--- EARLY HISTORY OF TOWN OF MILTON, STRAFFORD COUNTY, NEW HAMPSHIRE ---

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From: The Statistics & Gazetteer of New Hampshire, compiled by Alonzo J. Fogg, Concord NH, D.L. Guernsey, 1875 page 259

MILTON, STRAFFORD COUNTY. This is an important town in point of manufactories. The surface is broken and affords general pasturage. The soil is generally good, and, when properly tilled, produces fair crops.

RIVERS. Salmon Falls River waters the eastern section of the town. A branch of this river passes through the northern part, and united with it at the eastern border of the town, near the center of the line. There is some valuable water power, a part of which is improved with valuable manufactories.

PONDS AND MOUNTAINS. Milton Pond lies at the foot of Teneriffe Mountain, a bold and rocky elevation which extends along the eastern part of the gown.

EMPLOYMENTS. The employments of the inhabitants are nearly equally divided between farming on the one side and manufacturing and trading on the other. At Milton Mills there is considerable manufacturing--one manufactory annually producing over $170,000 worth of flannels and blankets.
are also produced in other manufactories, 200,000 yards of felt cloth, 150,000 yards of embossing cloth, 20,000 printing or piano and table covers. Also carriages. At the South part there are made over $100,000 worth of shoes, 15,000 clapboards, 325,000 shingles, 15,000 railroad splices, 5,000 shooks, 475,000 feet of lumber; besides, there are carriage and other small mechanical shops. The total value of goods, of all kinds, annually manufactured in town is $520,000.

RESOURCES. Productions of the soil, $68,192; mechanical labor $65,000; modernity at interest, $5,250; deposits in savings banks, $67,874; stocks in trade, $21,193.

CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS. Congregational, Rev. F. Haley, pastor; Freewill Baptist, Rev. John F. Joy, pastor; Christian, Rev. D. E. Goodwin, Milton Mills, Congregational, Rev. D. B. Scott, pastor; Baptist, Rev. Caleb F. Page, pastor. There are also Rev. J. S. Potter, Free Will Baptist, and elder I. J. Tebbits, Methodist. There are thirteen schools in town, Average length of schools, for the year, seventeen weeks. Amount of money appropriated for school purposes $1,645,85.

LITERARY INSTITUTION. Milton Classical Institute, Mr. J. H. Ham, principal.

HOTELS. Franklin House, At Milton Mills, Central House.

FIRST ORGANIZATION. Milton was formerly a part of Rochester, and was incorporated June 11, 1802.

BOUNDARIES. North-west by Middleton and Wakefield, east by Salmon Falls river, which separates it from Lebanon, Maine and south-west by Farmington and New Durham. Area, 25,000 acres; area of improved land, 8,517 acres.

DISTANCES. Forty miles north-east from Concord, and twenty north-west from Dover.

RAILROADS. The Portsmouth, Great Falls and Conway Railroad
MILTON--This is the northeasterly town in Strafford County, and is situated upon the Salmon Falls River, which forms its entire easterly boundary and separates it from Acton and Lebanon in the State of Maine. It is bounded southerly by Rochester, westerly by Farmington, and northerly by Middleton and Wakefield.

The west branch of the Lebanon Falls River also runs through the town, making a junction with the east branch at the head of Northeast Pond.

The town has a territorial extent of about eighteen thousand acres. The surface is somewhat broken, but the soil is generally good and well adapted to farming purposes. The Teneriffe Mountain is a bold, rocky elevation, near the centre of the town, affording excellent pasturage. The town is abundantly watered, being traversed by numerous streams and brooks beside those already named.

The three ponds from which the principal village takes its name are a trio of beautiful ponds spread out at the base of the mountain affording excellent boating and fishing, and are a favorite resort of the disciples of the immortal Isaac.

The early history of this town is identified with that of Rochester, it having formed a part of that town under the name of the Third or Northeast Parish prior to June 11, 1802, at which time it was incorporated into a separate town by legislative enactment.
On account of the destruction of the records by fire, it has been found somewhat difficult to determine just when, where or by whom the first permanent settlement was made in the town. It is, however, very certain that it was in the southern part of the town, and probably as early as 1760, or very near that time.

