

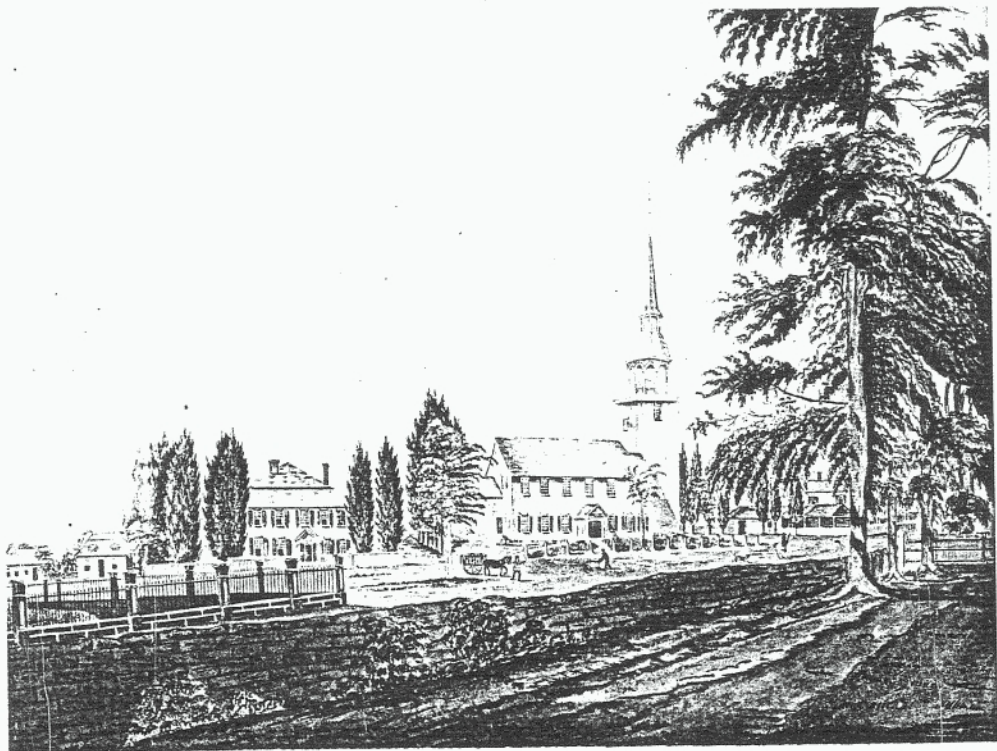
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THE
FOUNDERS AND INCORPORATORS
OF THE THIRD PARISH IN
JAMAICA PLAIN

WHO THEY WERE AND WHERE
THEY LIVED IN 1769

FRED SEAVER





FIRST MEETING HOUSE AND PARSONAGE — ERECTED 1769.
(FROM AN OLD WATER COLOR.)

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MARCH 16, 1917



JAMAICA PLAIN, MASS.

1917

AN EXCURSION INTO EARLY LOCAL HISTORY.

THE FOUNDERS AND INCORPORATORS OF THE THIRD PARISH IN JAMAICA PLAIN, WHO THEY WERE AND WHERE THEY LIVED IN 1769.

Read at the meeting of the Congregational Union of the Unitarian Church, Jamaica Plain, March 16, 1917, when the subject was "Old Times in the Church."

It is always customary on an occasion of this kind, of an historical nature, for the committee of arrangements to secure the service of the "oldest inhabitant of the town" to assist in the exercises and that probably accounts for my appearance here this evening. When the chairman of the committee first asked me to try and locate the residences of the original founders of the parish who lived here from 1769 to 1773 I found I was given a serious proposition. I felt like the old tramp who was walking along the road from Boston to Providence. It was a very warm day and he was in a delapidated condition and almost exhausted. He sat down on the wall by the roadside to rest, and while there a finely appointed limousine approached. The chauffeur stopped the car directly in front of him and a finely dressed gentleman got out, and approaching the tramp said to him: "Can you change a ten dollar bill for me?" The tramp looked at him a moment and then said: "No sir, I can't change the bill but I am much obliged for the compliment."

