

The Basics of Probate Records

Virtual Winter Stay-at-Home 2023

David Allen Lambert, Chief Genealogist

THE BRUE FAMILY LEARNING CENTER



American Ancestors®
by NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Meet today's presenter



David Allen Lambert
Chief Genealogist

OVERVIEW

- **Presentation** (60 mins.)
 - What are probate records
 - Probate terminology
 - What information do they contain
- **Q&A** (30 mins.)

Sept. 19. 1690. The Invention of Robt. Mackelaflin of Wrenhamdale
 The house & servants acres of Land - - - - - 094 = 00 = 00
 10 Cows & one yearling 7: 10 one horse 4-10-00 - - - - - 009 = 00 = 00
 10 18 Sheep 4: 2 money 4: bedding 4-5-0 curtains & vallises 5 - 011 = 19 = 00
 10 wooden ware 10 a little Kettle & spunter 10 worn att wear 50 003 = 18 = 00
 plowshare & bullock & stubble 5. old horse 4: 6 one axe 2: 6 - - - - - 000 = 18 = 00
 one axe more 3: 6. Bottle & wedges & drawing knife 2: - - - - - 000 = 14 = 00
 one old warming pan 15 great pot 15. Little pot 10 pot hooks 2 - - - - - 001 = 08 = 06
 one mortising ax 4: hand saw & other Iron Utensills 3 Cow bell 2 - - - - - 000 = 09 = 00
 Spinning wheel 12 Churn & distrying pan 6 1/2 pounds sheepswood 8 002 = 03 = 06
 Baskets 18 fott: Wool 12 Scive, 12 hat 10 gloves 2: 6 Gimlet 3 001 = 07 = 09
 Gun 25 bagg of hops 12 hemp 2 - - - - - 001 = 10 = 00
 Lumber 5: a pike 4: baggs 5: & disswon 2: 6 000 = 13 = 06
 4 h. 6 = 00 = 00 - - - - - 012 = 02 = 06
 17 - - - - - 002 = 16 = 00
 - - - - - 000 = 18 = 09

 12 1 = 00 = 06
 000 = 09 = 00

 101 = 09 = 06

 00 = 14 = 00
 his wages from yr Country - - - - - 04 = 12 = 07

 10 = 6 = 07



Voice of
 David Allen Lambert
 Chief Genealogist

What is a Probate Record?

- Court process that disposes of a deceased person's estate
- Describes how an estate will be distributed
- Names who will administer the estate
- Contains a list of property/possessions owned by the deceased

Why use probate records?

- Verify family relationships
- Substitute when vital records are lacking
 - Approximate death dates
 - When a daughter was married by
- Trace the origin of family items or property
- Context of ancestor's life

Why use Probate Records?

- Many published genealogies never went to the bother of searching probate and deeds
- Because old handwritten documents are often a challenge they are overlooked by genealogists

Challenges of Probate Records

- Not everyone left a probate record
 - i.e. women
- Deceased may have had multiple marriages
- Not all children are always listed
- No uniformity
- Difficult to read

[eɪ

Don't assume your
ancestor didn't
have a will.

English Probate Overview

English Probate

- Debate on the origins of early probate in England
- Oral wills in the presence of witnesses
- Church Courts of England had a monopoly on proving probates until the Probate Act of 1857 introduced in Parliament; there were over 300 Church Courts in England in 1857
- Not until 1882 could a wife who predeceased her husband make a will except with her husband's permission

Primogeniture

- A system of inheritance in which a person's property is inherited by their firstborn legitimate child after their death
- Primogeniture: (Latin) “primo” first, and “genitura” relating to a person's birth
- A daughter could inherit if and only if she had no living brothers or the descendants of deceased brothers
- Today, primogeniture has largely been abandoned; instead, a person's property is dispersed through a will or through the laws of intestate succession

Successions in English Probate

- *In England* when an individual dies intestate with no surviving spouse, but with living children or other descendants, the entire estate will pass to the children in equal shares
- In situations when a son or daughter has died, their specific share of the inheritance will be divided amongst their children

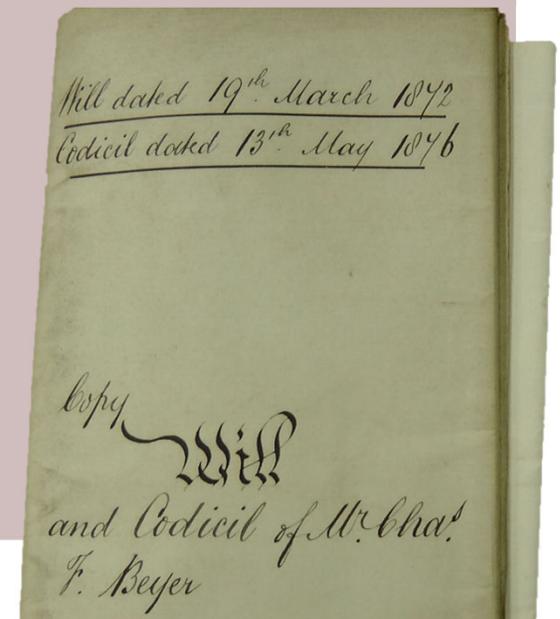
Probate in America

- Early American probate system traces back to the English system with some exceptions depending on time period and location
- Probate laws and resulting records differ from state to state; time period to time period
- First probate court in U.S. established in Massachusetts in 1784
- U.S. probate courts:
 - Surrogate
 - Orphan courts
 - Courts of the ordinary, etc.

Probate Terminology

Generic Probate Terms

- **Personal and Real Estate:** the possessions belonging to the deceased outlined for distribution
- **Testate:** dies *with* a Last Will & Testament
- **Intestate / Administration:** dies *without* leaving an actual will of any kind



Generic Probate Terms - People

- **Testator / Testatrix:** an individual leaving a will
- **Executor / Executrix:** a person with the responsibility of having a will proved and acting on its conditions
- **Administrator / administratrix:** an individual appointed by the court to administer the estate

Generic Probate Terms



File Papers: the original documents associated with the probate file



Record Books / Copy Books: copies of certain probate files copied into bound record volumes

Types of Probate Records

Documents found in Probate Records

- Will
 - Written
 - Holographic
 - Nuncupative
- Codicil
- Letters of Administration & Letters of Testamentary
- Inventory
- Accounts
- Division, distribution
- Guardianship Records
- Miscellaneous Probate Papers
 - Dower Records
 - Bill of Sales
 - Receipts

Testate vs. Intestate

Testate

- Will
- Codicil
- Letters of Testamentary
- Inventory

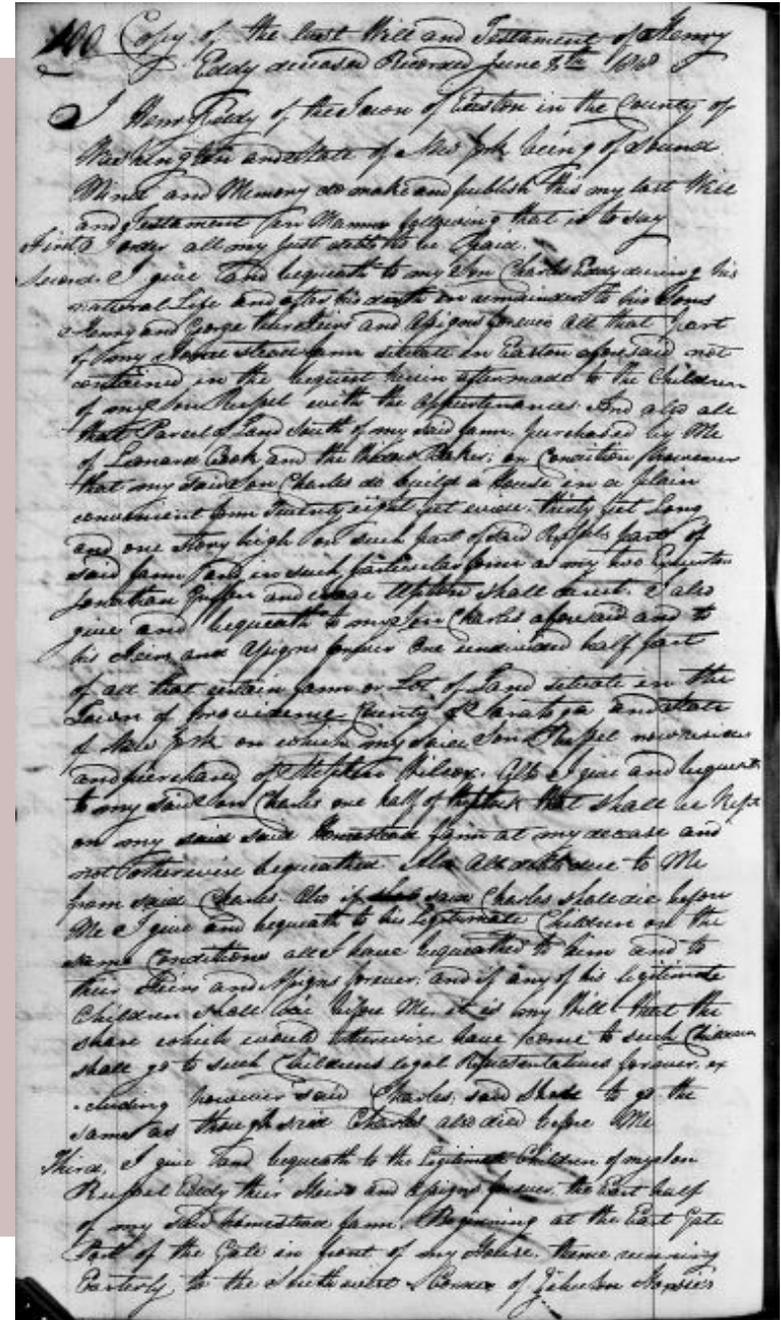
Intestate

- Letters of Administration
- Inventory
- Guardianships
- Distributions

Wills and Codicils

Wills

- Written by the deceased
- Indicates how the deceased wants his or her estate distributed



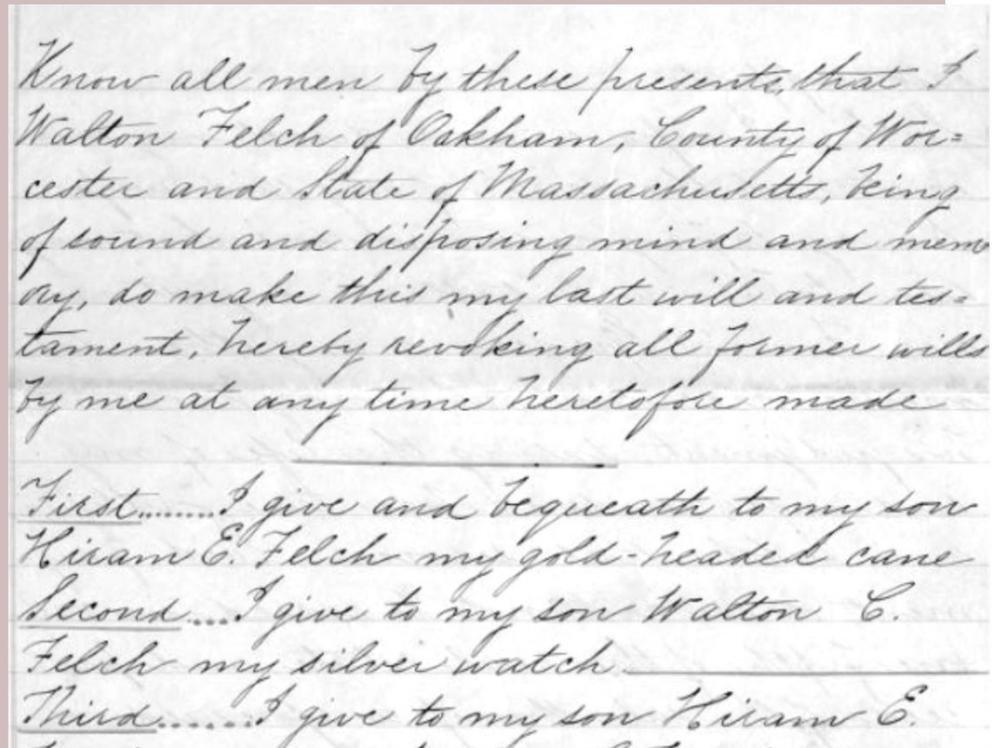
In y^e Name of God Amen this twelfth Day of March In y^e year of
 Our Lord one Thousand seven hundred thirty & nine of forty, and In y^e
 Thirteenth year of his Majesties Reign of William Johnson of Newbu
 In y^e County of Essex In y^e province of y^e Massachusetts Bay In New
 England Shipwright being through y^e Goodnes of God In A comfortable
 Measure of helth & of A disposing Minde & Memory, calling to mind
 My own Mortallity, not knowing y^e Day of My death, do make this
 To be My last will & Testament as touching such worldly Estate
 Wherewith it hath pleased God to Bless Me in this life I Give
 And Dispose of y^e same In y^e following Manner & form —

