

NEWSLETTER JABEZ OLMSTED OF WARE



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our second newsletter. Many encouraging comments were received about Volume 1, Issue 1 and we hope you will find this and succeeding issues both informative and helpful as we share more information about Jabez and the events of his day as well as information on other descendants who are part of our large family of kinspeople. While Carl and a few other

contributing editors can keep the newsletter going we would encourage everyone to feel free to submit articles, queries, etc. and be part of the sharing process.

Joe Barber

JABEZ OLMSTED OF WARE

We continue the article taken from the "History of Ware, Massachusetts, 1911, by Arthur Chase. We will conclude in the next issue. I have interjected some notes of my own in the text, in brackets, signed COH.

page 47-following of Chase

Judging from the numerous traditions that have survived even to the present day, we may be sure that Jabez Olmstead was indeed a man of importance. He was probably born in Connecticut about 1690. He was a soldier in Queen Anne's war from Deerfield, Massachusetts, in 1709. In 1712 he married Thankful, daughter of Thomas Barnes of Brookfield. Eleven children were born, part in Brookfield, part in Ware. A second wife, Martha, he married in later life.

In 1736, seven years after his removal from Brookfield to Ware, we find a petition of Jabez Olmstead of Ware River praying for a grant of province land "in consideration for his good services in the late Wars against the French and Indians, and the Wounds he has received with the expense he has been at for the cure of them." It was ordered that 200 acres be granted him of the unappropriated lands, provided he returns a plot within twelve months for confirmation, and provided the petitioner, his heirs or assigns, " build on the premises within three years a house 18 feet square at the least, and 7 ft. stud, and break up or bring to English grass five acres, and fence the same." In 1738 Olmstead prays for further time, "as through some disappointments he has not been able to lay out the same within the time limited." It was ordered + "that the time be extended 12 months

from the present, and two years to fulfill the conditions of the grant." I (Chase) find no records to show that he ever located the grant.

In the Old French and Indian Wars (1744-49) Capt. Jabez Omstead was active, taking part in the expedition against Louisburg in 1745. He commanded the 10th Co. in Col. Samuel Willard's 4th Mass. Regiment. The fact that he held a commission disposes of the tradition that Jabez had Indian blood in his veins, none but white men holding commands in the Indian Wars,—at least on the British side.

That he was a "mighty hunter" is altogether probable, for much of his life was passed in the woods. It is doubtful whether he could read and write. He usually made his mark to legal documents, yet signatures purported to be his are in existence, and we know that commissioned officers ordinarily made reports under their own hand. [NOTE-The inventory of his estate lists books valued at 2 s. COH]

The following anecdote is preserved by Mr. Hyde—" On the return of the army to Boston from Louisburg, he was invited with the officers to dine with Governor Shirley. The pudding he found to be too hot; and taking it from his mouth, and laying it upon the side of his plate, he said he would keep it to light his pipe with." [NOTE - How many people can quote one of their ancestors of 250 years ago in ordinary conversation ?COH]

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(Continued on page 3)

THE DEERFIELD SCOUT

The GOFA (1912) describes briefly the "scout" which contains the first mention we have of Jabez. Following is the first part of this narrative, taken from Sheldon, George, "A History of Deerfield, Massachusetts: The Times When and the People by Whom it was Settled, Unsettled and Resettled; with a Special Study of the Indian Wars in the Connecticut Valley, with Genealogies", Deerfield, MA, 1895. pp 386-372. We will continue with this story in the next issue.

The following intensely interesting narrative, taken twenty years after the event from the lips of the survivors, by Ebenezer Grant, I (Sheldon) printed from the original in an appendix to the "Narrative of the Captivity of Stephen Williams," in 1889. The date given is an error. The scout left Deerfield about April 26th, 1709. Here we find a realistic, matter-of-fact description of one of those tragedies constantly occurring, when scouts from the opposing nations met under the primeval trees, or on the lone waters of the great northern wilderness. Nowhere have I met with a more enlightening account of the nature of this dangerous service. The reports of these desperate encounters are usually of the briefest; sometimes, it may be, none return to tell the bloody tale.

"CAPT. BENJAMIN WRIGHT'S SCOUT.

Rever^d Sir—After Due Regards these May Inform you what Lieut. Childs and Mr. Hoit related to me concerning the travails of Capt. Write & his Company towards Canada & w^h happened to them about that time it is as follows—

Capt Write & a Small Company of men designing for Canada to destroy y^e enemy, in y^e Beginning of April 1710 [1709], we then set out from Deerfield in Number Containing 16, and travailed up Connecticut River which is usually Called 120 Miles. There we discovered two Bark Canos, by reason of that our Capt was pleased to Leave 6 of his men to Ly in wait of y^e Canos Supposing Some Indians would Come there. And then the Capt, with y^e Lev^t & y^e rest of y^e men set forward up y^e White River taking y^e Nor west Branch, following it up to the Head then we Steared to French river & travailing down s^d River till we Came to y^e 3^d Falls & yr^t we built two Canoes & then set out for the Lake & when we came there the wind was so high y^t we were forced to lye by a Day or two. After that one Evening we espied a fire y^e opposite Side. Supposing it to be indian we then forthwith Im bark & Steared our Course towards the fire and while we was upon y^e water, there arose a terrible Storm of thunder & Lightning which put out the fire y^t we before espied & thro' Gods Goodness we all got safe to land & Drawing up our Canos upon y^e Land turned them up for Shelter till next morning & then we making search for the fire that we afore espied & found it had only been y^e woods on fire. After that we set out for Canada in our Canoes on y^e west side of the lake till two hours by sun at night & then the wind arose again which forced us to Lye by till next day in y^e afternoon & then we set out for Shamble & coming to a point of land near Fortlemote, we espied 2 Canos of Indians in number 8 coming towards us then we paddled to Land & running up y^e Bank, by this time those indian Canos was got against us, & then we gave them a Salutation out of the mussel of our guns turned one over-board & we still continued firing caused y^e to Paddle away wth all Speed & left y^e fellow Swimming about & when they had get out of y^e reach of our guns both Canos got together, and all got into one, &

