

An aerial photograph of a landscape. A river flows from the top left towards the bottom right. The land is divided into various patches of green, brown, and tan, suggesting different types of vegetation or land use. There are several small, dark, irregular shapes scattered across the landscape, which could be ponds or small bodies of water. The overall texture is rough and uneven.

# Assembling Wilmot Additions, Subtractions, and Gores



some  
assembly  
required

The town of Wilmot was  
created from

1. The northern portion of  
the town of **New London**
2. The northern portion of  
the “**Kearsarge Gore**”
3. The western part of the  
township of **New Chester**

This 1828 map (right) shows  
the town before the addition  
of part of New Chester



A satellite map of the New England region, showing parts of New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Maine. The map is overlaid with yellow text. A red dot is placed on the border between New Hampshire and Massachusetts, near the town of Wilmot. The text "But first ..." is in the upper left, and "How was New Hampshire assembled?" is in the center-right.

But first ...

How was New Hampshire  
assembled?



*Sir Ferdinando Gorges (c. 1568-1647)*

## Historical overview

**1622** – Ferdinando Gorges granted patent for Province of Maine

**1629** – Province split into John Mason's New Hampshire & Gorges' New Somersetshire.

**1641** – Region organized under Massachusetts Bay Colony

**1686** – Absorbed into Dominion of New England

**1692** – New Hampshire becomes a separate crown colony

*Map by Ed Thomasten*



**1699-1741** – Governed

*Capt. John Mason (1586-1635)*

## Mason's Patent

In 1629 Capt. John Mason was awarded the charter for a region that included the southern part of the province of Maine and lands of the Massachusetts Bay Company.

A surveyor's arc (yellow line) with a radius of 60 miles from the coastline was drawn through sketchily charted territory.

It was described as being between the Naumkeag (Merrimack) and Piscataqua rivers.

The future location of Wilmot is shown with the red arrow.

*Map by Samuel Langdon (1723-1797)*



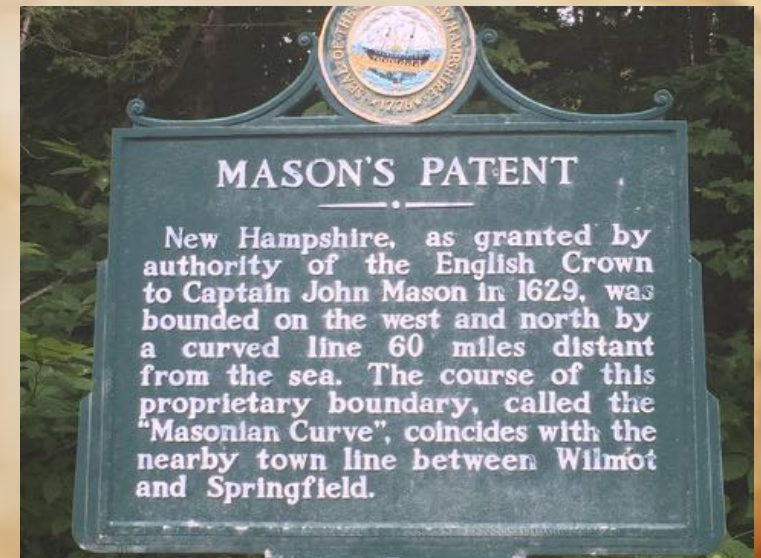


Long story, short  
In 1635, Mason died  
young, and his charter  
lands were seized by  
provincial landowners.  
His great-grandson John  
Tufton Mason recovered  
the title in 1738.  
He sold most of his  
shares to “the  
proprietors,” who formed



*(above) Memorial plaque in the Portsmouth (UK) Cathedral that cites Mason's "founding" of New Hampshire*

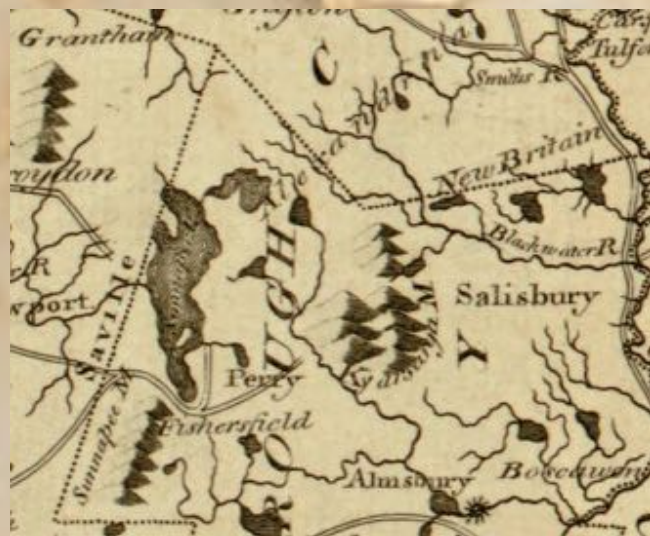
*(right) Historical marker on N.H. Rt. 4A in Wilmot that identifies the coincidence of the town's boundary with the edge of Mason's Patent*



## Hazy geography

The geography of the region was not well known, much less well mapped.

For example, in the 18th century Mason's Patent was estimated to comprise 200,000 acres.



*Area that would someday include Wilmot*



*New Hampshire in 1794*



## Older towns

Older towns in New Hampshire, established before the advent of the proprietors' actions, were chartered with **acreage set aside** for town greens, government offices, and roads connecting adjacent towns.

The townships surveyed by the proprietors were not.

Instead, each surveyed lot was expected to become a farm, and roads were assumed to be laid out along the **range lines** between lots/farms.



