper published in Amherst, N.H., 6 Aug. 1805; also 20 & 27 Aug. 1805, p. [4].)

1806: [ESCAPE – RECAPTURE] “We have lately witnessed an exertion of public spirit, highly honorable to the persons concerned. The breach of Amherst Gaol, and the escape of *Arden, Stark, and Putney* therefrom is a fact well known. Though the county, in point of interest, were deeply affected by this escape, as well as the public justice, the same unaccountable negligence or inattention in the Sheriff of the county, no reward was offered for their apprehension, and no exertions made for their arrest. To the vigilance and exertion, however, of several gentlemen in Vermont, the county are indebted for the return to Gaol of the persons escaping, who were surprised in the road in Barre, Vt. on their way to Canada, in a covered sleigh. [Names persons who captured and arrested the escaped prisoners.] The expenses attending this arrest are very considerable, but it is presumed that they will be indemnified and rewarded in as ample a manner as if such a reward had been advertised, as the county has a right to expect.” (*Farmer’s Cabinet*, 25 Feb. 1806, p. [3].)

1806: [ESCAPE] “Broke from Amherst gaol, on the night of the fourth instant,

CALEB PUTNEY, committed on civil process, and since indicted, for forgery; he is about six feet high, light complexion, brown hair cut short in the neck.

BENJAMIN SHAW, committed on complain of a rape; he is about five feet 8 or 9 inches high, dark complexion.

JOSEPH FARNUM, committed on civil process, and for assault and battery, nearly six feet high, light complexion and light hair.

SAMUEL GREELY, committed on an execution, about five feet eight inches high, dark short hair, and dark eyes.

JACOB BLANCHARD, committed on complaint and warrant, and on a civil action, about five feet ten inches high, light complexion, sandy hair.

Any person or persons, who will apprehend & return to Amherst gaol the above described PUTNEY, shall receive \$50 reward; and \$10 for each of the other above named persons. By order of MOSES KELLEY, Sheriff.

AARON WHITNEY, D’y Goaler [sic, gaoler].” (*Farmer’s Cabinet*, 29 July 1806, p. [4].)

1807: [ESCAPE] “100 Dollars Reward! Broke from Amherst Goal on the night of the fourth of July last, CALEB PUTNEY, committed on civil process, and since indicted for forgery; he is about six feet high, light complexion, brown hair. Any person on persons, who will apprehend and return to Amherst Gaol the said Putney shall receive ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS reward. By order of MOSES KELLEY, Sheriff. AARON WHITNEY, Amherst, March 16, 1807.” (*Farmer’s Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 24 March 1807, p. [1].)

1807: THE SUPERIOR COURT, Amherst, Nov. 1807. “Poor vs. Kelly. This was an action brought against the Sheriff for the alledged default of his deputy gaol keeper in suffering the escape of one Caleb Putney, who was

confined on mesne process for a debt due to the plaintiff. The defendant offered to prove that there was no default of the goal keeper, but the court said the testimony was inadmissible; that if Putney did escape to the damage of the plaintiff, the Sheriff should be liable, and if the goal was insufficient, the county was liable to an action of the Sheriff. The debt on which Putney was arrested was about 300 dollars. The defendant, in mitigation of damage, proved that Putney had little or no property, and contended that the plaintiff had therefore suffered no damage. The Chief Justice, in charging the jury, said there was a distinction between this case, where the debtor was committed on mesne process, and that in which he was committed on execution. In the latter, the Sheriff would be liable for the whole debt, but in the former, for such damages only as the creditor appears to have sustained. It being evident that Putney had no property, and was never likely to have any, the plaintiff in this action can hardly be entitled to full damages. Verdict for the plaintiff, 25 dollars and costs.” (*Farmer’s Cabinet*, 8 Dec. 1807, p. [[3].)

1808: [ESCAPE] “*Nothing Uncommon!* – Hart, Henry, Wyman and Eastman, criminals confined in gaol in this town. Escaped last Friday night, by breaking the wall between the chamber and garret, and jumping from the window.”

“ESCAPED from Amherst gaol, on the night of the 29 th ult. *Jeremiah Eastman, Seth Wyman Jr., Samuel Henry and Charles W. Hart*, committed on criminal actions.

Eastman is a remarkably tall man, about 6 feet 6 inches, firmly built, and of a light complexion, about 25 years [old]. Wyman is a portly looking man, has a florid countenance, black eyes, about 22 years of age and nearly six feet high. Henry is an uncouth looking mortal – crazy when rum is in him, but as innocent as a sucking dove when sober, He is somewhere about 30 years old – of a dusky complexion, and 5 feet 6 or 7 inches in height.

Hart is the counterpart of Henry, but generally discovers more cunning and less ignorance. He appears to be 40 years old, and nearly the size of Henry – when speaking, his voice somewhat resembles the braying of an ass.

Whoever will deliver the above named persons to the gaoler, in Amherst, shall receive the reward of 60 Dollars, of 15 for each individual. JOSIAH CONVERS, gaoler, Amherst, February 1st, 1808.” (*Farmer’s Cabinet*, 2 Feb. 1808, p. [3], and 16 Feb. 1808, p. [4].)

SETH WYMAN: The second mentioned prisoner turns out to have been Seth Wyman V. [5th] (1784-1843) of Goffstown, who dedicated himself from childhood to a life of mischief, roguery, and thievery. Near the end of his life he wrote a tell-all book about shoplifting and chasing skirts, called *The Life and Adventures of Seth Wyman: Embodying the Principal Events ...* (published posthumously in 1843). A piece of clothing figures prominently in his exploits on a trip to Amherst to get a deed recorded for his father (p. 55-56): “I left my horse at a tavern, walked out about dark to reconnoitre. While rambling around the plain, I observed a house that was then being finished, and I thought this an excellent opportunity to make a good selection [of tools], and accordingly entered the building. I speedily took those that I needed, and transferred them to my great coat. Besides a great variety of small, but valuable tools, that I did not often find in my marauding expeditions, was a case of nearly new razors. [After concealing] my goods in a secure place ... I went to a store kept by a Col. M. [Robert Means, of course, at 1 Pierce Lane], and on entering observed that he kept his thick cloths on a bench in the middle of the floor, and ...my fancy was taken by a very handsome piece of snuff-colored cloth, which I thought would make me a very good surtout. ... I leaned up against the bench, and in a few minutes, managed to pull out the piece, and place it under my coat. I stopped in the store a short time...” He retrieved his horse and other stolen goods and quickly left Amherst, and was never caught. I, Katrina, estimate this occurred c. 1804. In 1806, the neighbors of whom he had made enemies, not being able to prove his thievery, got him hauled before a justice for adultery, as Wyman explained: “and committed by him for trial at the next court, under heavy bonds for my appearance. For want of bail, I was obliged to go to jail and at last the inside of Amherst Jail, while Aaron Whitney, at other times a blacksmith, was jailer.” But the Grand Jury, sitting at court in Hopkinton, had not found a bill of indictment against Wyman because his accuser had neglected to bring a marriage certificate of Wyman's lover, Mrs. C., who had already born the first of his children. From then on, he called her “my wife” and lived with her. (p. 153) A year or so later, after breaking into a Goffstown store and helping himself to the till, a search of his premises turned up a marked coin, so he was again sent to Amherst jail at the beginning of Feb. 1807 to await trial at the next court in about two months. “Whitney was not now jailer, and a C. [Josiah Converse], a man not altogether so kind or gentlemanly in his appearance, had been appointed in his place.” (p. 184) – Sketch by Katrina Holman, rev. 2017.

1808: “Four persons were committed to gaol in this town [Amherst] on Sunday for circulating Burroughs counterfeit bills. One of these, by name of Kelly, is said to be an old offender, having been imprisoned in this town during the revolutionary war for passing the counterfeit currency of that time.” (*Farmer’s Cabinet*, 9 Feb. 1808, p. [3].)

1810: [SUICIDE] “A singular attempt at suicide. A person, belonging to Harvard in Massachusetts, arrested at New-Ipswich, was committed to the gaol in this town [Amherst], on Sunday last week, for attempting to pass counterfeit

bills. His case did not appear very heinous[sic], and from the circumstances as related, the probability was that he would not be convicted of guilt. On Wednesday morning, however, his keepers, on carrying him his breakfast, found him in a most shocking and deplorable situation, wallowing in the dust, with his throat cut and his head dreadfully mangled, it appears, from what one can learn respecting it, that he first attempted to beat out his brains with a craggy stone, which he applied on the back and thickest part of the head, till he made an incision, of some inches in extent, to the bare skull, which he had so bruised, that considerable flakes of the bone were taken off by the surgeon. But, probably finding this method too painful, and likely to be ineffectual to his purposes, he had recourse to a dull jack-knife he had kept in his pocket; with which, after attempting to pierce the jugulars of the neck with the point (but which its bluntness prevented) he made four distinct cuts across the wind-pipe, one of which took effect and severed it nearly asunder; and then deliberately shut the knife and returned it to his pocket. Surgical aid was immediately called; and his wounds though dangerous, it is thought will not prove fatal; the prospect is in favor of his recovering. He is said at times to have been delirious. His appearance before his wounds were dressed, was most awful and impressive. Many spectators viewed the solemn spectacle; to whom, and to all, we trust, it will operate as a useful lesson against the commission of errors that may lead to so horrible a catastrophe – and more especially to excite an abhorrence of the too prevalent practice of self-murder, the most unnatural and worst of crimes!”

(*Farmer's Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 24 April 1810, p. [3].)

1810: “Domestick [news]. A person who was committed to gaol in Amherst for attempting to pass counterfeit money, on the 15 th ult. attempted to kill himself, by beating his head with a craggy stone. But not liking his method, he then attempted to cut his throat with a dull jack-knife, which he had in his pocket. But after mangling his throat in a most horrid manner, and nearly cutting his wind pipe asunder, he gave it over. Surgical aid being immediately afforded, it is thought that he will recover.” (*Farmer's Museum*, Walpole, N.H., 7 May 1810, p. [3].)

1810: “The Cabinet. AMHERST, OCTOBER 30, 1810. A person was yesterday brought to this town and committed to gaol for passing and making counterfeit Bills. Large sums are said to have been found on him; and he has confessed himself belonging to a gang of a large number, who are carrying on the business extensively – and that he will divulge their nest with its contents provided he is permitted to turn state's evidence. The bills are principally on the Union Bank of Boston, of five and three dollars.” (FC, 30 Oct. 1810, p. [3].)

1811: There is a gaol in Hopkinton, Hillsborough county, N.H. Sheriff Benj. Pierce offered rewards (July 16) for 5 men confined on criminal prosecutions who broke out. (FC, 6 Aug. 1811, p. [3].)

1815ca. (after May 1811 court decision but specific dates/years unknown) [DEBTOR]:

Nathaniel Shattuck, Esq. (3d, 1774-1864, b. Temple), a lawyer who had graduated Dartmouth College in 1801 in the class of Daniel Webster and was admitted to the bar in 1804, moved to Amherst in 1808, buying the former tavern-inn at 1 Carriage Road (deed 79:459). However, from about March 1812 Shattuck rented out his house to Captain Emerson as a tavern until he sold it in Oct. 1814 for \$2000. His idealistic sense of justice cost him his home.

