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Schoolhouse has remarkable connection to the world

By **ROBERT B. STEPHENSON**
Jaffrey Historical Society

In the 19th century Jaffrey had 13 school districts with each served by a one-room schoolhouse. Of these, five survive today as residences, and one, The Little Red Schoolhouse (No. 11), stands on the Common beside the Jaffrey Meetinghouse.

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Yet Schoolhouse No. 1 has a remarkable connection to the world beyond little Jaffrey, a connection that could never be guessed at.

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He was one of the founders of what became the Raytheon Corp., and was an early advocate for the creation of the National Science Foundation. He was president of the Carnegie Institution, chairman of Merck & Co., sat on numerous cor-

that he had fitted up as a laboratory and study to ponder such things as atom bombs, analog computers and precursors of the worldwide web.

In the doorway he might have paused and looked to the east over the pasture land he then owned. If he were to do so today he would see a major industrial complex, Millipore Corp., founded by his son John in 1954. Remarkable connections

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It was moved and restored in 1960 to its original schoolhouse appearance by the Jaffrey Historical Society. Schoolhouse No. 1, on Route 124 (the old Third New Hampshire Turnpike) at the corner of Prescott Road, was built in 1816 by Oliver Prescott to replace the original 1790 structure that had burned two years before. From the exterior there is nothing remarkable about this particular building,

or about old schoolhouses still around and converted to other uses.

Yet Schoolhouse No. 1 has a remarkable connection to the world beyond little Jaffrey, a connection that could never be guessed at.

Across the street from the former schoolhouse stands The Benjamin Prescott Inn. This was once owned by Dr. Vannevar Bush (1890-1974). Bush, a distinguished engineer and scientist, was a seasonal Jaffrey resident from around 1937 until the early 1960s. He is probably most famous as the initiator and administrator of the Manhattan Project, the secret World War II effort to develop the first atomic bomb and who oversaw an astonishing 130,000 employees. Dr. Bush had a long and close association with MIT, as a student,

faculty member, and administrator (Dean of the School of Engineering and Vice President of the Institute).

He was one of the founders of what became the Raytheon Corp., and was an early advocate for the creation of the National Science Foundation. He was president of the Carnegie Institution, chairman of Merck & Co., sat on numerous corporate boards including AT&T, and served on many scientific and engineering committees. Probably no more acclaimed personage ever spent time in Jaffrey.

So it is easy to imagine that when Vannevar Bush was in Jaffrey, away from the stress and commitments of Cambridge, Washington and the world, he might cross the road to the old Schoolhouse No. 1

that he had fitted up as a laboratory and study to ponder such things as atom bombs, analog computers and precursors of the worldwide web.

In the doorway he might have paused and looked to the east over the pasture land he then owned. If he were to do so today he would see a major industrial complex, Millipore Corp., founded by his son John in 1954. Remarkable connections, indeed.

Articles are contributed by individual historical organizations that are part of the Monadnock Historical Societies Forum. For further information, please contact Tom Haynes at the Historical Society of Cheshire County at 352-1895 or visit the Forum's webpage at www.hsc-nh.org/roundtable/default.cfm.