



CAPT. JOSEPH VALENTINE
One of the First Selectmen of Westbrook



HON. LEANDER VALENTINE
First Mayor of Westbrook

HISTORY OF WESTBROOK

LEROY H. RAND

THE greater part of Westbrook is situated between North Lat. 43 deg., 40 min., and 43 deg., 45 min., and between West Long. 70 deg., 20 min., and 70 deg., 25 min. The postoffice is nearly on Lat. 43 deg., 40 min., 41 sec., and Long. 70 deg., 20 min., 45 sec. From the point of intersection between South Portland, Scarboro and Westbrook to the point of intersection of Falmouth, Windham and Westbrook, the distance is about 7½ miles. Its greatest width is 3¼ miles and the point showing the least width is 2⅛ miles, and its area is about 21 square miles or 14,000 acres.

The elevation of the populous part of Westbrook, which is along the banks of the Presumpscot River, is low; averaging about 30 ft. above sea level. The highest point of land in Westbrook is known as Gowen's Hill, on Duck Pond Street, not far from the Falmouth line. Its elevation is 300 ft.

ELEVATION OF THE PRINCIPAL HILLS

Rocky Hill,	240 ft.
At the left of Methodist Street, beyond Rocky Hill,	220 ft.
There are five points on Methodist Street,	200 ft.
Deer Hill,	120 ft.
Harper's Hill,	120 ft.
Woodlawn and St. Hyacinthe Cemeteries,	100 ft.
Chapman Hill,	100 ft.
Saco Street, beyond Stroudwater River bridge,	120-140 ft.
Conant's Hill,	100 ft.

The farms of Benjamin F. Knight, Mason M. Chapman and George R. Johnson on Buxton Street, extend to a height of 140 ft.

Westbrook is favored with rivers and streams. The Presumpscot is the principal river and source of the establishment and continued permanence of the great industries of Westbrook. This remarkable river never fails in the most severe drought and the two falls at Saccarappa and the one at Ammoncongin have been in continuous operation in mill products for about 175 years.

Westbrook was notably lax respecting its town records from 1814 to 1891. A decided improvement in this direction

has been maintained since it became a city. Previous to 1814, Westbrook was a part of Falmouth, and the Falmouth town records from 1786 to 1814, and from 1718 to 1786 excepting 11 years, were destroyed by fire in 1850. In 1690, when Falmouth was destroyed by the French and Indians, the existing town records were also consumed or carried away by the enemy.

Therefore great difficulties confront the historian in procuring data.

The territory embraced within the present, also the former and larger Westbrook, previous to 1603, was owned and occupied by the Aucocisco clan of the great Abnaki tribe of Indians. Aucocisco and Casco, it is said, are identical names.

Good authorities claim that a prehistoric or protohistoric civilization once existed in this country, and good evidence is at hand that a numerous unknown people lived within present or immediate territory.

One writer produced evidence not improbable that the Phœnicians established trade and commercial relations with the people in what is now our State, some 2,800 years ago.

Previous to 1615, two great tribes of Indians dwelt within our territory of Maine—the Penobscots whose jurisdiction extended from the St. Georges River, east of the Kennebec River through to Nova Scotia, and reaching far into the wilderness hundreds of miles, and the Abnaki tribe whose country extended from the Kennebec River to the Piscataqua River, N. H., and from these points extending back as far as the St. Lawrence River, including the present site of Quebec and probably Montreal.

It is estimated of both tribes that there were 5,000 warriors and 37,000 population within the limits of Maine in 1615, which is more than the estimated population of the Europeans in our State in 1750.

The Abnaki were divided into many clans or minor tribes, such as the Canabis or Kennebecs who had villages on the Kennebec River, the Anasagunticooks on the Androscoggin River, the Sokokis or Sacos on the Saco River, the Newichewannocks on the Piscataqua River, N. H. These four principal tribes were sub-divided and the result was the Wahwe-nocks, east of the Kennebec River, the Pequawkets on the Saco in the vicinity of Fryeburg, and the Aucociscos on the Presumpscot River, and many others.

