

Session Five

OLLI: A Walk Through Berkshire History

Spring 2019 © Michael Forbes Wilcox

Quick Review of first three properties

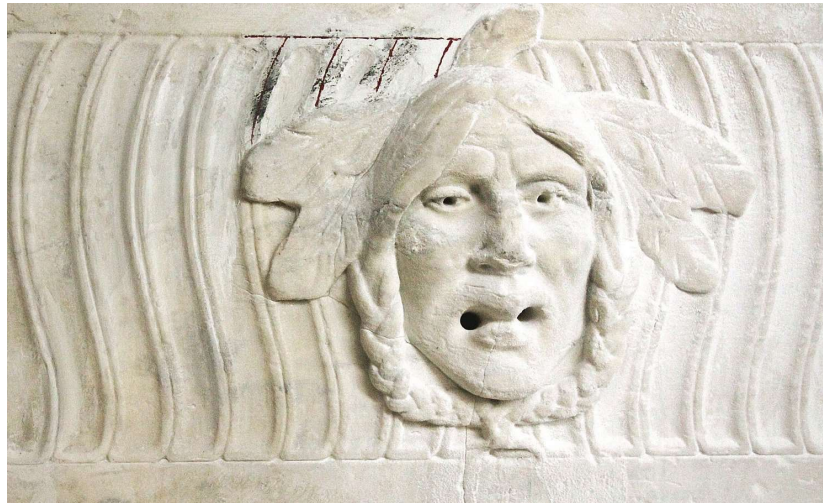
This session: Alford Springs & Parsons Marsh

Next Up: Keystone Arch Bridges (Session Six)

<https://ucc-lee.org/wp-content/uploads/Fountain-Preservation-info.pdf>

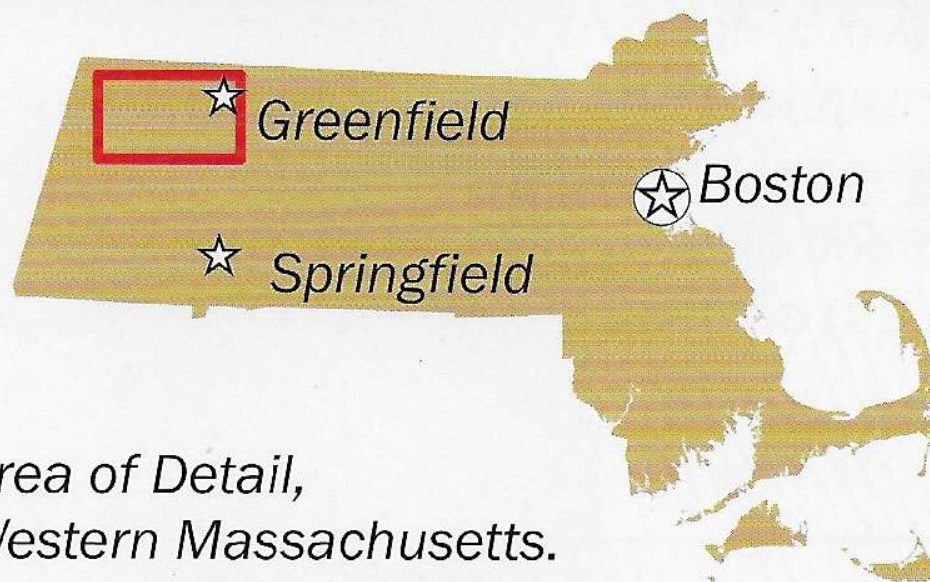
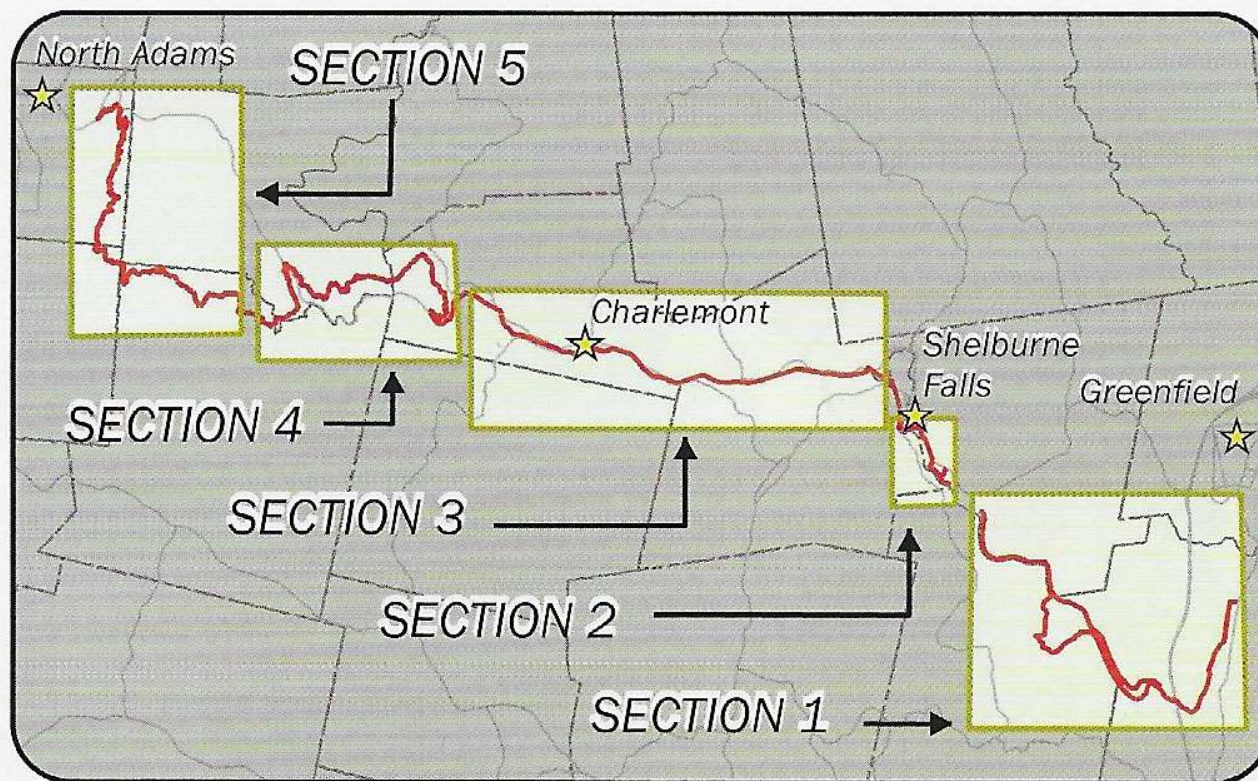
- <https://www.berkshireeagle.com/stories/mohicans-and-the-mohawk-trail-nothing-about-us-without-us,573028?>

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Nothing About Us Without Us

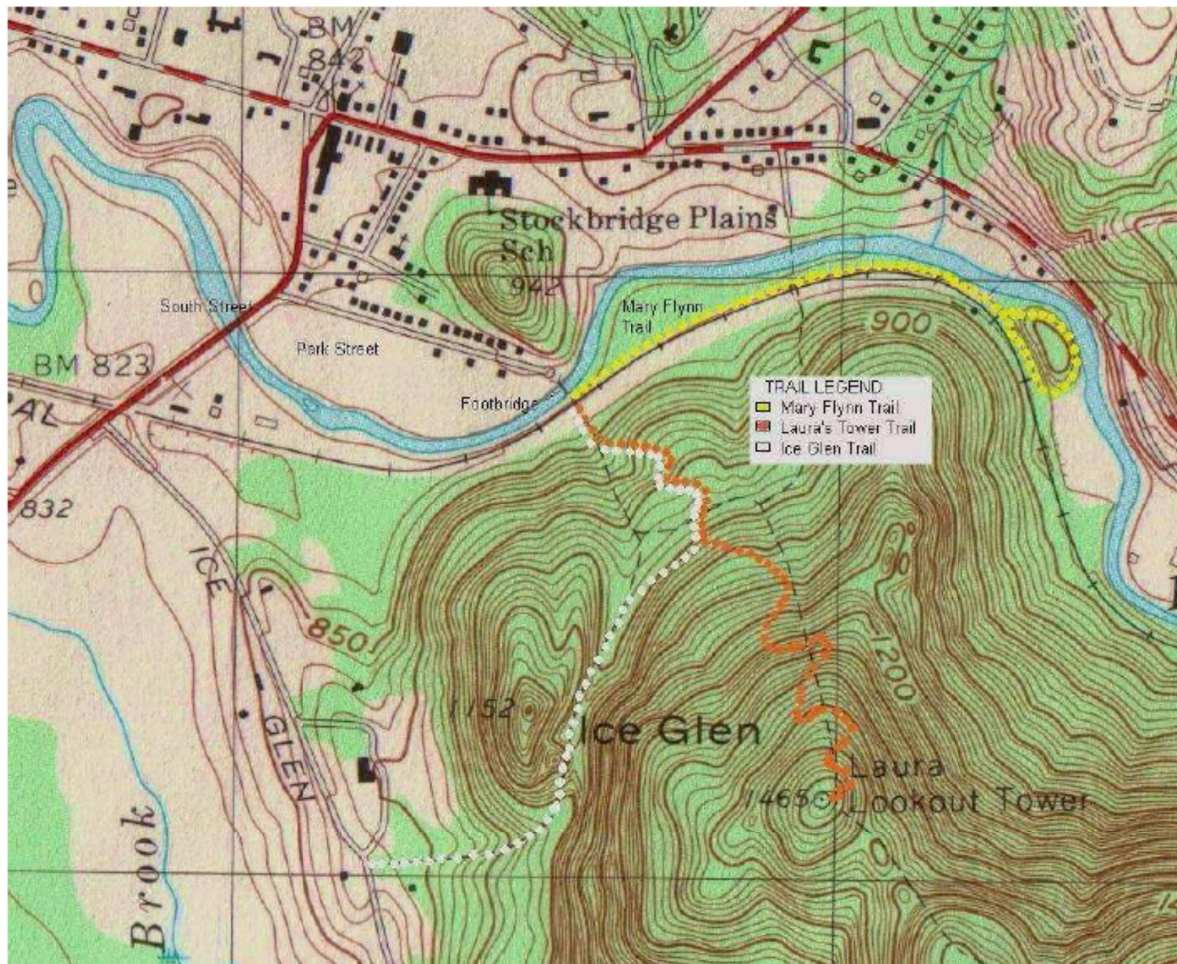







Area of Detail,
Western Massachusetts.

