

The Sutton Historical Society Bulletin

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President's Message

I want to give thanks to those who have contributed to some of our most recent events.

Thank you to David Vermette, author of [A Distinct Alien Race](#), for his presentation this late April, on French Canadian immigration. This was our largest showing yet with an estimated attendance of over 100. Also thank you to Gary and Judi Vaillancourt for the use of Blaxton Hall in the the Manchaug Mill.

Thank you to Jon Clements, state horticulturalist with UMass. Jon cloned five Sutton Beauty apple trees for us. These trees were planted at the Blacksmith Shop, Eight Lots School House, and Waters Farm. Thank you to Dave Pizzi, Society member and Eight Lots School House curator, for leading this project. This apple theme also ties in with our September scheduled speaker, Christie Higginbottom, with the topic of Historic New England Apples. Check out our other upcoming events on our calendar.

Thank you to Myra Page, a senior intern from Sutton High School, who volunteered with the Society for 6 weeks organizing, cataloguing, scanning, and uploading all of our newsletters since 1975. She also created an ad for the Society to be included in the 4th of July Parade booklet, wrote an article included in this newsletter, and assisted in the setup of the David Vermette presentation and the Coffee with Cows event on the Common.

Also, thank you to the Sutton Library staff and local resident, Linda Carlson. Through their combined efforts, the General Rufus Putnam Museum catalog of holdings is being input into excel spreadsheets for eventual upload to a museum software program. These spreadsheets help museum staff determine what is stored in the museum.

On another note, Sutton, Route 146 and the Blackstone Valley are going through some major changes. This is tomorrow's history being made today. The 9-mile stretch of Route 146 between the Route 16 exit to the Boston Road intersection, has several significant development projects planned or in process to bring over 6 million square feet of warehouse and distribution space to this region including locations specifically in Sutton, namely--the UGPG RE SUTTON LLC project (2.1 million sq feet) in the old sand pits off of 122A, Blackstone Logistics (640,000 sq ft) at Lackey Dam Road, and Lackey Dam Logistics (212,000 sq ft) at Lackey Dam Road and Oakhurst Road. I urge everyone to please pay attention to this history in the making. Look at the Town of Sutton site's, (suttonma.org), homepage under calendar for Historic Commission, Planning Board, Conservation and Select Board meeting information and be an informed community member.

As always, thank you to everyone for your support.

Brian Stevenson

Samuel Rich and Richard Waters - Early Residents of West Sutton Partition of 1000 Acres in 1722

By Peter Michelson

This article discusses two early settlers in the West Sutton area, Samuel Rich and Richard Waters. A brief biographical introduction of these two men and their families is followed by an explanation of the partition of a tract of 1000 acres that they jointly purchased in 1720. Finally, a surprising family relationship between these men that has been lost to history will be revealed.

Samuel Rich (1684 -1729) was the son of Nicholas and Abigail (Green) Rich of Essex County, Massachusetts. Samuel and his siblings are presumed to have been born in Wenham, Massachusetts. Nicholas Rich relocated to Preston, Connecticut, and died there in 1726. His estate was settled by his heirs, including Samuel Rich of Sutton and Timothy and Abigail (Rich) Jerome of Bristol, Connecticut, as is proven from land records of Preston. Nicholas Rich is the 5th great-grandfather of Sir Winston Churchill who has a line of descent through Abigail (Rich) Jerome. Before coming to Sutton Samuel Rich lived in both Wrentham and nearby Mendon, Massachusetts, as can be seen from the birth records of his children. Samuel was very involved in local politics. He was a selectman in Mendon along with Robert Taft (an original proprietor of the Town of Sutton). In 1718 Samuel was on a committee that recommended the creation of the Town of Bellingham. In 1724 he was on a committee that recommended annexing the West Sutton area to the Town of Sutton. Samuel remarried after his first wife died in 1716. Presumably, his first wife's death was a complication from the birth of their daughter Eunice (it is uncertain if Eunice survived). Samuel came to Sutton with his second wife and eight children in 1720. Samuel died in 1729 without executing a will. "The History of Town of Sutton, Massachusetts, from 1704 to 1876" (Benedict and Tracy, 1878) documents the Chandler Stockwell house as having originally been a part of the Rich Farm and owned by Rich family descendants until 1835. This area is now part of the Whittier Farm on Douglas Road.

