

Ronald Dale Karr, "Two Centuries of Oligarchy in Brookline" *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* Volume 13, No 2 (June 1985).

Published by: Institute for Massachusetts Studies and Westfield State University

You may use content in this archive for your personal, non-commercial use. Please contact the *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* regarding any further use of this work:

masshistoryjournal@wsc.ma.edu

Funding for digitization of issues was provided through a generous grant from MassHumanities.



Some digitized versions of the articles have been reformatted from their original, published appearance. When citing, please give the original print source (volume/ number/ date) but add "retrieved from HJM's online archive at <http://www.wsc.ma.edu/mhj>.



Two Centuries of Oligarchy in Brookline

Ronald Dale Karr

For nearly two centuries a hereditary elite dominated Brookline. This oligarchy took hold shortly after the first settlers arrived, before a government was organized or a church established. It did not loosen its grip until after population growth and modernization had transformed society. In the face of rapid population turnover and rising inequality, the elite stabilized and united the community. The course of Brookline's elite is closely interwoven with the history of the town. In the early 1630s the territory that now comprises Brookline was the Muddy River district of Boston. The still vast waters of the Back Bay separated the district from the narrow peninsula three miles away that constituted Boston proper. Boston allotted lands at Muddy River to its residents, who were expected to work their fields by day and return to the town each night. But the distance, especially in the absence of a ferry across the bay, proved too great for daily commuting; by the end of the decade an irregular settlement had emerged. Although technically within Boston's jurisdiction, Muddy River was on its own, without church or effective government.¹

A dozen or so years after settlement began at Muddy River, the founders of Brookline's leading dynasties arrived. The three patriarchs had much in common. Each was in middle age, born in England but a long time resident of New England, and none had achieved prominence before his arrival. The key to their success in Brookline was the acquisition of strategically located lands. When Boston had allotted land at Muddy River in the 1630s the choicest properties were given to substantial citizens. The five most desirable tracts, parcels of rich land strategically located along the only road to Boston, were granted to the Reverend John Cotton, Ruling Elders Thomas Leverett and Thomas Oliver, Deacon William Colebourne, and Captain John Underhill. None of these luminaries had actually settled on their lands, and by 1660 they had disposed of four of the five tracts.²

In 1650 John White (?-1691), a resident of Watertown for at least eleven years, purchased Thomas Oliver's 150-acre tract.³ Captain John Underhill's 140-acre grant passed in 1657 to John Winchester (1611-1694), an inhabitant of Hingham since 1636.⁴ At about the same time Thomas Leverett's 175 acres were acquired by Thomas Gardner (c. 1614-1683), who had lived in Roxbury for more than twenty years.⁵ White, Gardner, and Winchester would be names to reckon with for generations to come. Despite their previous obscurity, the three newcomers quickly became the leading inhabitants of Muddy River. In

1652 the Boston meeting began electing a separate constable and surveyor for Muddy River, and in 1669 the district's eligible voters were given the exclusive right to nominate candidates for these offices.⁶ John White was elected constable in 1655, Thomas Gardner in 1657, and John Winchester in 1659. In all but six years between 1661 and 1675 at least one of the three was elected constable or surveyor.⁷ The earliest property tax list now extant, which dates from 1674, shows Thomas Gardner ranked first, John White second, and John Winchester sixth among the district's thirty-nine taxpayers.⁸

By 1674 White, Gardner, and Winchester were in their late fifties or early sixties, and their power, influence, and property had already passed in part to the next generation. Each had three adult sons, and all save John Winchester's second remained in Muddy River. In 1676 John White, Jr., (1642-1695), was chosen constable, and his brother Joseph (?-1725) was elected surveyor. The following year the number of surveyors for the district was increased to two: John Winchester, Jr., (1644-1718), joined Joseph White in this post. In 1682 Thomas Gardner's son, Andrew (1642-1690), was elected constable.⁹ Together, the first and second generations of Whites, Gardners, and Winchesters also represented a formidable concentration of economic power. In 1687 the twelve adult male members of these clans constituted twenty-one percent of the adult male population but held thirty-seven percent of the district's assessed wealth.¹⁰

