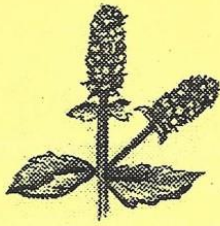


# *Revolutionary Quest*

A GAME IN SEARCH OF BOLTON PATRIOTS



By the Bolton Historical Society



# Ordinary People, Extraordinary Times

*“This is no ordinary time, no time for weighing anything except what we can but do for the country as a whole. . . . This responsibility is only carried by a united people who love their country and who will live for it . . . to the fullest of their ability.”*

Spoken in 1940, Eleanor Roosevelt’s words seem suited to describing an earlier time, before the country to which she refers was a country. Note that she speaks of living for one’s country, not dying for it.

It is the lives of ordinary Boltonians in the Revolutionary era that we hope to provide a glimpse of in this booklet. The stories of fourteen Bolton individuals who served in the colonial forces at some time during the American Revolution (1776–1781), or—in two cases—the wives of men who served. The stories are fictionalized biographies. All the names (with the exception of Ezekial and Aunt Sally) are those of real Boltonians of the time, and any facts given about their lives (e.g. number of children, spouses, house locations, specific appointed offices, petitions signed, etc.) are accurate, based upon the sources available (see References for details). The more general facts about everyday life in the colonies, and specifically in central Massachusetts at that time, are also as accurate as we were able to make them. The fiction comes in the blending of generalized and specific facts so as to make a single voice and a single story for each of the persons chosen to represent the whole.

## Recipes

As for the various activities, we have included 'medicinal' recipes that can do no harm if tried, such as Abigail Moor's Mint Tea. We chose foodstuffs and beverages containing readily available ingredients so that those who wish to venture into the world of “what they ate and drank” may do so easily. Any recipe in the text that is preceded by this symbol, ✓, ought to be harmless, and in the case of foodstuffs, tasty.

## References

We have purposely not explained every reference to what is now an unfamiliar place, activity, or custom. We hope that your imagination and interest may be piqued and those who walk the Bay Path will want to look at other sources to learn more about Bolton, its residents, and its history.

Due to inconsistencies and deficiencies in the primary and secondary sources used, there may be some inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this material. If we had access to primary sources, we resolved any contradiction by going with the primary source. Most of our sources were secondary. In those cases, we resolved inconsistencies as best we could, but make no claim to having made the definitive resolution. For any unintentional errors or inconsistencies, we apologize and welcome additional research or sources.

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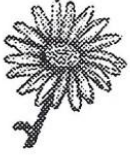
Design: Cia Ochsenbein

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## 1

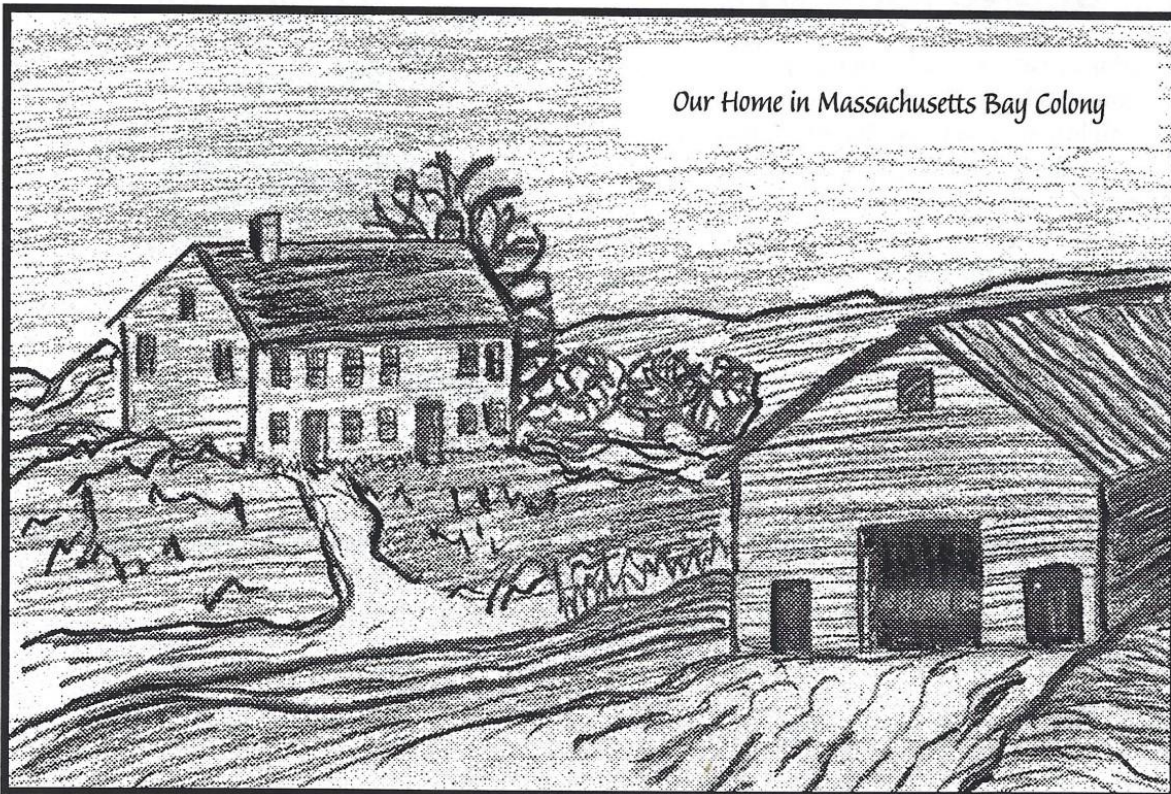
## Daniel Greenleaf, M.D., Army Surgeon Old South Cemetery



My dad was a physician, too. In fact, I learned a lot of my early medicine from studying with him. But, I wanted to learn more, so I went to England. When I came back home to Bolton around 1764, I brought my English wife Anna (Nancy) with me. We were warned out of Bolton in 1766 and that's why our daughter Silence was born in Bolton, but our daughter Eleanor and our son Daniel were born in Harvard. Nan thought that the fact that she was English and more sophisticated than most of the ladies around here may have contributed to some of the tensions that lead up to our being warned out, but that's past history now.

When we came back to Bolton from Harvard, we built a house near Ball's Inn. Nan made a sketch to send to her family in England. I was a surgeon, and when the war broke out there was obvious need for men with my skills. My father, Dr. Daniel Sr. was already 75 in 1775, but I was in my early 40's and quite fit. Now you may not know much about doctoring in those days. I can sure tell you, doctoring out here in the countryside was very different that what I studied in England and hear they're doing in Boston. Mostly I do amputations, tooth pulling and bleedings. What with all the rotting teeth, the injuries on the farms hereabouts - seems like somebody is always chopping off a little bit of themselves with a hatchet or ax, or getting a toe frozen when they stay out too long - I'm kept pretty busy. And everybody knows that a good bloodletting can cure most anything. I do some vaccinating (although not everybody will accept it, even if I don't charge much), and a fair amount of stitching up big gashes and the like. Most of the ladies see Abby Moor for their birthing and women's complaints, but I do get a few female patients.

I'm not sure I feel as strongly about the Reverend Goss as my Pa does. Of course, I have been away for a while. And Nan doesn't understand all the fuss at all. Personally, I thought his sermons were all right; a little stiff, perhaps, but acceptable. And we certainly went every Sunday to Meeting. The noon break between morning and afternoon services was a convenient time for folks to catch up on the latest news and so on. It didn't matter so much to me, since I got out and about a good bit with my doctoring, but this time was really important to Nan. Just as for lots of folks, this was the one day of the week when she saw anybody outside our little household.





When the War against England finally came, I joined up right away, as a surgeon of course, and unfortunately ended up at the sorry affair of Kip's Bay in '76. I guess there are several views of that encounter, but it was a disaster from my point of view. I'd already had a bellyful of cutting, and more than a bellyful from not being able to help the men who got sick and died of dysentery, diphtheria and the like. As usual, disease caused more casualties than the British.

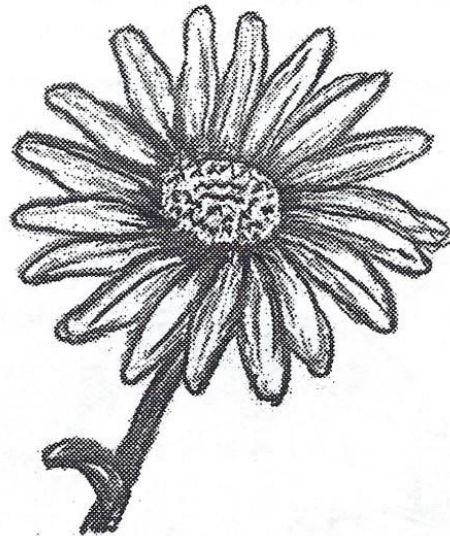
I don't really know how I got sick. Looking back on it, I think it must have been when I nicked myself taking off the arm of one of our soldiers who came too close to a cannonball at Kip's Bay. I'm usually very careful, but things were so confused at that time, that I didn't think much of it when I accidentally slashed my ring finger. Later I noticed a little swelling and redness, but I was just too busy with all the sick and wounded to do anything. Once I started running a high fever, I knew I was in trouble, and got leave to come home, figuring I could recover and return later. I did make it back to Bolton, and died in Nan's arms in the morning of January 18, 1777. That's my stone you're standing in front of right now.

Most of us who died during the Revolution are buried somewhere in here. Some of the stones disappeared over the years, so that's why some of the stones are symbolic. But mine isn't.

### **ANNA GREENLEAF'S BLOND HAIR DYE**

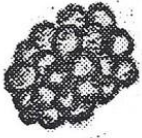
Make a very strong tea of Daisy flowers. When it is completely cool, strain the liquid and put it up in a tightly stoppered bottle. After each hair washing, which should be at least twice a month, once the hair is completely free of soap and dirty water, pour over 1/4 cup of the preserved tea. Work the tea well into the hair, then dry.

This will lighten the hair very nicely.





## 2

Abigail Moor, Soldier's Wife and Midwife  
The Intervale

Folks who need a midwife (and that's most everybody at some time or other) call on me, Abby Moor. There's no shortage of doctors around here, but we kind of keep to different spheres of influence you might say. Most of the doctors stick to bleeding and surgery, while we midwives do most of the caring for the sick, especially the women and children. There's some cross-over of course, and sometimes some downright feuding.