Richard Waters of Sutton was the grandson of the immigrant ancestor Richard Waters (1604 - 1676) of London, England. Richard Waters, the immigrant, was the son of iron tradesman, James Waters, who died in England in 1618. Richard, immigrated with his mother Phebe and her second husband, William Plasse, to the New World, arriving in Salem in 1636. He married his step-sister, Rejoice (or Joyce) Plasse, in 1637 shortly after her arrival in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Their son, John Waters, and his wife Sarah (Tompkins) Waters were the parents of a large family, including Richard and Nathaniel Waters who settled in Sutton. The land where Waters Farm is now located belonged to the Salem-born Richard Waters. His dwelling home at his death was located in the village of West Sutton, presumably at the intersection of Boston Road and the road to Oxford. His grandson, Stephen Waters, built the house that stands on the Waters Farm property overlooking Manchaug Pond. Stephen had over 1,000 apple trees and cultivated the Sutton Beauty Apple. Stephen died in 1819. This property is now owned by the Town of Sutton and functions as a living history museum operated by the Waters Farm Preservation, Inc. In 1715, Nathaniel purchased a one-tenth share of the Town of Sutton from William King, the brother of his wife Elizabeth (King) Waters. Nathaniel died in 1718 never having settled on his land in Sutton. Two sons of Nathaniel and Elizabeth (King) Waters, Nathaniel and Jonathan, left Salem and resided in the North Parish of Sutton. This area became the Town of Millbury in 1813. Asa Waters and his brother Andrus of Millbury, gunmakers whose efforts to create a water-powered armory were critical to the Revolutionary cause, descended from Jonathan Waters. The Waters' descendants include important cultural and political figures. There are three men with a proven lineage to the immigrant Richard Waters of London who all were venerated with the title President of the United States—namely, the Honorable William Howard Taft, who was also appointed Chief Justice in 1921 by the Honorable Warren Harding; the Honorable Calvin Coolidge; and the Honorable George Walker Bush.

It has been 300 years since Richard Waters and Samuel Rich agreed to a partition of the 1000 acres of land they jointly purchased on December 8, 1720. This land was the eastern half of a 2000-acre tract known as Manchaug Farm. A map preserved in the Massachusetts State Archives, created in 1684, after the conclusion of King Phillip's War in 1676, includes the unmistakable landmark of Manchaug Pond and describes the area as 2000 acres that "lyeth at Manchaug in Nipmug Country". The Nipmuck praying village of Manchaug that was abandoned in September 1675 was situated within the bounds of Manchaug Farm. The 19th century manufacturing hamlet in Sutton known as Manchaug Village may be named because of its proximity to and dependence on the water released from Manchaug Pond; however, this area is not the location of the praying village visited by John Eliot and Daniel Gookin.

Land records from the colonial period use a system of metes and bounds to describe the property. Reference points can be a pile of rocks, a stake in the ground, a conspicuous tree that may be marked in some way, or a neighbor that has long since moved. The unit of measure is typically rods (or perch, they are equivalent), chains, and links. The dimensions of the 2,000-acre Manchaug Farm was a rectangle 424 rods wide by 755 rods long; a rod being a unit of measure equal to 16.5 feet. This translates to a length of 2.5 miles and a width of 1.325 miles. The northern border extended to Eight Lots Road. The southern boundary bordering Oxford and Douglas is easily recognized on a contemporary map by the notch in the town lines that began at what was known as Manchaug Corner - the southeastern boundary of Oxford prior to 1734. The land was originally granted to William Stoughton and Joseph Dudley on 15 Feb 1681/2 (the Julian calendar was in use until 1752) as compensation for their service to the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The Stoughton Grant eventually became part of West Sutton

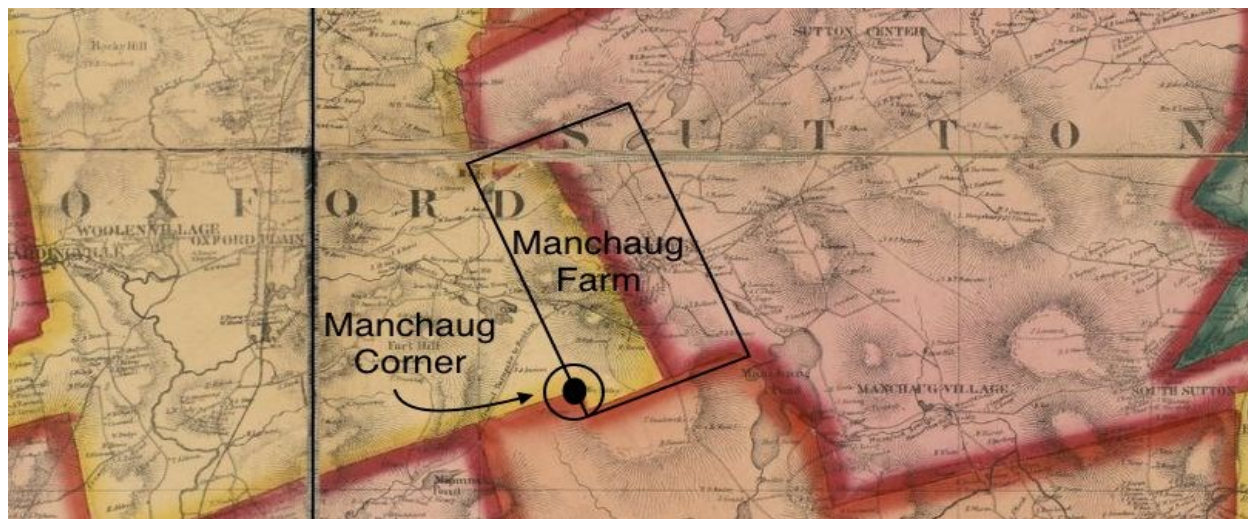


Figure 1 - Map of Worcester County from 1857

while the Dudley Grant extended the boundary of the Town of Oxford as can be seen in **Figure 1**.

