



EARLY SETTLERS
OF
PELHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE

By
Ruth Baldwin Williams

Daughter Of The American Revolution

Oak Forest Illinois 2006

Donated to the Pelham Historic Society for historic research.

IN APPRECIATION

To Barbara Dillon, DAR Swallow Cliff Chapter IL, my guardian angel and chief travel guide throughout New England, and dear friend, who took the dream of finding my ancestors and made it a reality.

To Ruth Fuss, DAR Swallow Cliff Chapter, who has willingly worked with us.
To Gloria Flathom, DAR Swallow Cliff Chapter who has also assisted us.
To Ruth Parker, Matthew Thornton Chapter NH, and Secretary of The Hudson Historic Society, for providing countless records, cemetery photos and personal information.

William Hayes of The Pelham Historic Society, for providing whatever records he could find, and the genealogy of Henry Baldwin of Woburn MA.
The New England Genealogical & Historic Society.
Google.com Web sites for Haverhill, Hudson, Nashua, Nashville, Pelham, and many family history sites.

Note: The Historic Societies are manned by volunteers, and The Societies are dependant upon donations to keep them afloat. When you receive assistance from those Societies, a donation is definitely in order, if we are to preserve the history of our country. If you have documented information that a Society does not have, be willing to share that information with them; one hand washes the other.

It has been the adventure of a lifetime researching early New England and finding more families than I ever knew existed. Genealogy is more than just names, places and dates; it should involve reading countless history books where you actually become part of the families that you are researching, and a walk through American history that you will never learn in school. You will learn that religious freedom played a major role in those perilous voyages across the Atlantic Ocean to an unknown wilderness, and that history repeats itself in our world today.

Honor our ancestors who made it possible for us to enjoy our freedoms and liberty today, in the most wonderful country in the entire world. We dwell too much on what's wrong with America, when we should dwell on what's right. We are one nation in a very troubled world. Protecting our country from the threat of tyrants and bullies, who would like to take our freedom and liberty away from us, is the responsibility of each generation. The future depends on each and every one of us.

DOCUMENTATION AND RESEARCH TOOLS

Vital records and census records of Boston, Billerica, Dunstable, Haverhill, Lawrence, Lowell, Salem, Wilmington, Woburn MA; Hudson, Nashua, Nottingham West, Hopkinton, Pelham, Lebanon NH; Chicago IL, Suffolk County, Middlesex County, Hillsborough County, Rockingham County, Cook County. Church records of the 1st Church of Nottingham West and the 1st Congregational Church of Pelham. Certificates of births, marriages and deaths. Probate Wills, and Town Meeting Records of Nottingham West and Pelham NH, cemetery records.

Books:

A Brief History of Pelham by Pelham Library
Asahel Blodgett by Isaac Dimond Blodgett pub. 1906
Baldwin Genealogy by Charles Candee Baldwin pub. 1881
Blodgett Blodgett by Bradley DeForest Thompson pub. 1955
Biographical Review Hillsborough County pub. Boston 1897
DeForest of Avesnes France & The Netherlands by Capt. John DeForest pub. 1901
Early Settlers of Amesbury & Salisbury MA
Faith of Our Fathers (Iwo Jima) by Bradley pub. 2002
Vol. 1 & 2 Probate Records of Rockingham County by Evans pub. 2000.
History of Boston
History of DeForest WI by a Town Committee 1910
History of Hudson NH by Kimball Webster pub. 1913
History of Nashua NH & 1850 Nashua Street Directory.
Old Days & Old Ways by C. Francis Hobbs pub. March 1975 by Pelham Historic Society
Our Nation's Archives by Crosley & Braun pub. 1999
Reflections Of Pelham by a Town Committee pub. 1996
The Vinton Memorial pub. 1858 & The Richardson Memorial by John Adams Vinton
The Good Fight by Ambrose pub. 2002 (WW11)

Web Sites

Billerica MA
French Huguenauts
Haverhill MA
The Mayflower Society
Merrill Family Memorial
Noyes Family Genealogy
Paine-Joyce Genealogy
Francis Wyman Family Memorial
Rockingham County NH
Hillsborough County NH
Middlesex County MA

Libraries

Daughters of The American Revolution Washington D.C.
Newbury Library of Chicago IL
New England Genealogical & Historic Society
Porter County Library of Valparaiso IN
South Suburban Genealogy Society Library of Hazelcrest IL

“WHY HISTORY?”

