



History of the Hebron Village Store

The first record of the village store in Hebron is in 1799. The town records, in giving the bounds of the Common and Meeting Rouse lot when they were laid out on July 1, 1799, speak of the "north corner of Mr. Eliot's store." Mr. Eliot apparently left Hebron before 1806.

In 1803-1805 Daniel Greenleaf ran a store and was taxed on stock in trade. Then Stephen Goodhue ran the village store from 1806 through 1817. It was during the tenure of Stephen Goodhue that the Hebron Village Store and the Post Office were combined for the first time. This was in 1811, and in 1812 Stephen Goodhue was appointed Postmaster. Stephen was a pretty good businessman. In his first year his stock was only valued at \$15, but by 1817 he had increased its value to \$900.

After Stephen Goodhue the store and Postmaster position was taken over by his son Stephen Goodhue, jr. and he continued with the operation until 1826.

In 1826 George W. Lang was appointed to the position of Postmaster, but the Goodhues no doubt continued to keep a store during these years, and at some point Lang went into partnership with them in the village store. On the tax lists for 1829 the partnership of Lang and Goodhue had stock in trade valued at \$800, its value had increased to \$1000 by 1831.

David Hazelton became postmaster in July 29, 1833, and it was probably in 1832 or 1833 that he built a new general store on the site of the present one. His stock in trade was valued at \$1000 in the Hebron tax inventory of 1834.

David Hazelton was born in Hebron in 1797, son of Benjamin and Deborah (Cross) Hazelton, and grandson of Deacon Samuel Hazelton, one of the grantees and earliest settlers of Cockermouth (which in 1792 became Hebron). He had been living in Northfield, NH for several years prior to 1832 and working in a store in Sanbornton Bridge (now Tilton). Ellen Webster in her book "Recollections of Hebron" said "He was a man of sterling worth, valuable in the community." He was one of the founders of Hebron Academy and a member of its executive committee, town clerk for many years, and Hebron's representative in the Legislature in 1848-1850.

In the early 1840's a young man named Alfred Edwin Jaques came from Sanbornton to work in David Hazelton's store. He was born in Sanbornton in 1823, son of Chase Jaques and Mary T. (Moore) Jaques. In 1853 Alfred Jaques married Sarah E. Hazelton, oldest daughter of David Hazelton. After his marriage he went into business with a brother-in-law in Tuftonboro, NH but after four years returned to Hebron. It was about 1857 that the partnership of Hazelton & Jaques was formed.

After David Hazelton's death in March 1864, Alfred Jaques carried on the store for about two years. He then moved to Wilton, NH. where he was a storekeeper. From 1875 until his death in 1894 Mr. Jaques was postmaster in Wilton.

After Alfred Jaques left Hebron, Charles W. Hazelton, oldest son of David, took charge of the store until his death on June 6, 1868.

With the death of C. W. Hazelton, the heirs leased the store to Hutchinson and Brown. Hutchinson never lived in Hebron but William H. Brown was the postmaster and storekeeper. In April 1870 the store burned for the first time.

"In Nov. 1870, Levi Ferrin came from Concord and bought the site where the store had burned the April before and at once commenced to rebuild... It wasn't finished or opened up for trade until the following spring." (Recollections, -Webster, p. 26)

Levi Ferrin "continued in trade till May, 1876, when he exchanged property with Samuel Wells of Burlington, NH." Samuel Wells was postmaster from 1880 until 1905. According to the New Hampshire Register the storekeeper during this time was M. A. Wells, who was Samuel Wells' wife.

Wallace G. Gurney was a clerk for Mr. Wells in the Hebron Village store. In 1905 he took over the store and post office, which he carried on for about 4 years.

Then John Cordon of Franklin bought the store in 1909 and became postmaster in the same year. He was Hebron's storekeeper and postmaster until his death on Nov. 30, 1939.

Roy E. Herrick was store operator and postmaster for a few months in 1940, until Helen Wilson took over as storekeeper and postmaster. She ran the store until 1942, when Harold Shanks took over as storekeeper, with Myrtle Shanks as postmaster.

The store and post office burned for the second time on May 31, 1945.

Miller Bestick rebuilt the store in its present condition in 1947. The post office had moved across the Common in the house next to the school and library when the fire struck. Mr. Bestick continued to operate the store until 1954 when he sold it to Norton Braley, who had been appointed postmaster in 1953. Norton Braley moved the post office back into the store.

Thomas C. Jaques bought the store in 1968 and ran it until July 8, 1990, when he died. Then the store closed for a year until it was purchased from Tom Jaques estate by Bill White and Loma O'Leary and was re-opened after renovations and general clean-up on May 21, 1991. White and O'Leary planned on taking over the space occupied by the Post Office when a new Post Office was built between the store and the church. The Post Office was never built, and today remains in the building with the store.

White and O'Leary ran the store until 1997 when it shut once again. A group of Hebron residents formed the Hebron Common LLC and purchased the store building and leased the store to Norton Braley in 1999. This is the same Norton Braley who bought the store in 1954. Norton announced his retirement effective October 1, 2002, which is the date that the store was leased and operated by Ron and Janice Collins.

Ron and Janice Collins, members of the Hebron Common LLC, took over the store to keep it from closing but did not intend to operate for long. The Collins' moved the store upscale and expanded the dining facilities, including a once a month Gourmet Dinner which was sold out every time. As they ran the store the Collins' were on the lookout for someone to take over the store and operate for a long period. They found this person in April 2003. In August 2003 Kim Provencher took over the lease of the store from the Collins' and operates the store today.