TRAIL MAP

All three trails start after crossing the Goodrich Memorial footbridge, located at the end of Park Street.



TRAIL LEGEND

Yellow		Mary V. Flynn Trail
Orange		Laura's Tower Trail
White		Ice Glen Trail

THREE TRAILS

Maintained by the
LAUREL HILL ASSOCIATION
Stockbridge, Massachusetts



THE MARY V. FLYNN TRAIL

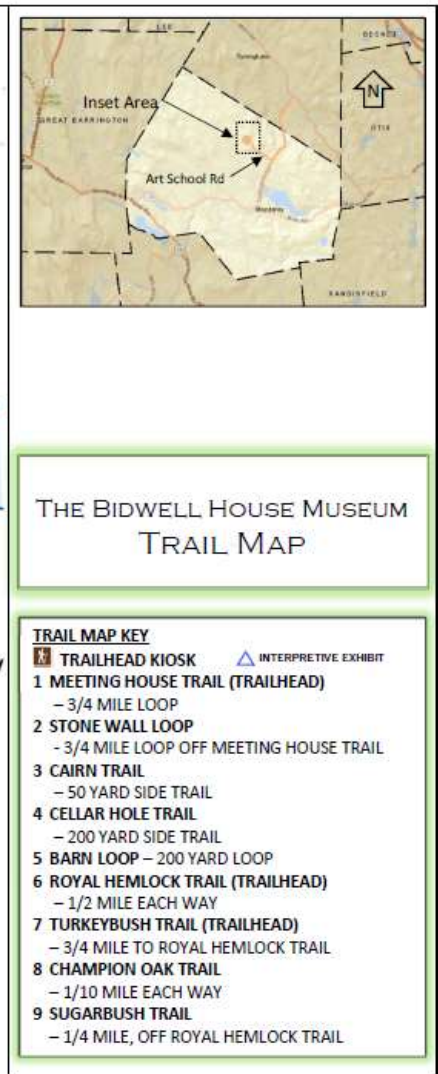
LAURA'S TOWER TRAIL

ICE GLEN TRAIL

The Laurel Hill Association is the
nation's oldest village improvement
society, founded in 1853 by
Mary Hopkins Goodrich.

To become a member, or to donate
toward the maintenance of these trails,
please contact:

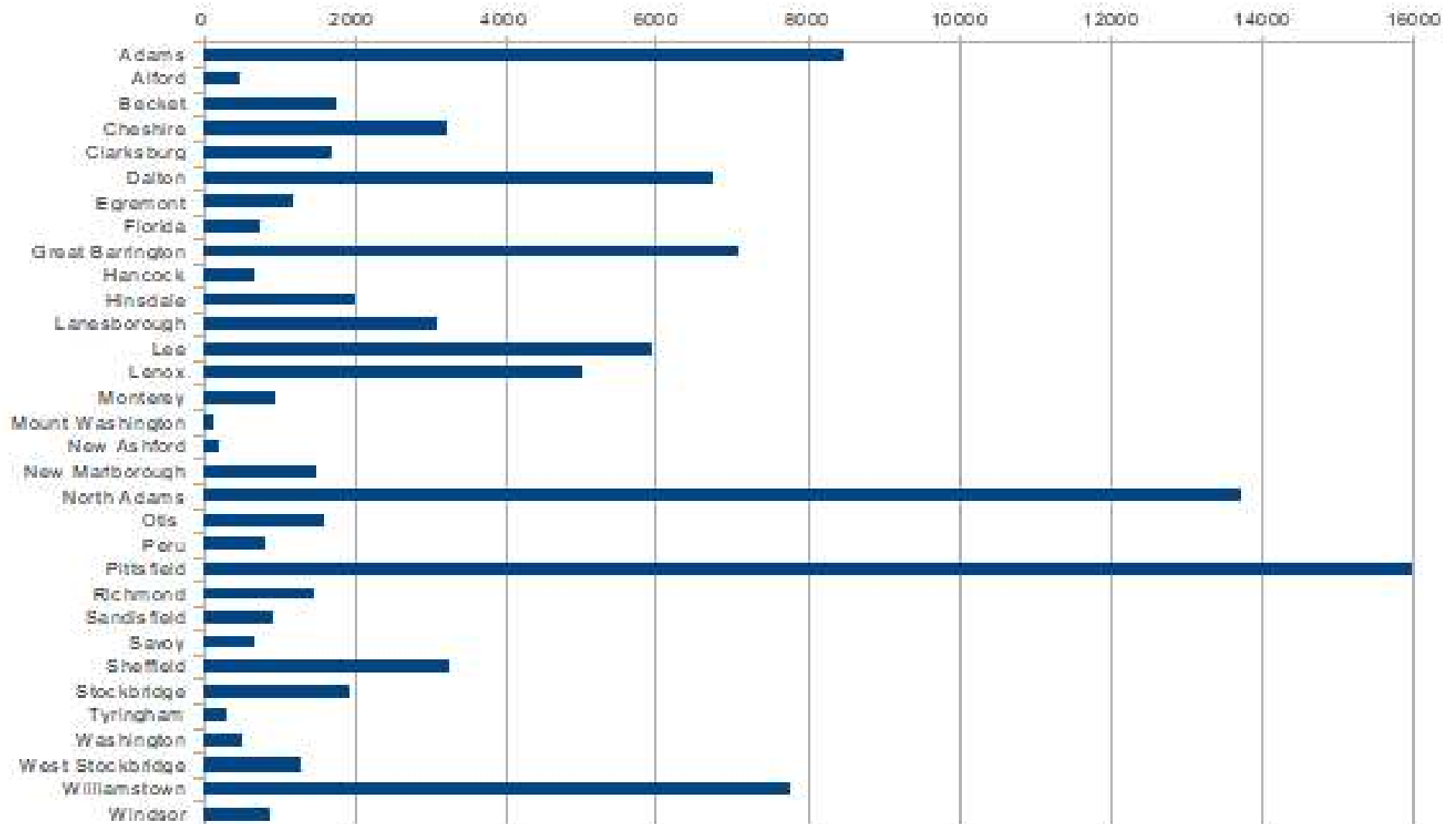
The Laurel Hill Association
P. O. Box 24
Stockbridge MA 01262

