

Researching in New England Town Records: 17th through 19th Centuries

*Class 1: Introduction to the New England Town
Meeting and Record Keeping*

David Allen Lambert, Chief Genealogist



American Ancestors®

A NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY HISTORY, HERITAGE & CULTURE

Meet today's presenter



David Allen Lambert
Chief Genealogist

OVERVIEW

- **Presentation (60 mins.)**
 - Town Records
 - The Town Meeting
- **Q&A (30 mins.)**

up year. Common & undivided Land

Aprill the 8th 1728.

At a Meeting of the Proprietors Committee of 4
Land in Watertown, (at Du: Jonathan Stone) the Com
a Meeting of 4 Proprietors of 4 Common and undiv
Town said Meeting to be on the thirteenth day of this
one of the clock in the afternoon. And the Proprie
dred to post up in writing in some publick place in sd To
Meeting in the words following. viz. The proprietors
divided Lands in Watertown are hereby desired to give a Me
ting in of East Pr
in sd Town on Friday
of 4 Common and other
of what in William

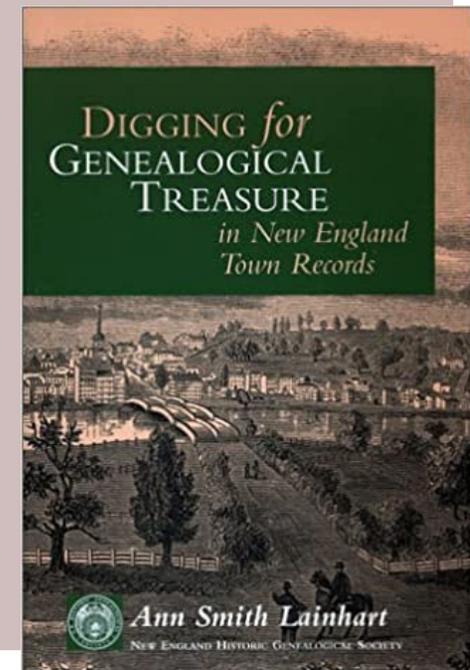


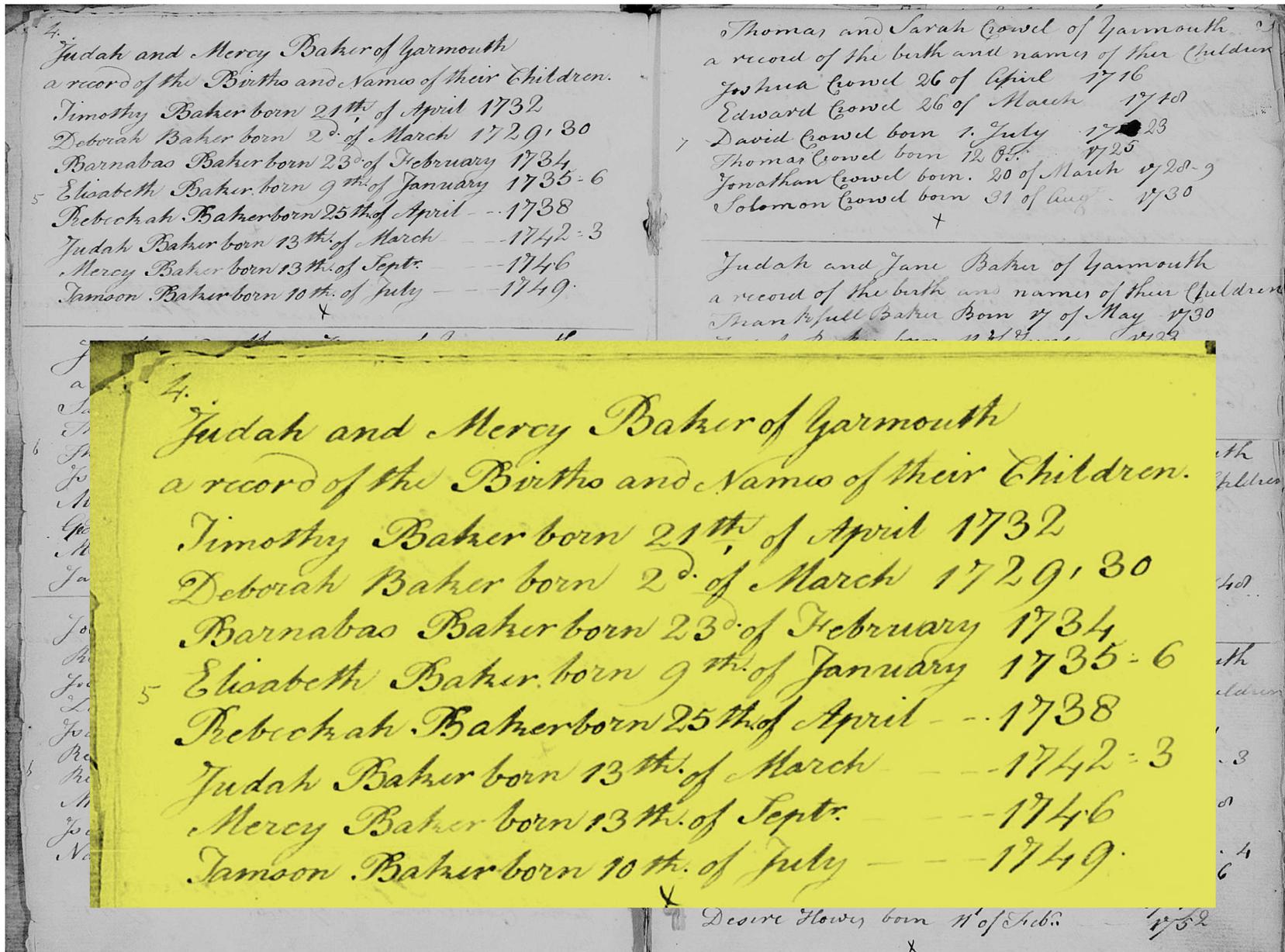
Voice of
David Allen Lambert, Chief
Genealogist

Town Records

Examples of Town Records

- Vitals – birth, marriage and death
- Officers
- Meetings
- Treasurer's records
- Tax records
- Land Sales
- Ear marks
- Pew deeds
- Warnings out
- Licenses





Dennis, MA 1730's – Family Vital Records

Value of Town Records

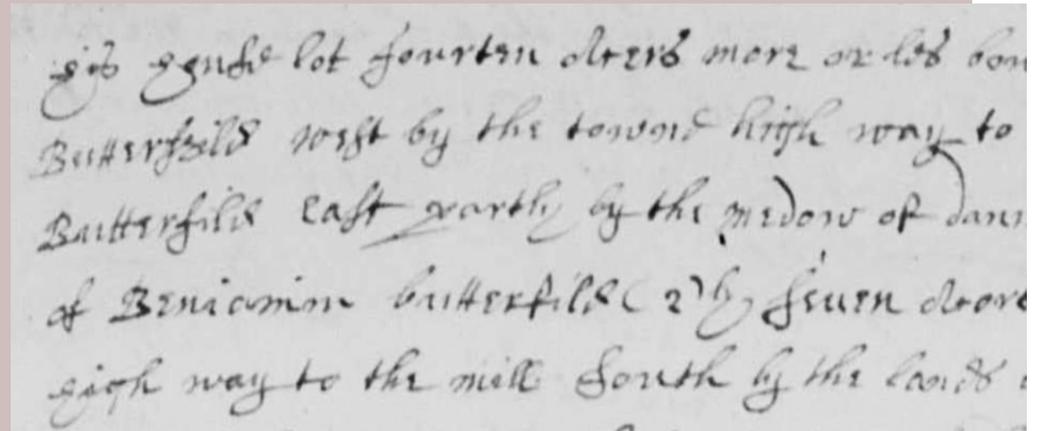
- Comprised of many different types of records
- Provide unique information
- Track movements and migrations
- Important source for female ancestors

Value of Town Records

- Best source for impoverished ancestors
- Vital record substitutes
- Help distinguish individuals with same name
- Give context to your ancestor's life
- Provide insight into community

Challenges

- Time consuming
- Usually unindexed
- Poor handwriting
- Different formats
- Difficult to access
- Recorded in random order



Who Was Considered a Town Inhabitant?

- Land owners
- Individuals born in the town
- Apprentices trained in the town
- Newcomers allowed if:
 - Good character
 - Vouched for by existing town inhabitant OR
 - Approved by Selectmen
 - Deemed not become a burden to the town

Privileges of Town Inhabitancy

- Land
- Common land for grazing
- Fishing and hunting privileges
- If became indigent, right to be cared for by the town



Image from www.revolutionarywarjournal.com

Freemen

- Applied for privilege
 - Male, usually over 21
 - Church member (varied by Colony)
 - Land ownership (varied by Colony)
 - Good character
- Participate in Town Meeting
- Vote on Town business
- Serve on juries



Mural at Post Office, Ipswich, MA

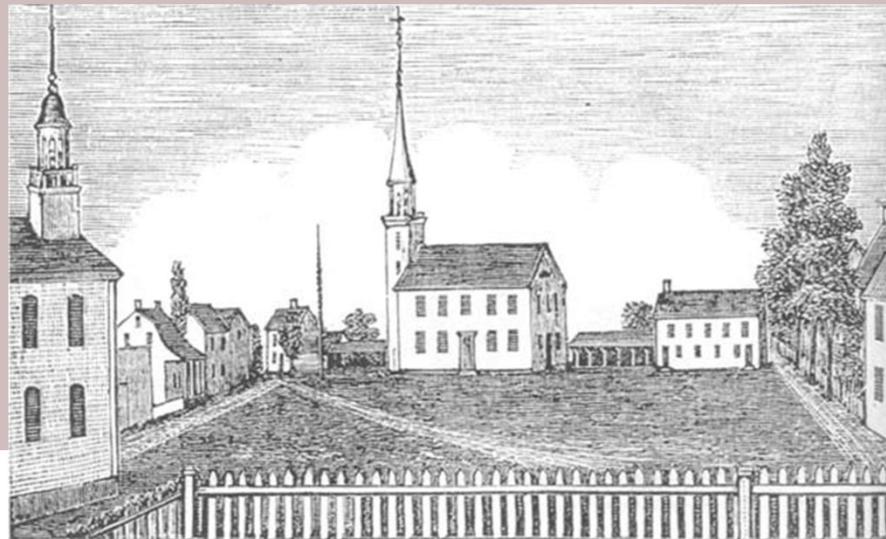
Freemen
 Benjamin Thayer Junr
 Stephen Sweet
 Abraham Northbrook
 Abel Farr
 Tho^r. Reynolds
 John Chambers
 Jm^d Adams
 Elisha Reynolds
 James Sweet
 Isaac Goodwin
 Moses Farr
 Wm Brandigo
 Joseph Mott
 Alexander Gregg
 Daniel Smith
 Joseph Hayden
 Humphrey Smith
 Silvester Sweet
 Joshua Manning
 Abraham May
 Friedrich Toxsey
 Peter Carrigan
 Jacob Cook
 Wm Soules
 James Fisher
 Richard Mott
 John van Wert
 Jacob Mott
 Joseph Hacks
 Gabriel Manning
 Peter Clark
 Stephen Soules
 Joseph Sweet
 Joseph Mott
 John Andrews
 Abraham Babcock
 Timothy Mott
 Alexander Scott
 John Waters
 John LeDuc
 James Andrews
 James Hoxie
 Daniel Kezgel
 Emanuel Hammen
 Samuel Mott
 John Haggan
 Phillip Cook
 Wm Lemay
 Nathaniel Hammen
 Wm Miller
 Peter Hammen
 Nathaniel Wood
 Wm George
 George Brewster
 John Lagan
 John Mott
 Henry Miller
 J^r Calla
 Edward Huberg
 Henry - Hill
 Christopher Finkel
 Joseph L. Mott
 Timothy Soules
 John Finkel
 Nathan Miller
 Wm Mear
 Phillip Gray
 Reuben Taler
 Ben^r Spencer
 Joseph Soules
 John Haggan
 Daniel Kezgel
 James Haggan