The Aucociscos, of which we have a particular interest, had villages along the Presumpscot and one was at the lower falls, another at Ammoncongion, now Cumberland Mills. The Indian names of places all had a meaning. Ammoncongion is translated "high fishing place"; Saccarappa Falls, "falling towards the rising run"; Presumpscot, "many rough places river," referring to its many water-falls.

Most of the ponds and streams of Maine still retain (many of them in a changed form) the names given by the Indians. While these people did not write history, the memory of a lost race is retained by these names.

The Abnaki were rated as the oldest of the eastern tribes. Other tribes referred to them as ancestral, and the name Abnaki, or more properly Wanbanaghi, taken from the Indian word Wanbanban, designating the people of the Aurora Borealis, or the breaking of day in the east. The first streak of dawn it is white.

A tradition prevailed among the Abnaki that they were here from the beginning of the creation of man.

There has been some controversy over the date of the change of name from Stroudwater to Westbrook. The following verbatim copy is taken from Baxter's Documentary History of Maine. Me. His. Col. Vol. XIII, 2d series, pp. 216 and 217.

"Falmouth 12 Nov. 1718, Spurwinck & Casco Bay. Ancient town made a town 19 Oct. 1658.

"Stroudwater 14 Feb^y 1814 part of Falmouth. (name changed to Westbrook 9th June 1814)"

Many of the towns of New England had their foundation in a larger territory, organized first as a parish and later as a town. As the settlement increased within the larger town, another parish became a necessity and consequently was set off from the original parish, which, later, became incorporated as a town, resulting finally into a number of incorporated towns made up in each case from the former and larger town.

Westbrook, Conn., and Westbrook, Maine, are towns formed from territory originally embracing large territorial parishes. Westbrook, Conn., is one of the six towns that formerly made up the town of old Saybrook. Westbrook, Maine, in like manner, is one of six that originally made up old Falmouth. These older towns in both instances, still exist in name as remnants of the former towns, so that Connecticut still has its Saybrook and Maine its Falmouth.

After the cessation of hostilities in 1756 up to 1814, old Falmouth had undergone many changes. At the time of the incorporation of Portland, in 1786, up to 1814, Falmouth contained the present Falmouth, Deering District of Portland and Westbrook, as one town; even with the loss of Portland and Cape Elizabeth, Falmouth had become an unwieldy town especially in extent of territory. Its two parishes, the New Casco within the present Falmouth and the Stroudwater in this section, were the main cause of the division of the town in 1814.

THE CALL OF THE FIRST TOWN MEETING IN 1814

To Nath'l Partridge, one of the principal inhabitants of the town of Stroudwater in the county of Cumberland, by virtue of an act of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, made and passed on the fourteenth day of February in the year of our Lord, eighteen hundred and fourteen, entitled an act to incorporate the town of Stroudwater. I hereby request you to notify and warn the Free-holders and other inhabitants of said town of Stroudwater qualified by law to vote for town officers:—

viz. Such as are twenty one years old and upwards, and residents of said town for the term of one year next preceding, to assemble and meet at the meeting house in said Stroudwater on Monday, the fourteenth Instant ten of the Clock in the fore-Noon to act on the following articles viz:—

1. to Chuse a Moderator.
2. to Chuse a Clerk.
3. to Chuse town officers for the insuing year.

Given under my hand and Seal this fourth day of March 1814. ARCHELAUS LEWIS, Just. of the Peace.

Stroudwater, March 7, 1814.

Pursuant to the Within Warrant, I have duly notified the Inhabitants of said town qualified as Within Mentioned to meet at the time and place and for purposes within mentioned by posting up five attested Copies of the within Warrant. Nath'l Partridge.

At the first town meeting, the following officers were elected:—Silas Estes, Moderator; Jonathan Sparrow, Town Clerk; Silas Estes, Randall Johnson and Joseph Valentine, Selectmen; Zachariah B. Stevens, Collector; Jonathan Sparrow, Town Treasurer; Luther Fitch, Town Agent; Esq. Archelaus Lewis, Thomas Slemmons, John Jones, committee on articles; also the following officers whose names will be omitted:—8

constables, 25 Surveyors of Highways, 23 Surveyors of Lumber, 3 Cullors of Hoops and Staves, 25 Fence viewers, field drivers, hog reaves and pound Keepers, 4 Tything men, 5 Sealers of Leather.