By David McCullough

Reader's Digest 2002

The best way to know where the country is going is to know where we've been. On a winter morning on the campus of one of our finest colleges, in a lovely Ivy League setting with snow falling outside, I sat with a seminar of 25 students, all seniors majoring in history, all honors students; supposedly the best of the best. “How many of you know who George Marshall was?” I asked. No one knew. Not one. At a large university in the Midwest, a young undergraduate told me how glad she was to have attended one of my lectures, because until then, she said she never realized that the original 13 colonies were all on the Eastern Seaboard. This was said, in all seriousness, by a university student.

Who are we, we Americans? How did we get where we are? What is our story and what can it teach us? Our story is our history, and if ever we should be taking steps to see that we have the best-prepared, most aware citizens ever, that time is now.

Yet the truth is that we are raising a generation that is to an alarming degree historically illiterate. The problem has been coming on for a long time, like a disease, eating away at the national memory. While the popular culture races loudly on, the American past is slipping away. We are losing our story, forgetting who we are and what's it's taken to come this far.

Warnings of this development have been sounded again and again. In 1995, the Department of Education reported that more than half of all high school students hadn't even the most basic understanding of American history. In the year 2000, a study by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni showed that four out of five seniors from leading colleges and universities were unable to pass a basic high school history test. To the question “Who was the American general at Yorktown?” the majority of these students names Ulysses S. Grant rather than George Washington. In this year of 2002 none of the nation's top 50 colleges and universities now require American history as part of the curriculum. In fact, one can go forth into the world today as the proud product of all but a handful of our 50 top institutions of higher learning without ever having taken a single course in history of any kind.

Why bother about history? Because it shows us how to behave. History teaches and reinforces what we believe in, what we stand for, and what we ought to be willing to stand up for. History is about life, human nature and the human condition and all its trials and failings and noblest achievements. History is about cause and effect, about the simplest of everyday things, and the mysteries of chance and genius.

History shows us what choices there are. History teaches with specific examples the evils of injustice, ignorance or demagoguery, just as it shows how potent is plain courage, or one simple illuminating idea. History is, or should be, the bedrock of patriotism, not the chest-pounding kind of patriotism but the real thing, love of country.

At their core, the lessons of history are lessons of appreciation. Everything we have, all of our great institutions, our laws, our music, art and poetry, our freedoms, everything is because somebody went before us and did the hard work, provided the creative energy, faced the storms, made the sacrifices, kept the faith.

Indifference to history isn't just ignorant; it is a form of ingratitude. And the scale of our ignorance seems especially shameful in the face of our unprecedented good

fortune. What is so worrisome about the college students who didn't know that George Washington was the commanding general at Yorktown is that they have no idea that it was Washington who commanded the Continental Army through eight long years in the struggle for independence. I'm convinced that history encourages, as nothing else does, a sense of proportion about life, gives us a sense of how brief is our time on earth and how valuable that time is.

We live in an era of momentous change, creating great pressures and tensions. But history shows that times of tumult are the times when we are most likely to learn. Our nation was founded on change. We should embrace the possibilities inherent in such times and hold to a steady course, because we have a sense of navigation, a sense of what we've been through and who we are.

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, history can be a source of strength and of renewed commitment to the ideals upon which our nation was founded. As unsettling as events may be, others before us have known worse. Think of what our predecessors endured and accomplished.

I passionately believe that history isn't just good for you in a civic way; history really is an extension of life. It enlarges and intensifies the experience of being alive, like poetry and art or music. History is ours to enjoy. If we deny our children that enjoyment, that adventure, in the larger time among the greater part of the human experience, then we have cheated them out of a whole life.

Footnote: The Daughters of The American Revolution are dedicated to the preservation and protection of our nation's history. We have an obligation to share our knowledge of American history with our families, our friends, and who ever we may interest in the subject. Our many projects include history & genealogy research, service to Veterans and Veterans Hospitals, Native American past and present history; support for battered women shelters, good citizenship essay awards for youths in grade schools, high schools, R.O.T.C. recognition, and awards to outstanding American citizens in community service, environmental projects, protection of our Flag, our Constitution, our heritage, and our Flag. We also support special schools for orphaned and abandoned children, a Native American School in Oregon, and services to Native Americans in South Dakota. The Sons and The Daughters Societies are the only representatives of Revolutionary Soldiers and we are dedicated to honoring their memory by participating in Veterans Memorial Services.