Most of us mid-wives learn from our mothers or another close relative. I learned my skills from my Aunt Sally Frye. Some of you might have heard about Mary Rowlandson? I hear she even published the story of her time with the Indians. Well, there's another side to every story. There was another Mistress Mary in Lancaster about the same time, and she, too, was taken by the Indians. In the raid of 1697 on Lancaster, Mary Fairbank was taken and her husband and some little ones killed. Now instead of just moaning about and complaining, my Mistress Mary set her mind to watching and learning. When she was finally returned to Lancaster, some two years later, she had stored away in her head a mighty amount of learning about how the Nashaway treated the sick and wounded, what herbs they used for what, where to find the right plants and the parts to use, and so on. She married David Whetcomb, and she was so good at doctoring that she was known as Doctress Mary by the time she died in 1733.

I'm proud to say that my knowledge of healing comes right from Doctress Mary. My Aunt Sally, who taught me, learned at the side of her cousin, Doctress Mary! Now most of the goodwives around here know how to brew up the simple teas and tonics that most everybody knows about - and, mind, there's nothing wrong with them. But when that doesn't work, they call on me. And I'm the first one they call to help with a birthing, or other women's troubles. Many's the expecting woman who swears my Goldenseal tonic eased her morning sickness, and plenty of tippy tummies have been soothed by my Blackberry cordial. And there's a special variety of Mint I get by the river that makes an excellent tea for cramps. And the wonders of willow bark! Why I could just go on and on.

Whenever I'm needed, I go. And that's sometimes all hours, any season; borning babies pay no attention to the calendar, that's for sure! I just let my eldest daughter Mary know where I'm off to, then I get. We live out the Bay Path quite a ways, but I still usually walk to make my calls. And I stay until I'm not needed, so I can be away two days or more.

As you can imagine, I've got bits of this and that drying all over the place. Sometimes it gets a bit cramped, trying to fit my healing plants into the rest of the place, but I manage. And Gardner, my husband, is pleased enough with the extra I bring in for my services that he usually keeps quiet about what he calls my "stinky stalks and stuff." Course I don't usually get paid in real money; mostly I get paid in kind, but sometimes I get a few pence, even a shilling a few times. He also lets me spend some of the real money I get to buy the supplies I can't make for myself, like oil of cloves. Thanks to the richness of the Bolton woods, meadows and swamps, I can get most of what I need right around here. Sometimes it's right on my doorstep (like the blackberries for my blackberry cordial). When Gardner came back from his enlistment he even brought me some bits of a different kind of Pipsissewa and I've got a little patch started out in the woods. But my favorite place is way over by the River. It takes me a whole day to walk over, do my gathering and walk back, but I can get so many different kinds of plants there, that it





makes it worth taking the whole day. I can get Angelica, Comfrey, Dandelion, Elderberry, Burdock, Woodruff, Willow, Hellebore, Valerian, my special Mint and Violets, just to name a few of the plants I use in my medicines.

I'm won't tell you just how to make a lot of the medicines I use, because you have to be real careful with some of them. They are powerful and if they're not used right, they can do more harm than good. Just about anybody can pick a flower and brew up a tea. But knowing just which plants to pick, what parts to use, how much, when and how to use it, that takes learning. But I don't see as how a soothing Mint Tea can hurt most anybody, and a sip of my Blackberry Cordial hasn't been known to harm, so I will tell you how to make them.

### ✓ ABIGAIL MOOR'S BLACKBERRY WINE

8 C. Fresh Blackberries, Crushed 8 C Sugar 1 Gal. boiling water 1 Pkg. yeast

Pour the boiling water over the crushed berries and let the mixture sit, covered, for 24 hours. Strain the liquid and squish the pulpy mass against the stainer, so you get out all the juice you can. Discard the berry pulp. Add the sugar and give a bit of a stir, then add the packet of yeast to the liquid (it will be more or less of a gallon, depending upon the natural juiciness of your berries, how well you squished the pulp, etc.). You don't have to cover the mixture, but if you do cover it to keep the dust and/or critters out, cover loosely. Loosely is important, because fermentation gives off gas and a tight cover won't leave anyplace for the gas to go. Let it sit and ferment until fermentation stops, about 2 weeks. Don't stir it or agitate it in any way - just leave it alone until done!! Strain, bottle and drink within a year.

Remember with any home wine making that the final product will vary depending upon many factors, including the quality of your fruit, and its natural sugar content.

### ✓ ABIGAIL'S MINT TEA

Note: Abigail probably used field mint or curly mint, but you can brew her tonic using spearmint. Teas, or tisanes, brewed for medicinal purposes were often brewed somewhat differently than those brewed for everyday drinking or pleasure. The former tended to involve larger quantities of herb to concentrate the active ingredients, and might be taken at room temperature and/or mixed with other things to increase effectiveness. Abigail's Mint Tea, below, will simply make a nice, refreshing cup of tea; unlike Abigail, we claim no medicinal value for it (but our recipe is for the drink, not the medicine):

For each cup of tea desired, 2 Tablespoons Fresh Spearmint Leaves (a little more is ok) and 6 ounces of boiling water. Add two more Tablespoons of mint for the pot. Lightly crush the leaves with your fingers, to begin releasing the oils. Take a ceramic tea pot that has been warmed and put the leaves into it. Add the boiling water and cover the pot and steep. Steep for at least 10 minutes, preferably 20. A tea cozy is good here, especially during the steeping, because it helps to keep the oils from escaping in steam, as well as retaining warmth. Pour, and as Abigail might say, enjoy.



3

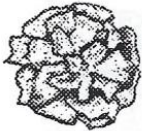
## Capt. Benjamin Atherton and his son, Jonathan Atherton Soldiers and Farmers

4

50 Bare Hill Road &  
310 Green Road



We lived up the road to Harvard a piece. My folks, Captain Benjamin and his wife Eunice let me and Ruth and our seven kids (we lost the other two, twin girls, back in the 50's as little ones) live with them and some of my other siblings on the farm my father had (50 Bare Hill Road). Our place looked pretty much like most farms around here then. Going up the road to Harvard, the second cleared place on the left was ours. And when I say cleared, I mean cleared. The area around the house and barn was bare dirt, excepting for the little patch behind the house where Mom grew some herbs and flowers for flavoring and physicing.



Pa's house was the usual two rooms, with a big chimney and a bit of a garret on the top. Like most folks, we didn't paint so the house was weathered to what we call brown. You might find chickens roosting in the windows and it might take a bit of careful stepping to get from the road to the front door, since we treat our trash the same as everyone around here, tossing it out the nearest door or window. We

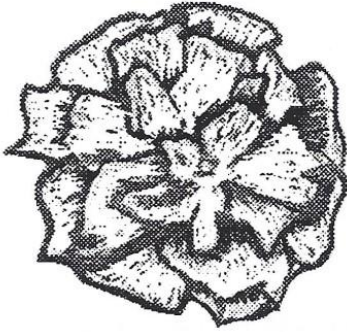
do keep all the fat and drippings though, so the ladies can make soap in the spring. The yard animals (pigs, chickens, and geese) poke around for the best food scraps, sometimes fighting with the dogs over a specially good bone. There's also the usual assortment of other odds and ends in the yard, scattered around higglety-pigglety; the broken crockery, tin pails with holes, the old broke down sled, some pieces of harness too worn to mend, the usual. When Ruth and I built our own place (310 Green Road) on some land from my father, back in 1770, Ruth insisted on adding a lean-to at the back of the house to give us a bit more room, so she could more easily spread out her herbs and stuff she uses for tonics and the like. She also puts in a big kitchen garden, and wanted more space to put up food ('course her favorite Fresh Pea Soup doesn't use put up peas).

The privy is back in one corner of the barn. Naturally, we use chamber pots too. We just empty the little pots into the pail we keep for chamber lye and every once in a while Sam Baker comes around and buys up any leftovers for his tanning. We've got 14 barn cats at last count, but still have rats and mice now and then. We've got a pair of oxen, some cows, sheep and a mare out pastured near the barn.

When I left for the War, I had my own good winter great coat, so I got a credit for \$3.33, which sure helped. Ruth wouldn't let me go without taking a small jar of her all purpose, good for anything that ails you marigold salve. And while I'm writing down receipts, I may as well tell you about my special Hot Buttered Rum. We all like it, but specially the old Captain; he's kinda rheumatically, walks with a stick and all, and he swears by my way of doing it. Just let me get a pen sharpened and find my spectacles...oh, and that pea soup recipe, too.







### ✓ RUTH'S GOOD-AS-GOLD SALVE

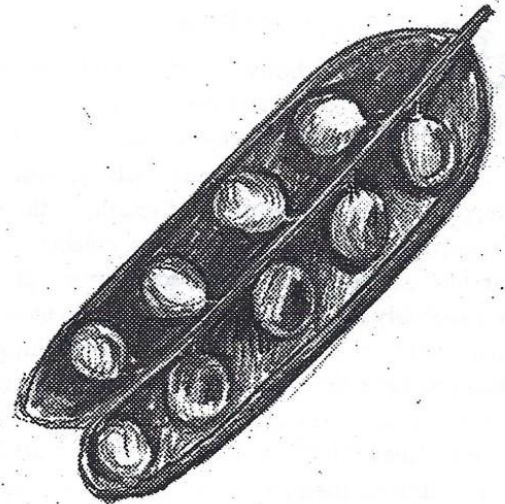
Take 1 C. petroleum jelly in a small pan and melt. Add 1 C. of the Finest Marigold petals and cook slowly over low heat until the herbs begin to brown or about 30 minutes. While still liquid, strain through cheesecloth or a fine sieve, discarding the petals. Pour liquid into a small jar, let it resolidify, then cover tightly.

### ✓ RUTH'S FRESH PEA SOUP

3 C. Chicken Broth    3 Lb. green peas, shelled    1 large  
Onion, minced

2 Tbsp. brown sugar    3/8 Tsp. Salt

Bring the chicken broth to the boil. Add remaining ingredients to the broth, cover and cook over a medium flame until the peas are soft, about 10-15 minutes. Push the ingredients through the fine blade of a food mill or puree in a blender. Return the puree to a pot and simmer to rewarm, serve.



### ✓ CAPT. BENJAMIN ATHERTON'S HOT BUTTERED RUM

1/3 C. Dark Rum    1 Tsp. Butter    1 Tsp. Maply Syrup

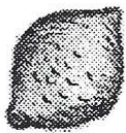
Dash of Nutmeg    1/3 C. of Boiling Water.

Put everything but the water into a warm ceramic mug. Leave a spoon in the mug, and add the hot water. Stir and serve. Lots of folks use powdered sugar, but my Pa likes it my way better, with our own Maply Syrup.