In 1686 the Council of New England granted Muddy River the quasi-independent status of hamlet, which included the right to set its own tax rate and choose its own selectmen.¹¹ The hamlet's first three selectmen, elected in 1687, were Andrew Gardner, John White, Jr., and Thomas Stedman. The names of the selectmen in the following decade are lost, but in 1698 the board consisted of Roger Adams, Thomas Gardner, Jr., and Benjamin White (?-1723) who was another son of the first John White. Gardner and White were reelected continually through 1706, and in 1705 they were joined by Josiah Winchester (1655-1728), son of the first John. After an extended struggle with Boston, the hamlet was incorporated as the town of Brookline on November 13, 1705.¹² By this time John White, Thomas Gardner, and John Winchester had died, but their families were firmly entrenched in the new town.

The three families flourished during the eighteenth century. The Whites emerged as Brookline's preeminent clan. Samuel White (1683-1760), grandson of the first John White, was the most successful officeholder in the town's history. He was a veritable one-man government with twenty-three terms as selectman, nineteen as treasurer and clerk, and ten as representative. Moreover, he presided over at least one town meeting during each of twenty-nine years. In 1746 he ranked fifth among Brookline taxpayers in amount of assessed property owned. His older brother, Benjamin (1676-1753), had been chosen selectman seven times and representative once. His first cousin, Harvard-educated Edward White (1693-1769), who was tied for second place among taxpayers in 1746, was elected selectman eight times, clerk and treasurer seven times, and meeting moderator during thirteen years.

The fourth generation of Whites were no less prominent. Three sons of Benjamin White remained in Brookline: Joseph (1702-1777), church deacon and

two-term selectman; Benjamin (1707-1777), the town's fourth-largest property owner in both 1746 and 1770; and Moses (1710-1780), also elected to a term as selectman. Samuel White had no sons, but Edward White's son, Captain Benjamin White (1724-1790), graduated from Harvard, served as justice of the peace and militia officer, and was chosen selectman nineteen times, representative nine times, and treasurer seven times, and presided at meetings over an eleven year period.¹³

Though unable to match the Whites, the Gardners—and to a lesser extent, the Winchesters—were well represented in the leadership of Brookline. In the early eighteenth century four brothers, grandsons of the original Thomas Gardner, achieved considerable economic and political success. In the fourth generation, Isaac Gardner (1726-1775), equaled the status of his contemporary, Captain Benjamin White. Like White, Gardner was a Harvard graduate, justice of the peace, and militia captain. He served thirteen terms as selectman, fourteen as clerk, eighteen as treasurer, and seven as moderator before a British bullet ended his career at the age of forty-nine.¹⁴ In their fourth generation, the Winchesters produced their first Harvard graduate, Jonathan Winchester (1717-1767), who served four terms as selectman, two stints as moderator, and six terms as town clerk and treasurer before answering the call of the frontier settlement of Ashburnham to become its first minister.¹⁵ Altogether, between 1705 and 1750, men from the three leading families occupied no less than sixty-six percent of all major town offices.

The leading families did not confine their activities to politics. When the town's first church was organized in 1718, its initial two deacons were Thomas Gardner and Benjamin White. Of the eight deacons before 1770, four were Whites or Gardners, and another's mother was a White. A meetinghouse seating list from 1719 allots the choicest pews to senior members of the three elite families.¹⁶ Similarly, the opportunity to send a son to college and thus acquire the basic credentials for admission to the provincial elite was largely the prerogative of the three families. Before 1775 eighteen Brookline boys had graduated from Harvard (another, a White, had graduated from Princeton). Eight of these were of the White, Gardner, or Winchester families, and four others descended from these clans through maternal lines.¹⁷

In a community almost exclusively devoted to farming, the ultimate source of economic, political, and social power was the ownership of land. Whites, Gardners, and Winchesters held large amounts of prime farmland fronting major town roads, the original holdings of the families having been carefully augmented by purchase, marriage, and inheritance. Even after more than a century, portions of the original grants of 1636 remained with the three families. In 1770, for example, Captain Benjamin White had recently inherited part of the Oliver tract his great-grandfather had purchased in 1650. Isaac and Elisha Gardner retained portions of the Leverett grant their family had acquired four generations earlier.¹⁸

