



1



2



3

Inhabitants and Warnings Out



Voice of
Rhonda R. McClure,
Senior Genealogist

4

Who Was Considered a Town Inhabitant?

- Landowners
- 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

5

Privileges of Town Inhabitancy



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

Image from www.revolutionarywarjournal.com

6

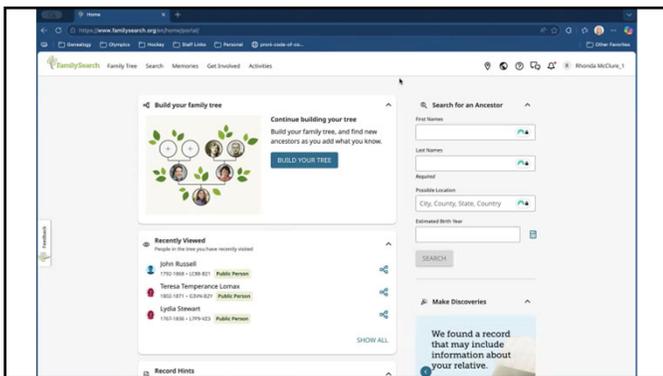
When Did Warnings Out Change?

- Never went to the county level
- Settlement Acts began to phase out warnings out
 - 1793 – Massachusetts
 - 1796 – Connecticut
 - 1796 – New Hampshire
 - 1817 – Vermont
 - 1821 – Maine
- Poor Relief acts basically eliminated warnings out

