

CHAPTER XXI.

PHYSICIANS IN MILFORD FROM THE INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN – DENTISTS NOW IN PRACTICE IN TOWN.

At the time the town was incorporated (1794), the population was about one fourth what it now is. Amherst, from which the territory of the town was principally taken, was not only the county seat, but the most important place in the county. The meeting-house in the new town was less than three miles from the meeting-house in the old town. For these reasons, for several years, physicians in Amherst continued to practise in both towns.

The name of Dr. Robert Smith appears upon the tax list for the year 1797, but not before. That Dr. Smith was a reputable physician and a substantial citizen is evident from the fact that afterwards he was a member of the committee on the part of the town "to hire preaching." How many years Dr. Smith remained in town, the historian is unable to state.

Dr. Robert Fuller, who spent nearly sixty years of his life in town, was born in Westmoreland, N. H., in 1766, and located in Milford within three or four years of the time the town was incorporated. His residence for many years was upon the corner, on the site of the town house. He was a regularly educated physician, and for the larger part of his professional life adhered strictly to the allopathic school of medicine; in the later years he departed somewhat from the prescriptions of that school, but to the end of his professional life had the confidence of his townspeople to an unusual extent. He lived to see a small village become a large and prosperous town. He was twice married. His first wife and the mother of his children, was Rhoda French of Dunstable. His second wife was the widow of Isaac Lund, who for many years was a prominent citizen of Milford.

His children were born and reared in this town. Of his children, Rhoda D. became the first wife of Thomas W. Gillis, Robert Ware became a clergyman, Esther Ware became the wife of J. H. Currier of Concord, Jacob T. was for many years a resident in town, owning a farm on the Nashua road and afterwards moved to Wisconsin There he died. His youngest daughter, Elizabeth, married Calvin McQuesten of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. Mrs. McQuesten, whom the historian remembers as an unusually accomplished woman, and whose home was in Milford until the year of her marriage (1853), and whose death occurred only a year ago (1898), gives the following valuable information in a letter received since the writing of this history was commenced:

"My father's family were the descendants of Dr. Samuel Fuller, who was a surgeon on board the *Mayflower*. My father's father and grandfather were also physicians."

Dr. Charles Tuttle, a native of Acton, Mass., came to Milford in 1800, and remained in the active practise of his profession for twenty years, when he returned to Acton, where he died July 1, 1858. His wife was the daughter of George Burns. His son Charles remained and died in town. Parmelia became the wife of Frederick Lovejoy. His sons George and Nelson settled in Nashua. For a score of years his name was a household word in all this region.

Dr. John Wallace, Jr., who for many years in the earlier part of the century was an active practitioner in town, was born March 28, 1781, and was a grandson of William Wallace, the early settler. His father, sometimes called Deacon John Wallace, died July 23, 1835, two years before the death of his son, Dr. John Wallace, so that Dr. Wallace was until almost the day of death called Dr. John Wallace, Jr.

Dr. Wallace studied medicine with Dr. Robert Fuller. The historian has not been able to ascertain the exact date when he commenced to practise medicine, but believes that it was not far from the time of his marriage to Olive Hutchinson in 1809. In 1820 he became a member of the New Hampshire Medical Society.

From the day he commenced to administer professionally to the wants of his patrons to the day of his decease, Aug. 4, 1837, he was an enthusiastic practitioner of medicine and surgery, his professional calls coming not only from Milford but from all the adjoining towns. He died in the prime of life, but not until he had rendered his town and state good service.

In 1821 Dr. James M. Fuller became a member of the New Hampshire Medical Society as a resident of Milford. He was taxed here in the years 1819-'21. Beyond this we have no information of his previous or subsequent career.

Matthias Spalding, son of Micah Spalding of Chelmsford, Mass., and a nephew of Dr. Matthias Spalding of Amherst, was born May 14, 1796. He studied medicine with his uncle, and is said to have been licensed to practise in 1817, probably by the New Hampshire Southern District Medical Society. The following year he settled in Loudon, but remained there only a short time. The same year or the year following, he removed to Winchendon, Mass., and remained there until 1822, when he located in Milford, and there continued in the practice of his profession until 1830, when he emigrated to Montabello, Ill., residing in the latter place until his death, Aug. 16, 1831. He became a member of the New Hampshire Medical Society in 1822.