Above all, ownership of sufficient quantities of productive land enabled a man to establish his sons within the town. Brookline's limited size and absence of unallotted lands forced many a young man to move elsewhere in search of

farmland needed to raise a family. Poorer fathers were compelled either to spread their meager resources among several sons or in effect drive some of their offspring away. Generally, the younger sons departed, since farmers usually favored eldest sons when they relinquished control over the family homestead. Richer farmers, in contrast, might see most or even all of their sons on nearby farms.¹⁹ Over the long term, prosperous families stood a better chance of persisting. Although many sons of Brookline's elite families departed, nearly half remained. Of the seventy-six sons born before 1750 to the three elite families who survived to adulthood, thirty-six persisted. Two-thirds of eldest sons remained, reflecting the preference shown to the first-born, thirty-five percent of second-born and forty-one percent of third and subsequent sons also stayed in Brookline.²⁰

Whites, Gardners, and Winchesters were at the center of intricate networks of kinship that linked together much of the permanent population of the town. Though only fourteen of the 108 adult Brookline males of 1770 bore the names of the elite clans, another thirteen were descendants of these families through maternal lines; twelve others had married women of elite ancestry. These twenty-five relatives of the elite families, twenty-three percent of the adult male population, owned thirty-nine percent of the town's assessed wealth. Together the elite families and their kin, though accounting for considerably less than half the adult male population, controlled nearly two-thirds of all property. Moreover, between 1705 and 1775 the relatives of the elite occupied eighteen percent of all major town offices. Thus no less than eighty-one percent of major posts during this period were filled by descendants of the original John White, Thomas Gardner, or John Winchester, or husbands of descendants.²¹

Franchise restrictions further amplified the influence of the three families. Although property requirements for voting were low, nearly all Brookline land owners qualified. Thus large numbers of propertyless young men were excluded resulting in an electorate dominated by the elite and their kin. In 1746, sixty-three percent of the adult males appear to have met the property qualifications; in 1770, fifty-two percent. Of these eligible voters, fifty-two percent in 1746 and fifty-seven percent in 1770 were members of the elite families or their relatives.²²

The continuity of power displayed by the elite helps explain why eighteenth-century Brookline was marked by harmony and order, despite growing inequality and a population in flux. Wealth was being gathered into fewer hands. In 1770 the top ten percent of taxpayers accounted for forty-seven percent of the town's assessed wealth, up from thirty-four percent in 1746 and twenty-eight percent in 1687. Of the 108 adult males who lived in Brookline in 1770, forty-four owned no taxable assets. More than half of the town's adult male population in 1746 had departed by 1770, even after accounting for deaths; in 1770 only one-third of the adult males had been born in the town. Yet, the town's records are devoid of conflict. Even such controversial issues as responding to British colonial policy were resolved unanimously.²³

Even at the peak of their power in the mid-eighteenth century, Brookline's oligarchy was showing the first signs of decline. Between 1746 and 1770 the

proportion of assessed property controlled by the three leading families had fallen from thirty-seven to twenty-five percent, and their share of major town offices dropped from sixty-six percent during the period 1705-1750 to fifty-nine percent in 1751-1775. In 1746 seven of the ten wealthiest property holders came from the three elite families, and the remaining three were linked to elite by marriage or by blood. Indeed, the twelve largest wealth holders all showed ties to the elite. In 1770, however, only four of the top ten property owners came from the elite families, and relatives accounted for but three more. The other three, including the two largest taxpayers, were newcomers.