Nathaniel Shattuck, Esquire, used his profession for the benefit of others rather than his own pecuniary profit (said his obituary). “Unfortunately for the peace and comfort of many years of his life, [Shattuck] was induced, upon the failure of the Hillsborough Bank at Amherst to bring a large number of suits against Charles H. Atherton and other stockholders of the defunct bank, claiming that they were personally liable to make good the bills issued by this corporation. He failed in his suits, and many judgments for costs were entered against him. [Unable to pay the considerable sum,] he was imprisoned upon the executions issued upon these judgments, but for the greater part of the time he had the liberty of the jail yard, as it was called. These limits were changed from time to time until they included a large part of the town of Amherst. Mr. Shattuck practiced law for many years while a prisoner.” (Ramsdell's *History of Milford*, 1901)

Another author's take (from *The Bench and the Bar of New Hampshire* by Charles Henry Bell (1894), p. 634):

“Nathaniel Shattuck ... was a man of some capacity, and apparently had a fair share of business and of the confidence of his townsmen at Amherst until he was so injudicious as to engage in bringing a large number of petty suits against Charles H. Atherton and other stockholders of the suspended Hillsborough bank upon the small bills issued by that institution, claiming that they were personally liable under the law. The actions were regarded as vexatious, and were held to be unfounded, and the costs, amounting in the aggregate a very considerable sum, fell upon Shattuck. He was unable to discharge them, and, as the law then was, was committed to jail for non-payment. He obtained the liberty of the yard, which extended to the bounds of the town of Amherst, but for years was unable to go outside them. It is said, however, that he made the most of this limited opportunities, and kept up his practice while thus nominally a prisoner.”

[Note by KH: Notice the careful choice of words: “apparently”, “it is said.”]

Background on the law suits against the failed Hillsborough Bank, which was incorporated in 1806 and failed in 1809:

1811-05-07 *Farmer's Cabinet*: "The Supreme Court closed its session at Hopkinton on Wednesday the 2d inst. The causes pending against the Hillsborough Bank, were decided in favor of the *ex-stockholders* – not on the ground that the *ex-stockholders* were not bound by the terms of the charter, but because the plea of *assumpsit* would not lie in this case. Con. Pap."

[Katrina's Comment: So although the Directors of the bank had clearly violated their charter – they got off scott-free on a technicality! Very interesting that the brief blurb above, reprinted from another newspaper, is the entirety of the local Amherst paper's coverage. Well, the editor surely did not want to disparage any of the directors who were all prominent men, certainly locally but some also had statewide prominence; Samuel Bell would go on to become Governor of N.H.! By the same token, the local newspaper tactfully never printed that Mr. Shattuck was in prison for debt.]

1811 May 28 *New Hampshire Patriot*, Concord, N.H.: "HILLSBOROUGH BANK. The late decision on the question between the Stockholders of the Bank and THE PUBLIC (for the question seems to have been simply this) appears to have excited a general disapprobation. "Something is rotten in Denmark." *It is said* that Judge SMITH two years since decided in favor of the plaintiffs, in a number of actions *brought word for word with the actions which were lately decided by Judge Livermore to be brought wrong*. We know that the directors of the Bank paid the amount and costs on a number of suites. If this was the case, *something must be wrong*. Errors of the head may be tolerated: whether these were errors of the head, or whether there was a *powerful unseen hand working* in the business, we will not pretend to say. It is to be hoped than the Legislature will take notice of a number of decisions which *seem* to set at defiance a government of the people – which *seem* to say, the Legislature may pass laws, but we care nothing about them."

REPORT by Katrina Holman on RESEARCH of SUITS VS HILLSBOROUGH BANK (20 Feb 2010)

At the State Archives in Concord, NH, there is a bound volume of all the Hillsborough Bank suits that were "resolved" by Superior Court in 1811. There were more than 200 suits BUT the BULK of them were by just 3 individuals: Peter Bachelder of Boston (44 vs Samuel Bell, 35 vs Joseph Cushing, 21+ vs Frederick French); James Wallace of Milford [I believe he was the JP judge who heard some of the Bank cases the first go-round before appealed] (39 vs C. H. Atherton, 17 vs Means, 15 vs Wilson and onesie-twosies vs Bell, Brown, French and Fuller). The third individual plaintiff was Nathaniel Shattuck, Esq., of Amherst who spread his suits around: 8 vs Hillsborough Bank, 4 vs Charles H. Atherton, 4 vs Eli Brown, 4 vs Frederick French, 2 vs Nathl Cleaves, 3 vs David Holmes, 3 vs John Watson, 3 vs Samuel Bell, 3 vs R Means, 3 vs David McG Means and some others. I did not count/record every single one but you get the picture. (Bell was the bank president, the others were directors.) Here's the other key piece of data to understand the QUANTITY of suits:

EACH suit was for a SINGLE ten dollar note (each a different note as evidenced by its assigned number and the person originally made out to). Ten dollars back then would have been around \$500 or so today's money, would you say? At the first go-round of suits, some heard in Milford, some in Amherst, by several different JP judges since at diff sessions, some of the suits were won by the plaintiff, some lost. C H Atherton defended the Hillsborough Bank directors/ stockholders in the cases I looked at. The defense argument was generally that they did NOT "promise" to pay out real money for the notes when presented; and some cases (Shattuck vs Means), that the stockholder wasn't a stockholder anymore having legally conveyed that hot potato to someone else.

For all Peter Bachelder cases that I glanced at, his COURT COSTS were \$21.39 for EACH \$10 note he sued on. So, doing the math, he purportedly lost more than \$1000 (100x10) worth in bills, then on top of that owed more than \$2139 in fines/court tax. And that's not counting whatever court costs he owed at the lower level court(s). Annotated next to each of his cases was "returned debtor committed to gaol". [I'd sure like to find out about him!]

As for NATHANIEL SHATTUCK, his court costs varied in the neighborhood of \$12.59 and \$13.61 and \$15.63 and \$17.97 for each ten dollar bill EXCEPT his most expensive which were vs. Hillsborough Bank, where he was assessed \$10.75 for damages plus \$36.95 court costs for each of the 8 cases. Ouch. BUT annotated next to EACH of his cases was something like "execution issued satisfied." By the way, when he lost the cases at the lower court, the court costs varied from 75 cents to \$2.07 .

What I was unable to find, is all those other suits that were thrown out ("unsuited") by the Superior Court's ruling in 1811. Who were the plaintiffs? If they were "unsuited", did the plaintiffs still have to pay fees? [end]

I can't help but wonder whether the emotional and financial stress contributed to the death of Nathaniel's first wife, Mary, in June 1812. Not only was her husband suddenly hugely in debt but her father, James Wallace of Milford, also suffered losses from the bank's failure and lost his lawsuit.

According to local lore (Emma Boylston Locke in her book *Colonial Amherst*, p, 78), Shattuck built the house at 3 Old Jailhouse Road while "confined for debt in the jail." Shattuck remarried as a widower in Amherst in 1816 and six children were born in town.

1813 Dec: [ESCAPE] “Twenty-five Dollars Reward. Broke and deserted from Amherst Gaol, on the night of 25th instant, a person by the name of WILLIAM READ, about 35 years old, 5 feet 9 or 10 inches high, black hair and black eyes, a straight slim built man. Whoever will return said Read to Amherst Gaol shall receive the above reward. JOHN ELLENWOOD, Deputy Gaoler, Dec. 27, 1813.” (*Farmer's Cabinet*, 3 Jan. 1814, p. [4]; 10 Jan. 1814, p. [4].)

1815 Sep: [ESCAPE] “Five Dollars Reward. Escaped from the gaol in Amherst, on the 26 th instant, a person by the name of BENJAMIN EATON, formerly of New Ipswich. ... JAMES C. MACE, Sept. 29, 1815.” (*Farmers' Cabinet* 30 Sep., p. [3]; 7 & 14 Oct. 1815, p. [1].)

1818 March: [ESCAPE] “Twenty-five Dollars Reward. Broke from the Goal [sic] in Amherst, on the night of the 10 th inst. MOSES HOLDEN, light complexion, sandy hair and blue eyes; about 24 years of age, and of middling stature – committed for theft. Whoever will apprehend said Holden, and return him to said gaol, before the 20 th day of April next, shall be entitled to the above reward. JAMES C. MACE, D. Goaler [sic]. Amherst, March 11, 1818.” (FC, 21 March 1818, p. [3]; 4 April 1818, p. [4].)

DEBTORS

1814 through

1818: “Moses Brewer” and “Moses Brewer, Isaac Lawrence and George Lancey, Poor Debtors in Gaol for LIFE!!” (*Farmers' Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 7 Nov. 1818, p. [3]).

1818: “THE RELEASED PRISONERS. We learn that the terms on which the release of Brewer, Lawrence and Lancey was effected, were --- that Gen. Pierce paid three hundred dollars down to the late prison-keeper, for which he consented to relinquish the remainder of his claim (amounting, as he states, to about \$800) ...” (*Farmers' Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 28 Nov. 1818, p. [3].)

Note: There are more articles on the cases of these three debtors (e.g., FC, 8 Aug. 1818, p. [3], about Capt. Brewer, reprinted from *Concord Gazette*). See “Historic Amherst: Revolution Hero in Gaol at Amherst – Guilty Only of Poverty: Debtor's case made N. H. a national disgrace” by Katrina Holman, published in *The Amherst Citizen*, Feb. 2016, p. 4 and 8. The legal obstacles to the release of (Captain) Moses Brewer, a poor veteran of Revolutionary War about 70 years old, committed to Amherst jail in Dec. 1814 for a debt around \$8, unable to pay for his food so that he owed the jailer more than \$300 by Nov. 1818 when released by Gen. Benjamin Pierce, newly re-appointed High Sheriff, who negotiated a settlement w/ jailer & prior sheriff by paying out of own pocket.)

NEW DEBTOR LEGISLATION

1819 June 7: See Legislative Acts. (FC, 12 June 1819, p. [2].)

Address of Hon. Sam Bell, Governor, to N.H. Legislature: “Amongst the laws which have occurred to me as standing in need of legislative revision, is that relative to the imprisonment of debtors. By this law prison-keepers are compelled to afford food and sustenance to persons imprisoned for debt. An oppressive burden is thereby imposed upon the prison-keeper in cases where the debtor is unable to pay for this support. There seems no good reason why prison keepers should be compelled, at their own expense, to support prisoners who are paupers, whether they were such at time of their commitment, or were rendered paupers by that commitment. I would therefore recommend to the legislature to make such provision by law as will relieve prison-keepers from this burden by imposing it on the towns where such prisoners have their legal settlements, or upon creditors who may hereafter commit such debtors to prison without having any reasonable ground of expectation that they were of sufficient ability to pay their prison charges.”

1820 April: [QUANTITY – EMPTY!] “A Remarkable Fact. We are informed by the Keeper of the Gaol in this town, that, there is not at this time, nor has there been for a week past, a single individual confined within its walls, either for crime or debt – a similar circumstance we believe, has never occurred since the Gaol was erected.” (*Hillsboro Telegraph*, Amherst, N.H., 29 April 1820, p. [3].)

1820: [SUICIDE OF JAILED DEBTOR] “Melancholy Event. On Thursday last, an inquest was called to examine the body of Mr. THOMAS BAKER, a prisoner in the gaol in this town, for debt. – He put a period to his existence by hanging himself in the room where he had been confined for nine days. He was found suspended by a woollen sash, which was confined to a white-pine pin about three-fourths of an inch diameter, drove in a joint between two stones composing the walls of the prison. Verdict of the jury was “that the said Thomas Baker came to his death by feloniously hanging himself, &c while under the effect of intemperance.” (*Hillsborough Telegraph*, Amherst, N.H., 1 July 1820.)