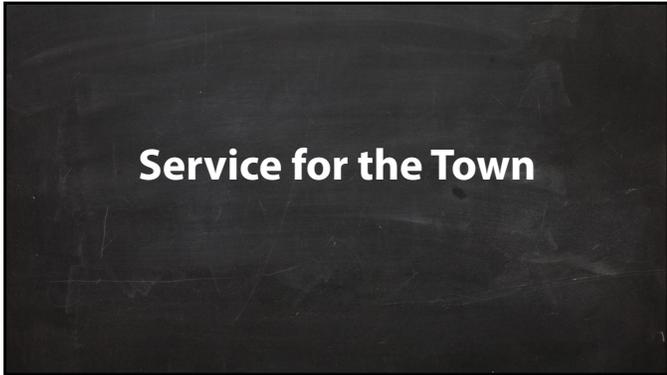
7

Demonstration: Limiting a Search When Using Family Search's Full Text Search

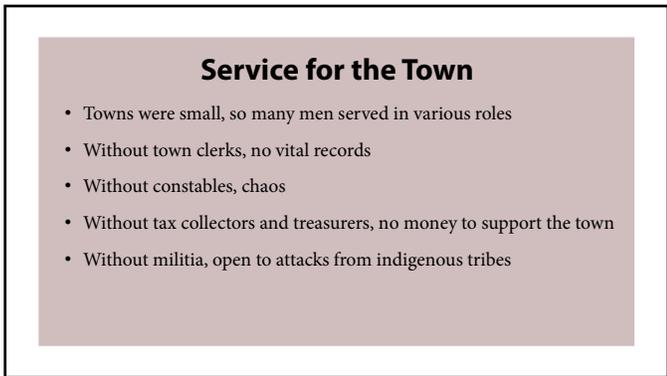
8



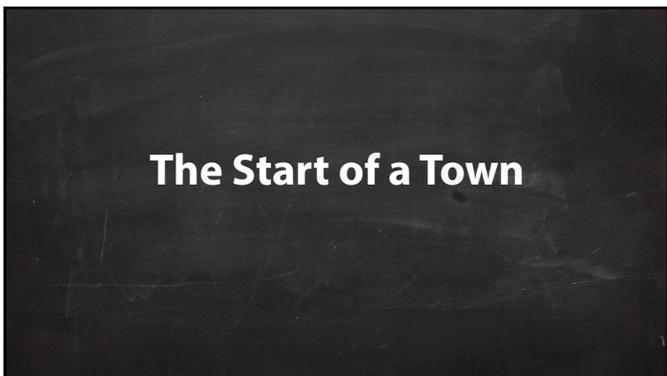
9



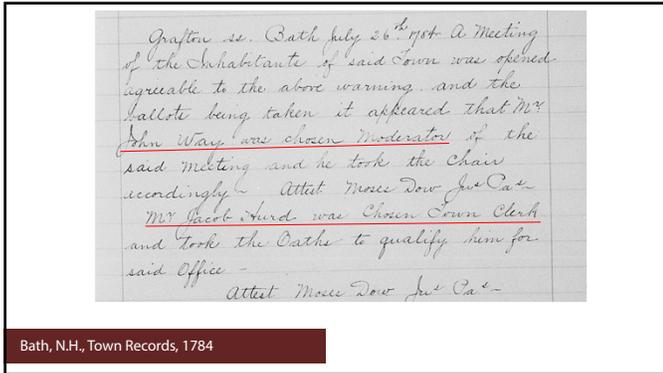
10



11

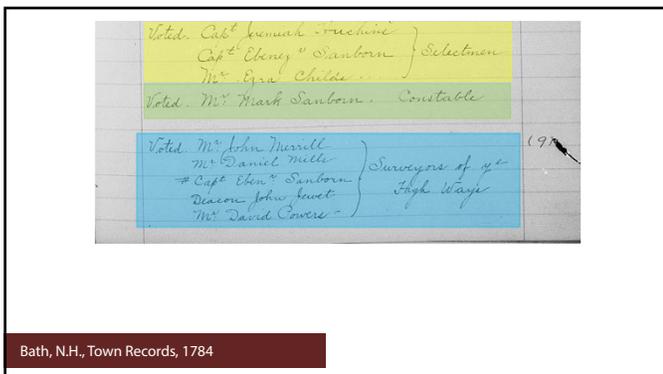


12



Bath, N.H., Town Records, 1784

16



Bath, N.H., Town Records, 1784

17



Bath, N.H., Town Records, 1784

18

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.

19

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"

20

Tip:

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

21



22



23

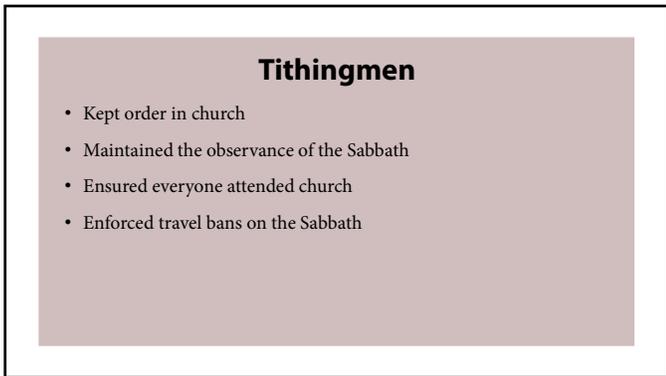
Selectmen

- 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 (including warnings out)

