

Documenting the History of Your House

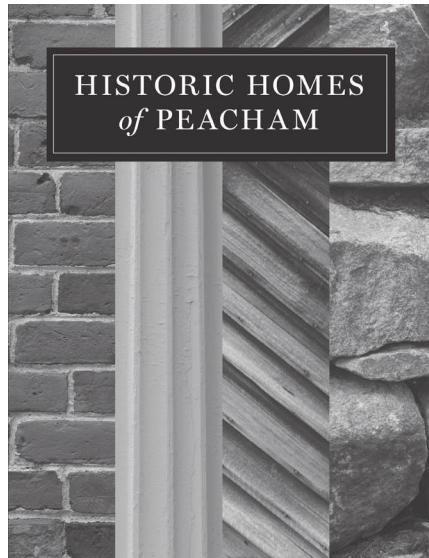
In July 2024, the Peacham Historical Association published a revised second edition of *Historic Homes of Peacham*.¹ The book, designed to preserve Peacham's rich legacy of historic homes, provides brief descriptions and both contemporary and historical photos of houses built in Peacham before 1900. The brief descriptions do not provide complete house histories. But owners interested in tracing their homes' histories in more detail can use the same resources and strategies on which we relied in doing research for *Historic Homes*. This article provides guidance based on our experiences. Of course, uncovering the stories of historic homes and their early owners can be very challenging. But it can also be immensely rewarding.

Getting Started:

The Peacham Town Clerk's Office

Peacham's Land Records are the researcher's first stop. These include deeds that establish the chain of ownership from the property's first acquisition up to the present. The records are housed in the vault at the Town Office and are filed in chronological order from 1763 to the present. There are two indexes: the index of grantors and the index of grantees.

Start by finding the earliest owner you know about in the Grantee Index. This listing will reveal the identity of the grantor(s) who conveyed the property to the owner you know about. You can then repeat this process by finding the name of the grantor you have discovered in the grantee index and determining the identity of his/her grantor. If you continue this process, you will eventually get to the first owner.



The Deeds You Will Find

Two different types of deeds are commonly used in Vermont. Warranty deeds are the more common type. In a warranty deed, the grantor (seller) guarantees that he/she has the right to sell the property. *Warranty deeds* are helpful because they typically describe the boundaries of the land, list the previous owner, state when the grantor acquired it from the preceding owner, and name the previous owner. *Quit-claim deeds* do not guarantee the seller's right to transfer the property. They are often used when the property is transferred without a sale, for example, when a father transfers property to a son. They rarely provide the boundary, date, and prior-owner information available in warranty deeds.

Perils You Will Confront

While researching deeds is the most effective way to identify the prior owners of your house, it is not straightforward and can be an arduous process.

FIRST, the deeds in the Peacham Land Records record the transfer of *land*. They do not always indicate whether

the transfer included a building. In the late 1700s and early 1800s, land transfers occurred frequently, and many transfers did not include a home. Understanding the location of the land mentioned in the deed is thus an essential step in charting a house's ownership chain.

In our research for *Historic Homes*, multiple land transactions initially led us astray on a number of occasions. One example is the now-renamed Knox Farm, described in the 2007 edition of the book as the William Holmes House. Between the first deed on February 6, 1800, and 1900, there were 20 land transfers involving the farm where this house was located! Timothy Walker, who valiantly worked his way through these transactions, discovered the mistake in the 2007 edition.² The mistake reflected the fact that William A.P. Blanchard was involved in two different land transfers on the same day. On July 7, 1855, Blanchard purchased a one-acre lot on Old Cemetery Road from Charles Holmes (who had received the property from his father, William Holmes); he also sold a 25-acre parcel located more than a mile from the one-acre lot he purchased. Neither Charles nor William Holmes had ever owned the 25-acre parcel. This type of mistake is easy to make, and you want to avoid it if you can.

SECOND, Peacham families shared a number of common surnames, and sons frequently shared their fathers' first names. For example, there is a series of three "George Washington Clarks" in Peacham, all pertinent to the history of the George Washington Clark Homestead on East Hill.³ Changes in the spelling of names and occasional spelling errors add to the difficulties.