Brookline's proximity to Boston was attracting outsiders whose wealth and social prestige exceeded those of the old town elite. Among Boston's rich, a country estate within one or two hour's drive of the city had become fashionable.²⁴ Brookline's first mansions appeared in the 1740s when two native sons, Nathaniel Gardner (?-c. 1745) a merchant, and his first cousin, the noted physician, Zabdiel Boylston (1676-1766), returned flushed with urban success.²⁵ After Gardner's death his mansion and estate were sold to Jeremiah Gridley (1702-1767), perhaps Boston's most prominent lawyer.²⁶ Although Gridley appears to have lived only part of the year on his Brookline property, he nevertheless was elected representative four times, meeting moderator six times, and selectman three times in the twelve years between the purchase of his mansion and his death. Following Zabdiel Boylston's death in 1766 his estate was acquired by a Scottish-born Boston merchant, William Hyslop (1714-1796). Two years later the town meeting chose Hyslop to serve as moderator, perhaps the highest single honor the community could bestow.²⁷

The American Revolution hastened the decline of the old order. Warfare put severe strains on the community. On the very first day of combat, April 19, 1775, leading citizen Isaac Gardner was killed in a skirmish with British regulars at Cambridge.²⁸ During the long siege of Boston that followed, a six-gun battery was located in the town and two companies of troops were quartered there. Subsequent outbreaks of smallpox and dysentery boosted the town's death rate to its highest recorded level.²⁹ Even after the battle zone moved elsewhere, the town faced years of runaway inflation, insatiable recruitment quotas, and constant uncertainty.³⁰

Under the multiple shocks of wartime, Brookline's venerable political system underwent more change than it had seen in more than half a century. Previously, a man seldom obtained major town offices before he had reached his mid- to late forties, after a lengthy apprenticeship in minor posts. In 1770, for example, the five selectmen averaged nearly fifty-three years of age.³¹ The war thrust younger men into power. In 1777 and 1783 mass refusals by veteran officeholders to serve in major offices—for reasons now unclear—opened the way for younger and less experienced men. Among the three selectmen ultimately chosen in 1777 were thirty-six year old Caleb Craft, a Roxbury native, and thirty-five year old Timothy Corey, a recent arrival from Weston. The following year two experienced leaders were joined on the board of selectmen by three men each serving his first term in office: one was twenty-eight years old, another twenty-seven and in 1779 another new member, thirty-one years old, appeared on the board.³²

Though younger than most of their predecessors, the new selectmen were products of the same system: all but one was a son of a previous major officeholder or related to the three elite families. In 1780, however, two newcomers without discernible ties to the leading clans were chosen selectmen. The third man on the board that year was a veteran officeholder. The first, Major William Thompson, had moved to Brookline from adjacent Roxbury around 1772. The following year he was named to the town's Committee of Correspondence and in 1774 was selected as a delegate to the Suffolk County convention. Later that year he presided over a town meeting, and presided again in 1777, 1778, 1780, and 1781.³³ The second, William Campbell (1734-1808), had arrived in Brookline only a year before his election as selectman. A son of a Scottish immigrant, Campbell was a native of the frontier town of Oxford, Massachusetts, where he had served as captain of the town's militia. After a stint as an officer in the Revolution, he settled in Brookline, leasing the town's largest farm, the three-hundred acre estate of exiled Loyalist Samuel Sewall. Six months later he was named to a town committee, and the following spring he was a selectman, being returned to this latter post in 1781 and 1782. He was chosen moderator in 1780, 1783, and 1784.³⁴

The virtual takeover of the town government by these newcomers seems to have been a direct consequence of the turmoil caused by the Revolution. Both Thompson and Campbell bore the prestige of a militia commission, and it may well have been their military expertise that the town sought during this critical period. This assumption is reinforced by their hasty departures from Brookline as the war ended. William Thompson appears to have left for Boston in 1782, and William Campbell traced his path back to Oxford two years later, before moving on to Vermont.³⁵ By 1790 the elite families or at least their relatives had reasserted control. All major town officers that year were born in Brookline, and each was either a White or Gardner descendant or married to one. Nine of the ten largest taxpayers of 1787 belonged to the White-Gardner kinship network.³⁶