Recorded by Jonathan Sparrow J. Clerk -

John Jones, Esq., and Silas Estes, Esq., were elected representatives to the Massachusetts Legislature from this district which was included in the second eastern district of the Massachusetts Commonwealth. Hon. Ezekiel Whitman represented us in Congress at this time and was re-elected. Samuel Dexter was Governor and William Gray, Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts. Two senators were elected, James Means and Theodore Mussey.

Soon after the incorporation of Westbrook, the matter of the adjustment of debt and settlement of paupers of the two towns, Falmouth and Stroudwater, now Westbrook, came up for consideration. A committee of five men of integrity and prominence from each town were chosen to adjust the matter and Stroudwater assumed charge of 19 paupers, Falmouth 16, with 4 paupers to charge to other towns. \$3,928.34 was the joint debt, of which Falmouth agreed to assume 2-5ths and Stroudwater 3-5ths. The adjustment was made April 18, 1814.

The book containing the inventory of valuation and taxes for 1814 was doubtlessly a joint one of Falmouth and Westbrook, and was evidently retained by Falmouth. Consequently, it was destroyed by a destructive fire in that town in 1850.

The total valuation of Westbrook in 1815 was \$19,574.36.

The same valuation book was used for each year up to and including 1818. No record was made of any change in the valuation for those years. The rate of taxation was \$28.00 per \$1,000.00. Poll taxes were \$2.00 on 520 polls. The citizens were taxed at an exorbitant rate compared with the present time. Incomes were taxed; money in possession of private citizens was directly taxed, and evasion of taxes was out of the question.

The aristocratic method of travel was the one horse chaise. In 1815, there were 84 of these vehicles taxed and the number of houses taxed were about 400.

Recorded by Archelaus Lewis Town Clerk

The Presumpscot River flows through Westbrook for a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles and is a boundary for about 3 miles. The Stroudwater River, is a stream of many sources, and flows through the southerly part of Westbrook for a distance of over 4 miles. Many mills were once operated on this river. Its flow gradually became less and correspondingly its mills fell into disuse and final decay.

Duck Pond brook is the outlet of the present Highland Lake and is a turbulent stream and formerly had a number of saw mills in active operation.

The chief industries of Westbrook in 1814 were its fertile farms, saw mills, tanneries, lumbering and farming industries. According to the tax assessor's list, Saccarappa had nine saw mills, 2 grist mills, 2 carding and fulling mills; Congin, 3 saw mills, 1 grist mill; Stroudwater River, 2 saw mills, 1 grist mill; Duck Pond and Duck Pond brook, 5 saw mills and 1 grist mill.

There were five tanneries in Westbrook in 1815. Home-spun clothing was generally worn by all classes. The girls were taught the art of spinning and weaving and if they were adepts in this art coupled with that of cooking, it was considered their highest accomplishment to meet the duties of a wife and mother.

The year 1815 was a memorable one in local history. Every month of the year heavy frosts were reported throughout this section. Frost was reported upon the window panes in July; crops of every kind were almost a failure; the people so dependent upon local crops for sustenance were obliged to resort to meat, game and fish; cereal food could only be purchased as a luxury.

Sept. 2, 1816, the town voted for separation from "old" Massachusetts by a vote of 246 yeas and 29 nays. Col. Thomas Slemmons and Silas Estes, Esq., were the delegates to the Convention held later at Brunswick, and both gentlemen warmly advocated an independent State; although no separation was affected at this time; the agitation continued and July 26, 1819, another vote of the town stood 488 yeas and 12 nays. The Separation Act soon after became a law, and Sept. 20, 1819, Silas Estes, Esq., Col. Thomas Slemmons and John Jones, Esq., were chosen delegates to the Portland Convention on the 2d Monday in Oct., 1819, to frame a constitution for the new

State. They proved very active delegates and Esqs. Estes and Jones presented many measures which became a part of our Constitution.

