History of Waterford, Maine

From

A Gazetteer of the
State of Maine

By Geo. J. Varney

Published by B. B. Russell, 57 Cornhill,

Boston 1886

Waterford lies in the southern part of the broad middle section of Oxford County. The township is almost square, with angles marking nearly the points of the compass. Norway bounds it on the north-east, Albany and Stonham on the north-west, Sweden and Lovell on the south-west, and Harrison and Bridgton in Cumberland County, on the south-east. Crooked River enters the town on the north-west side and leaves it at the south-eastern angle in its course completely exemplifying its name. Extending across the southern portion of the town is a range of ponds, bearing the names of Long, Thomas, Bear and Moose. At the western angle, lies Kezar Pond, Island Pond, lies near the southern angle, Pappoose Pond near Crooked River in the north-eastern part, Bog Pond a little south-east of Thomas Pond, Chapin Pond at the north of Kezar, and Duck Pond on the south-western side of the town. These vary in size from 484 to 50 acres, in the order in which they are mentioned. In the southern part of the town is a range of three considerable eminences, of which the highest have the names of Bear and Hawk mountains. In the western part of the town Beek Hill stands solitary and beautiful. On the outlet of Bear Pond, and near Hawk Mountain, are a saw mill, grist mill, a clothes pin factory, and a hotel. Waterford post-office and the town-house are at “Waterford Flat,” on the western side of Thomas Pond. South Waterford post-office (“Waterford City,”) is on the stream connecting Thomas and Bear ponds. East Waterford post-office (“Rice’s Junction”), is between Crooked River and Long Pond, on the outlet of the latter. North Waterford is situated on Crooked River near the north-western side of the town.

At Waterford Flat are a tannery and Shattuck’s Hygienic Institution; at North Waterford are a lumber mill, a sash mill, a grist mill and a tannery; at South Waterford are a lumber and grist mill, a stave-mill, a salt box, dry bucket and carriage factories.

The surface of the town is uneven and has much beautiful scenery, especially about the southern ponds. The roads are excellent, and nowhere are more enjoyable drives to be found than in this town. It is 13 miles from the Grand Trunk Railroad station at South Paris, on a stage-line from that place to Fryeburg.

Waterford was surveyed in 1774. The first settler was David McWayne, who took up his residence here alone in 1775. So fond was he of utter solitude that he appeared very much annoyed when, three years later, a clearing was commenced on what is now known as Paris Hill, 12 or 15 miles away; Eleazer
Hamlin, father of Dr. Cyrus, and grand-father of Hom. Hannibal Hamlin was an early settler, as were also his three brothers. Five or six Brown brothers, and the four families of Jewett, Saunders, Chaplin and Greene also came early. Prof. William W. Greene, M.D., distinguished as a surgeon, was a native of Waterford. The titles to the lands were principally from Jonathan Houghton, Henry Gardiner, David Sampson, Jonathan Whitcomb, chief proprietors.

The town was incorporated March 2, 1797. An Orthodox minister was settled in 1799, and a militia company formed in the same year. At present there are two Congregational churches and one Methodist church in the town. The number of public schoolhouses is fourteen; and the school-property is valued at $7,000. The population in 1870 was 1,286; polls, 333. In 1880 it was 1,161, with 349 polls. The valuation in 1870 was $403,651. In 1880 it was $338,987.

Found at: http://history.rays-place.com/me/waterford-me.htm