The writer is of opinion that Jonathan Twombly is entitled to the honor of making the first settlement near the Twombly Brook, and upon the farm now owned by Hon. Luther Hayes, and sometimes called the Bragdon farm, Samuel Bragdon having purchased the farm from a son of Mr. Twombly in about 1800. Mr. Twombly and his wife and some of their children were, no doubt, buried upon the farm. An ancient headstone records that Hannah Twombly died in February 1769. She was doubtless a daughter of Jonathan, and this is believed to be the oldest grave in Milton.

Richard Walker was also an early settler and a near neighbor of Mr. Twombly; probably there was very little difference in the time of their settlement. Mr. Walker died in 1813 at the age of seventy-seven years and he and his wife are buried very near their old neighbors. The date of Mr. Twombly's settlement is obtained from the birth of his daughter, Betsey, who afterwards married James C. Hayes Sr. She was born June 4, 1862 and is believed to have been the first white child born in town. [NOTE: This probably should be 1762].

John Twombly not supposed to be a near relative of Jonathan, made a settlement in what is now known as the Varney neighborhood in 1771 or 1772 and had for nearest neighbor one Jenkins, who lived upon the Goodwin hill at that time. The Christian name of Mr. Jenkins is not known, and so subsequent knowledge is had of him. Mr. Twombly very soon removed to and
made a permanent settlement in the Lyman neighborhood, where he and his good wife died at a ripe old age. Our respected townsman, Theodore C. Lyman, was an adopted son of this worthy couple, and always spoke of them with much affection.

The next settlement is believed to have been made upon Plumer's Ridge in 1772 or 1773 or very near that time and probably by Benjamin Scates. Beard Plumer and his brother Joseph, son of the Hon. John Plumer of Rochester, however were very early settlers and it has been sometimes questioned whether they were not the first in this locality. James C. Hayes, David Wallingford, William Palmer, Elijah Horn, Moses Chamberlain, and others, very soon followed and opened up settlements in this neighborhood. This was soon followed by quite a rush of settlers to the west side of town, Daniel Hayes, Caleb Wakeham, Enoch Varney, Samuel Nute, William Wentworth, William Tuttle, Ichabod Hayes, James Hayes, Ebenezer Coursan, and Stephen Meseron being among the first. Jeremiah Cook, Dudley Burnham, Jotham Nute, Otis Pinkham, Ephraim Plumer, John Twombly, James Varney, John Varney, William Mathes, and others coming soon after.

Early in the summer of 1776 Jonathan Twombly, could have been seen, with a pack well strapped upon his back, wending his way up the side of Teneriffe, to search out a home for his lady love, returning and bringing her to this wild region the next year. Stephen Wentworth very soon became a neighbor of the Twomblys.

It does not appear that any settlement was made east of the West Branch River prior to about 1785 or 1786, and among the earlier settlers there may be named among others, Reuben Jones, Paul Jewett, Amos Witham, the Berrys, the Millers, Ephraim Twombly, Paul Wentworth, Caleb Wingate, David Coursan, John McDuffee, and soon after Hatwell Nutter, Thomas Applebee,
Among the first who settled at Three Ponds were Samuel Palmer, Levi Burgen, John Fish, Paul Jewett, Pelatiah Hanscom, Robert McGooch, and others.

Daniel Door and Jonathan Door settled at the head of the Pond quite early. The old tavern-house at Three Ponds burned a few years ago, was built by Robert McGooch in 1786 or 1787 and was perhaps the first tavern on town.

April 9, 1787 the town of Rochester "voted to raise a tax on the supposed first parish, to pay Rev. Joseph Haven his salary, and also voted to raise an equivalent tax on the out parts of the town, to be laid out by them as such time an dplace as they may agree." This was doubtless the origin of the different parishes which were afterwards established.

[additional information on the laying out of roads, dates and people involved may be found in the original document]

CORPORATE SEAL--Very soon after the organization of the town it was voted to use the letter M as a seal for the town of Milton. The first town meeting in Milton was called by William Palmer Esq. and held at the dwelling-house of Lieut. Elijah Horn (now the dwelling house of Lewis B. Twombly) on the 30th day of August 1802, at which meeting Beard Plumer was chosen moderator; Gilman Jewett town clerk; and William Palmer, John Fish, John Remick Jr. selectmen. [additional information on that first meeting, a list of officers of the town for 80 years is included in the original document]

History of Milton NH schools and library are also included in the original document, along with the history of its churches, including the First Congregational, the "First Christian Church," the Baptist Church, the Free-Will Baptist Church, the
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Methodist Church at Milton Mills, The Union Congregational
Church, the Acton and Milton Free-Will Baptist Church.