Inprimis I Give & Bequeth unto My Dearely & well Beloved wife —
 Abigail Johnson y^e southerly End of My dwelling house with y^e one
 Half of My grate Celler with liberty of passing & Repassing In to
 The same with y^e one half of My Garden plot to use & Improve as
 shee shall see cause during her Naturall life & also I give unto
 My s^d wife all y^e household stuff of all sorts that I had with her
 At y^e time of our Marriage and also I give unto My s^d wife y^e use &
 Improvement of y^e wholl of My household stuff which I have bought

Last Will & Testament

Types of Wills

- Written Will
- Holographic Will
- Nuncupative Will

A photograph of a handwritten will document on lined paper. The text is written in cursive and is divided into three numbered sections. The first section states the testator's name and location, and declares this to be their last will. The second section lists bequests to two sons: a gold-headed cane to Hiram E. Felch and a silver watch to Walton E. Felch. The third section begins with a bequest to Hiram E. Felch.

Know all men by these presents, that I
Walton Felch of Oakham, County of Worcester
and State of Massachusetts, being
of sound and disposing mind and memo-
ry, do make this my last will and tes-
tament, hereby revoking all former wills
by me at any time heretofore made.

First.....I give and bequeath to my son
Hiram E. Felch my gold-headed cane

Second....I give to my son Walton E.
Felch my silver watch.

Third.....I give to my son Hiram E.

Codicils

- An addition or change to a will
- Add heirs
- Change distribution of estates
- Acknowledge deaths of heirs in will
- Change administrators

Codicil of Henry Eddy

Remit of Van Schaick
Copy of the Codicil annexed to the last Will and
Testament of Henry Eddy deceased deceased June 5th 1810
Whereas I Henry Eddy of the Town of Canton County of Washington
and State of New York have made my last Will and
Testament of the date of the tenth day of April in
the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixteen
in and by which Will and Testament in the seventh Item
thereof I said Give and Bequeath all the Residue of my Estate
both real and personal to my Sons Charles Eddy and Rufus Eddy
their heirs and assigns forever in equal Shares; Now I
said Henry Eddy by this my writing solemnly declare
to be a Codicil to my said last Will and Testament and to
be taken as a part thereof Will and bequeath the share of my
Residue Estate (so as aforesaid will be to said Rufus Eddy
my Executors Jonathan Griffin and Isaac Upton and the Survivors
of them during their and each of their natural Lives and
after their decease to Nathan Davis Junior of the Town of
Galway County of Saratoga and State of New York in
trust and for the uses and purposes following that is to say
that they the said Trustees take the whole charge of said
Residue property during the natural Life of my said Son
Rufus Eddy, and they pay over to the use of the family

W^h I said Rufus so much thereof from time to time as
said Trustees shall deem said family shall see and
that within six Months after the decease of said Rufus said
Trustees pay over all such parts thereof as I shall be responsible
- as including the interest and profits thereof to the legal
Representatives of said Rufus during and according to
them said Trustees reasonable pay for their trouble and expenses
in the premises, and that if all said Trustees shall die before
the decease of said Rufus that what shall remain unpaid
of said residue appertaining to said Rufus shall be in a
reasonable time after the decease of said Trustees paid over to
said Rufus, and if any of said Residue be real property my
Will is I bequeath the same after the decease of said
Trustees to said Rufus his heirs and assigns forever if he
shall outlive said Trustees, if not then to his Children
their heirs and assigns forever, and that this said Will be taken
instead of said seventh Item in my said Will as to said
share in trust except so much as I do bequeath to my said
and seal this thirty first day of March 1810 and order
the same to be affixed to my said Will as a part thereof
Henry Eddy
In presence published and
declared by said Henry Eddy to be a Codicil
to his last Will and Testament in presence of us
Joshua Dickinson
Calvin Smith
Elisha Cook

Letters of Testamentary and Administration

Letters of Testamentary

- Issued by the court
- Exists if a person left a will
- Allows the executor to take control of the deceased's estate and distribute it according to the will

Washington County, N.Y. Be it Remembered that on the
 the eighth day of June in the year of our Lord one
 thousand eight hundred and eighteen before Me Henry
 Martindale Surrogate of the County of Washington
 personally came Calvin Smith one of the Witnesses to
 the preceding Will and Codicil who being by Me duly
 sworn on his oath declared that he saw Henry Cady
 sign and Seal the Will and Codicil of which the
 preceding are Copies and heard him declare and avouch
 the same to be his last Will and Testament and the
 Codicil thereto that at the several times thereof the
 said testator was of sound disposing Mind and Memory
 according to the best of the knowledge and belief
 of him the deponent that his Name thereto is of
 his own proper hand writing which he subscribed
 to the said Will and Codicil as a Witness at such
 time in presence of the testator and that he saw
 Jacob Van Osseusen and Jemot Van Schaick also
 subscribe their Names to the said Will as Witnesses
 in the presence of the testator and at the exe-
 cution of the said Codicil he also saw Joshua
 Dillingham and Peter Hoag subscribe their
 Names thereto in the presence of the testator

And he it further remembered that on the same
 day and for aforesaid also personally came before
 Me the said Surrogate Jonathan Griffin
 and Charles Cady ^{Executors} in the said Will named
 and were duly qualified to
 the true and faithful performance of said Will
 by being duly affirmed as Executors according
 to Law

Henry Martindale
 Surrogate

Washington Co., NY Wills, Vol. 4, p. 105

I certify therefore that at the several times thereof the
 said testator was of sound disposing Mind and Memory
 according to the best of the knowledge and belief
 of him the deponent. That his Name thereto is of
 his own proper hand writing which he subscribed
 to the said Will and Codicil as a Witness at each
 time in presence of the Testator, and that he saw
 Jacob Van Buren and Gerrit Van Schaick also
 subscribe their Names to the said Will as Witnesses
 in the presence of the Testator, and at the exe-
 -cution of the said Codicil he also saw Joshua
 Dillingham and Fisher Hoag subscribe their
 Names thereto in the presence of the Testator

Letters Testamentary for the estate of Henry Eddy

And be it further Remembred that on the same
 day and for aforesaid also personally came before
 Me the said Sundgate Jonathan Griffin
 and Charles Eddy, ^{Executors} in the said Will of Henry
 the true and faithful performance of said Will
 by being duly affirmed as Executors according
 to Law
 Henry Martindale
 Sundgate

Letters Testamentary for the estate of Henry Eddy

Letters of Administration

- Issued if an individual died intestate
- The court appoints an administrator/trix
 - Distribute the estate of the deceased

14 Dec. 1722
1000

KNOW all men by these presents, That We
 Hannah Phillip, widow & John Cutler Yeoman both of Cambridge
 in the County of Middlesex

within His Majesty's Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New-England, are
 holden and stand firmly bound and obliged unto *James Parsons*
 Judge of the Probate of Wills and Granting Administrations within the
 County of *Middlesex* in the full Sum of *One thousand* Pounds,
 Currant Money in New-England: To be paid unto the said *Judge*
 his Successors in the said Office or Assigns: To the true
 Payment whereof, We do bind our selves and each of us, our, and each of our
 Heirs, Executors and Administrators, jointly and severally for the whole and
 in the whole, firmly by these Presents. Sealed with our Seals. Dated
 the *14th* Day of *December* Anno Domini, One Thousand *722*
 Annoque Regni Regis GEORGII, *9^o*

The condition of this Present Obligation is such, That if the above-bounden
Hannah Phillip who hath this day taken *oath* for the Administration
 of the Estate of her late Husband *Andrew Wilson* of Cambridge in the
 County of *Middlesex* do make or cause to be made, a true and perfect Inventory of all and singular the Goods, Chattels,
 Rights and Credits of the said Deceased, which have or shall come to the hands, possession or know-
 ledge of her the said *Administress* or into the hands and possession of
 any other person or persons for *her*: And the same so made, do exhibit or cause to be exhibited
 into the Registry of the Court of Probate for the aforesaid County of *Middlesex* at or before the
14th Day of *March* next ensuing. And the same Goods, Chattels, Rights and
 Credits, and all other the Goods, Chattels, Rights and Credits of the said Deceased, at the time of her
 Death, which at any time after shall come to the hands or possession of the said *Administress*
 or into the hands and possession of any other person or persons for *her* do well
 and truly Administer according to Law. And further do make, or cause to be made a just and true
 Account of her said Administration upon Oath, at or before the *14th* Day of *December*
 which will be in the Year of our Lord, *One thousand 723*
 And all the rest & residue of the said Goods, Chattels, Rights & Credits which shall be found remaining
 upon the said Administrators Account (the same being first examined & allowed of by the Judge or
 Judges for the time being, of Probate of Wills and granting Administrations within the County of
Middlesex aforesaid) shall deliver and pay unto such person or persons respectively as the said
 Judge or Judges by his or their Decree or Sentence pursuant to Law shall limit & appoint. And if it
 shall hereafter appear, That any last Will and Testament was made by the said Deceased: And the
 Executor or Executors therein named do exhibit the same into the Court of Probate for the said County
 of *Middlesex* making request to have it allowed and approved accordingly. If the said *Administress*
 within bounden being thereunto required, do render and deliver
 the said Letters of Administration (Approbation of such Testament being first had and made) into the
 said Court: Then the before Written Obligation to be Void and of none Effect, or else to abide and
 remain in full Force and Virtue.

