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Pages from the Old Town Book of Lynn

These lands following were given to the inhabitants of the Towne of Lynn Anno Domini 1638:

- * To ye right hon ye Lord Brooks, 800 acres as it is estimated.
- * To Mr. Tho: Willis, upland and medow, 500 acres as it is estimated.
- * Mr. Edwa: Holliocke, upland and medow, 500 acres.
- * Henry Collins, upland and medow, 800 acres and tenn.
- Mr. Flood, upland and medow, 60 acres and tenn.
- Edw: and Frans' Ingalls, upland and medow, 120 acres.
- * Widdow Bancroft, 100 acres.
- * Widdow Hammon, 60 acres.
- * George Burrall, 200 acres.
- John Wood, 100 acres.
- * Tho: Talmage, 200 acres and tenn.
- * Nicholas Browne, 200 acres and tenn.
- Thomas Laughton, 60 acres and tenn.
- John Cooper, 200 acres and tenn.
- * Boniface Burton, 60 acres.
- * Mr. Sadler, 200 acres and the rock by his house.
- * Joseph Armitage, 60 acres.
- * Godfrey Armitage, 20 acres.
- Mathew West, upland and medow, 30 acres and tenn.
- George Farr, 30 acres and tenn.
- * James Bowtwell, 60 acres.
- * Zachary Fitch, 30 acres and tenn.
- Jarrett Spencer, 30 acres.
- Jenkin Davis, 30 acres and tenn.
- * George Taylor, 30 acres and tenn.
- Thorne, 30 acres and tenn.
- * Thos: Townsend, 60 acres.
- * Tho: Parker, 30 acres and tenn.
- Francis Lightfoot, 30 acres and tenn.
- Richard Johnson, 30 acres and tenn.
- Robert Parson, 30 acres and tenn.
- To Philip Kirtland, junior, 10 acres.
- Goodman Croste, 10 acres.
- * Hugh Burt, 60 acres.
- Wathin, 10 acres.
- Richard Brooks, 10 acres.
- Francis Godson, 30 acres.
- George Wellbye —
- Will: Partridge, upland, 10 acres.
- * William Cowdrye, 60 acres and tenn.
- Allin Bread, 200 acres.
- Edward How, 200 acres and tenn.
- * John Poole, 200 acres.
- Job Seyers, 60 acres.
- Thos: Seyers, 60 acres.
- Thos: Chadwell, 60 acres.
- * Christopher Foster, 60 acres.
- * Edmund Farrington, 200 acres.
- Nicholas Potter, 60 acres.

- * — Walton, 60 acres.
- William Ballard, 60 acres.
- Josiah Stanborough, 100 acres.
- * Edwa: Tomlins 200 acres and twenty.
- * Will: Knight, 60 acres.
- South, 100 acres.
- * John Smith, 60 acres.
- * Mr. Edward Howell, 500 acres.
- * Nicholas Battye, 60 acres.
- * Edward Burcham, 30 acres and tenn.
- * Anthonye Newill, 30 acres.
- * Tho: Newill, 30 acres and tenn.
- Michael Spenser, 30 acres.
- * Timothy Tomlins, 80 acres.
- William Harker, 20 acres.
- * Richard Rooton, 60 acres, sould to ye Towne 20 acres next to ye towne for 3 shillings.
- Nathaniel Handford, 20 acres.
- Thomas Hudson, 60 acres.
- Thomas Halsye, 100 acres.
- * Samuel Bennitt, 20 acres.
- John Elderkin, 20 acres.
- * Abraham Belknap, 40 acres.
- Robert Driver, 20 acres.
- John Deakin, 10 acres.
- * Philip Kirtland, senior, 10 acres.
- * Tho: Marshall, 30 acres and tenn.
- Nathaniel Whiterige, 10 acres.
- George Fraile, 10 acres.
- Joseph Rednap, 40 acres.
- * Edward Bridges, 10 acres.
- * Richard Langlye, 40 acres.
- Tho: Talmadge, junior, 20 acres.
- Tho: Couldum, 60 acres.
- * Adam Hawks, upland, 100 acres.
- * Thomas Dexter, 350 acres.
- Daniel How, upland and medow, 60 acres.
- * Richard Walker, upland and medow, 200 acres.
- Henry Gaines, 40 acres.
- Richard Wells, 10 acres.
- Pell, 10 acres.
- John White, 20 acres.
- Edward Baker, 40 acres.
- James Axey, 40 acres.
- Will: Edmonds, 10 acres.
- Edward Ireson, 10 acres.
- Jeremy How, 20 acres.
- William George, 20 acres.
- Ephraim Howe, next to ye land of his father, upland, 10 acres.
- Ivorye, 10 acres.
- Timothy Cooper, 10 acres.
- Sam'll Hutchinson, 10 by estimation.
- * Mr. Samuell Whiting, the pastor, 200 acres.
- * Mr. Thomas Cobit, the Teacher, 200 acres.

The above represents three pages from the Towne booke of the Records of
 Lynn the 10th $\frac{1}{mo}$ Ano Domni $\frac{59}{60}$ By me Andrew Mansfield
 towne Recorder

Notes: By the calendar then in use the 1st month was April.

The * indicates grantees mentioned in the following pages.

The Six Mile Grant and Its Distribution

Recent search among the old records of the Quarterly Court of Essex County in Salem, has thrown much light upon the planting of Linn Village and Linn Fields. One document is a copy of three pages from the long lost town book of Lynn, giving the number of acres granted in 1638 to each of its inhabitants, in the distribution of thirteen square miles of land, most of it lying within the present bounds of Wakefield, Reading and Lynnfield.

This grant was from the General Court of the Colony, and extended six miles from the meeting-house in Lynn. Its western limits were the two Wakefield ponds, and from thence north to the Ipswich River. The date was March 13, 1638. The distribution began immediately, for according to the book of Lands and Ways of the Town of Reading, Nicholas Browne received 200 acres, much of it on the east shore of the Greate Pond, on March 18, 1638.