However, I have done better than the tramp did, for out of the thirteen founders of the parish I have located twelve, and of the thirty-four incorporators I have placed the residence of thirty-one.

In 1769 there were only two main streets (roads they were

called then) through the Jamaica Plain part of the town. The main one, which is now Centre street, was called the upper road to Dedham, and South street, from its junction with Centre street, where the Monument now stands, was then called the lower road to Dedham. There were no cross streets where are now Eliot, Burroughs, Green, Keyes, etc., between Hyde Square and the Dedham line. There was one exception, however, Pond street, which ran as it does now by the Pond and up to the Brookline line.

The founders and incorporators of the parish all lived on or near these two streets, with a few exceptions. I find there was a group of five members who lived in the neighborhood of Forest Hills station and over near the Dorchester line, and another group of six members who lived on the other side of the town near the edge of Brookline from what is now the Larz Anderson estate down to the Roxbury line, near Heath street. In the case of the small number of the occupants of the parish of which I have failed to give any definite location as to their actual residences I will say that in searching carefully the records in the Registry of Deeds office in Boston, and also in Dedham, when there was any record made of the sale of their property the boundaries were so indefinite that it is practically impossible to state the exact place of their residences.

The founders in 1770, were:

Edward Child,	Eleazer Weld,	Abil Withington,
Joseph Brewer,	Nathaniel Weld,	William Burroughs,
Nathaniel Brewer,	Benjamin Pemberton,	Lemuel Child,
Isaac Williams,	George Woods,	Henry Williams.
John Mowry,		

The incorporators, in 1872, were:

Eleazer Weld,	Joseph Brewer,	John Child,
Edward Child,	John Louder,	Nathaniel Wheaton,
Nathaniel Weld,	John Coburn,	Nathaniel Brewer,
Daniel Harris,	Elijah Whitney,	Jonathan Payson,

William Pepperell,	Ezra Davis,	Samuel Scarborough,
John Williams,	John Mowry,	John Louder, Jr.,
Ebenezer Weld,	Isaac Williams,	Jacob Davis,
Wm. Burroughs,	Thomas Weld,	John Foster,
Joshua Loring,	Walter Logan,	Edward Bridge,
Henry Williams,	Samuel White,	John Keyes,
George Woods,	Lemuel Child,	Ezra Davis, Jr.
Joseph Weld,	Ebenezer Scott,	

BENJAMIN PEMBERTON

Of the founders of the parish, Benjamin Pemberton lived in the house which is now standing on the corner of Centre street and Lester Place, opposite the Baptist church. It was built in the old West Indian style, of one story, its construction being something like the Andrew J. Peters house on South street, near Forest Hills.

This house was purchased in 1760 by Mr. Pemberton from his brother-in-law, Peter Faneuil, and was occupied by him until 1802, when he sold it to Dr. John C. Warren, a noted surgeon who performed the first operation with ether in 1846.

EDWARD CHILD

lived on Newton street near the Brookline line, in what, in my time, was called the "Hannah Webster" house. The house is now standing and is in good condition. I think this is the oldest house now standing in Jamaica Plain. It belongs to the Larz Anderson estate.

ISAAC WILLIAMS

His estate was situated on what was formerly known as Back street, now Canterbury street, and was occupied for a great many years by Mr. John Fottler, a farmer, whom probably the older members of the parish will recall.

JOHN MOWRY

His house stood on the right-hand side of Center street, the third house on the right beyond Louder's Lane, on what is now the Winchester estate. The great grandfather of Mr. Artemas Winchester bought this estate and farm from John Mowry.

LEMUEL CHILD

was quite a noted man in those days. He was captain of the Minute Company of the Third Parish at the battle of Lexington. He kept the Peacock tavern which stood on the westerly corner of Center and Allendale streets. This tavern was a noted resort where the British officers used to gather after their skating parties on Jamaica Pond.