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Cross-checking names with genealogical records to establish dates can help identify the correct person.

THIRD, land records also list mortgages, which can be confusing. Early Peacham settlers frequently used their property as collateral to obtain a loan so the records include many such listings. These did not result in a land transfer unless a foreclosure occurred. It is important to read the full mortgage deed to determine if foreclosure took place.

FOURTH, in Peacham's early days, lawyers, particularly John Mattocks and John Winthrop Chandler, often assumed temporary ownership of property. The Peacham records contain pages of entries for both men. If you should run into Mattocks or Chandler in your search, a lengthy and tedious excursion through their listings will be necessary to chart the chain of title. Philip Dawson confronted this problem in his frustrating search for the early owners of the John Winthrop Chandler Place:

I found that in 1814 Henry Blake signed a quit-claim deed conveying his farm in

*Lot 8 in the Ranges to John Winthrop Chandler, from whom he had bought it on some earlier date not specified. Looking for Blake's name in the index of grantees, I found – nothing. Chandler was a wealthy man who carried out many transactions. Under his name in the index of grantors, there are many entries: which of them refers to the conveyance to Blake? The only recourse was to read every deed in which Chandler was the grantor, from 1814 backward until Blake appeared as the grantee. (It was in 1804.)*⁴

As Dawson's experience shows, checking deeds requires persistence and patience.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greetings and best wishes for 2025!

First, I thank all of you who visited the Historical House and the *Picture Perfect* exhibit this past year. Nearly 500 guests saw the exhibit, and many shared stories about the postcard scenes displayed. Thank you for your visits and support!

The 2025 Historical House Exhibit will focus on the interwar years (1918–41) in Peacham. We hope to show the impact of the Great Depression as well as the effects of new technologies like the automobile and telephone. We are planning some special events to accompany the exhibit. On the last Sunday in July, we will open the Annex to honor Peacham Academy. This event will feature stories showing the effects of World Wars I and II on local education.

We are also beginning to make plans for the nation's– and Peacham's– 250th birthdays. As part of the celebration, we are cooperating with the Peacham Library to welcome Michele Pagan. From 2003 to 2005, Michele was part of the Star Spangled Banner Project at the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C., and she is now the textile conservator for the Vermont state collection of historic flags. Michele is currently working with the Vermont State 250th Anniversary Commission and has planned a Vermont Sampler Driving Tour that will feature samplers with a direct connection to the revolutionary period. We are excited that PHA will be contributing to this event.

We are looking for mannequins and/or dress forms to borrow from June 15 until Fall Foliage Day. We are also looking for new volunteers. Please contact us at 802 592-3049 or call me at 802 227 3348.

Please check the PHA website (www.peachamhistorical.org) for updates and information about additional activities.

Hope to see you this summer!

STEVE GALINAT, PHA President

Grand Lists

Once you have finished with the land records, it is time to move on to the "Grand Lists," which record property-tax assessments. The lists provide a comprehensive inventory of the town's taxable properties, updated annually and showing the assessed value of each property. From 1800 to 1852, listings included the owner's other taxable resources, including houses and other outbuildings. These listings can sometimes be used to identify the specific tax year in which a home was constructed. More often, a construction date is not given and you will need to make assumptions. For example, we assumed that John Winthrop Chandler's house was built in or before 1800 because the 1800 Grand List reports that he possessed "45 acres of cleared land, three horses, two oxen, five cows older than 3 years, two cattle 2 years old, a *house*, a watch, and \$223.75 in cash."⁵ (After 1853, the grand lists included only land and buildings; they no longer provided interesting details about farm animals and other possessions.)

Historical Maps

Maps are another useful resource for tracing the history of your house and can confirm the names of property owners during the 19th century. PHA's collection includes a variety of historic maps from Peacham's earliest settlement.