One of these grantees received 800 acres— $1\frac{1}{4}$ square miles; several, 500 acres; fourteen, 200 acres; seven, 100 acres; and forty-eight had either 40, 60, or 80 acres. This allotment was not based upon their relative amount of property as in later division of common lands. When the Colony made these large grants to various towns between 1630 and 1640, it had several objects in view:

Promises Were Fulfilled

These land grants enabled the company that promoted the settlement of Massachusetts Bay to fulfil its obligation to the patriotic stockholders who had advanced money to meet the cost of fitting out and of planning the Colony. Its pledge was as follows:

“The allotment of land to adventurers in the common stock was 200 acres for each £50 adventured. For persons as go over at their own charge and are adventurers in the common stock shall have lands for themselves and their families at the rate of 50 acres for each person; but being ‘noe adventurers’ shall have 50 acres for the Mister and familie.”

This contract explains the thousands of acres in Concord and elsewhere granted to Gov. Winthrop and Gov. Dudley; the great farm of Gov. Bellingham in Andover; of Hon. John Humphrey, which extended for a mile in every direction from Suntaug Lake, Lynnfield; and, in this Lynn distribution of 1638, Lord Brook’s farm of 800 acres, Mr. Willis’, Mr. Holyoke’s, and Mr. Howell’s, of 500 acres each, besides a dozen more of 200 acres. Among the last group were Nicholas Brown whose lands east of the Greate Pond included the present Beebe estate; John Pool, the town miller, whose farm extended the entire length of the present Bay State Road, including in its limits the Wakefield and Cox farms and Camp Curtis Guild; Richard Walker, the first captain of the Reading military company, and its first representative to the General Court; Richard Sadler, the town clerk of Lynn, whose land west of Haverhill street, between the Ipswich River and Bare Meadow, is still known as Sadler’s Neck. Grantees such as these, had advanced money to aid in planting the Colony, and now received this land in payment.

Those who were granted 40, 60, or 80 acres came over at their own charge, and had advanced no money to the company. Among these is the name of William Cowdrey, 60 acres. He was town clerk, selectman, and a deacon of the church during the first forty years of the town’s existence; John Smith, 60 acres. He later owned by purchase or inheritance the Howell farm of 500 acres, extending east from the lake at Wakefield Junction to the Saugus line; Zachary Fitch, 40 acres, on Fitch’s Lane, now Salem street, Wakefield, a short distance from the Common. He was chosen as a selectman and a deacon when the town and the church were organized; Thomas Parker, 40 acres. His homestead was about fifty rods

north-east of the present town hall in Wakefield; was "won of the foundation of the church," and the ancestor of Capt. John of Lexington fame, and Rev. Theodore, the theologian and anti-slavery agitator; "Widdow Bancroft," 100 acres, probably near Beaver Dam, Lynnfield Center. Her husband, John, died in 1637, a few years after their arrival at Lynn. He was not the father, but probably a brother of Lieut. Thomas, ancestor of the Reading Bancrofts and of George Bancroft, the historian; George Taylor, 40 acres, described as "now situated in the town of Reading." In 1642 he sold this and 50 acres more, all east of the Greate Pond, to Nicholas Brown; Adam Hawks, 100 acres, west of the Saugus line. In 1653, when a committee settled the boundary between Lynn and Lynn Village, this farm was mentioned as John Smith's farm; Joseph Armitage 60 acres; his brother Godfrey, 20 acres; Hugh Burt 60 acres; all located in Lynn Village, and sold by them soon after 1638; Thomas Marshall, 40 acres. Thirty acres of this were near John Pool's saw mill on the Cox farm. His dwelling with 16 acres adjoining was near the corn-mill, where John Pool and Thomas Parker were his neighbors. He was one of the first selectmen; he with William Cowdrey, John Pool and Richard Walker were foremost in promoting the settlement of Lynn Village. He went to England, fought under Cromwell, returned to Lynn, where he was for many years landlord of the famous Anchor Tavern, half way between Boston and Salem. Like Walker, he was a captain and a member of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company.

Longley vs. Town of Lynn

The occasion which led to the copying of these three pages of the old Lynn town book was a suit brought against that town in 1660 by William Longley, "for withholding and not laying out forty acres of land which were his due and equal proportion as an inhabitant, according to a distribution made in 1638." He won his suit, and forty acres were laid out for him west of the Humphrey farm in Lynnfield. In 1678, it was purchased by Lieut. Thomas Bancroft. During the trial of this case, Joseph Armitage testified "that in the division of land, he and his brother Godfrey

had given to them four score acres. He sold it about twenty-one years before for £15 gold. The 30 and 40 acre lots in Lin village were worth and sold for 20 shillings per acre." Andrew Mansfield and Hugh Burt testified "that the 30 and 40 acre lots in Lin village which were given by the town of Lin at the same time that the forty acres now in question were given were worth in their judgment about 20 shillings per acre."

In the inventory of the estate of Abraham Belknap of Lynn taken in 1643, is a "lot of 30 acres in the Village." He was granted 40 acres in the distribution of 1638. This evidence, and many other facts already stated, prove that Lynn Village was laid out in adjacent 30 and 40 acre lots along Main Street, from the head of the Pond south to the Town Hall.

Inland Villages Planted

This brings us to the consideration of the second object sought by the General Court when making grants to towns, namely, the planting of villages on the frontier inland from the Bay. This is clearly shown in the wording of the two Lynn grants which immediately became territory of Linn Village. On March 13, 1638/9, when Linn was granted six miles into the country, two men were appointed "to report whether the land beyond it may be fit for another plantation." This six mile grant was at once divided among the one hundred inhabitants of Lynn as set forth in the preceding pages. Three months later there was a second grant viz, "The petition of the inhabitants of Linn for a place for an inland plantation at the head of their bounds is granted them four miles square on condition they shall within two years make some good proceeding in planting so as it may be a village fit to contain a convenient number of inhabitants which may in due time have a church there."

This second grant extended west to Woburn bounds and included most of the present town of Reading and all of Wakefield west of its two ponds. Inhabitants of Lynn, as such, had no share in any distribution of this grant. It was reserved for future inhabitants of the new plantation.

On Nov. 4, a committee was appointed "to measure the bounds of

Linn and to certify how it lyeth for the settling of their bounds and the bounds of the village." This committee in the following June "That the six mile grant from the meeting-house in Linn extends from the Charlestown bounds (Stoneham) to the south end of the Greate Pond at Linn village from thence to the greate swamp adjoining to the Greate Pond, and so to run northward to the North River (Ipswich) and thence to Salem bounds (Middleton.)

The fact that in November 1639, a village is spoken of, and that in June 1640, it is called Linn village, indicates that probably rude habitation had been built; but it was not until 1644, when a sufficient number of families had been settled, that the Court christened the village by ordering, "that Linn village shall be called Redding at the request of its inhabitants."

