

Quabbin Voices

The Friends of Quabbin Newsletter



PRINCE WALKER OF BARRE, MASSACHUSETTS (1774 – 1858): HIS LEGACY IN THE WARE RIVER

Part 1: A Tale of Two Families

by Lucy Allen

Spring
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We must hear and listen to all of Quabbin's many Voices. Voices of the Past, as well as Voices of the Present and of the Future. Voices of the Trees, the Sky, the Rain that falls, and all the Wild Things; Voices of the People who depend on this valuable resource for their daily needs of clean water, and Voices of those who draw upon it for deeper needs of the Soul.

—Les Campbell

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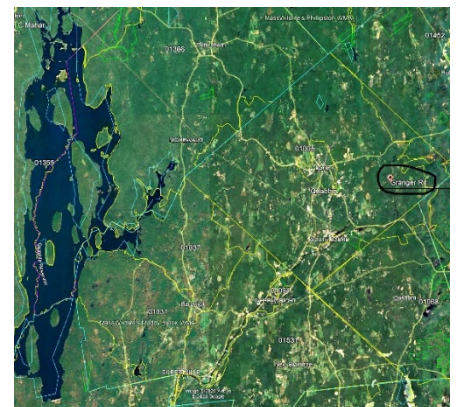


This Tale of Two Families starts in the early 18th century. Most of the action takes place in the Ware River Watershed of Barre. The original territory that contains the watershed was purchased by a group of five European settlers from five Native Americans in 1686. The Native Americans called it Naquag; the Europeans called it Rutland. The 12-mile square territory would eventually be divided into the towns of Rutland, Hubbardston, Barre and Oakham, with small parts going to other towns. Barre at first was called the Northwest Quarter, and then Rutland District until incorporated as a town in 1774 with the name of Hutchinson. Since Hutchinson was a hated Loyalist, the townspeople petitioned the General Court to have the name changed to Barre in 1776. And four years later, Massachusetts would adopt its constitution that, in part, declared all men free (In 1976, men was changed to people regardless of sex, race, color, creed or national origin). One and one-half centuries later, much of the land in this part of the Ware River valley became subject to the Ware River Act of 1926, which authorized the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to purchase property to help protect water resources for Metropolitan Boston. Farms, homes, businesses, and schools in the original Naquag purchase were bought and demolished to preserve water quality for the Ware River Diversion. While it may appear that the eastern 22% of Barre is a wilderness, at one time it was the cradle of early settlement. Gone are many of the old homes, but gravel roads lace the watershed. If you know where to look, they lead to a treasure-trove of stone ruins that represent tales of those who lived here centuries ago.

In this article we will look at two of the families with a strange bond who inhabited

the Ware River Watershed in Barre: that of James Caldwell, the enslaver, of Scots-Irish origin; and the black family he enslaved, in later years known as “Walker.” Prince Walker, the youngest member of the Walker family, was only nine years old when his oldest sibling, Quock, was instrumental in achieving freedom for all enslaved people in Massachusetts in 1783. Prince’s route to freedom was not as direct as enjoyed by the older members of his family; his enslaver, Nathaniel Jennison, sold him into slavery in Connecticut where slavery was still legal for those under 21 years of age. Prince’s escape from slavery there and his return to Barre to become a landowner in the Ware River Watershed is a fascinating story that is the focus of this series of articles.

The relationship of these two families, one white and free, the other black and enslaved, demonstrates how if the enslaver’s family went through rough times, their misfortunes trickled down to those they enslaved. Enslaved families were dependent on their slaveholders for food, housing and clothing. If the controlling family suffered financial



Location of Granger Road, Barre (circle)

challenges, it might decide to sell its slaves, split up the enslaved family, or neglect the slave family's needs. Prince Walker was born while a victim of the institution of slavery, became a casualty of the chaotic times immediately before and during the Revolutionary War, and served as a pawn in the game played by enslavers as they attempted to retain their human assets in the waning days of slavery in New England.

The Caldwells and their associates were Scots-Irish immigrants who settled in Barre in the mid-1730s to build independent, successful lives. The settlement of Barre was an extension of the "settled part" of Rutland. The second family (the Walkers) was purchased by James Caldwell in 1754. Years later, this family assumed the surname of Walker. Unlike the Caldwells, the Walkers did not come to Barre voluntarily. As we'll see, these years of tumult were especially hard on Prince Walker, the youngest member of the Walker family. But despite this, he freed himself, acquired land, work and respect and achieved a measure of success on the same land on which his family was enslaved by James Caldwell. Prince Walker became a respected citizen and farmer in Barre, was a registered voter, and was liked by his neighbors for his work ethic and charming personality. The burial ground he made on his property off Gilbert Road is the lasting testament to his labors.

But back to James Caldwell, his story started in Dunboe, Northern Ireland, where he was born about 1711. The Caldwells and many others of that area were brought there by the English about a century earlier from Scotland. Like many other "Scots-Irish," the Caldwells decided to leave Ireland behind and start a new life in New England. In 1718, the Caldwells bade farewell to Dunboe and settled in Worcester, Massachusetts.