# 5

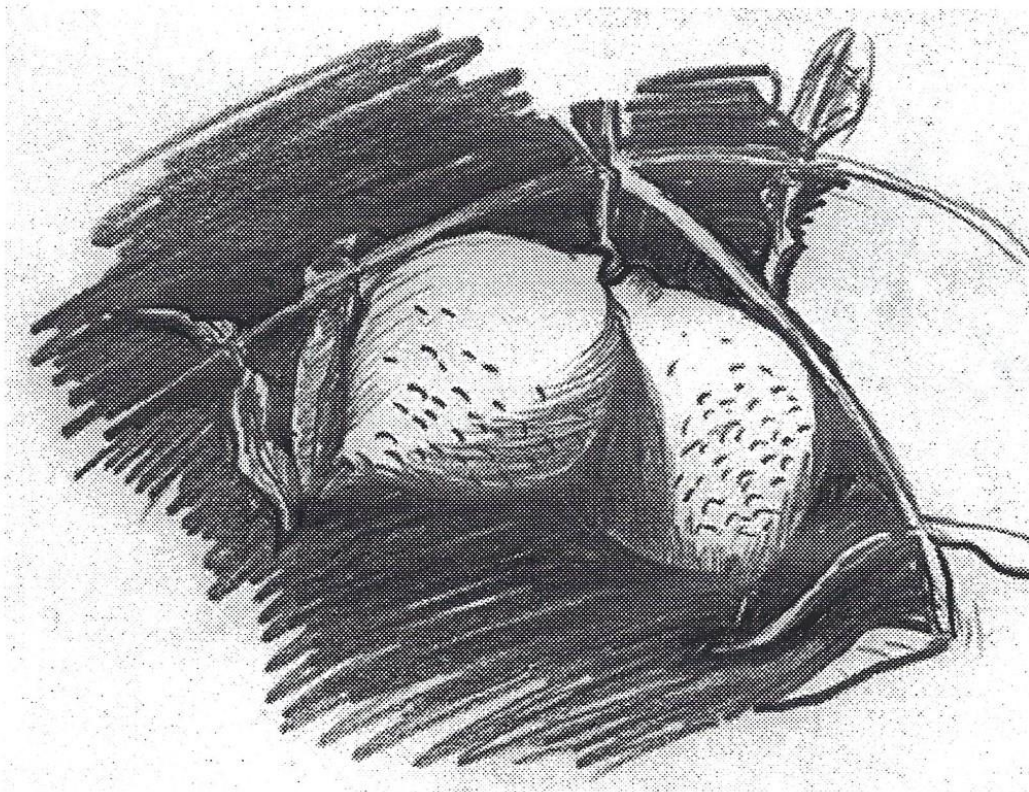
## Mathew Atherton, Soldier and Farmer Vaughn Hill Conservation Area



Our place was pretty much like Father described it, but he left out some of the best parts. There are two trees growing down near the barn, a couple of butternut trees. Mother makes a wicked cake from the nutmeats, and my sister Molly turns out the best ink in the family. I'll give you her recipe as best I remember it. She likes to draw, so I guess she got into ink making so she'd always have a supply handy. Of course, Molly isn't the only one in the family to need or use ink. Grandpa Benjamin's a real bear about schooling. In fact, Father says that before we got the schoolhouse out here, school was held in Grandpa Benjamin's house for the kids around here. So you can tell we're a reading and writing kind of family. We all learned some reading and writing, and when a decent goose quill isn't handy, we just whittle a twig to a point with our pen knife, dip it in Molly's ink and we're off.

Hunting is something I really like. Sure, everybody has to do some to make ends meet and keep the varmints down, but I really like to hunt. Maybe because it's a chance to get off by myself. Anyway, whenever I can get loose of my farm chores, I get my rifle and go hunting. One of my favorite places is a couple of miles from the house. It's kind of hard to describe where I did my best hunting, because Bolton has changed so much. But, if you go to where Bowers Springs Conservation area is now, that's it. Of course, it was all woods when I hunted it. I guess a better idea of what it was like for me was what is now called the Vaughn Hills Conservation land. Personally, I thought the hunting was better at what you call Bowers Springs, but Vaughn Hills has more the feel of what the land was like around where I liked best to hunt. If you can get there on a nice quiet fall day, it'll give you the idea. I hear it's changed a lot since I moved to Vermont. But it sure was a sweet place for deer, squirrel and raccoons. Once I even got a moose there!

Anyway, when I did finally join the Army, Ma sent along some of her "Good as Gold" salve with me, just like she did with Father. And of course, she kept on reminding me to be sure and take vinegar tonic every day, so I guess it's a good thing that each soldier gets a ration of 7 gills of vinegar a week. I guess just about everybody knows how to make a good vinegar tonic, but since you asked, I'll write it out for you.



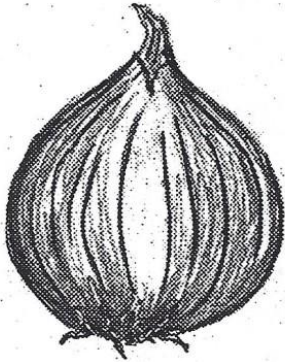


## ✓ MOLLY ATHERTON'S NUT BROWN INK

Shells of 8 walnuts 1 Cup water 1/2 Tsp. vinegar 1/2 Tsp. Salt

Put the shells in a cloth sack, or wrap in a rag. Smash the shells to small pieces by hitting the bagged shells with a hammer (this is a really fun part of making ink!). Put the shell pieces into a pan with the water and bring to a boil. Then turn down the heat to a simmer and let the mixture simmer for 30 to 60 minutes, until the liquid has reduced to about 1/3 to 1/4 C and turned a dark brown. Remove from the heat, cool, and strain out of the shells. Add the vinegar and the salt (to retain color and retard mold) to the liquid, bottle and use for ink.

If you make Molly's ink, remember that you need an old fashioned nib pen, the kind that you dip into the ink, not the kind you fill (a new style fountain pen might not like Molly's ink). Of course, you could also do what Matt and Molly did, take out your pen knife and sharpen a goose quill, or lacking a goose quill, sharpen a small, straight stick.



## VINEGAR TONIC

2 Tsp. of vinegar to 1 C. water

Take once or twice a day, or as needed. It's good to cure, ward-off or generally ease a number of aches, pains and other assorted ills. You can use it for most anything, but it's specially good for strengthening eyes; nose illness; asthma; creaking joints; gas, falling hair, skin rashes, and general fatigue.



# 6

## Captain Jonathan Houghton, Innkeeper, Soldier & Son, Rufus Houghton, Farmer & Soldier Across from 340 Green Road



Welcome to the Inn! I'm Captain Jonathan Houghton by the way. Me and my son Rufus both served; young Jonathan was too young to get in on things. Actually, Rufus just barely made it, but I'll let him tell you about that. My wife Sarah and I had a small family by the standards around here. There were only the six of us at the time of the War. There might have been more, but little Abby died young. What? Oh sure, we do have a grown up daughter Abigail, but she was born after little Abby died, and Sarah was real partial to the name.

Because we don't mind extra people, and Sarah's a good cook, I got us a Liquor License when I got back from soldiering. I used part of my Bounty Money for it (it wasn't cheap, either; it cost £ 10, a whole third of my bounty money!). So, Sarah and I set up the house for an Inn, right here facing Fiddler's Green. There are some other Inns here in Bolton, but we've got the best dancing green, and we're the only one that serves those new drinks, cocktails. My son Rufus spent some time in New York when he was a soldier, and he came back and told me about them and we decided to serve them in the Inn; they're sure popular.

Before I turn this over to Rufus, I guess this is as good a place as any to talk about Inns and drinking. I don't want you to think we're not good, God-fearing people who live right and don't abuse strong drink. Nobody needs to come to an Inn to just drink. Folks come to Inns to socialize, or to put up unexpected visitors and the like. And we, the Innkeepers live here; it's our house, we just use some of the rooms for Inn purposes. So, back to drinking. There's drinking and there's drinking. Sure we drink a lot of what you call alcoholic beverages, but would you drink our water? I sure wouldn't. And milk is OK for babes and oldsters, but that's all. So, that leaves drinks where the water has been boiled, like tea, or drinks made from fruits and vegetables, like cider. Let me tell you, once orchards got going around Bolton, cider sure became a major drink around here. Of course, you can't keep cider fresh for long, but that's OK, 'cause it's just as good (some think better) when its fermented a bit, or become hard cider. I can't think of a household around here that doesn't have at least one kind of home brew other than cider around, and most of 'em have three or four - if it can be fermented or brewed, there's likely somebody around here who does it. Then there's good old Rum, the King of drinks. Why just before the war broke out and kind of messed up shipping, I heard that the average Rum consumption in the colonies was about 3 3/4 gallons per head per year; and yes, per head means everybody, including women and children. Let's see, that works out to about just under 2 ounces per person per day, which sounds about right. Why recently, there was a town meeting over to Worcester, where they were arguing against a bigger liquor tax, and one of the arguments that carried the day was to the effect that "spirits were an absolute necessity for the morale of farmworkers." So, let me turn this over to Rufus, who can tell you all about our fancy new cocktails.



Rufus: Well, like Pa says, I brought back the cocktail. I was too young to enlist when the war broke out, but as soon as I came of age, I joined up. The description on my papers is pretty close, as it listed me as having a light complexion, light hair and being about 5'5". I ended up serving some time in the New York area, and if you know your history, you know that time was a real mix of fighting and sitting around. So one time when it was more sitting than fighting, I went to this nearby Inn, just to pass some time. The bartender there, Betsy Flanagan, was pretty nice to soldiers. Of course, this was before I got married mind.



So, her bar is all decorated with designs made out of rooster tail feathers stuck on the wall, and it looked real pretty. Anyway, some duffer is in there, really slopped. So he hollers out to Betsy that he'll have some of those "cocktails" to drink. Betsy doesn't blink an eye, just pours him another tot, grabs down the nearest tail feather, stirs the tot and puts it down in front of him. After that, folks would come into her Inn and order a "cocktail," as a joke.

Being a thinking kind of fellow, when I was home on leave once and sitting in the Inn with Ma and Pa, I remembered Betsy's bar and the cocktails. I jumped up, whipped up a Saratoga Cannonball, had Ma and Pa taste it and told them the cocktail story. Well, next to plain old tots and flips, the Saratoga Cannonball is the most popular drink at our Inn!

Cocktails isn't all I got from New York. I met my wife, Mary there. We didn't settle back in Bolton. I liked soldiering a lot, and kept going back to it. In fact, I was in the Battle of Lundy's Lane in Canada. Our little boy, Luther, was only just 14 and he went with me that time, and I was killed there and he was so badly wounded he got a lifetime pension. Mary stayed on in Canada, and when she was well into her 80's she applied for a widow's pension.