Many such villages were planted during the decade between 1635 and 1645, all with conditions similar to those governing the settlement of Linn village. Charlestown was defined as extending eight miles from its meeting-house and its proprietors were granted two miles at its headline provided they build within two years. Later it was given a grant of four miles square "to make a village." Previous to 1638 it was known as Charlestown village and then Woburn.

Cambridge was granted land for Shawsheen village, now Billerica, "provided they make it a village to have ten families within three years." It was laid out in farms of 125 acres, and village lots of 40 acres near to the church.

Topsfield was settled by the inhabitants of Salem who "agreed to plant a village near the river which runs down to Ipswich."

A Typical New England Village

Many other settlements were planted by order of the Court under similar conditions, viz, a considerable number of homestead lots, centrally located and large farms often owned by the villagers sometimes two or three miles distant.

Each village had its church, with a "learned minister," settled for life; a school; a military company and a training field or common. At

first all dwellings were required to be within half a mile of the meeting-house, and no man could become a resident unless he had purchased a "homestall." These requirements insured safety, promoted neighborliness, established certain uniformity in social customs and habits.

Land was held by titles independent of any foreign prince or landlord, and local government was secured by freemen in town-meetings assembled. Each village became a small democracy.

When a town was taking shape time, correspondence and long consultations were necessary to secure suitable families.

All this was true in the founding of Reading. William Cowdrey its town clerk for forty years and one of the first deacons and a selectman testified in 1683, when about eighty-one years of age that, "I Being one of the first Beginers of ye towne of Reding and before ye settlement of sayd town we, the proprietors of land in Redding had many meetings at Lyn." This explains why, although the land was granted in 1638/9, a church was not organized in Linn village until 1645, nor deacons or selectmen chosen until 1647.

The Puritan fathers were not so much interested in promoting their real estate, as in securing a firm foundation for their great experiment in self-government here in New England. They builded wisely and deliberately. The institutions thus established have been equal to the tests placed upon them, and have become the main stay of our strength as a nation.

Old Reading was thus founded; and, during the three hundred years of its history, has been true to these ideals. It has experienced peace and war; periods of prosperity and adversity. It has never failed to bear its share of responsibility in maintaining a worthy democracy.

Promotors of the new village were Lynn men; but many leading settlers came from other towns.

The statement often made that Reading territory was a part of Lynn, and that its early settlers were chiefly from that place, convey an erroneous impression. The two land grants of 1638/9, now Wakefield and

Reading, were intended for a new village. Before 1638, this was common land of the Bay Colony, and not a part of Lynn territory.

Its early settlers were far from being exclusively inhabitants of Lynn. The Rev. Henry Green, the first Reading minister, settled in 1645, was from Watertown, and a large group of most influential settlers soon migrated from Watertown and Dedham. Such were Jonas and William Eaton, John Batchelder, John Damon, Isaac Hart, Thomas Taylor, Henry Felch; Thomas Bancroft and Robert Gowing leased land in Reading, joined its church, and later moved to neighboring farms in Lynnfield.

From Charlestown came Thomas Kendall, Francis Smith, Peter Palfrey and Jeremiah Swayne. Robert Burnap was from Roxbury via Salem. Four of the seven first selectmen were from this group while Kendall, Bancroft and Damon were of the first eight deacons. All but two of those mentioned shared in the first distribution of the Reading common lands made in 1647. Their homesteads were on village lots sold to them by Lynn grantees of 1638, who did not wish to improve their holdings. They were men of character, ability and property; attracted to Reading, doubtless, by the prospect of sharing in the four mile grant (16 sq. miles) made to Lynn village in 1638.

Full credit should be given, however, to those far-sighted inhabitants of Lynn who for years had promoted the planting of the village by securing grants from the General Court, selecting a few families to venture into the wilderness, securing the wise and devoted minister from Watertown, and inducing such a superior group of families to follow him to Reading.

County and town records show that the Lynn men to whom credit, as founders and promoters of Lynn village chiefly belongs were Dea. William Cowdrey, Capt. Richard Walker, John Pool, Nicholas Brown, Lieut. William Marshall and Dea. Thomas Parker.

The Ancient Records of Lynn and Reading

During three hundred years many things have happened to the old records of Lynn and Reading. At the outset there were only a handful of voters, the town meetings were very informal, and the records were probably kept on loose leaves that were soon misplaced and torn. By 1715, the Lynn records were "so much shattered" that its inhabitants voted, "that the oldest book may be kept fare to reed severell years, and the second book transcribed." A few pages were thus copied and the books afterwards lost or destroyed. It is quite likely that the pages copied out of the old book in 1660, which are printed at the beginning of this study, giving the names of the grantees in the distribution of the six mile grant in 1638, were among its most important ones. The first record book of Reading also became "shattered," and at a town meeting in 1681 it was voted, "that the Old Town Book be transcribed that is in all material things." This was carefully done probably under the supervision of the venerable William Cowdrey deeply interested in promoting Lynn Village years before its actual settlement, and with his son, Nathaniel, its town clerks until 1688. It is in two parts, one containing records, of town meetings from 1644, and the other the Book of Lands and Ways beginning in 1638. Besides records copied in 1681 it has also a few mutilated entries of the very earliest land records. Many grants mentioned in the Court copy of Lynn grants of 1638 are confirmed and fully described in the Reading book of Lands and Ways. It has the following title: "A Trew Record of the lands and medows within the Bounds of the towne of Redding as they were given by the Towne of Lin or as they were given by the Towne of Redding or as they have been purchased of others.

The 18th of the 12 mo. 1638.”

In a few instances the copy of 1681 gives neighboring owners as of that year. For example, Nicholas Brown bought land east of the Great Pond of George Taylor of Lynn in 1642, and Hananiah Parker is mentioned as owning land on the north; he was in 1642 only four years of age, having been born in 1638!

The copy of 1681 was again transcribed by William Wightman, town clerk of Reading from 1862 to 1874. The ancient letter forms were difficult to decipher, making his task long and perplexing. His copy was beautifully done and remarkably accurate. Before 1700 the title “Master” was a very honorable one, reserved for ministers, magistrates, and other learned men. Mr. Wightman sometimes mistook the abbreviation “Mas.” for that of “Maj.”, as result he gave to several of the early ministers the military title of major. Jeremiah Swayne was the only Reading man bearing the title of major before 1700.