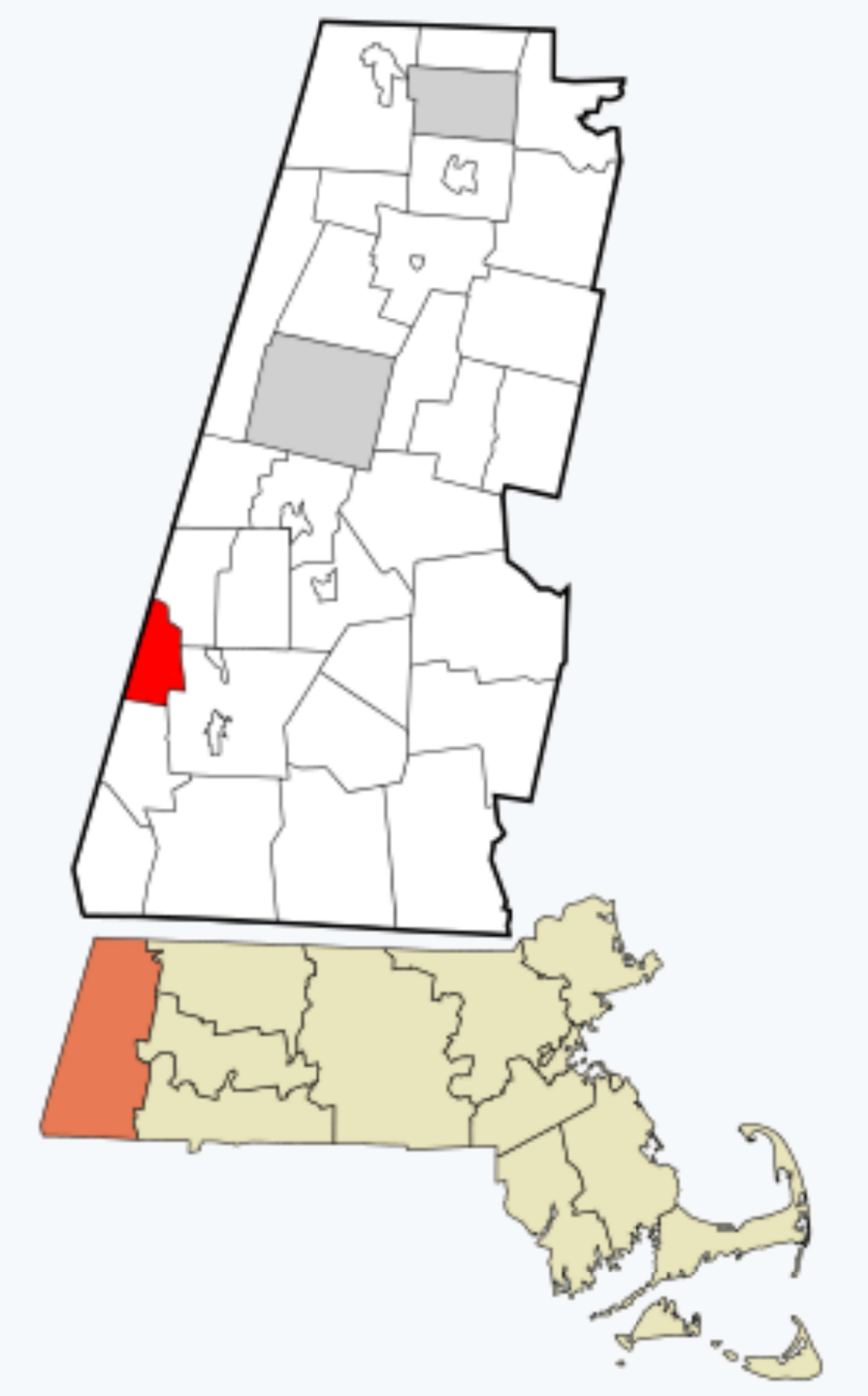


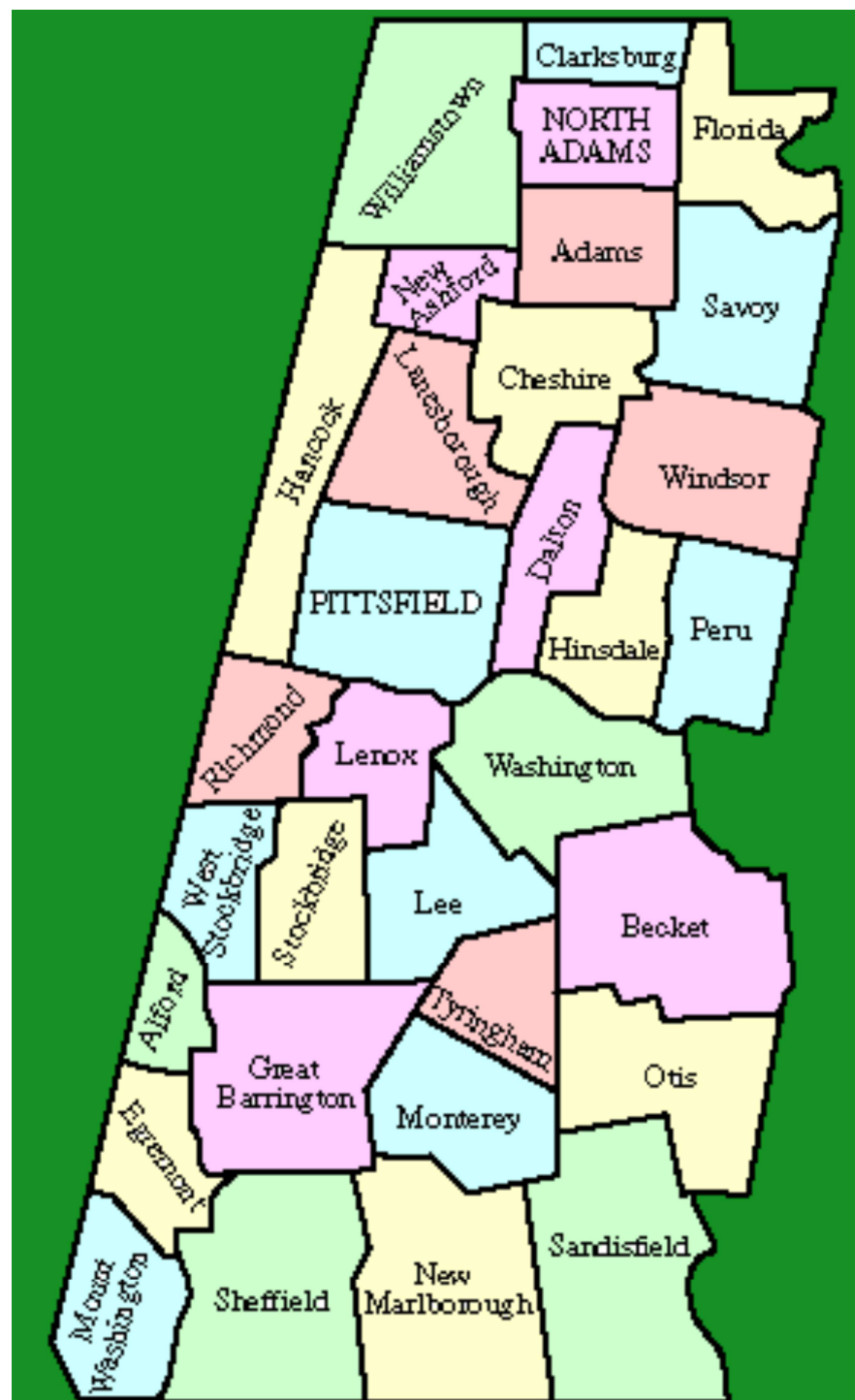
Berkshire Towns Population, Area, Density

Sheet1																									
Town	First Occupied	Incorporated	1790	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	Population		1850	1858	1860	1870	1880	2010	% change	Population Rank		Area Postal	Area 2010	%	Area Rank	Density	
Adams	1750	Oct 15, 1778	2,040	1,688	1,763	1,836	2,648	3,703	6,172	6,980	6,924	12,090	5,591	8,485			-54%	1	3	23.02	22.96	2.4%	20	369.56	
Alford	1750	Feb 16, 1773	577	518	522	575	512	481	502	526	542	430	348	494			-19%	27	29	11.58	11.54	1.2%	32	42.81	
Becket	1740	Jun 21, 1765	751	930	1,028	984	1,063	1,342	1,223	1,472	1,578	1,346	1,123	1,779			-17%	13	14	48.04	47.79	5.1%	4	37.23	
Cheshire	1767	Mar 14, 1793	(a)	1,325	1,315	1,202	1,050	905	1,298	1,532	1,533	1,758	1,537	3,235			-13%	12	10	27.57	27.51	2.9%	14	117.59	
Clarksburg	1769	Mar 2, 1798	(b)	253	231	274	315	370	384	424	420	686	724	1,702			6%	29	15	12.72	12.79	1.4%	31	133.07	
Dalton	1755	Mar 30, 1784	554	859	779	824	827	1,255	1,020	1,064	1,079	1,252	2,052	6,756			64%	17	6	21.83	21.88	2.3%	22	308.78	
Egremont	1730	Feb 13, 1760	759	759	790	866	890	1,038	1,013	992	1,079	931	875	1,225			-6%	19	20	18.91	18.52	2.0%	29	66.14	
Florida	1783	Jun 15, 1805	(c)	(c)	392	825	454	441	561	612	645	1,322	459	752			-65%	26	25	24.71	24.59	2.6%	18	30.58	
Great Barrington	1730	Jun 30, 1761	1,372	1,754	1,784	1,908	2,276	2,704	3,264	3,449	3,871	4,320	4,653	7,104			8%	4	5	45.86	45.78	4.8%	6	155.18	
Hancock	1762	Jul 2, 1776	1,211	1,187	1,049	1,165	1,052	922	789	848	816	882	642	717			-27%	23	26	35.59	35.73	3.8%	11	20.07	
Hinsdale	1762	Jun 21, 1804	(d)	(d)	822	822	780	955	1,253	1,361	1,511	1,695	1,595	2,032			-6%	14	12	21.66	21.70	2.3%	23	93.64	
Lanesborough	1742	Jun 21, 1765	2,142	1,443	1,303	1,319	1,192	1,140	1,229	1,235	1,308	1,393	1,286	3,091			-8%	15	11	29.56	29.58	3.1%	13	104.50	
Lee	1760	Oct 21, 1777	1,170	1,267	1,305	1,384	1,825	2,428	3,220	4,226	4,420	3,866	3,939	5,943			2%	3	7	27.11	27.02	2.9%	16	219.95	
Lenox	1760	Feb 26, 1767	1,169	1,041	1,310	1,315	1,359	1,318	1,599	1,921	1,711	1,965	2,043	5,025			4%	8	8	21.58	21.67	2.3%	24	231.89	
Monterey	(1739)	Apr 12, 1847	(e)	(e)	(e)	(e)	(e)	(e)	761	823	758	653	635	961			-3%	24	21	27.23	27.40	2.9%	15	35.07	
Mount Washington	ca.1720	Jun 21, 1779	328	291	474	467	409	403	351	344	321	256	205	167			-20%	30	32	22.34	22.37	2.4%	21	7.47	
New Ashford	1762	May 1, 1835	460	390	411	458	285	227	186	195	239	208	203	228			-2%	31	31	13.65	13.48	1.4%	30	16.91	
New Marlborough	1736	Jun 15, 1759	1,550	2,068	1,979	1,668	1,656	1,682	1,847	1,647	1,782	1,855	1,876	1,509			1%	10	17	48.04	47.91	5.1%	3	31.50	
North Adams	(1750)	Apr 16, 1878	(f)	(f)	(f)	(f)	(f)	(f)	(f)	(f)	(f)	(f)	(f)	10,191				(f)	2	20.70	20.61	2.2%	25	665.11	
Otis	1750	Jun 13, 1810	(g)	(g)	1,111	981	1,012	1,177	1,224	1,018	998	960	785	1,612			-18%	18	16	37.90	38.03	4.0%	9	42.39	
Peru	1762	Oct 16, 1806	(d)	(d)	912	748	729	576	519	487	499	455	403	847			-11%	28	24	26.10	26.03	2.8%	17	32.54	
Pittsfield	1752	Apr 21, 1761	1,992	2,261	2,665	2,768	3,559	3,747	5,872	6,501	8,045	11,112	13,364	44,737			20%	2	1	42.43	42.47	4.5%	7	1053.38	
Richmond	1760	Jun 21, 1765	1,255	1,044	1,041	922	844	1,097	907	970	914	1,091	1,124	1,475			3%	20	18	19.06	19.01	2.0%	26	77.59	
Sandisfield	1750	Mar 6, 1762	1,745	1,637	1,648	1,648	1,655	1,464	1,649	1,615	1,585	1,482	1,107	915			-25%	11	22	52.98	52.98	5.6%	1	17.27	
Savoy	1777	Feb 20, 1797	(c)	430	711	852	927	915	955	919	904	861	715	692			-17%	21	27	36.11	36.02	3.8%	10	19.21	
Sheffield	1725	Jun 22, 1733	1,899	2,050	2,439	2,476	2,382	2,322	2,769	2,624	2,621	2,535	2,204	3,257			-13%	5	9	48.67	48.57	5.1%	2	67.06	
Stockbridge	1735	Jun 22, 1739	1,336	1,261	1,372	1,377	1,580	1,992	1,941	2,058	2,136	2,003	2,357	1,947			18%	7	13	23.70	23.68	2.5%	19	82.22	
Tyringham	1739	Mar 6, 1762	1,397	1,712	1,689	1,448	1,350	1,477	821	710	730	557	542	327			-3%	25	30	18.98	18.88	2.0%	27	17.32	
Washington	1765	Apr 12, 1777	583	914	942	750	701	991	953	1,068	948	694	493	538			-29%	16	28	38.78	38.80	4.1%	8	13.87	
West Stockbridge	1753	Feb 23, 1774	1,113	1,002	1,049	1,034	1,209	1,448	1,713	1,736	1,589	1,924	1,923	1,706			0%	9	19	18.61	18.68	2.0%	28	69.91	
Williamstown	1753	Jun 21, 1765	1,820	2,086	1,843	2,010	2,134	2,153	2,626	2,529	2,611	3,559	3,394	7,354			-5%	6	4	46.86	46.89	5.0%	5	165.37	
Windsor	1767	Jul 2, 1771	916	961	1,108	1,085	1,042	897	897	905	839	686	644	899			-6%	22	23	35.26	35.17	3.7%	12	25.56	
Sums			28,139	31,131	35,787	35,991	37,717	41,565	49,518	52,791	54,956	64,827	69,032	131,219			6%	31	32	947.14	946.04	97.6%	32	138.70	
														86,482				actual	32		903.57	946.43			95.71
									MA					6,349,097			2.1%			MA	10,555	9.0%			
(c) the gore	Florida	and Savoy	450																						
(d) Partridgefield		1771	1,041	1,361																					
(g) Bethlehem and Loudon		1779	261	488																					
		1773	344	614																					