MOST NOTORIOUS INMATE: MURDERER DANIEL FARMER – Only Criminal Hanged in Amherst

1821 April: "... Daniel Farmer was arraigned at the bar of the Court on Saturday last, on an indictment of the grand jury for murder; but his trial under the circumstances of the case, was postponed to October term, which will be held in this place. In the mean time, he is to be kept in the county gaol in this town, to which he was reconveyed on Wednesday." (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 28 April 1821, p. [3]. See also *Hillsboro Telegraph*, 28 April 1821, p. [2].)

1821 Nov. 1 – Surviving Letter Describing Visit by Passing Clergyman to Daniel Farmer in Amherst Jail:

A letter by Amos _ . Cook at Fryburg [Maine], whose envelope is addressed to Mr. Elisha Cook, Templeton – County of Worcester, and the letter addressed to "My dear Brother[in-law] and Sister [identified at the end of the letter as Mrs. Betsey Cook]": The following are the last sentence of the first paragraph and most of second paragraph:

"We arrived at the inn in Amherst at 9 A.M. where we feasted ourselves at a table profusely spread with a great variety, and in great style. After breakfast we visited poor Farmer, at the prison, who is sentenced to be hung on the first Monday in December next. We found him reading the Hymn book, with a Bible on the table before him. His height is probably below six feet – decently dressed in home spun – of a complexion not fair – of a countenance rather gloomy & rather sullen – and the system throughout, muscular. He was not inclin'd to make conversation; although he answered, directly and sensibly, all the questions, put him. We learned at the inn, that his wife has become a picture of grief – and has, with her little children, spent several days and nights with him in his confined state. Farmer, 'till of late, has sustained the reputation of being an upright man – honest in his dealings among men; – and it is said, his wife is a likely woman. But through passion, and probably intoxication, he was left to commit the horrible deed of Murder."

Note by researcher Virginia E. Strahan dated 19 July 2017: The letter is in several pieces, having separated along the folds, and is missing a section providing additional details about Amos' trip to the Shaker community in Canterbury, N.H.

1821 Oct.: A long account of the trial at Amherst of Daniel Davis Farmer for the murder of widow Anna Ayer of Goffstown was published in the *Farmers' Cabinet*, 13 Oct. 1821, p. [3]: "... On Wednesday morning, the court was opened at 8 o'clock, in the meeting-house, which was immediately filled with persons of all classes, ages, and sexes. This being the first trial for life, ever occurring in this county [Hillsborough], and the extraordinary atrocious circumstances of the murder ... it was computed by some that from 2 to 3000 persons were present through the day. ... The principal witness, as to positive facts against the prisoner, was Anna Ayer, the daughter of the deceased murdered woman, aged 14 years ... [Testimony recounted in great detail.] Evidence was then adduced on the part of the prisoner, to invalidate the testimony of the girl – and to prove that the mother had sworn a child against F. before a magistrate, and on examination after death was found not to be pregnant – and also to show that the woman did not necessarily die of the wounds inflicted as described by the surgeons – and to the former good character of the prisoner. ... [The Jury retired "about 10 o'clock at night;" the Court reassembled at eleven. The Jury's verdict was GUILTY.] The Court adjourned (at half past 11 o'clock) to 8 o'clock the next morning. There was never, perhaps, a verdict given on a like occasion, more universally satisfactory, than this to all who heard the trial. In fact the prisoner has never, since committed to prison, denied the charge of killing the woman and beating the child. And since his condemnation, has acknowledged it to be just, and the truth of his own guilt. ... [The full address by the Judge to the prisoner was printed.] ... pronounce the judgment of the law, which is – That you be taken hence to prison, from prison to the place of execution, and there be hung by the neck till you are *dead!*"

1822 January – Execution by Hanging: "The concourse of people which assembled in this place on Thursday of last week to witness the execution of Farmer, the murderer, ... is computed by most persons that there were 10,000 people present – although the weather was intensely cold. Many came from a great distance; there never having occurred a public execution before in the county, and but one before in the State. ... Much praise is due to Sheriff Pierce and his Deputies, for the good order and solemn manner in which they fulfilled the duties of their office on the occasion." (*Farmers' Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 12 Jan. 1822, p. [3].)

(More on "Daniel Davis Farmer, the prisoner confined in the common gaol in this town, under sentence of death" in *Hillsboro Telegraph*, 1 Dec. 1821 and account of his execution 5 Jan. 1822, p. [3]. Gen. Pierce was the High Sheriff of the County and thus in charge of the hanging.)

(In his memoir, *Sketch of a Busy Life, at Busyfield and Elsewhere*, 1892, Edward D. Boylson (1814-1895) describes witnessing the hanging while sitting on his father's shoulders (chapter 2, p. 18-19, one paragraph); Edward was nearly 8 years old. His father was editor, publisher, and proprietor of the *Farmer's Cabinet* newspaper and Edward succeeded him in those roles.)

1821 Oct. – OTHER DEFENDANTS: On same newspaper page as Daniel Farmer's murder trial is summary of all the cases tried in Amherst at that term of the Court, with names of defendants and charges (Ebenezer L. Williams on two indictments for opposing the sheriff in the execution of his duty, Benjamin Ranger for stealing a sheep, Jacob M'Intyre for stealing 2 bank bills, William Cook for assault with attempted rape, besides Daniel D. Farmer convicted of murder), and sentence for each. [The article does not say whether they were held in the county jail in

Amherst, but probably so. -KMH] (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 13 Oct. 1821, p. [3].)

COMPARISON – DEBTORS IN OTHER STATES

1824: “Imprisonment for debt. There are but 4 persons confined for debt in the gaol of New York, and 3 in that of Boston. Among the prisoners for debt in the Baltimore gaol, there were lately one person for four-pence-half-penny, one for nine-pence, one for twenty-seven cents, one for thirty & one for 48 cents.” (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 11 Dec. 1824.)

1828: [ESCAPE] “Four prisoners, committed for criminal offences, broke the jail in this town [Amherst] and escaped, in the night of Saturday last, 29th ult. They were placed two by two in different cells; but by means of instruments furnished by some persons from without, they sawed through the bolts and removed the bars which fastened the doors of the cells in which they were confined; and also sawed a hole through the outside door of the prison, which was of wood covered with plates of iron, the iron being bent to admit their passage through the hole in the wood. The persons of the prisoners are described by the jailer in an advertisement in another column. It will be seen that two of them had before served an apprenticeship in the state prisons. They will probably soon *let themselves* as journeymen in some of our state institutions. In Massachusetts it is said they hire the prisoners to labor.” (FC, 5 April 1828.)

1828: Deputy gaoler Charles Richardson of Amherst placed a newspaper notice in the 5 April 1828 issues of the *Farmers' Cabinet* and *Portsmouth Journal* about jailbreakers:

“Broke from the Common Gaol in Amherst, County of Hillsborough, on the night of the 29th [March], the following prisoners, all of whom were committed for criminal offenses, and for trial at the next term of the Superior Court, viz”:

- Caleb Stiles, about 55 years of age, light complexion, sandy hair and whiskers, bald in the fore part of the head, stout built; and dressed in dark clothes and blue surtout; is a native of Massachusetts and was recently discharged from the state prison of N.H. (to which he had been sentenced to three years hard labor after being convicted at age 48 in June 1823 for stealing, as reported by the *N.H. Patriot & State Gazette* of Concord, 9 June 1823).

- John Fisher, about 30 years of age, dark hair; wore dark clothes and a seal skin cap – says he is a native of Pennsylvania.

- Albert Ainsworth, about 18 years of age, dark complexion, black or very dark hair; dressed in dark clothes and seal-skin cap.

- Sargent L. Kimball, about 35 years of age, dark complexion, black hair, about 6 feet high; dressed in dark clothes, and a dark camblet cloak or coat; and was lately discharged from the state prison.

Rewards offered: \$40 (\$10 each).

1830: “David Roby committed to Amherst jail for the murder of Mr. Alexander M’Koy, in a Piscataquog village is about 15 years of age. It is said that they had both been drinking, and that Roby cracked M’Koy’s head with a pair of tongs which caused his death.” (*New Hampshire Gazette*, Portsmouth, N.H., 26 Jan. 1830.)

1831: “Superior Court held a session of five days last week in this town [Amherst, N.H.]. ... The following are the sentences of the Court upon the convicts, under indictment by the Grand Jury:

Luther Pearson indicted for larceny, pleaded guilty and was sentenced to one year’s imprisonment in the common gaol, and to pay a fine of \$100 for the use of the county of Hillsborough, and costs.

Thomas Lull, indicted for wilfully and maliciously maiming and wounding a Bull, the property of Moses Hodgdon, was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to 90 days imprisonment in the common gaol, and to pay a fine of \$100, for the use of the county of Hillsborough, and costs.

John Jones, indicted for breaking into the dwelling house of John Prentiss, Esq., in Amherst, last May, with intent to steal from the Farmer’s Bank, was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to 10 days solitary confinement, and confinement to hard labour in the State Prison for life. (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 1 Oct. 1831.)

1832: Superior Court term in this town [Amherst] [names individuals sentenced, including one for stealing a coat worth \$15 at Dunstable, who was sentenced to] “imprisonment in the Common Jail for six months, to pay a fine of \$30, and costs of prosecution.” (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 3 March 1832, p. [3].)

Comment: Example of types of crimes and sentences meted out. Not clear whether they spent time in Amherst jail.

GOOD EXAMPLE OF NUMBER AND KINDS OF CASES AND PUNISHMENTS

1842: “COURT OF COMMON PLEAS ... High Sheriff Moulton commands perfect order in the court room. ... Alexander Webster an old Connecticut prison bird has been sentenced for breaking the store of Wm. S. Spring in Amherst, and stealing goods, to the state-prison for 7 years. ...

Calvin T. Gilson of Nashua, for stealing a bible and sundry other articles, 2 months in common jail and pay treble the value of the articles stolen.
Samuel Kenney and Connel Donnion 4 months each in county joal [sic] and pay treble the value of the watch stolen.
..." (FC, 26 August 1842, p. [3].)

1843: The Court of Common Pleas sitting in Amherst ... [6 names of men sentenced in criminal trials – presumably they all were jail inmates prior to trial] (FC, 21 April 1843, p. [3])

REFORM MOVEMENT REGARDING “UNFIT” JAIL & ESCAPE OF 5 PRISONERS

1843: [ESCAPE] “*Gaol Delivery*. After our paper went to press on Wednesday morning of last week, the following occurrence took place in our village, too late to be inserted in our columns; but which we announced in an extra, as follows: The prisoners in the jail in this place, having had the said jail represented to them in the papers, as an unfit residence for 'frail humanity'; were consequently dissatisfied therewith; and having also a desire to spend Thanksgiving among their 'own kin,' with other divers other good and sufficient reasons therewith inducing them – and not having the fear of the jailer before their eyes – did, with intent to escape the punishment of the law, with *force of arms*, break, mutilate, and force open, with divers weapons, the doors of the said prison, through which they walked into open air, and made good and effectual their retreat from the custody, confinement and curtailment of the prison walls, to their own great joy, and the consternation of those who had them committed to their *safe* keeping – contrary to their duty as liege prisoners, and to the statute in such case made and provided – whereof they are amenable, (when caught) – and for their safe return a reward is offered of \$10 each, being five in number, and the whole number in prison. Thus making a clean sweep, and affording a good opportunity for a 'clean sweeping' of said prison of its impurity, so represented as unfit for the residence of those who violate the law and the rights of others for the sake of a good place to dwell in at the public expense. /

The names of the prisoners are – James Dwinnel of Manchester; Ezra Meach of Shelburn, Vt.; Leonard Foster of Lowell, Mass.; Edward L. Heath of Dedham, Mass., formerly of Meredith, N.H.; Amos Laforest of Nashua. High Sheriff Moulton has since offered a reward of \$30 each for Foster, Heath and Dwinnel, and \$10 each for the other two. They must have labored hard and skillfully – and have evinced themselves workmen not ashamed, of their skill.” (*Farmers' Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 8 Dec. 1843, p. [3].)