### ✓ SARATOGA CANNONBALL

1 Jigger each, Dark Rum, Brandy | Tbsp. Honey | 1/2-1 Jigger Heavy Cream Dash Allspice

Mix gently, and serve. It is easier to mix if the honey is heated to liquid first, then the other ingredients added to the honey.

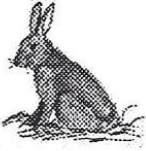
### ✓ SARAH HOUGHTON'S HOMEMADE MEAD

Mix 1 Qt. honey with 3 Qts. water and simmer slowly for 1 hour. Cool, add yeast. Let stand until fermentation ceases. Strain and bottle.

An updated version would really be the same, except the amount of yeast would probably be specified as 1/2 pkg., and you might want to cover the fermenting pail lightly with cloth to help keep down the dust. Don't cover it tightly when it is fermenting or it could blow up.



## 7

Becke & Anna Langley, Goodwife & Daughter  
610 Sugar Road

My name is Becke Langley and I was 10 years old when my father, Colonel Robert went off. He went to Lexington and the Siege of Boston and other places after that. Pa was off more than home for the 18 months or so between the spring of '75 to late fall, early winter of '76. It seemed odd, having Pa away, and we all had to do more work, but I never really appreciated what was going on until one morning in January of '76. I woke up early and noticed Ma wasn't in the bed I shared with her and my sisters, Rachel, Lucy, Rhodey and Tille. I eased my way around my brothers' bed and saw that Eli had his legs sticking out, as usual, John was snoring, little Jon was a lump under the covers, but I couldn't spot Robert. I don't exactly know what time it was, but it was real early, because the sky was clear, and I could see the moonlight on the snow through the little window where we slept, but it was still dark. I remember I had my favorite doll, Sally, in my hands; I was really getting too old for dolls, but Sally was an old friend, a stuffed sock with eyes, and Ma wasn't too strict about our holding onto childish things as long as we got our chores done. So here I crept, past the other bed, being careful to step over and around all the other stuff in the room and out onto the stairs. I went quietly down and turned left into the great hall. There was a little light from the fire and then I just froze, because I saw something I'd never seen before. Ma and Little Robert were near the fire, and I saw Ma hit him, hard, and even more scary, I could see that tears were running down her cheeks. That's when I really understood just how different things were with Pa away.

**Anna:** I married Robert in 1756 and we had a good life. Still do, really. But that time he was away was the hardest time of my life. I don't suppose I had it harder than any of the other wives left at home, and we did all try to help each other as much as we could; and when some men would come home, they'd try to help neighbor's families and so on. But even with willing help, including all the children, most of the work and everything else fell onto the wives. Nothing really different I guess than more ordinary times, when a woman might be suddenly widowed, or a man lose his wife and infant in the same day. But it was different during the War, because everybody was involved. I mean, it's never pleasant or easy to lose family, but if it's not wartime, there's often family and neighbors to help take up the slack until things get back to some kind of normal. But in the War, everybody was in the same situation, so folks didn't really have the time and energy to help each other the way they would otherwise.

You have to keep in mind that we were never an idle people. About the only time we weren't working was at Sunday Meeting and the rare times when it was too dark to do anything useful. And we weren't working necessarily because we liked the work, or because we wouldn't rather be doing something else, but we worked because that was the only way to survive. We grew, raised, hunted or gathered all our own food, meat and greens and roots and all; we grew the raw material for our clothes, processed it from plant or animal to cloth, then sewed the clothes; we made most of our tools, and if we did buy some of them, we got pretty good at fixing whatever we had, using it until it was hopeless and couldn't be used for anything else. We did some home schooling, and managed to court, marry and have children, too. Now you add sleeping to that routine, and there's not much time for anything else!

The work got divided up pretty much by the number of folks there were to do it. I guess I was lucky, because even though we had 9 children when Robert went off to war, only four of them were 7 or younger. So I did have the elder five to help, and John and Eli really did the best they could to take over a lot of their father's chores.

But that still left me to do all the planning, and I even had to do some of the fall slaughtering. Don't mistake me, I'm not sentimental about butchering animals, and I've been wringing chicken necks since I was 9. But if you've never actually slaughtered a full grown cow before, and never been taught how to do it, it's a tedious, messy, backbreaking labor. Sure the girls helped out too, cooking and spinning and so on. But Eli isn't very good yet at shearing, so the wool was a mess





and excepting Rachel, none of the girls had the experience to fix so it could be spun properly. So there I am, when I need to be putting up the meat, trying to untangle a mess of ruined yarn instead. Rhoday cooks some, but porridge and soft cheese is about it for her; Becke got pretty good at trapping rabbits and making stew. Well, you get the idea. I couldn't be everywhere at once, but I tried, I really did.

That morning that Becke was talking about was just the point at which I snapped. I don't think it was any one thing, just the accumulation of having to be solely responsible for 46 acres under plow, all the animals, the kids, the house, just everything. I hadn't slept much the night before, so I figured I might as well get up and get going so as to get a start on all the chores. I also wanted to brew up a new batch of Mulberry tea because little Tille and Jon still had worms; you worry when any of the kids are sick 'cause so many die, but it's somehow worse with the little ones. It was horrible cold, with the wind coming in through the clapboards and around the window, and one of the kids had forgotten to work up kindling and pile it by the fireplace the day before. I simply couldn't face going outside, so I just shaved some slivers off the cornerbeam to use for kindling. Then, just as I got the fire up, Little Robert came stumbling down into the Hall and fell smack against the big pot of chamber lye, knocking it over and spilling it all over the apples I had spread out to dry. That's when I struck him.

That was about my worst time, ever. Things on the farm didn't really get better or easier until Robert had been back for a couple of years, there was that much catching up to do. But I never again felt so bad as I did that morning, and the kids and I did get through until Robert came back. Believe it or not, we even had some fun now and again. In fact, I think that was the winter when Becke got to be so good at Shadow Puppets, Lucy made her pretty pocket, and Eli and Little Robert made the funny cow we stuck up on the barn for a weathervane.

### ✓ RHODAY'S SOFT (COTTAGE) CHEESE

2 Cups whole milk 1 Tbsp vinegar Salt

Heat the milk until it's bubbling, stirring all the time. Remove from heat and add the vinegar. Stir gently and watch for the curds to form. Once curds have formed, empty the pot into a strainer and press the curds gently with the back of a spoon to remove and drain the liquid, or whey. Put the curds, or cheese, into a bowl and cool it, salt to taste and eat. If any is leftover, refrigerate. You really must use whole milk as the fat is necessary to make curds.



# 8

## Samuel Baker, Politician, Businessman, and Soldier Lime Kiln and Quarry



I'd actually moved my wife, Susannah, and our seven children to Berlin in 1765, but we kept ties to Bolton. In fact, my eldest son, Sam, married a Bolton girl, Hannah, and they lived in Bolton and brought up their twelve kids there. My son, Sam, and I both served some time during the war. He went on to be a businessman as well as a farmer, but I kinda liked the political scene. By the time I died, I was known as Judge Baker, and in addition to the judging, I'd been a representative to the Constitutional Convention and a Senator for Worcester County. As I said, Sam didn't much like politics, but he kept on with the family milling businesses and did ok.

I put up a house, tannery and mill right near here - in fact, if you visit Benjamin Sawyer, you'll see where my house is located. My mill and tannery were north and east of the house, on the Great Brook. So I worked right close to the Lime Quarry and Kiln. My mill and tannery are long gone, and Ben has the house now. But the quarry is a handsome sight, so I thought I'd meet you here.

Just because I was a tanner and later a politician, don't get the idea that I didn't farm like everybody else. But folks always need leather, and once you get a few folks together to sort of make a village, it makes good business sense to supply something you know folks will need. And since tanning is so messy and takes so much time, folks are usually happy to pay for somebody else to do it. Of course, paying isn't like it is for you; we'd put a money value on the work, but mostly we didn't hand around money. We'd trade things, and keep a running account that might go on for years, just settling up maybe every few years. And settling up didn't necessarily mean getting to zero; it just meant me and the other fellow agreed that at the time we settled up, I owed him, or more likely, he owed me some amount like £ 2/ 6sh-9d. Then I'd just add or subtract from that, depending...

Tanning isn't a trade for everybody. It takes a sound knowledge of hides and skins, and how to cut and dye them, patience and a none too sensitive nose helps. See, it takes about a year to tan most skins properly, but it's not like pickles where you jar 'em and forget about 'em. You've got to mind the hides and change the solutions they're bathing in, and move 'em around and so on. And, you've got to keep a steady supply of hides ready to go in as you take out the ones that you figure are about ready. A hide doesn't come off an animal like a coat, all nice and neat and ready to tan; nope, you've got to scrape off all the bits and pieces of the animal still attached, do some trimming to neaten things up, maybe take off the hair and just generally clean it up. That's not so bad in the winter, but if we have to do it in the summer it sure raises a stink. Butchering stock is a funny thing, some folks around here are as neat as old Dr. Dan, but some folks, I won't mention names, they just seem to use the hack and hew method. And hunters bringing in pelts they shot or trapped, same thing; Matt Atherton's pelts are always nice and neat, but some others I could tell about... Well, back to tanning. Once the hides are





ready, we put 'em in the baths to condition 'em; soften 'em, harden 'em, dye 'em, whatever. I won't tell you what goes into the process besides water, 'cause it's a trade secret. But, since every tanner I know uses these and everybody knows about them, I guess I can tell you that besides water, oak bark and sig are used a lot. Susannah sure had a fit the day I spilled a barrel of sig all over myself! I'd just done the rounds, picking up folks' chamber lye, went to unload the wagon at the tannery and over she went! When I got home for dinner, Susannah threw me out of the house. Threw a clean set of britches and a shirt out too, and told me I couldn't come in and sit to table until I changed. I never asked her, but I think she made so many pomander balls because of the constant tanning stink.

### ✓ **SUSANNAH'S POMANDER BALLS**

Use a firm orange with a thick skin or a hard apple. Stud the fruit all over with whole cloves. If you want it to be fancier, try to get the cloves into a pattern or design. Tie a string or ribbon around the pomander and hang in your closet, or put in a drawer. It will scent the clothes and (maybe) keep away moths.

### **SAM'S DAUGHTER PERSIS' ASTHMA RELIEF**

Take a nice fresh muskrat skin and put it fur side down on the chest, next to the skin. Wear until relief is obtained.



