

GUIDE TO THE FIELD FAMILY PAPERS

Scope and Content Note

The Field Family Papers have been received by the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association from various sources. The papers date from the late 17th century to the late 19th century.

The papers are those of or relating to certain members of six generations of the family, descended from Zechariah Field, who was born in England, came to this country in 1629, and after living in several towns in Massachusetts, settled and died in Hatfield in 1666. The major part of the collection consists of papers of Zechariah's great grandson, David Field (1712-1792) and David's sons Samuel, Oliver, and Elihu. The number in superscript that accompanies many of the names in the notes below was the number assigned to that individual by George Sheldon in genealogical notes on the Field family which are included in the second volume of his *History of Deerfield* (1895). Many of the following biographical notes are derived from that source and from the two-volume *Field Genealogy* by Frederick Clifton Pierce (Chicago, 1901).

Biographical Notes and Description of Series

John Field⁸, the son of John³ and Mary (Edwards) Field, was born in Hatfield, Mass., in 1672 and died there in 1747. He and his wife, Sarah (Coleman) Field, had six children, three of whom are named below.

His papers consist mainly of deeds to land in Hatfield. The earliest of these (1711), is a deed for the family's "Home Lott & Buildings thereon," granted to him by his father as the whole of his part of his father's estate. The latest paper (1747) is an inventory of the household goods in his estate.

John Field, eldest son of John and Sarah, was born in Hatfield, Mass., in 1700. He is represented by one paper, an extract of a deed for land from his father.

Hannah Field, daughter of John and Sarah, was born in Hatfield in 1704, married Samuel Dickinson of Deerfield in 1729, and died by drowning while fording the river at Old Fort in 1740.

She is represented by an undated list of purchases she requested, perhaps shortly before her marriage. The list includes material for clothing and for curtains, strings of beads, thread, pins, and various household items.

Eliakim Field, youngest son of John and Sarah, was born in Hatfield, Mass., in 1711 and in 1752 he married Esther Graves of that town. He died there in 1786.

His papers suggest that he was a farmer. They consist mainly of legal documents – deeds to land in Hatfield received from his parents and others, promissory notes, receipts, and orders to pay. There are two wills, one he made in 1747, the other in 1777.

Samuel Field⁴, a son of Zechariah¹ and Mary (Stanley) Field, was born in 1651 and settled in Hatfield. He married Sarah Gilbert in 1676. He saw service under Captain Turner in the Falls fight, and was killed by Indians in 1697.

He is represented by one paper, dated 1701 – a distribution of his estate to his widow and children, performed by a committee of five appointed for the purpose.

Samuel Field⁹, a son of Samuel and Sarah, was born in Hatfield, Mass., in 1678 and settled early in Deerfield, where he was a tavern keeper and prominent in town affairs. In 1705/6, he married Mary Edwards Hoyt, widow of David Hoyt, and the couple had six children, one of whom is mentioned below. Samuel was wounded in the Meadow fight and as a consequence was granted land in Northfield by the General Court.

His papers consist of a verbatim copy of a will he made in 1733; a plat of land laid out by him north of Cheapside by a committee of three in 1736; and part of an obligation of Nathaniel Sikes of Springfield, Mass., to Samuel Field as treasurer for the proprietors of the Falls fight township in 1738.

David Field¹³, son of Samuel and Mary, was born in Deerfield in 1712. He lived on Lot 35 where he had a store and was an innkeeper for many years. He was a soldier in the Indian wars, was prominent in town affairs, served as chairman of the Committee of Correspondence and Safety, and was a delegate to the Provincial Congress in 1775 and to the Constitutional Convention in 1779-80. In 1741 he married Thankful Taylor; they had nine children, four of whom are mentioned below.

The earliest of his papers is an agreement with Moses Brooks of Winchester, New Hampshire, for improvement of Fields' lands there. Other papers include a complaint regarding goods stolen from his store and various legal documents – accounts, receipts, writs of attachment, and executions – many related to his business.

Three sons of David and Thankful – Samuel¹⁵, David¹⁶, and Oliver¹⁷ – joined with their brother-in-law, Consider Dickinson, in a business venture with Timothy Childs, Simon Larned, and Joshua Danforth, all of Pittsfield, Mass. A folder relating to this venture, the nature of which is not clear, is filed to precede the papers of Samuel.