left y^e other wth Considerable plunder in it, & when they was moved off we maned out one of our Canoes and fetched in theirs. And he that was Swimming about we Called to Shore to us, And Lev^t Childs killed him & some of y^e men scalped him. And by information that we had afterward by the Captives, y^t were then in Canada three were killed at the Same Time. And after that Skirmish, we made the best of our way homeward, & Came to y^e French River after Dark, and so proceeded all that night up y^e French River till we Come to the Falls, and there we left our Canos and took our Packs upon our Backs and travailed homewards up y^e River, and coming to a Crook that was in the river; we Left y^e river & took y^e nearest Cutt acrost y^e Elbow and so come to ye river again, which was about nine of ye clock that morning, & there we espied a Canoa coming down y^e river with four Indians in it and a Captive-man, which was taken at Exeter, named William Moody. We Immediately fired on them and killed 2 the first shoot & wounded y^e 3^d & y^e 4th Jumped out & Swam to y^e Contrary Shore, then our Capt ordered some of his men to tarry there & fire at him when he got to Shore, and they did So, & afterwards we was Informed y^t he was so wounded, that in a few days after he got to Canada, died. Now the rest of the men followed y^e Canoa as it fell Down Stream, and the Capt Called to the Captive to paddle y^e Canoe to Land, but he replied he could not because the wounded Indian would not Let him, with that the Capt hollowed to him & bid him knock in him in y^e head, with that he took up a hatchet to Do it but y^e Indian rising up took hold of y^e hatchet & got it away from him and then caught up the Paddle & Laid it on his head & they skuffling together turned over the Canoe and parted in the water, & the Indian Swam to the Contrary Shore. As he got out of the water we pined him to the Bank with seven Bullets. The Captive also Swimming towards us, but being very weak fell down a great pace & Cried out he should Drown before he Could get to Shore, with that Lieut Wells flung down his gun upon y^e Bank & run Down & Caught up a pool & held out to him & he caught hold of it & y^e Lieut. drew him to Land. And John Strong being upon the Bank heard y^e sticks Crack behind him & Looked round & cried out Indians & was Immediately fired upon by them & was wounded in the face & breast with a Charge of Cutt Shoot, but not mortal. With that Lieut Wells sprung up the Bank to get his gun & was mortally shot. Now the men being scattered along upon the Bank but the Capt being with y^e captive y^t came to y^e shore Immediately examined him how many Indians there was, he made answer 19 being in 5 Canos 2 being down stream from that which we shot upon, And 2 above, having been at Exeter took 4 captives (men), which they there had with them and those 2 canos y^t was passed by was y^t Indians y^t made y^e first shoot upon us.

(Continued next issue.)

Answer to Quiz

According to Louis E. Roy, "History of East Brookfield, Massachusetts 1686-1970", p. 324, Thomas Barnes died on April 23, 1734, after being gored by a bull.

Jabez OLMSTED OF WARE *continued*

(Continued from page 1)

In 1742, Jeremiah and Israel Olmsted were signers of a petition to Gov. Shirley.

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On the settlement of a minister - In 1745, a committee was appointed, consisting of Jabez Olmsted and William Blackman to discuss with Mr. Read, Esq. to see what incoredgements he will grant toward the settlement of the gospel in this place, and give his advice where the meeting house should be.

Capt. Olmsted went to Boston at the expense of the Parish, and Mr. Read recommended a location. Nor was he backward in the matter of "incoredgements", for Jabez Olmsted and others were deeded, as trustees, the most eligible portion of the tract for the church support.

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THE COLONIAL WARS AND THE REVOLUTION

FRENCH AND INDIAN WARS

The Town Records contain no references whatever to the French and Indian Wars. Information concerning the part in those contests taken by our early inhabitants is laboriously culled from Muster-Rolls and other papers preserved in the Mass. Archives. Such incomplete information as those ancient papers might give is difficult to get at, for they are indexed only by the names of the men that appear upon them, not by the towns from which the men came.

The French and Indian Wars extended altogether from 1689-1763, though with several intervals of peace. They were simply the American side of a hundred years' struggle for supremacy between the English and the French nations. The first two wars were fought before any white man had made his home between the Ware and Swift Rivers; but they were fearfully disastrous to our neighbors. Brookfield was wiped out in 1693. [NOTE - Roy says this was in 1675. COH] Deerfield was destroyed in 1704. Scarcely a town in the Connecticut Valley escaped pillage, burning and murder at the hands of the savage allies of the French. The third war, commonly referred to as "The Old French and Indian War" lasted from 1744-49, breaking out after a long interval of peace. During that period Ware was a Parish and Precinct, and was of little importance either socially or politically. It does not appear to have been called upon to furnish men for the army. But Jabez Omstead took part in the famous expedition against Louisburg on Cape Briton Island at the mouth of the St. Lawrence, which Sir William Peppered of Maine, with a force of a few thousand Yankee farmers and fishermen, set out to capture. The siege lasted 49 days, and the fort capitulated June 17, 1745. Jabez Omstead had been connected with the militia from the time he could carry a gun, and in the Louisburg expedition he had the rank of Captain, commanding the 10th Co. in Col. Samuel Willard's 4th Mass. regiment. His residence is given as Brookfield on the Muster Roll, indicating that, though he had lived for fifteen years in Ware River, his military relations were still with his former home.