Dr. Richard Williams was born in Groton, Mass., Jan. 12, 1803. He received his degree of Doctor of Medicine from Dartmouth college in 1830. He commenced practice in Milford, January, 1831. He married Susanna Shattuck of Groton, Mass., April 25, 1832, afterwards the second wife of Hon. Leonard Chase. He was a member of the Medical Society of the Southern District of New Hampshire, of which he was secretary for several years, and at the time of his decease was president. In 1834 he became a member of the New Hampshire Medical Society. Dr. Williams died Oct. 6, 1842, after a most successful practice in Milford of but little more than ten years. During this time he had proved himself to be not only an able and successful physician but a citizen of most exalted character. The historian, although less than ten years old at the time, remembers the deep grief that settled over the entire community at the early death of Dr. Richard Williams. (Biographical sketch elsewhere.)

Dr. Simeon Smith Stickney, who was long identified with the practice of medicine in Milford, was born in Townsend, Mass., Nov. 16, 1810.

Dr. Stickney came here in October, 1837, a well-equipped physician. He had practised a short time in Dublin, N. H. The death of Dr. John Wallace in the summer of 1837 created an opening, of which Dr. Stickney promptly availed himself. He was not only a well-read physician and surgeon, but possessed unusual strength of character, was positive in his opinions, and at all times ready to defend them. He had a large and successful practice until he accepted the position of postmaster under President Pierce. He also served during the Buchanan administration, in all eight years. His business capacity was such that from the time he received the appointment of postmaster he gave but partial attention to the practice of his profession, and gradually entered into real estate operations, which practically took him out of the practice of medicine some time before he died in July, 1878.

Dr. Jonas Hutchinson, a grandson of the early settler, Nathan Hutchinson, was born June 2, 1792. Was regularly educated as a physician at Dartmouth Medical college, and commenced to practice in Hancock, where he remained until 1841, holding a prominent position as a physician and surgeon and as a public-spirited citizen. He represented the town of Hancock in the legislature in 1833, 1834, and 1835. He returned to his native town in 1841 and at once entered upon a remunerative practice.

Dr. Hutchinson came here as a physician in the full maturity of his powers, and for nearly a score of years had the confidence and professional patronage of the people of the town. He was strong man with decided convictions, which he never concealed. His citizenship was of a high order.

Dr. John H. Heard became a member of the New Hampshire Medical Society as a citizen of Milford in 1843. He may have located here in 1842, as his name appears as one of the physicians appointed in March, 1843, to vaccinate the people of the town. His name appears on the tax list for 1843 only.

Dr. Hezekiah Eldredge was born in Princeton, Mass., Feb. 6, 1798. He began to practise medicine in Dunstable, Mass., in 1826; afterwards practised in Pembroke, N. H., and Amesbury, Mass. He settled in Milford in 1848, where he continued to reside until his death, Jan. 25, 1870.

Dr. Eldredge was a member of the New Hampshire Medical Society. During the twenty years that he was in active practice in town he had the respect of his professional brethren, who regarded him as unusually wise in counsel and true to the best traditions of the profession. The people of the town, young and old, had a most friendly feeling for him. Of his sons, one took the profession of his father, Frederick Augustus Eldredge, now recently practising in Ohio. (Biographical sketch elsewhere.)

Dr. Osmore O. Roberts, a native of Lyndon, Vt., born Oct. 27, 1828, was the first resident physician of the homœopathic school to practice medicine in town. He settled here in 1852. Dr. Israel Herrick of Lyndeborough, a homœopathic physician, had previous to that time an extensive practice in town. Dr. J. F. Whittle, of Nashua, had often been called professionally.

Dr. Roberts is remembered by many as an active and successful practitioner. After remaining here something less than five years he left for Northampton, Mass., where he has continued in the practice of his profession.