The 1,000-acre Stoughton Grant had the dimensions of 212 rods by 755 rods. Using a modern map as a reference, the western extent was adjacent to the southeastern boundary of the Town of Oxford. There are two documents that declare the Rich Farm to be $333 \frac{1}{3}$ acres: the partition agreement of 11 Mar 1722/3 found in Suffolk Land Records and the probate record of Elizabeth (Tompkins) Rich from 1741. The 1000 acres of land was not uniformly divided into two pieces in 1722. The partition agreement uses the language of metes and bounds without a diagram to describe the southern width of the Rich Farm to be $83 \frac{1}{3}$ rods. The width was $12 \frac{2}{3}$ rods longer than the expected one-third of 212 rods ($70 \frac{2}{3}$). The extra width can be visualized as approximately 70 yards, or the minimum width of a soccer field used for international competition. This imaginary soccer field is over a mile long and this area is added to the southern or bottom region and removed from the area in the top region that extends toward Eight Lots Road. The net effect is that the area of the two rectangles of different widths described in the Rich Farm is equal to the area of one large rectangle. A detailed description of the dimensions and how to locate them on a map is now presented.

The southern bounds of the Rich Farm began at the Oxford-Douglas-Sutton border and projected $83 \frac{1}{3}$ rods east. The eastern border of the Rich Farm extended in a northerly direction parallel to the Oxford border 376 rods to a heap of stones and a walnut tree in a meadow. This tree served as the reference point in the partition agreement because the boundaries of the towns of Oxford and Sutton did not include Manchaug Farm in 1722. The first tract of land describes a rectangle $83 \frac{1}{3}$ by 376 rods. A second tract of land is described as a rectangle 376 rods long and a width 20 less than the first tract ($63 \frac{1}{3}$ rods). A final sliver of land bordering Eight Lots Road was 10 rods less ($73 \frac{1}{3}$ rods) than the width of the first tract with a length of 3 rods (the total length is then $376 + 376 + 3 = 755$). A facsimile of the land description is shown in **Figure 2**. The area in acres is calculated using the dimensions of a rectangle in rods: area (acres) = width * length / 160; 1000 acres is equal to 160,000 sq rods.

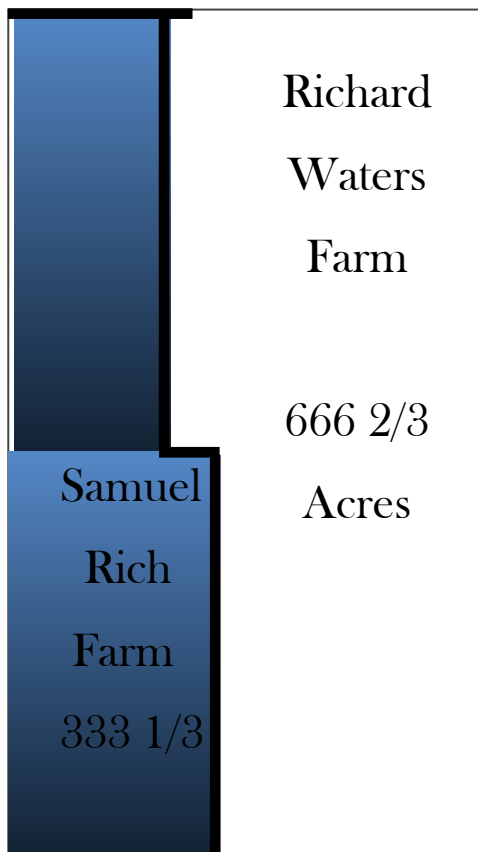
Calculation of the area of the three rectangles previously described quickly demonstrates the partition of the land represents a tract that is greater than $333 \frac{1}{3}$ acres. However, since two documents declare the Rich Farm to be $333 \frac{1}{3}$ acres and the partition describes the boundary lines as perpendicular and parallel to the Manchaug Farm borders, a 21st century reader can be confident of the intended partition. The distance to the walnut tree may have been $83 \frac{1}{3}$ rods but perhaps the

distance to the heap of stones was $80 \frac{2}{3}$ rods as shown in **Figure 3**. This shorter dimension determines the Rich Farm to contain an acreage of $333 \frac{1}{3}$. Is it likely that 3 rods are an acceptable margin of error for measurements of such a large distance over hilly terrain? An exhaustive study of the land records of the heirs of Elizabeth Rich is required to either resolve this discrepancy or confirm the dimensions found in the partition agreement. The settlement of the estate of her son Nathaniel Rich in 1744 indicates a width of 80 rods.