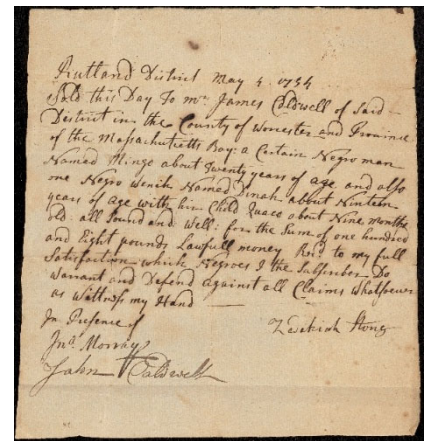
Most of Massachusetts practiced Puritanism which strictly disapproved of all other religions so a few years later, the Scots-Irish looked for "frontier" areas where they would be free to practice their Presbyterian faith; Rutland was one of those places. The "settled" part of Rutland was incorporated in 1722. Soon, isolated farms sprouted on the frontier fringes, including Barre. Capt. James Caldwell was one of the first settlers in Barre, purchasing 560 acres in 1736 along the Ware River on what is now Granger Road, near the junction of the Burnshirt and Ware Rivers. Local lore alleges that James spent his first winter, about 1736, under a granite sheltering ledge that is near the house that he built about 1750. It is the oldest frame house in Barre. Before that he lived in a crude cabin. Finally, as James approached his 30th year,



James Caldwell's first home in Barre, a sheltering ledge off Granger Road.

he found a wife with whom to share life in his grand new house. James Caldwell married Isabella (usually called Isabel) Oliver of Athol on 15 January 1751 (Old Style) or January 26, 1752 New Style after calendar reform). Her father, William Oliver, was also a Scots-Irish pioneer who arrived in Athol about 1736. It is likely that James Caldwell and William Oliver knew one another from having served in His Majesty's services in the French and Indian Wars of the 1740s through 1760s. James was a Captain in the Colonial forces, serving in several campaigns up to 1761, two years before his death. Others who would prove important in this Tale of Two Families, including Probate Judge John Chandler and Col. John Murray of Rutland, also served in the Colonial forces.

The Walker family is documented in a bill of sale dated May 4, 1754. At that time Mingo, about 20 years, Dinah, about 19 years, and their infant Quaco "Quock," nine months, were purchased by James Caldwell from Zedekiah Stone of Nichewaug (Petersham). Stone was another of the group of wealthy men with whom James Caldwell associated.



Bill of sale for the slaves, Mingo, Dinah and baby Quaco, May 4, 1754

In the New England style of that time, the Caldwells and Walkers probably lived together in the house on Granger Road. The house is in a pocket of private land, surrounded by Ware River Watershed



James Caldwell house in Barre at present, photo by Lucy Allen, March 2019

property. Between 1754 and 1763, when James Caldwell died unexpectedly, both families grew. The first Caldwell child was born in 1754, which may be the reason that, after 18 years in the wilderness clearing land on his own, James Caldwell acquired slaves. Few details of the lives of either family survive, except that James Caldwell seemed to take a liking to young Quock, promising him freedom when he reached the age of 25. Sadly, Caldwell did not record this promise in a will or other document.

On July 18, 1763, James Caldwell was working on his estate, which now spanned more than 1,100 acres, when a storm blew through. A tree toppled and killed Caldwell and injured a "Negro," probably Mingo. Quock would testify almost 20 years later that he, 10 years old, had been harrowing in the field when this happened. Isabel (Oliver) Caldwell, who was (continued on page 5)



Gene Theroux

President's Message

Spring 2025

The 250th Anniversary of the American Revolutionary War is approaching. The Friends of Quabbin with the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) and Betty Allen Chapter of Northampton Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) got an early start last year at the Memorial Day Service at the Quabbin Park Cemetery (QPC) by unveiling the bronze plaque on a slab of Vermont granite commemorating the names of forty-three patriots from the Revolutionary War. The same groups will be present this year.

The Revolutionary War officially began with the Battles of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775, although there were prior provocations. With the speed of Paul Revere, the 250th Anniversary is fast approaching with the approaching date of Revere's ride of that fateful night of April 18-19th that alerted the Minutemen to ready for the battles of Lexington and Concord on April 19th.

There are numerous local patriots from the American Revolutionary War. While all were local when the war started, some moved west after the war. One such patriot that had moved away was Lieutenant Colonel William S. Stacy Sr. Stacy came from New Salem. One published history has it that when alarm bells called the citizens to the New Salem green on April 20, 1775 to learn of the battle at Lexington, there was indecision by the assembled group as to what to do. Then First Lieutenant Stacy stepped forward and said in the words engraved on a memorial stone on the New Salem Common:

"Fellow soldiers, I don't know how it is with you, but for me, I will no longer serve a king that murders my own countrymen." He pulled out his commission from the crown and tore it to bits and trod it underfoot. Amid wild cheers, a militia company of



Monument honoring Lt. Col. William Stacy on New Salem Common.

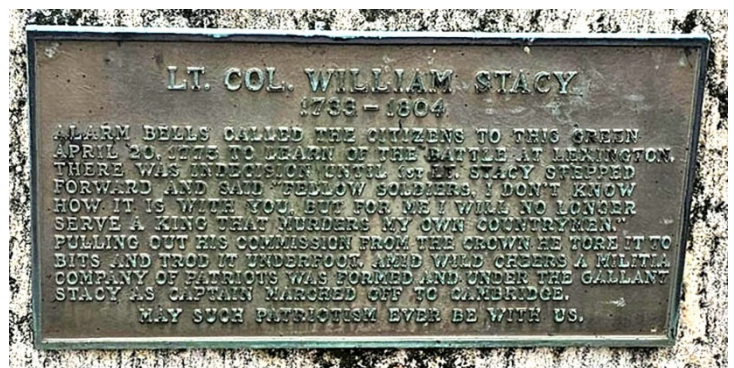
patriots was formed and under the command of Stacy as Captain, they marched off to Cambridge to join the war. A memorial plaque was dedicated to Colonel Stacy in 1956 on the village common of New Salem.