No Precinct Meeting is recorded for the spring of 1745, the first one for the year being called for July 6. This was held at Capt. Jabez Omstead's house, and his bill for boarding ministers was allowed.

The fourth and last of these struggles 1754-63 was by far the greatest, and from its importance is often known as "The French and Indian War." It was to decide a question of supreme importance, namely, whether the English or the French should control the American Continent. The fighting line extended from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi River, through the great valleys of the Mississippi, the Ohio and the Hudson, along the shores of Lake Champlain, and even down the Connecticut Valley as far as Greenfield. This war involved the whole of the American Colonies, and in it George Washington won his spurs.

Hampshire County was thrown into a ferment by numerous attacks upon its outposts at Dutch Hoosac (now within New York), at Stockbridge, Pittsfield and Lenox. The frontier towns of New Hampshire suffered greatly, the enemy appearing as far south as the Massachusetts line. Col. Israel Williams of Hatfield commanded the regiment from Hampshire County, to which Ware River sent a Company of 39 men. The Muster Roll may be seen in the Mass. Archives. (Vol. 95, p. 542)

"A Muster Roll of Capt. Jacob Cummins' Company for Col. Israel Williams Ridgement that went to ye relief of Fort William Henry when Besieged by the Enemy in Aug. 1757—Marched from Ware River so called. Jacob Commins, Capt."

(A list of 38 names and ranks are then listed. Israel Olmsted, Sergt. is third on the list.)

Ware River Parish, Jany. 5th, 1758.
Errors Excepted

Jacob Cummings.

The roll was sworn to by the Captain before a Justice of the Peace of Worcester County on the date subscribed, Jan. 5, 1758.

The expedition was not a long one, the length of time for the greater part of the men being 15 days. The Company marched to Kenderhook, with the following exceptions: Moses Smith and Benj. Bartlett to Sheffield, Jonathan Olds to Greenwood, Judah Marsh to Blanford, Jotham Lyman, Francis Lull and John Lull to Westfield. The total pay-roll of the expedition footed £75,,2,,11.

Another old paper in the Archives is this: "1757, August 6. The following to an account of men victualled by Luke Bliss at the cost of the province, they being sent to the Relief of Fort William Henry when besieged."

A long list of men follows from Ware River and neighboring places, each charged with one meal. The paper has no further interest for us—unless for the extraordinary spelling of the names of the men.

Further information concerning those who bore a part in this war is fragmentary and incomplete, but it is clear that our townsmen bore their full share of the toils of the war.

Muster Roll dated 1756. Names of those who have served within two years last past: (include)

Moses Omstead

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

Jabez Omstead

These and others are in Capt. Ingersoll's Company, and are taken from a list of the persons in the South Regiment in County of Hampshire under command of Col. Wm. Worthington, that have been employed in His Majesty's service within two years last past according to the return of the several captains.

A Muster-Roll of a Company of Foot in His Majesty's Service under the Command of Captain Andrew Dalrymple of Petersham in a Regiment raised by the Province of the Mass-

-achusetts Bay, for the Reduction of Canada, whereof Jedidiah Preble Esq. is Colonel.

Expedition from March 30 to Nov. 30. Among the names are the following, given as from Ware River:

Daniel Knowlton, Ensign, at £3.,10 per month. Term of service 8 mo. 16 days.

Moses Omstead, Private,

For 7 most. 19 da. @ £ 1.,16 per mo.

A Return of men enlisted for His Majesty's Service for Total Reduction of Canada, 1760.

Endorsed as Ensign Tailor's return.

In the list is the name of Simeon Omstead, aged 18 years. Born at Wair River, though his residence is given as Dorchester, Canada.

QUIZ

One of the features of our newsletter is a quiz, to test your knowledge of the Olmsted Family. The answer to the quiz is elsewhere in the newsletter. Contributions for future quizzes are welcome. Answers should be documented.

Quiz:

What was the cause of death of Thomas Barnes, Jabez's father-in-law?

VITAL RECORDS OF WARE

We continue with the selected portions of the Vital Records of Ware, copied from the Cobin Collection. We will show in this issue only MARSH births. (Deaths of some of the young children are also shown.) The numbers refers to the number of the individual in the GOFA, and were assigned by the editor [COH]. We ask readers to review the assignments. Given names in the first column are as spelled in the VR. We will present only the families of Judah MARSH and Hannah OLMSTED (9073) and of Ephraim MARSH and Sarah OLMSTED (9076). Thomas MARSH and Mary TURNBULL had eight other children. Mary TURNBULL was b. 3/24/1681/2, in Suffield, CT, d. of Judah TURNBULL and Marg. She d. at Ware, 6/23/1765. Judah removed from Rauley to Suffield in 1676.

Surname MARSH

Aaron		d. of Judah (9116) & Elizabeth	b. 5/13/1785
Abigail	9187	d. of Thomas (9110) & Lois	b. 6/6/1781
Abigail Perkins		d. of Jacob (9196) and Abigail	b. 9/15/1807
Betsey		d. of Judah (9116) & Elizabeth	b. 9/21/1781
Benjamin Howard		s. of Jacob (9196) and Abigail	b. 2/1/1813
Daniel C.		s. of Zenas (9197) and Fanny, at Hardwick	b. 12/15/1827
Delphia	9200	d. of Joel (9117) & Annis	b. 6/12/1790
Dorcas		d. of Jacob (9196) and Abigail (Corrected 4/10)	b. 2/10/1811
Dorothy	9114	d. of Judah & Hannah (9073)	b. 5/29/1750
Dwight	9201	d. of Joel (9117) & Annis	b. 8/19/1793
Elia C.		s. of Zenas (9197) and Fanny (Corrected 4/10)	b. 5/24/1829
Elijah	9180	s. of Thomas (9110) & Mary	bap. 4/30/1769 b. 3/7/1769
Elijah	9108	s. of Judah & Hannah (9073)	b. 1/1/1737
Elisha	9122	s. of Ephram & Sarrah (9076)	b. 12/19/1743
Ephraim,		s. of Thomas & Mary TURNBULL, in Hatfield, h. of Sarah OLMSTED (9076)	b. 1/3/1717
Ephraim	9182	s. of Thomas (9110) & Mary	bap. 5/26/1771 b. 3/19/1771
Eunice	9192	d. of Jonathon (9115)& Anna	bap. 9/25/1796 b. 6/8/1786
Fany Ann		d. of Zenas (9197) and Fanny	b. 4/22/1834