1844: “Outrageous Assault. On Friday last a man by the name of Ellsworth, of Manchester, waiting as a witness at some cast at the court sitting here ... wrongfully and contumaciously crowing rather too closely upon “the bar,” ... to the discomfort and displeasure of the Sheriffs, whose right and duty it was to keep order and due decorum in said court – ... Ellsworth was ... gently pushed back by one of the officers of the Court to the great displeasure, indignation and wrath of him, the said Ellsworth, who vowed to have satisfaction. Accordingly on Saturday, Ellsworth, harboring his purposes of vengeance, waylaid E. Monroe, Esq., one of the Sheriffs of the court and Jail Keeper in this place [Amherst], as he was passing home through the avenue to the Jail house, having laid wait in a contiguous horse-shed for that purpose. Having struck Mr. M. on the head with a club, he then grapples in with him and threw him to the ground, when others came to the rescue, and he was prevented from doing further injury. Ellsworth was immediately arrested, examined before a Justice and laid under bonds with sureties, of \$300 for his good behavior and for his future appearance at Court, and for want thereof was committed to jail, for safe keeping, under the care and admonition of the man whom he had so cruelly and unjustly maltreated for performing his bounden and required duty.” (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 18 April 1844.)

LETITIA S. BLAISDELL – Poisoned Adopted Mother in New Boston

1849: From the Dover Gazette. Case of Letitia S. Blaisdell who poisoned her adopted mother in New Boston; held in Amherst jail ... (*Farmers' Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 26 July 1849, p. [2].)

1849: Long article on sentencing and background (N.H. *Sentinel*, Keene, 3 May 1849; taken from Cabinet)

1849: Letitia S. Blaisdell plead guilty to killing the child of Benj. Blaisdell, at Goffstown, and is sentenced to be hung on the 30 th August. (*Picayune*, New Orleans, Louisiana, 8 May 1849.)

See: *History of Goffstown*; Franklin Pierce and David Steele were assigned as her counsel.

1849: The bill, changing the punishment of Letitia S. Blaisdell from death to imprisonment for life, has passed the Legislature of New Hampshire. (*Semi-Weekly Eagle*, Brattleboro, Vermont, 25 June 1849).

1849: Letitia S. Blaisdell, whose sentence was commuted to imprisonment for life, was last week brought to the State Prison, where she will probably remain for many years. (N.H. *Patriot*, Concord, 12 July 1849.)

1848: “From the Dover Gazette. LETITIA S. BLAISDELL” [long article, others put the idea into her head and gave her the money for the poison; she was consumptive while in Amherst jail] (*Farmers' Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 26 July 1849, p. [2].)

1850 census – Concord, N.H., State Penitentiary: Letitia S. Blaisdell, 25, committed 1849 for murder.
1860 census – Concord, N.H., State Prison: Letitia S. Blaisdell, 35, factory hand, committed 1849 for murder.

1861: PARDONED. Letitia S. Blaisdell, who poisoned a family in New Boston, N.H., a dozen years ago, and was sentenced to be hung for the crime, but which sentence was commuted to imprisonment for life by the Legislature, was finally pardoned out by the Executive last week. (*New Hampshire Sentinel*, Keene, 6 June 1861.)

1850 (census) [QUANTITY 11 of whom 2 female]: Peabody Keyes (1850), 45, laborer, intemperance; Franklin Fales (1850), 20, no occupation, stealing; Frederick Glover (1850), 19, no occupation, stealing; Ephraim L. Moore (1850), 26, no occupation, stealing; John Morietta (1850), 45, no occupation, assault & battery; Hannah O Niel, female (1850), 20, stealing; Ebenezer R. Durgin (1849), 25, no occupation, debt; John Thomas (1850), 20, sailor, intemperance; Eliza A. Keyes, female (1850), 25, intemperance; Charles N. Pond (1849), 45, baker, high[way] robbery; Israel Rundlet (1850), 15, no occupation, stealing.

ESCAPE OF 5 PRISONERS – 3 FRENCHMEN, A YANKEE AND A NEGRO – BY SOAPING

1850: “JAIL BREAKERS RETAKEN! Five prisoners broke out of Amherst Jail on the 31 st of December, by soaping their bodies and crowding through a space which they had made between the bars. They shoved each other through the bars until they came to the last a Frenchman, who came near sticking in the aperture all night with a good chance of freezing to death, as the night of their escape was the coldest of the season, The escaping party consisted of three Frenchmen, a Yankee, and a negro. The negro got chilled through, and stopped at Nashua, where he was shortly afterwards arrested in an engine house. The Frenchmen were arrested in Lowell, two in the streets, and one in a house, drunk. The Yankee, who gives his name as George Smith alias Fredericks, was arrested on board schooner Mary of Portsmouth, on Central wharf this morning, by officers Monroe and Starkweather of this city. Smith's feet were found to be frost-bitten, probably done on the night of his escape. He acknowledges that he is the person who attempted to break into the house of Dr. Hartford, at the corner of Pearl and Purchase streets, where he would probably have received a charge of lead, had not the Doctor's pistol missed fire. [Boston Trav. Friday.” (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 17 Jan. 1850, p. [2].)

1850: “Four of the five prisoners who escaped from our [Amherst] jail were re-taken by Mr. James Monroe, the Deputy Jailer – one at Nashua and three at Lowell – and safely returned to prison. The Yankee is still at large, resolved not “to give it up so.” The negro felt quite indignant at the difference made in the reward offered, to his disparagement, declaring himself “the best of the lot!” (FC, 10 Jan. 1850, p. [2].)

1850: “We are indebted to the Lowell Courier and other papers for an account of a renewed attempt to break jail in this town by the prisoners therein, no having before even heard of it! We did indeed learn that the “Yankee,” when brought back from his escape, expressed his indifference about it, and boasted that he could get out again in a week, and that he actually accomplished it in that time. How he managed to get out, we have not learnt, nor seen it in the Lowell papers. He made his escape by day light, but was soon overtaken and returned. This later attempt we now learn is a fact, as described:

Another Attempt to Break Jail. We learn that the three Frenchmen and the negro, who recently escaped from Amherst jail by soaping their bodies, and were re-captured, made a second attempt to escape on Monday night last. They pretended to be very thirsty during the whole of last week, and were supplied with water freely, which they stowed away in their wash-tubs. They then cut their beds open, took out the straw, and piled it against the small aperture or window in the stone wall, through which their food is passed in to them by the jailor. In the evening they set fire to it – hoping to burn the stone to such a degree, that by throwing water upon it, it would crack, and thus enable them to remove pieces enough to open a passage way out. The smoke, however, issuing out of the aperture, led to the discover of their design. The jailor immediately had a lot of water thrown in from without, which, while it quenched the flame, created such a smoke that the three Frenchmen became nearly as black as the negro himself. They were smoked to the color of bacon, and were almost suffocated to death – lying upon the floor with faces down – and kicking about as they were swimming in the water. The negro's grimaces as he rubbed his oily shin, are said to be indiscribly and awfully droll. Thus the means they employed to effect their escape, came very near causing their death. It is a fact, we believe, that at several years since, two convicts did escape from that jail by a precisely similar process – that is, heating the stones and them [then] throwing water upon them. [Lowell Cour.” (*Farmers' Cabinet* 31 Jan. 1850, p. [3].)

1850: “Two prisoners in our jail, who recently succeeded in breaking out and were overtaken and returned, have made another attempt, being the fourth[.] One day last week, occupying the two lower cells, they dug through the separating wall, by the removal of a quantity of large and heavy stone, so that they had free ingress to each room. All the implements which have as yet been discovered by which they performed this difficult labor, are the spoons that were used for eating their victuals. – Necessity, as the proverb says, knows no law, and will work wonders; and that hunger will break through stone walls. But whoever thought of breaking them with pewter spoons! The

prisoners, however, say they think they shall not try again, as court time is no near at hand, when they shall have their trial.” (FC, 14 Feb. 1850, p. [2].)

1850: “The Court of Common Pleas is still in session in this place [Amherst], being upon its fourth week. ... There has been in consequence of these delays, much expense to the county, parties waiting in vain for the tide of justice to come round, with numerous witnesses paid off, and to come again and again be paid. ...

John Moriarty, for assault on Thomas M'Cain sentenced to pay a fine of \$100, and 60 days imprisonment in the county jail. ... [Other sentences]” (FC, 9 May 1850, p. [2].)

1845-1853 [??]: “... the Wentworths, who were tried three times for the murder of Parker in Manchester, in 1835 [CHECK date]. Ex-President Pierce, who was one of the counsel for the defense, on the day their liberty was secured, rode to Amherst; it was a terrible hot day in haying time; the sheriff was up in Hillsborough at work in the field, and Pierce had some trouble getting a man to go and bring the sheriff back. At last he succeeded in hiring Alfred Noyes, hostler for Charles Shepard, to undertake the journey. Monroe, the high sheriff, was a noted stage driver, and Noyes, the hostler, is now a member of the Capitol police at Washington.” (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 24 Aug. 1893, p. 1.)

1850: “... In the case of Asa and Henry T. Wentworth, [the judge] decided that the evidence was sufficient to require them to answer to a higher Court, and therefore ordered them to be committed to Amherst Jail till October, there to await the action of the Court of Common Pleas.” (“The Parker Murder,” FC, 11 July 1850, p. [3].)

1850: THE PARKER MURDER EXAMINATION AT MANCHESTER. The examination of Asa, Henry T. and Horace Wentworth, and W. Clark, for the murder of Jonas Parker, was commenced on Thursday ... (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 6 June 1850.

1851: “Caught. Two boys were committed to Amherst jail from this town [Nashua], on Thursday, for various acts of iniquity, such as robbing henroosts, dove-cotes, etc. They knew all about breaking the windows in the Mount Pleasant School House, and told the officer who carried them to jail who did it, through they denied having anything to do with it themselves. The jail was full, and these boys were each put into a room with five or six hardened offenders. Some means should be provided at once to avoid so fatal a necessity. They might make honest men yet, if they could be kept under proper influences while there. As it is, little good can be expected to their morals. [Tel. [Nashua Telegraph]” (*Farmers' Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 10 April 1851.)

1851: [ESCAPE en route] “ELOPED – As J. M. Rowell, Esq. and Mr. **James Monroe**, were conveying the county prisoners to Amherst, on Friday, and had arrived at Mr. Hartshorn's farm house, just over the line between Bedford and Amherst, the team was stopped and Mr. Rowell stepped out of the wagon for a moment, when John L. Due, a prisoner who was indicted by the grand jury, at their last session, for stealing two one hundred dollar bills in the town of Bennington, add tried and found guilty, but whose sentence was postponed on account of some question of law, jumped out of the wagon and escaped, running cross lots into a piece of woods, though closely followed by Mssrs Rowell and Monroe. Due had a pair of strong cuffs upon his wrists. He has not yet been found. [Mirror.” (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 12 Sep. 1851, p. [2].)

