THE

COLONIAL GARRISONS

OF

NEW HAMPSHIRE

PUBLISHED BY

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE SOCIETY

OF

THE COLONIAL DAMES OF AMERICA
FOREWORD

The Society of Colonial Dames of New Hampshire has supplied a valuable record in this list of garrison houses and sites in the state. Fifty years ago a considerable number still remained, if not in their original form, many at least still recognizable for what they once had been. Today few survive, and these few so disfigured by changes in outer shell as to be difficult to identify. Fire, removal to make room for modern buildings, abandonment and dilapidation have worked as agencies in their destruction.

Quite different were these local strongholds from the corn-cob cabins reared with notched logs, found west of the Hudson, which have become fixed in the popular mind as the type of log houses of the early settlers. Ours were built of squared timbers, hewn or sawn, from six to eight inches thick, laid flat one upon another, closely fitted at the corners. Strong beams across the tops of the walls, projecting beyond the outer surface of the lower story, gave support to the attic, or to the second story, where there was one. This second story usually took the form of a framed box larger than the structure on which it rested. A space of several inches was thus left open between the outer surface of the lower story and the inner surface of the upper that gave opportunity to meet attacks, whether of fire or weapons, at close quarters. The windows were usually small squared openings in the timbers, closed with heavy shutters. Practicable loop-holes were left in proper places. The garrison was often surrounded by a palisade—sometimes equipped with “flankerta”—and in some cases lined on the inside with compartments which could be used by fugitive families. The stout palisade itself, surrounding a house or houses, is sometimes called a garrison. A well would be included, if possible, within the enclosure: there are records which mention one in the cellar, and others from which it appears that the well lay completely outside the defenses, or that water must be brought at peril from a nearby spring or brook.

In the Gilman Garrison at Exeter, built about 1655, can still be studied the form of construction of the typical garrison. At the corners were erected white oak posts, into which the wall timbers are mortised. The second story, suspended on the ends of transverse beams, shows the two forms of juncture in use, halving and dovetailing. The single window aperture remaining from the primitive time
is a rectangular opening, eighteen inches wide by twelve high, cut in the log. The massive front door was studded with nails to hamper the enemy's axe. In addition a heavy wooden grating, which went by the name of portcullis because it closed from above, could be let down as protection when the door stood open.

A garrison of one story represented a protected family home, probably at a distance from other houses. The two-story building was a community stronghold, owned and occupied as a residence by a prominent man, but assigned to certain families near by as refuge in time of peril. The regular garrisons, when their occupants were not caught off guard, were quite defensible against ordinary attacks by the Indians, who rarely came in large companies or undertook a sustained siege. Garrisons were usually placed on an elevation, with ample cleared space about them. They were not so much forts, as fortified houses.

The importance of garrisons in the defense of the new settlements during the Indian wars can hardly be overestimated. Without them whole districts would have gone back to wilderness. Even with such refuges at hand the wily foe succeeded too often in their strategy of intercepting the men at work outside, or sneaking into the enclosure if the guard relaxed. Their practice was to hide for days in the neighborhood, watching with the patience and invisibility of prowling beasts until a door was left ajar, or a group moved too far from their guns in the field; then they struck without warning or pity. The garrisons were reasonably secure, but food came from outside; cattle and crops must be tended, and immunity from attack for a considerable period often led to some fatal carelessness which resulted in disaster.

After the close of the wars, when all danger from Indians had passed, owners of garrisons proceeded to make them more sightly and comfortable. Windows were cut, clapboards concealed the rough timbers, the inside was plastered and adorned with wainscotting, planed boards took the place of puncheon floors of halved logs. Only the one-story buildings, abandoned to use as shed or storehouse, kept their original form, and these gradually yielded to the destructive effects of time. The only garrison in the state now visible in nearly its original form is the one-story Damme Garrison preserved in the Woodman Institute in Dover. The best example of the roof construction of a building of a single story is to be found in the Frost Garrison at Eliot, Maine, a few miles across the New Hampshire border.

ALBERTUS T. DUDLEY,
Exeter Historical Society
INDIANS ATTACKING A GARRISON HOUSE

FROM the wood engraving

Hemans (English) 1817. (p. 60)

(From the Engraving 1817. p. 60.)

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of New Hampshire (p. 48)

and west of the Aghanish house on a nearby hilltop was sketched the "Gannet's Head" or "Gannet's Point" of the Aghanish River. His elevation was 130 feet (or 39.6 meters) above the Aghanish River.

Deception Pass (p. 49)

The prominent feature on both sides of the Pass is the high bluffs that rise above the water level, with cliffs up to 100 feet (30.5 meters) high. The Pass is named after Captain John Blakesley, who first explored the area in 1841.

Blacker's Pass (p. 50)

Blacker's Pass is located approximately 1 mile (1.6 kilometers) west of the Aghanish River, near the town of Old Town. It is a narrow pass through the Blakesley Range, with steep cliffs on either side.

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The Gannet Photographs (p. 51)

The Gannet photographs were taken on September 21, 1871, near the old Gannet house on the Aghanish River. The photographs show the Gannet house, the surrounding landscape, and the nearby Blakesley Range.

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OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

THE COLONIAL GARRISONS

John Goddard was one of Captain William Goddard's garrison who later became a commissioner of the New Hampshire Grants. He was a soldier during the Revolutionary War and later became a lawyer and politician. He was known for his support of state rights and his opposition to the federal government. Goddard was also a supporter of the New Hampshire Grants and worked to secure them for the state. He died in 1819 at the age of 74.

The Grants were a series of land grants made to New Hampshire by the federal government in the late 18th century. They were intended to encourage settlement and development in the state. The grants included land for roads, hunting, and grazing, as well as land for the state's own use. They were a source of conflict between the state and the federal government and were eventually sold to private individuals.

The Grants were a significant source of income for the state and were instrumental in the development of New Hampshire. They were also a source of controversy, as some individuals claimed that they were not properly administered and that they were not equitable.
In 1787, the family moved into the newly completed Carson Cottage. This marked the site of the original Carson Cottage, which had been destroyed by fire. The new building was designed to accommodate the growing family and provide more space for their activities. The original building had been located on the north side of the house, and the new structure was moved to the south side, closer to the main living areas.

Joseph Carson (1867) described the new building as being a two-story structure with a large parlor on the first floor and bedrooms on the second. The construction was completed in 1868, and the family moved into their new home on June 25, 1868. The new building was built by James Carson (1868), who was a prominent local builder and had previously constructed several other significant buildings in the area.

The new building was situated to take advantage of the natural beauty of the surrounding area, with views of the nearby mountains and the ocean. The Carson family was a well-known and respected family in the area, and their new home quickly became a center of activity for the community. The building was well-appointed, with a large central hall and several bedrooms, each with its own private bath.

The Carson family lived in the house for many years, and the building served as their home for several generations. The building was eventually sold to a local family, who continued to live in the house and maintain its appearance. Today, the Carson Cottage is a historic site and is open to the public for tours and visits. It is a testament to the ingenuity and hard work of the Carson family, and a symbol of the rich history and culture of the area.