David Harvey
 Abraham Conklin
 Daniel Clark
 Edward Hogan
 Esart Gregg
 Nathaniel Mott
 Timothy Torce
 Reuben Garlick
 Royal Foster
 John Gregg
 Wm Hammen
 Abraham Gregg
 Job Babcock
 Febe Bolles
 Truman Clark
 William Caples
 John Soules
 John Taylor
 Philip Carrigan
 William Duell
 William Wilford
 Daniel L. Garlick
 Saml. G. Mott
 Jacob Pickel
 Daniel L. Garlick
 John K. Chilton
 Simon Sweet
 Abraham Scott
 Doak Soules
 Saml. Tracy
 William H. Finger
 Paul Corrigan
 Elizabeth Mear
 Conrad Bagget
 Eld. Daniel
 Michael Duell
 Michael Hamming's Jun.
 Linn Hammen
 Saml. Booser
 Richard Smith
 Will^m Wiley
 Benj^r Anderson
 Wm^r Smith
 Jm^r Corban
 Iron Wood
 Milt. Hamming
 Sylvester Sweet Jun.
 Thomas Marren
 Job Gadsden
 Moses Fair
 Joseph Duell Jun.
 John Clark
 Linder Hammen
 Lewis Soul
 James Palmer
 Ezra Pike
 Benjamin Barry
 Thomas Bards
 Samuel Edright
 Jm^r Babcock
 Elisha Remmels
 Robert Brown
 Peter Towne Jun.
 Jacob Manning
 James Coniseh
 George Coover
 Walter Larrow
 Stephen Miles
 James Williams
 Solomon Rowlett
 James Miles
 Uriah Travis
 Gray Straight
 Paul Miles
 Hugh Andrews
 John Duell
 Andrew Honicher
 John Dunston
 Peter Deegan
 John P. Hammen
 Henry Ollanbach
 Thomas W. Hammen

Alburgh, VT 1792, List of Freemen

Town Government

- Unit of government in New England and other locales
- Elected town officers governed the town
- Freemen voted for elected officials at town meeting



Religion and Town Government

- Earliest New England settlers brought English governing tools with them
 - Laws
 - Record keeping
 - Officers
 - Freemen could vote on town matters
- Massachusetts Bay made church participation a condition for Freeman status
- Connecticut Colony (but not New Haven Colony) allowed all men to apply for Freeman status

Typical Functions of NE Towns

- Assess and collect taxes
- Record land transactions
- Build and maintain roads
- Maintain law and order
- Care for indigent members of the community
- Maintain schools

The Town Meeting

The Town Meeting

- Notice posted to townspeople
- Led by a moderator
- The selectmen were to control the agenda and prevent long needless discussion on a matter.
- Often required attendance
- Election of town officials
- General town business

The Town Meeting

- The freemen and inhabitants of towns would meet at specific intervals to hold Town Meetings.
- Learn about various offenses, charges and praise given the various community inhabitants.
- From Town Meeting records you can learn various details on the social structure of the community.
- Understand the detailed history of a community when a town history has not been compiled.

State of New Hampshire } This is to Notify and warn all
Strafford } the freeholders and others inhabit-
ants belonging to the town of
Vote in town
meek at the
said Town on
next ensuing
and there to
1^{ly} To Chuse a m
2^{ly} To Chuse a To
3^{ly} To Bring in
Ensuing
4^{ly} To Bring the
Ensuing Als
of Deeds for Sa
5^{ly} To Chuse a Rep
in the General
6^{ly} To Chuse Const
as the Law Dir
7^{ly} To see what m
necessary Charges arising on said town the year ensuing
8^{ly} To see if the town will Agree to tax the inhabitants
in the upper Parish so called to Mr Smith & Mr Bowden
for their Gallerys and that said inhabitants in the upper
Parish shall have their equal proportion of preaching

State of New Hampshire } This is to Notify and warn all
Strafford } the freeholders and others inhabit-
ants belonging to the town of
Vote in town Affairs you are hereby required to
meek at the Congregational meeting house in
said Town on Thursday the eighth Day of March
next ensuing at ten of the Clock before noon then
and there to Act on the following Particulars (Viz)

Town Records – Gilmanton, NH

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and there to Act on the following Particulars (Viz)

Town Records – Gilmanton, NH

At a Legal Meeting of the freeholders and others inhabitants of the Town of Gilmantown held the eighth Day of March 1787 Agreeable to the above Warning
1st Gen. Joseph Badger Esq^r was chosen Moderator for said Meeting
2^d by William Smith was chosen Town Clerk (& sworn)
Capt. Nathaniel Wilson & Edward Scribner Mudgett and Benjamin Weeks were chosen Constables
Wilson & Weeks sworn
Mid. Gen. Joseph Badger John Shepard & St. Joseph Young were chosen Select men & all sworn
Cogswell Esq^r, Jonathan Morrison were chosen surveyors of high ways and all sworn but Jewth Sanborn
Robt. Moulton Th^o Taylor & Th^o Cogswell Esq^r

Town Record – Gilmanton, NH

Town Meeting Minutes, 1755

At a Publick Town meeting Legally Warned & held at the meeting house the 31st Day of March 1755

Joseph Hanson Esq. Town Clerk	William Hill	} Field Drivers
Thos. Millet Esq. Select Men	John Russell	
Joseph Hanson jun. Esq. Select Men	Lyab. Bunker	
James Young	Mrs. Hanson	
John Leighton	James Wesley	} Hog Reves
John Jackson	James Varney	
Thos. W. Wadsworth (Comifer)	Ebenezer Garland	
Eph. Hanson	John Kendal	
Timothy Moses } Constables	Wm. Stack Drive	} Callers of Names
William Hufny	Samuel Alley	
Edward Davis	Nathaniel Sammes	} Surveyors of Highway
Moses Varney	12 th Moses Winget	
Jehad Cannon	Moses Varney	} Overseers of the Poor
Daniel Kame	13 th Ephraim Hanson	
Cap. Wm. Stackpole	14 th Jonathon Kirkford	} Overseers of the Poor
Job Clements	Jonathon Pinkham	
Thomas Varney	15 th John Kirkford jun.	} Overseers of the Poor
Thomas Tuttle	Thomas Tuttle	

16th with respect to the Towns being at the Expence of hiring three school Maisters as mentioned in the notification was debated on put to vote & pass in the Negative

17th that as to the several bridges as inserted in the notification being not act'd only put to vote & pass in the negative

Then the meeting being adjourned till the fifth Day of may next at two of the clock in the afternoon

Special Town Meeting, 1755

17th votes that John Church be Constable in the Room of William Hufny who was chosen at the Annual March Meeting and Requested to serve also voted that Benjamin Hull be Constable in the Room of Timothy Moses who was chosen at the annual Meeting and Requested to serve

442nd The Freholders and Inhabitants of the Town of Dover
 This is to Give notice that there is a Publick Town meeting to be held at the meeting house at Cochecho in Dover on the 9th Day of may 1755
 To hear the Petition of sundry of the Inhabitants of the westerly part of the Town Call: Madbury Requesting to be set off a Parish by themselves and to subscribe as the Town shall think most proper also to see if the Town will be at the Expence of having More Schoolmasters than they are oblig'd to hire by Law
 Dover April 9th 1755 By order of the select men Jos. Hanson Town Clerk

At a Publick Town meeting Legally Warned and held at the meeting house at Cochecho in Dover on the 10th Day of may 1755
 Voted that Thomas Millet Esq. be the moderator for said meeting also
 Voted that Cap. Thomas Westbrook Wadson and Thomas Millet Esq. be appointed together or separate in the name and behalf of the Town of Dover to attend the next Court on the third Day of their next Sessions or on any other Day of their Session in order to make answer to a Petition preferred to said Court by a number of the westerly part of the Town Call: Madbury Requesting to be set off a Parish by themselves which agents are hereby empowered to act as they shall think most proper or the benefit of the Town in General with respect to said Petition
 also Voted that there be three Schoolmasters of good Repute by the select men Whereof one of them a Grammar Schooler and to be stated in divers parts of the Town where the whole of the People may be accomodated and the Charge thereof to be paid out of the Publick Town stock

Land Record, 1735

Dover September 1735
 Now Laid out to Joseph Lebellets jun^r twenty acres of Land up at a Place called black water the being part of his fathers Right in the Division of J. Comans in Dover which was Given July the eight 1731 beginning as followeth about two Rods South of Instream Island Now E. Corner it being a pitch pine tree then running East by sou. by y^e Road Eighty Rods then 110 by East forty Rods to a Norway pine then Eighty Rods by no. to said Islands Land then by said Land to the first bounds - Laid out by us
 Tho^s. Millet
 Robert Coens } Committee
 John Huskins

Town Records

9 at the meeting
to meet house in the west part on Thursday
the 22 day of this present April
at at twelve o'clock in the day
in order to chuse officers for the
year In doing may more fully appear
By the Charter this is the order
of his Excellency the governor
dated at Springfield April the 16 day 1756
Ebene: Stevens Cald said meeting

At Leagal meeting held By the Inhabitanee
of Sandown on Thursday the twenty Second
of this Instant April 1756

- 1 Capt Jethro Sanborn was Chosen moddrator for 1st meeting.
- 2 Capt Jethro Sanborn Chosen Parish Clark
- 3 Israel Huse was Chosen Constable for the present year.
- 4 Ruben Clough theophilus Eaton Leute Samuel Sleeper was Chosen Sectect men for the yea In doing
- 5 Capt tucker Joseph grealy was Chosen Sesore
- 6 David Sleeper and Jacob wels Chosen thithing men.
- 7 Jonathan Colbey Ezekel Eaton mores Blake Strains
- 8 Glandow Colbey mores tucker howards
- 9 Benjamin Shaw David Straw Seners
- 10 Mr mores Blake Selar of Leather
- 11 Mr Steven Rachelder nathanel Lad a Comity to Examin the Sectect mens account

noted that Mr. Israel Huse Junior is
Elected as hired Constable In the Town
of his father.