There is an alternative story. The New Salem Bicentennial Commission and the town historian later speculated that this event might have occurred earlier, i.e., at the time of the Powder Alarm during 1774. The Powder Alarm was a precursor to the events at Lexington and Concord and was a major popular reaction to the removal of gunpowder from a magazine near Boston by British soldiers under the orders from General Thomas Gage, royal governor of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, on September 1, 1774.

Stacy's patriotism and heroism did not end with that incident whichever it was. He served as an officer in the Continental Army from the beginning of the American Revolutionary War. He participated in the Siege of Boston. In June 1775, the British seized Bunker Hill and Breed's Hill. After this, the Americans laid siege to Boston. The siege continued for nearly a year.

Stacy was captured by Loyalists and American Indians at the Cherry Valley massacre, narrowly escaping a death by burning at the stake. General George Washington was unsuccessful in efforts to arrange a prisoner exchange for Stacy's release from captivity. When Stacy was finally released, Washington gave him a gold snuff box at the end of the war.

During Col. William Stacy's post-war life, he was a pioneer, helping to establish Marietta, Ohio as the first permanent American settlement of the new United States in the Northwest Territory. He was active in the Marietta pioneer community and served as foreman of the first Grand Jury in the Northwest Territory, an event establishing the rule of law in the territory. At the age of 56, he ice skated thirty miles up a frozen river, warning two of his sons of a possible Indian attack, which occurred several days later as the Big Bottom massacre and marked the beginning of the Northwest Indian War. Stacy is buried in the Mound Cemetery, Marietta, Ohio.



Closeup of Inscription

There are numerous direct descendants of Lieutenant Colonel Stacy interred in QPC and many of them were militia/military veterans who served in their community and nation in the Armed Forces. Many of Lt. Col. William Stacy Sr.'s descendants became members of the DAR and SAR. Lt. Col. Stacy's sons: Benjamin, Nymphas, William Jr., also served in the American Revolutionary War. Nymphas is at rest in QPC, as are many of his descendants.

The Friends of Quabbin is pleased to report that the bronze Soldier Monument sculpture and plaques at QPC will be cleaned and preserved this spring. Included in that effort will be the Honor Roll on the QPC administration building, the Dana Honor Roll plaque, the Hosea Ballou plaque, and the James Madison Stone plaque. This is an expensive preservation project at the cost of \$22,000.

In other efforts to improve the Quabbin Park Cemetery, the Friends of Quabbin voted at the February, 2025 directors meeting to have a flag holder casting made for the former General William S. Lincoln Grand Army of the Republic "GAR" Post 211 markers. The existing cast iron GAR



Headstone of Civil War veteran George Lyman Gibbs with unserviceable cast iron GAR Post 211 marker.

Post 211 flag holders are unserviceable, most of them are unable to properly hold American Cemetery Flags and are heavily corroded. The Friends of Quabbin has committed \$1215 for the die casting manufacture of the GAR Post 211 markers.

The Friends of Quabbin could use donations to help with both the memorial cleaning and replacing the markers. Donations are tax deductible.

My hope is that the bronze artifacts conservation projects and the replacement of the GAR Post 211 markers will be completed by the Quabbin Park Memorial Day Services scheduled for Sunday, May 25, 2025.

Sources:

1. Wikipedia, William Stacy (February 1734 – August 1802)
2. Internet Archive, The New Salem Sesqui-Centennial, The New Salem sesqui-centennial [electronic resource] : report of the addresses and proceedings of the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of the town of New Salem, at New Salem on Thursday, Aug. 20th, 1903
3. Wikipedia, Cherry Valley Massacre, Cherry Valley massacre - Wikipedia
4. Wikipedia, Powder Alarm

Annual Meeting Sunday, April 6, 2024

Fellowship Hall at the Belchertown United Church of Christ (BUCC), Park Street, Belchertown, MA – in the center of town on the road running parallel to Rte 202 and across from the town common gazebo and in the shadow of the water tower.

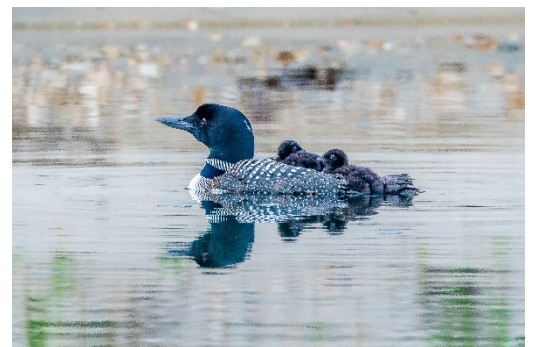
Time: 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

This is your opportunity to learn more about the Friends of the Quabbin, its activities, to meet the Board and become a member if you are not already one. You can learn more about how you can volunteer.

Social time with refreshments: 1:00-1:30 p.m., Business Meeting at 1:30-2:00 p.m., and Program: 2:00-3:30 p.m.

The Program will be a presentation by Dale Monette, retired DCR staff and author of several photo books on Quabbin wildlife.

“Quabbin Wildlife Stories”. Stories of wildlife at the Quabbin Reservoir that will include the bald eagle introduction at Quabbin in the 1980s that that has grown to 100 bald eagle nests in MA last year. It will also include the common loon survey, moose survey, and other animal surveys that have been occurring on the Quabbin watershed since the 1970s.