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

Foster	9195	s. of Jonathon (9115) & Anna	bap. 9/25/1796	b. 8/25/1788
Gamaliel		s. of Judah (9116) & Elizabeth		b. 1802
Gamaliel		s. of Zenas (9197) and Fanny		b. 9/5/1820
George H.		s. of Zenas (9197) and Fanny		b. 9/5/1831
George Sullivan		s. of James S. (9198) & Sarah		b. 7/23/842
Goerge Watson		s. of Gamaliel & Laura, at Springfield		b. 6/18/1843
Hannah	9112	d. of Judah & Hannah (9073)		b. 3/13/1746
Hannah		d. of Judah (9116) & Elizabeth	d. 10/31/1793 also 1/1	b. 8/27/1790
Hannah		d. of Judah (9116) & Jerusha		b. 4/1/1803
Hulda	9123	d. of Ephram & Sarrah (9076)	bap. 9/14/1746	
infant		d. of Jonathon (9115) & Anna	d. 9/23/1780	b. 9/22/1780
infant		child of Jonathon (9115) & Anna	d. 7/9/101	b. 4/30/1791
Jacob	9196	s. of Jonathon (9115) & Anna	bap. 9/25/1796	b. 12/24/1778
James Sullivan		d. of Judah (9116) & Jerusha		b. 5/1/1807
John P.		s. of Jacob (9196) and Abigail		b. 5/27/1805
Joel	9109	s. of Judah & Hannah (9073)	Died young	b. 3/31/1738
Joel	9117	s. of Judah & Hannah (9073)	bap. 7/29/1759	b. 7/29/1759
Jonathon	9115	s. of Judah & Hannah (9073)		b. 4/26/1752
Jonathon	9191	s. of Jonathon (9115) & Anna	bap. 9/25/1796	b. 10/24/1781
Judah		s. of Thomas & Mary TURNBULL, h. of Hannah OLMSTED (9073), at Hatfield		b. 7/25/1712
Judah	9116	s. of Judah & Hannah (9073)	bap. 7/29/1759	b. 5/22/1757
Judah		d. of Judah (9116) & Elizabeth		b. 8/4/1783
Lois	9186	d. of Thomas (9110) & Lois	bap. 8/1779	b. 6/24/1779
Lydia	9184	d. of Thomas (9110) & Mary	bap. 1/29/7	b. 3/10/1775
Lucy		d. of wid. Elizabeth (& Elijah 9180)	bap. 11/10/1765	
Mary	9125	d. of Ephram & Sarrah (9076)	Died young	bap. 10/5/1755
Mary	9126	d. of Ephiam & Sarrah (9076)	bap. 7/3/1759 also 7/8	
Mary		d. of Elijah (9108)	bap. 7/4/1762	
Mary	9183	d. of Thomas (9110) & Mary		b. 37/1773
Meriam (William)	9127	s. of Ephram & Sarrah (9076)	bap. 7/81759	
Molly (Mary)	9183	d. of Thomas (9110) & Mary	bap. 5/2/1773	
Moses		s. of Judah (9116) & Elizabeth	d. 5/27/1791	b. 4/27/1788
Nabbe (Abigail)	9187	d. of Thomas (9110) & Lois	bap. 9/16/1781	
Noah	9121	s. of Ephram & Sarrah (9076)		b. 2/2/1741/2
Patty		d. of Judah (9116) & Elizabeth	d. 6/28/1796	b. 6/27/1795
Phila	9199	d. of Joel (9117) & Annis		b. 2/17/1788
Pliny C.		s. of Zenas (9197) and Fanny		b. 3/8/1824
Polly		d. of Judah (9116) & Elizabeth	d. 2/27/1800	b. 10/15/1798
Prude (Prudence)	9185	d. of Thomas (9110) & Mary	bap. 6/1/1777	b. 2/19/1777
Rachel (Roxane)	9189	d. of Thomas (9110) & Lois	bap. 4/18/1788	b. 10/10/1786
Rachel	9111	d. of Judah & Hannah (9073)		b. 7/20/1743
Rachel		d. of Judah (9116) & Jerusla		b. 10/30/1804
Sarah	9124	d. of Ephram & Sarrah (9076)	bap. 4/28/1751	
Samuel Clifford		s. of Zenas (9197) and Fanny		b. 11/26/1816
Sarah	9181	d. of Thomas (9110) & Mary	bap. 5/1/1768 , 5/15	b. 4/22/1767
Sewel	9193	s. of Jonathon (9115) & Anna	bap. 9/25/1796	b. 5/24/1784
Silas		s. of Elijah (9108) & Elizabeth	bap. 3/20/1763	
Sopha	9194	d. of Jonathon (9115) & Anna	bap. 9/25/1796	b. 5/30/1794
Thankful	9113	d. of Judah & Hannah (9073)		b. 8/9/1748
Thomas		s. of Judah & Ephrain, b. in Hatfield, s. of Samuel and Mary ALLISON		b. 1/10/1679
Thomas	9188	s. of Thomas (9110) & Lois	bap. 11/30/1783	b. 10/24/1784
Thomas	9110	s. of Judah & Hannah (9073)		b. 8/14/1741
Thayer	9190	s. of Thomas (9110) & Lois	bap. 8/14/1790	b. 1/24/1791
William C.		s. of Zenas (9197) and Fanny		b. 10/10/1822
Wyatt C.		s. of Zenas (9197) and Fanny		b. 2/5/1826
Zenas	9197	d. of Judah (9116) & Elizabeth		b. 6/4/1793
Zenas		s. of Zenas (9197) and Fanny		b. 2/10/1818