The motivation for creating a wider southern partition of the Rich Farm has not been discovered. Perhaps the land was of a better quality closer to Manchaug Pond. Another consideration is that both the road to Oxford and the Connecticut Path leading to Hartford were located in the bottom half of the Stoughton Grant. The relationship of Samuel Rich of Mendon and Richard Waters of Salem appears to be stronger than simply two business partners engaged in land speculation in a wilderness area. A careful reading of the first-generation descendants of these men shows that there were no marriages between the families. A review of the ancestors of Richard Waters and the two wives of Samuel Rich demonstrates an unexpected familial relationship.

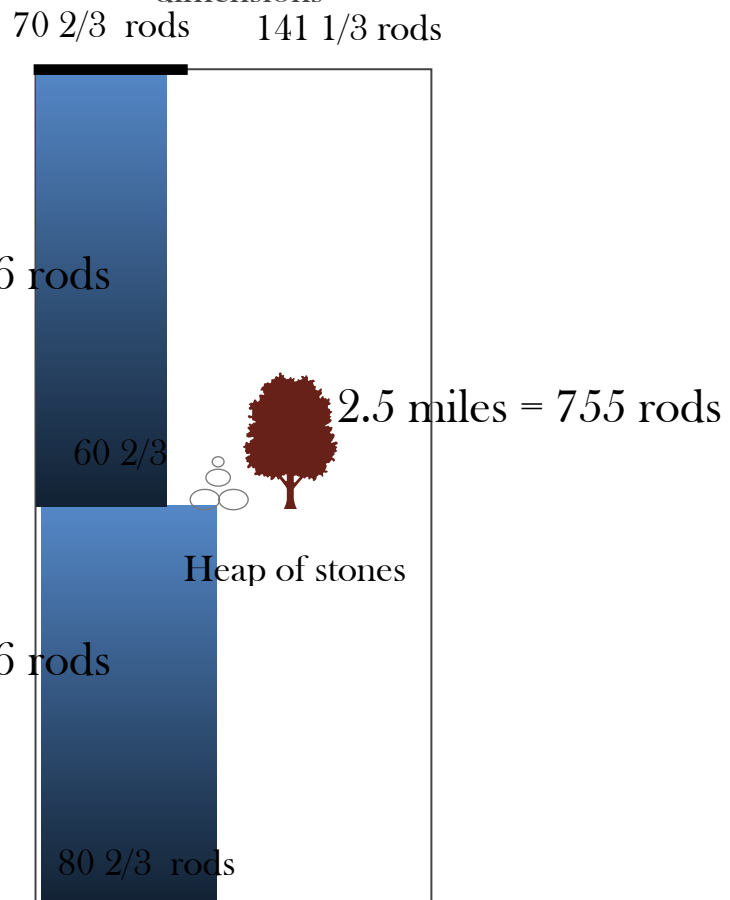
Richard Waters was the son of John and Sarah (Tompkins) Waters of Salem. In 1705, Samuel Rich married at Salem for his first wife, Hannah Marsh, the daughter of Samuel and Priscilla (Tompkins) Marsh. Upon her death, Samuel Rich married for his second wife, Elizabeth Tompkins, daughter of John and Rebecca (Knights) Tompkins from Salem. Richard, Hannah, and Elizabeth were all first cousins, with their parents being the children of John and Margaret Tompkins of Salem. The consanguinity between Richard Waters and both wives of Samuel Rich explains the nature of the relationship between the Waters and Rich families of West Sutton.

Figure 2 - 1723 Partition between Waters and Rich



1000 Acre Stoughton Grant

Figure 3 - 1723 Partition between Waters and Rich with dimensions



1000 Acre Stoughton Grant

Dispatch from Wampus Corner

By Peter Michelson

The establishment of the Town of Sutton in 1704 is recorded as a grant from the General Court of the Province of Massachusetts Bay. The language of this grant can be found documented in the History of Sutton Volume I. The territory is described as an area eight miles square including Hassanamessit which is four miles square. Hassanamessit is the Indian praying village and the homeland of the Hassanamisco Nipmuck people of the Nipmuck Nation. The four-mile square tract was reserved by John Wampus alias White (son of Wampus) in his will recorded in London, England in 1679.