In addition to the Book of Lands and Ways of Reading, the Registry of Deeds in Salem, contains records of the transfer of various lots that were parts of the six mile grant of 1638. Some of these lots were in Lynn Village, some in Lynn Fields and some in Saugus.

Land in this wilderness, three centuries ago, had so little value that many grantees did not pay the cost of having it located; others neglected to have its transfer recorded; and the crude way in which these remote tracts were laid out make it impossible to locate all of these early grants. No compass or chain was used; at the ends of boundary lines, trees were marked with initials of owners; only natural features were mentioned as boundaries, such as ponds, rivers, swamps and ledges; often the name of an adjacent owner or a highway is mentioned.

Three Large Grants South of the Ipswich

The first and largest of the one hundred grants made in 1638 was to the Rt. Hon. Lord Brooks. It was 800 acres ($1\frac{1}{4}$ sq. miles), not far from the present village of North Reading. It was bounded on the north by the Ipswich river, south by Bare meadow, west by Haverhill st. and included land on both sides of Chestnut st. for a mile. The General Court in 1639 "empowered Edward Holyoke to manage the estate of his lordship until the Lord Brooke do otherwise dispose of it." In 1654, Robert Bridges, probably acting as an attorney for the town of Lynn, sold this farm to Robert Burnapp of Reading. This deed was witnessed by Thomas Marshall and John Cotton before Deputy Governor Billingham. (Essex, Vol. 4, page 534). Payment was to be in good, sweet, well-conditioned, fat, fresh beef and in good, sweet, dry, well-cleansed, merchantable wheat at the warehouse of Mr. Broughton, Boston.

In 1662, Robert Burnapp sold the Lord Brooks farm to Capt. George Curwin of Salem for £200. Its western end was described as being on the farm of Capt. Walker (the Sadler grant), and the eastern end by Willis' meddow, "where a small brook runs out of the meddow down (north) towards the greate river." The meadow and brook still bear his name.

Grant to Mr. Sadler

West of the Lord Brooks farm, was a grant of 200 acres made to Mr. Richard Sadler. It was south of the Ipswich, north of Bare meadow, and west of Haverhill st. This and a part of the Lord Brooks farm are still known as Sadler's Neck. He returned to England in 1646. The town of Reading bought the west half and afterwards gave it to the eight families

then living in the North Precinct. Several of these families later sold their lots to Francis Nurse of Danvers, a grandson of the good Rebecca Towne who was executed for witchcraft. Capt. Richard Walker bought the half next to the Lord Brooks farm, and in 1680 sold it to John Legg of Marblehead "with seven acres of meadow, south of a river commonly called Bare river."

The Reading book of Lands and Ways has the following record: "Land of Capt. Richard Walker that he bought of Lieut. Thomas Marshall, which is one-half of the 200 acres that was sometime Mas. Richard Sadler's, lying west of the farm that was Capt. Bridges" (the Lord Brooks grant).

Grant to Mr. Willis

A third grant south of the Ipswich, was that of Mr. Thomas Willis, 500 acres of upland and meadow. It extended east from Willis' Brook to the paper mills in Middleton (then Salem territory). The present Sagamore Golf Course was within its limits. His grant was sold to Isaac Hart by his daughter Elizabeth, wife of the Rev. John Knowles of Watertown. These three large grants extended for three miles along the south bank of the Ipswich, from the junction of the present Park and Chestnut streets in North Reading east to the paper mills on the Middleton line.

Persons Connected With These Grants

Robert Lord Brooke was born in 1607; educated at Cambridge; was an M. P. for Warwick town in 1628 when he succeeded his cousin in the peerage. He early imbibed republican notions and with young Vicount Say and Sele refused to profess loyalty to the King in 1639. He was a captain in the armies of the Commonwealth in 1642. He died March 2, 1642/3, in his thirty-sixth year at Lichfield, being struck in the vizor of his helmet by a musket ball while directing the seige of St. Chad Cathedral. (See p. 333, Vol. II, Complete Peerage, by Gibbs.)

He had resolved to seek liberty in New England. The connection of Lord Brooke with Lord Say and Sele is commemorated by the town of Saybrook at the mouth of the Connecticut River, founded under their auspices.

Lord Say and Sele and the Earl of Lincoln were co-heirs of the Barony of Say.

Mr. Richard Sadler was the first clerk of the writs for the town of Lynn, 1635. He returned to England in 1646, was ordained as a minister, installed at Ludlow, but was deposed during the Restoration. In addition to the 200 acres between the Ipswich and Bare Meadow rivers, he was granted "The rock by his house." This great ledge is at the junction of Walnut and Holyoke streets in West Lynn. On its summit Judge Newhall, Lynn's historian, built his stone mansion, and at its base in 1854, placed a tablet bearing Richard Sadler's name.

Mr. Thomas Willis was a representative from Lynn to the first General Court in 1634, and a member of the Essex Court. His home was on Tower Hill, south of Sadler's Rock; called Willis' Hill first. He was one of the wealthiest of Lynn settlers, but went with two score more of its inhabitants to found Sandwich in Plymouth County. His honorary title of "Mr." was probably due to his being an English schoolmaster.

Robert Burnap was a proprietor in Roxbury in 1640. His son Isaac inherited half of a Salem farm from his father-in-law, and the Burnaps lived in that town until after 1647. In 1654, however, he mortgaged to Capt. Bridges his Reading homestead of 70 acres, east of Vernon st. and south of Lowell st., Wakefield. The Burnaps owned a great deal of land in Reading and for generations were very influential in its affairs. Robert Sr. was a selectman for fourteen years, and much of the surveying was done by him and his sons. Joseph Burnet (Burnap), the founder of St. Mark's School in Southboro, was a descendant of Robert of Reading.

George Corwin was a wealthy merchant of Salem and captain of the military company there at the time of King Philip's War. A son, George, married a daughter of Gov. John Winthrop of Connecticut.

Four Large Grants in the Bounds of Lynnfield

South of the Willis grant, which Isaac Hart bought, was 240 acres, granted in 1638 to Edward Tomlins, a brother-in-law of Isaac Hart. The latter bought this farm also in 1649. The Essex registry's record of this sale is as follows: "Capt. Edward Tomlins of London to Isaac Hart of Redding by Robert Bridges Attorney for £13 all his farme of 200 acres in the bounds of Linn which farme was given to Edward Tomlins by the Towne of Linn and in any meadow of said Tomlins within two miles of said farme." In 1661, Isaac Hart leased this farm to John Batchelder and his son David of Reading.