Doreen Dolleman's Research

Thanks for the encouraging words that so many of you expressed over looking forward to reading my future articles! Although I feel as if I've written zillions of letters to my genealogy pals through the years, this is my first attempt at writing something which needs to be well-put-together. Hopefully you folks will be patient with me.

I'm excited to share the story of our very first trip to Berkshire County, Mass which was in 1994. My husband, Bill, and I arrived too late in the day for town offices or courthouses to be open, so we spent the evening at the public library in Pittsfield which has an excellent local history/genealogy department. After several experiences of wasting valuable time in an unfamiliar library trying to "help myself," I have finally learned to go directly to the librarian and explain that I'm from out of town and need help. This was my approach in Pittsfield and within minutes of waling through the front door the genealogy librarian was explaining the "Shepard Collection" to me and immediately pulled out a card with a reference to the marriage of Jabez Omstead to Miriam Husse on July 11, 1758 in Sheffield. You can imagine my utter amazement! How was it possible to make such a profound discovery so quickly and effortlessly? If it was this easy then why had other Olmstead researchers not discovered it before me? My mind as usual was spinning with endless puzzling questions. The librarian explained that although the Sheffield vital records were copied in 1932 by Joseph Kellogg, they were never published. Even our own Seattle library has a huge collection of published Massachusetts town vital records, but you won't find Sheffield among them. This may explain why this extremely significant piece of Olmstead information was overlooked for so long.

The Olmsted "Red Book" reference to the wife of Jabez (9088) being an Elizabeth has always bothered me because I've never been able to find even one single document or record of any kind to confirm that he had a wife by this name. What evidence did the person who originally submitted this detail back in 1912 have that I couldn't find? Folks, this is why it is so important in your research to never accept at face value information that can not be backed up with recorded proof. Unrecorded information should only be considered a good clue which might possible lead to the truth. Many people have traveled down a wrong trail for years only to discover later that an entire line from which they assumed they were descended was not even their own. Don't ever accept the "Red Book" as gospel! It is a great starting place for ideas, but do your own research and find those records!

Now it's time to get off my soapbox and back to our trip! I also found at the Pittsfield Library the 1774 Stockbridge tax evaluation list with Jabez (9088) listed. Another interesting find was the reference to a different Jabez Olmstead (Conn. born, s/o Samuel & Esther Roberts) in "The Kelloggs of the New World." His family was also in Berkshire Co. And he married Elizabeth Kellogg (d/o Benjamin & Phoebe Stark of Austerlitz, NY). This couple eventually settled in Sidney, Delaware County, NY, and possibly were the source of confusion about the Jabez O. with a wife named Elizabeth in our Capt. Jabez line.

The following day we visited the Sheffield Town Clerk, a wonderful lady who is an expert on local history. We learned so

much from her. Although the old volumes of records are not available to the public because of their fragile condition, she agreed to open Volume 1 herself and let us see, but not touch, the two Olmstead entries which were:

Jabez Omstead and Miriam Husse (or Hulse) married July 11, 1758,

Isaac Richardson and Elizabeth (A) Omsted married Oct 26, 1759.

(Both children of Jeremiah Olmstead and Elizabeth Litten).

We also visited the Alford town clerk and had an entirely different experience. This person was new on the job, not a native, and had no interest in local history or concern about the care of old records. We were went, unsupervised, to a hot and dusty closet-sized room and allowed to handle the original town books and records dating back to the 1700's! In Vol. 1 of the Alford record book we did find Jeremiah and Jabez Olmstead's names repeatedly from 1773 through the final appearance of Jabez in 1783 and Jeremiah in 1785, elected to such positions as Hogg Reave & Constable, Fence Viewer, Surveyor of Highway, and Sabbath Warden. We also came across a wonderful old 1700's map of Alford and surrounding area, recently unearthed by a fellow in the highway surveying dept. We were able to get a copy which shows the original Capt. Jabez grant as well as Jeremiah's land in "The Gore".

In Great Barrington while I spent time at the library scouring the information in their local history room, Bill went across the street to the courthouse and returned with copies of all the Olmstead land deeds and surveys. He was so proud of his accomplishment and so was I!

Our second trip to the Berkshires and more exciting discoveries will continue in the next newsletter. So until then, happy ancestor hunting

(Continued from page 9)

person as one Islein, found on the Proprietors' Map next to the property of the Omsteads (or Almsteads) in the Gore. This is where the Silver Birch Camp (now Kingsmont) was later located and before that the family of Easland. The spelling of the name Islein as it appears on the Proprietors' Map also appears in a deed of 1766 of Jedidiah Omstead of John G. Jaquins in describing his land in the Gore.....

John Easland (Islein) was soon joined by many other settlers. Proprietors' meetings were held, consisting of both Indians and white settlers, in which all voted together, and granted surveyed land tracts.....

The entire town was surveyed with the exception of the Gore as much land there was already settled or in dispute.