Samuel Field¹⁵, eldest son of David and Thankful, was born in 1743, graduated from Yale in 1762, studied divinity with the Reverend Jonathan Ashley, but became a Sandemanian. He later read law, was admitted to the Bar of Hampshire County, and established a law practice. In about 1771 he moved to Greenfield where he engaged in trade for a time, then to Conway, and later (c. 1776) to Deerfield. He became town clerk, member of the General Court, and a member of the Federal Convention. In 1769, he married Sarah Childs. He died in 1800, his widow in 1831. Of their seven children, two sons and one descendant of each of these sons, is named below.

His papers include promissory notes, writs of attachment, executions and judgments, some of which derive from his law practice. Included also are letters from E. Babcock, a Hartford, Ct., printer, 1785, from his brother David in Albany, 1789, from his brother Oliver in Conway, Mass., 1790, and from his brother-in-law Consider Dickinson, 1800; a gathering of his poetry; and copies

of letters he wrote, 1769-72, to Joel Bardwell of Deerfield, John Emerson of Conway, and Roger Newton of Greenfield, Mass. (the last on religious topics).

Richard E. Field²³, the son of Robert R. Field¹⁹ and grandson of Samuel Field¹⁵, was born in 1796. A wheelwright, he lived in Greenfield and Charlemont, Mass., before returning to Deerfield, where he died in 1884. He and his first wife, Elizabeth (Wait) Field, had five children. Sometime after her death in 1864, he married Sarah (Snow) Thompson, widow of John Thompson.

He is represented by two papers, the first giving notice of his appointment as administrator of his father's estate (1841), the second an undated list of "Considerations" that appears to have been related to settlement of the estate.

Seth Field, son of Samuel E. Field² and grandson of Samuel Field¹⁵, was born in 1820. He was a farmer at "Great River," [East Deerfield].

Included are four mortgages to land in Deerfield, which Seth and his wife Sarah, together with his sisters Clarissa and Eunice, conveyed to John A. Gamber of Springfield, Mass., a dog license, and an insurance policy.

Oliver Field¹⁷, son of David and Thankful, was born in 1751. He was a trader in Deerfield and Conway. Most of his papers are legal documents, many of which concern actions for debt brought by Field against Rufus Smith of Deerfield and by Smith against Field. Two leaves of poetry by Oliver Field are included, with several verses addressed to his sister, Filana.

Elihu Field¹⁸, youngest son of David and Thankful, was born in 1753. He was a soldier in the American Revolution, lost his property while in business with his father, and moved to Guilford, Vermont, where he became a prominent citizen. In 1774, he married Hepzibah Dickinson; the couple had nine children one of whom is named below.

Except for one writ of attachment he brought against Oliver Davenport, his papers are official notices of his appointment as justice of the peace in Windham County, Vt., in 1809, as postmaster of Guilford in 1819, and again in 1828, and as justice of the peace in 1848.

Elihu Field, Jr.²², son of Elihu and Thankful, was born in 1781. He settled in Guilford, Vt., and in 1808 married Pamela Burt. The couple had one son and four daughters, one of whom died in infancy. Elihu was an officer of the Vermont militia during the War of 1812, longtime postmaster of Guilford, member of the constitutional convention in 1836, and representative in the General Assembly in 1842-43. He died in 1864, his widow in 1872.

There are two of his papers in the collection, both related to his service in the first regiment of the first division of Vermont militia: the first his appointment as quartermaster in February 1812, the second as adjutant in the following July.

Zechariah Field¹⁰, son of Samuel⁴ and Sarah, was born in Hatfield, Mass., in 1685. He came to Deerfield soon after the death of his father in 1697 and was in the Meadow fight. In 1711 he married Sarah Mattoon. They moved to Northfield, Mass., in 1716 and he was a miller and active in town affairs there. He died in 1746.

He is represented by one paper: an undated quitclaim deed to Jonathan Morton of land “on the Large Falls on Millers River” that he had purchased in 1720 from Pompanoot, an Indian.

Noah Field, grandson of Ebenezer¹¹ and great grandson of Samue¹⁴ and Sarah (Gilbert) Field, was born in 1750. In 1773, he married Mary Brown of Whately, Mass. Noah saw service in Massachusetts units during the American Revolution. He died in 1797.

He is represented by an incomplete legal document, an execution brought by him against Stephen Brace in 1790. In the folder with this document are several miscellaneous largely incomplete papers received with Field family materials.