1851: “Court of Common Pleas. ... on Friday afternoon the following sentence were pronounced. ... [Names 9 persons, of whom 4 were women, who were sentenced but does not mention their crimes. All except two received jail sentences, presumably to spend in Amherst; the other two were sentenced to state prison. They may or may not have spent prior time in the Gaol in Amherst because at least some of them were transported to Amherst for trial the previous day.] (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 12 Sep. 1851, p. [2].)

1851: “... A lot of miniature furniture exhibited by James Munroe [at county ag fair], and made by an inmate of Amherst jail, with no other tools that a jackknife and sand paper showed that the maker possessed a large share of ingenuity ... As it is not the object of the society to encourage convict labor, the committee did not feel authorized to award a premium.” (FC, 19 Nov. 1851.)

1893: “James Monroe died in Boston the 6 th inst. aged 68 years. Buried here Monday. He was a native of this village and only son of the late Elijah Monroe, Esq., a former high sheriff and jail-keeper. A generation ago he was the popular landlord and stable keeper at the Nutt tavern. Some thirty years ago he moved to Boston where he has since resided. (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 12 Oct. 1893.)

1851: “SHOCKING CASE OF INFANTICIDE IN THE CAR. A mother named Kate V. Poole, was lodged in our Jail on Saturday last, for the murder of her infant child, of two months, by throwing it from the cars, on the

afternoon of Monday, of last week, about one mile below Manchester, on the Nashua route. From the Telegraph and Mirror we gather the following particulars of this most extraordinary and dreadful infanticide: From the former we learn that this woman arrived at Nashua in the Monday evening train, giving her name as Mrs. French, and stated, that she with her husband, and an infant child, came from Melbern, Lower Canada, that while between Manchester and Thornton's Ferry, they being in the Saloon of the cars, her husband told her to go to the stove and warm her, and that on her return she missed her child, and learned from him that he had thrown it out of the window. That he held her and threatened her with instant death if she gave the alarm, and on arriving at Nashua he pushed her out of the cars and proceeded on without her. Her plausible story and distressed appearance awakened sympathy for her, and search was immediately made for the child, which was not however found until Wednesday morning, when it was taken up with its skull broken, about a mile below Manchester. Suspicion was awakened that she was the murderer of the child, and she was accordingly arrested and taken to Manchester. A Coroner's Inquest on the body of the infant child was held on the 13th inst, by Joseph M. Rowell, Esq. The verdict was to the effect, that the child came to its death by being thrown from the cars of the Concord Railroad by Kate V. Poole. On Friday morning she was brought before the Police Court on a charge of causing the death of her infant. Through her counsel, Wm. C. Clark, Esq., she waived an examination, and entered a plea of not guilty to the charge, and was ordered to Amherst jail to await the April session of the Common Pleas Court for this county. / The appearance of the prisoner this morning at the Police Court was very interesting. She was neatly dressed in mourning. She wore a delaine mourning dress, a Bay State mourning shawl, a black silk bonnet, and black kid gloves. She is a medium sized woman, apparently quite young, with rather agreeable features. Her countenance exhibited signs of deep sorrow, and we through we could distinctly trace in the eye a sort of wildness, in which view alone we can account for this most unnatural act. She is said to be quite intelligent. / The prisoner states that she is about 23 years of age, a native of Haverhill, N.H., that she worked at Haverhill in the summer of 1850, and went to school there the succeeding winter to a man by the name of French. She says that her child was born on the 3d day of September. She went to Lowell last spring, and there worked in some of the factories, and stopped at Lowell until Wednesday of last week, when she went to Haverhill and on the succeeding day to Manchester. It seems that she made several trials to obtain a place to work for her board the coming winter, but did not succeed, and says that she thought all were against her, and that she had no friends. In this idea she undoubtedly went to the cards, and while sitting in the depot from two till five o'clock on Monday afternoon as it was friendless and alone, without home and with the care of an infant child devolving upon her, her feelings must have been nearly overpowering. Taking all the circumstances into view, we must look upon it more as a case of desperation than of willful and deliberate intention. / We understand that the mother selected the clothes for the burial of her child yesterday. [Manchester Mirror" (*Farmers' Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 19 Nov. 1851.)

1852: Court of Common Pleas. An indictment has been found against Kate Virginia Poole for destroying her infant child but she has not been arraigned. (FC, 26 April 1852)

1852: "THE CONTRAST. The Oasis, after stating that Kate V. Poole plead guilty and was sentenced to State Prison for life for the murder of her child, draws the following contrast between her, and her seducer: "She goes to prison for life for an act committed when despair had overthrown reason, conscience and maternal affection – goes heroically, with no lie in her mouth, willing to expiate her sin and suffer her heavy sorrow alone, not daring to ask for human sympathy ... He [emphasis], in the eye of Heaven doubtless far more guilty, is basking in the smiles of the social circle ... This is the verdict of society, the world over, we believe. Poor houses, and prisons, and graveyards, are people[d] with the victims of men who hold their heads high among their fellows. The haunts of poverty and crime are thronged with the once loved and lovely, while their betrayers move in honored circles. ... [Telegraph [probably of Nashua]" (*Farmers' Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 13 May 1852.)

1852: "Executive Session. At the meeting of the Governor and Council last week ... Kate Virginia Poole, who was committed to the State Prison for life, at the April term of the Court for this County, for murder in the 2d degree, received a full pardon, to take effect in 30 days." (FC, 5 August 1852.)

1852: "Kate Virginia Poole, who excited so much public interest about a year since, and having been sentence for life to the State prison in New Hampshire for throwing her child out of the window of a car, while in motion, was pardoned by the Governor, on the ground of insanity, has been sentenced by the Court of Common Pleas at Lawrence to six months in the House of Correction for larceny." (FC, 24 Feb. 1853.)

1852: "The two young men recently arrested in Nashua for passing counterfeit bills on the Orleans Bank, Irasburg, Vt., have been committed to Amherst jail to await their trial. The Oasis says that several tens upon the Merrimack County Bank, wretchedly made from ones, have been passed upon our citizens. -Mirror" (FC, 21 Jan. 1852.)

1852: "Theft. A Mr. Marden, six weeks from State Prison, recently re-commenced operations in Lyndeborough, by stealing \$20 in money and goods to the amount of \$40 from the Public House of Mr. David Farnsworth, breaking

into the premises. He also entered as school house in that town and extracted therefrom a pair of rubber shoes and an umbrella. He was examined before a justice and in default of bail committed to Amherst jail to await his trial. – [Mirror” (*Farmers’ Cabinet*, 21 Jan. 1852.)

1852: Swindler regarding wheel patent in Amherst jail (“Caution to the Public”, 20 May 1852, p. [2].) Wood's agent was arrested by Putnam & Chase and committed to Amherst jail, where he lay for several weeks, and was finally bailed out by the heirs of Wood.

WIFE OF BRACKLEY ROSE UNFAITHFUL & MARY ORDWAY HOUSE OF BAD REPUTE

1853: “Court of Common Pleas – Hillsborough County. ... Edwin S. Belcher was accused of committing fornication with Rachel P. wife of Brackley Rose. Edwin denied that he had been led astray by a rose but the testimony in the case, like the handle of a jug, was all on one side. The jury were out a few minutes and returned a verdict of guilty. ...

The case State vs. Samuel C. Shattuck for adultery and Jane Turner for fornication, in consideration that the parties had been in jail about the length of time the Court would assign them, were *not pros'd*. ...

The State vs. Mary Ordway, a celebrity in Manchester for keeping a house of bad repute in Janesville, where an exorbitant price was paid for washing and ironing, was commenced. She is the vilest of womankind, but is smart as a snare gun. She harangued the Court and the audience and cross-examined the witnesses, but every word she uttered only tended to show how degraded, wretched and loathsome a female she is. The jury were out but a few moments and returned a verdict of guilty. ... Sentences: Mary Ordway, for keeping a bad house, sent to Amherst jail for three months, and pay cost taxed at \$34.06. Sentence: Edwin S. Belcher, for fornication, sent to the same place for three months, and to pay costs of prosecution and stand committed till paid [Ev. Mirror (*Farmers’ Cabinet*, Amherst, 3 Feb. 1853, p. [3].)

ABOUT BRACKLEY ROSE JR.

1850 Census – Lyndeborough, N.H.: Brackley Rose, 53, farmer; Sally, 44; Brackley, 27, laborer; George, 14; et al.

1851 April 2 – Lyndeborough: Marriage Brackley Rose Jr. + Rachel P. Hale, both of Lyndeborough, N.H.

1860 Census – Illinois: Brackley Rose Jr., 36, b. NH, carpenter; Abigail R., 33, b. Vt; George, 4, b. Illinois; Sarah J., 2, b. Illinois.

According to death record of Sarah J. Rose, mother's name Abbie Manning, b. Rutland Vt

1870 Census – Lyndeborough: Rose Brackley, 48, farm laborer, b. N.H.; Abigail, 42, b. Vt; George B., 14; Sarah G., 12; Eddie L., 8; girl, 5.

1850 Census – Wilton, N.H.: Edwin Belcher, 19, b. Vt, laborer, living in household of farmer with diff surname.

1853 April: [QUANTITY / SUICIDE / PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION / JAIL FOOD]

“AMHERST JAIL. Our County Jail now contains **only 15 inmates**, the smallest number there at any time just before Court for the last seven years. Last year at this time it had **27 inmates**. There is one thing worthy the notice of medical men, pertaining to this jail. During the nine years the present Jailer has had charge of it, High Sheriff Monroe, there have been over 600 inmates, and not a single case of fever or dysentery, or any other disorder, except what they brought with them. Of that number only two have died while here – one, a woman, hung herself, and the other, a man, died or delirium tremens in a day or two after he came there. What is the cause of this unusual prevalence of health? The most obvious answer is, regular meals, healthy food, cleanly and airy apartments and plenty of rest. Mr. Monroe takes the very sensible ground that the fattest beef and good food, generally, are the cheapest, as they contain so much more nutriment, and hence the inmates have excellent fare. **The Jail itself is a small, old-fashioned, narrow-contracted, bad-planned, stone-jug of a thing, and a disgrace to the County.** - *Manchester Mirror*. (*New Hampshire Patriot and Gazette*, Concord, 27 April 1853, p. [2].)

1853: “ATTEMPT TO KILL. On Friday night last, Mr. Moses B. Ferson, of Nashua attempted to kill his wife by cutting her throat ... After cutting his wife's throat, he made a similar unsuccessful attempt on his own life ... Dr. Gray was called in, and dressed their wounds, and both will recover. Ferson has been arraigned for an attempt to commit murder, and committed to Amherst jail. - Nashua Gazette. (N.H. *Patriot & State Gazette*, Concord, 28 Sep 1853, p. [2].) (See also, FC, 29 Sep 1853, p. [2].)

BIGAMIST

1854: "Warren F. Smith was carried to Amherst jail Wednesday. As far as heard from he has only four wives, at present, and is engaged to marry a fifth! But the "returns" have not yet come in from the "small towns," and the complexion of the result may yet be materially changed. - Manchester Mirror." (*Patriot*, Concord, N.H., 4 Jan. 1854, p. [2].)