Figure 1 is a facsimile of the tract of land as presented in the book, "The Indians of the Nipmuck Country in Southern New England, 1630 - 1750" by Dennis Connole. The tract is described in a deed at the Suffolk land records (Book 16 Page 89) that was executed in 1686 and recorded in 1693. Edward Pratt and his investors were unable to settle the land as their ownership was not recognized by the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony because Joseph Dudley and William Stoughton had previously purchased said territory from the tribe in 1682. The deed describes the area as two miles square on each side of the four-mile square Hassanamessit. This deed is an agreement between Edward Pratt and company (executors of the estate of John Wampus) and the "proprietors and inhabitants of Assanamoscoc in Nipmugg country".

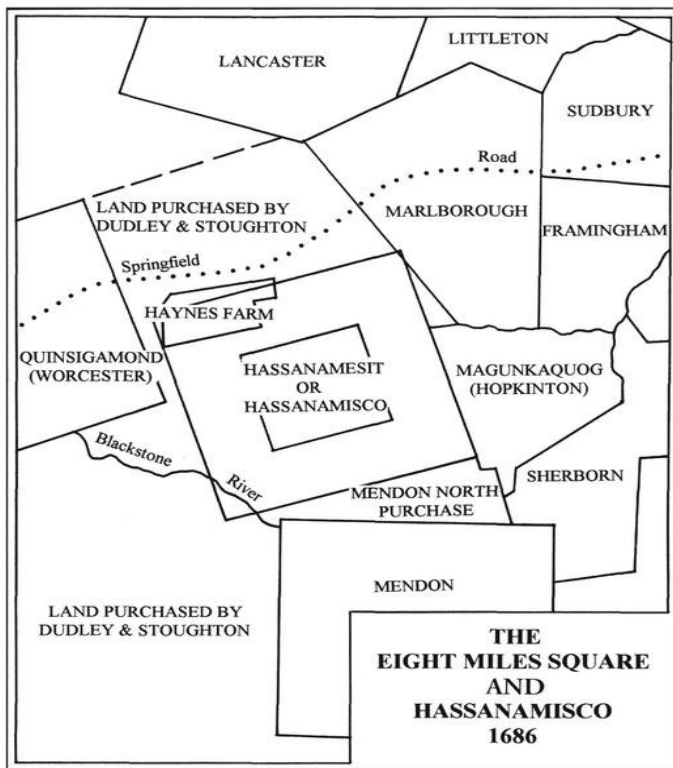


Figure 1: Hassanamessit from 1686 Deed

However, this donut-shaped configuration would never be acceptable to settlers of a new town in Colonial Massachusetts. The meetinghouse was typically located in the geographic center of the town which in this case would be in Hassanamessit. Therefore, placing the meetinghouse in any other region would be inconvenient for a majority of the settlers. The distance our Puritan ancestors would have had to travel to attend the all-day Sunday sabbath would follow the perimeter of the town or require them to traverse Hassanamessit. The town boundaries also would be unlikely to meet the constraint of not encroaching on other grants.

In 1702, Joseph Dudley was appointed the Governor of the Province of Massachusetts Bay and Province of New Hampshire which led to the establishment of Sutton in 1704. A map that was created in 1705, preserved at the Massachusetts State Archives, and confirmed by the General Court may provide some insight into the intention of Governor Joseph Dudley. While determining the location of a 500-acre grant to the heirs of Reverend John Collins, the plat includes the obvious landmarks of Manchaug Pond, Manchaug Hill, and "the rhoad from Oxford to Mendon". There is also a landmark that is labeled as "Wampus Corner". Dimensions and distances are measured with respect to this location. The northern boundary of the proposed 500-acre grant also includes the annotation "supposed to bound on Wampus Land". A landmark labeled as a "corner" is

typically the extent of a region, usually a grant of land. Two other local examples from 18th century maps are "Manchaug Corner" in Oxford and "Bear Corner" in New Sherborn. The obvious conclusion is that "Wampus Corner" was the extent of the eight-mile square region (i.e. "Wampus Land") reserved for the township of Sutton as shown in **Figure 2**. Hassanamessit was located in the northeast corner. The township extended an additional four miles west and south. "Wampus Corner" as shown in **Figure 2** was the extreme southwestern extent of the plan for the township of Sutton as described in 1704. The eight-mile square region is then "Wampus Land", containing the four mile square region of Hassanamessit. It is likely that this plan was ultimately rejected because it encroached on previous land boundaries established by a grant to other towns (Northbridge was part of Mendon at this time).

The township of Sutton was eventually platted in 1715 after the Treaty of Utrecht at the conclusion of Queen Anne's War. The land area grew to over 41,000 sq acres as shown **Figure 3**. The land area was slightly more than eight square miles and included both Millbury and Grafton as well as parts of Upton and Northbridge. The irregular shape was created to fit within unclaimed Province Land within the following boundaries: east of Oxford and the 2500 acres from

various farms that became West Sutton, west of Mendon and Marlborough, south of Worcester, and north of New Sherborn which became the town of Douglas. "Wampus Corner" is estimated to be on Mendon Road in West Sutton, somewhere between Manchaug Road and Central Turnpike.