Phineas Field, Jr., the son of Phineas, nephew of Noah, and great-great grandson of Samuel⁴, was born in Northfield, Mass., in 1799. In 1831, he married Chloe Leavitt of Heath, Mass. Ordained a deacon in 1825, Phineas moved to Charlemont, Mass., in 1838. He died in 1884.

His papers include copies of the wills of his father and of his brother Lucius. He was executor in both cases and there are several papers related to his settlement of these estates. Included also are several leaves of his poetry, one of poetry by and information about a niece, Clarissa Field (the latter was originally filed as PVMA P-n 6347), several papers bearing biographical information about him and his close relatives.

Erastus Field, a member of the sixth generation of the descendants of Zechariah Field¹ was born in 1773. He was a resident of and trader in Leverett, Mass.

He is represented by one paper, recovery of a judgment he won against Matthew White, late of Leverett, Mass., in 1810.

Erastus Salisbury Field, son of Erastus and his wife, Salome (Ashley) Field, was born in Leverett, Mass., in 1805. Primarily a portrait painter whose work is becoming more widely recognized, he studied briefly with Samuel F. B. Morse, settled in various communities near Deerfield, moved with his family to New York City about 1840, but returned to Palmer, Mass., in 1854. He engaged in farming to supplement his income and died in Palmer in 1900.

He is represented by a folder pertaining to an exhibit of his work in Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1963. It includes a copy of the exhibit catalog, clippings, and correspondence relating to the borrowing of a number of the exhibited works which were owned locally.

Alfred R. Field, son of George and Phila Holton Field, was born in Northfield, Mass., in 1815. He had a successful career as a civil engineer, held the position of chief engineer of the Troy & Greenfield Railroad, and was prominent in the management and construction of the Hoosac Tunnel in western Mass. He died in a tragic railway accident in June 1870. Field served for 3 years (1858-1861) as Franklin County Commissioner, and later as a Greenfield selectman, and state representative. He first married, in 1843, Sarah Newcomb Allen of Northfield; she died in May 1851. The couple had two children: Sarah Elizabeth (called Lizzie) and Joseph P. In Dec. 1852, he then married Mary Hunt Allen, sister his first wife; she died in May 1859. In Oct. 1859, he married Rebecca Williams of Deerfield; the couple lived in Greenfield and had three children: two boys who died in infancy, and a daughter, Mary Williams Field.

His papers consist of letters from his daughter, Lizzie, two deeds for land in Northfield, and a copy of the bylaws of the Federal Union Gold Mining Co., of which he was president.

Rebecca Williams Field, daughter of Ephraim and Rebecca Jackson Williams, and wife of Alfred R. Field, was born in Deerfield, Mass., in 1832, and died in 1904. Her papers, including letters from her husband, Alfred, are filed with the Williams family papers.

Container List

Folder 1: Papers of John Field ⁸ , 1695-1747	(14 items)
Folder 2: Papers of John Field, 1735/6	(1 item)
Folder 3: Papers of Hannah Field, undated	(1 item)
Folder 4: Papers of Eliakim Field, 1742-1784	(27 items)
Folder 5: Papers of Samuel Field ⁴ , 1701	(1 item)
Folder 6: Papers of Samuel Field ⁹ , 1733-1738	(4 items)
Folder 7: Papers of David Field ¹³ , 1742/3-1790	(32 items)
Folder 8: Papers of Samuel Field ¹⁵ , David Field ¹⁶ , and Oliver Field ¹⁷ related to a business venture	(14 items)
Folder 9: Papers of Samuel Field ¹⁵ , 1768-1800	(43 items)
Folder 10: Papers of Richard E. Field ²³ , 1841	(2 items)
Folder 11: papers of Seth Field, 1849	(1 item)
Folder 12: papers of Oliver Field ¹⁷ , 1774-1790	(17 items)
Folder 13: Papers of Elihu Field ¹⁸ , 1791-1848	(5 items)
Folder 14: Papers of Elihu field, Jr. ²² , 1812	(2 items)
Folder 15: Papers of Zechariah Field ¹⁰ , undated	(1 item)
Folder 16: Papers of Noah Field, 1790	(1 item and miscellaneous papers)
Folder 17: Papers of Phineas Field, Jr., 1827-1882	(15 items)
Folder 18: Papers of Erastus Field, 1810	(1 item)
Folder 19: Papers re. Erastus Salisbury Field, 1936	(30 items)
Folder 20: Papers of Alfred R. Field, 1851-1866, and undated	(10 items)
Folder 21: Correspondence of George Sheldon and others relating to various members of the Field family, 1873-1979 and undated	