

# Dublin Historical Society

DUBLIN, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03444

FOUNDED 1920

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## *Meetinghouses and Churches of Dublin*

### PART ONE

*An astonishing number of houses of worship have been erected in Dublin since its settlement in the 1760s: thirteen to be exact. Included in that number are the four churches built in the northern part of Dublin before 1870, when the northern three of Dublin's ten ranges became part of the Town of Harrisville.*

*Given the quantity of structures to survey, Part One will cover those built before 1840. At a later date Part Two will discuss those built between 1840 and the present.*

#### FIRST MEETINGHOUSE

The initial meetinghouse, first occupied in 1771, was built for early settlers by the Masonian Proprietors, the original investors in the development of Dublin. Located north of the Old Common Road near the present cemetery, the structure served a dual purpose, that of public meeting space and that of place of worship for a Congregational parish. No image of the building survives, but it would have resembled the meetinghouses built all over rural New England before 1800. Early town records describe a two-story structure measuring thirty-eight by fifty feet. The main entrance would have been on the long axis with the pulpit on the opposite long wall. So called porches, small two story additions located on the ends, contained stairways leading to gallery seating. The exterior of the meetinghouse in Jaffrey Center is an excellent example of the form, although the porches have been removed and the bell tower added.



The primary structure of the Jaffrey Meetinghouse, constructed in 1775, resembles Dublin's first meetinghouse. The design of the bell tower which was added in 1823 is related to the steeple of Dublin's second meetinghouse.

Lisa Foote

#### MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

Many thanks to those of you who have sent checks renewing your memberships for 2016 and making donations in addition. We appreciate your support, in fact we depend on your support, to run the business of the Dublin Historical Society.

We have included envelopes for those of you from whom we have not yet heard. Please be relieved that the LAST CALL FOR DUES stamp and red ink pad were not something John Harris handed over when he retired!

It is possible that the first Dublin meetinghouse had a third porch, a one story vestibule in front of the main entrance. When the Proprietors turned over the building to the town in 1783, it was described as unfinished. Soon thereafter town meeting voted to build three porches on the meetinghouse and “to sell ground for one row of pews in the gallery”. In December 1785 voters accepted the committee’s account “that finished the meeting house”. This may mean that the proprietors had never built the side porches—that the gallery at the second story level had never been used. As the building was still described as unfinished in 1788, nearly twenty years after its initial raising, its ultimate architectural details are impossible to know.

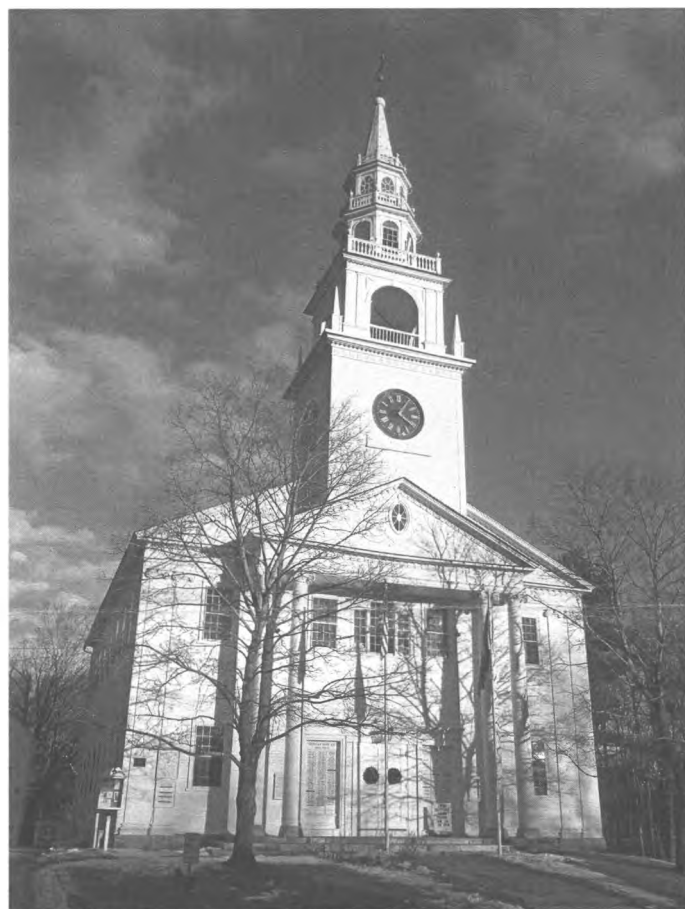
#### **BAPTIST SOCIETY MEETINGHOUSE**

In 1785 a group of residents founded the Baptist Society, having successfully petitioned the town to excuse them from paying taxes to support the Congregational minister. After twelve years of meeting at a home on what is now MacVeagh Road, they built their first meetinghouse on what is now Brown Road in Chesham. Described as measuring thirty by forty feet with twin porches on the ends, it would have been a smaller version of the Dublin meetinghouse. Records show that the twin porches were removed in 1830. Further alterations to the structure and its subsequent locations will be addressed in Part Two of this newsletter.