Edward Tomlins, Mrs. Hart and Mrs. Bridges all belonged to the Tomlins family. Edward Tomlins and Robert Bridges were representatives from Lynn for many years, the latter being its Speaker and also an Assistant. Both were members of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company. Edward Tomlins came to New England with Thomas Parker; both aged 30; and both went to Lynn.

Grant to Edward Holyoke

South of the Isaac Hart farms in Lynnfield Center, north of Vernon Street was the large grant of "Mr. Edward Holliocke upland and medow 500 acres." His will dated 1660 says, "All my land in Linn and that land and medow in the Country neere Reding all was granted my son Elizur Holyoke when he married Mr. Pynchon's Daughter." In the inventory is listed, "A farme at Bever Dam neare Redding, £150.

Mr. Edward Holyoke was a representative from Lynn for nine terms and a member of the Essex Court. His family name is perpetuated by

the mountain in the Connecticut valley, named in honor of his son Elizur Holyoke, of whom, a worthy writer said, "His whole life was devoted to the service of the people of the Connecticut Valley." He married a daughter of Gov. Pynchon. Edward Holyoke, who was a president of Harvard College was his grandson. Dr. Edward Holyoke of Salem who died at the age of one hundred years, and for whom the Holyoke Insurance Company of Salem is named, was a descendant of the Lynn immigrant. His home was on Sagamore Hill, at the north end of Lynn Beach, overlooking the harbor on the west, with a full view of Massachusetts Bay on the east. The hill is now covered by beautiful estates, and a great boulevard extends along the ocean front of its base.

The descendants of Mr. Edward Holyoke sold the farm to James Russell of Charlestown and his son set aside 90 acres for the poor of that town. It was later sold to Daniel and John Gowing. Upon the part of the Charlestown Farm on the south corner of Chestnut and Main streets is now located the beautiful estate of Mr. Charles Blood through which flows Beaver Dam Brook. Ensign Thomas Bancroft bought 60 acres east of the Gowing land which was in the center of Lynnfield Village. In a deed from James Russell to John Perkins of Topsfield is the statement that the Holyoke farm (of 500 acres) "was for a considerable time improved by Thomas Bancroft."

Farm of Thomas Bancroft

A third large farm in the Lynn Fields was that of Ensign Thomas Bancroft. Whether he purchased the 100 acres granted in 1638 to Widow Bancroft, his sister-in-law, has not yet been determined. She moved to Winsor, Conn., with her sons Thomas and John. Their marriages are recorded in the Enfield records. Recent research shows that the father of the Lynnfield Bancroft died in 1637 and his mother in 1639, and Newhall in his history of Lynn stated that he was among the arrivals of 1640. After stopping in Lynn, he went to Dedham, was married there in 1647, and moved to Saugus or Lynnfield in 1652. He testified in a disputed land

case that in 1655 he leased a farm of Samuel Bennett within the limits of Saugus and his field and improved land are mentioned in the lay-out in 1660 of the old highway from Reading to Lynn through Woodville in Wakefield. When his lease expired, he moved to Lynnfield. His land there was on the south side of Main street opposite that of Mr. Holyoke, where now are the Town Hall, the railroad station and a golf course. In 1670 he bought 60 acres of land that was given to William Blott in 1644 by the Town of Reading. It is described in the Essex records as bounded northwest by Mr. Holyoke and northeast by Isaac Hart. He bought 20 of the 80 acres granted in 1638 by the Town of Lynn to Henry Collins. In 1678, Thomas Bancroft bought the Richard Longley lot of 40 acres which was the occasion of the suit in the Essex Court in 1660 when the three pages of old Lynn records were introduced as evidence that give us valuable information concerning the distribution in 1638 of the Six Mile Grant. It had come into the possession of Francis Skerry of Salem and was described as being west of land formerly of Mr. Humphrey. Between 1673 and 1677 Ensign Bancroft and Capt. Jonathan Poole bought 100 acres of land between the Woburn line and what is now West street in Reading for Capt. Thomas, Jr., and Sarah Poole, who had been married in 1673. Here, near Fremont street one of the very first houses in the present town of Reading was built for the young couple.

Although Ensign Bancroft lived in Lynnfield until his death in 1691, he was a leading member of the Reading church and was buried in the old Reading cemetery (Wakefield).

Grant to Hon. John Humfrey

One of the largest and most interesting grants in the Lynn Fields was that of Mr. John Humfrey in South Lynnfield. It was not a part of the distribution of the Six Mile Grant of 1638, but was made to him by the General Court in 1634, after his arrival in Lynn. This farm extended for a mile or more in every direction from Lake Suntaug. The island in the lake was reserved as a place of refuge from attacks by Indians. Hon.

John Humfrey was one of the six men who in 1628 bought of the Council in England, all that part of Massachusetts between three miles north of the Merrimack River and three miles south of the Charles River. He was elected Deputy Governor of the Colony, but not being ready to embark with Gov. Winthrop in 1630, Thomas Dudley was chosen in his place. His wife was Lady Susan, a daughter of the Earl of Lincoln. The house of this nobleman, near Boston, England, was a center of Puritanism. Another daughter, was the Lady Arabella, who came in 1630 with her husband, Isaac Johnson. Thomas Dudley was the Earl's steward, as was Simon Bradstreet. John Poole is said to have been attached to the Earl's household, and one genealogist says that he was descended from the Earl's brother. John Poole and Thomas Dudley were two of the eight men who first settled Cambridge.

Grants in Lynn Village, Now Wakefield

(Recorded in the Old Town Book of Lynn and in the Ancient Book of Lands and Ways of Reading.)

The grant to John Poole was 200 acres north of the Great Pond, part in Reading and part in Lynnfield. It lay east and west along the entire length of the present Bay State Road, and included the Deacon Wakefield farm, Camp Curtis Guild and the Cox farm. It was bequeathed to his son Capt. Jonathan, the valued commander in King Philip's War, and to his grandson Lieut. John. They built a saw-mill where the Saugus River crosses Vernon street. John Poole, senior, was one of the wealthiest and most enterprising promoters of the settlement in Lynn Village. In the year that it was incorporated, he was given the exclusive right to maintain a grist-mill on land where the Rattan Works lately stood, and his homestead was nearby.