West Stockbridge and The Gore

Jabez's son, Jeremiah, and his grandson, Jabez, along with others of his family, removed from Ware sometimes about the time of Jabez's death, first probably to West Stockbridge, and later removed even further west in Massachusetts, to the disputed land called The Gore. In the last issue, we printed excerpts of the deeds and land records by which Jeremiah obtained these lands. Here we print excerpts from "West Stockbridge, Massachusetts 1774-1974", by Garnett, which provide some of the background of the settlement of the area. We are indebted to Doreen Dolleman for presenting us with this material, as well as the plat of Alfred that follows on the next page.

WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS OPENED TO SETTLERS

West Stockbridge had its earliest beginning long before its incorporation in 1774. The groundwork was laid fifty years earlier with the opening up of Western Massachusetts in 1722. That winter on January 30th, one hundred and seventy-six inhabitants of Hampshire County, Massachusetts petitioned the General Court of Mass. Bay Colony for two townships in the valley of the Housatonic. The petitioners were granted the two townships, each seven miles square. This land, located on the Housatonic river became known as "Upper and Lower Housatonic" townships. Two months later, fifty-five settlers received grants and proceeded to purchase the land of the Indians.

This Indian land purchase was necessary because in Western Massachusetts, as in all of New England, the English Crown made these land grants with total disregard for the land rights and needs of the native Indians. To the Crown, discovery meant the right to possess. They did not concern themselves with the manner of acquisition. Consequently, each colony developed its own rules and regulations to govern the securing of Indian land titles.....

These two Housatonic townships were governed by the advice of the Massachusetts Bay Colony: "If any of the savages pretend right of inheritance to all or any part of the lands granted in our patent, we pray you endeavor to purchase their title, that we may avoid the least scruple of intrusion." However, the colony recognized as Indian land only that under cultivation. This was quite limited, as the Indian farmed to eat, rather than to sell his produce.

Negotiations with these families was begun, resulting in a deed extinguishing Indian title to these lands on April 25th, 1724, signed by Chief Konkapot and twenty other Indians. Jehoiakim Van Valkenburgh assisted in this transaction, as an interpreter of Chief Konkapot. He was one of several Dutch traders in the area who were there without documentary right.

The area bought covered the present (1973) towns of Sheffield, Egremont, Mount Washington, Great Barrington, Alfred, part of Lee, and the southern parts of both Stockbridge and West Stockbridge.....

The English settlers paid the Indians 460 pounds, three barrels of cider, and thirty quarts of rum for these lands. This was said to be the largest sum ever paid to the Indians for their lands!.....

The Gore

Simultaneously with the settling of the English in Western Massachusetts, another problem was developing. The land to the west was also being settled. The New York Colony had made a grant to certain Dutchmen of New York for the same lands that the Massachusetts Bay Colony granted to the English, known as the "Patent of Westenhook", (the N.Y. Colony's name for the Housatonic River). The petition for the patent was dated July 11, 1705 with its claim based upon deeds given by Indians in 1685, 1703 and 1704. The Dutch claimed the territory as far east as the Housatonic River.

The New York Colony had originally claimed territory as far east as the Connecticut River but as she failed to push her settlements east of the Taconic Range of mountains she lost any claim that far east.

The Charter of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, on the other hand, claimed all land westward to the Pacific Ocean. While the attainment of this was quite impossible, the fact that the Massachusetts settlers had already settled in Sheffield, Great Barrington and Stockbridge, made it seem quite possible that more townships could be laid out still further west, and the state line established at a point 12 miles east of the Hudson River. However, the land between the Housatonic and the Hudson Rivers was in dispute for nearly a hundred years. The Massachusetts Governor forbade any further settlement in this uncertain territory called "The Gore".....

The earliest recorded deed for West Stockbridge land, settled upon by whites, was for a certain tract of land lying between the west boundary of Stockbridge (now West Stockbridge) and the east line of a township called Spencertown (now Austerlitz). This land was located in "The Gore", the uncertain land between Massachusetts and the New York Colony.