#### **SECOND OR “CENTRE MEETING HOUSE”**

By 1808 Dublin town warrants show questions put to the voters as to whether to repair the first meetinghouse or to replace it. Indecision reigned as to whether and where to build for ten years until the town voted in 1818 to build a new meetinghouse like the one in Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire. An acre of land was purchased for the site of the new meetinghouse and for the creation of a town common about one quarter mile east of the original location. Unlike the original meetinghouse which took over 20 years to finish, this building was constructed in seven months; the edifice was raised in June over “two or three days . . . for which many former residents assembled, to join their fellow townsmen” supervised by Jonathan Cutting and Samuel Kilburn, builders of the church in Fitzwilliam. The finished structure was dedicated on December 3, 1818.

In the early 1800s there had been a shift in the architectural design in rural churches. After a transitional



Lisa Foote

The Fitzwilliam meetinghouse, built in 1818, replaced the one built there in 1816 which burned. Both served as a model for Dublin’s second meetinghouse. The steeple shows elements identical to the steeple on Dublin’s second meetinghouse: a rectangular tower rising from the roof, an open belfry with bronze swinging bell, and two octagonal stages containing glazed windows all topped by a spire. However, a contemporary etching of the second Dublin meetinghouse shows a palladian window in the tower, not a clock.

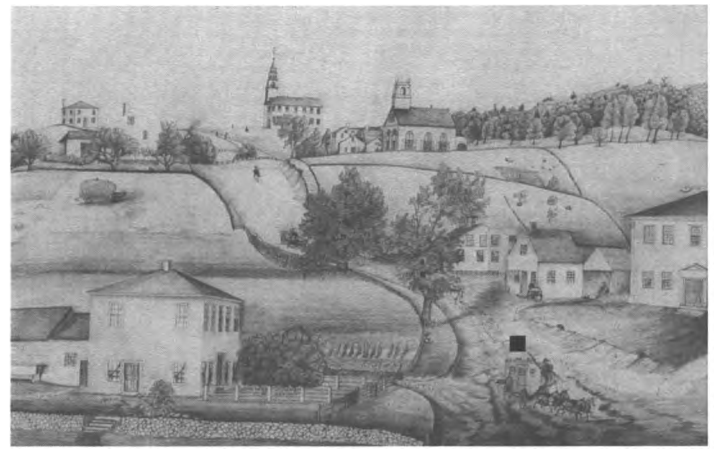
phase when tall, decorative bell towers were appended onto the end of earlier structures (like that in Jaffrey Center, see caption), the main entrance had migrated to the narrower axis of the building under a Greek portico supported by two-story columns surmounted by towering steeples. Only a few images of Dublin’s centre Meeting house survive showing this new orientation and its elaborate four-level steeple. We do know that the belfry stage in the steeple held a 1244 pound bell forged in the Paul Revere and Son foundry in Boston.

In fact the second Dublin meetinghouse was one of seven similar churches built between 1811 and 1822 referred to by Peter Benes in *Meetinghouses of Early New England* as the Templeton Run. Variations of the design, originally created by Elias Carter, were built

between Templeton, Massachusetts and Newport, New Hampshire, when one town instructed its committee to build a building like the one in a neighboring town— Dublin copied Fitzwilliam, Hancock copied Dublin and so on. Unfortunately Dublin's example is the only one of the group no longer standing. One need only to travel to Fitzwilliam or Hancock to see how large and imposing Dublin's second meetinghouse would have been.

#### TRINITARIAN CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY

The Reverend Levi Leonard's increasingly Unitarian proclivities alienated a number of parishioners at the First Congregational Society which met at the centre Meeting house. In 1827 a group left the church to form the Second Congregational Society. Renamed First Trinitarian Congregational Society a year later, it lacked a church building, so they met in homes, in the brick town house which had been constructed facing the new town common and infrequently in the "centre Meeting house". In 1835/1836 they constructed a brick church on Old Common Road on the hill above the current fire house. As in the case of the second meetinghouse, its design may have been influenced by the brick church built several years before in neighboring Jaffrey Center which is similar in scale and architectural detail. Both the Trinitarian



New Hampshire Historical Society

In this view of Dublin from 1845, one can see three buildings on the horizon line. On the far left is the brick town house built in 1823 on the site of the Wolpe's house. The "centre Meeting house" with the tall steeple stood near the Peters/Levene home, facing the common created in 1818. To its right is the brick Trinitarian Congregational Church. All three buildings were demolished by 1877.