Figure 2: Sutton Township 1704 estimated boundaries on a contemporary map

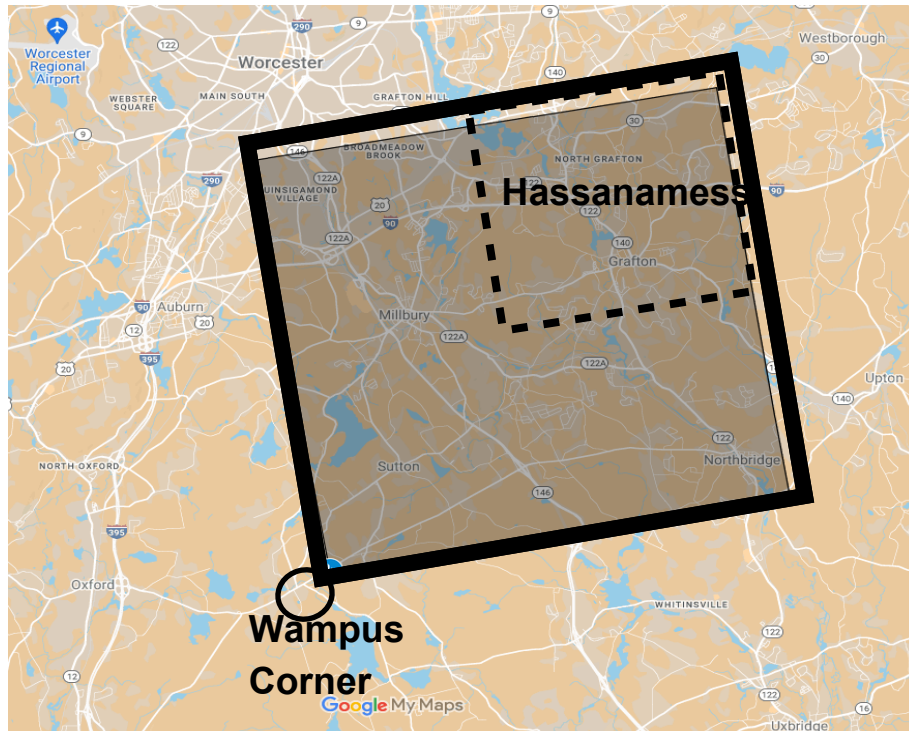
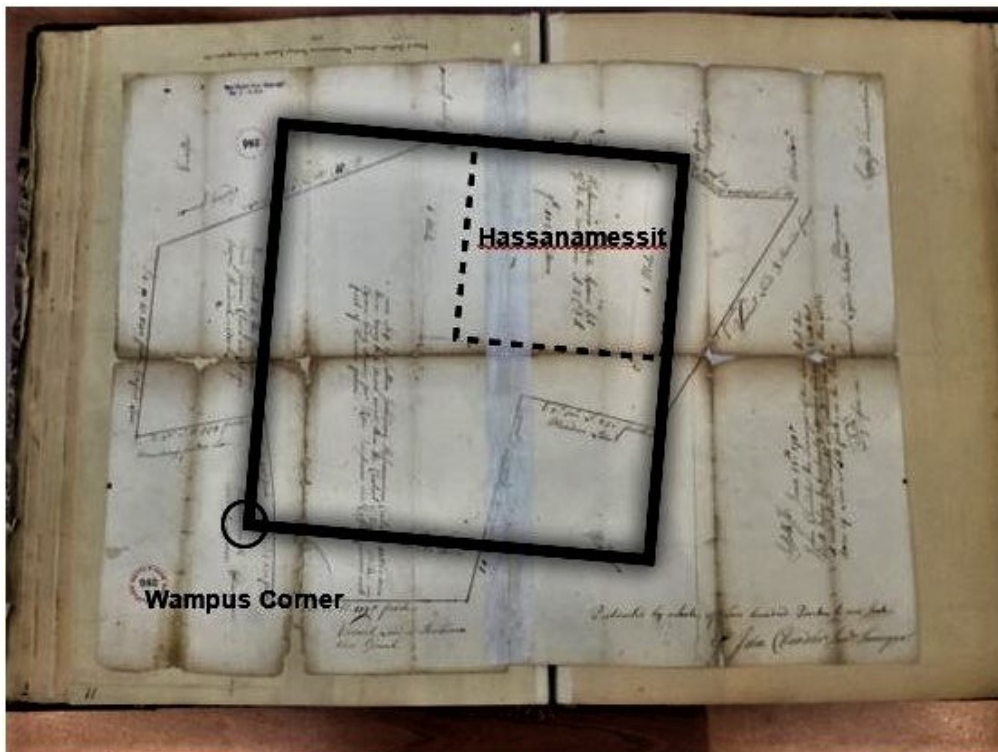