When Dr. Roberts left town it was arranged that he should take the practice of Dr. H.J.M. Cate, then of Northampton, and that Dr. Cate should come to Milford and assume the practice of Dr. Roberts. This arrangement was carried out. Dr. Cate did not remain long in town, but was regarded as a good practitioner. He was recently in Lakewood, N.J.

Dr. Levi W. Wilkins, a native of Merrimack, born July 18, 1823, was the next homœopathic physician to settle in town. He had previously practised in Nashua, Hancock, Antrim, and Charlestown, Mass. He died in Milford, Dec. 15, 1864.

Dr. Wilkins was a well-educated physician and highly esteemed as a citizen, but on account of his lack of health during all the time he was in town he could not accomplish what he otherwise would have done.

Dr. W. H. W. Hinds, senior, born in Chichester, August 1, 1835, was the successor of Dr. Wilkins in the list of homœopathic physicians practising in town. He came to Milford in 1865, and for more than thirty years was one of the leading physicians of the town. (Biographical sketch elsewhere.)

Before the decease of Dr. Hinds, his son, W. H. W. Hinds, Jr., also a homœopathic physician, had commenced practice in town, and is now actively engaged in the profession so long honored by his father.

Dr. Samuel G. Dearborn commenced practice in Milford in June, 1853, having graduated from the medical department of Dartmouth college in November, 1849, and having practised a few months at East Tilton, and at Mont Vernon three years. His reputation as a physician and surgeon had preceded him, and he at once entered into a large general practice. Probably no physician has ever practised in town whose services were more widely sought.

After practising alone for twelve years he associated with himself his youngest brother, Dr. Thomas Benton Dearborn. For the eight succeeding years, during which this partnership continued, the firm of Samuel G. and T. B. Dearborn increased the already widely-extended business of the senior partner until it covered a territory of many miles in every direction.

In May, 1873, Dr. Samuel G. Dearborn removed to the growing city of Nashua, where he has had a large general practice, drawing patronage from all sections of the state.

At the time Dr. Samuel G. Dearborn left Milford, his brother next younger than himself, Henry G. Dearborn, a thoroughly equipped physician and surgeon, having had ten years practice in Augusta, Ill., located in Milford, but at the end of three years followed his brother Samuel G. to Nashua, where he died in June, 1886, after ten years of successful practice.

Dr. Thomas B. Dearborn, from the time his brother Henry left town until the time of his decease, June 10, 1879, continued a practice so large that, although he possessed unusual powers of endurance, he died at the age of forty years, a victim of professional overwork.

Dr. Francis P. Fitch, a native of Greenfield, graduate of Dartmouth Medical college (1831)) commenced practice in New Boston, located in Amherst, 1839, where he remained twenty-six years, removed to Milford, where he was well known as a physician, in 1865. After a few years he relinquished practice and took up his residence in Vineland, N. J., where he died in 1874.

Dr. Melville E. Webb, a native of Bridgton, Me., where he was born March 3, 1842, a graduate of Bowdoin college, was in practice here for a short time in 1867. His wife was the daughter of Col. William Lane now of Nashua. Dr. Webb is now (1899) a resident of Boston, Mass., and has high rank as a physician and surgeon.

Dr. H. T. Whitney came to Milford in 1876 and remained something more than one year when he and his wife received appointments from the American Board as missionaries to China. It is understood that his professional skill reinforces his usefulness as a missionary.

H. McIntire, M. D., a native of Stoddard, N. H., spent two years at Tufts college, studied medicine with H. G. McIntire in Concord, N. H., graduated from College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, in 1878, and was in Milford a few months in 1879.

Cyrus K. Kelley, M. D., prepared for college at Gilmanton academy, graduated from the University of Vermont, and medical department of Dartmouth college, practised in Tilton and Plymouth, N. H., and Cambridge, Mass., and settled in Milford in 1879, but was here but a few months.

Dr. Albert W. Smith, born in Waltham, Mass., 1852, became a resident of Milford in October, 1865; graduated at Dartmouth in 1876, and at University Medical college, N. Y., 1877, and the same year commenced the practice of medicine in Milford. For many years he was a member of the board of education, representative in the general court 1889 and 1890, and moderator of many annual town-meetings.