Sealed and Delivered
 in Presence of
Martha Gurrish
Hannah Phillip
John Cutler

Hannah Phillip
John Cutler

Estate of Andrew Wilson Middlesex
Co. Probate File No. 25114

KNOW ALL Men by these Presents, That We
Rannah Phillips, Widow & John Cutler Yeoman both of Cambridge
in the County of Middlesex

within His Majesty's Province of the *Massachusetts Bay in New-England*, are holden and stand firmly bound and obliged unto *Francis Foxcroft* Judge of the Probate of Wills and Granting Administrations within the County of *Middlesex* in the full Sum of *One Hundred* Pounds, Currant Money in *New-England*: To be paid unto the said *Judge* his Successors in the said Office or Assigns: To the true Payment whereof, We do bind our selves and each of us, our, and each of our Heirs, Executors and Administrators, jointly and severally for the whole and in the whole, firmly by these Presents. Sealed with our Seals. Dated *14th* Day of *December* Anno Domini, One Thousand *722* Annoque Regni Regis *GEORGII, 2o*

14 Dec. 1722
1722

KNOW ALL Men by these Presents, That We
Rannah Phillips, Widow & John Cutler Yeoman both of Cambridge

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 Granting Administrations within the
 Sum of *One Hundred* Pounds,
 e paid unto the said *Judge*
 said Office or Assigns: To the true
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 indly and severally for the whole and
 ts. Sealed with our Seals. Dated
 Anno Domini, One Thousand *722*
 Regni Regis *GEORGII, 2o*

s such, That if the above-bounden
for the Administration
of Cambridge withed.

all and singular the Goods, Chattels,
 come to the hands, possession or know-
 or into the hands and possession of
 do exhibit or cause to be exhibited
 county of *Middlesex* at or before the
 e same Goods, Chattels, Rights and
 the said Deceased, at the time of his
 possession of the said *Administration*
 r person or persons for *her* do well
 ke, or cause to be made a just and true
 e the *14th* Day of *December*

Credits which shall be found remaining
 amined & allowed of by the Judge or
 Administrations within the County of
 rson or persons respectively as the said
 Law shall limit & appoint. And if it
 s made by the said Deceased: And the

shall hereafter appear, the
 Executor or Executors therein named do exhibit the same into the Court of Probate for the said County
 of *Middlesex* making request to have it allowed and approved accordingly. If the said *Ad-*
ministrators within bounden being thereunto required, do render and deliver
 the said Letters of Administration (Approbation of such Testament being first had and made) into the
 said Court: Then the before Written Obligation to be Void and of none Effect, or else to abide and
 remain in full Force and Virtue.

Sealed and Delivered
 in Presence of
Martha Givish
Hannah Phillips

Rannah + Wilson

John Cutler

Estate of Andrew Wilson Middlesex Co. Probate File No. 25114

1722
1000

KNOW ALL Men by these presents, That We
 Hannah Phillip, Widow of John Cutter Yeoman both of Cambridge
 in the County of Middlesex

The Condition of this Present Obligation is such, That if the above-bounden
 Hannah Phillip who hath this day taken upon her the Administration
 of the Estate of her late Husband Andrew Wilson of Cambridge in the
 County of Middlesex

do make or cause to be made, a true and perfect Inventory of all and singular the Goods, Chattels,
 Rights and Credits of the said Deceased, which have or shall come to the hands, possession or know-
 ledge of her the said Administration or into the hands and possession of
 any other person or persons for her: And the same so made, do exhibit or cause to be exhibited
 into the Registry of the Court of Probate for the aforesaid County of Middlesex at or before the
 14th Day of March next ensuing. And the same Goods, Chattels, Rights and
 Credits, and all other the Goods, Chattels, Rights and Credits of the said Deceased, at the time of his
 Death, which at any time after shall come to the hands or possession of the said Administration
 or into the hands and possession of any other person or persons for her do well
 and truly Administer according to Law. And further do make, or cause to be made a just and true
 Account of her said Administration upon Oath, at or before the 14th Day of December
 which will be in the Year of our Lord, One Thousand 729

And all the rest & residue of the said Goods, Chattels, Rights & Credits which shall be found remaining
 upon the said Administrators Account (the same being first examined & allowed of by the Judge or
 Judges for the time being, of Probate of Wills and granting Administrations within the County of
 Middlesex aforesaid) shall deliver and pay unto such person or persons respectively as the said
 Judge or Judges by his or their Decree or Sentence pursuant to Law shall limit & appoint. And if it
 shall hereafter appear, That any last Will and Testament was made by the said Deceased: And the
 Executor or Executors therein named do exhibit the same into the Court of Probate for the said County
 of Middlesex making request to have it allowed and approved accordingly. If the said Administration
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Majesty's Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New-England, are
 and stand firmly bound and obliged unto Francis Foxcroft
 the Probate of Wills and Granting Administrations within the
 County of Middlesex in the full Sum of One Thousand Pounds,
 Money in New-England: To be paid unto the said Judge
 his Successors in the said Office or Assigns: To the true
 whereof, We do bind our selves and each of us, our, and each of our
 Executors and Administrators, jointly and severally for the whole and
 sole, firmly by these Presents. Sealed with our Seals, Dated
 Day of December Anno Domini, One Thousand 722
 Annoque Regni Regis GEORGII, 5^o

The Condition of this Present Obligation is such, That if the above-bounden
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 said Court: Then the before Written Obligation to be Void and of none Effect, or else to abide and
 remain in full Force and Virtue.

Sealed and Delivered
 in Presence of
 Martha Gerrish
 Hannah + Wilson
 John Cutter

Estate of Andrew Wilson Middlesex
 Co. Probate File No. 25114

14 Dec. 1722
1806

KNOW ALL Men by these presents, That We
 Hannah Phillips, Widow & John Cutter Yeoman both of Cambridge
 in the County of Middlesex

within His Majesty's Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New-England, are
 holden and stand firmly bound and obliged unto *James Foxcroft*
 Judge of the Probate of Wills and Granting Administrations within the
 County of *Middlesex* in the full Sum of *One thousand* Pounds,
 Currant Money in New-England: To be paid unto the said *Judge*
 or in the said Office or Assigns: To the true
 and our selves and each of us, our, and each of our
 Assignors, jointly and severally for the whole and
 these Presents. Sealed with our Seals. Dated
 the 14th Day of December Anno Domini, One Thousand 722
 Annoque Regni Regis GEORGII, 5^o

Sealed and Delivered
 in Presence of

Martha Gerrish
Hannah Phillips
John Cutter

Hannah + Wilson

John Cutter

...ation is such, That if the above-bounden
 taken ~~any~~ for the Administration
 in the County of Cambridge withed.

Inventory of all and singular the Goods, Chattels,
 or shall come to the hands, possession or know-
 or into the hands and possession of
 me so made, do exhibit or cause to be exhibited
 fore said County of *Middlesex* at or before the
 And the same Goods, Chattels, Rights and
 Credits of the said Deceased, at the time of his
 hands or possession of the said *Administration*
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 at or before the *14th* Day of *December*
 1722

Rights & Credits which shall be found remaining
 first examined & allowed of by the Judge or
 granting Administrations within the County of
 no such person or persons respectively as the said
 pursuant to Law shall limit & appoint. And if it
 tament was made by the said Deceased: And the

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Estate of Andrew Wilson Middlesex Co. Probate File No. 25114

Inventory

What is an Inventory?

- Appraisal of deceased's real estate and personal property
- Provides a value for the estate
- Can provide clues about the lives of your ancestors

What can an Inventory tell us?

- How much land/property an ancestor owned
- Job/trade
- Education level
- Level of wealth/status

Real estate viz.

$\frac{2}{3}$ parts of 63 rods of land, wth $\frac{2}{3}$ parts of a dwelling house, standing thereon, the same being situate in said Amisbury, adj.^o land of Joseph Moore & others. } \$ 300. 00.

About 3 Acres & $\frac{1}{2}$ Land situate in said Amisbury, adjoining land of Valentine Bagley & others. } 80. 50.

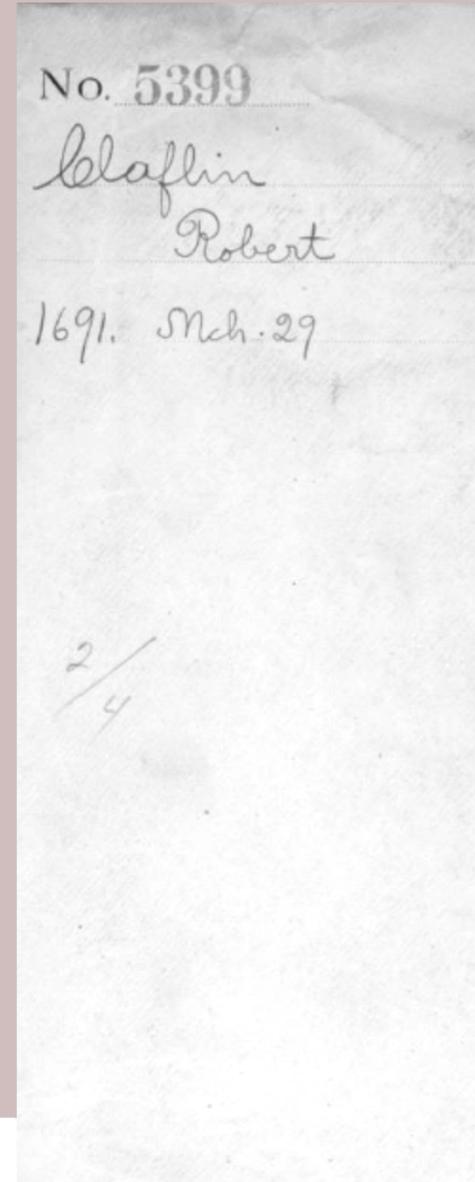
\$ 380. 50

Personal estate, viz.

Bible & other books \$ 3. 00.	Wearing apparel \$ 27. 25.	30	25.
Truison & straps \$ 0. 25.	1 Feather bed ⁴ w th bedstead	9	25.
cord & under bed, \$ 9. 00.	_____	15	75.
1 do 55 tt. w th bedstead, cord & under bed, _____	_____	11	00.
20 Sheets \$ 10. 00.	5 Bolster cases \$ 1. 00.	10	20.
10 Pillow cases \$ 2. 70.	10 Bed quilts \$ 7. 50.	3	00.
3 Wollen blankets \$ 1. 00.	7 Table cloths \$ 2. 00.	10	62
13 Towels \$ 1. 62.	1 Desk, \$ 6. 00.	3	00.
1 Bureau \$ 3. 00.	Large square table \$ 1. 75.	1	00
1 Card table \$ 1. 25.	2 Kitchen tables \$ 0. 50.		
2 Sight stands \$ 0. 50.			

Inventory

- Robert Clafflin, 1691
Wenham, Massachusetts



Sep. 19. 1690. The Inventory of Robt Mackelaflin of Wrenhamdale
 & S & S
 The house & contents across of Land ----- 054-00-00
 100 Cows & one yearling 7-10 one horse 4-10-00 ----- 009-00-00
 100 18 Sheep 100. Money 4. Bedding 4-5-0 Curtains & vallises 8 ----- 011-19-00
 100 wooden ware 10 a little Kettle & spunter 10 worn all wear 50 ----- 003-18-00
 plowshare & fother 6 & stubble 5. old horse 4.6. Saw axe 2.6 ----- 000-18-00
 one axe more 3. Bottle & wedges & drawing knife 2. ----- 000-14-00
 one old warming pan 12. great pot 15. Little pot 10. pothooks 2 ----- 001-08-06
 one mortising ax 4. hand saw & other Iron Stensills 3. Cow bell 2 ----- 000-09-00
 Spinning wheel 12. Churn 4. distrying pan 6. 1/2 pound sheeps wood 8 ----- 002-03-06
 baskets 18. fott. wools 12. scive 12. hat 10. gloves 2.6. Limblet 3 ----- 001-07-07
 100 earthen ware 2. Gun 25. bagg of hess 12. hamp 2 ----- 001-10-00
 butter tub 2. wood & lumber 5. a pike 4. baggs 5. & disswon 2.6 ----- 000-18-06
 swine 4-10. hays 32.6. Inderm 40 bush. 6 ----- 000-00-00
 Red 6. bath: 24. Beans 3 bush 15. In my hands 17 ----- 002-16-00
 Sheeps wools 10 1/2 lb for 18 tobacco leaf ----- 000-18-09
 Taken by Richd Hutton of the Estate of Mackelaflin jun: & S & S ----- 000-09-00
 his wife Batchelder sen: In working tools ----- 00-14-00
 his wages from yr Country ----- 04-12-07
 05-06-07 ----- 001-09-06

Inventory

October 30th 1692

Item Recd of Thomas Fisher Esq: of Wrenham
in the County of Essex Administrat: to the Estate
of Robert Macheluffin Esq: of Wrenham late
Deceased of the County of Essex Macheluffin in
the Administrat: have hadly owing to
obtain my self & for my heirs or Administrat:
that as I have now see in particulars shall
be hereafter in this account mentioned shall be
accomplish to the said Administrat: as
upon the accounts of my Legatee I shall be
indemn or Afford to me by the County Court
of Essex for the above Estate the particulars
are as followeth viz: —

a Cow at three pound	4	8	ss:
It is proctor ten shillings	3	0	0
It is an old wearing pan eighteen pence	0	1	6
It is a little little Stamen Shilling	0	7	0
It is a Briding Shirts four Shilling	1	15	0
	5	13	6
in all Eight pound thirteen Shillings & Six pence			
as witness my hand			

Samuel Smith

Witnessed
John Gilbert
Obidin A. Abbe
Ri marks

10:13:6
9:10:0

Inventory of Personal Estate

Accounts

Accounts

- List of debts owed to the estate
- List of debts the estate owes to others
- Published in newspapers

Berkshire Co. Court of Probate April
4th 1820. Then personally appeared
Charles Sedgwick the person mentioned
in the above Petition & order of notice
thereon & made oath that he had
published the same three weeks
successively in the Berkshire
Star printed at Stockbridge as therein
directed — Before me whereupon
it is received & ordered to be put
on file — W. Walker, J. Prob
~~Berkshire ss. Ita copul of Probate holden at
Lenox within and for S. County on the Court day
of April. 4th 1820. The above certificate is
received and ordered to be put on file~~

Why look at accounts?