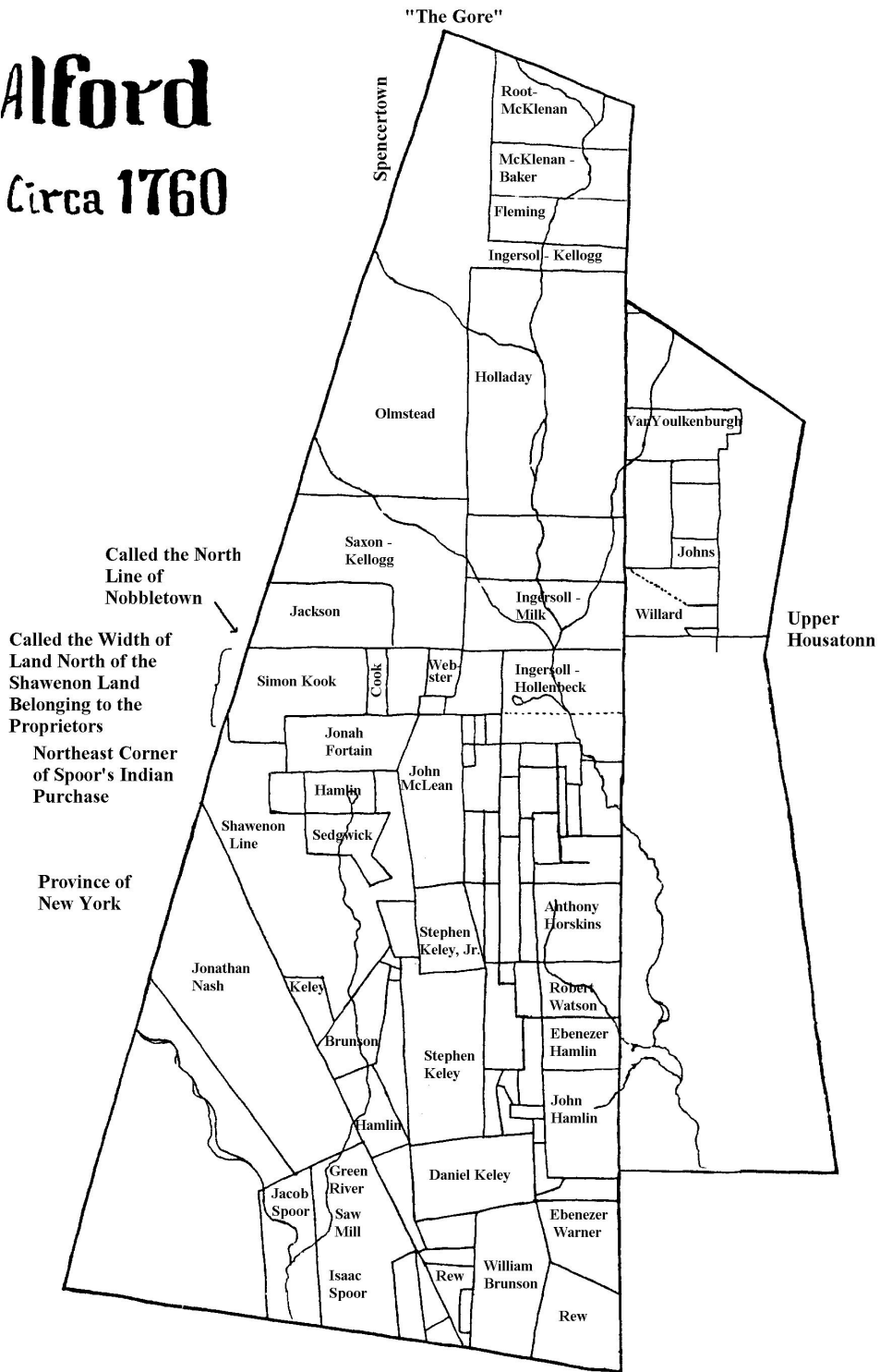
The deed was given by two Indian claimers and owners, John Pophnehonnukwok and Jehoiakim Yokum of Stockbridge to "several persons having entered on said tract of land and made improvements and got into possession of part of the premises, and several other persons are desirous to make improvements thereon, viz. Jeremiah Omstead, Joseph Fleming, Jabez Omstead, William Virgin, John Saxton, John Burgat which have already made settlements, and Jonah Westover, Abraham Andrus, Joseph Hunt, Peter Ingersoll and John Mills of Ghent". The land was described as "bounding South on the land called the Shauwaunan Purchase in part, and partly on land purchased by David Ingersoll and to extend as far as the township of Stockbridge." The deed goes on to demand that the above-named persons "settled and settling on said tract of land either forbear and remove or make satisfaction." They made satisfaction by payment of 60 pounds, New York Currency.....

Early Settlers In The Gore And State Line

(Continued on page 9)

Alford

Circa 1760



(Continued from page 7)

Until the early part of the 18th century, Queensboro (now West Stockbridge) remained a wilderness occupied only by Indians and a few Dutch traders. The only access to this area was on trails or paths through formidable mountain wilderness created by Indian runners when bringing furs to the fur traders at Albany or Hudson.....

The first white settler in West Stockbridge was John George Easland.
.....

All indications point to this John George Easland as being the same
(Continued on page 6)

QUERY

After the first issue, I received the following query from Lynne (Mrs. Thomas, Jr.) Keasling, 870 Yankee Way SW, Corydon, IN 47112-5317:

My ancestor, Nathan Hamilton, son of Joseph and Sarah Woodham, born 1739 in Brookfield, MA, married an Abigail Olmsted, 1 Jan 1771 in Brookfield. She was Nathan's second wife and their children were: Nathan Jr.; Abigail (called Nabby); Thurza; Esther; Simeon; Dorothy; Tilley (a male-my ancestor) and Serepta. Nathan Jr. died in 1819 and my ancestor Tilley made a claim for his father's Revolutionary War Pension. In that, he said that his mother, Abigail, died in 1838 in the Poor House in Brookfield. Tilley was living in New York at this time.

What I would like to know is whose daughter Abigail was- Jeremiah (?) who is listed in the Olmsted Family Genealogy as having a daughter Abigail born ca 1740 to 1749. She would seem to fit as she had children from 1774 to 1790.

I would like to know more about her family and will gladly share any information that I have. The Hamilton family later moved to Wisconsin.

I cannot find an Abigail Olmsted born between 1740 and 1749. There is an Abigail (9093), listed in OFA as the daughter of Jeremiah (9071) and Elizabeth Litten, but born March 24, 1731. This Abigail (9093) is listed in the OFA as being married to Nathan Hamilton, and the names of the children stated by Mrs. Keasling are as listed in the OFA. The marriage date is as in the OFA and in the Brookfield Records (BVR). All the children's births are listed in the BVR.

However, there is no record that Jeremiah and Elizabeth had a daughter named Abigail. First, neither the BVR or Ware Vital Records (WVR) mention her. Second, in the listing of Jeremiah's and Elizabeth's children in OFA, Abigail is out of chronological order. She is listed as the sixth child, but she was born first (1731). The OFA lists Jabez (9088) as born first in 1735 and his birth date is confirmed in both BVR and WVR. Finally, I know the marriage date (1734) of Jeremiah and Elizabeth is correct, because I copied the original handwritten record of their marriage, in the Brookfield Town Hall.