Dr. Smith has been able to do all this while attending to a successful practice of more than twenty years.

Dr. Darius S. Dearborn, a native of Northfield, N. H., and a cousin of the three Dearborn brothers already mentioned, a good representative of a family which has furnished so many well-known physicians and surgeons to the state, located here in 1879, having previously practised four years in Brookline, and several years in Illinois, before he came to New Hampshire.

Dr. Dearborn had with him as partner for two years, Dr. Walter H. Dinsmore, who settled in practice in Amherst in 1880. Dr. Dinsmore's practice in Amherst and Milford covered about five years. In 1885 he removed to Nashua, where he remained for a few years, when he took up his residence in Chicago.

Dr. Herbert S. Hutchinson, a native of the town and son of the late Stillman Hutchinson, was born Sept. 15, 1849, a graduate of Dartmouth college (1875) and of Bellevue Hospital Medical college, N. Y.; opened his office in Milford, May 1, 1885, having been in practice previously in Frankestown. Matthew 13:57, does not seem to apply to the experience of Dr. Hutchinson.

Dr. Charles F. Ober, a native of Nashua, where he was born March 2, 1848, was graduated from Dartmouth college in the class of 1873. He graduated in medicine at the University of the City of New York in 1879, and immediately commenced practice in Lowell, Mass., where he remained until April, 1888, when he took up his residence here.

While attending to the duties of an exacting profession he has found time to serve upon the board of education for an extended term.

Dr. Eugene Wason, a native of New Boston, where he was born April 25, 1845, came to Milford, Jan 15, 1895. He graduated from Dartmouth Medical college in 1872, and had been in successful practice in Nashua, Londonderry, and Hancock, before commencing practice as a physician and surgeon in this town.

Dr. G. W. Ellison was born in the city of Brooklyn, N. Y., Dec. 9, 1864, graduated in medicine in 1894, at the college of Physicians and Surgeons, New York city; located here July 12, 1896.

Dr. Ellison is a member of the New Hampshire Medical Society, a Fellow of the Massachusetts Medical Society, and of other medical associations.

Dr. J.W. Finerty is a native of the town, born July 23, 1866, educated in the Milford schools and Arms academy, Shelburn Falls, Mass., from which school he graduated in 1886. He received his diploma from the New York Homœopathic Medical College and Hospital in 1889, and at once commenced practice.

Dr. William H. W. Hinds, Jr., a son of Dr. William H. W. Hinds, graduated at the Boston University School of Medicine, June 5, 1895. Previous to receiving his diploma he had assisted his father in his practice. From the time of his graduation, either with his father or alone, he has actively and successfully practised his profession.

Dr. Mary Augusta Lull studied in both schools of medicine, graduating at the Woman's Homœopathic Medical college in New York city, April 10, 1869. After a successful practice of twelve years she took a much needed rest, traveling for more than a year in Europe. While there she visited some of the principal medical schools and hospitals, staying for several weeks in Vienna. Since her return personal business has required so much of her attention that she has not found time for active practice, but still feels the utmost interest and enthusiasm in her profession.

The following physicians are now in active practice in town: Drs. Albert W. Smith, Darius S. Dearborn, Herbert S. Hutchinson, Charles F. Ober, Eugene Wason, G. N. Ellison, Wm. H. W. Hinds, J. A. Finerty.

DENTISTS NOW IN PRACTICE IN MILFORD.

Charles F. Fiske, born in Temple, n. H., in 1833, attended medical lectures at Dartmouth college, studied dentistry with his brother in Clinton. Mass., where he first practised his profession. Settled in Milford in 1868, and is still in active practice.

Fred M. Wetherbee, born in Milford in 1863, graduate of Milford high school and Boston Dental college in 1886; commenced the practice of his profession in Milford immediately.

Fred M. Wheeler, born in Nashua, N. H., April 4, 1866. Graduated from University of Maryland, in Baltimore, in 1889. Practised his profession in Greenville until 1893, when he came to Milford.