- Hint at status of ancestor
 - Do they owe a lot of money?
 - Are they lending money frequently?
 - Do the debts add up to more than the value of the estate?
- Potential family and associate connections
 - Extended family
 - Business associates

Estate of John Spring, Berkshire Co.
 Probate File No. 1944

Barnabas Ordwell, Administrator on the estate of John Spring, late of Stockbridge, Mason, deceased, pays allowance of this his second account of payments and charges ⁱⁿ administration in the estate of John Spring, late of Stockbridge, deceased,

to Barnabas Ordwell, Administrator on said estate, Dr

To p^d the following persons the sums annexed to their respective names, allowed to them by the Commissionery on said estate on and payable April 3rd 1799, viz.

1. To Silas Pepon	0.93
2. To Rufell Smith	2.72
3. To Abraham Rice	0.60
4. To Samuel Partridge	1.68
5. To Benjamin Hatte	2.97
6. To Smith Dunlop	21.86
7. To Capt. Oliver Partridge	2.90
8. To do	5.57
9. To John S. Hopkins	6.25
10. To Moses Barnum	2.66
11. To Edward Edwards	11.55
12. To Seth Hamilton	2.70
13. To Ephraim Taylor	0.25
14. To Gx Seymour	11.67
15. To do	2.25
16. To p ^d John Sergeant	6.32
17. To John James	0.70
18. To Isaiak Byington	0.67
19. To Anna Bingham	22.49
	<hr/>
	\$ 106.68
To interest thereon, from April 3 1799, to Nov ^r . 1 st 1803, 4 years & 6m & 27 days --	29.30
20 To p ^d Joseph Woodbridge's account against said estate January 29. 1799	5-
To interest thereon from 2 nd 29 th Aug 1799 to Nov ^r . 1 st 1803 -- 4.9-	1.42
	<hr/>
	Cashed over \$ 132.40

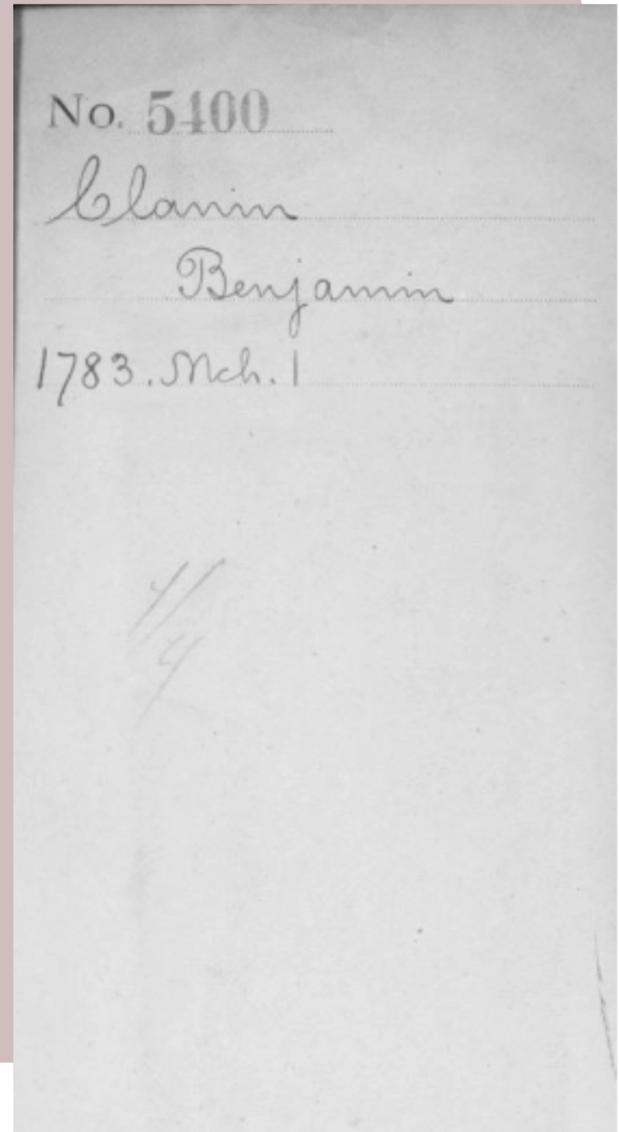
Estate of John Spring, Berkshire Co.
 Probate File No. 1944

Estate of John Spring, late of Stockbridge, Masson, deceased,
 1793 To Barnabas Bidwell, Administrator on said Estate Dr

Oct. 3 rd	To attending and taking administration on at Probate Court	1 -
	To p ^o . Probate Fees	2 55 ^c
Oct. 13	To 1 days attendance in making an Inventory and apprais- ing the estate	1 -
	To the hand half a day collecting the articles -	25 ^c
	To liquor &c for the appraisers &c	" 75 ^c
	To p ^o . 3 appraisers, 1 day each	3 -
Nov. 6	To attendance at Probate Court, for the purpose of exhibiting the Inventory &c & expenses	1 -
	To p ^o . Probate Fees	1 64 ^c
27	To 1 days attendance in selling the personal estate, not un- due (except Household Furniture)	1 -
	To expenses of liquor &c at vendue	1 -
Dec. 25	To 1/2 a days attendance with the Commissioners to receive and examine accounts of creditors	50
	To p ^o . the expense of the house	75 ^c
	To p ^o . for a stamp for the Inventory	50
1794 Jan. 20	To attending one day with the Commissioners of Insolvency	1 -
	To the expenses of myself with the Commissioners	1 25 ^c
	To arguing the Case, Anne Bingham vs J ^o . Spring's estate	2 -
30	To attending with the Commissioners another day	1 -
	To the expenses of myself with the Commissioners	1 25 ^c
March 24	To half a days attendance with the Commissioners and argu- ing the cause Bingham vs Spring's estate, on the first argument opposed by Mr. Woodbridge and on the second by Mr. Williams	2 -
	To the expenses of myself & the Commissioners	75 ^c
	To p ^o . the Commissioners fees, 3 dollars each, as p ^o . out.	6 -
		30 19

Accounts

- Benjamin Clannan, 1783



Newburyport Feb^{ry} 7th 1708
This may Certify that I the Subscriber am fully Content that my brother
in Law Edward Harris should Administer upon my late Husband
Mary^{as} ^{deceased} ^{Wife} ^{of} ^{his} Estate & that he should take guardianship for the
Children
Witness my hand Deborah Cowin

A request from the Widow

Commonwealth
~~of the~~ } By the Honourable *Benj^r Greenleaf*
 Massachusetts-~~the~~ } Esq; Judge of the Probate of Wills, &c. in
 and for the County of Essex.

Essex, ff. To *Joseph Sturges Esq. and David*
Moody & Ebenezer Greenleaf
 all of *Newburyport*, and Freeholders in said
 County GREETING.

YOU are hereby appointed a Committee, (being first
 sworn) to divide and set off, both for Quantity
 and Quality, one third Part of all the real Estate of
Benjamin Blannin late of *Newburyport*
 deceased, intestate, unto his Widow *Deborah Blannin*
 as her Right of Dower in said real Estate, to and for her
 Use and Improvement, during her natural Life; setting out
 the same by Meets and Bounds: And when you have so
 done, make Return of your Doings, together with this
 Warrant, into the Registry Office of the Court of Probate,
 in and for said County. Given under my Hand, and the
 Seal of said Office, this *twenty eighth* Day of *April*
 A. D. 17*83*, in the ~~Year of the King's Reign~~

Benj^r Greenleaf

April 20. 1783
The within named
Committee was
sworn to the faith
ful discharge of
their trust.
B Greenleaf

Claimants Warrant for Appraisers

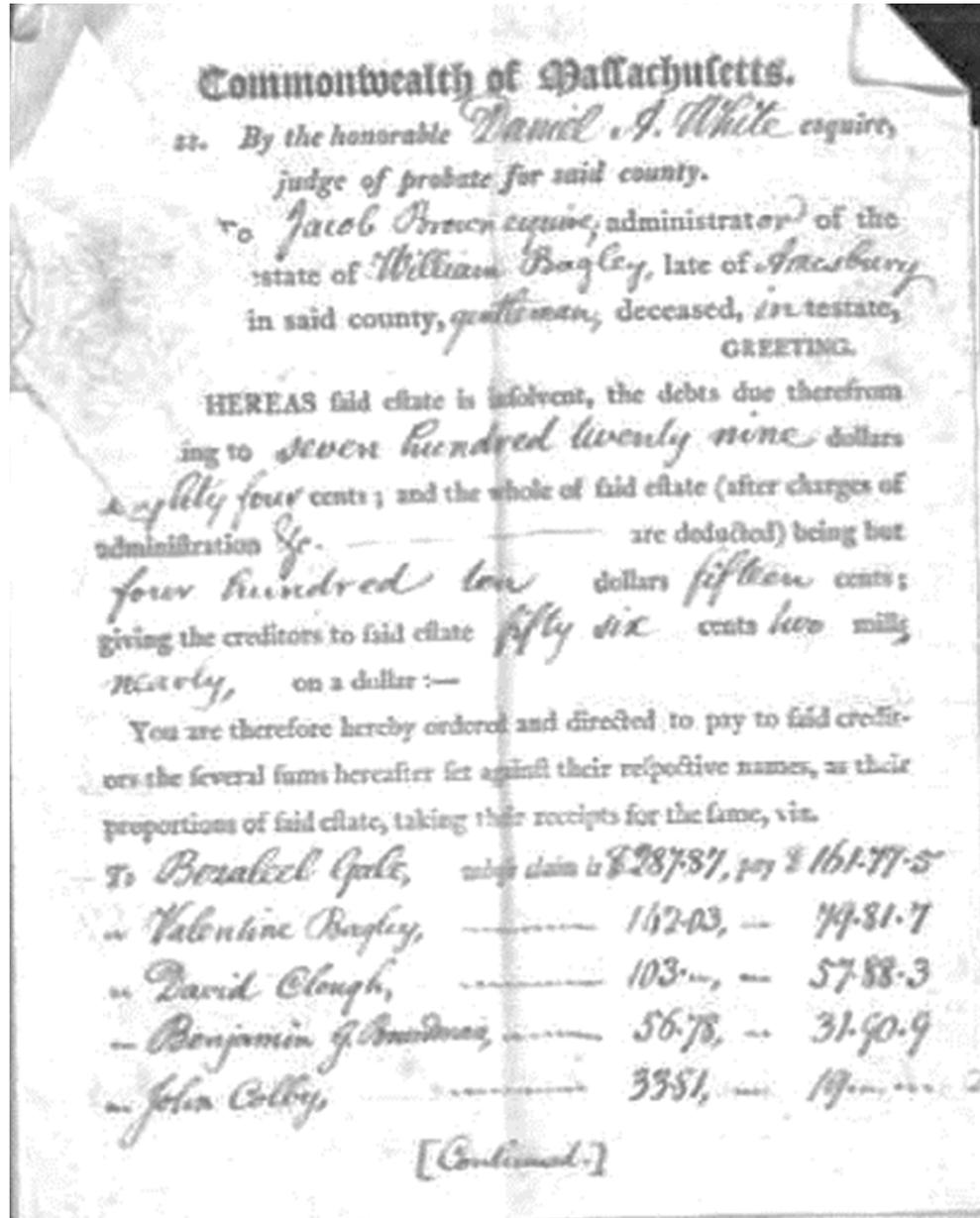
pursuant to a warrant to us directed by the Hon. Samuel
 Holtin Esq. Judge of Probate, for the county of Essex, ———
 We the subscribers having been first sworn as the said war-
 rant directs, have viewed & divided the homestead of Capt. Will-
 iam Bagley, late of Amherbury, ^{Essex} deceased, from the estate of the heirs
 of James Follansbe, with which it lay in common, & undivided
 as follows, Viz. Beginning at the center of the Well on the said un-
 divided estate, thence south forty five degrees west, one rod & eleven
 links, to a stake, thence northwesterly twenty links & an half, to the
 front door of the dwellinghouse, thence through the middle of
 said door, and chimney to a point at the backside of said house,
 the course last mentioned to be parallel, to the east or west end of
 said house, thence north forty six degrees west to land of Joseph
 Morse. thence north forty degrees east one rod & twelve links,
 to a stake, thence south forty six degrees east, five rods, & one

