



First fire truck was a hand tub bought in 1892 from Willowdale Mill. Hamilton.
Photo Hamilton Historical Society.

History of

Hamilton Firsts

History begins with the writing of it.

Before that, everything is hearsay, assumption, myth and folklore.

Hamilton's history begins with the preserved written records of Ipswich, when there is mention of places, people and events in the parish known as the Hamlet. The Ipswich records contain many references to the Hamlet, including when the English company granted the first land in the Hamlet to freemen, the name of the first doctor, location of the first meetinghouse, and much more.

The Hamlet, in 1793, became the Town of Hamilton. Since then, beginning with the first town clerk, Hamilton's history has been preserved. Later, diaries add more historical information. Newspaper articles, letters and videos also help fill the reservoir of Hamilton's history.

Note: *Many of the "firsts" that follow come from secondary sources, i.e., undocumented references in literature to historical events. Primary sources include newspaper articles, Hamilton's Annual Town Reports, and statements of individuals from the time of events.*

When	What	Who/Where	Comments	Sources
1973	911 Emergency Number	---	Replaced HO8-4421	1973 HATR
1910	Airplane Flight in New Eng.	Chebacco Lake	Took off & landed on ice.	Changing Town
1797	Auditorium	Town hall, 2 nd floor	Had a stage and balcony.	1798 newspapers
1960	Bank	Salem Five Cents Savings Bank	2 Main St. (<i>now Bay Rd.</i>)	homefacts.com›Banks› Massachusetts ›Essex County›Hamilton
1988	Bank Robbery	25 Bay Bank, RR Ave.	Broke in during night thru roof	Hamilton Police Dept. records.
1887	Barbershop	Heinrich Bernhardt Smith Block, RR Ave.	Moved from Wenham, Main St.	1886-87 Wenham Business Directory
1934	Baseball Field	Union St., Dorothy Winthrop Memorial Lot	Now Hamilton-Wenham Library	1934 HATR
1920	Basketball Court	Smith Hall on Railroad Ave.	1923, court opened on 2 nd floor of town hall.	1920 HATR

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1793	Birth, in Hamilton	James Cole	April 27	Hamilton Vital Records
1900<	Bowling Alley	Chebacco House	Was in former barn on property	Sue McLaughlin
1935	Bus Service	Hemeon Motor Coach, between Beverly depot & Essex ctr.	Began after streetcar service ended. Service ended early 1960s.	hwww.chicagorailfan.com/bossub
1794	By-Laws	Town freemen	Called Rules & Regulations	Changing Town
1985	Cable TV	Town	133 miles of coaxial cables, 296 pole mounted electronic amplifying devices. Cost \$1.8 million.	1985 HATR
1706	Cemetery Burial	Unknown, Dane lot	---	Essex County Deeds
1902	Cemetery Commissioners	George K. Knowlton Frank C. Norton George H. Gibney	MGL Title XVI, Chap. 114, Sec. 22	1903 HATR
2006	Chinese Restaurant	Jumbo House 30 Railroad Ave.	Left in 2015.	Several people.
1714	Church	Corner Main St. and Elm St. (<i>Now Cutler Rd</i>)	Designated Third Church of Christ in Ipswich; 28 members	Essex County History, Chap. XCVIII
1714	Church Pastor	Rev. Samuel Wigglesworth	Served until 1768.	Chronicle Country Town; Municipal History of Essex County in Massachusetts, Chap. XX, Hamilton
1960	Conservation Commission	Nathaniel C. Nash, Edward Fielding Jr., Edward A. Sammel, Mary M. McGray, Charles H. Shackelford	Protect town's water shed resources, MGL Title VII, Chap. 40, Sec. 8C	1960 HATR
1800	Democrat	Dr. Enoch Faulkner	House at corner Main and Essex, known as Faulkner's Comer.	Essex County History, Chap. XCVIII
1917	Dentist	Dr. John C. King, Smith Block, RR Ave.	Two days each week; main office in Boston.	Frank Newhall, Hamilton Times Past 1990
1932	Diner	Ralph W. Armstrong Depot Square	Left in 1958. Moved to Middleton, Rte. 114, behind Richardson's dairy.	Ellena Foote interview, 1997, Hamilton Historical Society.
1710	Doctor	Rev. Samuel Wigglesworth	Also church pastor	Essex County History, Chap XCVIII
1891	Drug Store	Horace E. Andrews	Smith Building, Railroad Ave.	Changing Town
2001	Elevator	Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary	Preceded H-W Library by a year.	Hamilton Building Dept.
1959	Emergency Tel. #	HO8-4421	Emergency Fire & Police Reporting Center established	1959 HATR
1928	Excise Tax, Vehicles	---	90% list price year manufactured. 60% in 2nd year. 40% in 3rd year. 25% in 4 th year. 10% then on.	1928 HATR
1998	Female Fireman	Susan Snow	Half-time. Full-time in 1999.	1998 HATR
1921	Female Police Officer	Mary Frear & Fay Mathewson.	Frear elected constable. Mathewson appointed a police officer	Hamilton's Constabulary & Police from Its Founding,
1984	Female Selectman	Susan D. Wiltshire	Special election: replaced John K. Waters, Jr. who resigned; moved to Maryland.	1984 HATR
1858	Female Teacher	All districts	For winter and summer terms.	Hist. Ipswich Public Schools