On the roll of the 3rd Company of Minute Men at the battle of Lexington are the following names of the founders and incorporators of the Parish:

Capt. Lemuel Child,	Corp. Joseph Weld,
Lt. Isaac Williams,	Corp. Joseph Brewer,
Lt. Lemuel May,	Private Elijah Child,
Ensign Samuel White,	Private John Child,
Sergt. Ezra Davis,	Private John Foster.
Corp. John Louder,	

These men evidently believed in preparedness of the most strenuous kind.

WILLIAM BURROUGHS

His residence stood on Centre street, about where the new Bank Building is now being erected, and adjoined the estate of Ebenezer May (one of the incorporators of the Parish.) Mr. Burroughs presented the Town of Roxbury with the street named after him in 1787.

JOSEPH BREWER and NATHANIEL BREWER

lived on what was known as the Brewer farm situated about opposite Prince street on Pond. The actual spot of their homestead I have been unable to locate.

ELEAZER WELD and NATHANIEL WELD

lived between South street and what is now Washington street, near Forest Hills station. They were both of them tanners and utilized the water of Stony Brook in their business.

GEORGE WOOD

His residence was on Centre street, about where stands the Strand Theatre, and his home was bounded on the north and

east by the land of Benj. Pemberton. The estate of both Mr. Pemberton and Mr. Woods extended from Centre street to Stony Brook.

ABIL WITHINGTON'S

residence when he became one of the founders of the Parish was on Centre street about where the Catholic church (Blessed Sacrament) is now situated, at Hyde Square.

JOSHUA LORING

Of the incorporators of the Parish, Joshua Loring lived in the house on the corner of South and Centre streets where Mr. and Mrs. D. S. Greenough now reside. Mr. Loring erected this house in 1760. It is said to have been framed in England and was one of the finest residences in Roxbury. Mr. Loring was a captain in the British army and took part in the capture of Quebec under Wolfe. He was wounded in the leg and at the close of the French war he retired on half pay to his estate here in Jamaica Plain.

He was an ardent Tory and on the morning of the battle of Lexington he left for Boston, never to return. He died in England in 1781. His estate here was confiscated by the Colonial Government, and in May 1771, was used as the headquarters of General Green of the Continental Army. In 1784 it came into the possession of the Greenough family. It is still owned by them and taken in connection with its surroundings is in spite of its age, hardly surpassed by any of its more modern neighbors.

The home of

WILLIAM PEPPERELL

was on Pond street on the site where now stands the house of Mr. E. D. Rice.

The estate belonged to Sir Francis Bernard who was from 1760 to 1769 the Royal Governor of Massachusetts. After Governor Bernard, the house was occupied by William Pepperell until he was obliged to leave this country for political reasons. It was occupied by the patriot forces in 1775. Captain John Prince bought it in 1806. He took down the old

house and made a street through the property, which is now Prince street.

In front of the estate are some fine old English elms which were probably set out by Gov. Bernard.

JOHN TROUTBECK

lived in the house that stood on the westerly corner of Centre and Pond streets and was occupied as an academy for many years. It was known as the 'Lindens' and was demolished several years ago.

He lived there with his father, the Rev. John Troutbeck, who was for twenty years the assistant rector of King's Chapel, and of whom Drake in his history says: "In addition to being the assistant rector of King's Chapel, he was also a celebrated distiller."

BENJAMIN MAY

was a blacksmith and lived in a house, a part of which is now standing, on the left hand side of Centre street just beyond Pond street toward Boston.

EDWARD BRIDGE

His house stood on Centre street, just beyond the estate of Mrs. T. W. Seaverns, next to May street. It was demolished a few years ago.

The house of

SAMUEL SCARBOROUGH

at the time he joined the Parish was on the site of the one that was last occupied by Mr. John Parkinson. It stood on the corner of Forest Hills and Scarborough streets. Mr. Scarborough died in 1789.

An old elm stands on this property which was probably planted by him.