Prince Walker

Continued from page 2

pregnant, abruptly had to face caring for four dependent children, one child on the way, and a family of dependent slaves numbering five. In the days when women had few rights, her responsibilities were daunting, especially considering that James Caldwell never made a will. Under the laws of intestate succession, the estate was divided between Isabel and her children, and the children were granted guardians by the court to protect their interests. The person responsible for guaranteeing that Isabel and her children would receive their shares was Probate Judge John Chandler. The man who accepted the guardianship of the Caldwell children was Col. John Murray. Both men were old comrades in arms and friends of the late Capt. James Caldwell. However, they ultimately failed in protecting the Caldwells and the Walkers because in August, 1774, they fled the area because of their Loyalist sympathies. Also involved was James' brother, John Caldwell, who would feature prominently in the Quock Walker trials. He, too, was accused of having sympathy for the British cause and was briefly jailed.

In 1769, the widow Isabel (Oliver) Caldwell married Nathaniel Jennison. He claimed ownership of the Walker family because of this marriage and became the controlling force in the story that evolved. The probate records show, however, that Isabel had ownership of the property from James Caldwell for the rest of her natural life, at



Col. John Murray 1722-1794, who was the guardian of James Caldwell's children after Caldwell's death and before Murray fled as a Loyalist in August 1774. Murray was one of the witnesses of the bill of sale for Mingo, Diana and Quaco in 1754. By John Singleton Copley. In New Brunswick Museum, St. Johns, New Brunswick, Canada.

which time it would go to her descendants. A few years later, Isabel died under clouded circumstances, and Jennison became the sole "owner" of the Walker family. No one seemed interested in pursuing Isabel's rights or the distribution of her property to her children. Had James Caldwell left a will, he probably would have recorded his promise to Quock to set him free when he became a man. Since Caldwell died intestate, however, this promise was only word-of-mouth and created a clash between Quock and Nathaniel Jennison. According to Quock's testimony during the trials from 1781 to 1783, when

Quock was about 27 years old, regarding his personal freedom, Capt. James Caldwell promised to set him free when he turned 25, and the widow Isabel set the freedom at 21 years. Jennison now lived on the Caldwell farm and claimed the right to control Quock's life.

But the times were changing. It was the first day of May 1781, when Jennison realized that Quock was missing. He suspected that he would find Quock working on the farm of John Caldwell, brother of the late James Caldwell, about 1.7 miles away. John Caldwell had convinced Quock that the new Massachusetts state constitution provided that all men were born free and equal, and that Quock could work for wages. Jennison brought Quock back and beat and temporarily imprisoned him until he was rescued by John Caldwell. The result of this altercation was a string of legal proceedings that culminated with a decision by Supreme Court Justice Cushing that indeed, slavery was not consistent with the state constitution. By his decision in 1783, all slaves in Massachusetts should have been freed. We know of one exception: Quock's younger brother, Prince.

Prince Walker was born in Barre on June 24, 1774. His birth was not recorded in Barre's Vital Records. Nathaniel Jennison arranged Prince's baptism in Barre's First Church on Nov. 6, 1774; Prince was recorded as "Servant of N. Jeneson." With no surname or legal parents, it seemed an inauspicious start to life. And yet, Massachusetts was entering a bold new era with concepts of both personal freedom and freedom of society from political oppression.

These might have been the best of times, but they were not for several reasons. Isabel (Oliver) Caldwell Jennison died, probably in 1773, but there is no record of her death. On August 4, 1774, Nathaniel Jennison married the widow Mehitable (Williams) Shirley of Roxbury, bringing her to Barre to live in the Caldwell house. On August 24, 1774, a Worcester mob threatened the safety of Loyalists John Murray and John Chandler, and they both ran; Chandler went to New Brunswick; Murray went to Nova Scotia in 1775. Gone were the two men who were the greatest protectors of the Caldwell children, and therefore, of the Walker family. Two months later, James Caldwell's son, William, elected his former step-father, Nathaniel Jennison, as his guardian. Now Jennison had almost full control over the Caldwells and the Walkers.

When slavery ended in Massachusetts in 1783, Jennison decided to make what profit he could from his legal loss to Quock Walker by selling his much younger brother, Prince, into slavery in Connecticut where it was still legal.

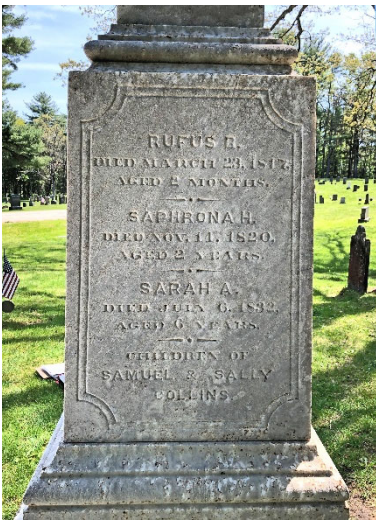
In the next part of this article, we will explore how Prince spent 12 years in slavery in Connecticut, escaped before his 21st birthday, and returned to the Ware River Watershed to become a landowner and respected citizen of Barre.

The Rise and Fall of Sanford B. Collins

by Robert Howe

The Collins burial lot in Quabbin Park Cemetery section 21 has 3 marble monuments. A small monument that says Mother and Father, a 2nd small remembrance monument, engraved with; Rufus B., Sophronia H. and Sarah Ann, three children who died young, and a handsome large monument with an urn and dove on top. Sanford and his wife Evaline are listed on the front of the large monument. Samuel and Sally are on the left face and Rufus, Sophonia and Sara Ann are on the right face. Several years ago, my brother Tommy and I cleaned the 3 monuments and we wondered, who were these people, and what was their story?