In 1632 he and Lieut. Gov. Dudley were among the first eight proprietors of Cambridge. He was in Lynn before 1638, his homestead being in North Saugus. It is strange that he neither joined the church nor held any public office in the village that he was active in planting.

Grant to Nicholas Browne

The record of this in the Book of Lands and Ways of Reading is as follows: "The 18th of the 12th month 1638. The Lands and Medows of Nicholas Browne as they ware given him by the town of Lynn and as they ware given him by the town of Reading and as he hath purchased them of other men.

“Imprimis. The land given him as appears by Linntown Book in ye year 1638, two hundred and ten acres lying within the bounds of Reading and is Bounded on the east side of it with the great River (Saugus); on the south side with the land of Boniface Burton; on the west side of it with the Land of Lt. Thomas Marshall and Jeremiah Swain and on the north of it with the meadow commonly called the Wigwams.”

“Also purchased of Mr. George Taylor of Lynn in 1642: four score and ten acres of Land now situate in the bounds of Reading and is Bounded with the Land of Capt. Richard Walker and John Pool and Zachariah Fitch on the east and west; and on the north by the Land of Hananiah Parker (in 1681, but not in 1642 as said Parker was then only four years of age); and on the south by the land of John Bachellor this is one thirty acres of it. Another thirty acres of it: bounded by land of Edward Taylor and John Bachellor on the north and south and the Great Pond on the west and on the east by the said thirty acres and Thomas Parker.

“The other thirty acres lying between Edward Taylor and Capt. Richard Walker on the south and east and on the west by the Great Pond and on the north by the land of Nicholas Browne.”

“Also purchased of Hugh Burt of Lynn the 30th of the first month in the year 1647 four score acres lying within the bounds of Reading—and is bounded by the land of Lt. Thomas Marshall on the east and by the land of John Poole on the north and by the Great Pond on the west and the land of said Nicholas Brown on the south.” Hugh Burt had been granted 60 acres in 1638.

The home of Nicholas Brown was on land now owned by the Beebe Estate. His son Esq. John Brown, one of the most highly respected citizens in the whole history of Reading, was a magistrate, selectman, representative and captain. For many years his was the only name in Reading records, except that of the minister, to bear the honorable title of “Mister” or “Master.”

In the Book of Lands and Ways is a record of a grant of “30 acres and ten to Zachary Fitch by the town of Lynn in 1638.” This lot was on

Salem st. (Wakefield), which was early known as "Fitch's Lane." The lot extended, as did many of the other lots on the "Pond Side," east to Vernon st., which bore the name of Lott End Road. Zachery Fitch was a freeman in Lynn in 1638; a deacon of the Reading church from 1645, and a selectman in 1649.

Grants to Boniface Burton, Richard Roolton, Edward Burcham and Thomas Parker.

Boniface Burton was granted 60 acres of the Six Mile Grant in 1638. He moved to Boston and his lot was laid out to his son in 1665. It is described in the Book of Lands and Ways as "three score acres lying in the Neck bounded northwest and southwest by John Poole, northeast by Nicholas Brown and southeast by the River that flows down to the Iron Works (Saugus). Boniface Burton was the oldest man known to have lived in this part of New England. Several writers credit him with being 113 years of age. He died in 1669.

Richard Roolton was granted 60 acres in 1638. In the Essex Registry there is recorded the sale by him to Thomas Ervington of Lynn "for £14 of three score acres of ground lying in Reading." The location has not yet been ascertained.

Edward Burcham was granted 30 acres and ten in 1638 but he returned to England in 1656, and it was not laid out until 1682, when his son-in-law petitioned the General Court for redress. The General Court awarded him "40 acres in Reading between the Newhall lots and the old Robert Burnap lot according to the original grant of the Towne of Lynn." He was the Clerk of the Writs in Lynn from 1645.

Thomas Parker was granted 30 acres and ten in 1638. This lot was not more than fifty rods northeast of the present Town Hall in Wakefield. Proof of this is contained in a deed cited in Theodore Parker's "Family of John Parker of Lexington."

Thomas Parker came to Lynn in 1635 on the Susan and Ellen, from London. A fellow passenger was Sir Richard Saltonstall. The two families were related (See Waters English Gleanings). He was "won of the founda-

tions of the church in Reading", and a selectman for five years. With deacons William Cowdrey and Thomas Kendall he was a commissioner to end small causes.

Grant to William Cowdrey

The grant of 60 acres made in 1638 to William Cowdrey is described in the Book of Lands and Ways of Reading as follows: "First, three score acres of upland that was given him by the Towne of Lynn and Iyeth in the bounds of Reading and is bounded on the south with the lande of Mas. Samuell Haugh and John Gould and on the weste with the lande of Thomas Taylor and on the north with the lande of John Weyley and on the east with the lande of Mas. Samuell Haugh and Nathaniel Cowdrey."

"Given by the Towne of Redding in 1642, three Ackers of Meddow leyng in the Mill Meddow bounded on east with the meddow of William Eaton and Samuel Walker and on the south with the meddow of Thomas Clark and on the weste with the land of Mas. Samuell Haugh and Samuel Duntton and on the north with the meddow of Thomas Parker."

"Given by the Towne of Redding in 1647 a parsell of land by the Water Mill upon the hill on the southeast of Samuell Duntton's house."

William Cowdrey was one of the founders of Lynn Village. During the six years between the land grant of 1638 and 1644 when it was incorporated as Redding, there were he testified, "Many meetings and much correspondence necessary to promote its settlement." He was a deacon from the organization of the Reading church to the time of his death in 1687, a selectman from 1647 to 1680 except for two years, a representative for four terms and Clerk of the Writs from 1644 to 1687.

He was born in Weymouth, England, in 1602, sailed from Southampton in 1630, and settled first in Lynn. His granddaughter Bethia Polley of Jamaica Plain was the wife of Ensign Nathaniel Parker, the earliest to settle near the present Reading Common.

Grant to Thomas Marshall

Thomas Marshall was granted 30 acres and ten in 1638. In 1655, he borrowed £282 of Robert Bridges of Lynn, part of which he used to buy half of the Sadler grant, later sold to Capt. Walker. For security he gave a mortgage on 30 acres of upland "neare the late saw-mill in Reading, bounded north by the meadow of John Pool, eastly lands of Thomas Parker and Nathaniel Kirtland, south by Nicholas Brown and the Country highway." The saw-mill was on the Saugus River at Vernon St., on the line between Lynnfield and Reading, and was owned by John Pool. These 30 acres of upland appears to have been his grant of 1638.