## 9

## Abraham Holman, Sr., Patriarch and Soldier

### 225 Great Road



If you're standing where 225 Great Road is today, you're right close to where I lived. I went to the Lexington Alarm, then came home to stay with my wife Abby (she was Abigail Atherton when I married her - you might know her father, Capt. Benjamin?). We had nine children, eight boys and a girl. Abby died in '77 and I later married Prudence.

We were a lively household, especially while Abby was alive and all the kids were home. I was active in a lot of town issues, and two of my older boys, Silas and Abraham, Jr. were as well, so there were often meetings at my house to discuss town affairs. We could usually handle a pretty good crowd, since we had several tables and chairs and three punch bowls. Abby could stir up a mean bowl of Colonial Tea Punch when needs warranted.

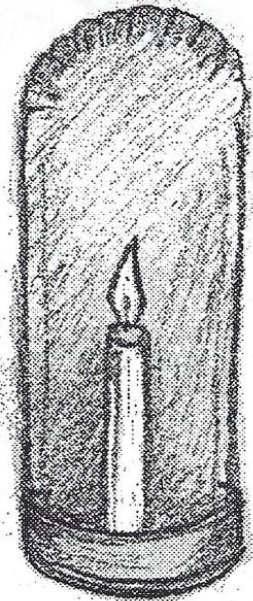
We also had all kinds of kitchen pots and kettles and whatever. In fact, we had the only frying pan in the neighborhood. Abigail was always good about lending it out to any neighbor who had a need for it. Some folks think the name, The Pan, comes from a warming pan (and we did have two of those), but believe me, most folks had their own warming pan, but not everybody had a good griddle or fry pan.

We had more than one book, too. Of course we had the Holy Bible (three actually), but I had a set of Josephus as well. Not that all we had by way of books was holy writ; I got me and the boys one of those books of Noah Webster, called a "disconary" or something like that, and we got a few other books just for pleasure. Most of our reading gets done in daylight, though. We get pretty much as dark after sundown as everybody else does. Most of us only have one or two candlesticks (well, I have a few more of course), and tallow and candle wax are dear. Just try reading by the flickering light of a fire and one or at most two candles - specially if your eyes aren't as young as they once were. Abby would always put down her fine needlework about an hour or so before sundown, 'cause she said she couldn't see fine enough to work the tiny stitches. She'd switch to darning then, where the stitches don't have to be so fine.

During the spring and summer, and some into the fall, the house got pretty empty during the day, with just Abby and the youngest ones at home while me and the older boys are out doing whatever needed doing, depending on the season and the notion. There's always something to do with the stock, or the crops, or hunting or fishing; and if none of them, there's always wood to work up. You can never have enough wood around here. Our woodpiles are nearly as big as the house.

Outside work doesn't end in the winter, it just gets some less. We do some cutting and sledding out in the winter of course, when it's easier to get the sled and horse through the woods. And the stock still needs care throughout the winter, as do all the creatures. But we do spend more time inside in the winter. Sometimes we'd all be together in the hall, working away on winter chores, the only sounds being the ones we make and the sound of my big clock chiming the hours. Why we'd mend harnesses, sharpen tools, bring accounts up to date and so forth; and Abby would be darning, or spinning, or cooking up something to eat, or boiling a tonic, or whatever.

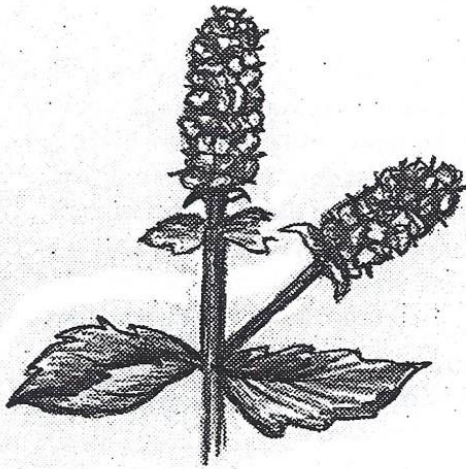
Some evenings our singing got pretty loud back then, with Abby and my daughter adding their light voices to me and the boys' darker ones. I've heard that they've started making pianofortes here in the colonies, but I don't know if we'll ever get one. Maybe I'll ask Prudence what she thinks about that idea...





### ✓ **ABBY'S DISH OF TEA**

Allow 1 tsp. dried herb to each 1 C of boiling water, put into a warmed tea pot. Don't forget to add 1 tsp. extra dried herb for the pot. Keep the pot warm and the steam in by covering with a nice cozy, and steep until as strong as desired. Serve with honey or lemon.



### ✓ **ABRAHAM AND ABBY'S TEA PUNCH**

Remove the Peel in thin strips from 12 lemons and place the strips in a punch bowl. Add 1 quart strong Tea and the Juice from the Lemons. Mix in 2 C. sugar and let this stand for 1 hour or longer. Add 1 quart of Dark Rum and 1 Jigger of Brandy. Pour mixture over ice and serve.



# 10

## Benjamin Sawyer, Soldier, Miller, and Chorister 392 Great Road



I didn't marry Becky Houghton 'til I had finished my soldiering; I was 27 when we married. Ten years and six children later (although, sad to say, only four were still living) I bought Sam Baker's place. He'd already put up some buildings and a house there (well, you sure know about his tannery if you've spoken with him yet), and I thought the site would be just perfect for a grist mill. We moved in 1791. I kept the Saw Mill on the Great Brook, and I used some of Sam's tannery building to put up my Grist Mill, drawing the water from West Pond. Becky and me went on to have six more children, again losing two young, so we ended up with eleven of us in the house.

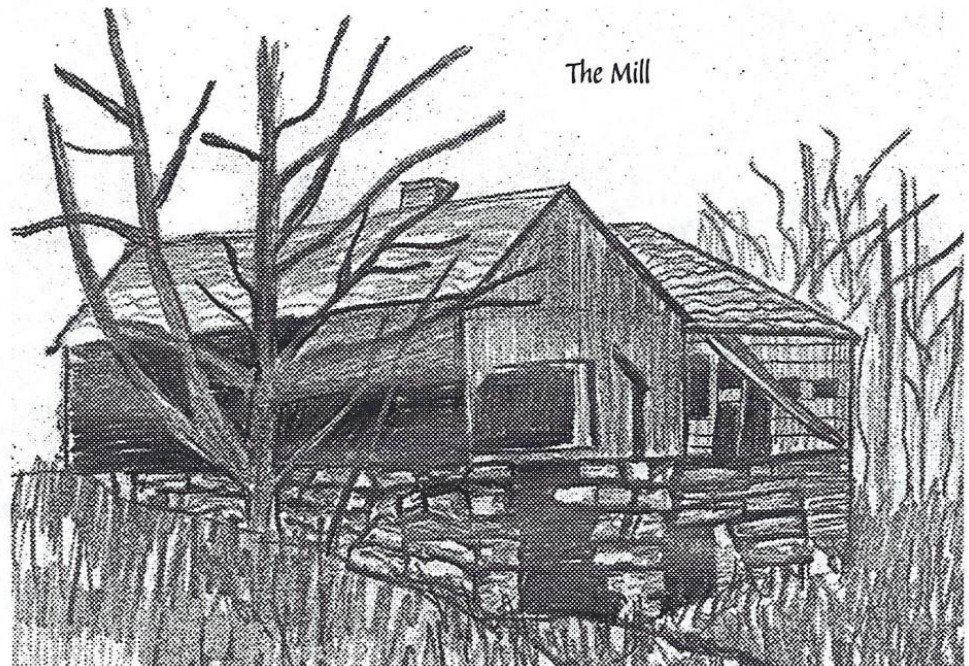
And no, the house isn't backwards, you are. Sam wasn't an idiot; the road you're standing on wasn't here when he built. You'd be knee deep in swamp, standing where you are now, back when we lived here. Actually, the swamp was part of the attraction, since where there's swamp there's usually a good deal of water around. I ran both a saw and a grist mill, but despite my name, I really liked working in the grist mill better. They're both hard work, and produce useful commodities, but I just like the making of flour better than the making of floorboards. Becky teases me that I spend more time at the grist mill than the sawmill so's I can spend more time with the ladies, but I swear that's not the reason for my preference. In fact, sometimes all those ladies can be a right nuisance. Now I'm proud of my products, so I figured I'd put a recipe for Johnny Cake right on my bags for cornmeal. Well let me tell you if that didn't set up a right uproar. Seems like everybody has their own favorite way of making Johnny Cake, and not one of the ladies liked the one I printed up. They'd all come up to me at Meeting (I'm a chorister you know) and start complaining about that recipe. I got so sick of it, I got rid of that one and had a new one printed up that has just the most basic ingredients on it, figuring that would settle things down. I was wrong.

I like to think I got picked as a chorister because of my fine bass voice and the gusto I bring to singing. It's a real pleasure to boom out those lines and then hear the members sound them back at me. I'll confess to you that I sometimes pick a hymn more because the words and tune I use set off my voice than because it goes with the lesson. Take "Sin and Misery Connected," that one can really give a person goosebumps.

Because I lead the singing, Becky tends to fuss over me when I dress for meeting. She trims my hair and inspects my shaving. She makes me chew a few caraway seeds before we go, "so you won't knock anyone over." She pulls this, and pushes that and just plain fusses.

Why, a few times she's even gotten me to rub some of her lemon milk in my hands; I was so mortified I covered up the smell with Bay Rum just as fast as I could. Sure my hands get pretty rough what with the weather and the work I do, but honestly, lemon milk! Little Lucy and Betsy giggled 'til they got hiccups!