Abigail's birth date, 1731, three years before the marriage of her parents (1734), would have not gone unnoticed then in a New England town, such as Brookfield. Indeed, Roy, in "History of East Brookfield" relates that in 1695, William Barnes (brother of Thankful Barnes, wife of Jabez) was the subject of a court settlement in Brookfield for

fathering an illegitimate child on Captivity Jennings, and was fined 2s 3p per week for child "maintenance".

There are additional problems. If Abigail was born in 1731, then she was 43 years old when her first child, Nathan, was born in 1774, and 59 when the last (eighth) child, Sarepta, was born in 1790. This is unlikely. And Mrs. Keasling has documentation that Abigail died in 1838, when she would have been age 107. This too is unlikely. The death date is also recorded in the BVR as 1833 or 1838 (dual date means the last digit was illegible).

This is complicated by the record of another Abigail Olmsted (9078), d. of Jabez and Thankful Barnes, born March 24, 1731. She is listed in the OFA, and is in both the BVR and WVR. BUT THAT'S THE SAME BIRTH DATE AS THE OTHER ONE! Could father and son both have had daughters born on the same day, and given the same first name? But even if the Abigail that married Hamilton was the daughter of Jabez, and not of Jeremiah, that still leaves a woman having a first child at age 43, and continuing to have seven more, until age 59. And then dying at age 107.

Another kicker. Temple, in "History of North Brookfield", says that Abigail Olmsted, daughter of Jabez Olmsted, married Nathan Hamilton in 1771. This would mean that she was married twice, first to Benoni Smith (before 1752), and then to Hamilton. But the BVR show a marriage of Abigail Olmsted, not Abigail Smith, in 1771. Would the Vital Records list a marriage under the widow's maiden name? No, it would read Abigail Smith, wid, for "widow", in such a case.

So we have a mystery. Who was the Abigail Olmsted who married Nathan Hamilton?

I can think of four possible answers:

Jeremiah and Elizabeth had an unrecorded daughter, born about 1745, in the four year gap between Martha (1743) and Gideon (Tilton) (1747). That puts Abigail's first child born at age 31, the last at age 45, and her death at age 93. These ages are reasonable.

Another of Jabez's sons had an unrecorded daughter named Abigail.

Abigail Olmsted, d. of Jabez, b. in 1731, married Nathan Hamilton in 1771, and died. He remarried someone named Abigail, as his third wife, and some or all of the eight children were hers.

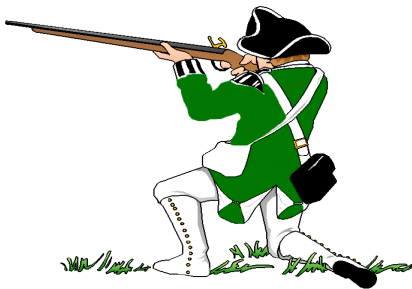
There are Abigail Olmsted's of the Hartford Branch that have appropriate birth dates, and no marriage or death listed: Abigail (4044), b. after 1737, and Abigail (4169), b. 1743. But there is no evidence that the two branches knew of each other that early.

Do any of our readers have a suggestion?

Inventory of Jabez's Estate

Following is the inventory of Jabez's estate, interesting as showing the substance of a well-to-do man of the period, and one of the earliest settlers of Ware. Remember that he had given much of his property to his children before his death. The appraisal was dated April 10, 1753, and signed by Job Lane, John Dowing, and Samuel Davis. The values are in £ s d q. Note that he had books of the value of two shillings. Interesting, in view of the fact that he was reported to be illiterate. From Chase, Arthur, "History of Ware, Massachusetts, 1911".

Chairs, 0 10 8 0	Old puter, 0 7 6 2	chest with draws, 0 6 8 0	half bushel, 0 0 9 2	warding cloths, 2 11 8 3
Cart boxes & hoops, 0 10 1 3	One wine glass, 0 0 8 0	Books, 0 2 0 0	bed stead, 0 2 8 0	four swine, 1 6 8 0
Plough-irons, 0 5 4 0	Woodden ware, 0 8 0 0	foot wheel, 0 12 0 0	cheap press, 0 1 4 0	yoke of young oxen, 7 6 8 0
Fire peate & tonges, 0 3 4 0	hetchel, 0 6 8 0	woden wheel, 0 1 4 0	sickle, 0 1 4 0	horse, 5 6 8 0
Betel rings & wedge, 0 3 8 3	two axes, 0 4 8 0	Wool cards, 0 1 4 1	Kneading trough, 0 1 0 3	read cow, 2 16 4 0
Stiliards, 0 4 0 0	frying pan, 0 3 4 0	powder horn & bullet pouch, 0 0 8 0	Harrow teeth, 0 3 2 1	Brown cow, 2 5 4 0
Pepper mill, 0 5 0 0	Woodden dishes, 0 1 8 0	Two Sives, 0 2 0 0	pitch fork, 0 1 0 3	calf, 0 8 0 0
Tramil pot & pot hooks, 0 12 0 0	jugg, 0 0 4 0	Baskets, 0 1 4 0	Knives, 0 1 0 0	The one half of a grist mill and priviledge for the same, 40 0 0 0
Iron Kittle, 0 3 4 0	Three chairs, 0 3 6 0	paire of shears, 0 1 3 0	Flax, 1 1 3 1	The Dwelling house and the Barn and all his lands lying in one body, 195 13 4 0
Brass Kittle, 0 12 0 0	table, 0 3 4 0	bridle bit, 0 0 6 0	Saddle, 0 4 0 0	
scythe, 0 1 4 0	small table, 0 5 4 3	bushel, 0 1 4 0	beds, beading, 2 16 3 1	Sum total, 269 16 3 0



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