*Google Earth image of Rye town hall and common, established 1623.*

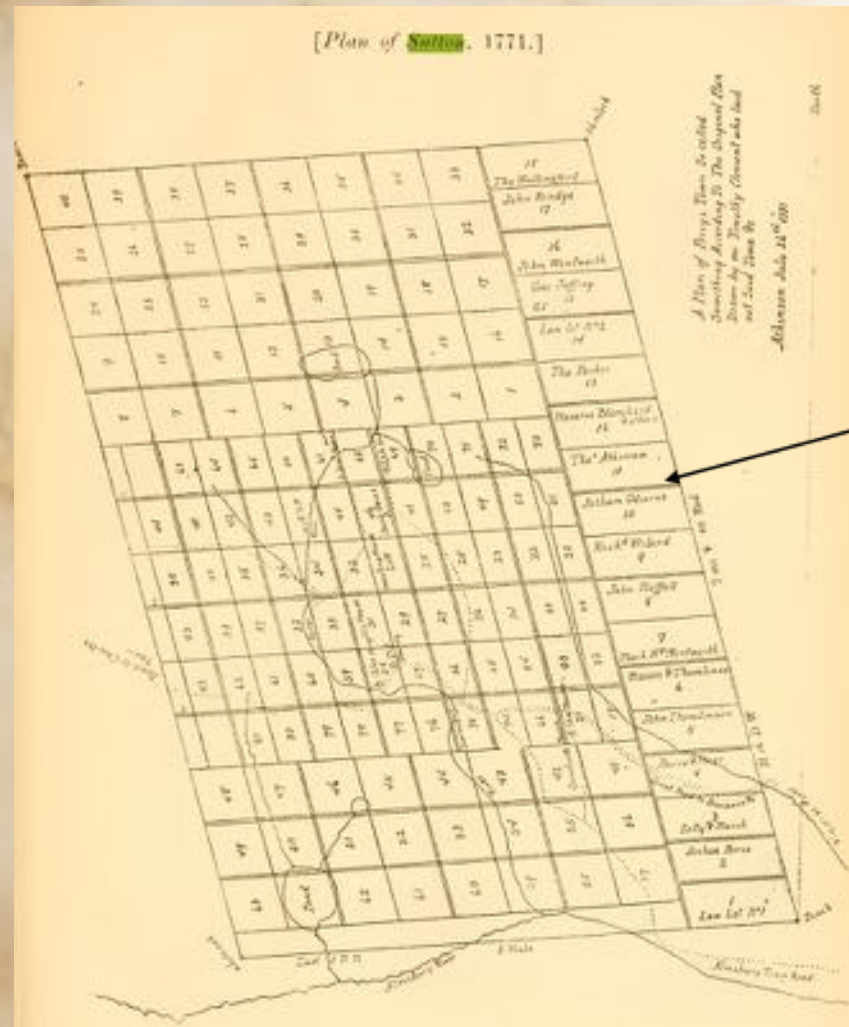


## Proprietors' Terms

After a Masonian township was surveyed, it was divided up into lots, each of them **between 100 and 140 acres**

The proprietors did not ask settlers for payment but did reserve lots for themselves.

Settlers signed a contract stipulating they would develop the land at a prescribed rate and with specified improvements



*"Township Grants of Lands in New Hampshire" by A.S. Batchellor*

*Rightmost  
column of lots  
are those  
reserved for the  
proprietors*

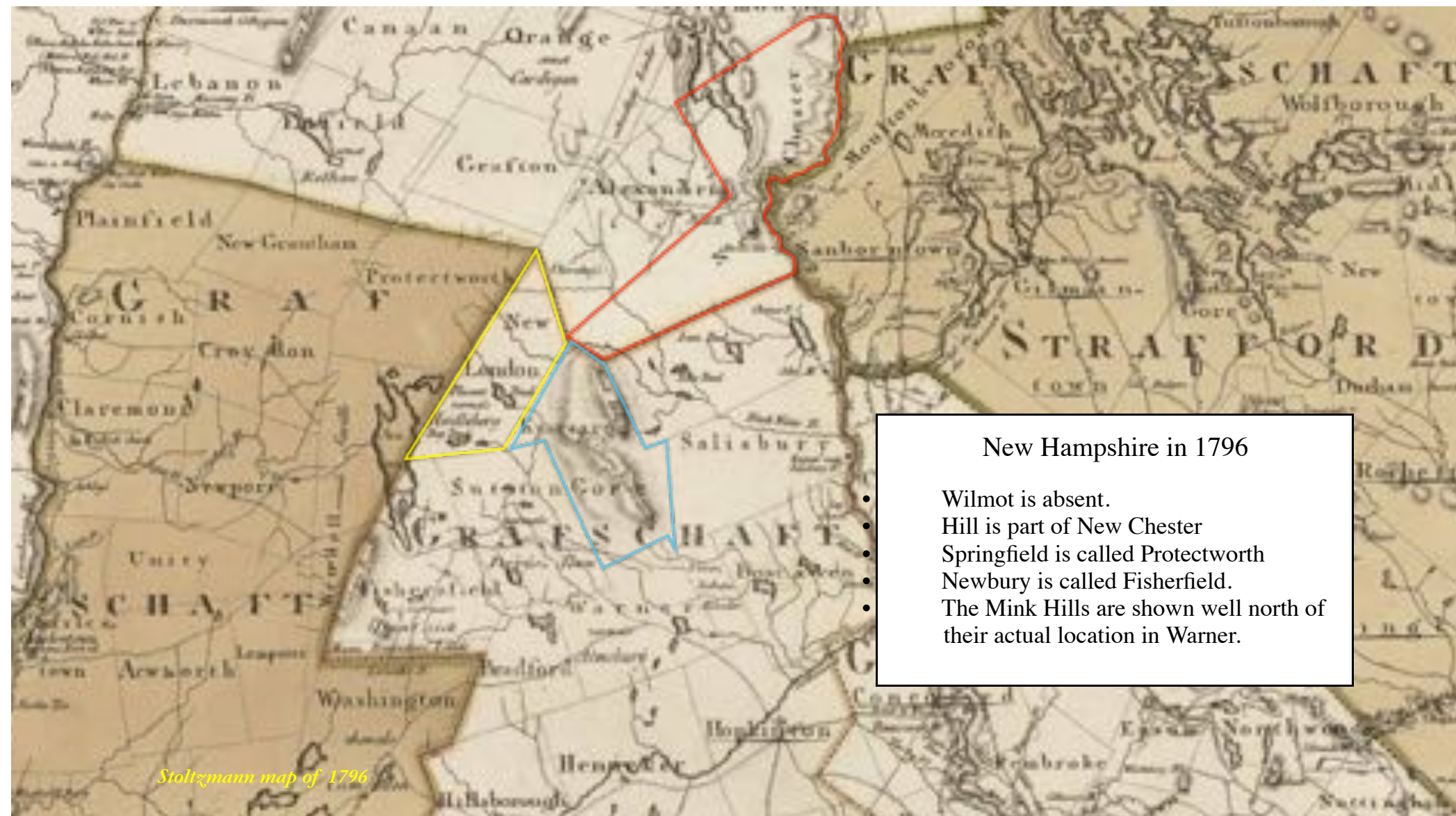
## New Hampshire in 1761

- New London is called Heidlebourg
- Andover is called Emery's Town
- Salisbury is Steven's Town
- Warner is Rye Town
- Sutton is Perry's Town
- Newbury is Dantzick
- Some townships are only numbered