A large section of the original document is devoted to the
Temperance movement in Milton NH.

MILLS, MANUFACTURES. The first saw-hill was built by Samuel
Palmer at the Three Ponds village, and near where the present
dam is located. This was very early, probably about 1775 to
1780. Mr. Palmer subsequently built another saw-mill and a
grist-mill farther down stream, where the Varney mill was
afterwards located. This part of the town was known for many
years as “Palmer’s Mill.” very soon after this a saw-mill was
built at Milton Mills by a Mr. Nock. This mill soon went into
the hands of Paul Jewett, and was subsequently known as the
Jewett mill. This place was known for a long time as Shapleigh
Mills. Mills rapidly increased, so that in 1813 there were
not less than twelve mills of various kinds in town, viz.:
Lyman’s saw- and grist-mills, owned by Theodore C. Layman and
others. Thomas Layton’s wood-carding mill, Ira Fish’s
fulling-mill, Isaac Wooster’s grist-mill, owned by Isaac
Wooster and others. Paul Jewett’s saw- and grist-mills,
Nathaniel Jewett’s saw-mill, owned by Nathaniel Jewett and
others; Stephen Watson’s saw-mill owned by Stephen Watson and
others, the lower saw-mill with various owners; Horn’s saw-
and grist-mills, owned by Benjamin Horn. The last-named mills
were situated at the upper end of the town, on a narrow point
of land which has since been annexed to Wakefield. This
number was soon increased by the erection of Berry’s mill,
Hayes’ mill and others. Thomas Layton’s factory was erected
in 1816 and was used as a woolen-mill until 1837, after which
Francis Looney used it for the manufacture of cotton for
fourteen years. It was subsequently burned.

The Milton Mills manufacturing company was organized in 1837,
and in that and the following year built their mill, and after running it a few years transferred the business to Durgin & Co. In 1845-46 the whole property was bought by John Townsend, and was run successfully by him for several years. The mill was burned and rebuilt by Mr. Townsend, being considerable enlarged. It was soon after sold to Mudge, Sawyer & Co., and subsequently to the Waumbeck Company and has continued to do a very successful business. This company has a capital stock of $100,000 and the mill has ten sets of woolen machinery. They employ 175 operatives, with a monthly pay roll of $3200. They use about 240,000 pounds of wool and 160,000 pounds of cotton, 725 cords of wood and 500 tons of coal annually, and produce 396,000 yards of cloth and 27,550 pairs of blankets. The officers are J.D. Sturtevant, president Brookline, Mass; Francis Cabot, treasurer, Brookline, Mass; B.G. Adams, agent, Milton Mills, N.H.; F.H. Lowd, paymaster, Milton Mills, NH.

In 1844 a cotton factory was built at Three Ponds, and after running it a few months was burned in September 1845, the watchman, Mr. Caleb Varney perishing in the flames. This mill was soon rebuilt, but was never put in operation; it being subsequently taken down and carried away.

William Sargent succeeded Ira Fish in the fulling mill business in 1820 and carried on the business until 1825 when he was succeeded by John H. Varney, who, after some twenty-two years of successful business, sold out to Joshua Holland in 1847. Mr. Holland went into the manufacture of woolen goods, which business he carried on with success for some ten or twelve years. The mill was subsequently burned.

Edward Brierly established a block printing business at Milton Mills in 1850, and after a few years of successful business
purchased a saw-mill and privilege on the site of the present Brierly mill, where he soon began the manufacture of felt goods. The rapid increase of his business soon compelled him to make extensive additions, and in a short time he had extensive mills upon both sides of the river, doing a very remunerative business. In the summer of 1873 these mills were entirely destroyed by fire, thus sweeping away in an hour the accumulations of years of hard labor. Mr. Brierly soon began the erection of the present mill but losing largely by the insolvency of insurance companies, he became somewhat embarrassed and was obliged to compromise with his creditors. His health soon afterwards failing, he was unable to recover his former position, and at his death, the property went into other hands, and has never since been operated to its full capacity.