Figure 3: Sutton Township 1715 with Eight Mile Square Overlay Showing Wampus Corner in Region that became West Sutton



New Plantings by the Historical Society

Sutton Beauty Apple Trees

by Dave Pizzi

The Sutton Beauty Apple is an historic variety of apple. According to the book, *Apples of North America*, by Tom Buford, "Sutton Beauty was found around 1757 by Stephen Waters of Sutton, Massachusetts", and Waters Farm became famous as a large apple farm and cider mill. Amazingly, the apple was cultivated before the American Revolution. Stephen Waters died in Sutton in 1819.

In 2003, as part of Sutton's tricentennial celebration, a commemorative Sutton Beauty apple tree was planted at the M.M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop in the center of town. For years the tree displayed vibrant blossoms in the spring and would bear healthy fruit in late summer and fall. Over the last 5 years, the tree had shown signs of dying. The tree, unfortunately, had experienced abuse from being hit by riding lawn mowers, may not have been planted and secured properly, and, most likely, did not receive proper watering/pruning/fertilizing care.

The tree was one of 300 specially grown trees developed from "antique cultivates" by Keown Orchards, a local farm. Keown's was later acquired, and is currently owned by Foppema Farms. I was informed by Lisa Foppema that all the original 300 trees were sold in 2003, and there are no saplings or additional trees available. The only option would be to cultivate new saplings from an existing mature Sutton Beauty tree. Lisa suggested that I contact Jon Clements, Extension Educator, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, an expert in commercial fruit tree production. When I contacted Jon in 2018, he indicated that he had three Sutton Beauty trees at the UMass orchards in Belchertown that Artie Keown originally gave him in 2003. He mentioned the three Sutton Beauty apple trees are loaded with apples and anyone is welcome to harvest the apples whenever interested. In 2019, he was successful in bud-grafting 5 trees for us, for which he needed to properly grow and provide his "tender loving care", especially during the winter months. A few weeks ago on April 15, we received the trees from Jon. It was decided to plant two trees at the Blacksmith Shop and one tree at the Eight Lots School House. We are still deciding where to plant the remaining two trees, possibly on the Town Common or elsewhere.

Our Historical Society wants to acknowledge our sincere appreciation to Jon Clements for all his guidance and support, and for generously donating all his service and materials in providing these Sutton Beauty trees to be proudly displayed in our town.

Distressed, dying tree 2018



Successful tree graft created by Jon Clements and recognition plaque



Newly planted Sutton Beauty tree at Blacksmith Shop and Eight Lots School House



Tales of an Intern

By Myra Page

As a student at Sutton High School, it is strongly recommended that all senior class members partake in an internship to conclude the year. For example, some of my classmates decided to take on work at a local bank or shadow a teacher at the school. Oftentimes, students will pick their internships based on their intended majors or the interests they will pursue after high school. As someone with an interest in Communications and local history, I knew working for the Millbury-Sutton Chronicle and Sutton Historical Society would be the perfect fit for me.

Over the course of six weeks, I have sorted and organized numerous newsletters all the way from 1975 to 2022. When I first arrived at the General Rufus Putnam Museum for my internship, the newsletters were disorganized and unsystematic, making it difficult to find what you were looking for. After I had sorted through all of them, I created a data index and organized each article by year, author, title, volume, and issue number, as well as keywords. By pulling out keywords, people are able to search the document for any information they need. For example, if someone needed certain information for a school project, they could search through the index and find exactly what they are looking for within a few minutes.

The next part of this project was digitizing all of this information and publishing it on the Sutton Historical Society's website. With the help of Christine Watkins, Secretary of the Sutton Historical Society, we scanned every newsletter, and published them, by decade, to the website. While digitizing the newsletter was the majority of my internship, I also updated the Society's website, suttonhistoricalsocietyinc.org, for upcoming events—namely, a presentation by author, David Vermette, and the Coffee With Cows event that took place on the Town Common. This allowed me to gain valuable experience in website design. In addition, I set up booths for these events, arranged and set up the table, sold merchandise, promoted the Society, and shared my experience as an intern with local community members. I now have an even greater appreciation for community volunteers, as they were essential to the event's organization and smooth operation.

Another aspect of my internship was creating an ad for the Society to be included in Sutton's Fourth of July parade program. The town's 501(c)3 organizations work together to orchestrate the Sutton 4th of July parade, and many more fun events for the Sutton community.

As my last week as an intern comes to an end, I can say that I have thoroughly enjoyed my time with the Sutton Historical Society and the Millbury-Sutton Chronicle. Along the way, I have learned so many important values and lessons that I will continue to practice throughout my life. From this experience, I have deepened my understanding of patience, networking, and most importantly, the importance of knowing your town's local history.