*Blanchard and Langdon map of 1761*



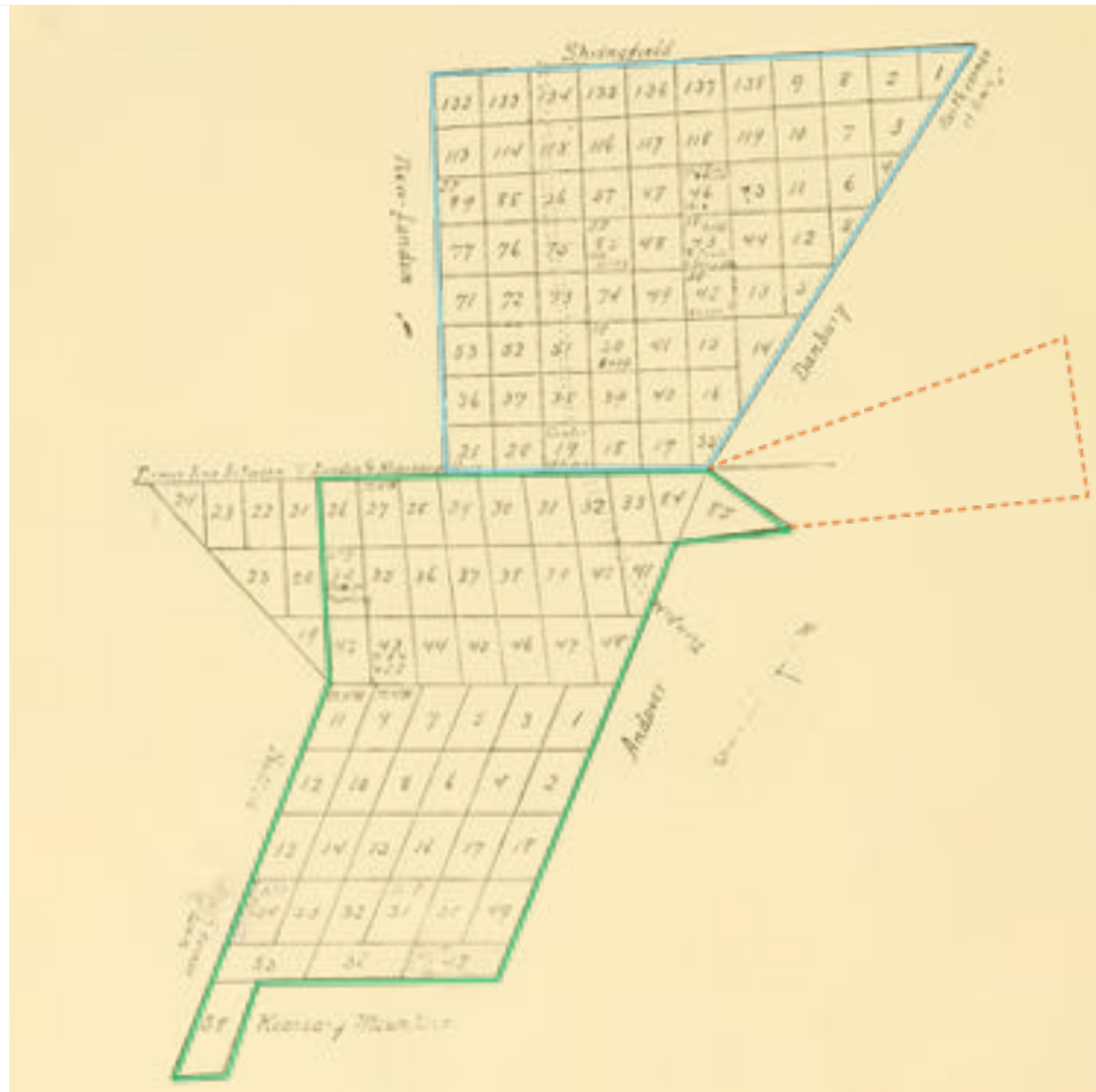


### New Hampshire in 1796

- Wilmot is absent.
- Hill is part of New Chester
- Springfield is called Protectworth
- Newbury is called Fisherfield.
- The Mink Hills are shown well north of their actual location in Warner.

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Making  
One Town  
Out of portions  
Of Two towns &  
Part of one gore





## Original townships

Most incorporated towns started with a township as the kernel and acquired or sold parts of other townships and towns until they settled on (more or less) final boundaries.

Only rarely, as with Sutton, did the boundaries remain just as they were surveyed in the 18th century. (orange outline at right)