1854: "A Man with Four Wives. Warren F. Smith, of Manchester, has been arrested at Nashua, on a charge of bigamy. It is stated that he has four living wives, one in Manchester, one in Bradford, one in Norther N. Hampshire, and one elsewhere." (FC, 5 Jan. 1854, p. [3].)

1854: Court of Common Pleas. Warren F. Smith of Manchester, bigamy in marrying Mary Horn of Manchester, while he had a lawful wife still living in Lowell. Plea guilty. Sentence, one year in Jail, fine of \$500 and costs of prosecution. (FC, 27 April 1854.)

DIVORCES

1854: "We learn that there were within this county seven divorces granted at the session of the Superior Court of this State, held at Concord last week. These, with the cases of bigamy lately developed at Manchester and elsewhere, indicate that matrimony is getting to be rather loose these days. And yet there are others who are drowning, shooting and hanging themselves because they cannot get into its toils." (FC, 26 Jan. 1854.)

1854: John Marshall, on a writ of habeas corpus was taken from Amherst jail and brought before the Superior Court of this sate now in Session at Concord ... bail ... charge of murdering Michael Calin of this city [Manchester]. - Manchester Mirror. (FC, 20 July 1854, p. [3].)

1854: Man Killed in Manchester. John Marshall, a stable keeper of [Manchester], got into a sharp talk with Michael Collan about paying for the use of a horse and carriage. The result was, that Marshall struck him on the head with a carriage wrench breaking his skull and injuring him so badly that he died. ... Collan was 27 years old and leaved a wife. [Mirror, 12 th (FC, 15 June 1854.)

1854: The trial of Marshall for the murder of John Calin was commenced on Tuesday, and was concluded on Thursday, the Jury after an absence of less than an hour, returned a verdict of NOT GUILTY. It was shown in the testimony that Callin struck the first blow, and the prosecution failed to prove that the blow returned by Marshall was given with a wrench, as alleged in the indictment. (FC, 16 Nov. 1854)

1854: [QUANTITY] "Amherst jail is now occupied by 27 boarders. Two of them are clergymen – whether signers of the "3050 remonstrance," we have not learned. - Nashua Gazette. (*Patriot*, Concord, 11 Oct. 1854, p. [2].)

"HAY & GRAIN GIRLS" – one of whom is MARGARET TORRENCE/TERRANCE (d. 1883)

1854: [ESCAPE] "TWO GIRLS ESCAPED FROM AMHERST JAIL. Two girls, known at the Jail, by the names of Laura J. Reed and Jane M. French, alias Margaret Torrence, about 18 or 20 years of age, escaped from Amherst Jail yesterday morning. These girls were arrested at Nashua at the time of the late Fair, put in a room at the Pearl St. House, were they broke away and were afterwards retaken. They took with them a horse and wagon belonging to Mr. Holbrook, who lives about a mile and a half from the jail. / They jumped out of the attic window of the jail and made their escape. They were found in this city [Manchester] today near the Reservoir, and Mr. Munroe has taken them back this afternoon. They put up their horse to "hay and grain" in Cheney's stable, yesterday, the 5 th, cool as old stagemen. They are "bricks," in their way. –*Manchester Mirror*, Friday. (*New Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette*, Concord, N.H., Wednesday, 11 Oct. 1854, p. [2].)

Note: Working backwards, the girls must have escaped on Thursday, Oct. 5.

1854: "... On Monday last, 18 criminals were arraigned, four of whom were females, two of whom were those who recently broke from jail, and stole a horse and wagon. Indictments were read as follows: ... Catharine Moffatt, fornication. Ross C. Durfee, breaking into dwelling of Horace C. Clark, Amherst. **Laura A. Reed and Jane M. French, stealing horse and wagon.** ... Each of the above pleaded not guilty. ... George Leavitt, of Amherst, for assaulting his father and stealing from him \$15. This is a case of robbery, and pleading not guilty, the Court, in accordance with his wish, assigned Messrs. Morrison and Clark as his counsel. ...

The "**hay and grain**" girls attracted quite a crowd. They are smart, and twice as wicked. After their first escape, says the Mirror, one of them was put back in the attic of the jail, 24 feet from the ground, and strong bolts and bars put into the window. By means of a post in her room, which she tore down, she broke one of the bolts, and again escaped. But the Sheriff heard the breaking of the bolt, and the jump, and found her in the yard. ...

The bail for Nancy Mead was declared forfeited, she having failed to appear." (FC, 2 Nov. 1854, p. [2].)

1854: "COURT OF COMMON PLEAS. At the coming in of the Court, sentences were passed upon Laura J. Reed and Margaret Lawrence for stealing horse of F. P. Holbrook of Amherst, each for four years' hard labor in the State Prison. Their "enterprise" flagged at this announcement, and they wept tears that they should have wept before. ...

Catherine Moffatt of Manchester, on an indictment for fornication, was ordered to pay a fine of \$40, and costs. (FC, 9 Nov. 1854, p. [2].)

1855 June 1 Register of Convicts in Prison: Laura J. Reed, born Litchfield, N.H., convicted in Hillsborough County of stealing horse, sentenced to 4 years. Margaret Torrence, b. Melbourne, C.E., convicted in Hillsborough County, for stealing horse, sentenced to 4 years. (Journal of House of Representatives of State of N.H., June 1855, Appendix, p. 36)

WHERE WERE THEY BEFORE? I could NOT find Laura Reed in 1850.

1850 census – Manchester, N.H.: Elias Toney, 58, barber, \$500, b. Mass; Della [Dillia], 54; Caroline Proctor, 25; William Toney/Teney, 32, barber, b. Mass; George, 22, barber, b. Mass.; Elizabeth and Nancy, both 21? [first digit hard to read], b. NY; Susan, 19, b. Mass.; and 3 children b. NH, aged between 3 and 10/12; Laura Reed, 20, b. Mass.; Edward Quimby, 19, b. Mass.; whole household is listed as BLACK.

Note: Died 6 April 1855 in Manchester, N.H., Elias Toney, aged 63 years and 9 months, of consumption; color not recorded. Delia Toney, wife of Elias Toney, died Nov. 1873 aged 77 in N.H. Death in Manchester of their 8-yr-old son Henry in 1841 confirms that he was black.

1850 census – Bedford, Mass.: Castalio Hosmer, 64, shoes, b. Mass.; Dolly [Hosmer], 58, b. Mass.; Ann F. [Hosmer], 42; Lucinda [Hosmer], 36, b. Mass.; Ruth Reed, 47; Laura J. [Reed], 15, b. Mass.

1850 census – Norway, Maine: Henry C. Reed, 46, farmer, b. Maine; Martha, 46; Martha E., 17; Laura J., 13; Mary E., 10; Francis H., 8; Maria L., 1. Same family in same place in 1860, all born in Maine, when Laura J. Reed, the eldest child living at home, is school teacher, and her younger sister Mary is milliner.

1857: “Margaret Terrence the girl who escaped from the State Prison last Fall, is out again. This time she took a companion with her, named **Clarissa Gove**. They effected their escape by cutting off a plank in their cell.” (FC, 23 July 1857, p. [3])

1858: “Two women escaped from the N.H. State Prison on Thursday night last by picking the locks of their cells, climbing out of a window into the prison yard and out over the wall of the yard by means of two short ladders spliced together. Their names are Margaret Torrence and ___ Gove. The first we believe had previously escaped three times and the latter twice. This time they are clear off not having yet been heard from. Verily our State Prison must be a terror to evil doers – at least all such as desire a steady home and are fearful of getting flighty! -*N.H. Patriot*.” (*Ohio Statesman*, Columbus, Ohio, 6 April 1858, p. [2])

1858 June: “Margaret Terrence, who escaped from our State Prison last Spring, has been arrested in Lowell, and will be returned. She says that after her escape from Concord, in passing a farm house near town, she saw a man undress and put his pants upon a chair. After he was asleep, she raised the window, and with a bean pole drew his pants from the chair, and found in his pocket \$150 in money. From the day of her escape until now they had been able to get no trace of her. / The above explains a fact about which there has been not a little speculation. A Mr. Thomas Mills, living just over the line between this city and Bow, was owing a Mr. Bean, who lives in the rear of the State House, \$150, and was to have paid it on the day following the night he lost the money. He affirmed the loss at the time, yet, as no one entered his house, many people could not understand how any one should have known about the money and obtained it by searching his pants' pocket from the distant window; yet his word could not be disbelieved when he said he had been robbed. His sleeping room joined the one in which he left his pantaloons, and they were near the open door between the rooms. This bad woman should be confined ten years for that theft. She is a dangerous woman, and has done much mischief in her day. -[*Mirror*.” (FC, 23 June 1858, p. [2])

1859: “A PRISON BIRD. Margaret Terrence, the most artful female rogue of her age in this country, is again under arrest – has been detained here in suspicion of knowing something about the breaking into and stealing from a store at Wilson's Crossing the night before the State election last month. Margaret is only 25 years old. She came here ten years ago from Canada East, and since then has divided her time curiously, the first four years in the mill, and since then, in jail, State Prison, and a nymph *du pave*. The first public record we made of her exploits was four years ago, when she and another girl, broke out of Amherst jail, stole a horse and wagon, drove to this city, and put their horse up to hay and grain. Since then they have been called the “hay and grain girls.” Afterwards she was sent to Concord State Prison from which she made three escapes – one time for seven months, another time for three months, and another time for a week. Several times besides she broke out but did not succeed in getting clear. Since she has been arrested here she has got out of the room in which she is kept in the City Hall, crawled thro' the ventilating window over the door, but was taken again before she left the Hall. She is spry and artful as a fox, and full of mischief. She is now anxiously waiting to see what is to become with her this time, but is cool, self-possessed, keeping her own counsels, and sleeps and eats as well as ever. - [Mirror.” (FC, 27 April 1859, p. [2].)

1859: “MARGARET TERRANCE AGAIN OUT OF JAIL. [The article starts basically same as Mirror article reprinted in Cabinet 27 April 1859]

Her last prison sentence ended last fall. About six weeks ago she was arrested on suspicion of being implicated in stealing \$275 worth of goods from the store of Warren Richardson, in Londonderry, on the night 7 March last, and for want of bail was sent to Exeter Jail to answer to a higher court. / Last week she was confined, and had a dead baby. Since, she has been very sick. Monday night she had a nurse with her, and was sick, vomiting several hours, keeping the nurse running up and down stairs to wait upon her. The outside door to the jail at Exeter was kept locked till towards morning, but the nurse having to pass in and out so often, they finally left it unlocked, not dreaming that Margaret, so weak as she was, would leave. Margaret “takes the chances” every time. At 3 o'clock Tuesday morning, when the nurse was in the kitchen, she left for parts unknown. Word was sent to officers in all directions, and during that day she was found at Epping, some dozen miles from jail, almost dead from exhaustion. She was on the way to Manchester, a place she dearly loves. Margaret is “a blood,” is unflinching in her adherence to her accomplices, and believes in “honor among rogues.” This time she has nearly “played her hand out,” if not quite. –Manchester Mirror.” (N.H. Patriot, Concord, 15 June 1859, p. [2], far right column; also FC, 15 June 1859, p. [2])

1859 Oct: “Asylum and State Prison. One of the editors of the Boston Traveller, who last week visited some of our 'institutions' seems to have been especially pleased with the present condition and management of the State Prison and Asylum. He writes as follows: There are now 99 convicts in the State Prison here. ... There are now five persons confined in this prison for murder. There are only two female convicts, and one of them, a young Irish girl is shortly to be discharged, and is now making her 'freedom' dress. It is expected that Margaret Torrence, a notorious woman, who has several times escaped from the institution, will be returned there in October. John Foss, Esq., the present warden, is an efficient officer, and the prison and convicts, by their appearance and conduct, bear evidence of good management on his part. ...” (FC, 14 Sep. 1859, p. [2])

1860 census – Manchester, N.H.: Terence Margaret, 25, b. Canada, fancy woman, the oldest of 5 young women of same occupation living with “saloon” keeper James McGregor, 37 [probably boarding house – or bordello].