It is an honor and a privilege to be a member of D.A.R., and part of a very special group of American women. If you have a Revolutionary Soldier in your family history, you will be welcomed as a member of D.A.R. or S.A.R. nationwide and a few Chapters overseas.

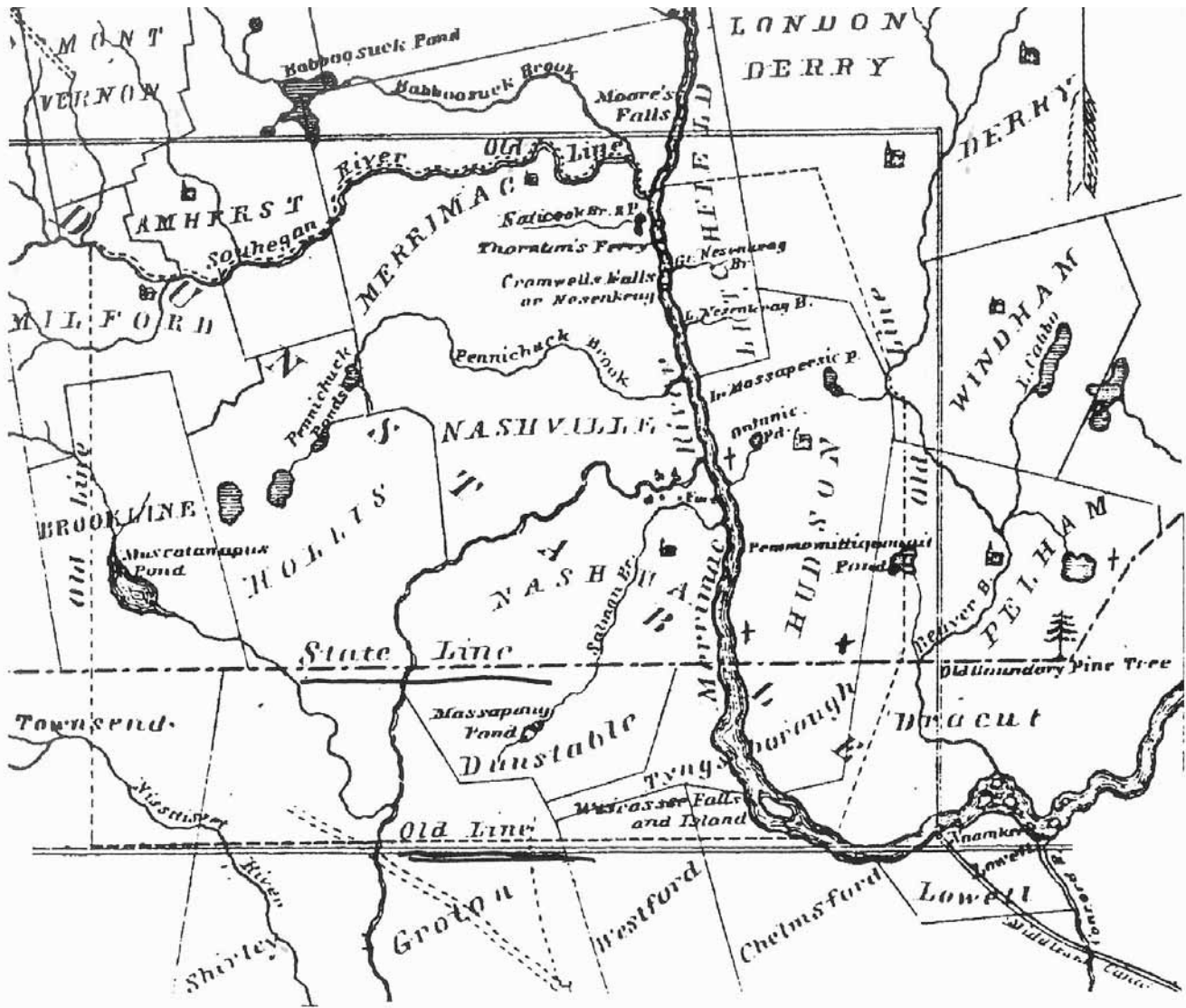
THE MAP OF DUNSTABLE MA

Follow the “old line” (- - -) along the bottom, to your right and up to and around the Souhegan River, and back down to the bottom. Forget half of Townsend, Tyngsborough, Hudson, most of Litchfield, all of Merrimac, Nashville, Nashua, Hollis, most of Brookline and Milford. This entire area was Dunstable MA, prior to 1733 when the portion now known as Hudson & Pelham became Nottingham MA.

This explains why the marriage of Ruel Baldwin and the birth of his children, as well as children of his brother James, are recorded in the Dunstable VR. Also recorded is the marriage of Joseph & Dorothy Perham Blodgett and the birth of their son, Joseph, as well as other Blodgetts from Woburn MA.

Following to the right of the Dunstable MA line is Dracut MA prior to the formation of Pelham. Now follow the new State Line of NH (___ . ___ . ___) from the “Old Boundary Pine Tree” to just inside the old boundary line of Dunstable (Hudson) MA. That is where the 1st Meeting House and Church of Nottingham West was built, where John & Sarah Baldwin’s children are baptized, children of Henry & Abigail Butler Baldwin as well as their marriage, and children of the Joseph Blodgett families, and where the early settlers attended town meetings together. The first town meeting was held at Henry Baldwin’s home in 1733.

In 1741, the Blodgetts & Baldwin's, and other settlers have successfully petitioned King George’s representative to form their own town, having already built their own Meeting House & Church. The entire land area from the old MA line east of the Merrimac to Dracut is named Nottingham West, where the births of all of John & Sarah Baldwin’s children up 1745, including the three daughters born in Woburn, are recorded, as well as sons Daniel, Simeon, Levi, John and daughter Rebecca. In 1746, the settlers of northern Dracut petition the King to have their own town, citing the hardships of attending church because of having to cross Beaver Brook to do so. I note that there is a small Meeting House on the property of Charles Colburn on the northeast boundary line. Their