Population by Town 2010 Census







Alford Factoids

- The first English squatters came in 1750
- Land formally conveyed by the Natives in 1762 in two parcels:
 - Shawenon Purchase of the central and southern part of town
 - Greenland Grant in the northern part
- Incorporated in 1773, named after
 - A town in England
 - John Alford of Charlestown (1686-1761), founder of the professorship of natural religion, moral philosophy, and civil polity at Harvard University, supporter of the society for the propagation of the gospel among the Indians
 - Colonel John Alford of Charlestown, who was known for his work in preaching Christianity to Native Americans, and for sponsoring a theology professorship at Harvard College's Divinity School* *[town website] *did not exist until 1816*

Podunk

The place we now call Alford, after a town in England, or John Alford, or my father's story, was originally known as Podunk. Place names in the Algonquin languages are descriptive, and there are many places in the Northeast that were called Podunk, which means something like "the place where you sink in" – in other words, a marshy area. If you're familiar with the center of our valley, you can see why it was called that. The stream we now call the Alford Brook was once called the Seekonk River. Seekonk is an Algonquin word probably meaning "black goose" or perhaps "wild geese."

The Wilcox Name

Alford's first Town Meeting was held in February 1773. David Ingersoll was the Moderator, and he was also our Representative to the Great and General Court in Boston. A fellow named Sylvanus Wilcox was constable and collector, and he later became a Selectman and a Captain in the Continental Army.

Old Beaver Dam along the Alford Brook (Seekonk River)









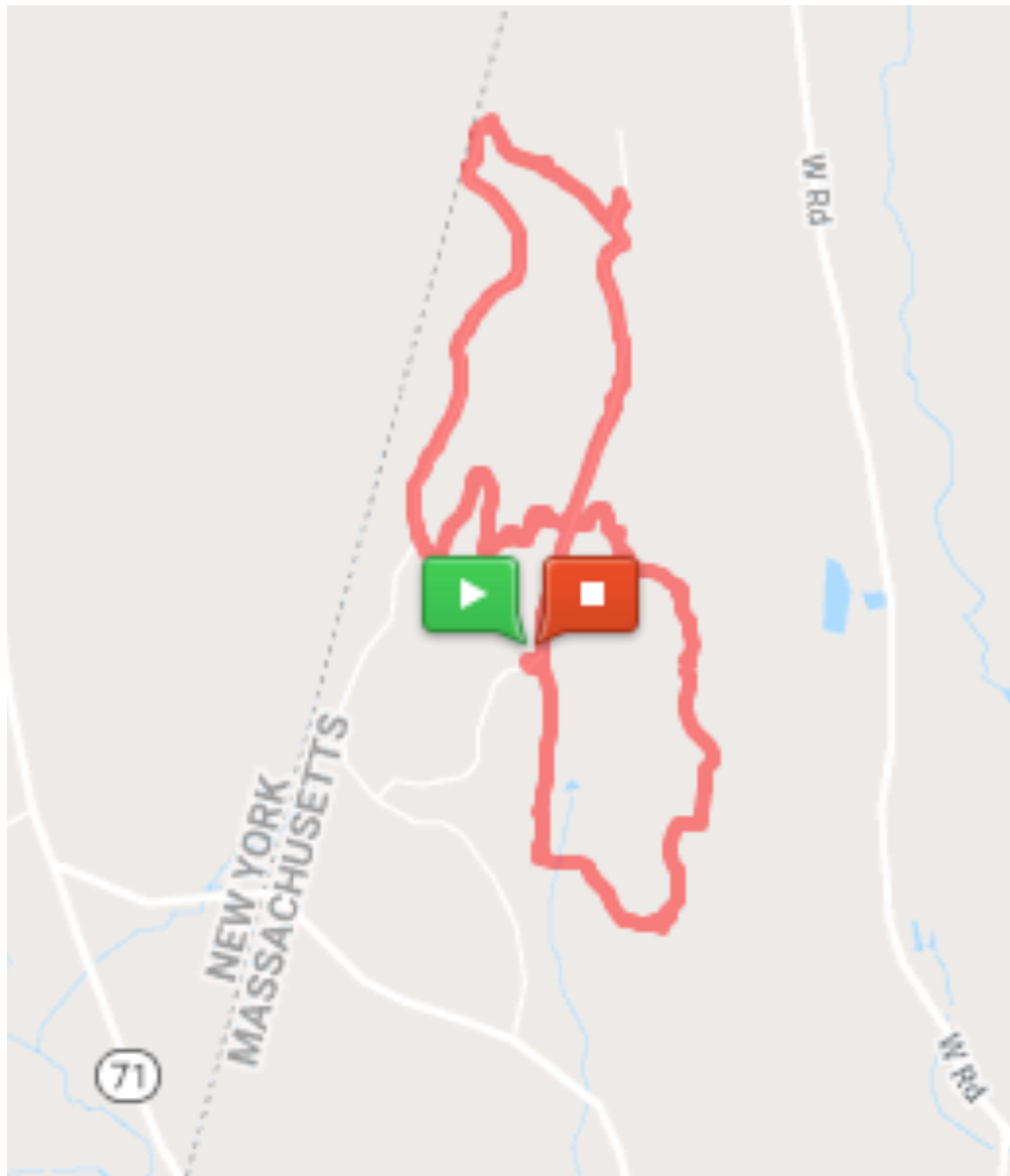


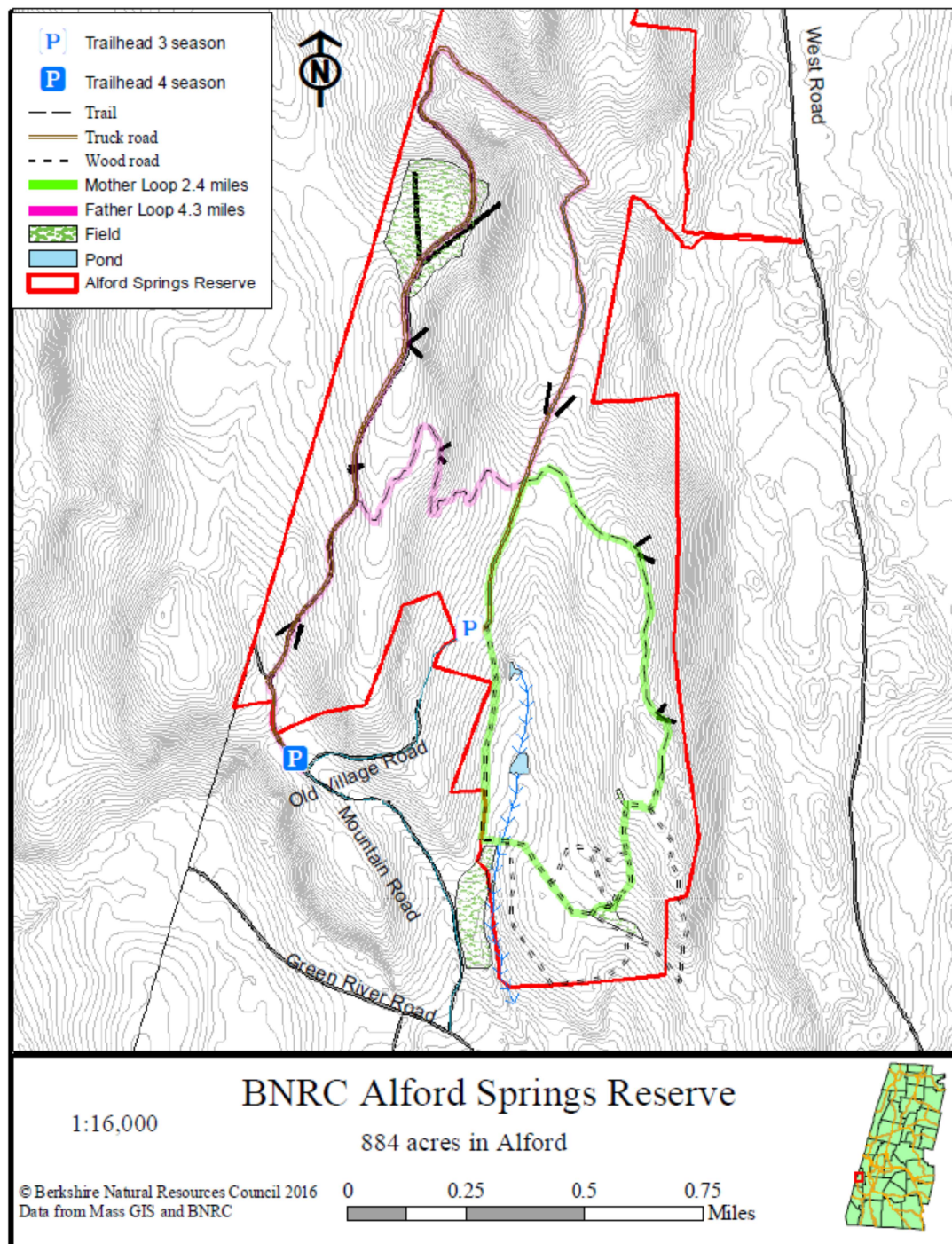






6.3 miles







View south from the corner of Alford Springs



Dr. Richard Beebe

1884 History of Berkshire County

Alford page 594

Richard Beebe, a graduate of the Berkshire Medical College in 1854, is now the only doctor in town.