Sutton High School's internship program is a great opportunity for young minds to explore potential career paths, gain valuable experience, and expand their professional network. I would recommend this program to any upcoming seniors or any interested companies and non-profits, as it provides students, like me, with a glimpse of what life after high school could look like.



2022 Calendar of Events

Dates and Times may be Subject to Change

All events open to both Society members and the general public.

Visit us at suttonhistoricalsocietyinc.org or Facebook for updated meeting information.

Upcoming meetings/events are listed in the Millbury-Sutton Chronicle, The Uxbridge Times, and the Blackstone Valley Xpress.

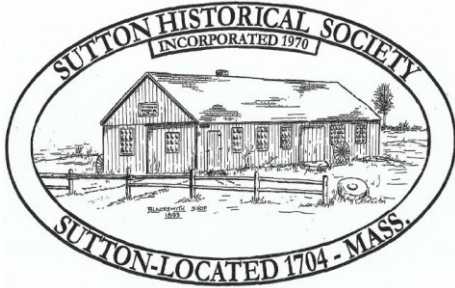
July 9-July 17		Can/Bottle Redemption Drive Drop off your returnable cans/bottles at your convenience 24-hours	M. M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop 6 Singletary Avenue
August 5 Friday	6:30 pm	Annual Potluck Supper	Eight Lots School House 54 Eight Lots Road
September 6 Tuesday	7:00 pm	Christie Higginbottom An Infinite Variety of Fruit: Historic New England Apples This program will explore the role played by apples at the table and on the farm landscape in the past, and will look at the revival of interest today.	First Congregational Church 307 Boston Road
October 1 Saturday	12:00 pm– 4:00 pm	Wagon and Cart Show	M.M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop 6 Singletary Avenue
October 4 Tuesday	7:00 pm	Annual Meeting	First Congregational Church 307 Boston Road
October 29 Saturday	7:00 pm	Historic Cemetery Tour Re-enactors will tell the tale of early Sutton settlers buried in the Sutton Center Cemetery	Sutton Center Cemetery 4 Uxbridge Road
November 1 Tuesday	7:00 pm	Michael Tougias, Author <u>Until I Have No Country</u> Presentation about King Philip's War	First Congregational Church 307 Boston Road
December 3 Saturday	Various	Chain of Lights Annual Town-wide Christmas Event	Eight Lots School House General Rufus Putnam Museum M. M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop
December 6 Tuesday	6:30 pm	Christmas Potluck	First Congregational Church 307 Boston Road
December 31 Saturday	Midnight	Last Night Cannon Firing Cannon Club	M. M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop 6 Singletary Avenue

**2022
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES**

Please note the annual membership fees are due by **March 1, 2022**. The fees collected are important funds to help sustain payments of related insurances, utility bills and ancillary bills, the mailing of the news bulletin and various activities. If you have not received your 2022 membership card, please renew today.
We gladly accept all donations.

VOLUNTEER...

We welcome all volunteer help. If you have a special talent, skill or trade, please let us know how you would like to volunteer and your area of interest. Please contact sutton1704@gmail.com.



Mail all payments to:

**SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Inc.
4 UXBRIDGE ROAD
SUTTON, MA 01590**

email: sutton1704@gmail.com
suttonhistoricalsocietyinc.org

MEMBERSHIP FORM

**Annual Membership Fee is due March 1, 2022
Checks Payable To: Sutton Historical Society, Inc.**

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

\$15.00 Individual Fee: _____

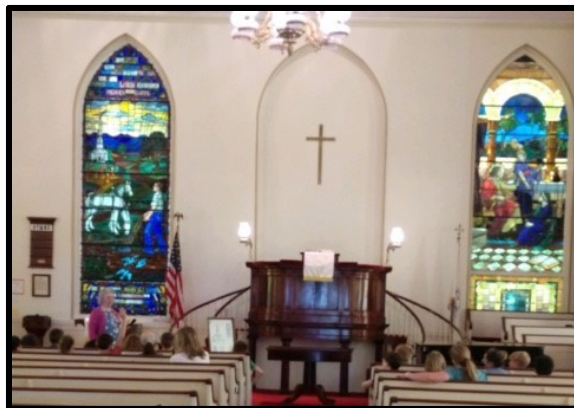
\$25.00 Family Fee (including children under 18): _____

Additional Donation: _____

The Sutton Historical Society, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.
Consult your tax professional for the deductibility of all donations

SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
4 UXBRIDGE ROAD
SUTTON, MA 01590

*Sutton 3rd
Graders Tour
Sutton Center
June 6, 2022*



*Meeting House
M.M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop
General Rufus Putnam Museum
Cannon Shed*