petition is granted; The boundary line of Nottingham West is moved a bit south of the old line, and Pelham is created by being 2/3 Dracut and 1/3 Nottingham West. Many of the early settlers then found themselves in Pelham NH, and others in Nottingham West, & Dracut MA. Some found their homes in one town and their land in another. Joseph Tyng owned over 3000 acres in original Dunstable MA, and then founded the town of Tyngsborough MA. Nottingham West became Hudson in 1830 and Litchfield was granted a portion of that land area. Nashua (including Nashville) was named in 1843 and Nashville was formed shortly thereafter, but was reincorporated into Nashua in 1853. I do not know as yet when Merrimac, Milford, Brookline and Hollis were formed. As if all of these changes were not enough confusion, Nottingham West was placed in Hillsborough County, and Pelham was placed in Rockingham County. Imagine the tax collectors!



I placed a cross (+) at the approximate location of the Blodgett farm, and one further north along the Merrimac River where Nathaniel Davis located. I also placed a cross at the locations of the 1st Church of Nottingham West, and the small Meeting House on Colburn's land. The 1st Church was given to Rev. Nathaniel Merrill of Hudson, who then sold it to Pelham; the church (meeting house) was dismantled and moved to Pelham, reconstructed in the Pelham town center. That Church was used until 1845, when the new 1st Congregational Church was built in Pelham. The 2nd Church in Nottingham West was built in the center of Hudson for the convenience of those settlers.

I am indebted to William Hayes of the Pelham Historic Society for providing this map as an invaluable tool in researching Pelham, Hudson and Nashua. It is highly recommended to researchers of those towns to accept a free ride on His Royal Majesty's geographical merry go round, or you will find yourselves scratching your head and in the words of Abbot & Costello, be asking, "So who's on first?"

Your search for early settlers will involve the Vital Records of Dunstable MA, Nottingham West/Hudson, and Pelham. Note that most of the early settlers in the section of Nottingham West that became Pelham, will be found in the Hudson vitals, which explains in part why Pelham has little or no history on those early residents. Those records could be accessed by Pelham, but we are thankful that they do exist.