567 At Leagal meeting held By the Inhabitanee
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- 6 David Sleeper and Jacob wels Chosen thithing men.

Inuse a Comity to agree and give
aminutors for Summ Preaching and
make Return of these same with

Town Meeting Record, Sandown, NH, 1756

9th Voted that Twelve Pounds be raised for mending
 the Great Bridge the year past.
 10th Voted That Forty Pounds be raised to defray
 Town charges the present year.
 11th Voted That that part of the money assest
 last year to mend High ways and not committed, be
 this year appropriated to mend the High Ways.
 12th Voted that the Select men sell the Pest House
 for what it will fetch.
 13th Article dismissed.
 Recorded Pr. Step n. Longfellow Town Clerk

Falmouth Feb ry. 20th 1753.

By the desire of the Selectmen of Falmouth
 I, the Subscriber have measured and laid out Roads in
 Falmouth aforesaid as follows -
 Begin at Henry McKennys westerly corner at Cape
 Elizabeth thence
 North 35 Degrees West 19 Rod on the top of the Sea
 Wall to Hanscoms Point thence
 North 59 Degrees East 9 Rod thence
 North 32 Degrees West 34 Rod on the top of the sea
 Wall to Capt. Wm. Wentworths Land thence
 South 88 Degrees West 7 1/2 Rod thence
 North 9 Degrees West 11 Rod thence
 North 47 Degrees East 6 Rod thence
 North 9 Degrees East 12 Rod thence
 North 21 Degrees West 19 Rod thence
 North 12 Degrees East 30 Rod thence
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 North 21 Degrees West 19 Rod thence
 North 12 Degrees East 30 Rod thence
 North 31 Degrees West 16 Rod thence

North 90 Rod between

own field in the Road that is now trod then
 South 53 Degrees West 56 Rod then
 South 88 Degrees West 29 Rod then
 North 57 Degrees West 30 Rod, which goes about 7 Rod
 to the Northward of John Jordans Barn, then
 South 82 Degrees West 94 Rod near the swamp to the
 Northward of Richard Jordans Barn, thence
 South 63 Degrees West 50 Rod to a small red oak tree
 standing about 2 Rod to the Southward of James Jordans
 Barn thence
 South 83 Degrees West 28 Rod then
 North 41 Degrees West 16 Rod which leads into the
 former Road over the long causeway to Clement Jordans
 The Road to be Two Rod in width, and to be extended
 one Rod each way, from these courses.

Falmouth, Maine 1753 Road Survey

Hull, Massachusetts (1671)

- Town Meeting March 1, 1670/1
- The Selectmen are dealing with many laws and the fines for not complying with them.
- Many dealt with the building and maintaining of fences or stone walls which were to be 3 feet ten inches high and 10 inches broad.
- Also “who be found smocking of tobacco in any barn or other place wher any straw or cumbustabell stufe is for dangor of fire upon the penalty of 12 s...”

Tip:
Look at multiple Town
meetings for context

Woburn, Massachusetts (1699)

- The Selectmen reported on September 18, 1699 about townsman Jacob Hamblet.
- “Informed that Jacob Hamblet was so outrageously distracted, and tore all his cloaths off his back from time to time nothing will hold him, and that his wife was no longer able to subsist without som help from the town...”
- A suit of Sail cloth was presented by Constable James Berbeen with lace behind so he could not get it off.
- Was Jacob Hamblet mentally ill?

Ipswich, Massachusetts

- “That if any p[e]rson or p[e]rsons from This town shall suffer any Dog Little or great to Come Into the Meeting house on ye Sabbath or Lectur Days The Ownr of such dogs being convicted...”
- Fine imposed 1 ½ shillings.

New Haven, Conn. (1708)

- “In Consideration of the great Damage done by black birds yearly.... Do order that every male person above the age of sixteen years to the age of Seventy (except the minister) Shall Kill or destroy one dozen of black birds...for what number more then one Dozen any person or persons Shall Kill or destroy he or they Shall be paid one penny for each bird”
- Fine under a dozen was a penny per bird you did not kill.

New Haven, Conn. (1726)

-[since] the Boys playing in the market place is mischievous for by that means the meeting house windows are often shamefully Broken.... That for the future the Boys shall not be allowed to play in the market place within 20 Rod of the meeting house on the penalty of 12 pence for Each such offense”

Deerfield, Massachusetts (1739)

- “... Mr. John Catlin be appointed to go to Hatfield and Meet the Com^{ttees} of Northampton, Hadley * Hatfield and there in y^e behalf of this town to act and determine what to give Doct^r Forter for his Encouragement to settle as a bone setter in this part of y^e Country that is to Say whether to give fourteen pounds or what part soever thereof shall be by him accounted to be our proportion...”

Cape Elizabeth, Maine (1778)

- “That there be a vote passed that if any person shall pass by or within Forty Rods of the House where Josiah Sawyer & his family now is in Sick with the Small Pox, until said family and house is cleansed except they obtain leave of the Selectmen... the Doctor & nurse only excepted, under penalty of Fifty pound...”

New Braintree, Massachusetts (1799)

- “Respect to fencing the Burying yards...That the Town will fence one in a year...the present year to fence the one by the Meeting House, the second the one by Cap^t Warrins, the Third on the Plain, and the Fourth that by Mr Nathan Thomsons”

Chittenden, Vermont (1804)

- “...to pay their proportion of a premium of 10 Dollars for each grown wolf after the first Day of May and previous to the first Day of January next, taken killed and Destroyed within the towns of Philadelphia, Pittsford, Rutland, Brandon or Chittenden.”

QUESTIONS?

Elected Town Officers

Town Officers

- Key Officers
 - Moderator
 - Town Clerk
 - Selectmen(Town Councilors – RI)
 - Constable
 - Treasurer
- Depending on the size of the town, some offices seemed “semi-hereditary”

Office	Description
Town Clerk	Keeper of vital records, recorded meeting proceedings, administered oaths and affidavits, certified licenses.
Selectmen	Elected to one year term, managed affairs of town. Known as Town Councilors in Rhode Island.
Treasurer	Managed town's finances, presided over reimbursements (military service, care of poor, services by townspeople).
Constable	Posted notice for town meetings, "policeman" of the town, warned out strangers, could act as tax collector if position did not exist.
Tithingmen	Ensured that townspeople made contributions to meetinghouse and salary of minister, monitored church attendance, observed conduct of townspeople.
Overseers of the Poor	Charged with using town funds to support town inhabitants who were unable to support themselves. Support took the form of supplies, services, or money.
Surveyor of Highways	Inspected town roads, determined when and where new roads would be constructed.
Assessor	Responsible for listing the names of property owners (real and personal property) and determining how much tax they should pay.
Tax Collector	Collected the assessed taxes.
Fence Viewers	Reviewed fences and property boundaries, moderated boundary disputes.
Hogreeves	Caught stray livestock, fined owners for straying animals.

Tip:

Use the Town Officer Lists to Place
Your Ancestor in Place and Time

Page #9

The Town then Proceeded to Business
Ruben Garlick was chosen Moderator and
The following Persons were then Chosen to
The offices annexed to there Respective Names