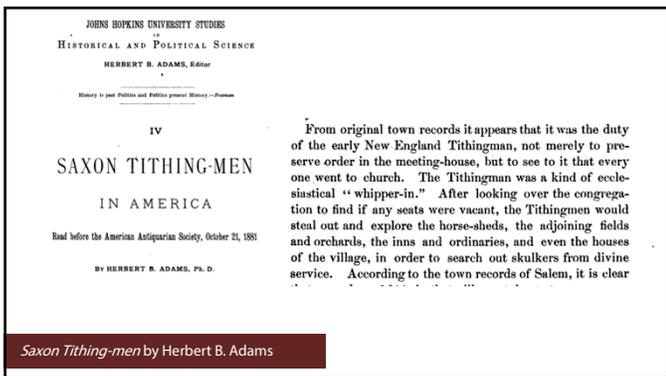
24



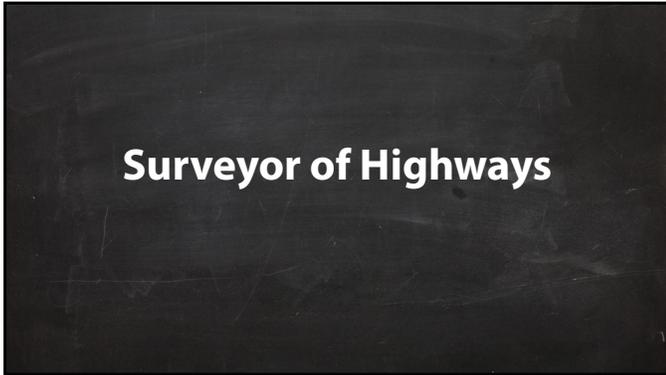
25



26



27

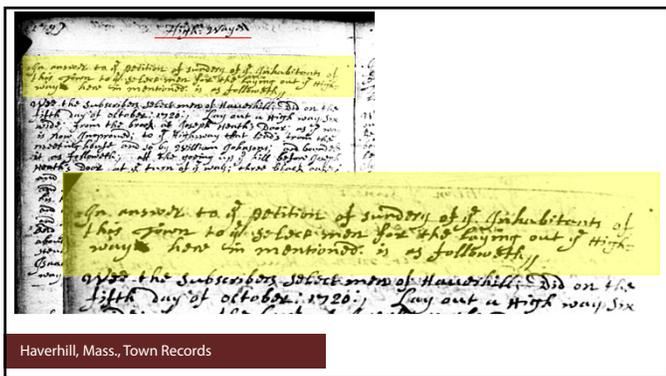


28

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

29



30



31

Fence Viewers

- Reviewed fences and property boundaries
- Responsible for moderating boundary disputes
- Important position in establishment of new communities
- Usually was required to be a freeholder (i.e., a person who owned land and had the right to improve, transfer or sell it)

32

96 FENCE-VIEWERS.

FENCE-VIEWERS.

I. How to be chosen, qualified, and sworn.

Every town* shall, at their annual town-meeting for the choice of officers, choose two or more *judicious and discreet freeholders*, to be Fence-Viewers, to be sworn as other town officers are, to the faithful discharge of the duties of their office; each of whom, in case of refusal after seven days notice, shall pay a fine of five dollars to the use of the town. And another person shall forthwith be sworn in his stead.

Massachusetts Requirements

33



34

HOG REEVES	<p>New England towns appointed hog reeves (officers charged with the prevention or appraising of damages by stray swine). Hogs were usually supposed to be yoked (wear collars) and have rings in their noses, which reduced the amount of damage they could do to gardens and crops by rooting. This was not a minor concern, because this food was necessary for human survival. There were punishments established for failure to control animals. The fine in Chelsea was "10 shillings for each swine for every time it is found without a keeper." But, the damaged party had to have an adequate fence, as in 1643 Virginia where "if he be deficient therein, what damage he shall systeyne by hoggs, goats or cattle whatsoever shall be to his own losse and detriment." Wandering livestock were called "estrays," they were "taken up," and they often were taken to the "pound." Notice of such actions are found in town records and county court minutes.</p> <p>If the owner of a hog had not 'rung' and 'yoked' their hogs, and they got loose and became a nuisance in the community, one or more of the men assigned as Hog Reeve would be responsible for capturing the animal and performing the necessary chore for the owner; who could legally be charged a small fee for the service.</p> <p>Reeve" derives from the same root as the "riff" in sheriff, and a hog reeve rounded up stray hogs. He turned them over to the pound keeper, who fed them until claimed by the owner, who paid set fees.</p>
-------------------	---

Descriptions of Official Positions... Chelsea

35



36

Other Town Offices

- Assessor –
 - Responsible for listing the names of property owners (real and personal property) and determining how much tax they should pay
 - Determining the amount of property that needed to be sold if taxes were unpaid
- Overseer of the Poor –
 - Took charge of funds for the indigent
 - Supervise the poor house (alms house)

37

(62)