Co-tenant Division

Cases, ss. A list of debts against the estate of ~~Capt~~ William Bagley, late of Ames
in said county, gentleman, deceased, ~~in the~~ ^{in the} ~~estate~~ ^{estate}.
~~being~~ ~~presented~~ exhibited to the Hon. Samuel Holten Esq. Judge of
Probate, for ~~the~~ ^{said} county of ~~Essex~~, by Jacob Barron, Adm^r. of said
estate, this 4th day of ~~February~~ ^{March} 1813. — Viz.

Due To Capt. Marzilla Sumner, for Note, & interest. say.	\$ 14. 00
— David Blough for Note, & interest.	106. 00.
— Capt. Valentine Bagley, for two Notes & interest.	139. 64.
— Nathan Song, for Note, & interest & for Acc ^t .	21. 62.
— James Winn for two promissory notes & for int.	
— Royalcel Gale for his account.	313. 40.
On set 1. — 11. — 18	

Debts owed against the Estate



Distribution to Creditors

Divisions/Distributions

Distributions

- Dividing an estate among heirs
- Occurs after bills are paid, debts collected
- Heirs (children, widow, etc.) mentioned in distribution
- Genealogical importance:
 - List of children if vital records aren't available
 - Married names of daughters
 - Children of deceased heirs

11 Distribution of that Part of the Estate of Peter Sturges late of Fairfield dec^d which was distributed & sold off to the Widows of ~~David~~ for her Dowry in the Estate of said dec^d made by us the Surrogate under Oath according to Order of the Court of Probate this 28th Day of August A.D. 1777

Distributed & sold off to the Heirs and legal Representatives of Capt. Sam^l Sturges dec^d

Two acres and eleven Procs of ground on the South Easterly Side of Droches lott so called to extend from Front to rear & be of equal width at each End } £28. 19. 5. 3

Two acres of land on half of land at Request Swamp so called 12. 10. 0. 0

Two acres one quarter & twenty four Procs of ground at the Northwesterly End of Ward Island so called to begin at the Northwesterly End thereof and run southerly to a bound set about four Procs Southwesterly of a Point running out on the Easterly Side of said Island a little southerly of the mead leading on to the southerly Part of the Bears meadow and from hence a crop to a bound set in a Bound in said Island on the Westerly Side of said Island about fifteen Procs southerly of the mead that leads on to said Island reserving Liberty for those that own the Remainder of said Island their Heirs and Assigns and those that own meadow adjoining said Island to pass & be pass for Wood & Hay } 30. 3. 5. 3

£71. 12. 11. 2

To the Heirs and legal Representatives of Hannah Jennings dec^d late wife of Stephen Jennings

Four acres of Land in the Field at the Mill plain so called £39. 19. 6. 2

one acre and eight Procs and an half of salt meadow a little Northerly of Ward Island to lye on that Part of the acre and an half Piece so called next adjoining to the Ogden's meadow and is to be divided from the Remainder of said Piece by a Line drawn Parallel with Ogden's Line } 8. 8. 5. 1

£48. 7. 11. 3

To Abigail Sherwood Wife of Jeremiah Sherwood

the whole of the 5th Division in Cables long lott so called £22. 14. 2

one acre and eleven Procs and an half of land at the Northwesterly End of the 3rd Division in said lott 1. 17. 10

Twenty five Procs and half a quarter of a Proc of salt meadow in the acre & half Piece & to be of equal width the whole length adjoining to that distributed to Hannah's Heirs } 1. 5. 2. 8

Abigail bought over 25. 17. 2. 7

one acre and Twenty eight Procs & three quarters of a Proc of land on the Northwesterly Side of the Hornsted taking half the width of the lott between ~~David~~ the Distance of six Feet from the Northwesterly Side of the dwelling house & the Land of David Bartow & to run to the Rear taking a Sufficient width at the Rear to make said Quantity adjoining to John Thorp his Heirs the Privileges in the former distribution mentioned The North Easterly half of the South Easterly half of the Barn } 17. 10. 11. 3

5. 0. 0.

£48. 8. 2. 0

To Grace Perry wife of Micah Perry

Ten acres and sixteen Procs of Land at the southerly End of Ward Island the whole thereof excepting what is herein before distributed to the Heirs and legal Representatives of Sam^l Sturges dec^d } 27. 6. 6. 1

Twenty one Procs of salt meadow being a part of the acre and half Piece so called and is to lie on the Easterly part of said Piece and adjoin the whole length thereof Easterly to meadow of David Sturges and adjoin Westerly to that distributed to Sarah } 1. 1. 2. 0

£48. 7. 8. 1

To Sarah Andrews Wife of Ebenezer Andrews -

The 2^d Division in Cables long lott originally so called all excepting one acre and eleven Procs and an half at the Northwesterly End thereof which is distributed to Abigail } 24. 12. 0

one acre and Twenty eight Procs of Land in the Hornsted to take the whole width at the front between what is distributed to Abigail and the Distance of six Feet from the Northwesterly Side of the dwelling house and to run back to the Rear taking a Sufficient width at the Rear to make the Quantity aforesaid adjoining to John Thorp & his Heirs the Privileges in the former Distribution mentioned } 17. 10. 11. 1

the Southwesterly half of the South Easterly half of the Barn } 5. 0. 0. 0

Twenty five Procs and half a quarter of a Proc of salt meadow being part of the acre & half piece so called and lies between the meadow of Abigail & Grace and is the whole of said Piece that is not herein before distributed } 1. 5. 2. 7

£48. 8. 7. 2

Peter Sturgis Distribution, Fairfield Probate Dist. File No. 6215

A Distribution of that Part of the ^{real} Estate of Peter Sturges late of Fairfield dec^d which was distributed & sold off to the Widow of said dec^d for her Dower in the State of said dec^d made by us the Subscribers under Oath according to Order of the Court of Probate this 28th Day of August AD 1777

Distributed & sold off to the Heirs and legal Representatives of Capt John Sturges dec^d.

Two acres and Seven Rods of Ground on the South Easterly Side of Drakes Lot so called to extend from front to rear & be of

£28. 19. 3. 3

A Distribution of that Part of the ^{real} Estate of Peter Sturges late of Fairfield dec^d which was distributed & sold off to the Widow of said dec^d for her Dower in the State of said dec^d made by us the Subscribers under Oath according to Order of the Court of Probate this 28th Day of August AD 1777

called 12. 10. 0. 0

1st the Northernly End hereof and a quantity of a Point the Southernly of meadow and Island on the Southernly of the for those that own the Remainder of said Island their Heirs and Assigns and those that own meadow adjoining said Island to past & receive for Wood & Hay

£30. 3. 5. 3

£71. 12. 11. 2

To the Heirs and legal Representatives of Hannah Jennings dec^d late wife of Stephen Jennings

Four acres of Land in the Field at the Mill plain so called £39. 19. 6. 2

one acre and eight Rods and an half of salt meadow a little Northernly of Ward Island to lye on that Part of the acre and an half Piece so called next adjoining to the Ogdens meadow and is to be divided from the Remainder of said Piece by a Line drawn Parallel with Ogdens Line 8. 8. 5. 1

£48. 7. 11. 3

To Abigail Sherwood wife of Jeremiah Sherwood £22. 14. 2

the whole of the 5th Division in Cables Long lot so called 1. 17. 10

one acre and Eleven Rods and an half of Land at the Northernly End of the 3rd Division in said Lot

Twenty Five Rods and half a quarter of a Part of salt meadow in the acre & half Piece & lots of equal width to the whole length adjoining to that distributed to Hannahs Heirs 1. 5. 2. 8

Peter Sturgis Distribution, Fairfield Probate Dist. File No. 6215

Distributed & sold off to the Heirs and legal Representatives of
 Capt Sam^r Sturges dec^d.

Two acres and Eleven Prods of Ground on the South Easterly Side
 of Drakescott so called to extend from front to rear & be of
 equal width at each End } -- £28. 19. 5. 3

Two acres of Land an half of Land at Pequot Swamp so called 12. 10. 0. 0

Five acres one quarter & twenty four Prods of Ground at the Northerly End
 of Ward's Island so called to begin at the Northerly End thereof and run
 Southerly to a bound set about four Prods Southwesterly of a Point
 running out on the Easterly Side of said Island a little Southerly of
 the Road leading on to the Southerly Part of the Beech's meadow and
 from thence across to a bound set in a Bend in said Island on the
 Westerly Side of said Island about fifteen Prods Southerly of the
 Road that leads on to said Island reserving Liberty for those that
 own the Remains of said Island their Heirs and Assigns and
 those that own meadow adjoining said Island to pass & re-pass for
 Wood & Hay

£71. 12. 11. 2

A Distribution of that Part of the Estate of Peter Sturges late of Fairfield dec^d
 which was distributed & sold off to the Widows of said dec^d for his Dower in the
 2^d 1/2^d of said Estate & the Heirs under Oath according to Order
 of August A.D. 1777

Legal Representatives of

South Easterly Side } -- £28. 19. 5. 3
 Front to rear & be of }

Swamp so called 12. 10. 0. 0

of Ground at the Northerly End
 thereof and run
 Southwesterly of a Point
 Island a little Southerly of
 of the Beech's meadow and
 and in said Island on the
 four Prods Southerly of the
 long Liberty for those that
 Heirs and Assigns and
 Land to pass & re-pass for

£30. 3. 5. 3

£71. 12. 11. 2

of Hannah Jennings dec^d late wife
 of William Jennings dec^d

mill plain so called £39. 19. 6. 2

of Salt meadow a little
 Part of the acre and an half
 into meadow and is to be 8. 8. 5. 1

divided from the Remains of said piece by a Line drawn
 Parallel with Ogden's Line

£48. 7. 11. 3

To Abigail Sherwood wife of Jeremiah Sherwood £22. 14. 2

the whole of the 5th Division in Cables Long lot so called

one acre and Eleven Prods and an half of Land at the Northerly
 End of the 3^d Division in said Lot 1. 17. 10

Twenty five Prods and half a quarter of a Prod of Salt meadow
 in the Acre & half Piece & lot of equal width the whole length
 adjoining to that distributed to Hannah's Heirs 1. 5. 2. 8

Peter Sturgis Distribution, Fairfield
 Probate Dist. File No. 6215

A Distribution of that Part of the Estate of Peter Sturgis late of Fairfield dec^d which was distributed & sold off to the Widows of said dec^d for his Dower in the State of said dec^d made by us the Subscribers under Oath according to order of the Court of Probate this 28th Day of August A.D. 1777

Distributed & sold off to the Heirs and legal Representatives of Capt Sam^l Sturgis dec^d.