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1921	Female Voter	Lydia L. Haraden	1919 Suffrage Act; Librarian for 34 yrs. (1919-53)	Salem News, 07-01-1956
1916	Finance & Advisory Committee	Five members, appointed by Moderator	Two serve until 1917, two until 1918 & 1 until 1919, 1 until 1920 & 1 until 1921,	1916 HATR
1915	Fire Chief	Robert Robertson, Jr.	Called Chief Engineer	1915 HATR
1896	Fire Company	Willow St.	Volunteers; 15 members; horse-drawn hook & ladder	Changing Town
1915	Fire Department	Willow St.	Consisted of a Chief Engineer & 4 Assistants	1915 HATR
1931	Fire Hydrants	4 on Railroad Ave. business shop section	Water from water tank tower at depot.	1930 HATR
1890	Fire Station	Willow St.	Land leased from Angive M. Adams	1890 HATR
1892	Fire Truck, Hand Powered	Fire tub Willow St.	Bought from Willowdale Mills (<i>was on Winthrop St.</i>)	Hamilton Historical Society photo caption.
1916	Fire Truck, Motorized	Ford Chemical Pumper	Still at fire station	1916 HATR
1931	Football Field	Dorothy Winthrop Memorial field behind the high school	6-man field, 80x40 yards	Hamilton Historical Society
1919	Garbage Pickup	South Hamilton district	1 st Monday of month,	1919 HATR
1955	Garbage Truck	Board of Health	Every other week collections	1955 HATR
1925	Gas Station	Merrill Cummings, 86 Main St. (<i>now 19 Railroad Ave.</i>)	Became a Shell station 1935. Closed 1979.	Hamilton Historical Society photo caption.
1894	Golf Course	Myopia Hunt Club	6,539 yds., par 72	Wikipedia
1638	Granted Land	Matthew & John Whipple About 240 acres, through which Old Bay Rd. later ran.	Came from Bocking, Essex, Eng.	Essex County History, Chap XCVIII. Ray Whipple (2016).
1989<	Harbormaster	Bowdie Russell, Chebacco Lake	Chebacco Lake is a Great Pond and harbormaster required.	MGL, Tittle XV, Chap. 102, Sect 19
1898	Hardware Store	Adams building, Willow St.	Moved 1900 to brick block building (<i>now Black Cow building</i>)	Beverly Citizen, Jun. 25, 1900
1908	High School Building	South School, Railroad Ave.	2 classrooms, small laboratory in basement, 2 very small coatrooms	1909 HATR
1907	High School Classes	South School addition Railroad Ave.	16 periods per week of prepared work per pupil.	1907 HATR
1911	High School Graduation	South School Railroad Ave.	16 graduates	1911 HATR
1907	High School Principal	Ellery C. Polk	Resigned 1908.	1907 HATR
1869	Hotel	Hamilton House, 1020 Main St.	Tavern on first floor	Changing Town
1936	House Numbers	---	Part \$16,000 appropriated to provide work for town's unemployed.	1936 HATR
1797	Jail Cell	Town hall basement.	Now a supplies closet.	1798 newspapers
1965	Junior High School Building	Corner of Linden St. & Union St.	Former high school. 396 students.	1966 HATR
1938	Kindergarten	Mollie Tyack, teacher, South School, Railroad Ave.	Private, 3 days/week	1938 HATR