Recorded by Geo Bishop Town Clerk



Dec. 26, 1819, The New State Constitution was accepted by a vote of 75 yeas, 1 nay.

On April 3, 1820, the first meeting of the town was called in the name of the State of Maine and Zachariah B. Stevens was the Constable.

Earlier in the history of old Falmouth, there came a gentleman from Portsmouth, N. H., who, it is said, had previously emigrated from Newgate, England, and was appointed King's Mast Agent. We refer to Col. Thomas Westbrook, Esq. At about the same time, 1719, his brother-in-law, Nathan Knight, came as a settler at Scarborough, and was agent and contractor for Col. Westbrook in the mast business. Later, in 1726, Col. Westbrook took up his residence at Stroudwater, and built what was known as the Harrow House. This name evidently was one borrowed from England. Col. Westbrook, with the assistance of Mr. Knight, who married his sister, conducted an extensive business in this vicinity, collecting masts. The business was, indeed, a boon to the early straggling settlers, for by cutting and shipping masts to a central point, they were able to secure real money, which, in those days, was a scarce article, for many of the settlers were obliged to resort to barter to gain their livelihood.

Later, Col. Westbrook constructed a paper mill at Stroudwater, which was in active operation for some years, and as first pioneer in this industry, a dam was built at the Lower Falls of the Presumpscot River, and a paper mill erected there, but owing to the depredations of the Indians and other causes, this mill was never in full operation, and was later destroyed by the enemy.

Col. Westbrook began building a dam at the Upper Saccarappa Falls and a block house was erected on Pork Hill (now Park Hill) for protection; but this dam was never fully completed for the same reason given above.

Col. Thomas Westbrook died Feb. 11, 1744 and left no descendants by the name. On the other hand, Mr. Knight's posterity became legion, and one of these lived on the Quaker Lane Road, Westbrook, and was at the town meeting held April 4th, 1814. The town had been incorporated February 14th, 1814, under the name of Stroudwater. A family tradition exists that at this meeting, David Knight, above alluded to, arose and suggested that the name Stroudwater be changed to Westbrook, in honor of Col. Thomas Westbrook. This matter was immediately taken up and a vote was passed that the Legislature of Massachusetts be petitioned for change of name to Westbrook. This petition was acted upon by the Legislature, and finally adopted on June 9th, 1814.

Nathaniel Knight, a son of Nathan, occupied the property now known as the Chapman farm, and his brother, Westbrook Knight, lived near the same place and near to the present Spring Street bridge.

They owned and operated a saw mill at the present Babb Falls, previous to 1744.

During the Indian War of 1744, all mills in this vicinity were destroyed and Mr. Nathaniel Knight and family were obliged to flee to Stroudwater for protection.

1815, the valuation of the town was listed at \$19,574.36, and had increased in 1830—a period of fifteen years—to \$41,358.94, an increase in valuation of about 53%. On the other hand, the number of polls had increased from 520 to 629, showing an approximate increase in population of 18%. This shows that the town had made a wonderful increase in wealth but not correspondingly so in population.

In 1830, the poll tax was \$1.11.

There was 1 grist mill at Capisic, 3 at Saccarappa, 1 at Duck Pond and one at Stroudwater; 3 saw mills at Duck Pond brook, 2 at Duck Pond, 15 at Saccarappa and 3 at Congin. Stevens Plains had 3 tanneries, Back Cove 4, Stroudwater 1, and Saccarappa 1. Eight different men were taxed for navigation. There were four brick yards in Westbrook. The Portland Manufacturing Company's cotton mills were located at Saccarappa with a taxable valuation of \$16,000.00. There were 5 carding machines in operation at Saccarappa, 2 at Stevens Plains and 1 at Stroudwater; 2 fulling mills, 2 dyehouses at Saccarappa and 1 at Stevens Plains. There were 3 wharves at

Stroudwater and a number of wood-box machines at Westbrook.

From 1814 to 1829, town meetings were held in the Stroudwater meeting house, Parson Bradley's church. From 1829 to 1831, town meetings were held in the Universalist Church at Brighton Avenue.

SEPTEMBER 13, 1841

On the question of Constitutional amendment for biennial elections, there were 370 nos and 73 yeas.