From my research, the monuments were most likely commissioned by Sanford B Collins during his time of good fortune. We will start his family’s story with the newspaper announcements of his death.

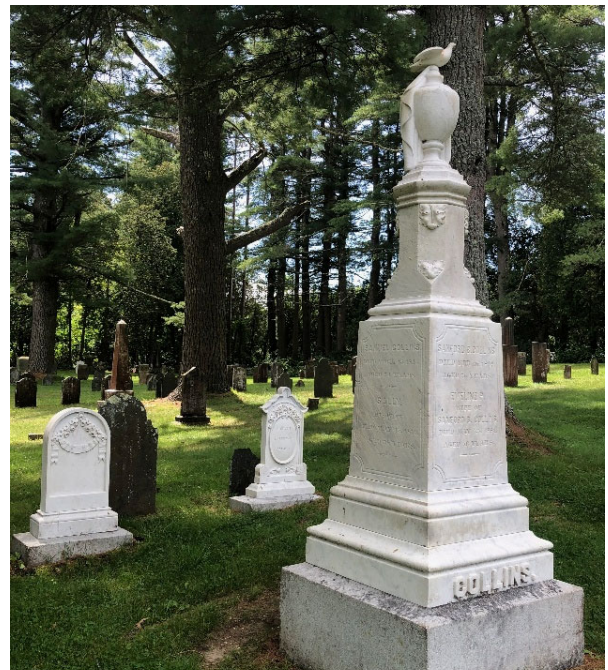


Right face of family memorial.

From the North Adams Transcript, Adams, Ma, Feb, 1899
Sanford B, Collins, aged 76 years, died at the town farm Thursday afternoon, after a lingering illness. He was born in the state of Connecticut. The history of his whole life is not fully known but he was an educated man of ability. At one time he was a manufacturer in Enfield. There was a time when his check was good for \$100,000. He came to Adams about 20 years ago and went into business with a partner. Up to this

time he had been successful but reverses came and he was reduced to poverty. The effect was too great for him and he was affected with insane paralysis and has been a town charge for three years. He has no near relatives. The funeral will be held Saturday afternoon. The remains will be taken to Enfield and buried by friends there.

From the Springfield Republican – Enfield Feb. 1899
Undertaker E. H. Moore left yesterday morning for Adams to bring to Enfield for burial the body of the late Sanford B. Collins who died at the town farm in Adams a few days ago. Mr. Collins was formerly a resident of Enfield and was a prominent member of the Congregational church for many years, serving in the capacity of deacon and also superintendent of the Sunday-school. In accordance with the desire of his old-time friends, funeral services will be held in the chapel before the body is taken to the cemetery. The hour cannot yet be fixed.



Collins Monuments - left rear stone - father and mother; right rear stone - remembrance stone for children. The larger family monument has the Samuel and wife on the front over the name Collins, Samuel's father and mother on left face and Samuel's siblings on the left face and Samuel's siblings on the right face.

Sanford B Collins was born 1821 in Ashford, Ct to Samuel Collins and Sally Ct. Later, the Collins family moved to Woodstock, Ct where Sarah Ann died 1832 age 6, and was buried in Woodstock. Sometime before the year 1840, Sanford and his parents moved to Enfield, Ma. The monument with the 3 children’s names is for remembrance, none of their remains



were moved to the Enfield Hill Cemetery. Sanford’s father Samuel Rufus B. and Sophona H. Collins, Snow Cemetery, Ashford, CT from FindaGrave.



FindaGrave.

died in 1844 at the age of 54 when Sanford was 23. Sanford’s mother, Sally, lived continued to live with

Sanford for the rest of her life, dying in 1881 when she was probably in her late 80s. Samuel's background and occupation are unknown at this time.

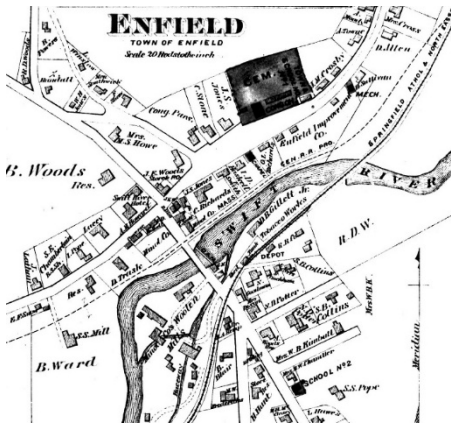
A year after his father died, Sanford B. Collins, the only surviving child, married Evaline Pomeroy of Enfield, Ma in November 1845. He was 24 and she was 21 years old. From census records, we can learn something about Sanford's life. It appears that Sanford and Evaline never had children. In 1867, Sanford served a term as an Enfield selectman and was an

Census data provide almost the only clues to Sanford's activities beyond those hinted at in his obituaries.