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1891	Librarian	Annie E. Woodbury	Salary \$25, to \$50 in 1892	Changing Town
1891	Library	Room in home of John L. Woodbury, 588 Main St.	First day, 22 people (<i>population 961</i>) applied for library cards, and 20 books issued.	Changing Town
1713	Meetinghouse	Corner Main St. & Elm St. (<i>now Cutler Rd.</i>)	38 ft. wide, 50 ft. long. Windows were small diamond-shaped glass.	Municipal History of Essex County in Massachusetts Chap XX, Hamilton
1731	Meetinghouse Bell	Hung on pine tree, northwest of meetinghouse, until belfry built.	Purchased in England for £60.	History of Ipswich, Essex and Hamilton
1868	Memorial Day	Hamilton Cemetery	Called Decoration Day	Changing Town
1961	Million \$ Budget	\$1,095,718.03	\$982,869.67 in 1960	1960 HATR
1793	Moderator	Nathaniel Whipple	Appointed at first town meeting. Great grandson of Capt. John Whipple	Essex County History, Chap XCVIII
1908	Moderator Elected	C. Augustus Norwood	1-yr. term	1908 HATR
1920s	Movie Theater	Hamilton-Wenham Grange Building, Railroad Ave.	Thursday evenings	Frank Newhall, Hamilton Times Past
1895	Newspaper	Wenham-Hamilton Times	Weekly. 1899 had 24 subscribers in Hamilton.	Library of Congress
1988	Optical Scanning Voter Ballots	Town hall	Optical scanning machine for counting marked ballots	1988 HATR
1907	Park Commissioners	George K. Knowlton, Chair; Rev. James J. Goodacre; & Frank C. Norton.	MGL, Title VII, Chap. 44, authorizing towns to lay out public parks within their limits.	1907 HATR
1945	Police Car	Ford Police Special	Car 45 parked in front of Hamilton Hardware at the Depot	1947 HATR
1913	Police Chief	Joseph Merrill	Served until 1915	1913 HATR
1927	Police Officer, Full-time	Edward Frederick	Police Chief	1927 HATR
1797	Police Station	Town Hall, 1 st floor	Now tax office.	1798 newspapers
1803	Post Office	Brown's tavern	Elm St. (<i>now Cutler Road</i>)	Changing Town
1803	Postmaster, Town	Daniel Brown	Brown's Tavern on Elm St. (<i>now Cutler Road</i>)	Essex County History, Chap XCVIII
1985	Proposition 2-1/2 Override	---	G.L. Chap. 59, Sec. 21C	1985 Hamilton Annual Town Report (HATR)
1989	Recycling	---	Discussions began 1974.	1989 HATR
1900	Saddle Store	London Harness Brick Block, Main St.	Run by Osgood J. Kimball. Sold horse and polo equipment.	Changing Town
1730	School	Corner Main St. & Elm St. (<i>now Cutler Rd.</i>)	One room. Boys only.	Chronicle Country Town
1914	School Bus	West district students to South School	John R. Mann, driver, paid \$2.25/ day.	1914 HATR
1730	School Committee	Capt. Matthew Whipple, Thomas Brown, Dea. Matthew Whipple	School was on corner Main St. & Elm St. (<i>now Cutler Rd.</i>).	Essex County History, Chap. XCVIII
1944	School Lunch Program	Lunches sold for 12¢ and milk for 2¢	Federal government gave schools 7¢/meal and 2¢/bottle of milk.	1947 HATR
1924	School Nurse	Helen E. Purdy	Part-time	1924 HATR
1730	School Teacher	Joseph Secomb	Taught for 4 months.	Chronicle Country Town