For the first time in its history (this was at the time when the license law was in effect) the town voted for No License.

It may be well to mention the matter of our town clerks.

George Bishop had served continuously from 1816, except one year, to 1842 when he was succeeded by Hon. Aaron Quinby. Mr. Quinby was an excellent penman and the general neatness of the pages executed by him has never been excelled except by the present incumbent, Alex. G. Wilson.

SEPTEMBER 12, 1842

Brown Street was accepted from the house of David Hayes, Esq., to Tritten Hurd's house.

In the spring of 1843, there were great freshets. Saccarappa bridge was carried away and Congin bridge was greatly damaged. \$2,000.00 was raised to build a new bridge at Saccarappa and repair the one at Congin.

Brackett Street was accepted, and a town court was established for the first time. In 1844, the town voted in favor of License with many restrictions.

In 1848, the town voted No License.

SEPTEMBER 10, 1850

At this time, the legislature was meeting on the first Wednesday in May. An amendment was proposed to change this to the first Wednesday in January. Westbrook voted no 118, yes 108. License.

In 1852, No License.

OCTOBER 3, 1857

Town voted to accept the new road from Brown Street to Congin road near Cumberland Mills, extension of the present Brown Street and also an extension of Brackett Street.

MARCH 19, 1860

The check list for voters, according to the records, was used for the first time. George Libby and John T. Winslow were chosen a committee to assist the moderator in the use of this check list.

NOVEMBER 6, 1860. NATIONAL ELECTION

The whole number of ballots, 884. The electors for Lincoln and Hamlin, 553; Douglass and Johnson, 267; Breckinridge and Lane, 59; Bell and Everett, 5.

An effort was made for graded schools at Saccarappa by the union of districts 9, 10 and 11.

In 1861, after a trial of one session, it was voted to restore the said school districts to their former standing and discontinue the graded system.

The pier bridge at Cumberland Mills was carried away May 7, 1861.

MAY 25, 1861

It was voted to build a truss bridge to replace the one at Cumberland Mills, and Elisha Newcomb and Clement F. Maxwell were chosen to receive proposals and have charge of its construction.

MARCH 17, 1862

At the annual town meeting, it was voted to supply the families of Vol. soldiers in accordance with laws of the state and to abate the poll taxes of volunteers. The following committee was chosen to report and plan for the further support of the families. James Pennell, Joseph Chenery, John Haskell, Marshall N. Fales, Samuel Clements, Henry F. Sands, Lewis P. Warren, Charles E. Boody and Dana Brigham. Westbrook was divided into military districts. 1st was the bounds of Co. A followed by the bounds of Cos. B, C, D, E.

JULY 24, 1862

The town voted to pay a bounty of \$100.00 to each soldier; this was on the enlistment of the so-called "nine months' men."

To encourage manufacturers to locate here, the town voted to exempt any cotton or wool fabric firms hereafter erected for a term of 5 years (Act of April 1st, 1859).

NOVEMBER 27, 1863

Lincoln's call for 300,000 men was responded to by a vote to pay \$250.00 to each soldier when enlisted, as a bounty to be raised on the credit of the town. It was voted to hire \$5,000.00 additional as a contingent fund.

JULY 18, 1864

President Lincoln made another call for 500,000 men. The town voted to petition a loan of \$25,000.00 for a term not exceeding 10 years, interest at the rate of 6%, payable semi-annually.

On Jan. 30, 1865, "voted that the selectmen and treasurer be authorized to issue a note of the town for \$400.00 payable in 5 years with interest annually to each citizen drafted and accepted, and to each citizen who may furnish a substitute in the call for troops, Dec. 19, 1864."

A new bridge was built at Congin, at the cost of \$1,200.00.

In the beginning of the year 1867, Capt. John B. Coyle and others had petitioned to the Legislature to set off a portion of the town, annexing same to Portland. A remonstrance against this measure was passed, but it was only the beginning of trouble, relating to the final division in 1871.

JUNE 3, 1867

At a special meeting, the vote stood for the suppression of drinking houses and tippling shops, 221 in favor and 6 against.