Rebecca's comment: I don't either fuss over Benjamin. I just think he should look his best, especially when he's going to be standing up in front of the congregation for so long at Meeting. I know we should eschew vanity,





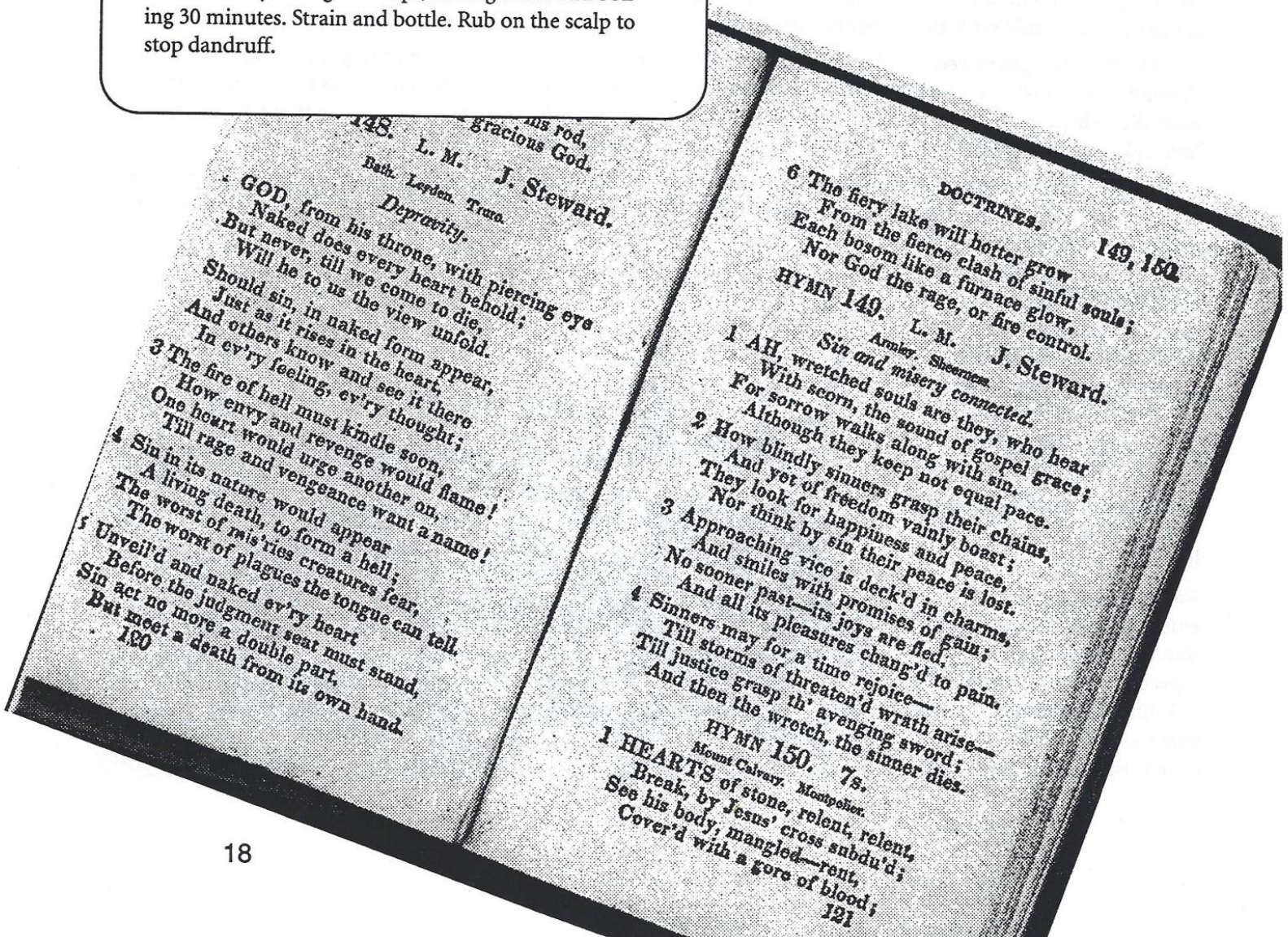
and I subscribe to the Church teachings on personal vanity. But I'm also a practical woman. Benjamin is an important businessman in this village, and between his business and his choristering, he gets seen and talked about a lot. And I know how folks can get - look at the fuss about his Johnny Cake recipe for goodness' sake. That's why I always rub a little of my dandruff lotion in his scalp when I trim his hair. But I do not fuss.

## ✓ REBECCA'S LEMON MILK LOTION TO SOFTEN HANDS

Slice 1/2 of a lemon into a cup. Cover with enough warm milk to fill the cup and let it sit for 2 hours or so. When the milk has nicely curdled, strain. Discard the curds and keep the clear whey. Rub a little into your hands to soften and whiten them.

## REBECCA'S CURE FOR DANDRUFF

Make a tea by taking beet tops, adding water and boiling 30 minutes. Strain and bottle. Rub on the scalp to stop dandruff.





# 11

## Lemual Burnham, Farmer and Soldier Cranberry Meadows



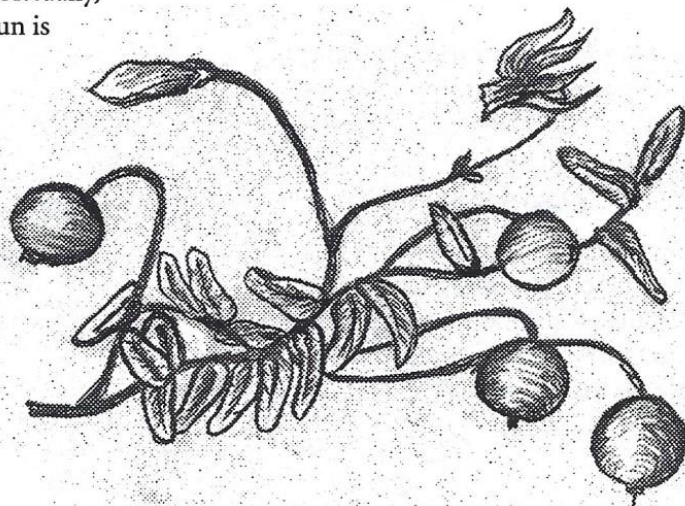
My wife, Sally, and I lived on The Pan with our nine kids. We didn't marry until after the War, but as you know, things didn't really change around here until well after the War. I guess the changes started before, but it really got noticeable around 1810 or so, when houses came up like mushrooms in the village center. When I was a kid, we thought our end of the village was pretty well settled, but that was nothing compared to what happened 20 to 30 years after the War!

Sally's given name is Sarah, but we all call her Sally. Actually, lots of folks are called something different than their given name, and the way we spell our names isn't really consistent either; doesn't have to be, we know who we are and who we mean! Sometimes people just get called something different than their baptismal name because they get a nickname for no reason, or sometimes just to differentiate two or more folks with the same name. We don't have those books you've got with "The Top Two Hundred Names for Boys and Girls," but we don't need 'em. Sure, we get a lot of duplicates, like I said, but the Holy Bible has a powerful lot of names, especially in the Old Testament, and we use all of them. Then they're the family names that get tagged on the little ones. And lots of times, if a little one dies (which isn't that uncommon I'm afraid) we re-use the name when another baby comes along, so we can keep the name in our family.

Speaking of names, I did say we lived on the Pan? You know why we call it that? Frying pans are not cheap, and we all don't have our own in the house. Abby Holman always let all the folks around here borrow hers when they had need. Long as they returned it and treated it good while they had it anyway. Well, enough about naming; I don't know how I got off onto that. Sally does say I tend to wander.

Ben Sawyer has a receipt printed on his cornmeal from his grist mill, but Sally doesn't like it, so she wants me to include her recipe for Johnny Cake. If you can get Mr. Abraham's pan, and you've got corn and maple syrup, you'll enjoy her recipe.

We lived off the Bay Path a bit, right near here. I had you come to the Craneberry Bog here because it figured a lot in our lives. We had all the usual animals and crops and so on, but the bog provided us with some special things we wouldn't have had otherwise. From Fall to late Spring the meadows were flooded. Part of the meadows were Craneberry Bog, so the water protected the berries over the winter. Then, the meadows would dry out over the late spring and summer and into the fall, and they made a perfect place for Sally to get plants for her teas, tonics and dyes. Actually, her yellow dye that she uses in her special homespun is the envy of all the ladies in Bolton. She won't give me her secret dye recipe (I can tell you she uses dandelions and celandine, because she's always off in the orchard in spring, as well as all over the meadows), but I was able to slip out a copy of her Craneberry Pie. This area was also a great place to catch Snappers, and since I have a special fondness for snapper stew, I'd come out when I could and if I could get a nice big one, we'd have my snapper stew.





### ✓ LEMUEL BURNHAM'S SNAPPER STEW

2 lb. Turtle meat 2 Tbsp. Fat 4 C. Boiling water 1 Tbsp Lemon juice  
1 Medium onion, sliced 1 or 2 Bay leaves 1 Tbsp. Salt 1/2 Tsp. Pepper  
1 Tbsp. Sugar Dash of Ground Allspice 6 Carrots, Halved 1 Cup. Chopped Parsnip  
1 Lb. Small White Onions 1 Clove Garlic

Cut meat into 1/2 inch cubes and brown in the fat. Add water, lemon juice, garlic, sliced onion, bay and other seasonings (you might add a bit of Worcestershire if you like, or even bitters). Cover and simmer for at least two hours. Add the carrots and small onions, and parsnip. Cover and cook for 30 more minutes until vegetables are tender. Serve in bowls

### ✓ SALLY'S RECIPE FOR JOHNNY CAKE

1 C. Cornmeal 1 Tbsp Salt 1 C Boiling Water 1/2 C. milk

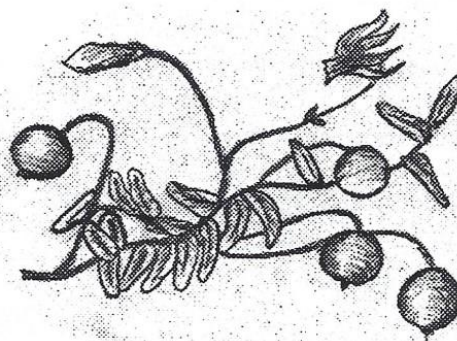
Stir the cornmeal and salt into the boiling water. Cook until thick. Remove from the heat and add the milk and mix well. Drop the dough onto a greased, hot fry pan by Tablespoonfuls. Brown on both sides and serve.

### ✓ SALLY'S CRANBERRIE PIE

Pastry for 2 crust pie 3 C. fresh cranberries, chopped coarsely 1 C raisins

2 Tbsp. flour 1 1/4 C. Sugar 1/2 C. Water 1 Tsp. Vanilla

Mix all ingredients well and turn them into a 9" pie pan lined with half the pastry. Cover with the top crust. Cut slits in top crust, put pie in 350° oven for 40 minutes.





## 12

## Josiah Coolidge, Farmer & Soldier

### 663 Great Road



I was born in Watertown in 1718, but I came West and married Mary Jones in Bolton in the spring of '42. We got warned out in 1747, when our first two kids were just 4 and 3. So we went up to Vermont for a while, just to let things settle down. We did come back to Bolton, and pretty much stayed put. But feelings for Vermont had become part of the family I guess - my son, John Calvin moved back up there right after he got married in 1779 (he married a nice gal from Lancaster, Hannah somebody or other). And that branch of the family stayed around the Putney area for quite a while. Some folks

think we were pretty notorious, because we got warned out. But you have to remember that being warned out didn't have to be because you were a major criminal or anything like that. Folks got warned out for all kinds of things, some major, some minor. You could be warned out because you didn't agree with religion, or politics (sometimes the same thing), because you hadn't gotten around to registering your wife or kids with the town offices, because you were just a little late on your taxes, why just about anything. I'm not telling you why we got warned out, because that's a private matter. And I'm not gonna talk about my son Josiah moving to Vermont and forgetting to pay his taxes in Bolton, either. I know it was 7s. 6d., but he was in a hurry to get north, and what with the War and everything, he just forgot about it.