Mr. Tho^s Reynolds – Town Clark Qutified

Mrss^{rs}

Richard Mott

John Chambers

Joshua Manning

Jacob Cook

Samuel Mott

Selectmen Qutified

Mr Benj^m Marvin Esq Town Treasurer Qutified

Mrss^{rs}

Abel Parr

Joseph Mott

Parr first Constable
Constables Qutified
& Collectors

Mrss^{rs}

Moses Parr

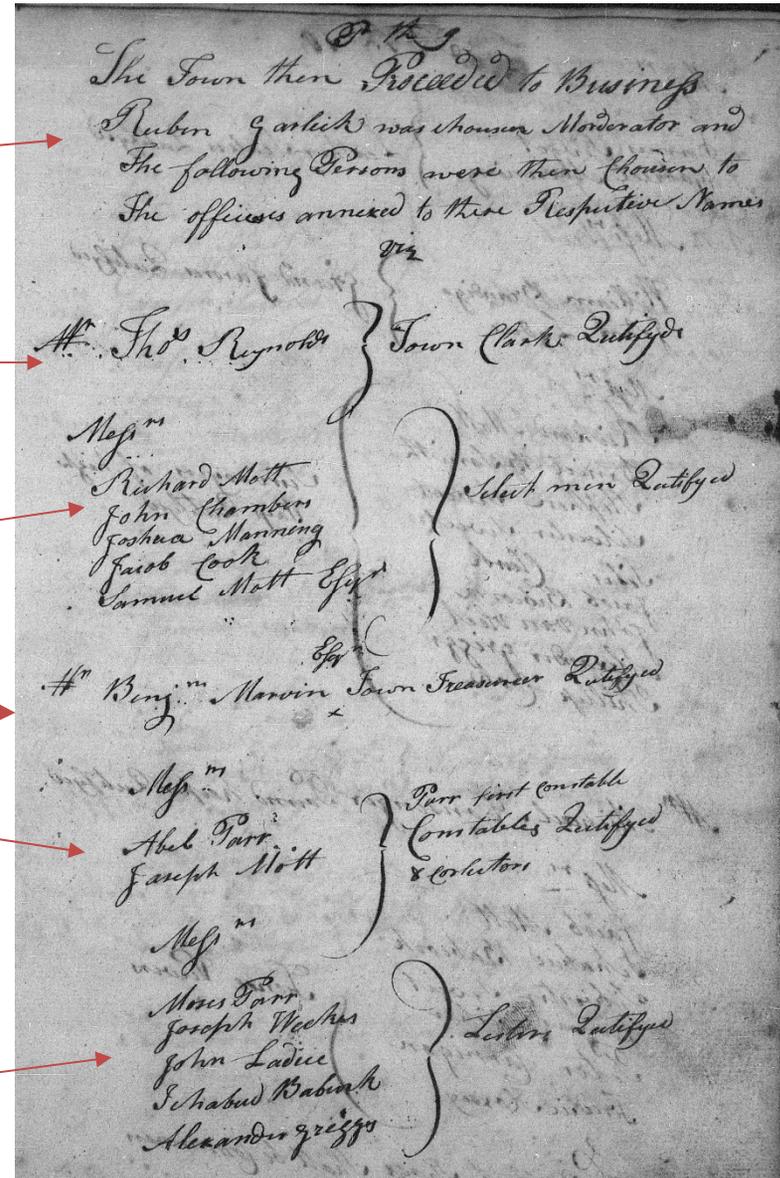
Joseph Weekes

John Ladue

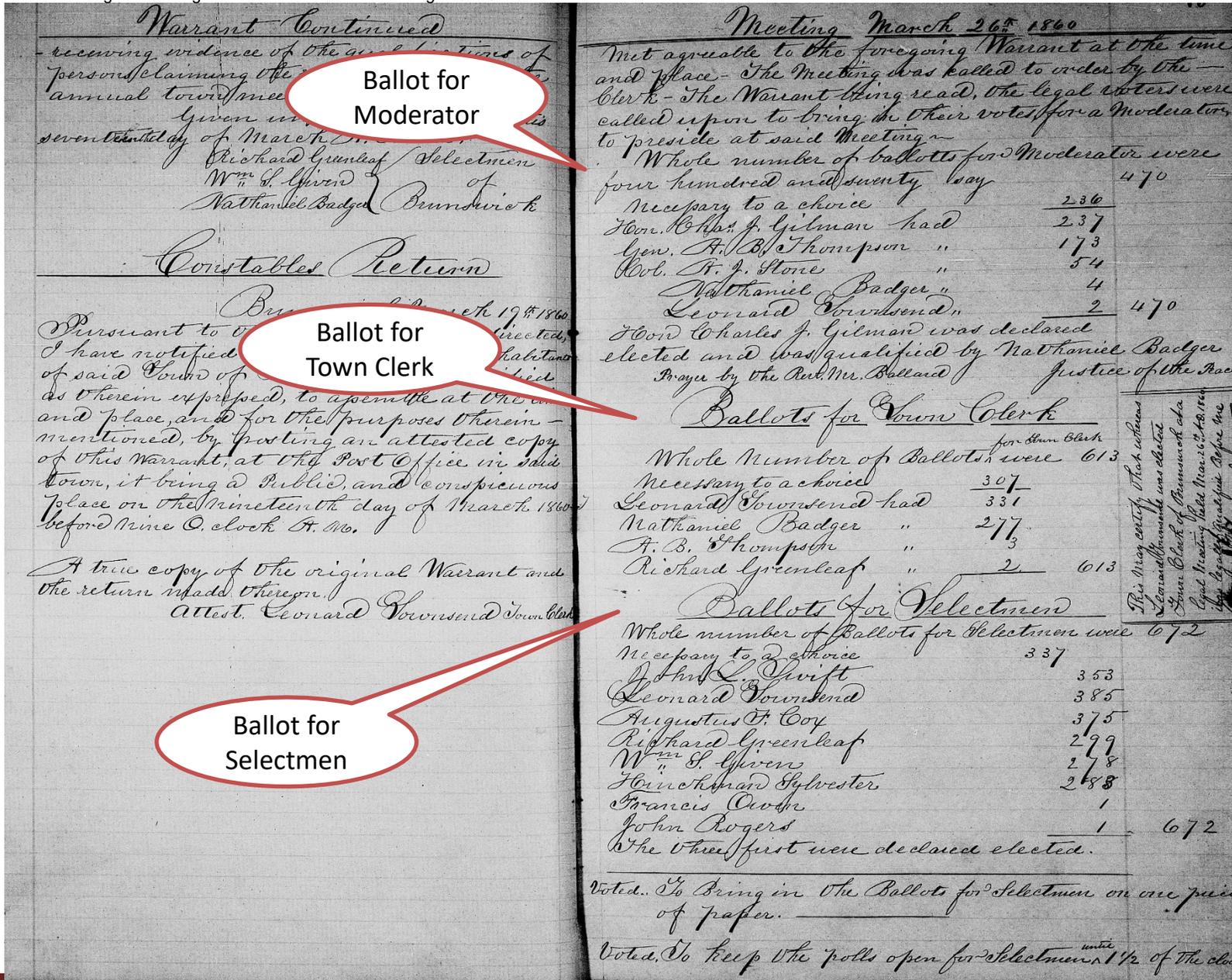
Ichabod Babcock

Alexander Griggs

Listers Qutified



Alburgh, VT 1792



Brunswick, Maine 1860

Major Offices

Town Clerk

- Keeper of vital records
- Documented votes, resolutions, and orders
- Recorded the meeting proceedings
- Administered oaths and affidavits
- Certified licenses

Selectmen

- Generally elected to a one-year term
- Managed the affairs of the town
- Performed many tasks
 - Created slate of jurors
 - Divided town lands
 - Judge offenses against town laws and orders

Treasurer

- Managed town's finances
- Presided over reimbursements
 - Military service
 - Care of poor
 - Services by townspeople (constructing and repairing roads, building school house, etc.)

Constable

- Posted notice for town meetings
- “Policeman” of the town
 - Conduct
 - Illegal activity
- Acted as tax collector if specific position did not exist
- Warned out strangers

Other Town Offices

- Fence Viewers
- Hog Reeves / Field Drivers
- Listers and Collectors
- Surveyor of Highways
- Jurors
- School Superintendent
- Fire Wardens

Fence Viewers

- Reviewed fences and property boundaries
- Responsible for moderating boundary disputes
- Important position in establishment of new communities

Hogreeves

- Responsible for catching stray livestock
- Fined owners for straying animals
- Generally newly married or younger men
 - Can be helpful for estimating age

Listers, Collectors, and Tythingmen

- Listers – wrote down list of inhabitants and their taxable property
- Collectors – two types
 - Collected taxes on male citizens and land
 - Collected contributions to meetinghouse and salary of minister
- Tythingman
 - Kept order in church
 - Maintained the observance of the Sabbath

Surveyor of Highways

- Inspected town roads
- Hired townspeople to repair roads
- Determined when and where new roads would be constructed
- Could alter landscape as they saw fit

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North 12 Degrees East 30 Rod thence
North 31 Degrees West 16 Rod thence

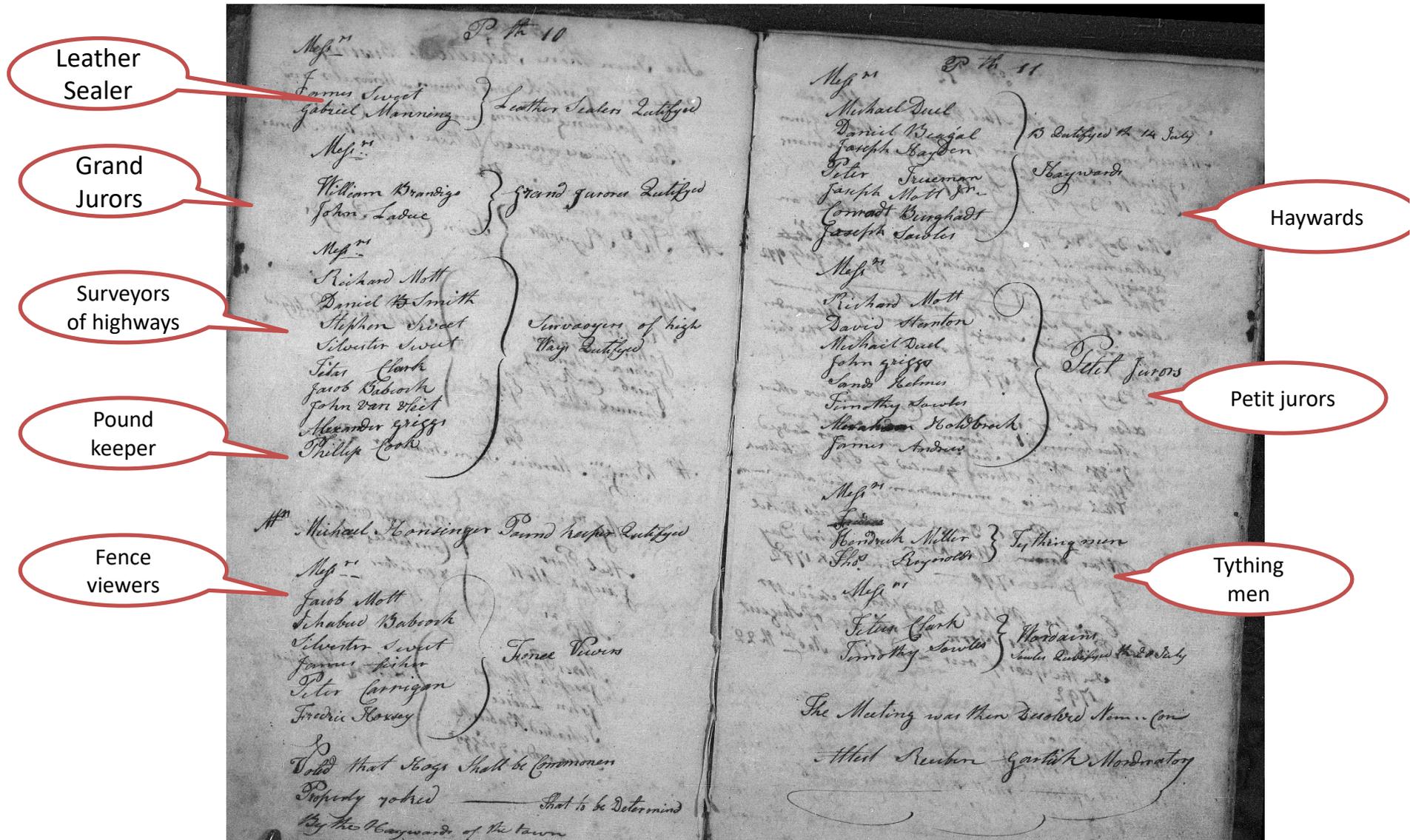
North 90 Rod between

Corn Field in the Road that is now trod then
South 53 Degrees West 56 Rod then
South 88 Degrees West 29 Rod then
North 57 Degrees West 30 Rod, which goes about 7 Rod
to the Northward of John Jordans Barn, then
South 82 Degrees West 94 Rod near the swamp to the
Northward of Richard Jordans Barn, thence
South 63 Degrees West 50 Rod to a small red oak tree
standing about 2 Rod to the Southward of James Jordans
Barn thence
South 83 Degrees West 28 Rod then
North 41 Degrees West 16 Rod which leads into the
former Road over the long causeway to Clement Jordans
The Road to be Two Rod in width, and to be extended
one Rod each way, from these courses.