Notice

The resident ~~proprietors~~ of the following tracts of land or real estate in the town of Wiscasset in the County of Lincoln, are notified that the same are taxed in the tax list committed to the subscriber the collector of taxes for said town of Wiscasset for the year One thousand eight hundred and seventy seven (1877) that the taxes assessed on the same remain unpaid, and that nine months from the date of the assessment has expired –

Amount of tax due

Wiscasset, Me., Assessor's List, 1877

38

Names of Owners	Estates Taxed.	Acres.	Amount of tax due and unpaid
James S. Bagdon	Fence, farm & land on east side of old Shupscot road	37	8 26 ⁵
John Bailey	Fence, farm & land on east side of Jovanke road.	104	73 60
William S. Bagdon	Homestead on both sides of road to Andersons Lower Bridge bounded north by land of Robert & Candis east by Lewis's lot, south by Luther & Donnell's west by John Baker 3 ²⁵	76	23 10
James W. Warrington	Lot of land bounded north by Main street west by Union St north by		

Wiscasset, Me., Assessor's List, 1877

39

Class 5: Researching in New England Town Records: 17th through 19th Centuries



40



41



42

Town Meetings

- Include lists for town officers
- May allude to court issues
- May include lists of militia
- Appointments of jurors to county courts
- Business of the operation of the town

43

Bath Nov^r 28th 1796
 This may certify all whom it may concern
 that we the Selectmen do licence Andrew
 Woods a tavern for the term of one year
 from the above Date and that he provide
 himself with Accomodations as the law
 directs
 Amasa Buck } Selectmen
 Aaron Hillard } for Bath
 Attest Isaac Moore Town Clerk

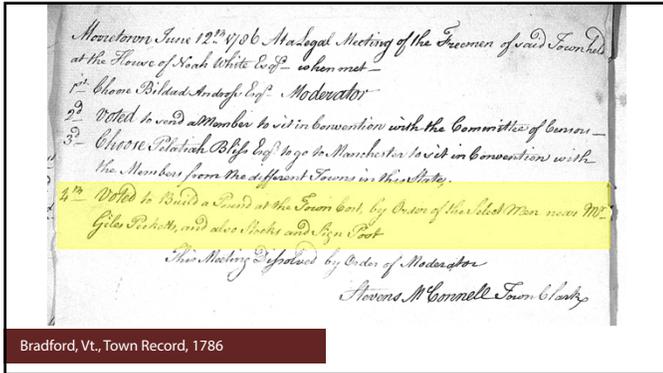
Bath, N.H., Town Meeting, 2 March 1797

44

Light coloured ...
 near High with the letters I. N. John Moulton
 11th 1796 Fakeness and Strayed by Nath
 - and Martin of Nail Town of Calla a Dark Brown
 near Calk Combing Two years old has no artificial marks
 that the Drivers could discover but the natural marks
 as followeth (viz) both her hind feet white all the
 to her Gambrel and two white spots between her Eyes
 something like a white spot upon her Nose and ears
 Paces both said Calk is priced at twenty five pounds
 Recorded this 13th day of January 1796 for John Hoffe Town Clerk
 Advertisement

Manchester, N.H., Stray Animals

45



Bradford, Vt., Town Record, 1786

46



47

Comfort S. (____) Quint

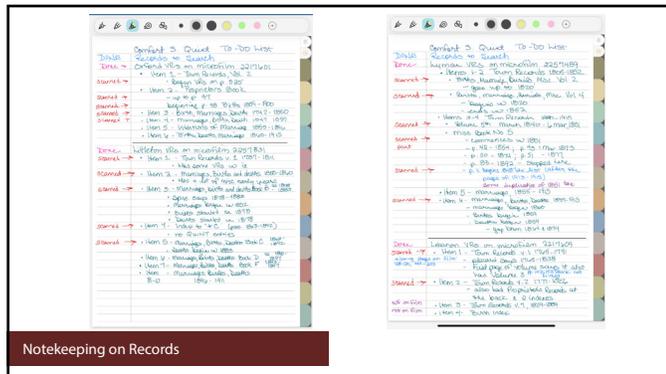
- May have been born a MASON
- b. ca. 1804, New Hampshire
- d. ca. 1865, Littleton, Grafton Co., N.H.
- m. ca. 1829, Andrew Quint
- Child: Malinda J. Quint, b. Jan. 1831

48

Examined town records in...