The residence of

LEMUEL MAY

was on May street where now stands the house of Mrs. Thomas W. Carter. This home was built in 1650 by Mr. Bridge and since 1771 has been in the possession of the May family. The

original farm included all the land bounded by Eliot, Centre and Pond streets and also a part of the hill where Messrs. Bowditch, Harding, Dr. Richardson and others now have their residences.

JOHN LOUDER and JOHN LOUDER, Jr.

lived in a house on the right hand side of Centre street, the third house this side of Louder's Lane. This house is not standing now.

EBENEZER MAY

lived on Centre street about where the fire engine house now stands.

EZRA DAVIS and EZRA DAVIS, Jr.

lived in a house which stood on the right hand side of South street just before coming to Bussey street. I remember when this house was destroyed by fire several years ago.

JOHN KEYES

His house stood on the southeast corner of South and Keyes street (which was named for him). In 1794 he sold his property to Mr. D. S. Greenough. He was a tanner by trade and utilized the water of a brook that flowed through the meadow till it joined Stony Brook and from which I have seen my father catch many a basket of fine trout.

LEMUEL AUSTIN

lived on Centre street about where the Baptist church now stands.

John Child, Elijah Whitney, John Coburn, Jacob Davis, Daniel Harris and Ebenezer Scott all lived near the Brookline line; their boundaries are very indefinite.

John Williams and Jonathan Williams were brothers, the sons of John Williams, and they lived in adjoining houses on Walnut avenue on the east side near Westminster avenue.

Jacob Davis lived on Washington street near Cliff street, Roxbury.

John Foster lived on Boylston street, near Lamartine Square.

Jonathan Payson lived on what is now Forest Hills street, near where Scarborough street joins it.

To give some idea of the size of some of the estates in those days I will mention two of them. The Greenough estate began where the house is now situated, opposite the Soldiers' Monument, and ran the whole length of the left hand side of South street to Stony Brook at Forest Hills station, then ran easterly on the line of the brook to where the Jamaica Plain railroad station is situated and thence to the line of beginning.

The Weld Estate began on the opposite side of South street and ran the whole length of Centre street way up to Spring street, West Roxbury (where the second Parish is located), thence following the line of Spring street to where the N. Y. N. H. & H. R. R. is at present, then along the line of the railroad to the Forest Hills station, then up South street westerly to the point of beginning. Bussey street practically divides this estate in about two equal parts. In 1769 on these two estates there were only seven or eight houses where now there are thousands and tens of thousands of inhabitants.

These men were the founders and incorporators of the Third Parish.

They were men of sturdy stock and character, good citizens all, and firm and steadfast in their religious beliefs. If we who come a century and a half after them, and those who follow us, but try and emulate their example there is no reason to doubt that the old Third Parish of Roxbury (Jamaica Plain) will be for centuries yet to come a model and example of all that is good, right and just in this community.

The numbers on the accompanying map have been placed on the sites of the residences of the Founders of the Parish — so far as they have been determined.

- 1; Benjamin Pemberton.
- 2; Edward Child.
- 3; Isaac Williams.
- 4; John Morey.
- 5; Lemuel Child.
- 6; William Burroughs.
- 7; Isaac Brewer.
Nathaniel Brewer.
- 8; Eleazer Weld.
Nathaniel Weld.
- 9; George Woods.
- 10; Abil Withington.
- 11; Joshua Loring.
- 12; William Pepperil.
- 13; John Troutbeck.
- 14; Benjamin May.
- 15; Edward Briggs.
- 16; Samuel Scarborough.
- 17; Lemuel May.
- 18; John Louder.
John Louder, Jr.
- 19; Ebenezer May.
- 20; Ezra Davis.
Ezra Davis, Jr.
- 21; John Keyes.
- 22; Lemuel Austin.
- 23; John Williams.
- 24; Jonathan Williams.
- 25; Jacob Davis.
- 26; John Foster.
- 27; Jonathan Payson.



NUMBERS INDICATE SITES OF RESIDENCES OF FIRST MEMBERS OF THE PARISH