The reinstatement of the old order proved temporary. The town was changing, with population rising from 484 in 1790 to 900 in 1820, mostly due to an influx of newcomers who ranged from wealthy Boston merchants to propertyless farm laborers. A village settlement was taking hold at the site of an ancient crossroads tavern, and farming was no longer the only important economic activity.³⁷ Most striking, the town's longstanding unity was shattered by virulent partisanship, as local Federalists and Democratic-Republicans scrambled for votes. Even the town's minister, a social conservative with Federalist leanings, found himself being pressured into openly supporting the Federalist cause from the pulpit. "In pursuing the moderate measures which my conscience dictated," the Reverend John Pierce later recalled, "I incurred the charge of weakness from the leading Federalists, and, at the same time, I was represented by the opposite party as being under the influence of their opponents."³⁸

Elections, once celebrations of unity, now grew bitter, with charges of fraud arising from losers. After his party suffered defeat in the 1812 election for state representative, Federalist stalwart Benjamin Goddard fumed:

Every man in Town on the Democratick side was admitted as a voter who presented himself[;] of course [there were] many more than was calculated upon, for it was well known many had not the qualifications As in other Democratish proceedings . . . the Power of determining [the qualifications of the voters] is in the hands of the Selectmen, and [since] they are Democratick, no good result can be expected, especially when the Chairman of that Board is the candidate and . . . extremely desirous of being elected.³⁹

In the aftermath of the War of 1812 fierce partisanship faded, as quickly as it had arisen, but the ideal of the organically unified community had been dealt a serious blow.

Brookline's elite families were unable or unwilling to adapt successfully to new conditions. Early in the nineteenth century the old families lost most of their political and economic prowess, although for a time their cousins, nephews, and sons-in-law inherited some of their mantle. The bulk of major town offices were occupied by these relations of the elite until after 1825.⁴⁰ Reduced numbers, both relatively and absolutely, was a major factor in the decline of the old elite. For generations, of course, many sons of elite families had left town, but after the Revolution departures increased sharply as young Whites, Gardners, and Winchesters joined the general exodus out of New England. Both the eldest and the youngest sons of Captain Benjamin White left Brookline for Georgia (the youngest eventually returned); two of the three sons of Isaac Gardner departed, one for central Massachusetts and the other for upstate New York. Brookline Whites turned up as plantation owners in Georgia and Mississippi, a Gardner became a newspaper editor in Newark, New Jersey, and at least one Winchester settled in Ontario. Descendants of all three families scattered throughout northern New England, New York state, and the Midwest. By 1812 the last of the Winchesters had left Brookline, and by 1837 the last Gardner was gone.⁴¹

After persisting for so many generations, why did the elite families depart at this time? Opportunities elsewhere drew the offspring of the old families away from Brookline, while changes within the town worked to push them out. By removing restrictions on westward migration the Revolution unleashed a pent-up demand for land and commercial opportunity unavailable in New England. For a man with capital, prospects in the West and in eastern cities seemed boundless. Meanwhile, the growing popularity of Brookline as a site for summer homes of wealthy Bostonians boosted land values, thus encouraging heirs to cash in these assets and invest them in other places. Much of the ancestral holdings of the Whites and the Gardners became the property of Brahmins.⁴²

While opportunity beckoned elsewhere, modernization reduced the attractiveness of home. By disrupting traditional rural trade practices, the Revolution had encouraged Brookline farmers to assume greater risks, but for some the results were disastrous. In 1786, for example, the town's tax collector, Daniel White, fell behind in his accounts and saw the town attach some of his lands: When his uncle, Captain Benjamin White, died five years later, the Captain's heavily mortgaged estate was found to be insolvent.⁴³ Modernization removed

the farmer from his position at the center of society. No longer was a man's status primarily defined by the quality and quantity of land he worked. By 1845 agriculture still employed most Brookline residents, but farmers, now badly outnumbered by farm laborers, artisans, and tradesmen, no longer dominated the community the way their predecessors had in 1770. Farmers monopolized major town offices until 1805, when a tanner was chosen selectman. Thereafter, their fall from political power was rapid. In 1817 the board of selectmen consisted of a tanner, a carpenter, and a shopkeeper, the first farmerless board in the town's history. Farmers did not return to the board until 1825, and never again retained control of Brookline's government.⁴⁴

The scions of the old elite families who remained in nineteenth-century Brookline faced competition at every turn. The deferential authority enjoyed by their ancestors was in large measure derived from the position which they maintained in a traditional rural society. Now *that* society was passing. No longer was it feasible simply to take up the ancestral plow: the transformation of agriculture into the highly specialized business of market gardening demanded dedication and skill far beyond the rudimentary practices of traditional farming. And even as summer residents, the presence of Brahmins must have diminished their hereditary high status.