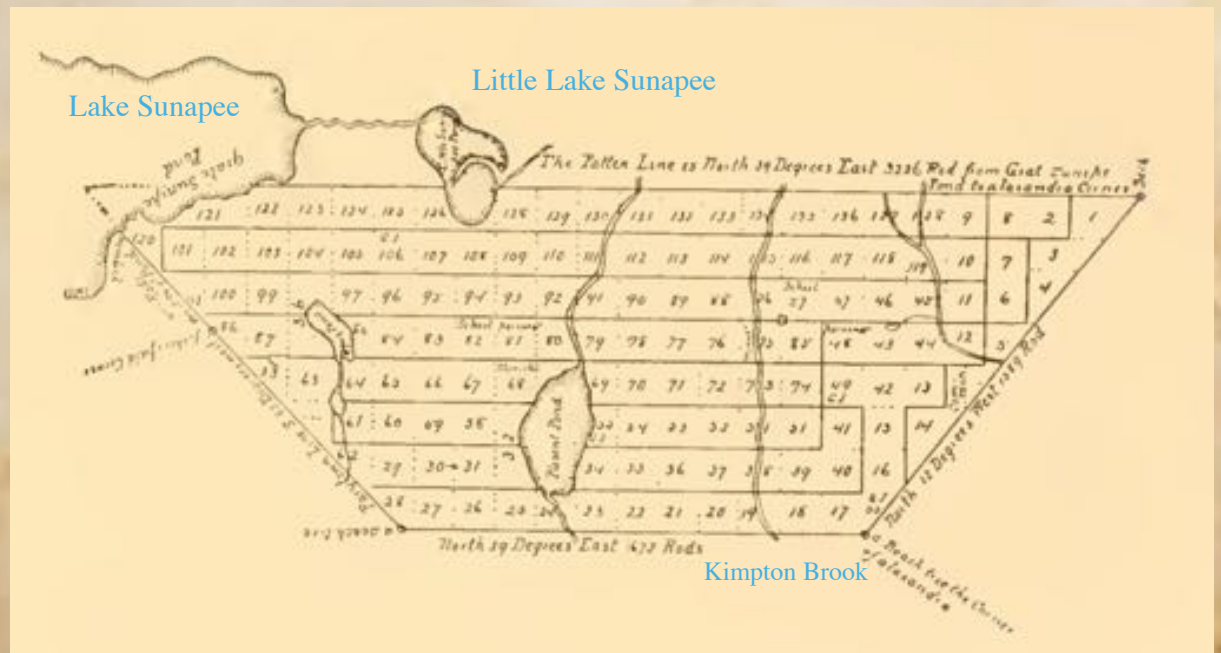
*"Township Grants of Lands in New Hampshire" by A.S. Batchellor*

## Alexandria addition

In 1753 the charter for “Heidelberg” was issued and then revoked after settlers failed to develop the land.

Reganted in 1773 with altered boundaries as the “Alexandria Addition,” it was incorporated as “New London” in 1779.

28 years later, Wilmot was subtracted from the



*“Township Grants of Lands in New Hampshire” by A.S. Batchellor*

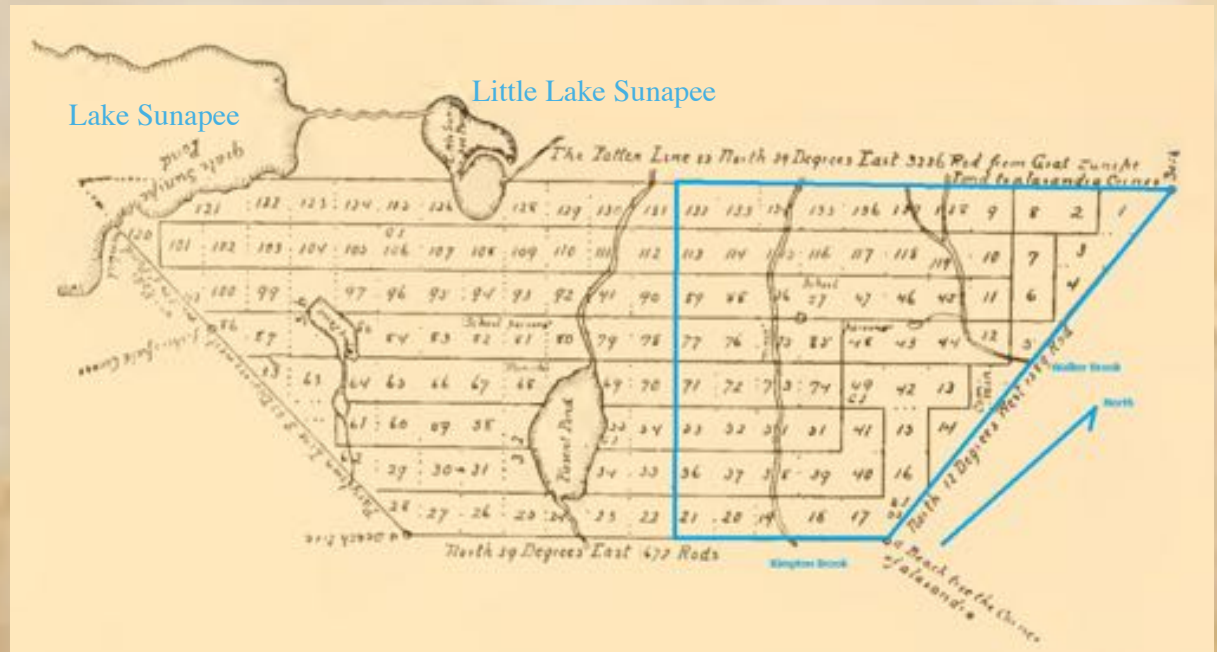


## Making north Wilmot

Four factors precipitated  
the formation of Wilmot:

1. Construction of the  
4th New Hampshire  
Turnpike
2. Difficult geography
3. Feuding Baptists
4. Federalists vs.  
Republicans

In 1807 the Free-will



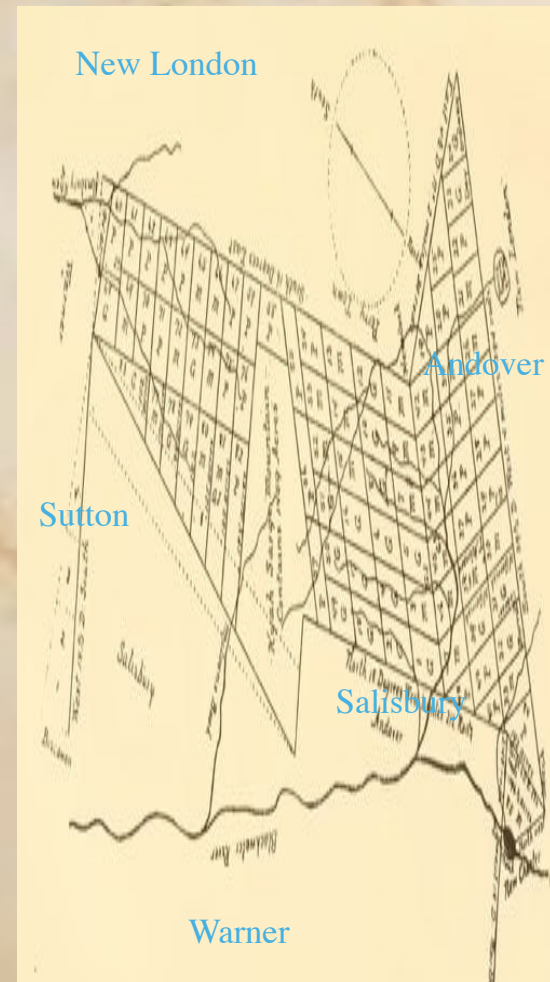
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Plus,  
part of a gore

Gores are geographic areas  
not incorporated into  
townships.