I am providing the Pelham Historic Society and the Pelham Library with my lineage of Baldwin, Blodgett and Davis, my Baldwin uncles, aunts and cousins in Pelham, genealogies of the Ebenezer Webster family, the Nathaniel Merrill family, the Moses Noyes family, the Joseph Wyman family, the Richardson's, a brief on the Butler's and the Hamblett's, all of whom are related to the Baldwin's in marriage. Finding just one clue is often the very clue that a researcher needs to move forward with.

I urge any and all descendants of Pelham settlers to provide what documented information that you may have on your families to the Pelham Historic Society and the Pelham Library. We owe this to our ancestors and to the town of Pelham where those ancestors lived. We also owe this to the restoration of our country's history.

Good hunting, and do not be discouraged by any roadblocks along your journey. Your family history is worth working for, and an irreplaceable legacy that you will leave for your descendants.



Daughters of the American Revolution

SWALLOW CLIFF CHAPTER

Participants in Memorial Day Service at the Eternal flame Veterans Memorial,
Worth Illinois:



L.to R.: Mayor Ed Guzdziol, Vice Regent Ruth Williams, Past Regent Marilyn Earnest,
VFW Post Commander John Hansen, Regent Barbara Dillon, Registrar Gloria Flathom.

GREETINGS TO PELHAM AND HUDSON NEW HAMPSHIRE !!

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR GRANDFATHERS

SURNAME FORESTS

REMEMBERED LEAVES

Ash and Elm and Pine,
Wild Apple and common Plum;
Bark of generations built from
So many who brought forth sons.

Each spring will see them waken
To their pulsing red blood sap
And set upon their outstretched hand
A leaf.

To trust there will be warmth again,
To trust there will be birth.
To trust that fallen leaves
Are not forgotten on the earth.

I never knew my grandfather
And yet, I've come to know him well
Through the stories writ in crumbled leaves
And the tales our old trees tell.

He was a soldier, and a patriot,
And a lover, and a man
And I feel his passion flood my veins
As I hold his phantom hand.

Mary S. Van Deusen

A MOTHER'S DAY MEMORIAL

The young mother set her foot on the path of life. "Is this the long way?" she asked. The guide said, "Yes, and the way is hard, and you will be old before you reach the end of it; but the end will be better than the beginning." The young mother was happy, and she would not believe that anything could be better than these years. She played with her children, she fed them and bathed them, and taught them how to tie their shoes and ride a bike, and reminded them to do their homework and brush their teeth.

The sun shone on them, and the young mother cried, "Nothing will ever be lovelier than this." Then the nights came, and the storms, and the path sometimes was dark, and the children shook with fear and cold. The young mother drew them close and covered them with her arms, and the children said, "Mother, we are not afraid; for you are near and no harm can come to us." And the morning came, and there was a hill ahead; the children climbed and grew weary, and the mother was weary, but at all times she said to the children, "A little patience, and we are there." So the children climbed, and as they climbed they learned to weather the storms, and with this, the mother gave them strength to face the world. Year after year, she showed them compassion, understanding, hope, but most of all, unconditional love. And when they reached the top they said, "Mother, we would not have done it without you."

The days went on, and the weeks and the months and the years, and the mother grew old and she became little and bent. But her children were tall and strong, and walked with courage. And the mother, when she lay down at night, looked up at the stars and said, "This is a better day than the last, for my children have learned so much and are now passing these traits on to their children."

And when the way became rough for her, they lifted her, and gave her strength, just as she had given them hers. One day they came to a hill, and beyond the hill, they could see a shining road and golden gates were flung open wide. And mother said, "I have reached the end of my journey, and now I know that the end is better than the beginning, for my children can walk with dignity and pride, with their heads held high, as their children can do after them." And the children said, "You will always walk with us, Mother, even when you have gone through the gates."

They stood and watched her as she went on alone, and the gates closed behind her. And the children said, "We cannot see her, but she is with us still. A Mother like ours is more than a memory, she is a living presence." Your Mother is the whisper of the leaves as you walk down the street, your breath in the air on a cold winter day, in every emotion that you feel. Mother is the place you came from, your first love, your first friend, even your first enemy, but nothing can separate you; not time, nor space, or even death.

REMEMBER YOUR GRANDMOTHERS.