Census Data

Year	Sanford's Age	Sanford's Occupation	Real Estate Value	In today's dollars	Personal Wealth	In today's dollars
1850	28	"manufacturer"				
1855	633	"overseer"				
1860	38	"manufacturer"	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 48,184.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 240,920.00
1865	43	"manufacturer"				
		"retired"				
1870	48	manufacturer"	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 48,184.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 1,084,140.00

By the time of the 1880 census, Sanford was 58 years old and still married, but he was listed as working in Adams, Ma at a woolen mill and had been unemployed for 5 months of the last year and a border renting a rooms. The 1880 census shows his wife Evaline was in Chicago Il. She was listed as, married, living with her widowed sister Angeline P Baker. The following year Evaline died, her death record said she died in Chicago of heart disease and was buried in Enfield,



Collins property is south of river and railroad near H.D.W



Sanford B. Collins house in 1930 when owned by David Tebo, looking at the west face.

Ma. About 8 years later, on February 10, 1899 Sanford B Collins died on the town poor farm in Adams, Ma. In only 10 years Sanford went from today's equivalent of a millionaire, successful

businessman and married for more than 25 years to working in a woolen mill and boarding at a rooming house. He would be alone a year later and then, over the next ten or more years, become destitute, and with a lingering illness described in the obituary as insane paralysis, a ward of the own for his last three years. Insane paralysis is a term we don't hear today. It is medically known as general paresis.

“General paresis, also known as general paralysis of the insane (GPI), paralytic dementia, or syphilitic paresis is a severe neuropsychiatric disorder, classified as an organic mental disorder, and is caused by late-stage syphilis and the chronic meningoencephalitis and cerebral atrophy that are associated with this late stage of the disease when left untreated. GPI differs from mere paresis, as mere paresis can result from multiple other causes and usually does not affect cognitive function. Degenerative changes caused by GPI are associated primarily with the frontal and temporal lobar cortex. The disease affects approximately 7% of individuals infected with syphilis, and is far more common in developing countries where fewer options for timely treatment are available. It is more common among men.

GPI was originally considered to be a type of madness due to a dissolute character, when first identified in the early 19th century. The condition's connection with syphilis was discovered in the late 1880s.” Wikipedia

An Act Relative to the Quabbin Watershed and Regional Equity Round Two by Paul Godfrey

Most things worth fighting for require tenacity as much as any quality. One of those is the east-west battle in Massachusetts, in this case, over water, a classic battle issue. Quabbin's history is of the east, i.e. "Boston" taking the west's water, i.e. Swift River Valley. That battle has raged on and off for a century. A few decades ago, the battle was over taking more of the west's water, i.e. Connecticut River and moving it to the Quabbin system. Recently, it's been spreading the Quabbin water to more of the eastern towns. Last year, a bill was introduced in the legislature that would not reverse that situation but balance it a little better. That bill was known as the "Act Relative to the Quabbin Watershed and Regional Equity." It was the subject of the Friends of Quabbin Annual Meeting in April 2024. But like most bills brought before the legislature, endurance is a big part of the equation. The bill made it out of committee last year, a positive advance for a first-time bill but didn't get much further. But like another effort you may recall, it's back this year. That previous effort was the Renaming of the Quabbin Visitor Center to the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center. It was non-controversial and not a burden on tax dollars, yet it took two years and down to the last minute to pass.

One result of last year was that Senator Comerford and Representative Saunders invited the Secretary of Environmental and Energy Affairs for a visit to Quabbin. That resulted in a study by MWRA, manager of Quabbin water but not the watershed, to determine what the legislation would require, i.e. how to bring water to the Quabbin watershed towns most specifically. MWRA completed that study, all 24 pages. It outlines the cost of providing water to the towns in the western part of the Quabbin watershed. That cost for three subprojects for water to: 1) Pelham, Belchertown, Ware and Ludlow, 2) New Salem, Wendell, Shutesbury and Orange and 3) New Salem, Wendell and Shutesbury was pegged at \$497 million. Authorities in those towns have been quite critical of the study claiming it was not thorough, did not get input from the towns involved and didn't recognize the unique aspects of those towns. In fact, the MWRA study of last year does not consider any of them.

The initial bill and the current one contain six sections:

Section 1 Establishes the Quabbin Host Community Development Trust Fund for municipal service, public safety and development needs of the watershed communities. The Quabbin Watershed Communities would get at least 70% of the funds for municipal operations and capital improvements and up to 25% for non-profit organizations and tribal entities directly serving the health, welfare, safety and transit needs of the Quabbin Watershed Communities, Connecticut River Basin communities and Chicopee River Basin communities.

Section 2 Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) payments be based on the total acreage of state land in each community rather than only on the lands above the high water mark as in current law.

Section 3 (House version) Instructs the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to collect from MWRA

5 cents for every 1000 gallons of water drawn from the Quabbin. Those monies would go into the Quabbin Host Community Development Trust Fund and is expected to raise \$3.5 million/year.

Section 3 (Senate version)Section 4 (House version)

Increases to three the number of Connecticut River basin members on the MWRA Board of Directors; currently there is only one.

Section 4 (Senate version) redefines the term Connecticut River basin community.

Section 5 Sets term limits of 12 years for MWRA Board of Directors except the Secretary of Environmental Affairs.

Section 6 Instructs MWRA a Water System Expansion Evaluation for four western river basins: Westfield River, Chicopee River, Connecticut River and Millers River.

These must be consistent with that done by MWRA for the Ipswich River in 2022. No interbasin transfers could be made until the evaluation was completed and publicly available.