Richard Beebe, M. D., of Egremont, Mass., who was employed by the Cattle Commissioners to examine into the causes of a mysterious outbreak of disease in that vicinity, reports concerning a cow which died very suddenly, that he found the stomach apparently healthy, small intestines and bladder ulcerated, and quite full of thin, bloody water. When he came to the spleen it retained its shape, but the moment he touched it, it broke and run like water. He could not do anything about weighing it, but judged it would have weighed eight pounds; there was no coagula about any of the blood in any part of the animal, not even the cavities; there did not appear to be any fibrine in the blood. This would seem to indicate that the disease in question there, was splenic apoplexy.†

Epilepsy.

Dr. Richard Beebe, Alford, Mass., reports a case of epilepsy of twenty years' standing, treated with Peacock's Bromides, and cured. He says this preparation will do what other bromides can not.

(#18) 227 Egremont Plain Road (EGR-75), Tullar Tavern/Elm Court Inn

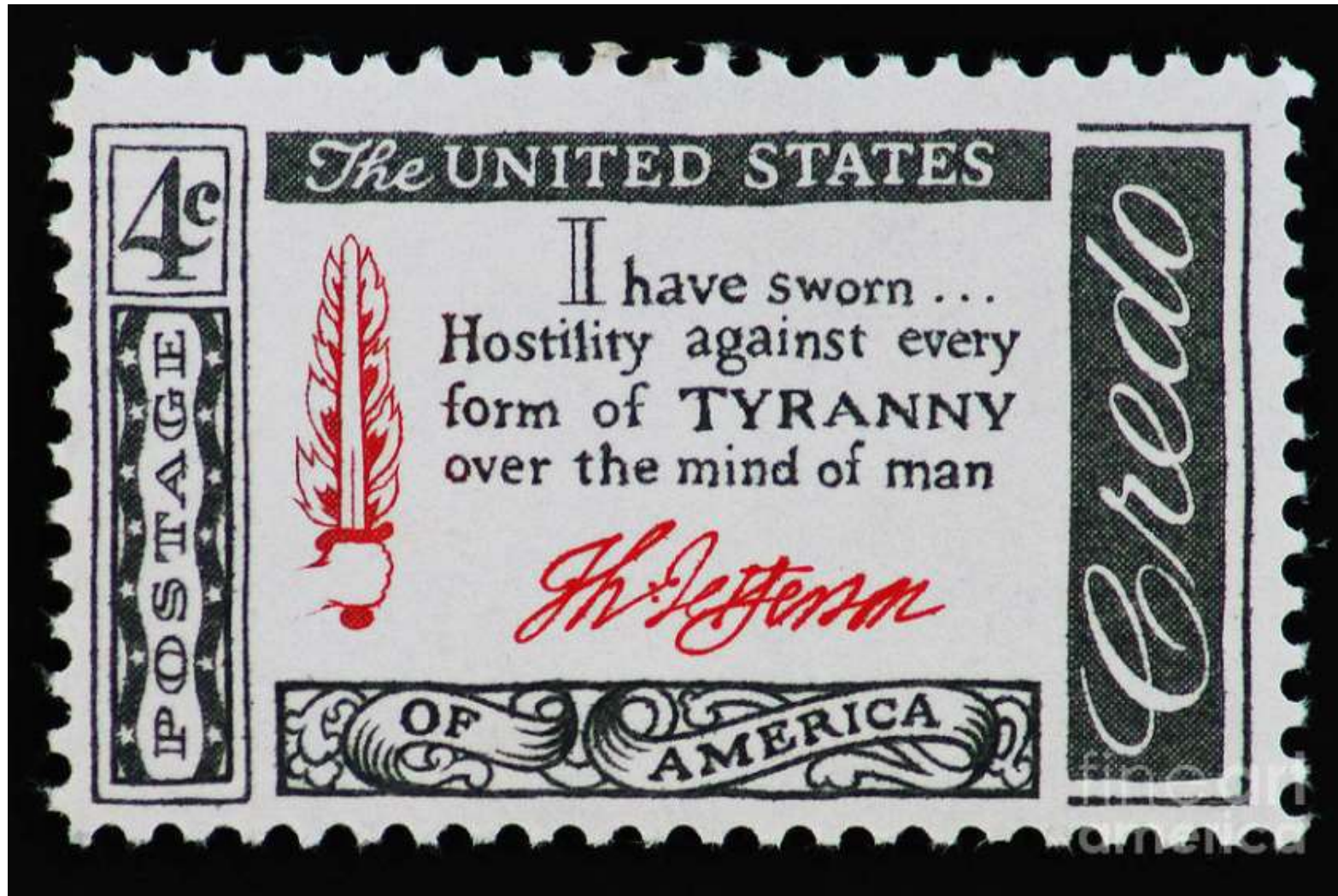


In 1790, prominent citizen John Tullar III, whose father built Egremont's oldest surviving house on its Sheffield border, built this structure to house his tavern, which for many years was an active center of village life. Grange meetings were held here, and in 1824 it became a Post Office and tavern called the Elm Court Inn. Over the years, the building has had many locally important owners and innkeepers: Joshua L. Millard; George N. Lester; and Dr. Richard Beebe. In 1885, Lyman Brusie bought the tavern from Dr. Beebe and ran a cider mill and livery stables here. The Ayre family bought the Inn in 1945 and turned it into one of the most popular places in the county. For many years during the 1990s and 2000s, it was the site of the popular Elm Court Restaurant. Today it is a private residence.

Lenox and Parsons Marsh

- First English inhabitant of Lenox was Jonathan Hinsdale of Hartford in 1750
- Reeve – in Anglo-Saxon times, the chief magistrate of a town or district
- Later, the term was used more broadly; a Shire Reeve (Sheriff) had wider jurisdiction
- Lenox elected Deer Reeves until 1774 to enforce the hunting ban on deer and moose from December 21 to August 11.
- Until 1782, there was a bounty of 80 schillings (half paid by the province) for wolves
- In 1762, the province (under Governor Bernard) decided to offer 10 townships for sale, over the objections of the resident Indians
- Township #8 had already been sold by two sachems known as Yokun and Ephraim – in 1765 #8 became Richmond (a misspelling of the Duke of Richmond, Charles Lennox). In 1767, Yokuntown and part of Washington became Lenox, and Mount Ephraim became Richmond.

Scott #1141



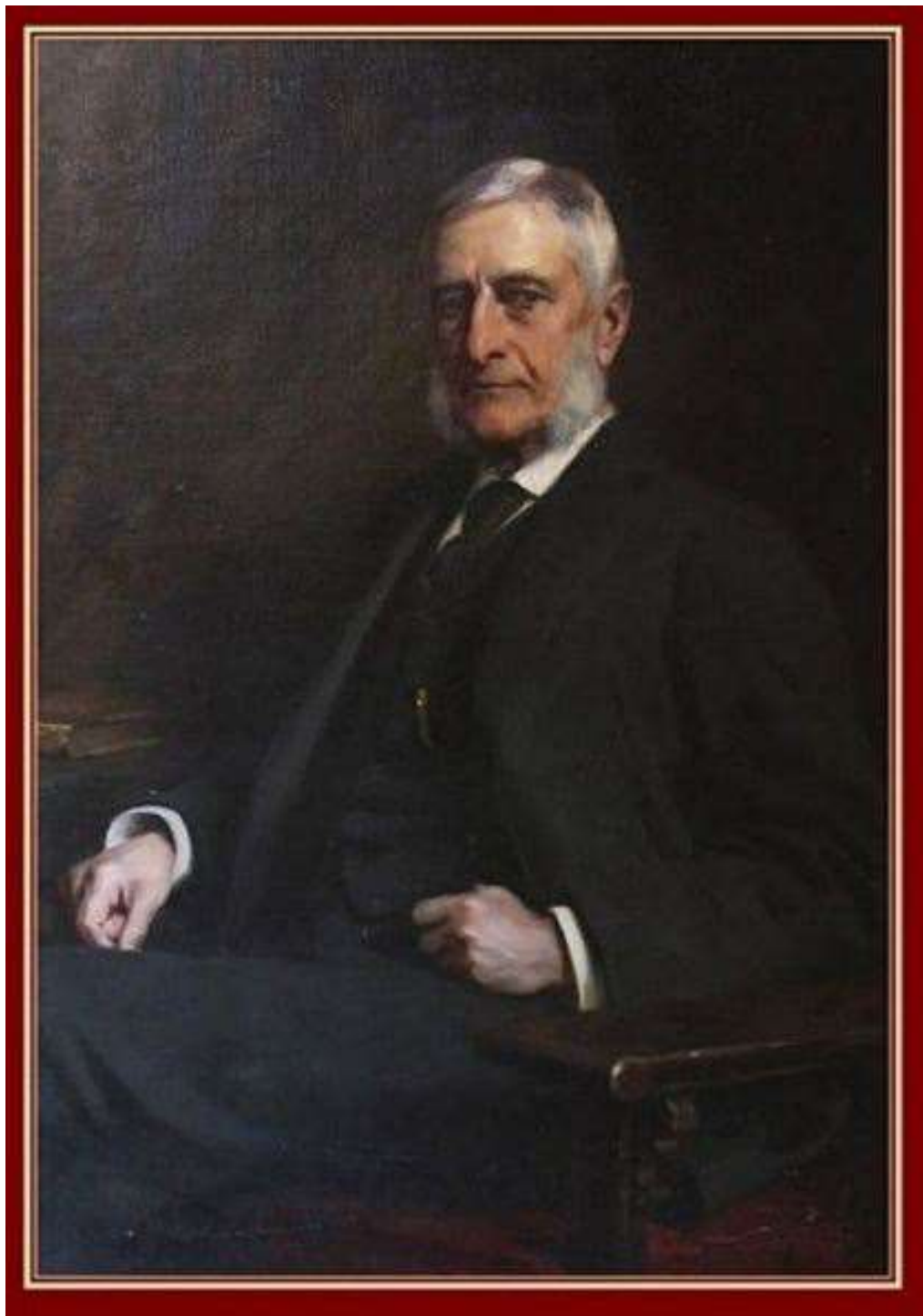
Thomas Jefferson *September 23, 1800*

... that delusion on the clause of the constitution, which, while it secured the freedom of the press, covered also the freedom of religion, had given to the clergy a very favorite hope of obtaining an establishment of a particular form of Christianity thro' the U. S.; and as every sect believes its own form the true one, every one perhaps hoped for his own, but especially the Episcopalians & Congregationalists. The returning good sense of our country threatens abortion to their hopes, & they believe that any portion of power confided to me, will be exerted in opposition to their schemes. And they believe rightly; for