NOVEMBER 22, 1868

The Cumberland Mills, or Boody slide, occurred of about 30 acres extent, which completely changed the course of the river below the paper mills for about one quarter of a mile.

Voted to accept Warren Street, now Warren Avenue.

The Civil War had caused a great increase in the debt of Westbrook and some of it is a standing debt today, which has never been fully paid, only by changing old notes for new.

MARCH 8, 1869

It was voted to accept the continuation of Brackett Street, and voted to accept Mechanic, Central and Elm Streets.

The town, at this time, was beginning to construct sewers, but evidently had not awakened to the construction of sidewalks.

DECEMBER 29, 1869. SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

The question of petitioning the legislature for a division of the town was passed, then the matter was taken up of opposing the division, referring the same to the selectmen of the town meeting. This was acted upon favorably by the legislature, the town was divided, and Feb. 16, 1871, Deering was incorporated. Joint town meetings, however, were held until March 20, 1871, when the first meeting occurred after the division for election of town officers. James M. Webb was elected town clerk, Henry B. Walker, John Cloudman, James Babb, selectmen; John E. Warren, town treasurer. Mr. Warren, as town treasurer, adjusted the settlement of the joint debt, etc., in connection with commissioners and the treasurer of Deering. The commissioners chosen to adjust the matter between the two towns were James Pennell and Samuel T. Raymond. There was not much opposition to this division, as both sections of the town believed that it would be for the betterment of both towns.

A new iron bridge was built at Saccarappa in 1870; was condemned by vote of the town and removed, and in 1871, a new bridge was built at the expense of \$5,893.33, and was pronounced a solid structure.

In 1873, the school committee recommended to the people the need of a High School. Chas. E. Boody and John E. Bean were the school committee at this time.

Much work was done in 1873 in regard to laying of sewers and cesspools. S. D. Warren & Co. furnished a large amount of the material and labor in their construction, free of cost to the town.

In 1871, the valuation of the town was \$1,403,067.00; in 1913 the valuation of the city was \$5,410,655.00.

In 1873, there were 5 terms of high school, 3 at Main Street and 2 at Pride's Corner. The school on Main Street was in charge of Fred E. C. Robbins with Sarah E. Bradley, assistant. The High School at Pride's Corner was in charge of F. O. Mower.

In 1875, a new schoolhouse was built at Rocky Hill at a cost of \$1,075.00. The school committee recommended that text books be supplied by the town.

In 1882, Bridge Street Schoolhouse was built at a total cost of \$9,423.33. Free text books were furnished at a cost of \$710.02.

A night police service was established, with D. K. Jackson at Cumberland Mills and E. B. Morris at Saccarappa.

Spruce Street school was discontinued as there was only one scholar appeared at the opening of the spring term.

In 1884, Warren schoolhouse was built at a total cost of \$8,577.87.

In 1886, the Main Street schoolhouse was removed to Valentine Street and fitted for school purposes at a cost of \$2,484.42. The present High School building was erected at a total cost of \$21,165.79 (previous to the erection, this year, of the Annex and the Industrial School), and Brown Street school building at a cost of \$7,406.89. Music was introduced in the schools in 1888, Mrs. W. N. Files being hired as teacher.

1888, the expense incurred on account of smallpox was \$2,513.89.

A city charter was granted March 1, 1880. The charter was adopted by a vote of the town, Feb. 24, 1891.

Since that time up to 1914, the city has been continuously growing in wealth and population; also a marked improvement has been made in a general way, until now we have paved streets, good sidewalks and a general appearance of prosperity. Socially, the city has improved greatly.

The following are the Mayors since Westbrook became a city:

1891	Leander Valentine.	1900-01	Jacob L. Horr.
1892	Mahlon H. Webb.	1902-04	Joseph A. Warren.
1893-4	Albert A. Cordwell.	1905-06	Rufus K. Jordan.
1895-6	William W. Cutter.	1907-08	Seth C. Morton.
1897	Francis A. Cloudman.	1909-10	Harry F. G. Hay.
1898-9	King S. Raymond.	1911-14	Oscar G. K. Robinson.