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FISKE GENEALOGICAL FOUNDATION
NEWSLETTER

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Pelham Historical Society, Pelham, New Hampshire

William T. Hayes & Karen Genoter

FILLING IN THE BLANKS IN PELHAM, N.H.

The town of Pelham, New Hampshire sits a few miles north of the Massachusetts border, due north from Lowell MA and just east of Nashua NH. Since the early 1850's the town has published annual "Town Reports" which record details of the schools during the previous year and of the town administration itself. In 1888, the Town Report began to include all births, marriages and deaths. (Other records are available for vital records before this date.) The Hayes-Genoter History and Genealogy Library in Pelham has placed digital copies of the Town Reports on their website for the years from 1858 to 2008. However, the library is missing 40 of these annual reports and they are asking for assistance from former Pelham residents or their descendants. If you know where any Pelham Town Reports might be found, please contact the library and advise them.

The library, <http://www.pelhamnhhistory.org/library/onlineLibrary.html> part of the Pelham Historical Society, has a rich collection of historical materials on-line for the area of southern New Hampshire, including town vital records, cemetery transcriptions, church records, and many other miscellaneous documents. They have digital copies of Pelham histories and family histories of Pelham families. Because of its location, Pelham has had close ties to towns like Andover, Chelmsford, Dracut and Dunstable in Massachusetts. The library collects material from those towns as well. They have recently added histories of Andover and Chelmsford to their digital collection. In the Congregational Church Records 1751-1885, there are many entries among the marriage records of brides or grooms from these surrounding towns. Details are readily available from the files on line.

In the Town Report for 1862, the reports from each school contain details on the teacher's success for each term of the year, as well as details about the deportment of the students. In the summer term for the District No 2 school, the teacher (Miss Rebecca A Whitehouse, working for \$17 per month, including board) was audited by Jeremiah Farmer. Farmer's evaluation included the following: "I will here give the names of 14 pupils who are reported, by their teacher, as not having whispered during the term: Sophia E Cutter, Julia F Cutter, Emeline Derbyshire, Sarah E Fox, Ella E Fox, Mary F Gage, Lucella E Goodspeed, Mary A Goodspeed, Louisa Jones, Oreanna McCoy, Ida E Seavey, Leora A Seavey, Ann E Tenney, and Philena Whitehouse. "

It's possible that over a number of years, the town reports from the schools will identify a good number of the young people in Pelham, during the years between census recordings.

by Gary A. Zimmerman

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