Leadership was the salient trait of the elite families, and here, too, their role did not go unchallenged. The ideological upheavals of the 1790s and early 1800s found the elite divided, with members of the old elite families holding positions of leadership in both parties. Brookline's Federalists were led by Senator George Cabot, Joseph and Benjamin Goddard, Ebenezer Heath, and Isaac Sparhawk Gardner. The Goddard brothers were descended from both the White and Gardner families. Heath's mother was a White, and he was also Isaac S. Gardner's second cousin; Gardner, in turn, was the son of the patriot killed in 1775. The town's Democratic-Republicans had at their helm Stephen Sharp and Dr. William Aspinwall. Sharp's grandmother was a White; Aspinwall's mother was a Gardner. Federalist Joseph Goddard was married to a niece of Republican William Aspinwall.⁴⁵

Amidst the fierce partisan wars a new type of political leader made his appearance. Neither farmer nor town native, this new man of politics represented the newcomers who were reshaping the town. The prototype was John Robinson, a Dorchester native who settled in Brookline in 1790. Twenty-seven years old at the time of his arrival, Robinson had come seeking a site for a tannery. As his business thrived, his standing rose. In 1797 he was named a church deacon, and in 1805 he was chosen to the first of twenty-eight terms as selectman. When partisanship cooled after 1815 he virtually ruled the town, drawing support from former Federalists and Republicans alike. Until the 1830s he invariably presided over town meetings and represented the town in the legislature.⁴⁶ Others soon followed. In 1807 Robinson was joined on the five-man board of selectmen by Eliphalet Spurr, a stage coach operator and a newcomer. In 1810 the board was reduced to three, and non-natives made up a majority for the first time since 1780. In 1831, for the first time ever, all three selectmen had been born outside of the town. Brookline natives did not return to the board until 1835 and appeared thereafter only intermittently.⁴⁷

In an age of professional politicians and issue-oriented reformers the old families had become irrelevant. The death of Oliver Whyte in 1844 can be said to mark the end of their era. The youngest son of Captain Benjamin White, Whyte (1771-1844) was in many respects part of both traditional and modern Brookline. As a young man he had followed his elder brother to Georgia in pursuit of a business career. On returning to Brookline several years later he opened a general store on the last remnant of the old Oliver grant. In the tradition of his family, he served repeated terms in important town offices: thirteen as selectman, nine as treasurer, and twenty-eight as clerk. For a time he was also Brookline's postmaster. His final term as town clerk was completed less than two years before his death.⁴⁸ After Whyte's death a few descendants of the old families successfully adapted to the new order, but they were an insignificant minority; political leadership was almost exclusively the domain of men born outside of the town or the sons of newcomers.

Brookline's old elite families were unable to continue their dominance amid modernization and growth. For generations Whites, Gardners, and Winchesters had parlayed their initial modest advantages into a commanding social position. Their political and social authority stemmed from control of large amounts of prime farmland, reinforced by kinship linkages to a majority of the electorate and deferential habits. But as farming became less important and newcomers swelled the population, the elite families shrank in numbers and influence. In the competitive commercial environment of nineteenth-century Brookline, power was increasingly difficult to inherit.