1861: Supreme Judicial Court – Hillsborough County: Among the indictments brought in by the grand jury: Margaret Terrence and James McGregor, for keeping house of ill-fame; [another couple also for keeping a house of ill-fame]; and County of Hillsborough for not keeping a suitable jail. (FC, 13 Sep. 1861)

1861: “Margaret Terrence, the celebrated “hay and grain girl,” whose name is familiar to every one acquainted with the criminal calendar of this State, and whose life would make a book full of romance, was taken of a *capias* this mo

1861: “Margaret Terrence, the celebrated “hay and grain girl,” whose name is familiar to every one acquainted with the criminal calendar of this State, and whose life would make a book full of romance, was taken of a *capias* this morning, in the three-cornered house nearly opposite the Catholic Church, by our Police Department. She was taken a couple of months since for keeping a bad house, and escaped from officer Charles Stevens, it is supposed, from his story, by giving him chloroform. –[Mirror, 10th.” (FC, 18 Oct. 1861, p. [3])

1863 April 3 – Manchester, N.H.: Birth of living female child surnamed McGregor, whose father is James McGregor and mother is Margaret Terance (?) [sic] .

1867: “MARGARET TERRENCE of Manchester, well known in this County as a most daring, shrewd and desperate female robber, has been arrested and committed for trial on a charge of robbing Mr. Marshall, one of the Selectmen of Dunbarton, of \$700. Mr. M. was in Manchester, with butter, which he sold at a saloon on Concord St., where he drank a glass of ale, which is the last thing he remembers until being found in the north part of the city. The Terrence woman was seen leading him along and hanging about him. She applied to a man to help her remove her father, as she called him, saying some one got him drunk, and she would give \$5 to have him carried away. James McGreggor is supposed to have been an accomplice. Margaret has been living at “the Trap” on the Candia road, kept by McGreggor.” (FC, 19 Sep 1867, p. [2])

1868: “MARGARET TERRANCE, the “hay-and-grain girl,” escaped from the State Prison, at Concord, on Saturday evening, through a cellar window, where she had gone to get water. She had on two dresses, and a hat under her clothes. She is 35 years of age, and was sentenced for stealing at Manchester, in May last, to a term of five or seven years. She escaped from the same institution nineteen years ago. \$200 are offered for her apprehension. LATER – “Marg.” has been captured.” (FC, 22 Oct. 1858, p. [2])

1868: “RECAPTURED. Margaret Terrence, who was committed to the State Prison on the 5th of May last, from Manchester, escaped on the 17th in the following manner: She went down from the women's rooms and took back a bucket of water, and returned for a second pailful. She passed by some of the attendants, who had no suspicion of her intention. Indeed, there seemed to be no way for her to escape, as she was inside of locks and bolts. But instead of returning, she dropped her pail, and crawled out through a cellar window. She got across the railroad tracks to the intervale, and seemed to have become very much confused and totally lost as to where she was. Near Horse Shoe Pond she got into a ditch or some water up to her neck. She was recaptured this morning on Allison street, by Mr. C. H. Butters, a night hand at the Gas Works. She had hid behind some bushes in a garden. She was chilled through and had had no food but four chestnuts since her escape. This is the fifth escape she has made from

the prison, in which she has served out two terms. Her sentence is five years for “going through” a man.”
(*N.H. Patriot and State Gazette*, Concord, N.H., 28 Oct. 1868, p. [3])

1870 census – Concord, Merrimack county, N.H.: Torrance Margaret, age 37, b. Canada, tailoress, State Prison inmate,

1870 census – Concord, Merrimack county, N.H. – Orphans Home: McGregor Julia, 7, b. NH, & Mary E., 6, b. NH, both attending school.

1871: “Register of Convicts in Prison May 1 st, 1871” included Margaret Terrance, age 35, born Canada East, convicted in Hillsborough County, for crime of stealing, in May 1868, sentenced 5 years, time expires May 1873. (At that time, total 79 prisoners, of which only 4 were women, the other 3 being 21 (or 24)-yr-old sentenced 3 yrs for forgery; 35-yr-old sentenced 1 yr for adultery; and 25-yr-old sentenced 15 for manslaughter.) (Report of the State Treasurer of the State of New Hampshire for the Fiscal Year Ending May 31, 1872, published Manchester, 1872, p. 22)

1880 – Lowell, Mass: Margaret Dorrance, 39, b. Scotland, works in cotton mill, living in large boarding house of women working in cotton mill, with Jane Dorrance, 20. [Similar name, close age, but wrong birthplace] Better candidate:

1880 – Manchester N.H.: Charter John 27, works in brick yard, self & parents b. Canada; Margaret, 47, wife, keeping house, self & parents b. Canada; McGregor Julia, 17, at school. b. N.H., pa b. N.H., ma b. Canada; Mary E. McGregor, 15, at school, same birthplace for self & parents; 4 boarders.

When Mary E. McGregor, aged 36, married at Manchester in 1901, her parents of record were James [McGregor] and Margaret Torrance! Same parents listed on Mary's death record when she died of consumption in 1903 aged 38.

1882 Sep – Manchester, N.H.: Marriage of Julia A. McGregor of Manchester, N.H., 19, born Manchester, daughter o

1882 Sep – Manchester, N.H.: Marriage of Julia A. McGregor of Manchester, N.H., 19, born Manchester, daughter of James & Margaret, + John Enright of Boston, 19, mill op.

When Julia (McGregor) Hayes, 48 (b. NH), wife of Fred Hayes, died at Boston's Consumptive Hospital of tuberculosis in Aug. 1911, her parents of record were James McGregor, b. Scotland, and Margaret __, b. Canada.

1883 May 22 – Manchester N.H.: Death of Margaret Torrence, age 49, born Melbourne, C. E. .

SUSAN HOLMES and CLARISSA GOVE (same person?) ALSO CLARINDA RANDAL, CAROLINE WORTH

circa 1857: Did Gove escape from Amherst jail, before going to state prison, from which she escaped first July 1857 with Margaret Torrence/Terrance? (See *N.H. Patriot*, Concord, 7 April 1858, p. [2].)

1857: “Margaret Terrence the girl who escaped from the State Prison last Fall, is out again. This time she took a companion with her, named **Clarissa Gove**. They effected their escape by cutting off a plank in their cell.” (FC, 23 July 1857, p. [3])

1858: “From the Manchester Mirror. Supreme Judicial Court – Criminal Term. Commenced at Manchester, January 12, 1858.

Arraignments:

Edmund E. Bullard, John O. Lamson and Levi A. Lamson, all of Amherst, for stealing two sheep from John Follansbee. Plea not guilty.

Clarinda F. Randall and Caroline Worth, both of Manchester, indicted for stealing two gowns. Plea not guilty.

Sarah [sic] Holmes of Manchester, indicted for stealing locket, victorine and gown from George N. Richardson. Plea not guilty.

[and many others]

Retracted Pleas:

Clarinda F. Randal and Caroline Worth plead guilty of stealing to the amount of \$17,00.

Sentences:

Susan Holmes, having retracted her plea to nolo contendere, was sentenced to hard labor two years in state Prison. Clarina F. Randal and Caroline Worth were sentenced to jail 30 days, fined \$10,00 each, and \$24 to owners of property stolen.”

[and more] (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 20 Jan. 1858, p. [2].)

1858: “ESCAPE OF SUSAN HOLMES. About the time of the Printers' Supper, Monday evening, quite a little excitement prevailed on account of the escape from the City Hotel, of Susan Holmes, who been has just been sentenced to the State Prison for two years. She was left in a room with Clarinda F. Randall and Caroline Worth,

who have a sentence of 30 days in jail. The two last had gone to bed and were trustworthy enough, their sentence is so short, to guard Susan while she was retiring. The keeper of the jail was in the adjoining room waiting for her to retire, and then he was going to take the clothes of all three to his room and lock them in. Susan said she wanted Mr. Hills, the jail keeper, and stepped to the door, and waited a moment and came back, saying that Mr. Hills was talking with a man in the entry way, and she wished the man would go away. She went out again and began to talk as if Mr. Hills was there, and the girls supposed he was. She talked for a minute or so, long enough to lull suspicion. Soon she stopped talking, and after waiting a few moments they became suspicious and jumped up and informed Hills, in the next room. She had fairly hoodwinked them and escaped the premises. Officers were put in pursuit all over the city, the watchmen notified, the Hotel was searched, and quite an excitement prevailed. At last about 2 o'clock this morning she was caught trying to get into one of the houses on the corporation. She is sly and foxy, but her arts did not avail her this time. She broke out of the State Prison at Concord, last summer, and was out several months before found again, at Lawrence, on the 4 th of last month. She was sent to the State Prison before under the name of Clarissa Gove. -[Mirror." (FC. 27 Jan. 1858, p. [3].)

1858: "Two women escaped from the N.H. State Prison on Thursday night last by picking the locks of their cells, climbing out of a window into the prison yard and out over the wall of the yard by means of two short ladders spliced together. Their names are Margaret Torrence and ___ Gove. The first we believe had previously escaped three times and the latter twice. This time they are clear off not having yet been heard from. Verily our State Prison must be a terror to evil doers – at least all such as desire a steady home and are fearful of getting flighty! -N.H. Patriot." (*Ohio Statesman*, Columbus, Ohio, 6 April 1858, p. [2])

1858: "CAUGHT – Clarissa Gove, one of the female convicts who recently escaped from the State prison [at Concord] ... The Manchester Mirror thus chronicles some of her exploits: "Clarissa Gove, famous in the annals of petty larceny, and a 'flyer' from jails, prisons and lobbies, who once broke out of Nashua lobby, **once out of Amherst jail**, twice out of the State Prison ... Clarissa is about 42 years of age; says she in the mother of 10 children, she is as smart as a steel-trap, though literally as homely as a hedge-fence. She is great at getting out and small at keeping out. She says she will be out again." (N.H. *Patriot*, Concord, 7 April 1858, p. [2])

GEORGE A. LEAVITT (1824-1856) for ROBBING FATHER, JOHN LEAVITT (1786-1862)

1854: "Friday. State v. George A. Leavitt. This was an indictment against the Respondent for robbing John Leavitt, his father, of \$15, on Sept. 21, in Amherst. B. F. Ayer, for State. D. Clark and G. W. Morrison for Respondent. / John Leavitt testified that on the 21 st of Sep he sold a cow for \$13, and received in payment a \$10 and a \$5 bill, and gave back a \$2 bill. Soon after, George went to him and said if he didn't give him some money he would put a knife through him, whereupon Leavitt gave George the \$15 he had received. Perley Dodge, the magistrate before whom the case was tried, said that when the complaint was read to George he said he got the money but would not say about the rest, and that he said his father had sold the cow without saying anything to him about it. / Elijah Monroe arrested the prisoner, and had some conversation with him about this affair. The prisoner told him that his father said he came up to him with a jack-knife, and said if he (his father) didn't give him some money he would put it through him. Witness said George took out a knife and said, "That is the one." The case was closed without argument by the counsel. The Jury was absent a short time and returned with a verdict of Guilty. The prisoner was then sentenced to solitary confinement one day, and to hard labor in the State Prison for life. / The community in which he has lived most fully accord in the justice and propriety of his sentence, though to those who know not the circumstances, it may seem severe." (*Farmers' Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 16 Nov. 1854, p. [2])

1850 census – Amherst, N.H.: John Leavitt, 63, farmer, value real estate \$2000: Nancy, 56; Alma, 26; George, 25, occupation none; Nancy, 23.

