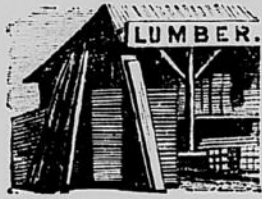


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Founded in 1623--Its Early Exclusiv-  
ness and Present Conservative Ap-  
pearance--Its Ruins and Relics--Excel-  
lent Harbor and Costly Navy Yard.

Of all the quaint and picturesque towns  
which mark the sites chosen by the early  
settlers of America, one of the most ancient  
and conservative in appearance is certainly  
Portsmouth, N. H. Situated as it is, in an  
archipelago of hilly islands, it might have  
become one of the leading ports of entry but  
for the tremendous fogs, which have thrown  
a wet blanket on it as a commercial port.  
It certainly got an early enough start, for it  
was settled in 1623, and no town on the coast  
possessed greater natural advantages for a  
settlement. The numerous islands and sur-  
rounding country are fertile, while the  
waters of the innumerable creeks and inlets,  
worming their way inland from the sea,  
were alive with fish.

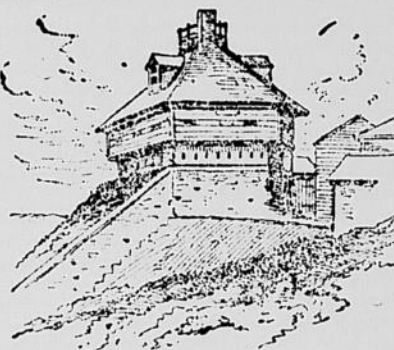


SPINET IN ROOM OF WENTWORTH HOUSE.  
One of the earliest of the blue blood set-  
tlers was William Wentworth, a baronet.  
In 1639 he, with others, signed a "combina-  
tion for a government at Exeter, N. H.," and  
from that time until the revolution he or  
his direct descendants held the political lines  
of the colony. For being too active poli-  
tically one of the members of the family was  
beheaded for treason during George III's  
reign. A portion of the old Wentworth man-  
sion still stands, and it was here that Gov-  
ernor Wentworth and Martha Hilton (im-  
mortalized by Longfellow in his "Lady Went-  
worth") were married. The parlor in which  
the ceremony took place remains unaltered.  
Most of the original pieces of furniture are  
yet in their places. In an interior room, ap-  
parently as a private arsenal, still hang  
the massive flintlock blunderbusses and  
other weapons of early warfare. From here  
a door opens to the governor's council cham-  
ber. The walls of this famous apartment  
are covered with colonial bric-a-brac, in-  
cluding the ancestral warming pan. Adjoin-  
ing this apartment is the billiard and music  
room, in which is the old-fashioned piano,  
or spinet, as it was then called.



OLD CHURCH, 1701.  
This old manse of the Wentworths must  
be standing, or at least a portion of it, for a  
century and a half. An earlier settlement,  
though, than Portsmouth was made about  
nine miles from here on the Isle of Shoals.  
It was there that Capt. John Smith first set  
foot in making his early explorations, and  
the little seagirt neighborhood, treeless and  
almost verdureless, holds many traces of  
that ambitious man, besides the old little  
monument erected there to his memory.  
Strange as it may seem, this bleak group of  
islands, soon after its discovery, became  
rapidly peopled, and it is affirmed that 500 in-  
habitants once had existence there. If one  
can take record from the shapes resembling  
graves, rudely marked by the rough island  
stones, the statement can't seem erroneous,  
but it appears in a different light when we  
wonder where the 500 found foothold at one  
and the same time, when now there seems  
scarcely soil for their graves.

The old stone church, erected in 1701, is  
one of the most appropriate monuments of  
the past. It contains records of all the  
early land grants, the census, etc., besides  
mention of the struggle to convert and  
educate the Indians, the perils of the  
colonial wars, and other facts that seem  
to us of this age as legendary as our fairy  
stories. At the breaking out of the revolu-  
tion the inhabitants fled to the mainland for  
protection, and but few of the families ever  
returned to make the islands their place of  
abode.



THE OLD BLOCK HOUSE  
On the movement of the settlement farther  
from the sea the people prepared to protect  
themselves from both encroachments of the  
Indians and from foreign invaders, so that  
the defensive institutions of early Port-  
smouth were both numerous and ample, and  
many old earthworks yet remain. These,  
however, are less attractive than the old  
stone and mortar ones--McClary and Con-  
stitution. McClary tops a jutting promi-  
nence of Kittery point, and dates back 200  
years. The old block house--rebuilt for its  
preservation in 1845--is a point of no light  
interest. It was a model of protection in its  
day, built with a projecting upper story  
with loopholes arranged so that the garrison  
could fire down on the enemy in case of an  
attack, but now merely an aesthetic finish  
for the modern fort at its base.

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