NOTES

1. John F. Sly, "A History of Muddy River from 1630 to 1705" (ms. dated 1929-30, Public Library of Brookline), pp. 56, 67-75; Darret B. Rutman, *Winthrop's Boston: Portrait of a Puritan Town, 1630-1649* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1965), pp. 68-70, 79, 93-97.
2. Brookline, Mass., *Muddy River and Brookline Records* (Boston, 1875), pp. 13-26; Sly, "Muddy River," pp. 5, 10-19; Rutman, *Winthrop's Boston*, pp. 39-40, 78-90; Theodore F. Jones, *Land Ownership in Brookline from the First Settlement* (Brookline, 1923), pp. 7-8.
3. Thomas J. Lothrop, "John White of Watertown and Brookline, and Some of His Descendants," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 52 (1898): p. 421; Jones, *Land Ownership*, p. 10, maps 1, 2.
4. Henry W. Cunningham, "John Winchester of New England and Some of His Descendants," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 78 (1924): 7-9; Jones, *Land Ownership*, p. 9, maps 1, 2.

5. Jones, *Land Ownership*, pp. 9-10, maps 1, 2; Mary W. Ferris, *Dawes-Gates Ancestral Lines* (Privately printed, 1943), 1: 308-9.
6. *Muddy River Records*, pp. 32-33, 106-7.
7. Names from *ibid.*, *passim*.
8. *First Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston* (Boston, 1876), pp. 56-57.
9. Lothrop, "John White," pp. 421-23; Cunningham, "John Winchester," pp. 8-13; Jones, *Land Ownership*, pp. 8-14.
10. Calculated from "1687 Muddy River Valuation" in *First Report of the Record Commissioners*, pp. 128-30.
11. *Muddy River Records*, pp. 57-58, 85-86; Sly, "Muddy River," pp. 118-22.
12. *Muddy River Records*, pp. 58-91; Sly, "Muddy River," pp. 125-33, 150-53.
13. Lothrop, "John White," pp. 421-26; offices from *Muddy River Records*, *passim*. Tax ratings from 1746 tax list, papers of Brookline Historical Society; 1770 valuation, Massachusetts Archives 130: 421-24, State House, Boston.
14. Jones, *Land Ownership*, pp. 18-20, 24-37; Charles K. Bolton, "The First Harvard Graduate Killed in the Revolution," *New England Magazine*, n.s., 12 (1895): 107-11.
15. Cunningham, "John Winchester," pp. 22-23.
16. Bradford Kingman, "Brookline," in D. Hamilton Hurd, ed., *History of Norfolk County, Massachusetts* (Philadelphia, 1884), 2: 808-11.
17. John Pierce, *An Address at the Opening of the Town Hall in Brookline on Tuesday, 14 October 1845* (Boston, 1846), pp. 42-43.
18. Jones, *Land Ownership*, pp. 9-28.
19. Daniel Scott Smith, "Parental Power and Marriage Patterns: An Analysis of Historical Trends in Hingham, Massachusetts," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 35 (1973): 422-27; James A. Henretta, "Families and Farms: *Mentalité* in Pre-Industrial America," *William and Mary Quarterly* 35 (1978): 26-32.
20. Tabulated from data in Lothrop, "John White," pp. 421-26; Cunningham, "John Winchester," pp. 7-28; and various genealogical sources.
21. Reconstruction of 1770-71 population based on tax lists and genealogical sources.
22. List of eligible voters from 1746 tax list; 1770 valuation. For franchise requirements see Robert E. Brown, *Middle-Class Democracy and the Revolution in Massachusetts, 1691-1780* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1955), pp. 78-93.

