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ANNUAL REPORT
For the Year 1971



City of
Rochester, New Hampshire

ROCHESTER TAX RATE

The tax rate for 1972 is \$43.50, an increase of \$3.00 per thousand.

1972

Schools	—	\$25.94
Municipal	—	14.95
County	—	2.61
		<u>\$43.50</u>

*University of
New Hampshire
Library*



1972

Members of the
Rochester City Government

and

Reports of the Affairs
for the Year

1971

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MAYOR JOHN SHAW

MESSAGE
from
Mayor John Shaw

Since I was a small boy I have always been charmed with the monument to Amos Main, located at Central Square in Rochester.

I admire the monument, but I admire the life and deeds of Amos Main a great deal more. Many people know so little about his personality and his character that I thought it would be appropriate to reprint something from the archives of the City of Rochester reports on the occasion of our 250th Anniversary. I have taken the liberty to change and paraphrase in some instances.

“In the early days of our country, church and state were so closely allied that the establishment of a church was the actual beginning of any community. The proprietors of Rochester had voted in April, 1730, to build a meeting-house, which should be “forty feet long, thirty-five feet wide, and eighteen feet stud.” A tax of three pounds was laid upon each share to pay for its erection. The meeting-house was built the following year on the top of Haven’s Hill near the fork of the roads, as marked by the tablet placed by Mary Torr Chapter, D.A.R.

“No minister, however, was provided for, to do the preaching. The proprietors were long on promises and voting to supply this lack but decidedly short when it came to paying over the taxes needed for the purpose. They thought the settlers ought to bear the expense, but the settlers were poor. Finally, the matter was taken to the General Assembly. It required several petitions and acts of the General Assembly to attain the final satisfactory result. When local self government was at last granted and power to tax non-resident land-owners, the problem was solved.

“It is hard today to realize what the church meant in that year 1737. It was the very heart and center of the town. The land was valuable in proportion to its proximity to the church. It was the only public meeting place. It was the political, moral and social, as well as religious center of the community. And therefore, the erection of the meeting-house in 1737 marked the actual beginning of Rochester, and the calling of Amos Main to become its minister in May, 1737, was the completion of the organization . . .

“Amos Main was a Harvard graduate, a man of great learning, bravery, wisdom and personality, laboring here from 1737 until the day of his death in 1760. He left an impress not only on Rochester but all the surrounding country which never died.

“He was not only minister of the Gospel but physician, lawyer and general adviser. In fact, he was the leading man of the community. It is in view of this that the statue to his memory now standing in

Central Square, one of the finest pieces of statuary to be found in New England, is exceedingly appropriate . .

“We should realize that it is not as a clergyman of a particular religious denomination that Parson Main is so honored, but as the real founder of Rochester, in the sense to which I have just referred.

“Parson Main’s salary was fixed at the equivalent of thirty pounds sterling, or about \$150, a part of which he should take in such articles as he had occasion for, at the money price. The town agreed to build him a good frame house forty feet long, twenty feet wide and two stories high, wherever he might elect and whenever he should call for it. By the original charter of the town, too, a whole share of the land was to be reserved for the first settled minister.

“So that, altogether, the remuneration, as conditions were then, was not nearly as poor as is that of many a minister of today. Like some modern churches, however, the town got behind on the minister’s salary and did not take action to build the house agreed upon until 1744. This house built for Parson Main was his personal property. The parsonage belonging to the town, which still stands on the very summit of the hill, was not erected until the fall of 1760, after Parson Main’s death.”

Thus Rochester was founded, if not upon a rock, at least upon a magnificent hilltop.

Thank you,

JOHN SHAW
Mayor