Two acres and Eleven Rods of Ground on the ... side ... } -- £28. 19. 5. 3

... called ... } 12. 10. 0. 0

at the Northernly End thereof and on the Northernly side of a Point little Southernly of ... meadow and ... Island on the Southernly of the ... } 30. 3. 5. 3

... for those that ... } 48 or pay for

£71. 12. 11. 2

To the Heirs and legal Representatives of Hannah Jennings dec^d late wife of Stephen Jennings

Four acres of Land in the Field at the mill plain so called ... £39. 19. 6. 2

one acre and eight Rods and an half of salt meadow a little Northernly of Ward's Island to lye on that Part of the acre and an half Piece so called next adjoining to the Ogden's meadow and is to be divided from the Remainder of said Piece by a Line drawn Parallel with Ogden's Line ... } 8. 8. 5. 1

£48. 7. 11. 3

To the Heirs and legal Representatives of Hannah Jennings dec^d late wife of Stephen Jennings

Four acres of Land in the Field at the mill plain so called ... £39. 19. 6. 2

one acre and eight Rods and an half of salt meadow a little Northernly of Ward's Island to lye on that Part of the acre and an half Piece so called next adjoining to the Ogden's meadow and is to be divided from the Remainder of said Piece by a Line drawn Parallel with Ogden's Line ... } 8. 8. 5. 1

£48. 7. 11. 3

To Abigail Sherwood wife of Jeremiah Sherwood ... £22. 14. 2

the whole of the 5th Division in Cables Long lot so called ... } 1. 17. 10

one acre and Eleven Rods and an half of Land at the Northernly End of the 3^d Division in said Lot ... }

Twenty Five Rods and half a quarter of a Rod of salt meadow in the acre & half Piece & lots of equal width to the whole length adjoining to that distributed to Hannah's Heirs ... } 1. 5. 2. 8

To the Heirs and legal Representatives of Hannah Jennings dec^d late wife of Stephen Jennings

Four acres of Land in the Field at the mill plain so called ... £39. 19. 6. 2

one acre and eight Rods and an half of salt meadow a little Northernly of Ward's Island to lye on that Part of the acre and an half Piece so called next adjoining to the Ogden's meadow and is to be divided from the Remainder of said Piece by a Line drawn Parallel with Ogden's Line ... } 8. 8. 5. 1

£48. 7. 11. 3

Peter Sturgis Distribution, Fairfield Probate Dist. File No. 6215

A (Distribution of that Part of the Estate of Peter Sturgis late of Fairfield and which was distributed & sold off to the Widows of said dec^d for his Dower in the State of said dec^d made by us the Subscribers under Oath according to order of the Court of Probate this 28th Day of August A.D. 1777

Distributed & sold off to the Heirs and legal Representatives of.

To Abigail Sherwood Wife of Jeremiah Sherwood	-----	
the whole of the 5 th Division in Cablesong lot so called	-----	£22. 14 2
one Acre and Eleven Rods and an half of Land at the Northwesterly	} -----	1. 17. 10
End of the 3 ^d Division in said Lot		
Twenty Five Rods and half a quarter of a Rod of Salt meadow	} -----	1. 5. 2. 8
in the Acre & half Piece & lot of equal width the whole length adjoining to that distributed to Hannahs Heirs		
		£71. 12. 11. 2

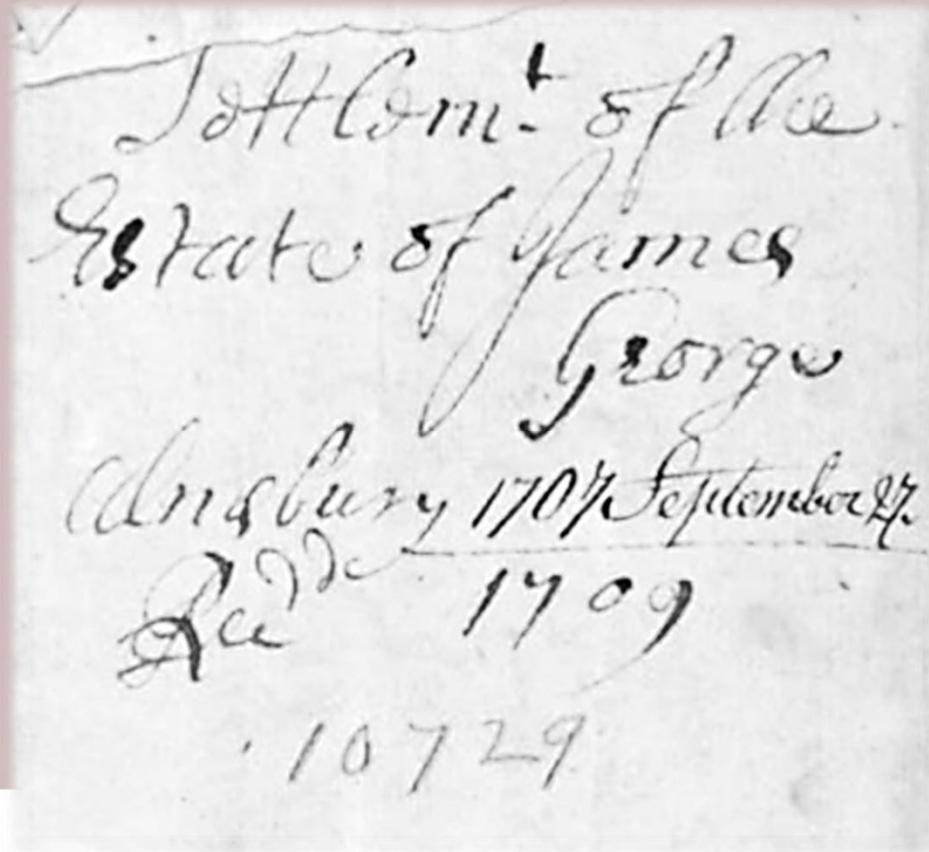
To the Heirs and legal Representatives of Hannah Jenning, dec ^d late wife of Stephen Jenning		
Four Acres of Land in the Field at the Mill plain so called	-----	£39. 19. 6. 2
one Acre and Eight Rods and an half of Salt meadow a little	} -----	8. 8. 5. 1
Northwesterly of Ward Island to lye on that Part of the Acre and an half Piece so called next adjoining to the Ogden meadow and is to be divided from the Remainder of said Piece by a Line drawn Parallel with Ogden's Line		
		£48. 7. 11. 3

To Abigail Sherwood Wife of Jeremiah Sherwood	-----	
the whole of the 5 th Division in Cablesong lot so called	-----	£22. 14 2
one Acre and Eleven Rods and an half of Land at the Northwesterly	} -----	1. 17. 10
End of the 3 ^d Division in said Lot		
Twenty Five Rods and half a quarter of a Rod of Salt meadow	} -----	1. 5. 2. 8
in the Acre & half Piece & lot of equal width the whole length adjoining to that distributed to Hannahs Heirs		

Peter Sturgis Distribution, Fairfield Probate Dist. File No. 6215

Agreement

- James George, 1709



Proceeds of son & c by answering to Case. 200 have
agreed to divide & final Estate. so out ^{of} left us as
as followeth: viz. that James George & his brother
shall have a lot in Almsbury belonging to our fathers
Estate. Call'd of Childrens Land:
2^{dly} to Samuel George: we agreed him a lot in a Division of
Land in Almsbury Call'd of the Grove at w^{ch}.
3^{dly} to Francis George: we agreed & he shall have our
fathers share - & also all appurtenances belonging
thereto: as also a piece of Land Adjacent unto
Robart Quimby on the north: & southwardly bounded wth Land
formerly belonging unto Thomas Haines:
4^{thly} Sarah George she have eight pounds out of our fathers
movables: agreed by us to be paid & delivered by Francis
George her son:
These are the words for humbly to request your Honours

Agreement for a division of estate

TO the Honourable Daniel A. White Esquire,

Judge of Probate for the County of Essex.

HUMBLY shews Moses ^{Epping} Billey of ~~Attorney~~ ^{Attorney} in the
County, of ~~Lockingham~~ ^{Lockingham} and State of New Hampshire, woman,
That cutting Billey
last an inhabitant of Salem in said County, of Essex, ^{mariner,} has
lately, viz. within five years died intestate,
leaving goods and estate, of which administration is necessary. That your petitioner
is the Father of _____

_____ said deceased, and
has a legal right to take such administration, and is ready to give bond with sufficient
sureties for the faithful discharge thereof. Wherefore he prays, that your
honour would appoint him administrator as aforesaid, agreeably to law in
such cases made and provided.

Dated at Ipswich this Second day of November
A. D. 1819

Moses Billey

Samuel Newman
John Brigham Clerk
Samuel Tenney
all of New

Intestate Probate

Guardianships

Guardianships

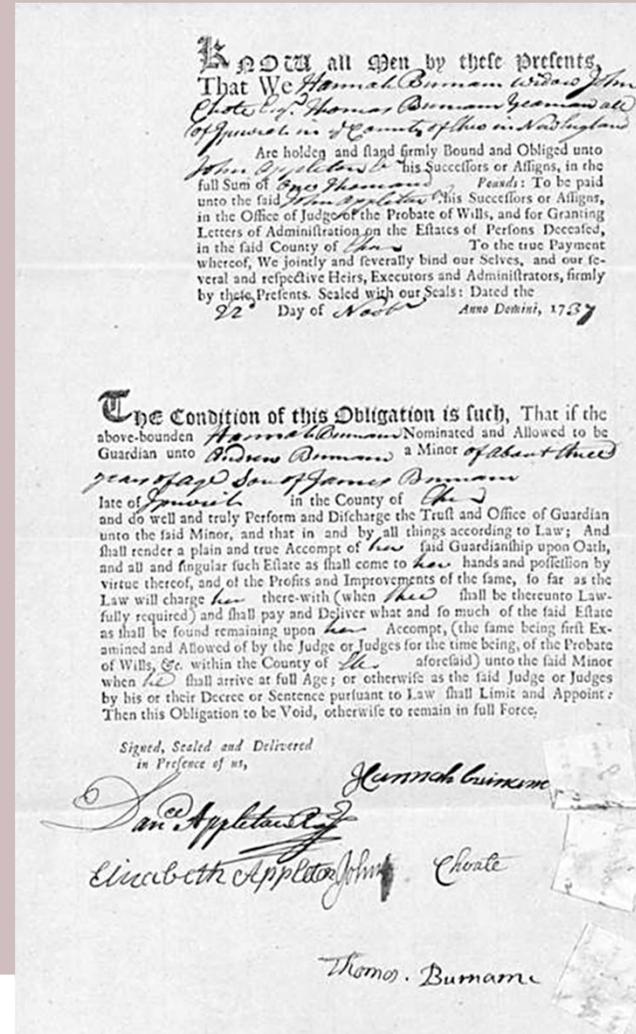
- Appointed for minor children
 - Males: under 21
 - Females: under 18
- Guardians protected the inheritance of minor heirs to an estate
 - Can provide financial support
- After minor becomes of age, the guardian is released
 - Guardian would then make an account of compensation
- Guardians also appointed for adults judged incompetent

Who appoints the guardian?