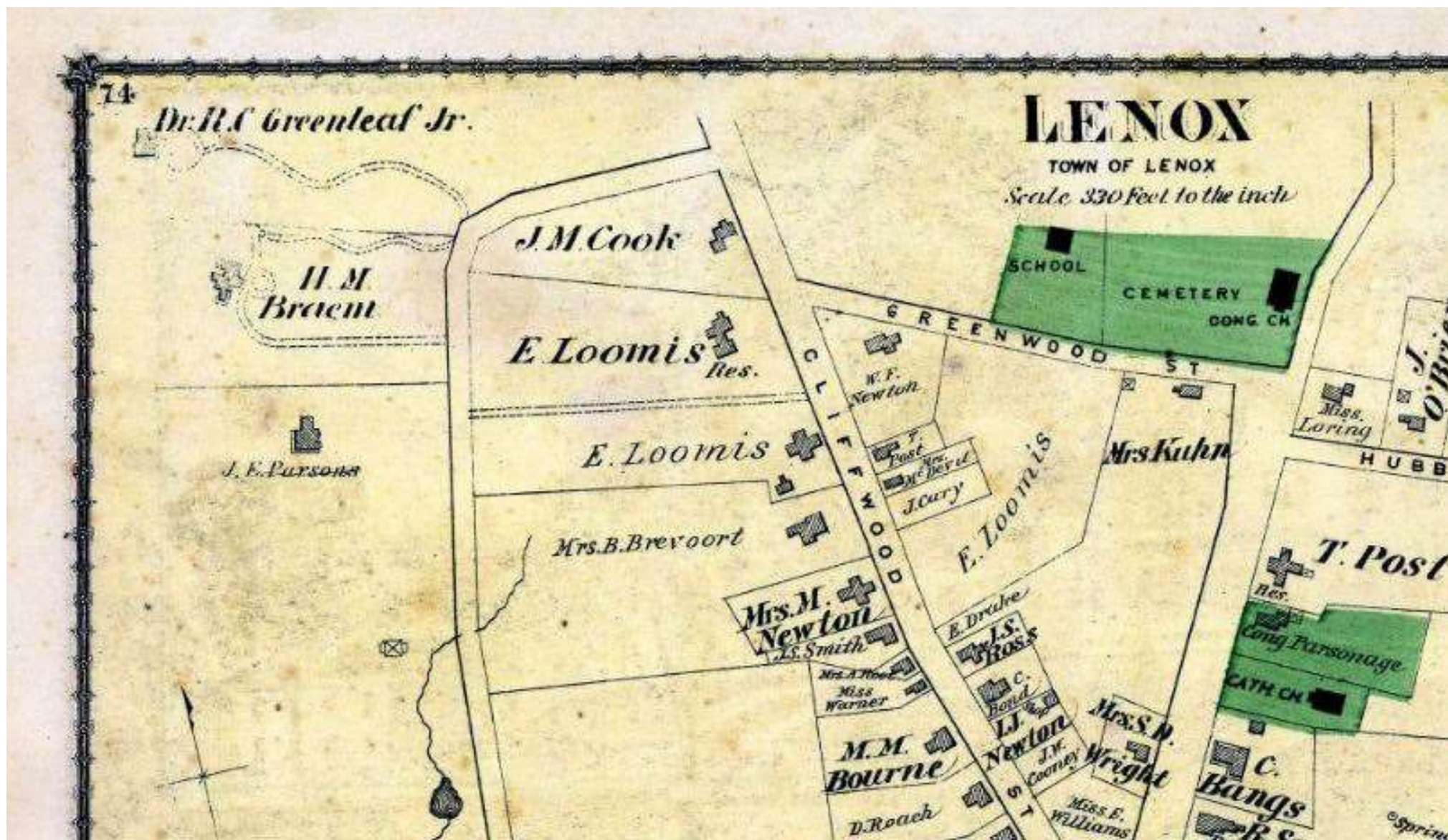
I have sworn upon the altar of god, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man.

More Lenox Factoids

- In 1794 non-Congregationalists were exempted from paying the church tax (to support the Minister):
 - 40 Episcopalians
 - 25 Baptists
 - 11 Methodists
- On July 6, 1774, Lenox sent a delegation to the Berkshire Congress in Stockbridge. In early 1775 a delegate to the Provincial Congress was selected, and it was decided to purchase muskets, bayonets, et cetera.
- April 19, the Battle of Lexington; Berkshire County sent at least five companies of soldiers to the east. After the British Evacuation (March 17, 1776), the Massachusetts regiment marched toward Canada, but were turned back by American defeat in Quebec before they arrived, and were involved in the capture of Burgoyne at Saratoga, and the battles in Trenton and Princeton, with General Washington.



1876 Map



Now the Lenox Club (1914)

1924 golf course expanded to 18 holes

1932 Aspinwall Hotel burned down



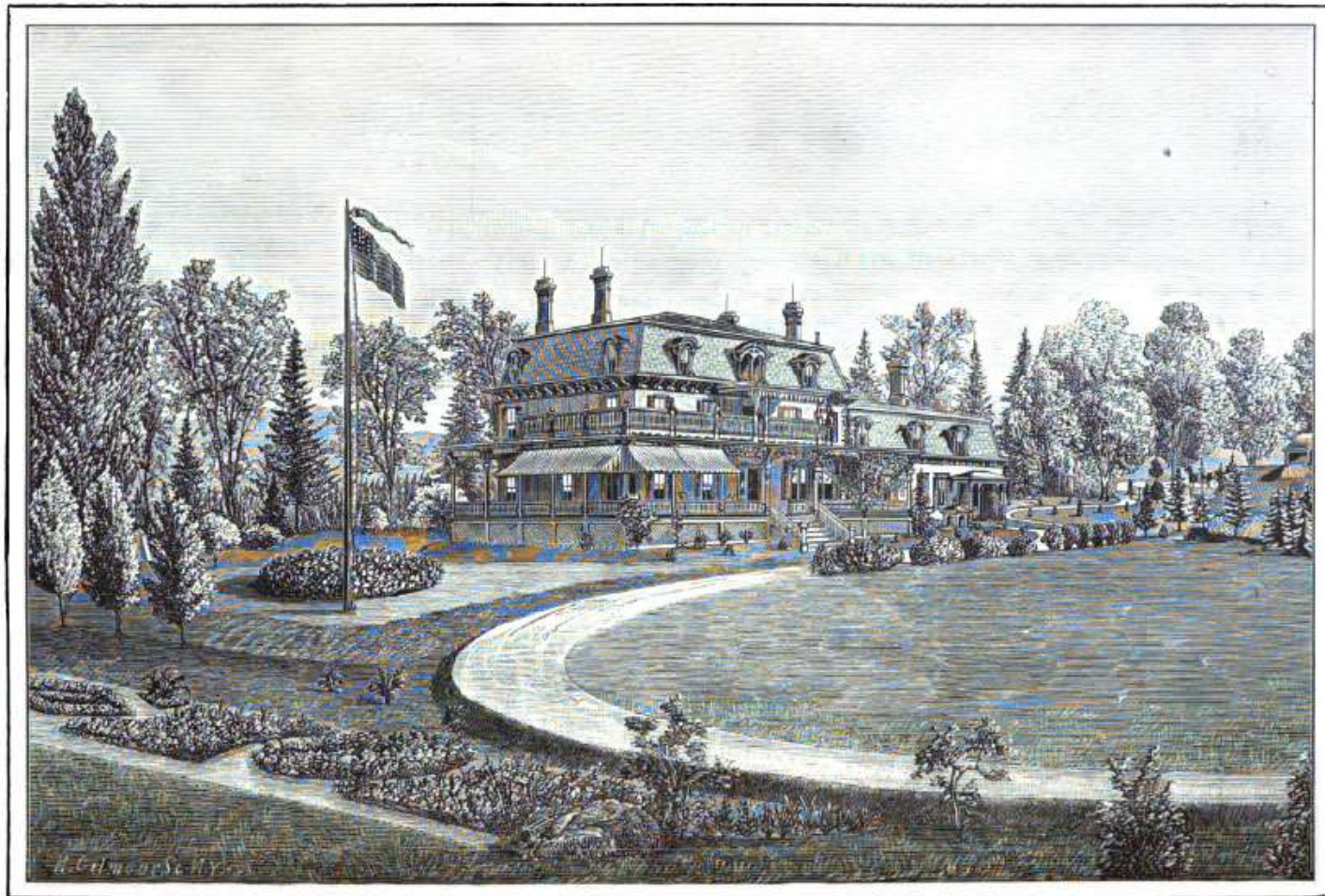
RESIDENCE OF DR. R. C. GREENLEAF,
LENOX.