In 1873 Henry H. Townsend & Co., erected a mill at the village for the manufacture of felt goods and still continue the business successfully. [Additional history of this mill can be found in the original document].

In 1880 The Great Falls Manufacturing Company built a large mill at Three Ponds ....... John E. Goodwin & Co. at West Milton .... H.V. & Eli Wentworth carried on a large business at South Milton [more on all of these in original document]. Lewis Plumer & Sons (lumber business).... Luther & C.H. Hayes are doing a large milling, lumber and box business. Other mills .. Eben Jones built a saw and grist mill... In 1863 George W. Wentworth built a large and expensive mill on the Middleton River, at the foot of Teneriffe Mountain .... [more in original document]

MILITARY RECORDS of Milton NH -- Enlistments for the war of 1812 [names only shown here but enlistment dates are in the
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WAR OF THE REBELLION
A history of the Civil War and Milton NH along with those who served in various regiments can be found in the original document http://archive.org/stream/historyofrocking00hurd#page/654/mode/2up

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES [excerpts ONLY ... more can be found in the original document] http://archive.org/stream/historyofrocking00hurd#page/n1071/mode/2up

Lewis Worster Nute, born in Milton NH Feb 17, 1820. His grandfather was Samuel Nute of Dover NH, his father was Ezekiel Nute, born at Milton NH Nov 30, 1794, who married Dorcas Worster and had four children, Cyrus W. Nute, Lewis W. Nute, Isaac F. Nute and Samuel F. Nute. Lewis Worster Nute married 1 Aug 1845 to Priscilla Farrow of Cohasset MA. Business man.

Joseph Plumer, a descendant of Francis Plumer of England. Son of Bard Plumer, b 1754 d 1816 who married -- Ham, she died in 1803. Their children were Jonathan Plumer, Enoch Plumer.
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Joseph Plumer, Betsey Plumer who m. Joshua G. Hall of Wakefield, and Susan Plumer who m. Adam Brown of Wolfborough NH. After his 1st wife's death, Bard Plumer m2) -- Page of Dunbarton NH. Joseph Plumer, son of Bard Plumer was b. in Rochester, now Milton NH 1786, a farmer on the original Plumer homestead. He m. Sally brown of Hampton Falls, dau of Nathan Brown. She was b. March 26, 1785. Their children were Jonathan, Caroline (who m. David P. Wentworth of Ossipee), Enoch W., Bard, Joseph and Sarah (wife of George A. Neal of Wakefield). Joseph died 3 Jan 1826, his wife Sally died July 1877. JOSEPH PLUMER, son of Joseph and Sally (Brown) Plumer was born in Milton NH on the homestead 11 March 1820; attended Phillips Exeter Academy. He was one of the original corporators of the Norway Plains Savings Bank. He m1) Adaline F. Barker; m2) Hannah D. Clark. Some of their children, Moses B. Plumer [remove to Colorado], and Joseph Jr who m. Carrie Fall. // Enoch W. Plumer was b. Milton NH April 4, 1815, m. Orinda Ayers. Children included John T, John E., Mary B. and Bard B. [more Plumer genealogy in original document]

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History of Strafford County, New Hampshire, and representative citizens (1914), page 449
http://archive.org/stream/historyofstraffo00lcsca#page/508/mode/2up

HISTORY OF MILTON [much of the history in this source is similar to that of the previous source]

THE NUTE HIGH SCHOOL. Milton has had good schools from the beginning, more than a century, but the best of its good fortune was one of its loyal sons, Lewis Worster Nute, made provision in his will for a first class high school and money enough to make a handsome annual income to support first class teachers to run it. Mr. Nute was born in Milton Feb 17, 1820.
He was the son of Ezekiel and Dorcas (Worster) Nute, natives of Milton and grandson of Samuel Nute, a native of Back River, Dover who settled in what is now Milton soon after the close of the Revolution. [more of his bio in original document].

Mr. Nute and his wife had no children. He died in 1888 and in his will gave to the town $123,000 to establish a high school and an additional $25,000 left in trust to a relative as long as she lived. She died a few years later and the school now has it. From the fund a first class schoolhouse was constructed and the remainder invested, the income used for support of the school.

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