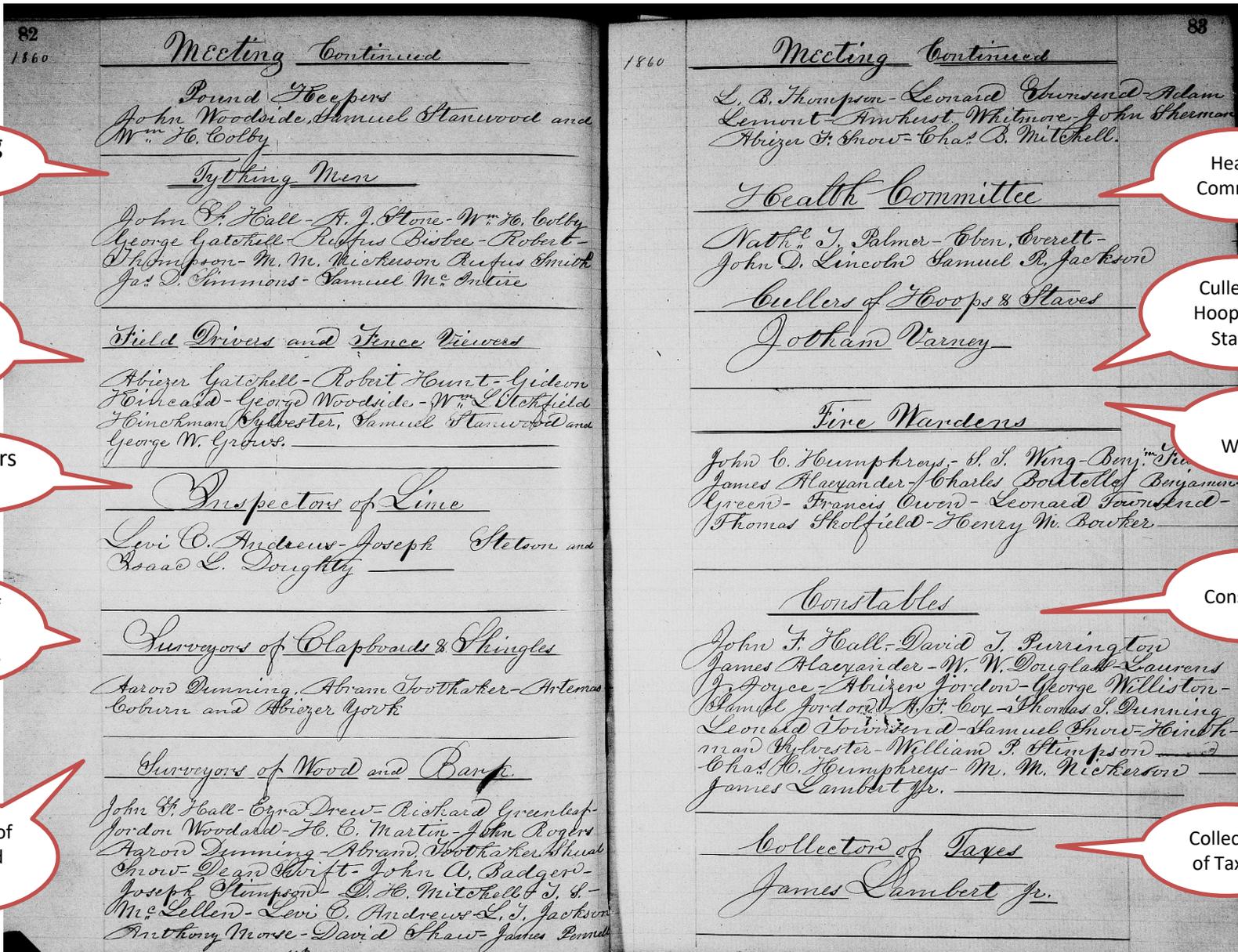
Falmouth, Maine 1753 Road Survey

Jurors

- A responsibility of male members of a town
- Grand jury – 12 male citizens to decide if evidence was sufficient to try a case
- Petit jury – 12 male citizens who tried cases



Alburgh, VT 1792 – Other Offices



Tything Men

Field Drivers and Fence Viewers

Inspectors of Line

Surveyors of Clapboards and Shingles

Surveyors of Wood and Bark

Health Committee

Cullers of Hoops and Staves

Fire Wardens

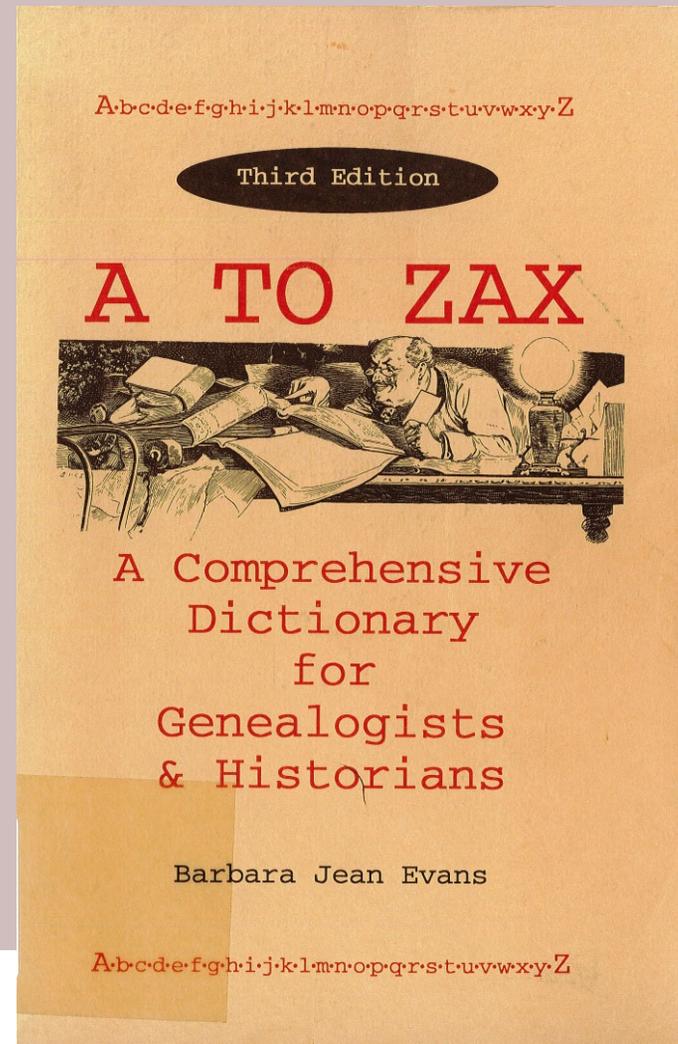
Constables

Collector of Taxes

Brunswick ME Town Offices, 1860

A to Zax

- Best source
- Definitions for obscure terms and positions
- Origins of terms



QUESTIONS?

Overview of Various Town Records

Land Records

Land Records

- First land dispersal from Colony to Town
 - Found in “Proprietors” Records
 - Proprietors were original settlers that petitioned colonial legislature for new settlements
- Other land documents in Town Records
 - Plats
 - Deeds
 - Resolution of boundary disputes

*Boston June 6: 1733 At a meeting of The Narragansitt
 Granters meet by Ajournment in the Common of the
 Town of Boston att Two of Clok in the Afternoon*

*Voted that the Granters allowed by The General Court
 Amounting to the Number of Eight Hundred & Twenty
 The whole he divided into Seven distinct Societies
 - ily to Consist of One Hundred & Twenty of the old
 Granters which Society shall be Intituled to one of the
 Townships Granted to the Narragansitt Soldiers*

*That one of the said Societies shall Consist mostly of the
 Proprietors belonging to the Towns of Barristable Garm-
 -outh Eastham Sandwich Plymouth Lisbury Abbingdon
 Dwarbury Cone of Scituate.*

A List of The Narragansitt Gra

<i>Barristable</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Mary Dimeson 38</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Samb. Hinkley 122</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>John Cagman 22</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>George Lewis 14</i>	<i>John L.</i>
<i>John Hathway 40</i>	<i>Caleb L.</i>
<i>Joseph Higgin 86</i>	<i>Joseph L.</i>
<i>Samuel Bryant 54</i>	<i>Sosiah L.</i>
<i>Richard Blingham 21</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Samuel Child 118</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Samuel Barnam 13</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Sam. Linnell 89</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Dr. Math. Fuller 69</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Samuel Fuller 20</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Thos. Fuller 25</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Increase Chap. 16</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Joseph Taylor 12</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>John Dapcam 15</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Ratho Hamblin 88</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Eleaz. Hamblin 42</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Thos. Huggins 14</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>John Phinney 87</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>
<i>Joseph Beaufe 81</i>	<i>Sam. 44</i>

*Boston June 6: 1733 At a meeting of The Narragansitt
 Granters meet by Ajournment in the Common of the
 Town of Boston att Two of Clok in the Afternoon*

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 Amounting to the Number of Eight Hundred & Twenty
 The whole he divided into Seven distinct Societies each Soc-
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*That one of the said Societies shall Consist mostly of the
 Proprietors belonging to the Towns of Barristable Garm-
 -outh Eastham Sandwich Plymouth Lisbury Abbingdon
 Dwarbury Cone of Scituate.*

Proprietors' Records – Gorham, ME

A List of The Narragansett Grantees of The Town of

<u>Gorham</u>		<u>Eastham</u>	
Samuel Barker	74	Timothy Cole	41 ✓
Richard Tayer	120	Jeremiah Smith	91
William Gray	71	Jon: Cole	59
William Chase	113	Joseph Hammond	36 ✓
Cap: Jon: Gorham	96	Thos: Paine	94
Thos: Barker	84	Jedediah Higgins	65
John Thatcher	31 ✓	Eliahim Higgins	11 ✓
John Hallid	93	Joseph Dowdings	104
John Matthews	55	Benj: Dowdings	103
Thos: Shortons	3 ✓	John Freeman	34
William Gray	4 ✓	Jon: Sparrow	92
Sam: Hall	5	John Fenowley	73
Samos Maker	6	Samuel Athon	67
Sa: Claghorn	7 ✓	John Doan	51
Joseph Hall	119	Thos: Mulford	90
Lanmy Hodge	83	Daniel Doan	29 ✓
Nathanell Hall	8 ✓	Jon: Walker	53
Joseph Wildemr	30 ✓	Jon: Myrick	82
Samuel Thomas	34 ✓	Math: Williams	58
Jon: Smith	17	Josiah Cooks	76
Samuel Jones	9 ✓	Joseph Harding	39 ✓
Richard Tayer	18 ✓		
Thos: Feltons	10 ✓		

Proprietors' Records – Gorham, ME

Tip:
Read the first pages!