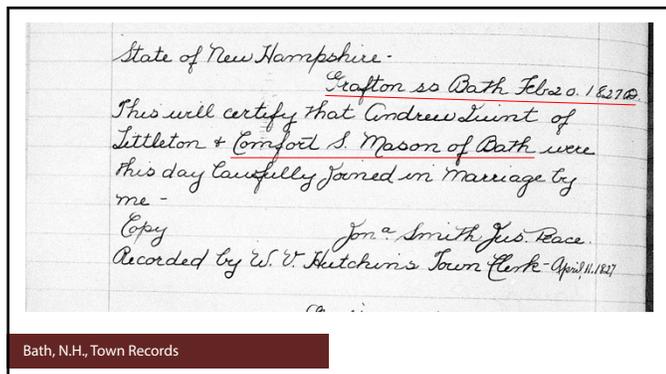
- Orland, N.H.
- Littleton, N.H.
- Lyman, N.H.
- Lebanon, N.H.
- Grafton, N.H.
- Bath, N.H.

49



Notekeeping on Records

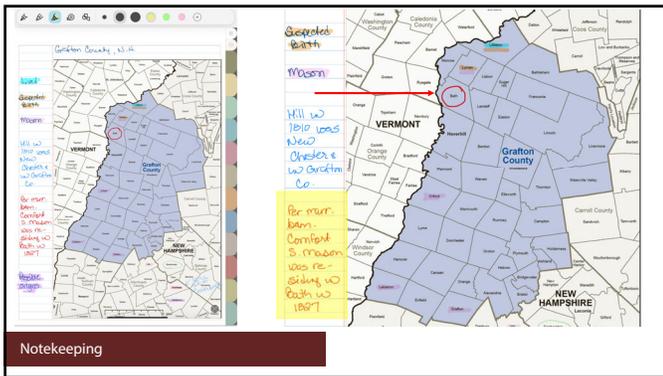
50



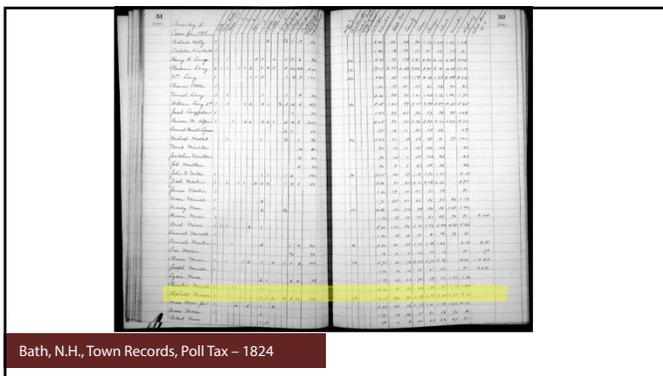
Bath, N.H., Town Records

51

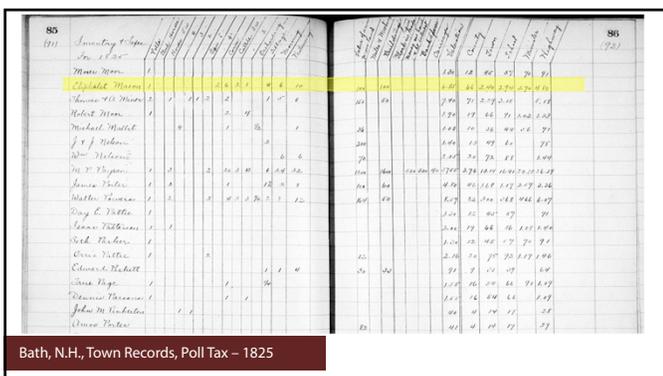
Class 5: Researching in New England Town Records: 17th through 19th Centuries



52



53



54



61



62



63



64



65