23. Calculated from 1688, 1746, and 1770 tax lists/valuations; reconstruction of 1770-71 population; and *Muddy River Records*.
24. Carl Bridenbaugh, *Cities in Revolt: Urban Life in America, 1743-1776* (New York, 1955), pp. 24-25, 144.
25. Jones, *Land Ownership*, p. 19; Rufus G. F. Candage, *Jeremy Gridley* (Brookline, 1903), p. 3; *Dictionary of American Biography*, s.v. "Boylston, Zabdiel"; John Gould Curtis, *History of Brookline, Massachusetts* (Boston, 1934), pp. 111-14.
26. *Dictionary of American Biography*, s.v. "Gridley, Jeremiah"; Jones, *Land Ownership*, p. 24; Curtis, *History of Brookline*, pp. 120-21; Candage, *Jeremy Gridley*, pp. 3-4.
27. Harriet F. Woods, *Historical Sketches of Brookline, Massachusetts* (Boston, 1874), pp. 301-3; Curtis, *History of Brookline*, p. 121; Jones, *Land Ownership*, p. 25.
28. Bolton, "First Harvard Graduate," pp. 110-11.
29. Curtis, *History of Brookline*, pp. 150-51, 158-61; *Church Records of Baptisms, Marriages, and Deaths for 100 Years* (Brookline, 1897); L. Kinvin Wroth, ed., *Province in Rebellion: A Documentary History of the Founding of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1774-1775* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), pp. 2209, 2705.
30. Curtis, *History of Brookline*, pp. 164-70.
31. Edward M. Cook, Jr., *The Fathers of the Towns: Leadership and Community Structure in Eighteenth-Century New England* (Baltimore, 1976), p. 104; reconstruction of 1770-71 population.
32. *Muddy River Records* and genealogical sources.
33. *Muddy River Records*, pp. 242-304, *passim*; Bettye Hobbs Pruitt, ed., *The Massachusetts Tax Valuation List of 1771* (Boston, 1978), pp. 508-9; *Vital Records of Roxbury, Massachusetts, to the End of 1849* (Salem, Mass., 1925-26).
34. *Muddy River Records*, pp. 287-322, *passim*; George F. Daniels, *History of the Town of Oxford, Massachusetts* (Oxford, Mass., 1892), pp. 421-25, 430; Charles H. Stearns, "The Sewall House," *Proceedings of the Brookline Historical Society*, 1903, pp. 35-39.
35. *Muddy River Records*, pp. 304, 322; obituary of Jane Thompson, consort of William, *Columbian Centinel* (Boston), April 2, 1791; Daniels, *History of Oxford*, p. 430.
36. Brookline tax list, 1787, papers of Brookline Historical Society.
37. Jones, *Land Ownership*, map 7; James Driscoll, "Industry in Brookline," *Proceedings of the Brookline Historical Society*, 1952, p. 12; Woods, *Historical Sketches*, pp. 25-27, 125-28, 130-31.

38. John Pierce, "Memoirs," 3: 29-31 (Jan. 1818), Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
39. Diary of Benjamin Goddard, May 14, 1812, Public Library of Brookline.
40. Tabulated from officers in *Muddy River Records*, and by tracing descendants of 1770-71 elite.
41. Woods, *Historical Sketches*, p. 289; Charles F. White, *John White of Muddy River* (Brookline, 1904), pp. 29-30, 33-38; Cunningham, "John Winchester," pp. 123-44, 230-50, 343-65, *passim*; genealogical clipping file, Public Library of Brookline.
42. Jones, *Land Ownership*, pp. 32-34; Woods, *Historical Sketches*, pp. 353-55; Mrs. Thomas Doliber, "Two Old Brookline Homesteads," *Proceedings of the Brookline Historical Society*, 1905, pp. 50-53; Curtis, *History of Brookline*, pp. 186-87.
43. Jones, *Land Ownership*, pp. 24-26; *Muddy River Records*, pp. 344-47.
44. Occupations of selectmen were determined from various biographical and genealogical sources, particularly Woods, *Historical Sketches*, pp. 21, 176-79, 205, 354.
45. Pierce, "Memoirs," 3: 29-31; Goddard diary, May 6-8, 12, 1813; Woods *Historical Sketches*, pp. 177-79, 329; reconstruction of 1770-71 population.
46. Woods, *Historical Sketches*, pp. 175-78; Curtis, *History of Brookline*, p. 180; *Proceedings of the Brookline Historical Society*, 1905, pp. 15-16; Jones, *Land Ownership*, pp. 30, 39, 41, map 6.
47. Woods, *Historical Sketches*, pp. 21, 176-79, 205.
48. Curtis, *History of Brookline*, pp. 206-7; Jones, *Land Ownership*, p. 31, map 6; Woods, *Historical Sketches*, p. 24.