They are created by **errors in  
surveying**, caused by the  
curvature of the Earth and  
local topography

Whether surveyed lines leave  
a gap, or overlap, the area  
between the lines is **not  
included in either township.**



*"Township Grants of Lands in New Hampshire" by A.S. Batchellor*

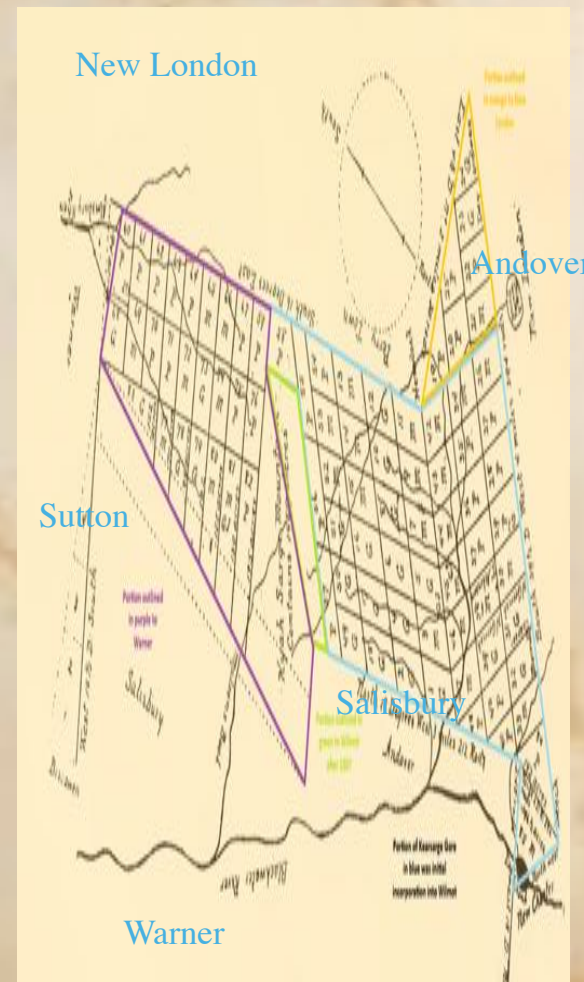


## Disassembling the Kearsarge gore

The **yellow** triangle was  
annexed to New London in  
**1793**.

The **blue** polygon became the  
southern half of Wilmot in  
**1807**, with the **green** trapezoid  
on top of Kearsarge annexed a  
few years later.

The **purple** polygon was  
annexed to Warner in **1818**



*"Township Grants of Lands in New Hampshire" by A.S. Batchellor*

## Wilmot in 1816

This map shows Wilmot made up of the northern part of Kearsarge Gore and the northern portion of New London.

The southern portion of the gore had not yet been annexed to Warner.

The western portion of New Chester had not yet been annexed to Wilmot.



*1816 Map of New Hampshire*



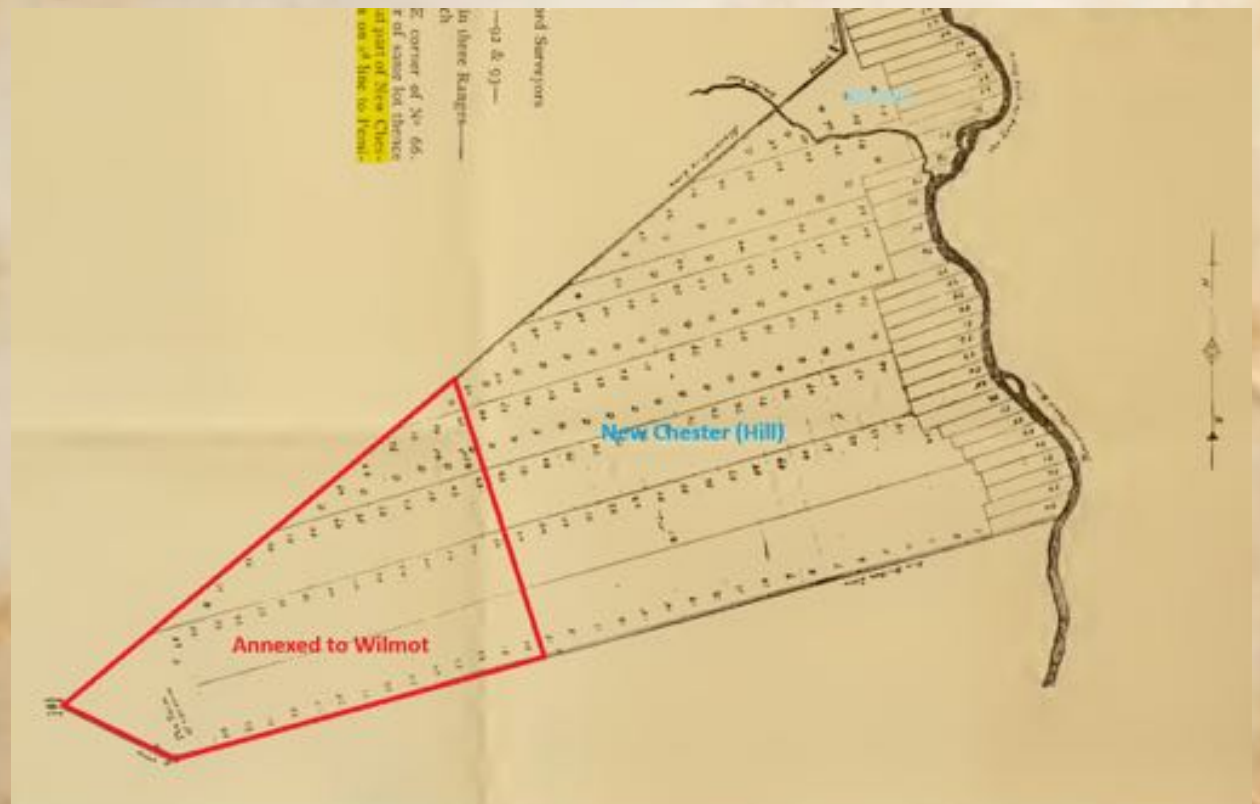
## Disassembling new Chester

In 1788 Bridgewater was incorporated out of New Chester.