He also pledged 16 acres "at or neere the dwelling of said Thomas Marshall having the land of Thomas Parker on the north side, land of John Pool on the east side, and the common highway on the south and west sides. Also 5 acres of meadow below the corn-mill, bounded north and east by John Pool, and south and west by John Smith. Also any houses, barns, orchards, gardens and cow-sheds." One of these lots and his house, appear to have been on the hill north of the present Town Hall in Wakefield, and the other piece below the corn-mill in the meadow.

Thomas Marshall sailed from London in the James in 1635 at the age of twenty-two. He was associated with Cowdrey, Poole, Walker, Browne and others, living west of Saugus Center, in the settlement of Lynn Village. In 1645 Sergt. Marshall was appointed a commissioner together with his neighbors Capt. Bridges and Capt. Walker to make a treaty with the French and Indians east of the Penebscot. He shared in the divisions of Reading lands in 1647 and 1652; after that date his name is connected with Lynn, where he owned the famous Anchor Tavern.

In 1653, when the bounds between Lynn and Lyn Village were settled, the Reading men appointed by the General Court were William Cowdrey, Capt. Richard Walker and Ensign Thomas Marshall.

Grants to Richard Walker

Richard Walker's grant of 200 acres in 1638 was in compensation for his services on a committee appointed by the towne of Lynn, to "lay out the farmes." This grant was west of the present Newburyport Turnpike in Saugus Center, south of one of the Adam Hawkes farms. His homestead, however, was on Elm St., (Wakefield) and it was given to him by the town of Reading in 1642, two years before its incorporation. It is described in the Book of Lands and Ways as "27 ackers of upland leying in the playne on the west side of the great pond, bounded on the north-west by Mathew Edwards and on the south with the highway and on the easte of the great pond." "There was also given to Capt. Walker at the same time a Neck of Upland Containing Tenn Ackers More or Less and Bounded on the Weste with the Land of Mas. Samuell Haugh and on the south with the Land of Mathew Edwards and on the east with the pond and on the north with a littell River that runs between the Beere neck and this land." "At the same time there was also given to Capt. Richard Walker a parsell of swampy meddow and it is Bounded with the great pond on the east and the heighway on the South and on the norewest with his one Land."

The Book of Lands and Ways also mentions the "Land of Capt. Richard Walker that he Bought of Leutt. Thomas Marshall which is halfe of the two hundred Ackers that was some time Mas. Richard Sadlers." Also, 100 acres bought of Samuel Bennett bounded on the north by the great River that parts Lynn and Redding (Saugus) and on the south upon the meddow of John Hawke and on the northwest with the land of Zachery Fitts, Robert Burnap, and the meddow of Edward Taylor, John Person and Thomas Parker."

"Also Bowhet of Leutt. Thomas Marshall A Tenn Acker Lott that was sometime Tho Talmage of Lyn and is Bounded on the South with the farme of Nicholas Brown and on the weste with the land of Robert Burnap and on the north with the Wigwam Meddow. These lands made Captain Walker

one of the largest proprietors of the new settlement. The great width and level surface of Elm St., Wakefield, near the Captain's homestead, indicate that it may have been the Town Training Field. In the early years of the town, Ken's Pond filled the space now occupied by Wakefield Common.

He was a neighbor of William Cowdrey. He and Lieut. Marshall were born in 1613, and both came to Lynn in 1635 with his brother Samuel Walker who also went to Reading, and afterwards was a deacon in the Woburn Church. Later these men became leaders in the promotion of Linn Village. He was its first representative to the General Court in 1648-'49 and one of its first selectmen in 1647 to '50.

The father of Richard and Samuel was that Richard Walker who coming to Lynn in 1630, settled west of the Saugus River, was a captain and a representative from Lynn, and was buried there on May 16, 1687, at the age of 95 years, according to Lewis the historian, but not found in any other authority. Judge Sewell in his diary says, "Monday, May 16, 1687, I go and visit Rev. Mr. Brock in Redding and to Salem. Capt. Walker a very aged planter is buried at Lin; a very good man." In the register of St. Mary's Church, Reading, Eng., there is recorded the baptism of a Richard Walker Feb. 14, 1690. As there was often a lack of accuracy in the reputed age of elderly persons, this Reading record may well be that of Capt. Richard, Sr. of Lynn.

Although the names Cowdrey and Parker are in the church register of Reading, there is no William Cowdrey nor Thomas Parker, nor that of any other early settler of Lynn Village. Charles I incorporated Reading in 1639, and it was a stronghold of Puritanism, surrendering to the parliamentary troops in 1643, both dates being closely associated with the beginning of Reading in New England.

The name of Capt. Walker, Jr. does not appear in the tax lists of Reading after 1664 as he returned to North Saugus, and died there. His will was recorded in 1682.

Grants to Mr. Edward Howell and Adam Hawks

Mr. Edward Howell's 500 acres, and the 100 acres granted to Adam Hawks, both in the Six Mile Grant of 1638, became the farms of Francis and John Smith.

Middlesex Registry. In 1646 Francis Smith bought 500 acres for £30 of Capt. Richard Walker and Lieut. Thomas Marshall, which had been granted by the town of Lynn to Mr. Edward Howell. It extended east from Smith Pond (now Crystal Lake) through the Woodville district for nearly a mile. In Vol. 7, p. 83 of Essex Records, Capt. Walker and Lieut. Marshall declare that the 500 acres sold to Francis Smith "are free of all manner of former bargains, gifts, grants, and sales from the beginning of the world to the day of the date thereof." Witnesses: Mas. Samuel Haugh and John Poole. It is described as "500 acres of upland and meadow in Redding bounded south by the common lands of Maulden; southeast by the common lands of the town of Boston; east by the land of Richard Roolton of Linn, and north by a little river, and the land of Thomas Clarke and Lieut. Thomas Marshall."

In 1652-3, this Howell farm was the head bounds of Lynn next to Redding and was, in 1682, the farm of Lieut. John Smith (Vol. 8 Essex Quarterly Court Record.)

In 1653, when the committee settled the bounds between Lynn and Lynn Village they mentioned "the east end of Mr. John Hawks farm, which is now Lieut. John Smith's farm and it is to be the bounds between the two towns."