W. O. CURTIS, Propr.

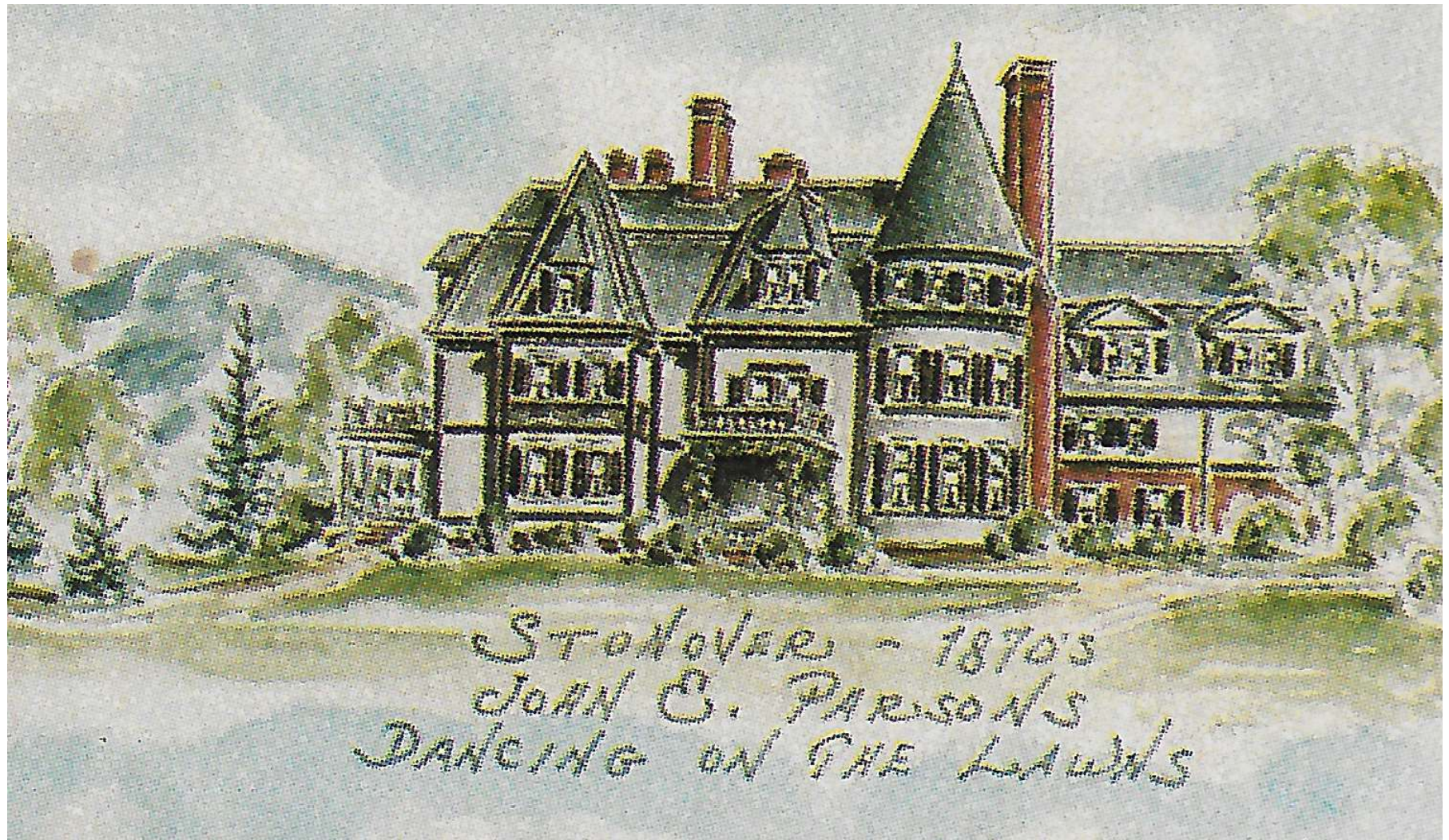
CURTIS HOTEL,
LENOX.

In 1901, the widower Parsons married into more money, in the person of the widow Mrs. David Wolfe Bishop, who owned another of the cottages nearby, Interlaken. She was fifty, he was seventy.



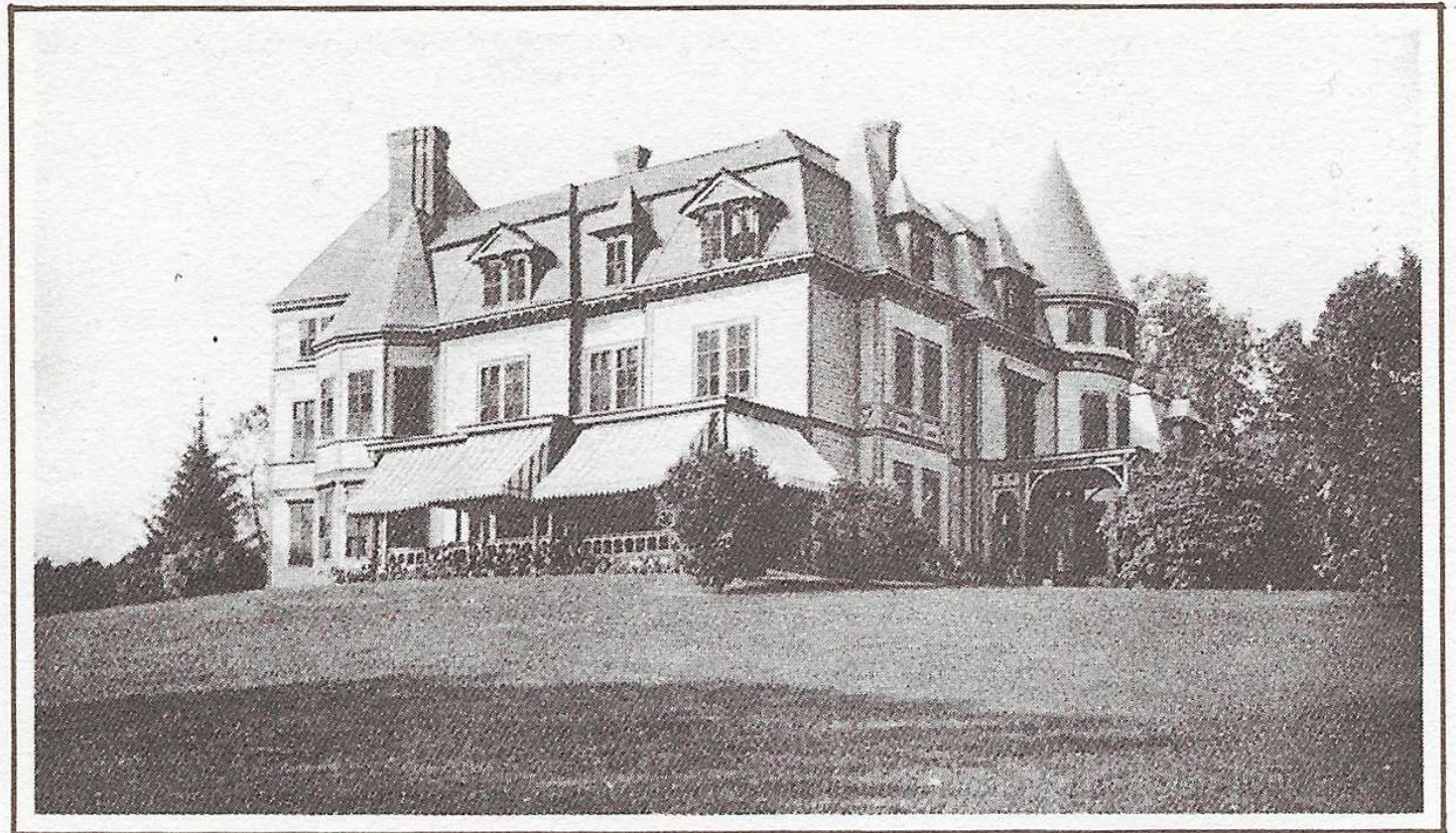
INTERLACKEN.
RESIDENCE OF DAVID W. BISHOP,
1901.

In 1875, Parsons built a mansard-roofed home, called “Stonover,” on Yokun Avenue near the village center, to which he made substantial additions ten years later. Until the 1870s, most Berkshire country houses were modest wooden structures. The peak building years were from the 1880s to 1920s as increasing wealth generated larger and more elaborate mansions. Stonover was among the earliest of these so-called “cottages” that wealthy families from New York, Boston and elsewhere built in Lenox from the end of the Civil War until the start of the Great Depression.