Read the first pages!

- Always read the first pages of the earliest town record books
- Hold important information about **WHO** settled the town and **WHEN** town was founded
- New communities founded with neighbors

Medfield. Novmber 6th 1729: att the House of m^r Joshua Morse. The Associates of William Ward & Joshua Morse — Proprietors Grantees of a Tract of Land Lying Between Oxford Brookfield Brimfield and the Proviner Line. Granted by the great and Generall Court of this provinca: 1729: Being assembled and mett — pursuant to a Notification given under the hand of William Ward who was Authorised and Impowered by the afores^d Generall Court to assemble the afores^d Grantees and to Act as Moderator in said Meeting, by Virtue of which Notification itt appeared under y^e Hands of said William Ward — And Joshua Morse That they had Notified y^e said Associates and Grantees — To meett at the Time & place afove mentioned. —

2: Said Associates Grantees being Mett at the Time and place as afove said — A List of their Names was Read to the Number of Twenty Two: as followeth

Melatiah Bourn: Esq.	Joseph Baker	Abraham Harding	Cap ^t John Dwight
William Ward: Esq.	Jonas Houghton	Moses Harding	Cap ^t Jon ^s Boyden
Ezra Bourn	Thomas Gleason	Josiah Ellice	Cap ^t Joseph Clark
Shubal Goram	Moses Gleason	Peter Balch	Nathan ^l Morse
Thomas Learned	Jonas Gleason	Ezra Clark	James Donison
Nathan Fisk	Joshua Morse	Samuell Ellice	Joseph Mash
Henry Fisk	Joseph Plimpton	David Ellice	
Cap ^t Ebenezer Learned	Nathanell Smith	Francis Moquott	
Nahum Ward	Solomon Clark	Henry Adams	
Gorsham Keyes	Timothy Hament	Jehabod Harding	
Zerubbah Eager	William Plimpton	John Plimpton	
John Shoarman	Ephraim Partridge	Josiah Chaney	

Town Records - Sturbridge, Mass.

Keeping Track of Property

Earliest Colonial Settlements

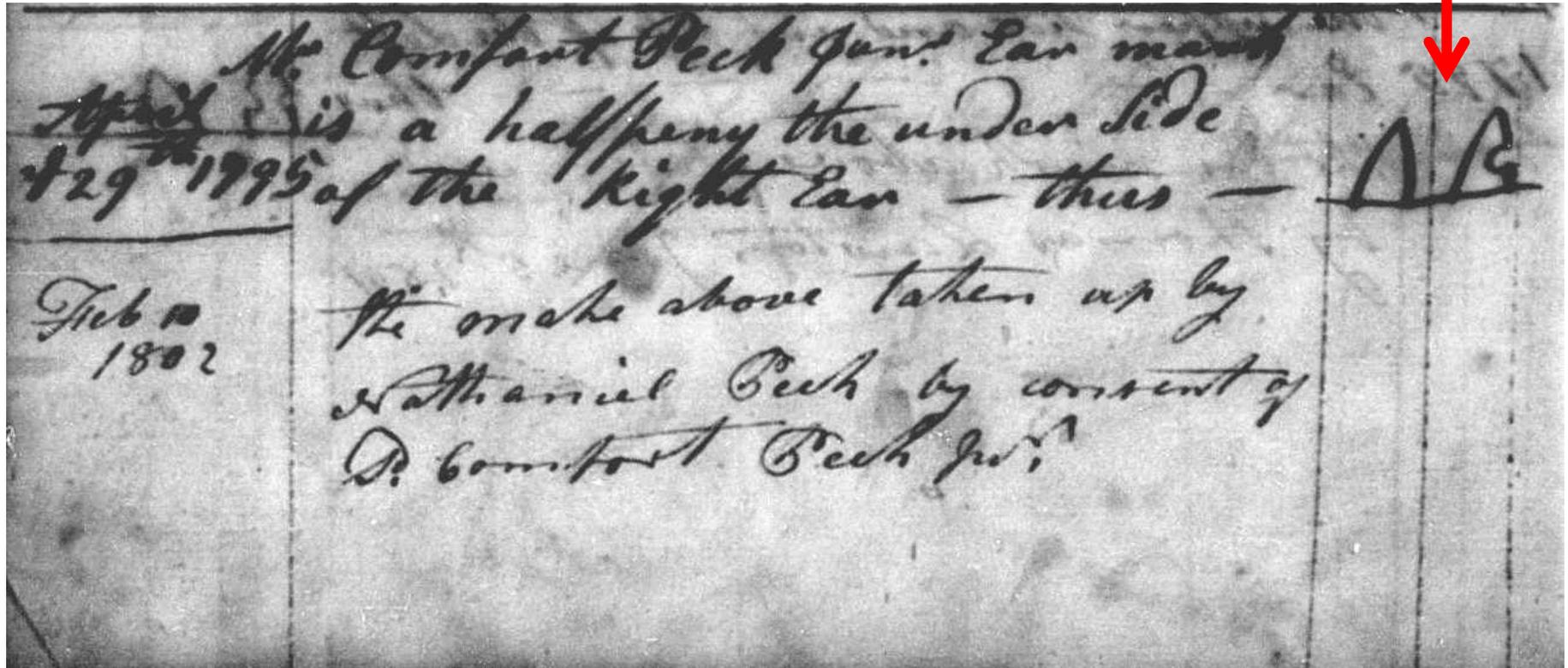


<https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:9s161952m>

Ear Marks

- Cattle and sheep were grazed on common lands
- Important that each animal had identifying mark
- Marks recorded by town clerk
 - Transfer of ear marks from person to person can prove parentage or relationships

Ear Marks



Ear Mark - Rehoboth, Mass.

Ear Marks

Jacob Perkins Enters his Mark which
he Derives from his Father Two half
penny on the Underside of the Near Ear
Attest. Samuel Rogers
Ips: Apr. 6. 1754 — ~~_____~~

Ear Mark - Ipswich, Mass.

Military Records

Military Records

- Militia Rolls
- Payment for military service
- Patriotic service
- Can provide insight into service
 - Company, Regiment, Battles

Oakham June 7th 1778

The Committee chosen by the several Clames
of the Persons in Town for any service done in the
Present War by themselves or other ways, to Estimate
the service of each Campaign they have served in &c.
Beg Leave to make the following Report

The N^o of Campaigns, the time
is as follows

The first Campaign was	Price
to Providence May 1777	£ 10
two months, four Men	
Thomas White	4:00
Robert Forbes	4:00
James Boyd	4:00
James Forbes	4:00
	£ 16:00

It was July 4th 23: 1777

An Alarm for Providence
went to Worcester was
Absent three Days

Cap. John Crawford	1:00
Lt. Alex ^r Bothwell	1:00
Serj ^t Will ^m Crawford	1:00
Corp ^s Will ^m Bothwell	1:00
Corp ^s John Forbes	1:00
Corp ^s Sam ^l Stone	1:00
Jesse Allen	1:00
Jacob Adams	1:00
Alexander Bothwell	1:00
Heman Bassett	1:00
John Brown	0:15:0
Jam ^s Bullard	1:00
Isaac Bullard	1:00
John Boyd	1:00
John Bothwell	1:00
Charles Forbes	1:00
Wm Carved up	£ 15:15:0

John Harper	0:15:0
Rob ^t Harper	0:15:0
George Harper	0:15:0
Abraham Fostlin	1:00:0
Edward Partridge	0:15:0
Rufus Parmenter	1:00:0
Nehemiah Packard	1:00:0
Jonas Park	1:00:0
W ^m Steenfon	0:15:0
Benj ^t Spooner	0:15:0
Eben ^t Woodis	0:15:0
W ^m Washburn	1:00:0
	£ 32:00:0

Military Record – Oakham, Mass.

Tax Records

- Recorded by the Assessor or Tax Collector
- Format differs in each town
- Can help determine age
- Serve as a vital record substitute
 - Individual not recorded on tax roll could have died

Tax Records

- Elizabeth Dudley of Exeter, New Hampshire
 - Born circa 1697 in Exeter
 - First married in 1725, Simon Gilman; he died 28 February 1749/50
 - Second married Jonathan Gordon; he died in 1767
 - Granted power of attorney to her son Samuel Gilman in 1768
- When did she die?

Continued 1770		L	S	D	L	S	D
Eliphalet Gilman	—	5	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	—	—	2	2 $\frac{1}{4}$
Phillips Gilman	—	7	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	—	—	2	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Daniel Gilman	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bartholomew Gilman	—	8	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	—	—	3	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Caleb Gilman	—	6	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	—	—	2	7 $\frac{1}{4}$
Simon Gilman	—	4	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	—	—	1	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Zebulun Giddings	—	16	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	—	—	6	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Nathaniel Giddings	—	6	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	—	—	2	7 $\frac{1}{4}$
Capt. John Giddings	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Eliphalet Giddings	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
George Giddings	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Jonathan Giddings	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nathaniel Giddings	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Joseph Giddings	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
wid. Mary Gorden	—	—	—	—	—	9	9
wid. Elizabeth Gorden	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
wid. Mary Gorden	—	—	—	—	—	10	10
Daniel Grant	—	—	—	—	—	15	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Paul Hall Grant	—	—	—	—	—	4	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Paul Hall Grant	—	4	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	—	—	—	—
John Gilden	—	8	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	—	—	3	5 $\frac{1}{4}$
James Gorden	—	5	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	—	—	2	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Benjamin Graves	—	12	8 $\frac{3}{4}$	—	—	4	10 $\frac{3}{4}$
Nathaniel Gorden	—	14	10 $\frac{1}{4}$	—	—	5	8 $\frac{1}{4}$
Benjamin Green Sr.	—	1	1	—	—	—	5
Ebenezer Goe.	—	5	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	—	—	2	2 $\frac{1}{4}$
Peter Gidden	—	4	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	—	—	1	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
John Hopkinson	—	11	1 $\frac{1}{4}$	—	—	4	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
John Hopkinson Junr.	—	9	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	—	—	3	6 $\frac{1}{2}$