Now our third boy, John Calvin, that moved to Vermont, is sort of important, because he was the first in what became a long line of John Calvin Coolidges. Seems my great-great-grandson, John Calvin Coolidge got to be Governor of Massachusetts and even President of the United States. Even though he was born in Vermont, my great-great-grandson had sense enough to come back to Massachusetts! Even if he did go further west, out to Amherst.

We're here at the Town Hall because lots of important news for the community was centered here. You know that this Town Hall is new, and the one I knew was the Meeting House out west along the Bay Path a bit. But we'll talk here. From time to time, the leaders of the War would send out notices to all the different towns, usually asking for something else they needed. In general, each town furnished the supplies needed for all the men it sent to the War; each individual would supply what he could on his own, and the town was expected to help out. Now at one time or other, nearly everybody served in some capacity. But, the town was usually assessed for 1/7th of the number of men they had over the age of 16. By my recollection, we had 299 men over the age of 16 in 1778, so that gave us a quota of 43 that year.

Well, lots of things were asked for using that same formula; 1/7th. The actual numbers varied from time to time. We were assessed for 43 men in 1778, but we were asked to send 55 coats in '75, and back to 43 with the whole blanket deal. In June of '79 the House wanted us to send shirts, shoes and pairs of stockings. We no sooner got all that stuff off then here comes another request, this one for blankets. This was September of '79, and they were getting ready for a winter campaign—I guess Washington learned something from Valley Forge the year before. Anywise, the General Assembly was impatient about those blankets - they sent three requests between September of '79 and January of '80! Course, if you read carefully, you'll see that congresses have certain things in common, regardless of the times. Guess folks didn't jump to it fast enough to suit the General Assembly, and by the third blanket request in '80, they were quick to tell folks it wasn't the government's fault that they needed the blankets!! " 'Tis not owing to a Neglect in Government to make early Provision for a foreign Supply of this Article, that this Requisition is made upon the people; but to the Misfortune of these Supplies falling into the Hands of the Enemy."

As you see, I don't really understand politics, guess I'll leave that to my offspring. But I can tell you a story. You know that song the British soldiers made up to make fun of us Militiamen and Minutemen? Sure you do, goes something like this "Father and I went down to camp, Along with captain Gooding..." You know that line about "the men and boys as thick as hasty-pudding?" For some reason, that song always makes me think of my Mary's Hasty Pudding. She also made a nice bean porridge. I can't remember how many times the boys and I would take a string of Mary's Bean Porridge with us when we were working up wood in the winter. We'd hike on out to where we were working, hang it up from a handy branch, and we'd be all set for dinner. It just got better the longer it set out and aged a bit!



*Bolton*

*State of Massachusetts-Bay.*

In the House of REPRESENTATIVES, June 21, 1779.

**R**ESOLVED, That the Selectmen of each town in this State, be, and they hereby are required and directed, to collect from the inhabitants of their towns respectively, or otherwise procure upon or before the first day of *October* next, the number of Shirts, pairs of Shoes and pairs of Stockings, set and affixed to their respective towns in the following schedule, the same being a number of each of those articles equal to one seventh part of the male inhabitants of such town, above the age of sixteen years, as returned into the Secretary's office, viz.

County of WORCESTER,

Worcester,	62	Shrewsbury,	56	Templeton,	34
Brookfield,	95	Harvard,	49	Winchendon,	17
Sutton,	88	Upton,	25	Ward,	18
Paxton,	17	Hardwick,	50	Lancaster,	96
Barre,	48	Douglafs,	28	Oxford,	28
Southborough,	26	Royalston,	16	Leicester,	30
Rutland,	37	Princeton,	22	Uxbridge,	39
Hubbardston,	19	Northbridge,	12	Bolton,	43
Westborough,	31	Mendon,	75	Leominster,	32
Lunenburg,	44	Charlton,	44	Western,	31
Dudley,	33	Spencer,	37	Petersham,	41
Sturbridge,	49	Oakham,	19	Athol,	27
Holden,	26	New-Braintree,	27	Ashburnham,	17
Grafton,	30	Northborough,	18	Fitchburgh,	24
Westminster,	36				

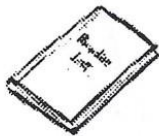
DUKES-COUNTY.

Edgarton,	37	Chilmark,	27	Tisbury,	37
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13

# Nathaniel Longley, Jr., Soldier & Surveyor; 738 Great Road

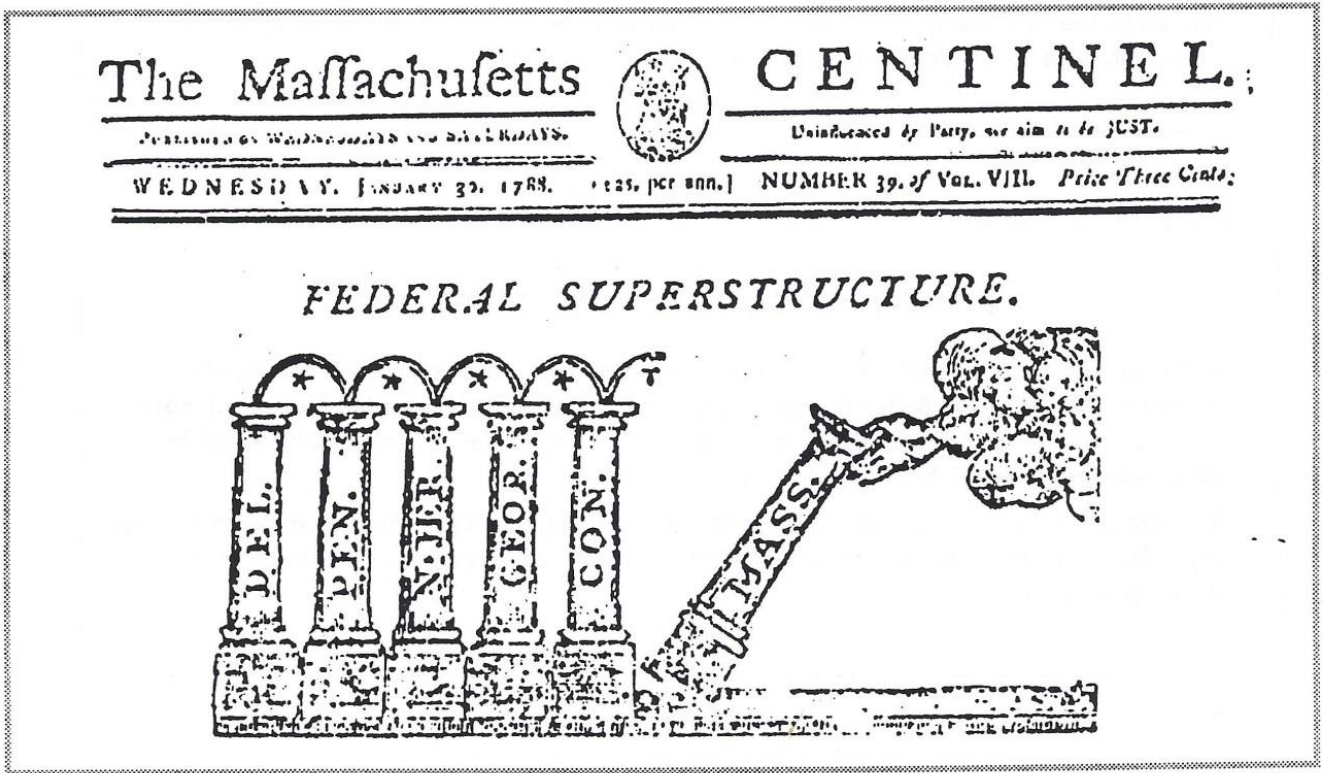


I suggested we meet here at the Library, because reading was one of my greatest pleasures. I suspect it started back in my school days. By the time I was going to school in Bolton, the folks had put up regular school houses around the village, so those of us who lived too far out to get to the first school house had a place closer to home. It's not that we read much that was exciting in school, or at least that's my opinion. But I did get bitten by the reading bug. What a wonderful thing, living in the Age of Enlightenment, to be able to travel in your mind to places you'll probably never see. Why sometimes I even make sketch maps of places I've just read about! And the wonders, to be informed of the latest politics, even in England, so quickly!

Of course, the price of books is very dear. Everybody has at least one Bible, but few of us can afford to have any other books. Things got a bit easier after the War, because we could print our own editions of books that had been copyrighted to the British. One of my prized possessions is my copy of *Paradise Lost*. That was what you would call a "Best-Seller" back in 1777. No matter how many times I re-read it, I never tire of it. Some folks think you should only read the Bible, especially on Sundays. But one of my favorite times was Sunday after supper. My first wife, Keziah, made me a hot rum in my special tankard, I'd settle back, and read aloud to the kids from *Paradise Lost*.

You have this whole building dedicated to the sharing out of books. But in my day, there weren't enough books in one place in Bolton to get anybody to even think of a special building (maybe excepting Reverend Goss' place, but lots of them were in Greek and Latin, and all of them were what you might call religious books). However, once things settled down a bit after the War, I got together with some other like minded gentlemen from Bolton and about, and we formed a society to purchase books for a lending library, with the books to be kept by Mr. Silas Holman.

We shared newspapers and broadsides, too. We'd pass them around, and post them in an Inn for others to see. What do you mean? Of course we had newspapers! We're a civil society! Why there's been a paper published right here in Massachusetts since 1704. In fact, I still subscribe to the *Boston News-Letter*; Ezekial fetches it when he takes his wagon into Boston. I also read the *Massachusetts Centinel* when he can get a copy. I even cut out this cartoon I liked and saved it. It's from the time after the War, when folks were working on the new Constitution; as you can see, five of the new states have already ratified the document, and the cartoon is a call for Massachusetts to do the same.





Abigail says I do go on about books and reading. She says she always figures to find me with my nose in a book. I think a love of books and reading helped to draw Abby and me together. After my wife Keziah died, the fond friendship that had existed between me and her widowed sister-in-law, Abby Fairbank just seemed to make marriage a natural consequence. To tell the truth, I do still miss Keziah's cooking. Keziah could make even the simplest boiled salt meat dinner taste like ambrosia, but I have learned to delight in Abby's company. I sometimes whisper these lines to her "With thee conversing I forget all time, all seasons and their change; all please alike."