LUKE CURTICE POISONED FATHER

1854: "THE CURTICE TRIAL. The trial of Luke Curtice, for poisoning his father [Lemuel Curtice of Windsor, N.H.], has been progressing in the Court of Common Pleas at Manchester for several days past. ... Jury could not agree, seven for conviction and five for acquittal ... Curtice was remanded to Amherst jail, to await another trial in April next. ..." (*Patriot*, 29 Nov. 1854, p. [2].)

[The case spelled out in "Two Persons Poisoned in Windsor this County," FC, 27 April 1854, p. [2], reprinted from Manchester Mirror; also Barre Patriot, Mass, 28 April 1854, p. [2].]

1855: Three boys, aged 11, 14 and 15 years, stole \$130 in money, and \$1400 worth of notes from the house of Mrs. A. C. Darrah, Goff's Falls, Tuesday afternoon. They were arrested in Nashua, and lodged in Amherst jail on Friday. The property was all recovered except \$10 [or \$19]. / Here are three more fit subjects for a Reform School. (FC, 21 June 1855.)

1856: Supreme Judicial Court. For the following Court news we are indebted to the Manchester Daily papers: Jan. 18.. Fourth Day. The prisoners from Amherst jail made their appearance, and the following persons were arraigned:

Sarah E. High plead not guilty of stealing in Manchester divers and sundry goods. She afterwards retracted and said she was guilty of stealing to the amount of \$13 [or \$18]. Mr. Morrison stated that she was only 13 or 14 years old, was an orphan, and that this was her first offence. The Court sentenced her to Jail 3 [or 5] months, to pay a fine of \$20 and twice the value of property stolen.

John Thompson was arraigned for stealing a mare from David H. Barton tried and convicted.

Patrick Ryan convicted of adultery.

Patrick McGlynn of Nashua for selling liquor without license.

James Drew to the charge of stealing shoe stock from Boyd & Corey, this city [Manchester], plead guilty. He was sentenced to four years hard labor in State Prison, and pay costs of prosecution.

Drew, when near Concord, slipped his handcuffs and jumped from the cars, injuring his so that he was easily retaken. (FC, 24 Jan. 1856.)

1856: Mrs. Lewis Held – Dr. Lewis Acquitted. The trial for the murder of Clarissa Ann Demary ... After a full hearing, Judge Smith decided that Mrs. Lewis should be sent to Amherst jail to await trial at a higher court, and that Mr. Lewis should be acquitted. Mrs. Lewis was carried off yesterday morning. - Mirror” (FC, 4 Dec. 1856, p [2].)

1857: Charles H. Moore, of Groton Centre, Mass., was arrested in Nashua on Saturday last and committed to Amherst jail, on a charge of stealing a silver watch and gold chain from Thomas Welch after having made Welch drunk. (FC, 11 Nov. 1857.)

BIGAMY: FARNUM CLARK & WIFE ALMA A. LEAVITT

1858: “Another Case of Bigamy. Farnam Clark of Amherst, was arrested on Saturday last by Officer HILL, for having more wives than the law allows him, and brought before PLINY WHITNEY, Esq. of this town. He “acknowledged the corn,” plead guilty, and in default of bail of \$300, was committed to Amherst Jail. O. W. Lull, Esq., appeared for Government. It seems this polygamist has married three wives. About 18 years ago he married a Miss Emeline Douglas of Nashua; in 1843 a Miss Susan Crosby, of the same place; and a third one was a Miss Alma Leavitt of Amherst, who a few years since committed incest with her own father. He married her the last of March. At the examination, he appeared perfectly indifferent to his fate, and said he “didn't think he was doing anything wrong.” He also remarked “that ONE good wife was worth all three of them.” He would make a good subject for Brigham Young. His trial will come off in Amherst in September next. - [Milford Republican.” (FC, 28 April 1858, p. [2].)

[The remark about incest is disturbing because to late 20th c. and early 21st c. sensibilities, one assumes that SHE was the victim.]

1853 Sep 12 – Nashua: Marriage of Farnum Clark & Susannah Crosby.

1858 April 3: Marriage of Farnam Clark & Alma A. Leavitt (per Secomb)

1866 – Amherst, N.H.: Birth of John Clark, 5th child of Farnum Clark of Amherst, farmer, b. Washington, N.H. & Almy Clark b. Amherst, N.H.

1860: “Supreme Judicial Court. Spring Term, 1860 – Hillsborough County, NASHUA, May 1st ... The morning was cold and damp, yet quite a number of persons from surrounding towns assembled at the City Hall, an hour or two previous to the opening of the Court [which] opened at 11 o'clock. The bar was well attended, and the seats for spectators completely filled. Quite a number of ladies were also present to hear the Judge's charge to the Jury. ...

Fourth Day. ... At 11 o'clock the prisoners arrived, fifteen to twenty in number, in charge of Deputy Sheriff Hill and were put in safe keeping. The Court opened at 2 o'clock. A large crowd had assembled to witness the arraignment of the prisoners... The indictments were as follows: 1. Farnum Clark of Amherst, for stealing \$490 in bank bills, on the 28 th of Feb last. Plea, Not Guilty. ... Farnum Clark sentenced to 3 years in state prison. ... (*Farmers' Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 9 May 1860.)

1860 census – Concord, N.H. [prison]: Farnum Clark, 41, farmer, b. N.H., stealing money.

1860 census – Amherst, N.H.: John Leavitt, 75, farmer, \$1500/\$800; Alma Clark, 37, housekeeper, b. NH; Nancy J. [Clark], 1; Harriet [Clark], 2 months.

1862 Aug – Amherst: Death of John Leavitt.

1862 Dec. 26: Guardian's notice that John Marvell appointed guardian by Judge of Probate of the estate of Alma Clark, of Amherst, decreed to be an insane person. (FC, 1-1-1863)

1863 Jan. 27: To Judge of Probate for Hillsborough County. John Marvell of Milford, in County of Hillsboro, guardian of **Alma Clark, of Amherst, decreed to be an insane person**, [says] that his Ward is seized of certain real estate in Amherst ... [which] is the Homestead of the late John Leavitt, deceased, and that it is necessary for the support of his ward and will be conducive to her interest to have the premises sold, so requested to be licensed and authorized to sell property at public auction. Hearing ordered for March in Manchester. (FC, 12 Feb. 1863, p. [3].)

1863 May 11 – N.H. by Rev. Thomas Savage of Bedford: Marriage of Farnum Clark & Alma [indexed Alina] A. Clark

1870 census – Amherst, N.H.: Varnum Clark, 59, farmer, \$2000/\$1000; Emily, 46; Nancy, 11; Harriet, 10; Charles, 4; John, 3 .

1872: “FATAL ACCIDENT. Mr. Farnum Clark of this town (District No. 8) fell from his team recently, injuring him in the stomach, though not seriously it was then thought. ... His age was about 50, and he leaves a wife and four young children.”

1880 census – Amherst, N.H.: Clark Alma A., 50, widow; Charles E., 14, son; John, 13, son, b. NH.

1880 census – Lyndeborough, N.H.: Clark Nancy J., 21, housekeeper for Gage brothers, farmers.

1881 Oct – Francestown: Marriage Horace D. Gage + Nancy J. Clark, dau of Farnum & Alma Clark.

1896 Nov – Lyndeboro N.H.: Death of Hattie Clark, age 36, b. Amherst, N.H., daughter of Farnum Clark b. Washington, N.H. farmer, & Alma A. Leavett, b. Amherst, N.H.

1900 census – Francestown, N.H.: Clark Alma, 70, b. Dec. 1829, married 20 years, 6/3 children, b. NH; Clark Charles, son, 32, b. Aug. 1867, b. NH, single, teamster, unemployed 2 months.

1904 Mar 9 – Francestown: Death of Alma A. Clark, aged 81 years 2 months, born 21 Dec 1822 at Amherst, N.H., daughter of John Lovell, carpenter, & Nancy Averill, widow of Farnum Clark. Interment at Amherst, N.H.

1924 Nov 23 – Lyndeborough: Death of Nancy D. Page, age 65, dau of Farnam Clark & Almy Leavitt

1858: “RATHER UNPROFITABLE SPECULATION. Last week, a man was arrested in this city, and was furnished with lodgings in Amherst jail. He stole a horse and buggy chaise in Providence. Driving to Chelmsford, he swapped off the horse to one of our citizens [Nashua?] for another horse and a gold watch worth \$25. ... –[Gazett.]” (*Farmers’ Cabinet*, 18 Aug 1858, p. [3].)

1860 (census): [QUANTITY: 38 of whom 8 female] Inmates of Jail: Timothy Foley, 20, b. Ireland, assault; Henry M. Colby, 21, assault; William D. Gilson, 20, assault; Timothy Connor, 20, b. Ireland, assault; Patrick Gaffney, 30, b. Ireland, assault; Thomas Foley, 25, b. Ireland, assault; Calvin Morrill, 20, assault; Charles Morrill, 18, injuring dwelling; John Adams, 45, b. Ireland, breaking & entering; Michael Fox, 20, b. Ireland, larceny; John McLane, 28, b. Ireland, drunkenness; Charles H. Tituf, 33, selling liquor; Mary Mullen [female], 22, b. Scotland, witness; James Murray, 16, stealing; James F. Danforth, 40, stealing; Abram Keily, 17, b. Ireland, stealing; Charles Howard, 30, stealing; John Pettingill, 19, stealing; Ann Castle [female], 25, b. Ireland, larceny; Leonard Huntress, 24, breaking & entering; __ William Hopkins, breaking & entering; William Clayton, 20, stealing; Frederick R. Allen, 25, stealing; Albert Jefts, 18, stealing; Thomas Hutchinson, 35, debt; Henry D. Kimball, 25, drunkenness; Caroline Went [female], 18, witness; Emma E. Hungerford [female], 21, witness; Mary Pifler [female], 40, b. England, stealing; Luther A. Sargent, 28, adultery; John P. Webster, 23, stealing; George Warren, 25, assault; Mary I. Calvin [female], 23, b. Ireland, fornication; James Thurston, 50, stealing; Huldah Adams [female], 30, stealing; Hannah Farley [female], 35, b. Ireland, stealing; James McGregor, 40, selling liquor.

1862: “HORSE THIEF CAUGHT. Last Sunday, a man calling himself Silas L. Nash, of Moira, N.Y., hired a horse and sleigh of M. B. McConihe of Merrimack, this county, to come to Manchester and return the same day. He did not return, and Monday Mr. McConihe started in pursuit, first place sending out bills and telegraphing in various directions. Mr. McConihe overtook him in Piermont, four miles from Haverhill, and brought him here [Manchester?] yesterday. He was before the Police Court this morning, plead guilty and was ordered to give bonds in the sum of \$500 to answer... for want of backers, was ordered to Amherst jail. ... –[Mirror.]” (*Farmers’ Cabinet*, 9 Jan. 1862, p. [2].)

[end]