In 1819 the town of Bristol was set off from New Chester and Bridgewater and incorporated.

In 1832 Wilmot annexed a portion of the township of New Chester.

In 1837 the remaining southern part of New Chester was renamed Hill after Gov. Joshua Hill.



*"Township Grants of Lands in New Hampshire" by A.S. Batchellor*

## East Wilmot

The **yellow** polygon outlines what was severed from New Chester and annexed to Wilmot in **1832**.

This last addition to Wilmot was called “East Wilmot.”

It included much more of Ragged Mountain than is now part of Wilmot.



*1858 Map of New Hampshire*

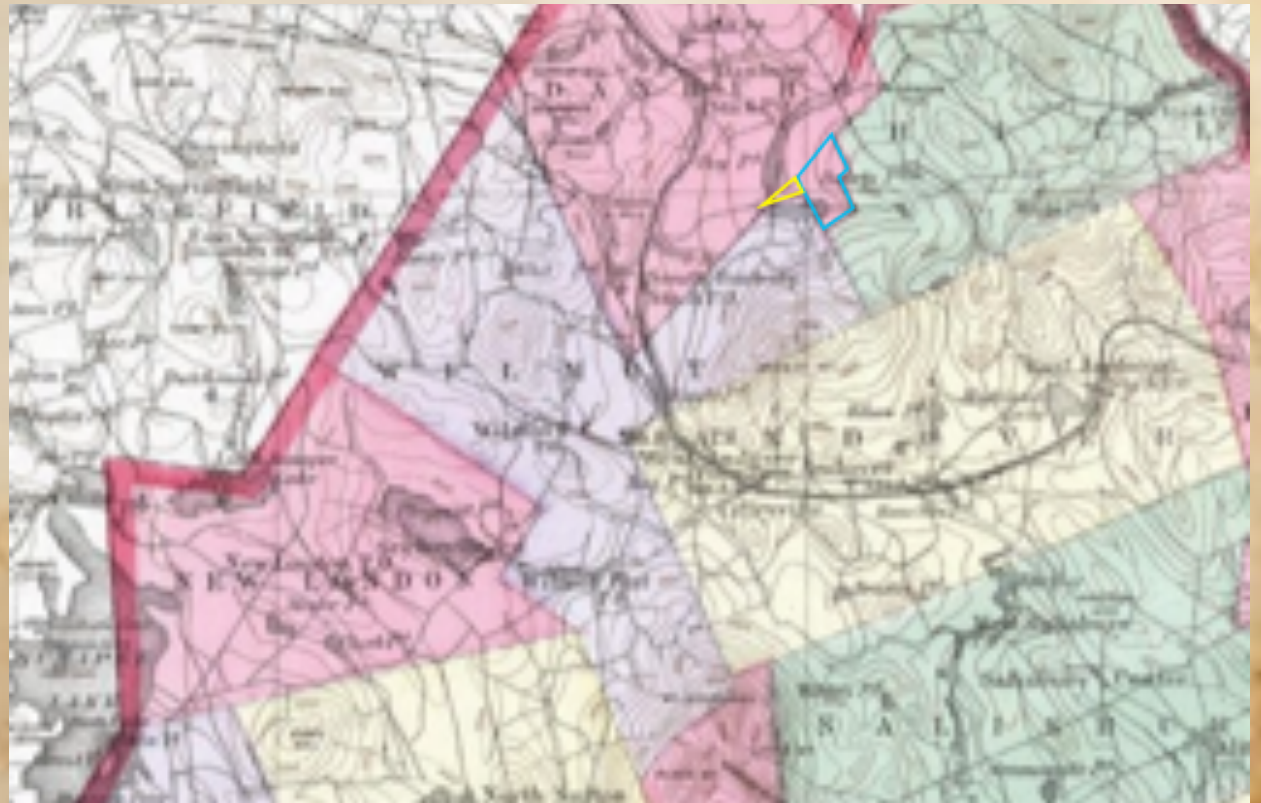


## Shrinking Wilmot

In 1848, land belonging to George W. Dudley and Archibald Ford was severed from Wilmot and annexed to Danbury. (triangular notch)

In 1858 a portion of Hill was annexed to Danbury (blue).