Tax Record – Exeter, NH, 1770

Rates for 1771. Continued

	Town Rate			Province d. & c.			County d. & c.		
	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
Widow Sarah Gilman	4	3		2	6				6
John Gilman 4 th	4	6		2	3				6
John Gilman (Newmarket)	1	3			7				2
Broad Street Gilman (Newmarket)	1	3			7				2
Nehemiah Gilman	1	8	0	14					3
Zebulun Gilman	15	3		7	7				11
Josiah Gilman Jun ^r	1	7	4	13	8				3
Noah Gilman	5			2	6				7
Elihu Phillips							3	1	2
Simon							1	6	1/4
M ^r Zebulun							10	1	1/2
John G							7		3/4
Cap ^t Nathan							14	1	1/2
Elihu							7		3/4
George G							2	3	
Jona ^h							4	6	
Nathan							2	3	
Joseph							4	6	
Wid ^o Mary							5	1	
Wid ^o Mary							2	10	
Daniel Grant	11	1	2	7			1	9	1/4
Paul Hall Grant	4	6		2	3				6
Peter Gidden	4	6		2	3				6
James Gordon	5	9		2	10				8
Benjamin Graves	13	4		6	8				8
Nathaniel Gordon	13	11	6	10	1		1	7	1/4
	13	11	6	17	3	1/2	1	14	5

Wid ^o Mary Gilman	3	1	2	1	6	1/4	1	1	1/4
Wid ^o Mary Gordon	10	1	1/2	5		3/4	4	3	1/4
Daniel Grant	14	1	2	7		3/4	1	9	1/4
Paul Hall Grant	4	6		2	3				6
Peter Gidden	4	6		2	3				6
	5	1		2	10				8

Tax Record – Exeter, NH, 1771

Possible Interpretations

- Elizabeth (Dudley) (Gilman) Gordon
 - 1) Moved from Exeter
 - 2) Ceased being head of household
 - 3) Died between 1770 and 1771

Licenses

- Issued to sell strong spirits
- Issued to keep tavern
- Source of town income

At a meeting of the Selectmen
Treasurer & Town Clerk holden this first day
of May A.D. 1824.
Mr Oren Nichols and John Perry Esq are
both authorized to sell strong liquors in their
separate stores. Vote to terminate the first
Tuesday of September next.
John McKeen Town Clerk

At a meeting of the Selectmen Treasurer and
Town Clerk holden this fourteenth day of Septembe
A.D. the day appointed for granting Licenses
Joseph McKeen John McKeen Jacob Johnson
John Coburn Noah Hinkley James Scilley
Oren Nichols Miss Brown & Humphrey
David Dunlop Miss Demerit & Stone
Saml N Gummer Jeremiah O'Brien
Abner B Thompson Rich Kutter Miss Minie
& Perry Ethan East ^{and Oliver} were received to sell
strong liquors. Miss Eva Wood, Thumel Steadler
Willm D Story John Wadsworth & Willm Hudykins
were licensed to keep tavern.

At a meeting of the Selectmen & holden
the 2 day of Oct. Deac^r William Pennel and
Jesse Pease are licensed to retail strong liquors.
John McKeen Town Clerk

At another meeting holden Nov 11 1825
Abner Bourne Esq is licensed to retail strong
liquors John McKeen Town Clerk

Brunswick, Maine, 1824

At a meeting of the Selectmen
Treasurer & Town Clerk holden this first day
of May A.D. 1824.
Mr Oren Nichols and John Perry Esq are
both authorized to sell strong liquors in their
separate stores. Vote to terminate the first
Tuesday of September next.
John McKeen Town Clerk

Treasurer's Records

Treasurer's Records

- Reimbursements to townspeople for services
- Payment to soldiers for service
- Best sources for the poor and women
- Apprenticeships

Schools.	70 Ditto Hannah Murray teach in 7 th District and interest after demand	14	63
Contingt	71 Ditto Charles M. Kimmy's exces. services 1824 and interest - '83 in all		83
Cont 1825	72 Paid Charles M. Kimmy his acct for services not going for Pa Rand	5	75
"	73 " Jeremiah Dingley Assesor 1825	11	16
"	74 " Nath ^l . S. Ingemold Assesor. 1825	10	45
"	75 " Eben Witham Assesor. 1825	13	35
"	76 " Richard Tarbox - Services - 1825	8	25
"	77 " Enoch Downer Constable serv. 1825	2	25
"	78 " Thomas Johnson " " "	3	00
Poor	79 " Thomas Johnson for Dorcas Rand "	7	36
"	80 " Solomon Rowe for Wm Moody & Lucy Cole's ¹⁸²⁵	39	92
"	81 " Solomon Goss for Luther Starbird 1825	6	76
"	82 " Joseph Eveleth for Mary Vickery - 1825	3	64
"	83 " Jonathan Haskell " Benj ^a Rand wife "	25	00
"	84 " And th . Giddings " Saml Starbird 1825		83
"	85 " Saml. H. Haskell for Supplies to Poor 1825	11	34
"	86 " Thomas Johnson " Dorcas Rand 1825	17	00
"	87 " Jonathan Libby " Anthony Murray 1825	33	80
Schools	88 " Saml. H. Haskell Repairs of School # 1 st Dist ⁿ ₁₈₂₅	2	75
"	89 " Will ^m Stinchfield " " - 7 th Dist - "	2	80
"	90 " Eben Jordan for " " - 6 th District "	4	00

Town Treasurer, Danville Maine 1826

Tools Towns Used to Support the Poor

- Relief in the home
 - Supplies such as food or wood and sometimes cash
 - Called “outdoor relief”
- Binding Out
 - Indentures between town and a community member – often for children, e.g. Pauper Apprenticeship
- Pauper Auction
 - Public auction where the indigent were auctioned to the lowest bidder

Poor put off as follows (to wit)

Christiana Land fear & Child to George Dawley at	20:5:11
William Land fear to Caleb Howard at	— — 0:1:6
Mary Skillion to William Axtin at	— — — 0:4:2
Mary Hopkins to Gideon Wait at	— — — 0:4:0

Voted this Council be adjourned to the Last Monday in January
next then to meet at Elias Mattisons -

Witness Benjⁿ Johnson Secy

West Greenwich, RI Binding Out, 1797

228

A Town Meeting Legally Warned in Framingham on the 13th Day of May 1774—
Joshua Stone was Chosen Mediator

Voted; That C^o: Abraham Pice Mess^r: Lawson Buckminster, & Wm^r: Micer be a ^{lee} Com^o:
to agree with some person to take Abner Brewer by the year, or as reasonable terms
as they can

On the Eighth Article, the Question put whether, the Annual Contribution for the poor
shall be continued and it in the Negative

on the Article Relating to John Wate, Ordered that the Overseers of the poor
make Enquire into the Justice of the accounts laid before the Town; and pay so
much thereof as appears to them Reasonable

Granted for the Support of the Poor Thirty five Pounds — £35. 0. 0

Ordered; That the Treasurer be discharged of the Sum of the Sum of £215. 5. 10. 3—

Town of Framingham 1774

Town Cost Avoidance – Warning Out

Warnings Out

- Practice in New England until early 19th century
- Non-residents of town examined upon arrival to determine if likely to become public charges
- Inhabitants of a town had the right to be supported by the town if the inhabitant became unable to support themselves
- Some towns made it a practice to warn out all newcomers
- Warnings did not always mean that the person was escorted to the edge of town.

Lincoln Jr To either of the Constables of the Town of Pownalborough

(seal) Whereas Edward Shelton & Wife with three Children the Widow Martha Cummings with two Children and John Rumble are now Residing and Dwelling in the Town of Pownalborough but have not either of them dwelt in said Town for more than three Months past and had been out of said Town for more than a Year together before their Departure and last Ret. his Majesty the above leave the of your do said Town & Seals of said Town in anno D

Agreable to the Warrant of his Majesty I warned Rumble to

Lincoln Jr To either of the Constables of the Town of Pownalborough

(seal) In his Majesty's Name you are Required to give Notice to Henry Bickford & his wife & Mother & three Children their names being Abigail Bickford his wife Elizabeth Bickford Paul Aron & Alis Bickford his Children under 12 years of Age that they immediately leave & depart out of this Town & you are to make due return of your doings to our Town Clerk as soon as may be

Pownalborough
9 March 25th 1767

March 25th 1767
Then Warned the within Named Persons Agreable to the Within Warrant

Lincoln Jr To the Constable of the Town of Pownalborough

(seal) In his Majesty's Name you are Required furthwith to warn their names being Abigail Bickford his wife Elizabeth Bickford Paul Aron & Alis Bickford his Children under 12 years of Age that they immediately leave & depart out of this Town & you are to make due return of your doings to our Town Clerk as soon as may be

Pownalborough
9 March 25th 1767

Gen^l Williamson } Select Men
Sam^l Goodwin }

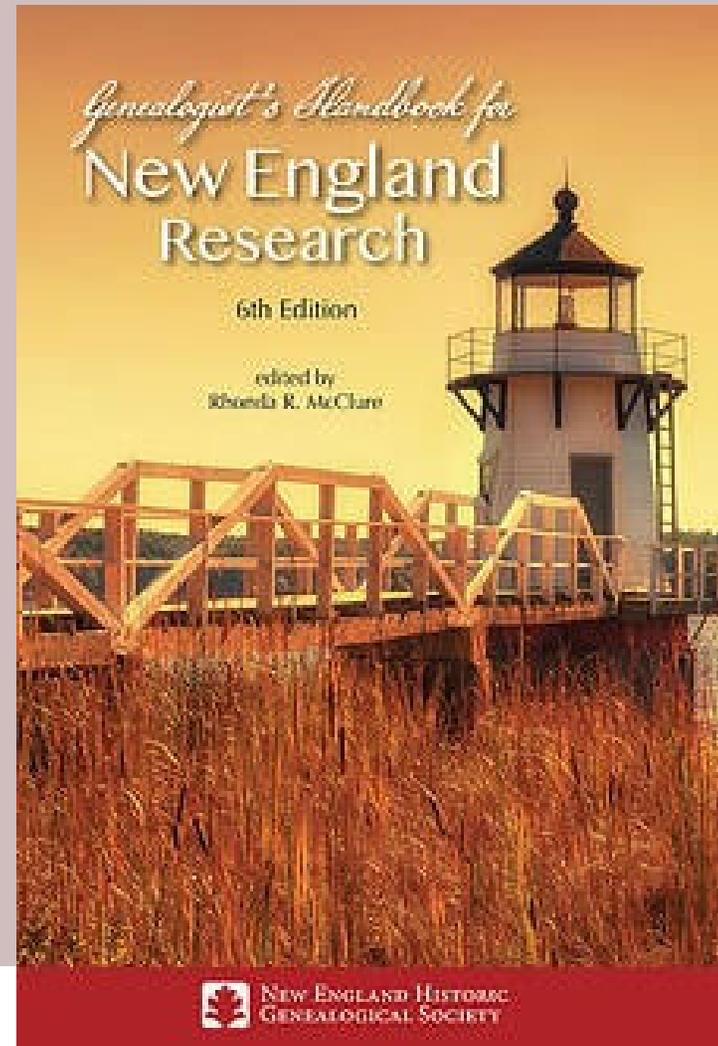
March 25th 1767
Then Warned the within Named Persons Agreable to the Within Warrant