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1910	Schools Superintendent	Andrew S. Thompson	\$339.60/yr. salary	Changing Town
1793	Selectmen	Jonathan Lamson, Daniel Brown and Joseph Poland, Jr.	One year terms	Municipal History of Essex County in Mass- achusetts, Chap XX, Hamilton
1755	Servicemen, Killed in War	Antipas Dodge, John Jones, Joseph Symonds	At Lake George, NY. During French and Indian War	Essex County History, Chap XCVIII
1908	Sidewalk, Concrete	Railroad Ave.	From Main to Willow, south side. Sidewalks at time had gravel surface.	1908 HATR
1917	Sidewalk, Tar	By Main St. (<i>now Bay Rd.</i>)	Replaced gravel sidewalks.	1917 HATR
1641	Street	Way to Ipswich, now Bay Rd.	Followed an old Indian path lead- ing to what is now Ipswich, from Salem.	Essex County His- tory, Chap XCVIII
1902	Street Lights, Electric	Main St.	Replaced naptha lights	Changing Town
1847	Street Signs	Main St.	Called guideboards	1847 HATR
1903	Street, Paved	Main St.	Macadam	1903 HATR
1886	Streetcar Service	Naumkeag Street Railway	Along Main St.; Railway Ave. and on to Asbury Grove	Changing Town
1803	Tavern	Brown's, corner Elm St. (<i>now Cutler Rd.</i>) & Main St.	Still standing.	Changing Town
1872	Taxi Service	Brought people to Chebac- co Lake hotels from train station at depot.	Carriages, provided by local far- mers, available for small fee.	Lake Croft Inn, flyer
1962	Taxi Stand	Amos Fuller, Jr. North end of train station	Ended 1973.	Edward Haraden
1872	Telegraph Office	Train Station Depot	Alerted stationmaster of approa- ching trains.	---
1946	Tennis Courts, Town	Patton Park	Gift from Frederick and daughter Catherine Winthrop	1946 HATR
1892	Three-Story Building	Smith Block, Railroad Ave.	Assembly hall on 3 rd floor.	---
1992	Town Administrator	Candace Wheeler	Previously Planning Coordinator	2010 HATR
1793	Town Clerk	Lemuel Brown	1793-1812.	Changing Town
1907	Town Electricity	Main St.	Beverly Gas & Electric Co.	1907 HATR
1918	Town Hall Telephone	Bell System	Total charges for year were \$1.49	1918 HATR
2009	Town Manager	Michael Lombardo	Replaced former Town Admin- istrator, Candace Wheeler	2009 HATR
1793	Town Meeting	Meetinghouse Basement Vestry	Held for organization of town government, Aug. 1, 1793.	Essex County History, Chap XCVIII
1913	Town Park	Central Park, Main St.	Now Cutler Park on Bay Rd.	1913 HATR
1962	Town Pool	Bay Road	Built by A. P. Gardner Post , American Legion	1962 HATR
1991	Town Union	Full-time employees town hall, library and Emerg- ency Center.	Joined American Federation of State, County and Municipal Em- ployees.	1991 HATR
1939	Town Water	Installed by John MacDonald Construction	\$198,1000. Funds from 1938 Federal Government Public Works Administration Appropriation Act	1939 HATR
1968✓	Traffic Light	589 Bay Rd., front Harold	Pedestrian activated for crossing	1968 HATR

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		Daley's store & post office	Main St. (<i>now Bay Rd.</i>).	
1919	Traffic Ticket	No name given	No reason given	1919 HATR
1839	Train Service	Station was house of depot master, Daniel Rust. Now open lot across Cumberland Farms service station.	Eastern Railroad line to Portsmouth, NH, from Boston.	Changing Town
1793	Treasurer	Nathaniel Whipple	Appointed at first town meeting. Great grandson of Capt. John Whipple	Essex County History, Chap XCVIII
1903	Tree Warden	Otis F. Brown	Also Town Clerk & Keeper of Lockup	1903 HATR
1924	Veterans Memorial	Soldiers' Green next to church on Main St.	Memorializes soldiers, sailors & marines of all wars	1924 HATR
1896	Voting Booths	Town Hall meeting room	Paper ballots, counted in basement	Changing Town
1908	Voting, Private Ballot	Town Hall	Called Australian Ballot	Changing Town
1997	Water Ban, Mandatory	---	Even with ban, consumption increased over prior year.	1997 HATR

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