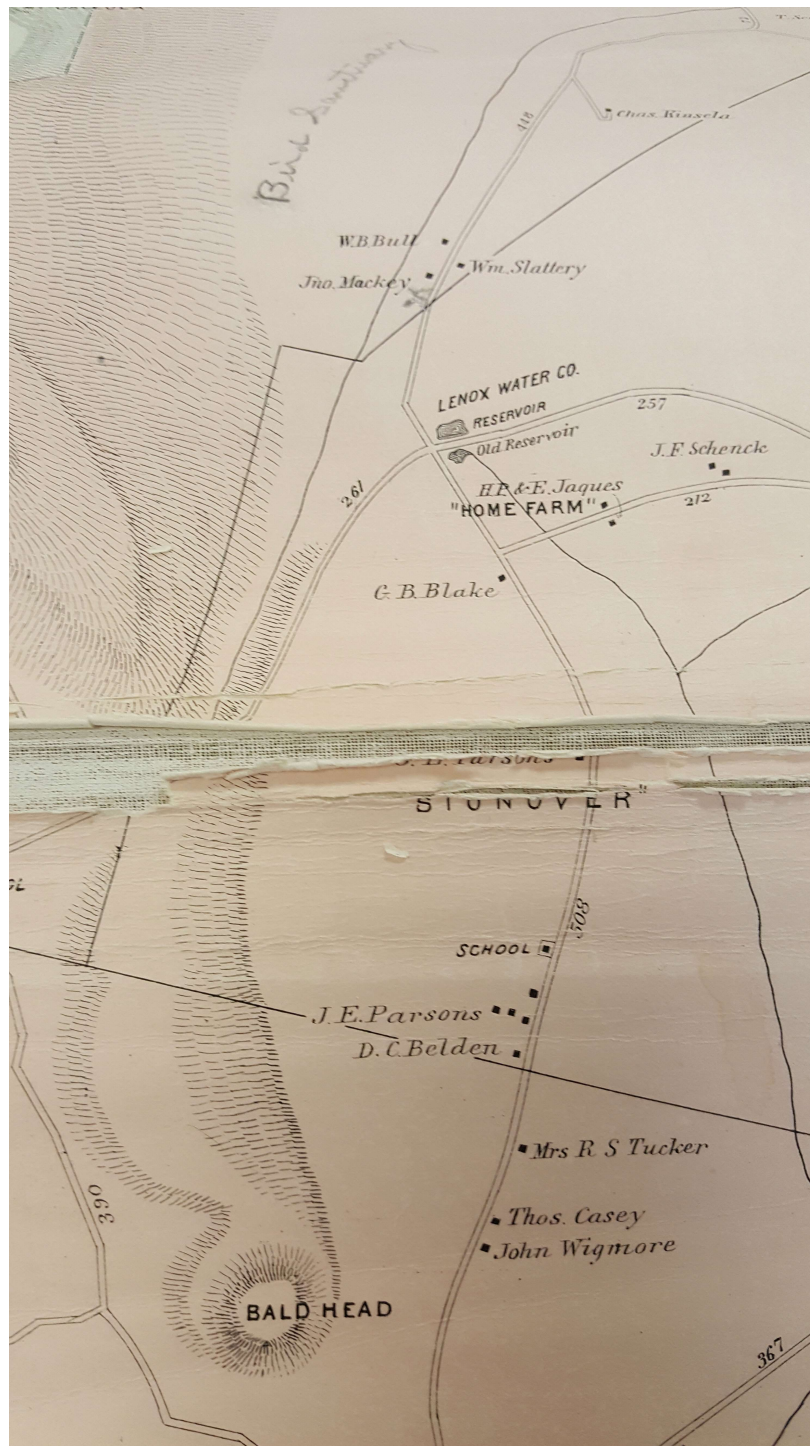


Stoneover - 1870's
JOAN B. PARSONS
DANCING ON THE LAWN

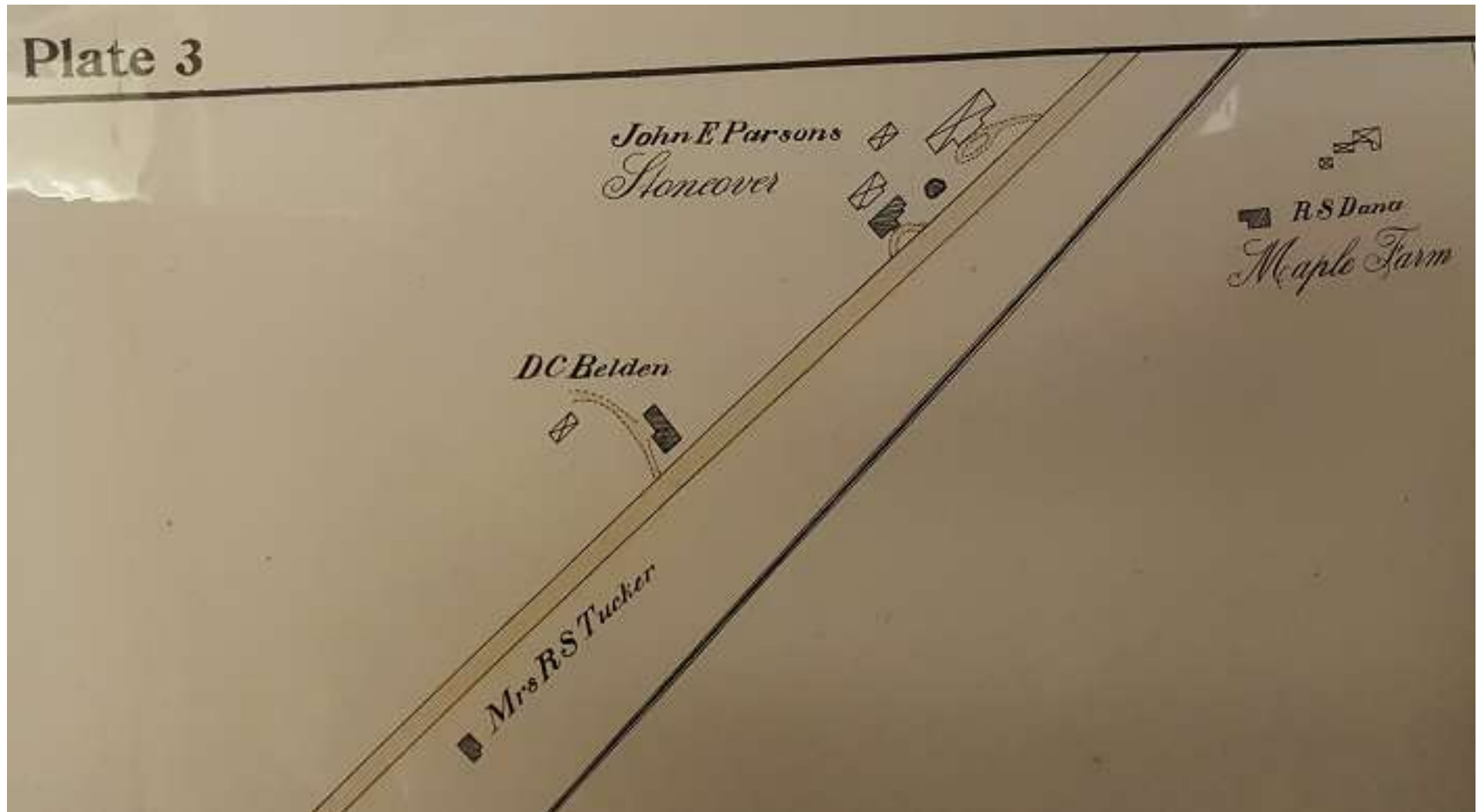
Stonover,
John E. Parsons'
cottage



Courtesy of the Library of Congress



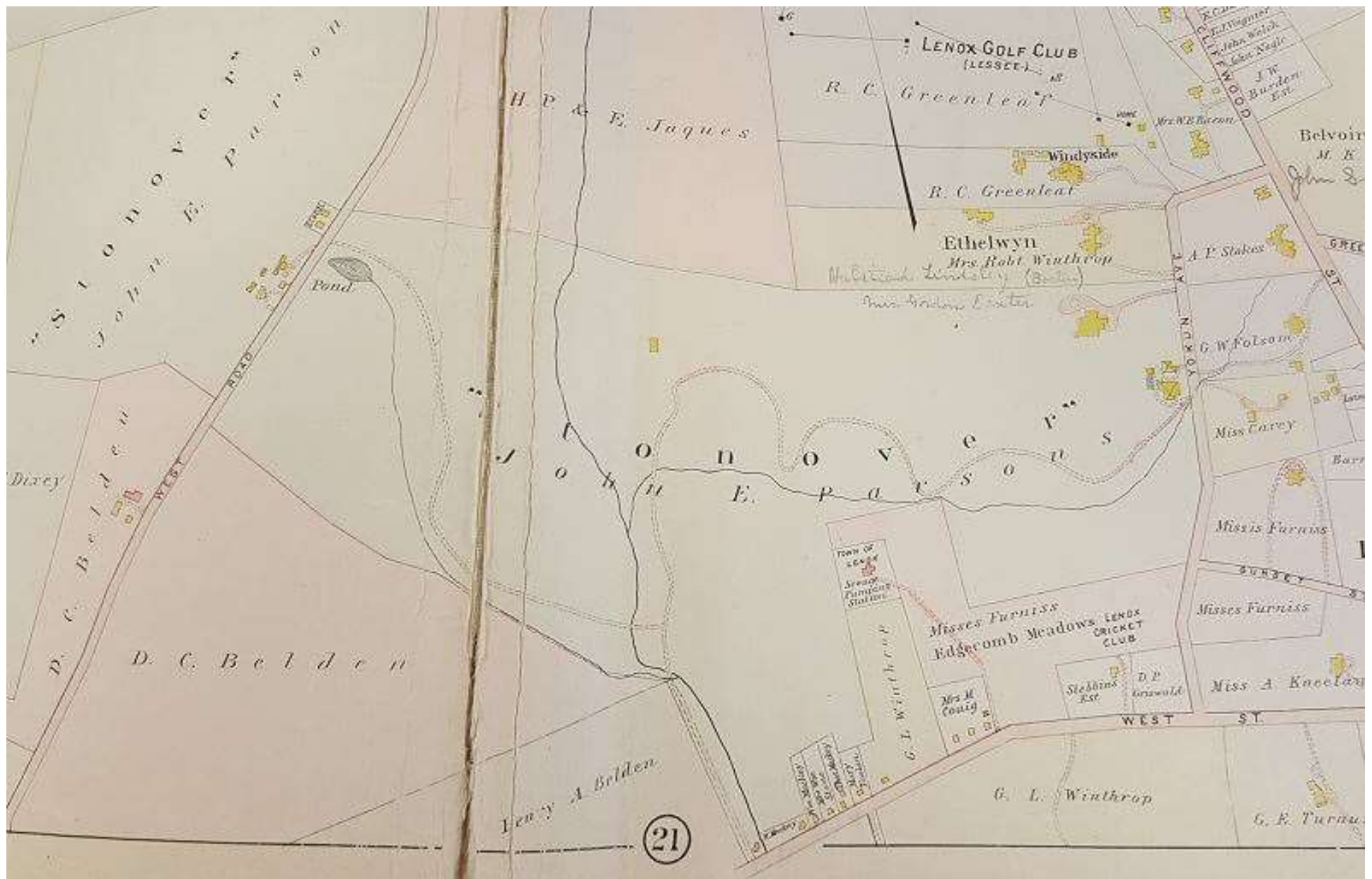
circa 1895



from Book of Berkshires 1904

Mr. Samuel Munson was ordained, November 8th, 1770, on a salary of £45, to be ultimately increased to £60 and his firewood annually. He also received the lands that had been set apart for the first minister. Eighty years later his successor, Dr. Shepard, said of him: "He was a graduate of Yale College in 1763, and was a man of good abilities and ardent piety, sound in the faith, and zealous in promoting the cause of the Redeemer. He lived, however, in troublous times. The Revolutionary war occasioned very bitter animosities among the people; and subsequently what is called the 'Shays Insurrection' was productive of much evil in the town. Such was the state of the church that for seven years the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not administered to its members." Disaffection on the part of a minority of the church, and the ill health of Mr. Munson, led to his dismissal in 1793. He returned to New Haven, where he died in 1814. His house stood on the knoll now occupied by the residence of Mr. John E. Parsons.

Stonover Properties in 1914



Stonover Farm





Mass State Plane Projection

1:2,000

© Berkshire Natural Resources Council 2016

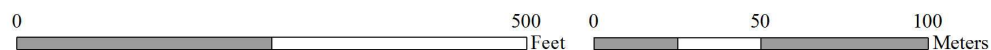
Data from Mass GIS and BNRC

Not to be used for conveyance.

PRELIMINARY Parsons Marsh Trail Layout: 10/26/2016

Berkshire Natural Resources Council

Lenox Community Preservation Fund Application



Lenox

- John “Jack” Drummond Kennedy 1897-1975
- Married to Elsie Parsons
- Another Parsons daughter, Mary, owned land that eventually became the Mass Audubon Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary.