

## **A Brief History of Fair Haven, Vermont**

The town of Fair Haven received its charter from the General Assembly of the state meeting in Manchester on October 27, 1779. The grant was made in consideration of the sum of “six thousand nine hundred and thirty pounds continental currency” to Capt. Ebenezer Allen of Tinmouth, Col. Isaac Clark of Castleton, and seventy-four others, among whom were Governor Thomas Chittenden and his wife, Ira Allen, Stephen R. Bradley, and other prominent men. All pine timber suitable for masts and spars of a navy were reserved for the use and benefit of the freemen of the state. There were also reserved and appropriated for public uses one share for a seminary or college, one for the first settled minister in the town, one for the benefit and support of the ministry, one for the County Grammar Schools, and one for the support of the schools in the town.

It is not certain when the first residents arrived in Fair Haven. Some people had already settled here when the charter was granted. Oliver Cleveland, who came from Killingworth, Connecticut, seems to be the only one of these original settlers represented in the charter. Other original proprietors who became settlers were Col. Matthew Lyon, Philip Priest, Israel Trowbridge, Derrick Carner, and Eleazer Dudley. Each proprietor was required to “plant and cultivate ten acres of land and build a house at least eighteen square feet on the floor or have one family settled on each respective right within the term of five years next after the circumstances of the present war between Great Britain and America will admit of a settlement with safety.”

The first meeting of the proprietors to organize under their charter was held at the house of Nehemiah Hoit of Castleton Corners in 1780. It was voted to make a division of one hundred acres to each proprietor’s right with five acres of highways.

The original grant included what is now the town of West Haven. By an Act of the General Assembly in October, 1792, in Rutland, the west line of Fair Haven as it now is, was established, and West Haven received all the privileges of a separate town, excepting that the two towns were to meet together and choose one representative. In 1823 the General Assembly decided that each of the towns should have its own representative. At the time of the division Fair Haven had 375 residents and West Haven, 545.