In 1878 (a year after this map was published) most of East Wilmot was

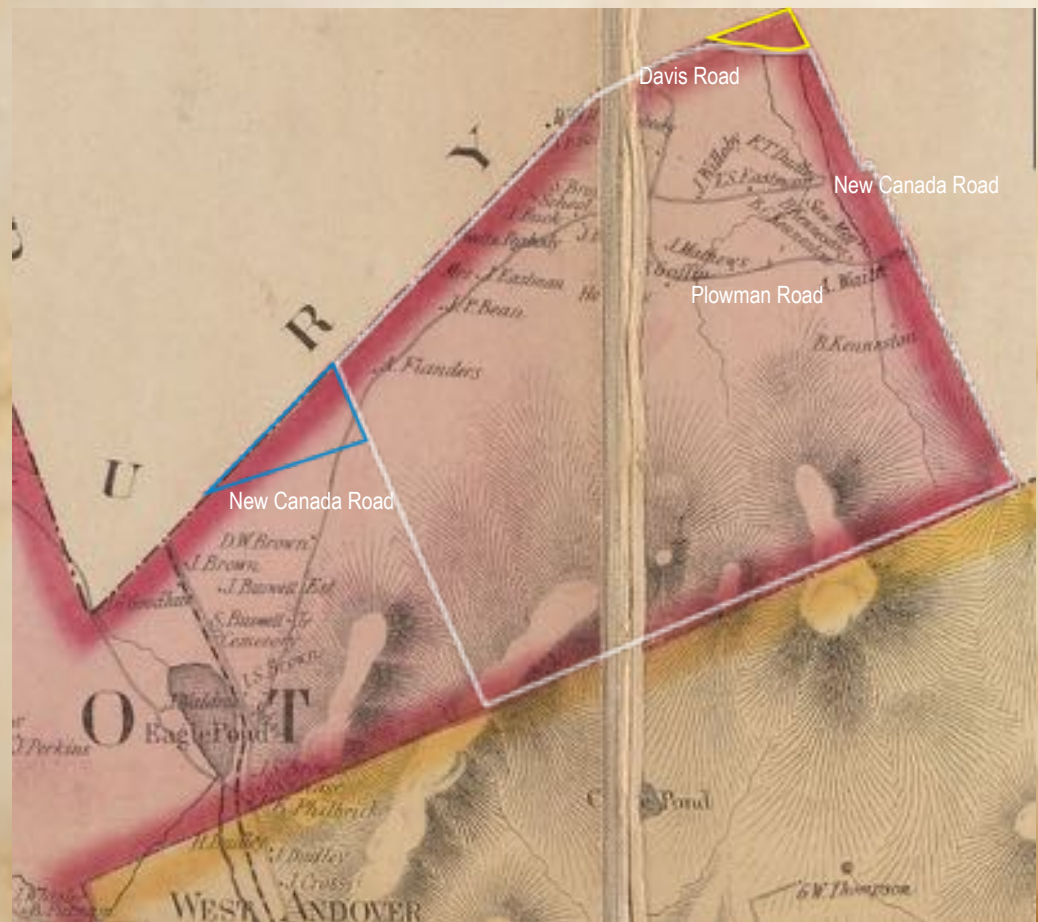


*1877 Map of New Hampshire*

# expanding Danbury

In 1858 a portion of Hill was severed and annexed to Danbury (yellow triangle).

This 1858 map of Merrimack County shows the homesteads of many East Wilmot residents who opted to become Danbury residents in 1878 (white



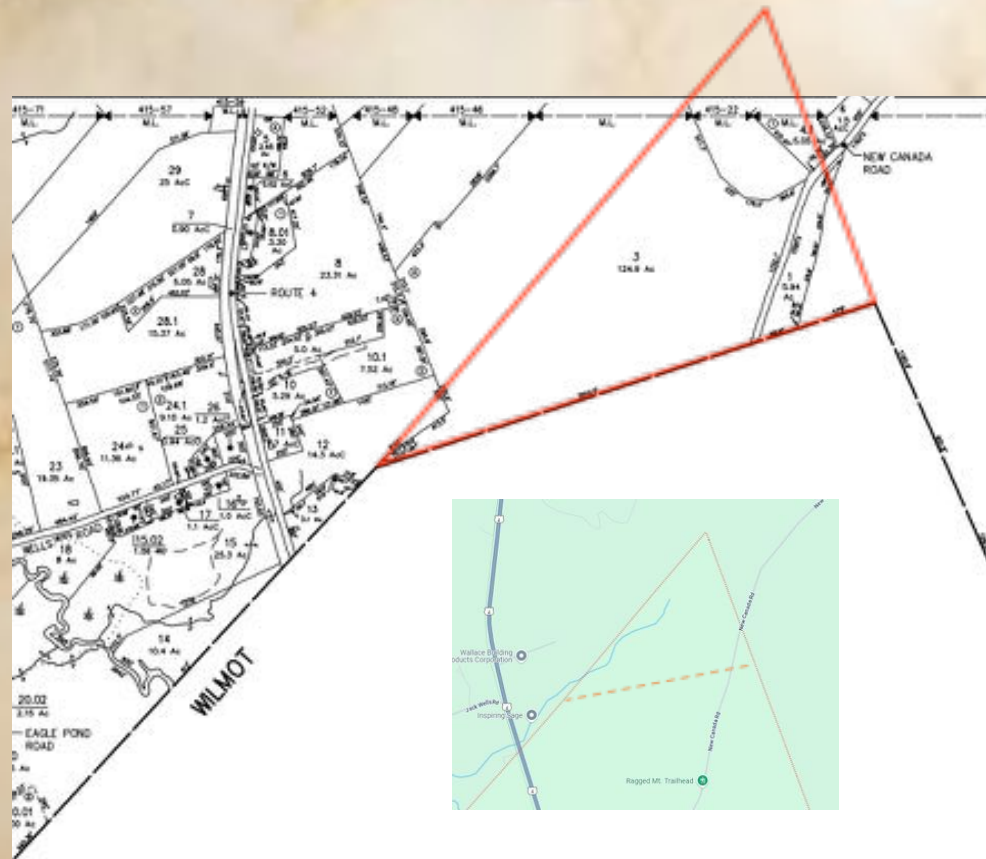
*1860 Map of Merrimack County*



The tax maps of Wilmot and Danbury show the northern boundary of East Wilmot has a bent line.

**All other maps** show it to be a straight line, which follows the historical boundary between New Chester and Alexandria townships.

The area in question is ~100 acres.