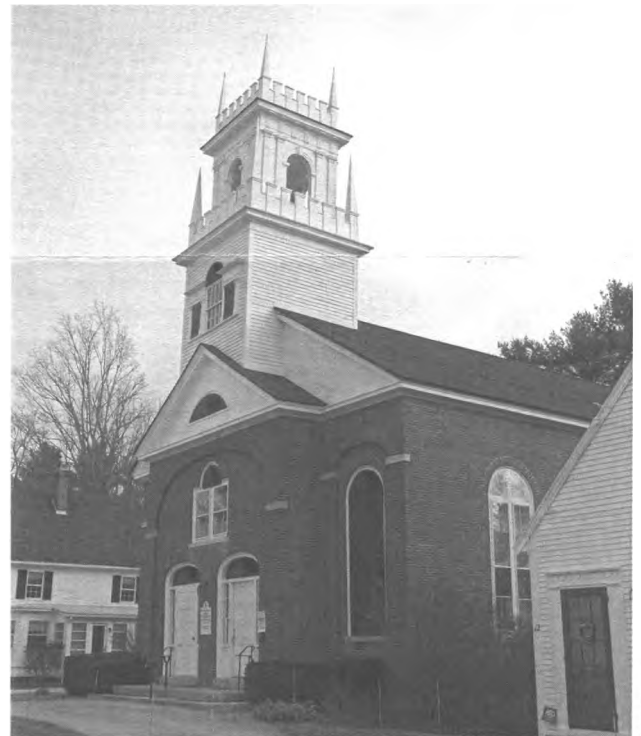
Congregational Church and the second meetinghouse can be seen in the 1845 drawing of Dublin village looking west by Maria Perry.

Of the churches described only the Baptist meetinghouse survives today. However, it bears no resemblance to its original design, having been



DHS

A 19th century view of the Trinitarian Congregational Church, built in 1835. Notice the similarities to the Congregational Church in Jaffrey Center built in 1831.



Lisa Foote

Congregational Church in Jaffrey Center built in 1831.

rebuilt and moved twice. The congregations of both the First Congregational Society and the Trinitarian Congregational Society voted to dismantle the buildings described above after less than 40 years. The details of the structures' replacements and rest of the churches created after 1840 will be described in Part Two.

— Lisa Foote

### HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CHESHIRE COUNTY SEEKS PAINTINGS BY ALBERT D. QUIGLEY

HSCC is seeking the loan of paintings by Albert D. Quigley (1891-1961) for an upcoming show running from May 5 until September 8, 2017. The exhibit will be part of the Town of Nelson's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

Quigley, raised in Maine, served in WWI and briefly studied painting in Paris. He settled in Nelson in the 1930s. Besides his numerous paintings "Quig" was known for his frame making, some of which were made for the paintings of Alexander James of Dublin. His musicality was legendary; anything to do with a fiddle was his milieu.

If anyone has Quigley paintings they would be willing to loan for the exhibition, please contact Teri at 603-847-3449 or email [quigleyexhibit@gmail.com](mailto:quigleyexhibit@gmail.com).

### CORRECTIONS:

While we strive to represent accurate information in our newsletter, we sometimes miss the mark.

There were multiple errors in our article about Bond's Corner in our Fall 2015 issue:

We twice misspelled Katherine (aka Diddie) Staples' name on page 2.

Cles and Diddie Staples bought the Carr's Store property from Glen and Susan Hipple in 1976, not from Harold and Isabel Clukay. The Clukay's businesses were first a garage and then the school bus company.

Bond Brook runs under Valley Road in the southeast corner of town, not under Route 137, as stated.

### IN MEMORIAM

The Society reports with great sorrow the recent loss of **Ivan Vladimir Bella**, **Robert P. Weis** (DHS Trustee, 1999-2002), and **Thomas Pearson Wright** (DHS Treasurer, 1990-1993). We extend our condolences to their families.

### POTLUCK SUPPER

Dublin Historical Society will hold their annual potluck supper at the Dublin Community Church on **Friday, March 18 at 6 PM**. The program will feature Adam Boyce presenting "Old Country Fiddler: Charles Ross Taggart, Traveling Entertainer", courtesy of a New Hampshire Humanities, Humanities To Go grant.

Boyce will regale us with a portrayal of Taggart, a musical humorist from Vermont who traveled the country performing for over 40 years beginning in 1895. Taggart was a fiddler, piano player, comedian, singer, and ventriloquist who made at least 40 recordings. Boyce portrays Taggart near the end of his career in 1936, sharing recollections of his life, with some fiddling and humorous sketches interspersed in the program.

Come join us for an enjoyable evening of delicious food, great company and a glimpse of the versatility of an early twentieth century entertainer.



Adam Boyce as Charles Ross Taggart



Traveling Entertainer, Charles Ross Taggart, 1927