As you can see, the bill is about a lot more than simply how to provide water to a few adjoining towns. It really sets the stage for an equitable and realistic water management in most of Massachusetts. There are parts here that may specifically benefit the Friends of Quabbin and our goals, but that is not the issue nor the reason for bringing it to your attention. It is really about creating a structure to expose major future water decisions in Massachusetts to wider public awareness, input, and decision. The bill is cosponsored in the MA Senate by Joanne Comerford (lead sponsor), Jacob Oliveira and Peter Durant and in the MA House by Aaron Saunders (lead sponsor), Lindsay Sabadosa, Todd Smola, Angelo Puppola, Jr., Natalie Blais, Brian Ashe, Jacob Oliveira, Shirley Arriaga, and Mindy Domb. Contact your legislator and let them know how you feel about this bill

(<https://malegislature.gov/legislators/SearchFindMyLegislator>).

Memories

by Anne Ely

This story has often been told
By those who lived it first-hand;
'Twas the disruption of their lives,
That taking of their land.
That taking of their land.

Cherished homes to be demolished;
What was next they didn't know,
More than a few tears had fallen
As they wondered where they'd go.

Years passed and life began again,
But sad memories lingered still.
More than a few tears had fallen
As they wondered where they'd go.

Years passed and life began again,
But sad memories lingered still.
If they could see this beauty now



Keystone Bridge News
by Paul Godfrey

There is some reason and a lot of hope that construction will start before April. Most of the procedural problems are resolved and it's only a matter of getting our contractors healthy.

Keystone Bridge, photo by Paul Franz, Greenfield Recorder

You've no doubt noticed that the Friends of Quabbin is seeking donations to cover the cost of rehabilitating Keystone Bridge estimated at about \$60,000. To date, we have received \$14,495.00 specifically for Keystone. On March 3rd, we broadened the appeal to the larger, other Quabbin community with articles published in the Athol Daily News and Greenfield Recorder. I was interviewed by Domenic Poli and photographed on site by Paul Franz. Conditions were less than conducive for moving about. The snow was 6-8" deep with a thick crust such that each step almost held you up but not quite. Walking was a herky-jerky affair, especially for the older set. I managed to trip over the low barrier wire blocking the parking area and make a facial snow angel. But otherwise, the interview (by phone, fortunately) and the photo shoot went fine. The snow did make the bridge a little better looking; the huge hole on the right was partially filled with snow. The snow angel's smile was much broader when \$720.00 in donations came in over the next 2 weeks.



Photo of Paul Franz by Paul Godfrey



The snow angel after brushing off snow and managing a bit of a smile, photo of Paul Godfrey by Paul Franz, Greenfield Recorder.

Quabbin Interpretive Services Interpretive Report- Spring 2025

by **Maria Beiter-Tucker**

The Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center offered several presentations this winter on topics ranging from African-American history in the Ware River Watershed to microorganisms in Quabbin Reservoir. If you were unable to attend a presentation, they were recorded and are available here <https://www.youtube.com/@MassDCR/videos> along with many other past presentations.

Our upcoming programs are listed in the newsletter and are also available to view on the Watershed events page <https://www.mass.gov/locations/quabbin-reservoir/events>. Regular visitors to Quabbin Park will have an up close view to a habitat restoration project undertaken by our forestry staff. A wooded area along Goodnough Dike will see some activity this spring and into the future to restore a type of forest known as an Oak Woodland. Certain known uncommon and rare plant and animal species thrive in a forest of oak trees, which are more widely spaced than that of a dense, closed canopy forest. Visitors may have noticed that trees have been marked with paint by DWSP foresters. This is to indicate which trees are to be cut or retained during harvesting by a licensed timber harvester. Thinning the canopy will allow more light to reach the ground and invigorate the understory plants.

In the future, prescribed fire will be used to maintain the more open state of the oak woodland. The uncommon and rare species that thrive in a woodland evolved with and are commonly part of fire adapted communities. Returning fire here will help encourage new plant growth and release nutrients, supporting these rare species that depend on the openness of an oak woodland. By reducing the leaf litter and allowing sunlight to reach the ground, seeds that have been waiting in the soil, sometimes for more than 50 years, will grow. This is just one of several habitat restoration projects planned for the Quabbin and Ware River Watersheds.

To help inform the public about these types of projects and others, the DCR Division of Water Supply Protection (DWSP) has launched a new public facing Forestry page found here <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/84f744ec96e54b93bab86a11ebd4b511/>.

Spearheaded by Quabbin Watershed Forester Rich MacLean, the new page covers over 100,000 acres of land managed by the division. It provides an in-depth look at DWSP's forest and land management strategies, featuring an interactive map that outlines proposed forest management projects and details on past and current timber harvests. Visitors can also use the site to submit comments during public comment periods and connect directly with DWSP forestry and natural resources staff.

Meeting and Events

Tuesday Tea

Tuesday Teas are held at the Les & Terry Campbell Visitor Center on the first Tuesday of each month at 1:00p.m. Attendance has been low lately but the discussions have been varied, ranging from genealogy to photography to memories and more. All are welcome. Come share a couple hours with us.

Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists

www.pvphotoartists.org

Hope United Methodist Church

31 Main Street, Belchertown, MA 01007

April 24, 2025 Silhouette

May 29, 2025 Curves

June 26, 2025 Street Photography

Meetings begin promptly at 7 pm on the last Thursday of the month. Open to the public; visitors are welcome. Meetings may be held via ZOOM. See website for more details.

Quabbin Photo Group

Program: This month we have a special speaker, **Tony Sweet** who will present his program, "**Atmospherics in Photography**". Tony is an award winning photographer who teaches workshops, give seminars, and has published several excellent, informative books. He has also given several presentations at NECC. This program will run for 90 minutes.