Stephen Marson Constable

Warning Out – Pownalboro, ME

Town Information

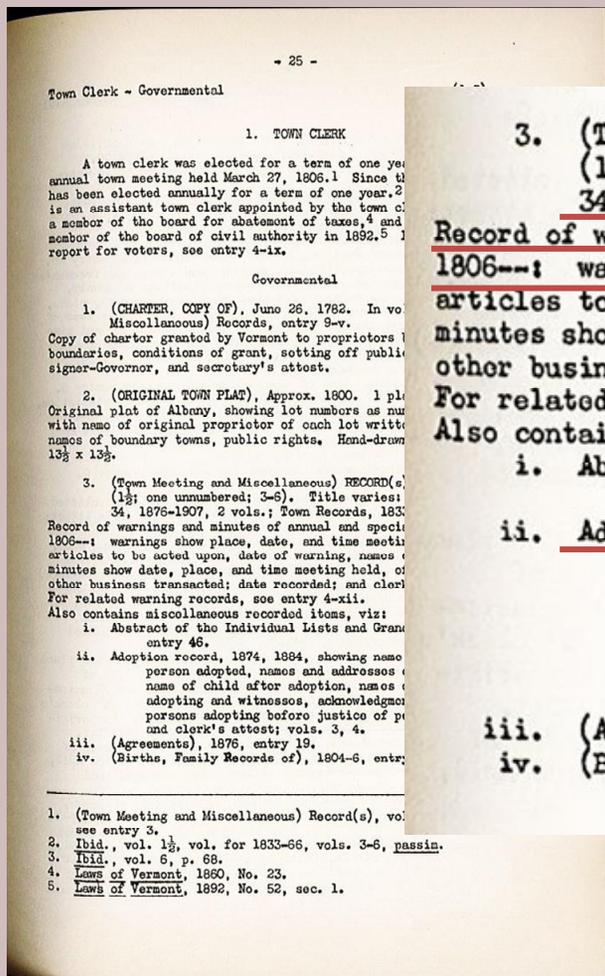
- Provides incorporation date of town
- Parent Towns
- Daughter Towns
- Former names



Historical Records Survey

- Works Progress Administration
- Survey and index of historical records in local, state, and county repositories
- Guides published for some communities
- Many unpublished guides

Historical Records Survey



- 25 -

Town Clerk - Governmental

1. TOWN CLERK

A town clerk was elected for a term of one year at the annual town meeting held March 27, 1806.¹ Since then he has been elected annually for a term of one year.² He is an assistant town clerk appointed by the town clerk as a member of the board for abatement of taxes,⁴ and as a member of the board of civil authority in 1892.⁵ See report for voters, see entry 4-ix.

Governmental

1. (CHARTER, COPY OF), June 26, 1792. In vol. 1 of Miscellaneous Records, entry 9-v. Copy of charter granted by Vermont to proprietors of boundaries, conditions of grant, setting off public lands, signer-Governor, and secretary's attest.

2. (ORIGINAL TOWN PLAT), Approx. 1800. 1 pl. Original plat of Albany, showing lot numbers as numbered with name of original proprietor of each lot written in names of boundary towns, public rights. Hand-drawn 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$.

3. (Town Meeting and Miscellaneous) RECORD(s), 1804-- (1 $\frac{1}{2}$; one unnumbered; 3-6). Title varies: 34, 1876-1907, 2 vols.; Town Records, 1833-77, 1907-33, 3 vols. Record of warnings and minutes of annual and special town meetings, 1806--: warnings show place, date, and time meeting to be held; articles to be acted upon, date of warning, names of signers-selectmen; minutes show date, place, and time meeting held, officers elected and other business transacted; date recorded; and clerk's attest. For related warning records, see entry 4-xii.

Also contains miscellaneous recorded items, viz:

- i. Abstract of the Individual Lists and Grand List, 1812-28, entry 46.
- ii. Adoption record, 1874, 1884, showing name of person adopted, names and addresses of persons adopting, name of child after adoption, names of signers-persons adopting and witnesses, acknowledgment of guardian and persons adopting before justice of peace, date recorded, and clerk's attest; vols. 3, 4.
- iii. (Agreements), 1876, entry 19.
- iv. (Births, Family Records of), 1804-6, entry 22.

1. (Town Meeting and Miscellaneous) Record(s), vol. 1, see entry 3.
2. *Ibid.*, vol. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$, vol. for 1833-66, vols. 3-6, *passim*.
3. *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 68.
4. Laws of Vermont, 1860, No. 23.
5. Laws of Vermont, 1892, No. 52, sec. 1.

3. (Town Meeting and Miscellaneous) RECORD(s), 1804--. 6 vols. (1 $\frac{1}{2}$; one unnumbered; 3-6). Title varies: Town Records, 1804-34, 1876-1907, 2 vols.; Town Records, 1833-77, 1907-33, 3 vols.

Record of warnings and minutes of annual and special town meetings, 1806--: warnings show place, date, and time meeting to be held; articles to be acted upon, date of warning, names of signers-selectmen; minutes show date, place, and time meeting held, officers elected and other business transacted; date recorded; and clerk's attest.

For related warning records, see entry 4-xii.

Also contains miscellaneous recorded items, viz:

- i. Abstract of the Individual Lists and Grand List, 1812-28, entry 46.
- ii. Adoption record, 1874, 1884, showing name and address of person adopted, names and addresses of persons adopting, name of child after adoption, names of signers-persons adopting and witnesses, acknowledgment of guardian and persons adopting before justice of peace, date recorded, and clerk's attest; vols. 3, 4.
- iii. (Agreements), 1876, entry 19.
- iv. (Births, Family Records of), 1804-6, entry 22.

Albany in Orleans County, Vermont

Earlier Work by Public Archives Commission

VITAL RECORDS.

These records are contained in part in the foregoing volumes and in part in the following, also in the office of the town clerk:

Records of births, deaths, and marriages (fragmentary records) are in Book I down to 1813.

Marriages, 1808-1836, and marriage intentions, 1813-1838, as well as births and deaths, are in Book II.

Vital records from 1837 to 1860 are scattered through Book III and Book IV, which contain also miscellaneous records.

Records of marriages and deaths from 1860 to 1892 are in Book V.

Records of marriages, of marriage intentions, of births, and of deaths, from 1892 to date, are kept in separate volumes.

FINANCIAL RECORDS.

The vault in the office of the selectmen contains the following:

Records of valuation, 1827 to date.

Tax books, 1818 to date.

Order accounts of the board of selectmen, 1807 to date.

School district accounts, 1820-1885.

Book of records for town's poor, one volume (small), 1817-1838.

Pauper accounts, one volume (small), 1855-1884.

Town farm accounts, one volume (small), 1884-1888.

Pauper notices, one volume (small), 1848-1860.

Pauper notices, one volume (small), 1860-1888.

Bonds of 1864, "To whom sold," one volume.

There are also in this vault the following records:

Selectmen's records (minutes of meetings, etc.) four volumes, 1827 to date.

Book of warrants, one volume (small), 1832-1844.

Warrants for school meetings, one volume (small), 1826-1860.

Register of oaths to town officers, one volume (small), 1831-1868.

Record of sheep marks, one volume (small), 1822-1883.

BRUNSWICK.

The town of Brunswick, originally part of the Pejepscoot proprietors' lands, was incorporated in 1738. The early records of the settlement must be sought in the records and papers of the Pejepscoot proprietors, in the possession of the Maine Historical Society.

RECORDS OF TOWN MEETINGS.

These records are carefully preserved in a safe in the office of the town clerk. With the exception of the first volume, which is dog-eared and often barely legible by reason of the fading of the ink, the records are in good condition.

"Town book" I contains not only the minutes of town meetings from 1739 to 1812, but vital records and matter of a most varied character, such as deeds of pews, marks of mill logs, sheep and cattle marks, records of stray beasts, notices of people warned from town, records of bounds, of collectors' land sales, and of school district divisions.

Book II, minutes of town meetings, 1813-1829; vital records; miscellaneous records.

Volume 4, minutes of town meetings, 1830-1856.

Volume 5, minutes of town meetings, 1857-1872.

Volume 6, minutes of town meetings, 1873-1880.

Volume 7, minutes of town meetings, 1880-1904.

Volume 8, minutes of town meetings, 1904 to date.

Check the Town Hall

- Understand the collections
- Call the Town Clerk
- Visit Town Hall



Other Repositories

- State and Town Historical Societies
- State Archives
- AmericanAncestors Library
– library.nehgs.org

Summary

- If your ancestor is not in the Town Vital Records, try other types of Town Records
- Town Records place your ancestor at a place and time and give a glimpse of their status
- Town Records may be challenging to use, but the rewards are great

QUESTIONS?

Schedule a consultation

consultations@americanancestors.org

Hire Research Services

research@americanancestors.org

Consultations

Book a one-on-one
consultation with
a genealogist and
receive help with your
family history research!

[AmericanAncestors.org/
Expert-Help/Consultations](https://AmericanAncestors.org/Expert-Help/Consultations)



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the American Ancestors website. On the left is the American Ancestors logo. In the center is the text "A National Center for Family History, Heritage & Culture". On the right are links for "Bookstore", "About Us", "Create a Tree", and a "LOG IN" button with a right-pointing arrow. Below the navigation bar is a secondary menu with links for "Search", "Events", "Join/Renew", "Give", "10 Million Names", "Publications", "Expert Help", "Tools", "Projects", and "Centers & Initiatives". The main content area features a large title "Researching in New England Town Records: 17th through 19th Centuries" in a dark blue serif font. Below the title is a white text box containing a thank-you message and a paragraph about the seminar. The text in the white box reads: "Thank you for registering for the online seminar, **Researching in New England Town Records: 17th Through 19th Centuries!** Among family history researchers, early New Englanders are famous for having created a wealth of records that provide insights into their lives. This was in large part due to the important role that the town played in early New England. Town and church records from the region can contain a wealth of genealogical information—including records of births, marriages, burials, mortgages, name changes, and more. In this 5-week online seminar we'll delve into these important resources for New England researching in the 17th through 19th centuries and demonstrate how you can get the most out of these records for your own family history. *This course includes five 90-minute classes and exclusive access to handouts and recordings of each presentation. These recordings and all course materials will be available for the foreseeable future.*"

<https://www.americanancestors.org/piecing-together-story-analyzing-records-and-drawing-conclusions>



THANK YOU!

AmericanAncestors.org



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