Francis Smith was in Roxbury in 1630, a freeman in 1631, when 131 acres of farm land were granted to him. He was one of the first contributors to establish the Roxbury Latin School. He lived for a while near the ferry in Chelsea. He was one of the first selectmen in Lynn Village, 1647-'49. He died in 1651. His son, Benjamin, married a daughter of the venerable Peter Palfrey of Salem whose last years were spent in the Smith household.

Lieut. John Smith leased the Maverick Ferry and its farm, with houses, an inn, and stables in 1644. He was also granted 60 acres in Charlestown bounds and Malden.

Mass. Colonial Records II, p. 87. "Good man Smith of Winisiminet hath liberty to sell wine, and keep a house of common intertan'mt." It was customary for the magistrates in their journeys from Boston to Salem to keep their horses at the Ferry Farm. This ferry and the country way to Lynn and Salem were probably the first in New England. He probably moved to Reading about the time of his father's death, as he was a representative here from 1650 to 1660, and a lieutenant of the Reading company from 1656.

His son, Deacon Francis, married Ruth Maverick, returned to Reading where he dwelt on his father's homestead. Anna Maverick, the mother of Ruth, died in Reading in 1697, and her grave stone is in the old cemetery in Wakefield. A daughter of Francis, senior, married Major Jeremiah Sweyne.

Grants in Saugus and in the Bounds of Lynn

Samuel Bennet was granted 60 acres. He later owned 600 acres south-east of the Howell farm. This was within the bounds of Saugus although it had been left common for the pasturage of cattle for both Lynn and Reading. In the settlement of a controversy, in 1681, between these towns as to Lynn's title to this farm, "Ensign Bancroft testified that in 1655 he had leased a part of it from Daniel Hutchins, who had bought it of Samuel Bennet, both men being inhabitants of Lynn." "John Gifford testified that when he was an agent for the Iron Works, he bought six or eight thousand cords of standing wood which he took within a mile or so from where Bennett's house stood, from up Reading way so down to the Iron Works pond."

The farm of Capt. Richard Walker granted to him in 1638 was, as earlier stated, east of this Bennet land, and west of the Iron Works.

Thomas Dexter was a very early settler in Lynn, and received 350

acres in 1638. His mansion near the old Iron Works in Saugus, built in 1636, has been carefully restored. He early built a mill and a weir on the Saugus River. He leased 600 acres west of the River as is recorded in the first deed of the Essex Registry 1639. He left Lynn, and became a proprietor of Sandwich in Plymouth Colony.

Grants to Mas. Samuel Whiting and Mas. Thomas Cobbet

Mas. Samuel Whiting and Mas. Thomas Cobbet, the two ministers of the Lynn Church, received grants of 200 acres each, probably near Saugus Center.

Mas. Whiting arrived in June 1636, but was not installed as minister until November as it was difficult to organize the church with only six members! He was a man of great earnestness, piety, and affability. The name of the town was changed from Saugus to Lynn as a compliment to Mas. Whiting, it being the name of his home in England.

The Rev. Thomas Cobbet arrived in May the next year, and became the colleague of Mas. Whiting. They labored in close friendship for eighteen years. The early ministers in New England were often graduates of the English Universities and highly respected. When town lands were divided, they always received a generous share.

Grants Not Yet Located

Other Lynn inhabitants received grants in 1638 that have not yet been located. Their family names are closely identified with the history of Reading and Lynnfield: namely, William Walton 60 acres, John Boutwell 60 acres, Thomas Townsend 60 acres, Thomas Newhall 30 acres, Christopher Foster 60 acres, George Burrall 200 acres, and William Knight 60 acres. A careful search in the county offices of Salem and Cambridge would doubtless result in locating many of these grants.

In the preceding pages, grants to one-third of the Lynn inhabitants have been located with varying degrees of accuracy. These cover more than eight of the thirteen square miles of the Six Mile Grant made by the

General Court in 1638. There were many small grants of ten or twenty acres each that probably were disposed of without any record being made of the sale.

Conclusion

The foregoing records furnish a fairly definite account of the beginning of Reading and Lynnfield. Previous statements have often given wrong impressions: one is that Reading was formerly a part of Lynn; another, that Lynn was much larger before Reading and Lynnfield were settled; a third, that Reading was set off from Lynn and then incorporated.

The Colonial records tell a different story. Certain common lands of the Colony were granted to the inhabitants of Lynn in 1638/9, and they immediately distributed them and proceeded in the case of Lynn Village to make plans and carry out the instructions of the General Court for the planting of a new settlement.

Many writers have regretted the loss of the old Lynn records and state that we cannot know who were the first proprietors of Reading and Lynnfield lands, nor who were the leaders in promoting the new village. It is believed that these pages supply much of this valuable information.

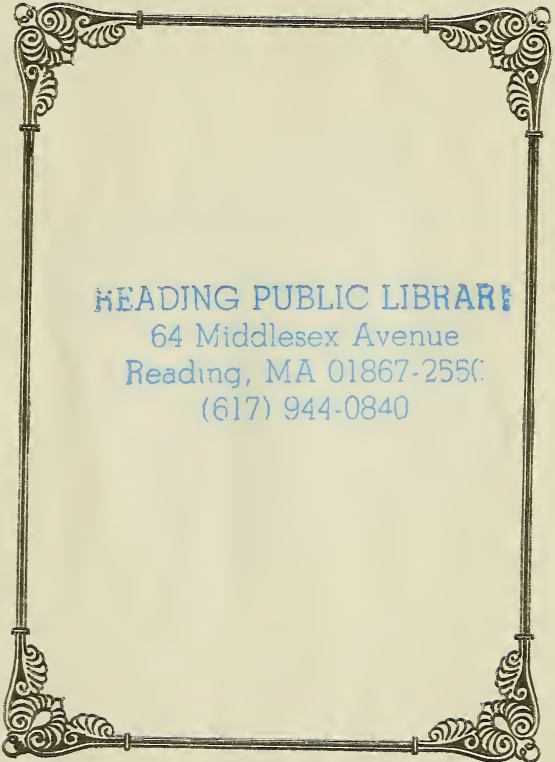
But the most gratifying result of this study of County and Town records is that it establishes the fact that the planting of Reading was according to the usual and orderly policy of the Bay Colony followed in the settlement of many other communities and was not the result of a haphazard gathering of families. A careful reading of these pages will show that much of the land granted was to persons of the highest character and of considerable influence in the Colony.

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