April 28, 2025, at 7PM for social time, and the meeting will begin at 7:30 and via Zoom for those unable to attend in person. The May program will be a Members Night.

The April and May meetings will be back at the Hope United Methodist Church in Belchertown at 31 Main St. Members Nights are when members can share some of their images.

Les & Terry Campbell Visitor Center Spring 2025

Presentation Schedule

All ages are welcome. Please dress appropriately for the weather and bring water. Dogs are not allowed anywhere at the Quabbin Reservoir. All programs are free, but registration is required; indoor events limited to 45 people and outdoor programs to 25 people. Registrations will be on the DCR website https://www.mass.gov/locations/quabbin-reservoir/events?_page=1 by the end of March.

Visit to Rutland Prison Camp

Sunday, April 6, 2025 11 am - 12.30 pm

Rutland Prison Camp- Easy, uneven ground

Rutland Prison Camp, main parking lot

299 Intervale Rd, Rutland, MA 01543

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/J1iuV7QGB3rEAbxJ9>

Fresh air, three home-cooked meals a day, comfortable sleeping quarters and a private hospital - sounds like a delightful retreat. for a

prison?? Indeed, it was! Join DCR staff as we explore the remains of this surprisingly successful social experiment. Ticks are still active so protection is advised, as is wearing orange during hunting season.

Saturday, April 12, 2025 11am – 1pm
Exploring the Ware River Watershed – group hike near Rutland State Park 4.4 miles

Moderate

Ware River Watershed, Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT)/Mid State Trail Parking Area, Route 122
 Rutland, MA 01543

Join us for a 4.4-mile lollipop loop hike in the Ware River Watershed. The route climbs/descends roughly 200 ft. in elevation. We will all meet at the MCRT parking area located on Route 122 in the town of Rutland. The hike begins/ends on the MCRT with a loop in the middle consisting of Camel's Hump, Long Meadow Road, and Prison Camp Road.

Visit the following website for additional information on the route: <https://www.trailforks.com/route/4-mi-inner-loop-near-rutland-state-park/>

Please dress appropriately for the weather and bring water and snacks.

Saturday, April 19, 2025 11am
Hidden History: Webster Road
1.5 mile

Moderate

Quabbin's ghost towns are hiding in plain sight – if you know where to look. This two-hour guided interpretive walk will teach you how to read the natural landscape as you uncover clues that reveal the hidden history of Webster Road. Explore old cellar holes and historic stone walls, get to know some native and invasive plants, and learn more about the families who lived in the town of Enfield a hundred years ago.

Meet at the Hank's Meadow parking lot. Please bring water and dress appropriately for the weather. Relatively flat terrain, approximately 2.5 miles round-trip. All ages welcome. Dogs are not allowed.

Saturday, May 17, 2025 11am – 1:30pm
Exploring the North Side of the Quabbin Watershed via Gate 29
2.4 miles

Moderate

Quabbin Reservoir Gate 29, Rt. 202 (Daniel Shays Highway)
 New Salem, MA 01007

Join us for a 2.4-mile out/back hike on Quabbin's north side of the watershed. We will be walking through the forest on a dirt road and ending at the shoreline of the reservoir. Walking to the water, the hike covers 1.2-miles and relatively little change in elevation. We will then backtrack and head out the way we came in. Please dress appropriately for the weather and bring water and snacks.

Hike begins at Quabbin Reservoir's Gate 29. The parking area is located on the south side of Rt. 202 (Daniel Shays Highway) in New Salem. Dogs are not allowed.

Saturday, June 7 10am-1pm
Exploring the Road to Dana Common
3.6 miles

Moderate

The old foundations, stone walls, and shade trees of Dana Common will transport you to the past as you explore Quabbin's unique history. This 3.6 mile round-trip hike will introduce you to some of the notable residents of Dana as you

discover what life was like in the Swift River Valley over a hundred years ago. Photos illustrating Quabbin's past will bring Dana to life before your eyes.

Meet at Gate 40 on Rt 32A in Petersham. Please bring water and dress appropriately for the weather. All ages welcome. Dogs are not allowed.

Saturday, June 14, 2025 11am – 1pm
Exploring the North Side of the Quabbin Watershed via Gate 22
4 miles

Moderate

Join us for a 4-mile out/back hike on Quabbin's north side of the watershed. We will be walking down to the water on a dirt road through the forest. Walking to the water, the hike covers 2-miles and drops 180 ft. in elevation. We will then backtrack uphill and head back uphill the way we came in. Please dress appropriately for the weather and bring water and snacks.

Hike begins at Quabbin Reservoir's Gate 22. The parking area for Gate 22 is located at the end of Shutesbury Road in the town of Shutesbury. Dogs are not allowed.

Saturday, June 28, 1pm-2pm
Exploring the History of the Quabbin Valley Through Gravestones –
.5 mile

.5 mile

Easy but uneven ground.

Take a walk through the Quabbin Park Cemetery and learn about the history and lives of residents (both prominent and ordinary) of the alley towns. Meet in the Quabbin Park Cemetery off Rt. 9 in Ware. Please dress appropriately for the weather. No dogs are allowed.

Friends of Quabbin 2024-2025

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Call for Member Submissions

This is your newsletter. We invite members to submit stories, articles, or reminiscences about the human or natural history of the Swift River Valley and Quabbin Reservoir.

Please send e-mail to Paul Godfrey at godfrey@umass.edu, or mail items to: The Friends of Quabbin
485 Ware Road, Belchertown, MA 01007



Quabbin Voices

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of Friends of Quabbin, Inc.

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