### ✓ KEZIAH'S COLLY FLOWERS WITH BUTTER

Cook cauliflower in boiling water until tender. Drain and serve with a Butter Sauce made by:

1 1/2 Tbsp Butter 1 Tbsp Flour 1/4 Tsp. Salt & Pepper 1 Tbsp. Vinegar  
1 Slice Lemon, diced 1 C. Water Dash nutmeg

Cream together the butter, flour, salt, pepper and nutmeg. Cook over hot water until slightly thickened, then add the lemon. Add the cup of water slowly, and continue to cook, stirring often, until well mixed. Pour over cauliflower.

### ✓ KEZIAH'S BOILED MEAT POT

A current version of Keziah's boiled meat pot would be any of the very many contemporary recipes for New England Boiled Dinner. Keziah would have used plain salt beef (or pork), not the seasoned and treated "corned beef" we get from the supermarket. But the results would be similar to what we now call New England Boiled Dinner.

This one pot meal, with all its possible variations, depending upon the kind and amounts of meat, vegetables and seasonings, was the single most common meal throughout New England in Revolutionary times.



# 14

## Josiah Townsend, Soldier, Patriarch & Farmer First Meeting House Marker, near 720 Great Rd.



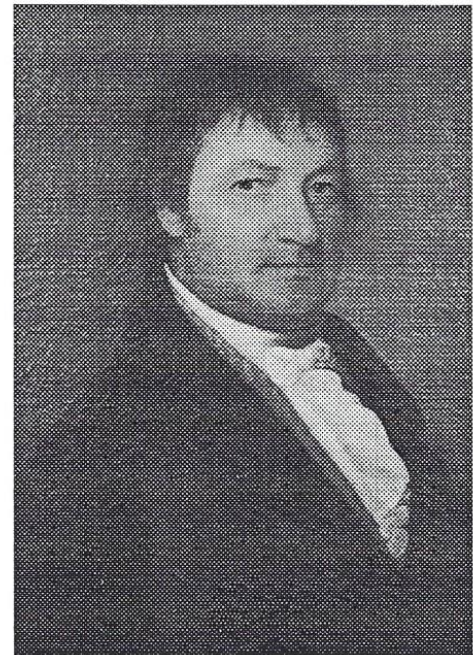
As you know, we were mostly farmers here in Bolton. And most of us were of English heritage. We tended to share the same religion, way of living, language, customs, habits, food and so on. We weren't as alike as peas in a pod, a fact you'll know if you've already met some of my neighbors. But we did tend to mostly share a common way of life. There were sometimes some pretty hot disagreements - you may not know that the Reverend Cotton Mather married me and my Elizabeth (that was in Boston) - now there was a disagreement of mighty proportions, all that going on and on about pro- and antipaedobaptists! We never got quite that fired up about religion here in Bolton, but we still managed some strong disagreements about things.

Most of Massachusetts was uncultivated at the time of the War of Independence, and except for the few cities and the villages scattered about, it was pretty much all forest. Anything that wasn't forest had been cleared by us. Most folks were self-sufficient to some degree, but out here in the country, we had to be pretty much self sufficient in everything to survive. Maybe that's why we didn't get so hot under the collar about a lot of things, it's not that we didn't care, we just didn't have time.

I'm not going to talk about everything we did, 'cause you'd get tired hearing about it and I'd get exhausted telling about it. I'll just tell you a bit. We cleared the land we needed for pasturing and crops, and built our houses and meeting places with the wood we cleared and milled ourselves, using the tools we made. We made our clothing, start to finish, growing the flax or raising the sheep and cows right through the dying and stitching. We produced our own food, by husbandry and hunting and fishing. We made our own entertainment and by and large doctored ourselves. But by the time of the War, we had done well enough that we usually had some left overs and that made for discretionary income. With that, we could indulge in a few luxuries and begin to have some leisure time, not much, but a beginning.

Why if we were standing here on the Great Road in my time, we just might see a number of wagons going by, in both directions. Wagons would be leaving Bolton, mostly going East to Boston and it's surrounding villages. Those wagons might be carrying some grains, or hay, butter and cheese. You might see some livestock being driven along the road, on to Market in Boston. If you looked into the wagons when they returned, you'd find sugar and tea, rum, spices, tobacco, bits of ceramic and pewter, sets of cutlery and crockery, even a few panes of glass and maybe even a chest of luxury items, like silk ribbon, a set of silver buckles and the like, and a sack with newspapers, books or broadsides.

There just wasn't much question about serving in the War of Independence when it actually happened. Sure there were some who disagreed, or weren't certain about the Rebellion, but they either left or served in spite of their doubts. Doubting doesn't mean you don't do your duty. And if you believed strongly in the King and Parliament's right to keep right on as they had been doing, why nobody stopped you from going over to the other side. During the eight years the Rebellion officially lasted, I believe that some 400 and more men served for Bolton. Aside from the elderly, the feeble-minded, objectors and such, why just about every able bodied man in Bolton served at some time or other. So it's not surprising that pretty much every family here in the 1770s had at least one man, often more, who served. In that sense, we Townsends weren't that different than our neighbors, we just happened to have a lot more men of the right age at the time. It's not complete, because I'm still working on it, but I drew up a kind of sketch of how many of us Townsends were in service and one time or another. With me, my sons and grandsons, I'm up to eight so far...

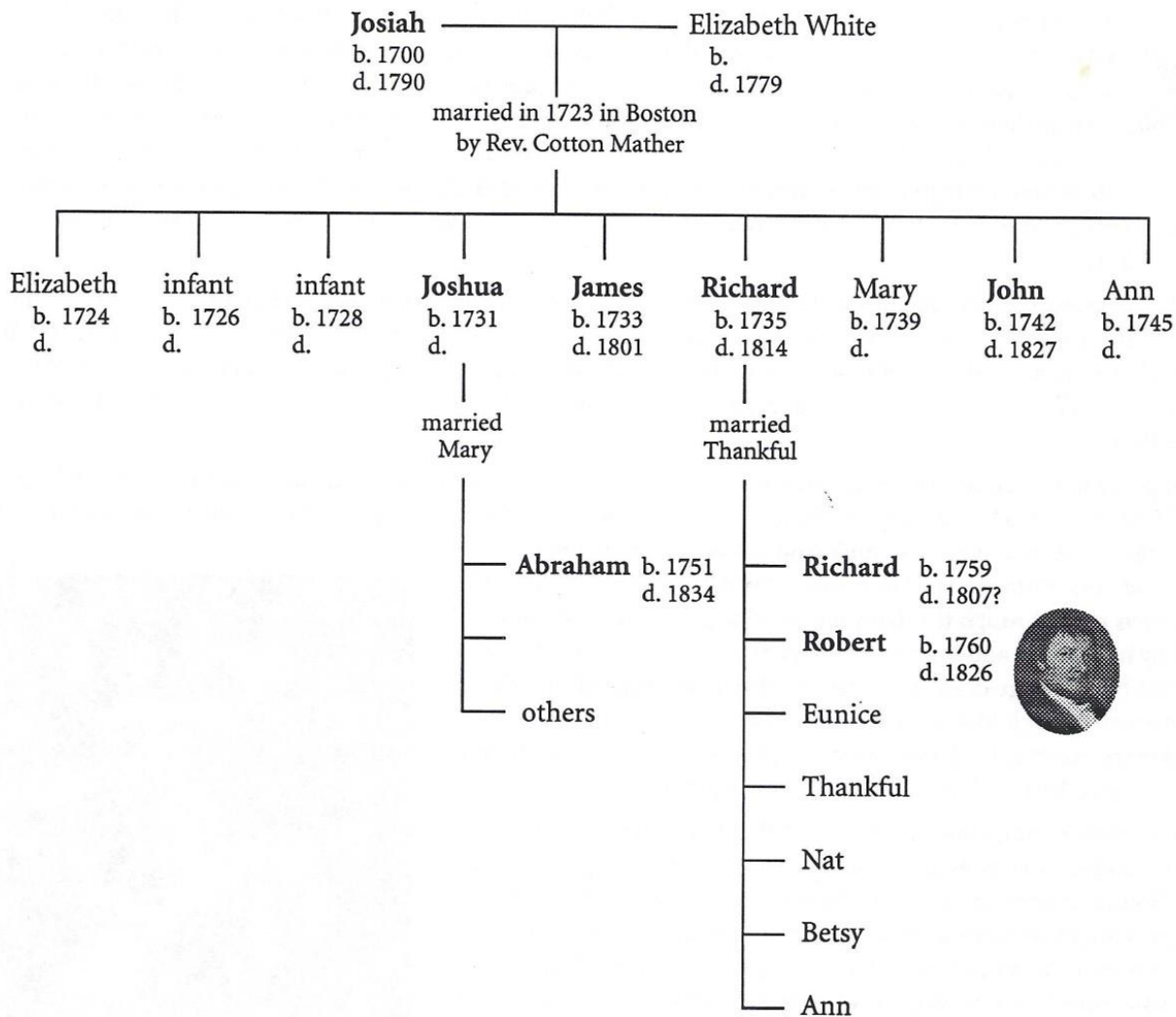


Robert Townsend



## TOWNSEND FAMILY TREE

Three generations of Townsends are known to have served  
in the American Revolution. (Boldfaced names)





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- [REVOLUTIONARY QUEST: A GAME IN SEARCH OF BOLTON PATRIOTS, Copyright May, 2000, Bolton Historical Society, Bolton, Massachusetts]



## HOW MUCH?

What did things cost in Bolton in the 1770s? It is difficult to put a precise value on goods and services in this era, but this table helps compare an item to the hours of work required of the average laborer to purchase that item.

Item	Hours of Labor	Item	Hours of Labor
1 pair of oxen	824 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	1 barrel of cider	12
7 pounds of wool	25	8 pounds of beef	6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Pocket watch	204 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	2 pounds of butter	4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
Pewter teapot	10 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	8 pounds of cheese	8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1 old frying pan	3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	1 dozen eggs	1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1 pound of sugar	2	4 bushels of butternuts	11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>5</sub>
1 nutmeg	1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	1 bushel of corn	12
1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> pound of tea	10	1 hoe and handle	13 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
1 shirt	24	Liquor license	634 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1 bushel of apples	3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	100 yards of cotton	248 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
50 pounds of nails	152 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	1 gallon of turpentine	7 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>