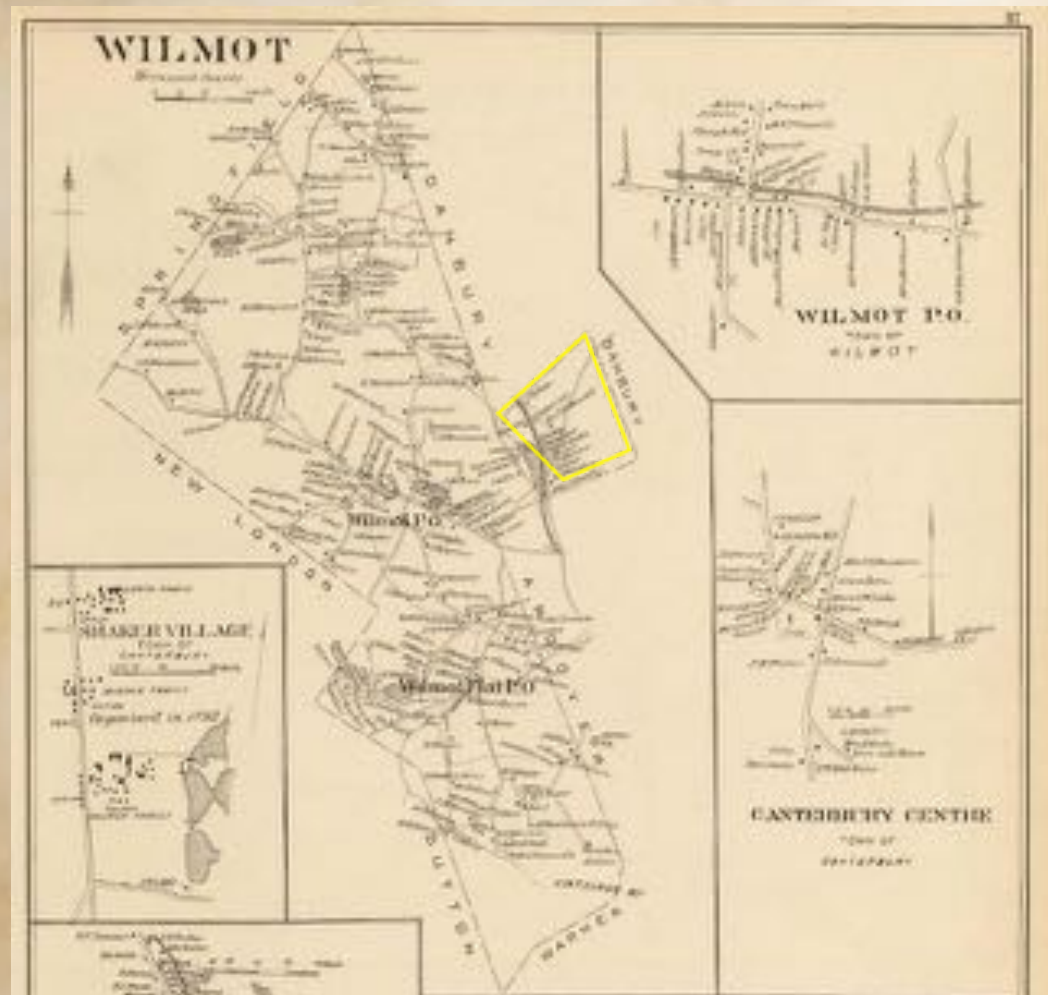
*Tax map of Danbury and (inset) Google map with tax map line dotted.*

## modern Wilmot

Much of Ragged Mountain became part of Danbury by annexation.

After 1878 Wilmot settled into the boundaries that it still has today.

On the 1892 map (yellow polygon) East Wilmot is considerably smaller than it was after the initial 1832 annexation.

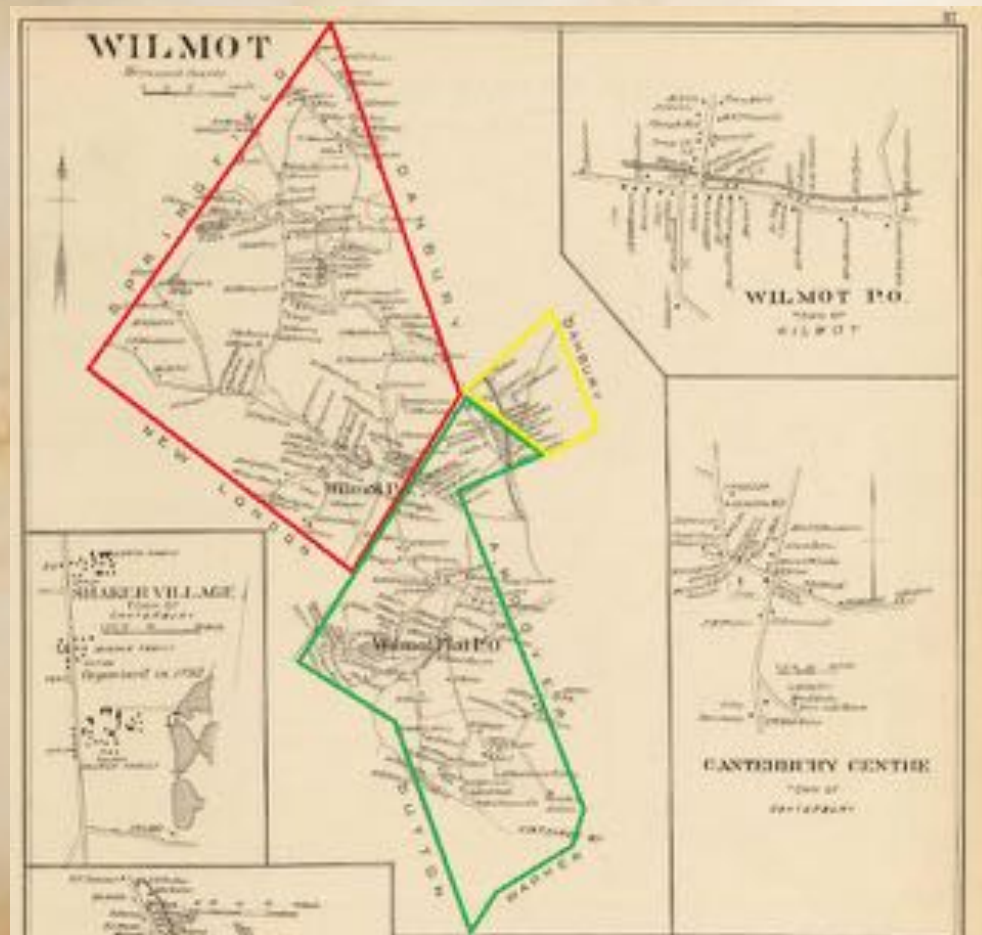


1892 Map of Wilmot



summarizing Wilmot  
The red and green polygons  
represent the portions of the  
town that were drawn from  
New London and the  
Kearsarge Gore,  
respectively.

The yellow trapezoid is  
what remains of what was  
originally annexed from  
New Chester.



*1892 Map of Wilmot*

## Walking the Boundaries RSA 51:2 Perambulation of Town Lines.

The lines between the towns in this state shall be perambulated, and the marks and bounds renewed, once in every 7 years **forever**, by the selectmen of the towns, or by such persons as they shall in writing appoint for that purpose.



*Perambulating the Danbury/Wilmot line in 2023*





- The meeting of Andover, Wilmot, and Danbury (AWD) on Buswell Ridges of Ragged Mountain
- This has been the corner of the three towns only since 1878