- If a minor is under fourteen, the guardian is appointed by the court
- If a minor is over fourteen, they may choose their own guardian

Guardianship

- Andrew Burnham, 1737




 KNOW all Men by these presents,
 That We *Annal Burnam* widow of
Chas. B. Burnam deceased
 of *County of the City of New York*
 Are holden and stand firmly Bound and Obligated unto
John B. Burnam his Successors or Assigns, in the
 full Sum of *£500* Pounds: To be paid
 unto the said *John B. Burnam* his Successors or Assigns,
 in the Office of Judge of the Probate of Wills, and for Granting
 Letters of Administration on the Estates of Persons Deceased,
 in the said County of *New York* To the true Payment
 whereof, We jointly and severally bind our Selves, and our se-
 veral and respective Heirs, Executors and Administrators, firmly
 by these presents. Sealed with our Seals: Dated the
22 Day of *Novr* Anno Domini, 1737

Guardianship – Andrew Burnham, 1737

The Condition of this Obligation is such, That if the
above-bounden *James Burnham* Nominated and Allowed to be
Guardian unto *Andrew Burnham* a Minor of about three
years of age Son of *James Burnham*
late of *Spencer* in the County of *Ches*
and do well and truly Perform and Discharge the Trust and Office of Guardian
unto the said Minor, and that in and by all things according to Law; And
shall render a plain and true Accompt of *his* said Guardianship upon Oath,
and all and singular such Estate as shall come to *his* hands and possession by
virtue thereof, and of the Profits and Improvements of the same, so far as the
Law will charge *him* there-with (when *they* shall be thereunto Law-
fully required) and shall pay and Deliver what and so much of the said Estate
as shall be found remaining upon *his* Accompt, (the same being first Ex-
amined and Allowed of by the Judge or Judges for the time being, of the Probate
of Wills, &c. within the County of *the* aforelaid) unto the said Minor
when *he* shall arrive at full Age; or otherwise as the said Judge or Judges
by his or their Decree or Sentence pursuant to Law shall Limit and Appoint:
Then this Obligation to be Void, otherwise to remain in full Force.

Guardianship – Andrew Burnham, 1737

Spendthrift Guardianship

- Samuel Bassett, 1840

in and for said county on the ~~first~~ Tuesday in ~~January~~, A.D. 1840.
On the complaint of the selectmen of the town of ~~Marblehead~~ Marblehead
in said county, shewing, that, in their judgement, John Bassett,
of ~~Marblehead~~ Marblehead aforesaid, fisherman, does by
excessive drinking and idleness, ^{so}
spend, waste and lessen his estate, as thereby to expose himself ~~and his family~~ to
want and suffering circumstances; and does also thereby endanger and expose the said
town to a charge or expense for his ~~and their~~ maintenance and support; and praying
that some person or persons may be appointed guardian or guardians of the said John
Bassett, agreeably to the laws of the commonwealth, in such
cases made and provided:—~~The time and place abovementioned having been assigned~~
~~for considering the same~~; and it being made
to appear, that notice has been given to said John Bassett
~~according to order~~; and the said John Bassett having signified
~~appearing~~, in writing his consent to be put under ^{guardianship,} ~~as therein mentioned,~~ due examination is had

To the Honorable *Daniel A. White* Esquire, Judge
of Probate for the County of Essex.

Humbly shews *Samuel P. Bassett*,
petitioner of *Marblehead* in said county

that there is occasion for a guardian to be appointed for
of *Marblehead* in said county, *John Bassett*, a person giv-
en to excessive drinking and idleness; that your petitioner has a legal right to take
such guardianship, and is ready to give bond with sufficient sureties for the faithful
discharge thereof.

Wherefore he prays, that guardianship of said *John Bassett*
may be granted to *him* agreeably to law in such
cases made and provided.

Dated at *Salem* this *seventh*
of *January*, A.D. 18*40*. *Samuel P. Bassett* by *W. Faber*
Essex, ss. At a Court of Probate holden at *Salem* in
and for said county, on the *first* Tuesday in *January*, A.D. 18*40*.

The foregoing petition being duly considered,—It is thereupon decreed by the court here,
that guardianship, as therein prayed for, be granted to said *Samuel P. Bassett*,
Bassett, he giving bond according to law for his faithful discharge of that
trust.

D. A. White Judge of Probate.

Spendthrift

To the Hon Daniel A. White, ^{requires} Judge of Probate for
the County of Essex,
The ~~Complainthe~~ Selectmen of the Town of Marblehead,
in said county, ~~complain to you~~ ^{in their judgments} that John Bassett,
of said Marblehead, ^{as formerly} a fisherman, does by excessive drinking
and idleness, ^{so spend, waste, & lessen his estate, as thereby to expose him-}
self to want & ^{circumstances;} sufferings, and does also thereby endanger
and expose the said town of Marblehead to a charge
or expense for his maintenance & support. They therefore
pray that you would appoint some person or persons
as guardian or guardians of the said Bassett, agreeably
to the laws ^{of the Commonwealth} in such cases made and provided
Dated at Marblehead
this 6th day of Jan^r 1840

James G. Jeffrey
Richd. J. J. J.
James Goodwyn } Selectmen
H. Hubbard }

Selectmen request a Guardian

Lunatic Guardianship

- John Burnham, 1755

Exec. d. To the Select Men of Ipswich in the County of Essex
Essex

Whereas it is Represented by the Relations of John Burnham
of Ipswich son of Thomas Burnham yeoman that he is
Lunatic or Distracted & therefore unable of taking
Care either of Person or Estate.

They are therefore hereby Required to
make Inquisition into his State of Circumstances
and Represent under your hands how you find him
and Judge him to be that if need be a Guardian
may be appointed him as the Law Direct.

Given under my Hand at Ipswich this
24 of Nov^r An: Dom: 1755.

Thos. Perry Jud. Prob

Exec. N. To the Select Men of Ipswich in the County of Essex
Erecting
Whereas it is Represented by the Relations of John Burrows
of Ipswich son of Thomas Burrows yeoman That he is
Lunatic or Distracted by the Incurable Offending
Care either of Person or Estate.
You are therefore hereby Required to
make Inquisition into his State of Circumstances
and Represent under your hand, how you find him
and Judge him to be That if need be a Guardian
may be appointed him as the Law Directs.
Given under my Hand at Ipswich this
24 of Nov^r An: Dom: 1755.
Thos: Perry Jud: Prob

Lunatic – Non Compos Mentis

An Inventory of the Estate of John Burnham of
 Appouh Rendred Noncompas taken by us the Subscribers being
 Appointed and Sworn by the Hon^{ble} Tho^s Berry Judge of the
 Probate of wills in the County of Essex as by his Commission beare
 with Exhibited may appear is as followeth viz

one Pair of Oxen £6:13:4	one pair of steers 82/8	10 11 6
one old Black Cow 3 1/8	one young Black Cow 40/	3 11 4 1/8
one two year old Stear 18/	one Bay mare 80/	4 1 8
one Grey mare 80/	one Iron Grey horse Colt 60/	7 1 1
two Lime Sheats 26/8	two Sheep 8/	1 11 8
and Iron horse tacking 11/	two yokes 3/2	1 7 12
a Cart 2/8	two Load of English Hay 53/4	2 11 6
five Load of fresh Hay 11/	five Load of Satt hay 80/	6 1 1
60 Pound of flax 30/	a pitch fork 1/4	1 1 3 4
two Rakes 2/		
A Cart Hoop 11/	a Riding Chair 14/	2 1 4 1/2
one oval table 5/4	a square white table 6/8	11 2 1/2
two small oval tables with pine Leany 5/4		11 5 1/4
two blue Chains 16/	one pair of Bellows 2/	11 8 1/2
a great Iron 2/	a trawle 5/4	11 10 1/2
five flie & Tongue 2/2		11 2 3/4
a pair of Andirons 12/	flatt fork 3	11 3 1/2
3 Iron Candlesticks with Brass Nubs 3/2		11 5 1/2
2 Plain Iron Candlesticks 1/	two Brass Ditto 11/	3 11 9 7
a Box Iron-heats and great 6/8	frying pan 3/4	11 9 7
Iron Spit 11/	a small Looking Glass 3/6	11 7 1/6
two Brushes one Shilling	a large Iron pick & hocks 6/	11 7 1/2
smaller Ditto with hocks 11/	small Ditto with hocks 2/8	11 6 1/8
a Dish Kettle 11/	small Ditto 2/8	11 3 1/4
a Chapin Dish 6/8		
Iron Skillet 6	old Brass Kettle 10/8	11 6 1/8
small Ditto 16/		

Inventory of John Burnham

Lunatic Commitment

- Elizabeth Dennis, 1836

Essex, ct. May 24, 1836. The foregoing representation being duly considered, and it being made to appear that the facts therein set forth are true; It is thereupon considered and decreed that Elizabeth E. Dennis, of Salem in said county, wife of Devereux Dennis, a lunatic, is so furiously mad, as to render it manifestly dangerous to the peace and safety of the community that she should continue at large, and that she be committed to the state lunatic hospital agreeably to law, and that the sheriff of said county or his deputy or any constable of Salem or said Devereux Dennis be directed to carry into effect this order; warrant issuing accordingly in due form.

Dr. H. W. H. H. judge of probate.

Essex, ss. May 24, 1836. The foregoing representation being duly considered, and it being made to appear that the facts therein set forth are true; It is thereupon considered and decreed that Elizabeth E. Dennis, of Salem in said county, wife of Devereux Dennis, a lunatic, is so furiously mad, as to render it manifestly dangerous to the peace and safety of the community that she should continue at large, and that she be committed to the state lunatic hospital agreeably to law, and that the sheriff of said county or his deputy or any constable of Salem or said Devereux Dennis be directed to carry into effect this order; warrant issuing accordingly in due form.

Dr. W. M. P. Judge of Probate.

Lunatic – Commitment Judgement

To the Hon Daniel A White
Judge of Probate for Essex County

I hereby certify that
in my opinion it is unsafe to allow Elizabeth
Dennis to go at large, she being at this time
furiously mad - you are therefore requested
to cause her admission to the Lunatic Hos-
-pital in Worcester -

Salem May 23 1836 - Swett Sutton & Co.
Mayor of Salem.

Salem May 24 1836. Here certify that I
concur in the opinion above expressed
& am of opinion moreover that Elizabeth
Dennis ought to ^{be} removed immediately

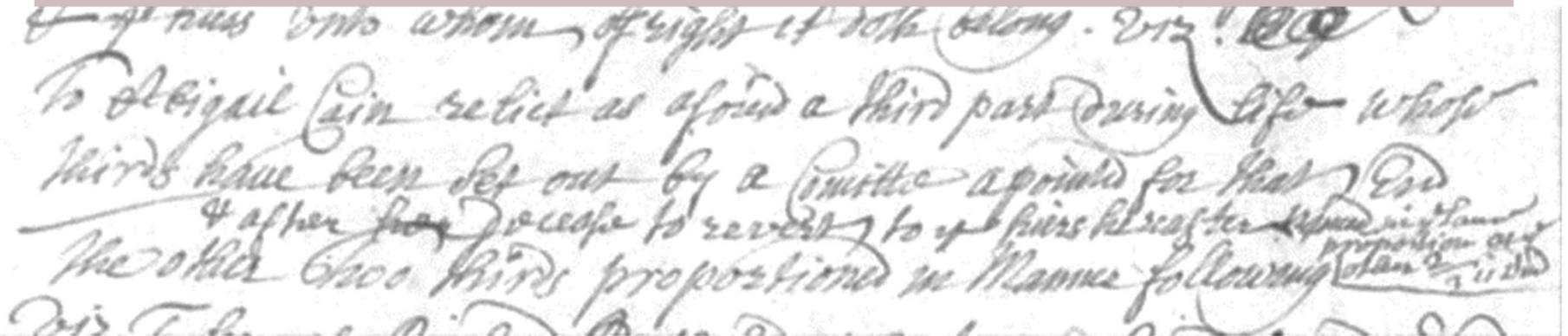
A. S. Peirson
Physician

Affidavits to support claim

Miscellaneous Probate Papers

Dower Record

- Portion of an estate given to a widow by law from her deceased husband's estate; usually 1/3



of the same unto whom of right it doth belong. Viz! ~~the~~
To Abigail Cain widow as aforesaid a third part during life whose
thirds have been set out by a Committee appointed for that purpose
& after her decease to revert to her heirs hereafter ^{the same in the same}
The other two thirds proportioned in manner following ^{proportioned as}
viz. To the said ~~Abigail~~ ~~Cain~~ ~~widow~~ ~~the~~ ~~one~~ ~~third~~ ~~part~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~estate~~ ~~as~~ ~~above~~ ~~said~~

Estate whereof Joshua Adams late of said Kingston, mariner deceased died seized, and you are to assign and sett off to Mary Cook (formerly the widow of the said Joshua deceased, & now the wife of Sylvanus Cook of s^d Kingston) her thirds or right of dower in said Estate, and you are to assign & sett off the same by notes & bonds, quantity & quality considered, so that she may hold and improve the same in severally during her life - and you are to make

under your hand & upon in under my hand & seal of Day of July in the year of our Order of the Judge of Prob^{ts} Thos^r Lotthrop Regr

To the Honble Joseph Cushing esq^r Judge of Probate &c for the County of Plymouth - In pursuance of your Hon^{rs} warrant dated July 7th 1788. empowering and directing the subscribers to take a view of the Real Estate whereof Joshua Adams late of Kingston mariner deceased died seized, and to assign and sett off to Mary Cook formerly the widow of said deceased, her thirds or right of dower in said Estate &c - we have accordingly attended said Service and sett off the same as follows - (viz) - we have assigned and sett

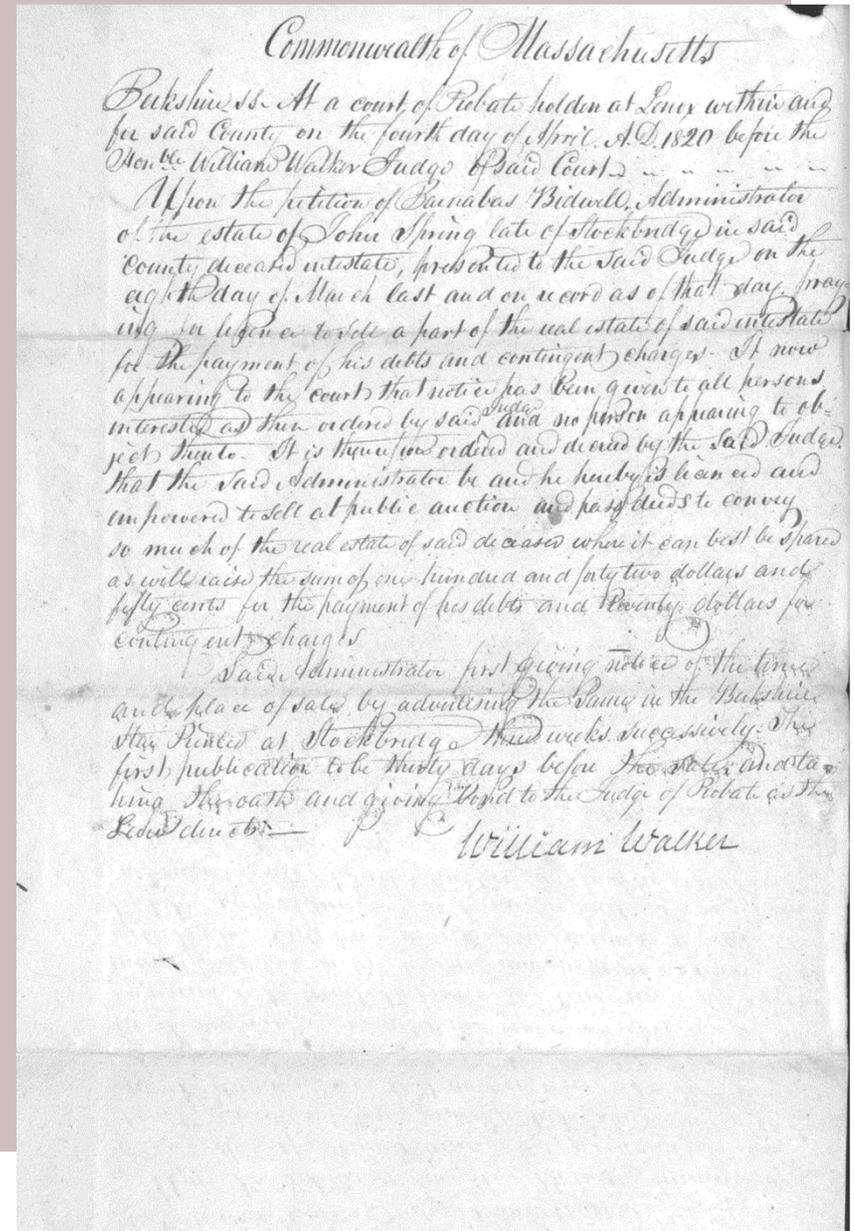
estate &c for the County of Probate &c dated July 7th 1788. im- a view of the Real Estate er deceased died seized, and widow of said deceased, her thirds or right of dower in said Estate &c - we have accordingly attended said Service and sett off the same as follows - (viz) - we have assigned and sett

off to said Mary Cook the easterly part of the dwelling House and the land on which it stands, bounded, beginning at a Stake and Stones near the north east corner of said House thence ranging westerly by the back side of said House and parallel thereto at the distance of six feet therefrom till it comes opposite to the Center of the old Stack of Chimnies, thence southerly through the Center of said Chimney through said House to the middle of the front Door and till it comes to a piece of Land called the four Rod Square thence by said Land easterly to the high way, thence by the high way northerly to the bound first mentioned to include all the room above and below within said limits, also the whole of the little back room which is intersected by the aforesaid line passing thro' said House - we have also assigned to said Mary Cook a piece of Land near the dwelling House containing about two thirds of an acre (more or less) bounded, beginning at the north westerly corner of the piece of Land called the four Rod Square, thence north sixty two degrees west till it comes to an acre of meadow belonging to Geshorn Cobb and wife, thence by said meadow south westerly till it comes to the southerly corner thereof, thence continuing the same course till it comes to Cobbs other Land, thence easterly by said Land till it comes to the south westerly corner of the aforesaid piece of Land called the four Rod Square, thence by said Land northerly to the bound first mentioned, with the one third part of the Barn thereon standing - also about seven acres more or less, being partly wood Land and partly cleared Land lying at the westerly corner of the farm, bounded, beginning at said westerly corner, thence by the range of Cobbs Land south fifty eight degrees east sixty three Rods to a stake and stones, thence north twenty four degrees west

Plymouth Co. Probate Records, Vol. 30, p. 401

Bill of Sale

- Property may have to be sold in order to pay debts
- Sold at public auction
- Approved by the probate court



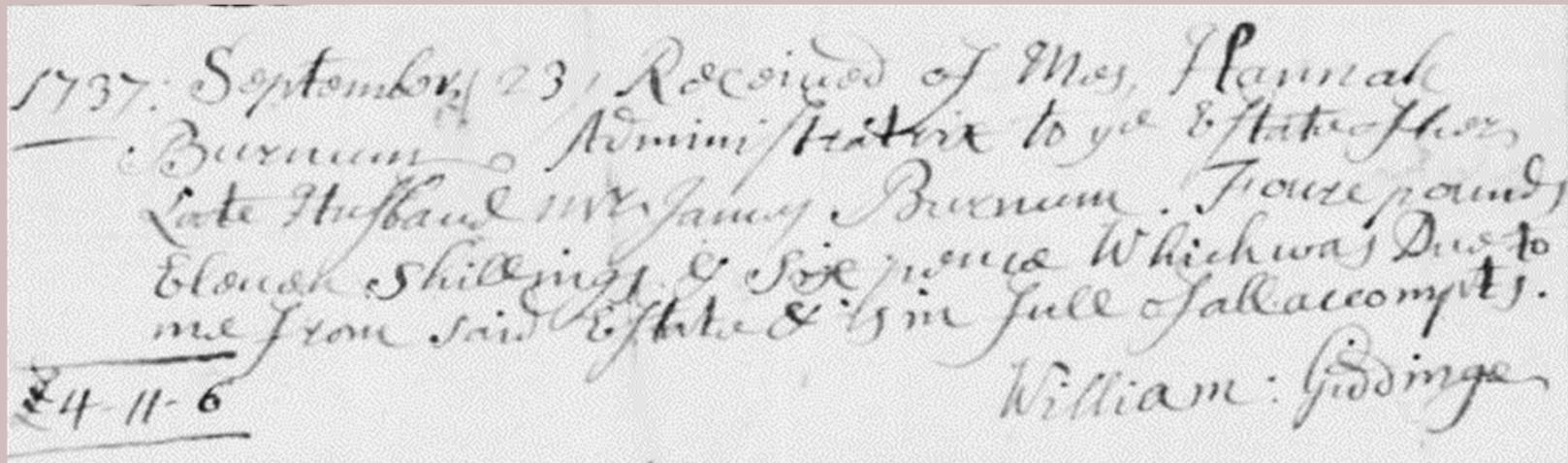
To the Honourable Daniel A. White Esquire Judge of Probate
for the County of Essex -

Stephen L. Greely of Gilmanton in the County of Strafford and
State of New Hampshire Gentleman, respectfully represents - That
he is Guardian of his children Ann Maria Greely and Stephen
Sewall N. Greely minors under the age of twenty one years, that
the said minors are seized in fee simple in common with
Thomas Burns and his wife Jane Burns in her right, and the
heirs at Law of Mark Coffin late of said Newburyport decedent
of one undivided fourth part of the following piece of land
with the buildings thereon, situated in Newburyport aforesaid
to wit - one piece of land with a Dwelling house and out
houses thereon containing about sixty rods and bounded
by the street -

Sale

Receipts

- Record of the administrator collecting or paying debts
- Record that the estate has been distributed



1737: September 23, Received of Mrs. Hannah
Burnum Administratrix to ye Estate of her
Late Husband Mr. James Burnum. Four pounds
Eleven Shillings & Six pence Which was Due to
me from said Estate & is in full of all account.
£4-11-6
William: Giddings

[eI

Look at all receipts in a
Probate case. The married
surname of a daughter may
be revealed.

QUESTIONS?

Hire Research Services

research@nehgs.org

Chat with a Genealogist

AmericanAncestors.org/chat



THANK YOU!

AmericanAncestors.org/education



NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

AmericanAncestors.org

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