Peacham Lotting Plans show the division of land among the first pioneer settlers. If your house was built in the



1796 Peacham map.

early 1800s, the map will show the name of the property owner during this period. The 1858 *Walling Map* shows the location of houses built before 1858 along with the name of the property owner. There are separate detailed maps of Peacham Corner and Peacham Hollow. The 1875 *Beers Atlas of Caledonia County: Peacham* contains detailed maps of Peacham Corner, Peacham Hollow, and South Peacham. The maps for each of the 13 listed school districts have been enlarged and make it easier to identify property owners in 1875. All three of these maps can be accessed online.

The *Timothy Cowles Map* is a unique, hand-drawn sketch of Peacham Village in 1824 based on Cowles's memories of growing up in Peacham. The map shows 42 buildings and roads. It also identifies property owners in 1824 and, in a few cases, as late as 1858.

A photograph of the *Elkins Map* is located in the lobby of the Peacham Town Hall. This map, drafted by Jonathan Elkins, is based on his surveys of Peacham in 1811–19. It shows the original 100-acre lots and their owners. The dotted lines within the map were

most likely native American trails that the settlers used to travel within the dense forests.

Peacham Publications

Publications about Peacham, most published by or with the support of PHA, are another useful resource. These include:

Peacham: The Story of a Vermont Hill Town, by Ernest L. Bogart (1948, reissued 2022). In writing this comprehensive history of Peacham, Bogart used a wide range of Peacham family papers and town and county records. The name index is a key resource for finding information about owners.

People of Peacham, by Jennie Chamberlain Watts and Elsie A. Choate (1965) records the genealogies of over 100 families that came to Peacham between 1776 and 1945. It also includes a map of old cellar holes identified by number with an index showing, for each numbered hole, the dates, former owners, use, or site. The map is copied and enlarged from the 1875 Beers Map. The family genealogies and the map entries should be used with caution; we have found mistakes.

A Vermont Hill Town in the Civil War: Peacham's Story by Jutta R. Scott and Michelle Arnosky Sherburne, eds. With an Essay by Lynn A. Bonfield (2012, revised ed. 2018). This publication includes brief biographies of the 170 Peacham men who served in the Union Army during the Civil War. Many later owned homes in Peacham, and the sketches offer useful biographical information.

Peacham Historical Association Collection

PHA's extensive collection, built over more than one hundred years, includes a large array of documents, letters, diaries, family papers, manuscripts, and other objects. Searching these remarkable historical resources is invaluable in documenting the lives of the owners of your house. Especially helpful are the biographical files that are arranged alphabetically by name. We used these files extensively in preparing the new edition of *Historic Homes of Peacham*. PHA's website (peachamhistorical.org) gives an overview of PHA's collections, publications, and programs.

Other Key Resources

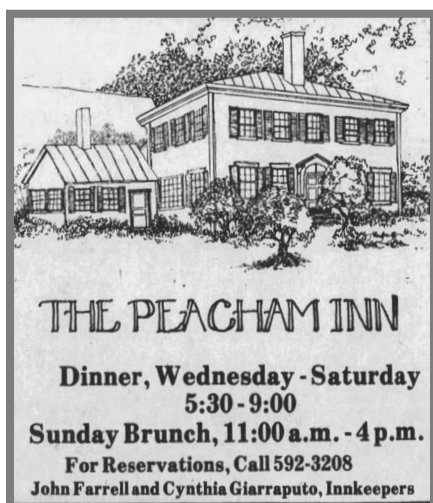
U.S. census records are a vital source of information about owners. The U.S. Census, taken every ten years from 1790, is a cornerstone for genealogical research. It includes valuable information on household members, occupations, and property ownership. The 1850 Census, the first to list all household members by name, is particularly significant and useful. Census records are available by subscription on Ancestry.com and for free on Familysearch.org.

Genealogical research sites are also essential research tool. They include the following websites:

vermonthistory.org: The website of the Vermont Historical Society provides access to local history and genealogy resources.

familysearch.org: The website has billions of records and offers free access to Vermont genealogical records such as birth, marriage, death, and census data.

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The Peacham Inn

I wrote about early Peacham vacation accommodations in the Summer 2024 edition of *The Peacham Patriot*. Although all of these inns closed their doors by the mid-1950s, the “Peacham Inn,” at 613 Bayley-Hazen Road (once the home of Vermont Governor John Mattocks and now the home of Larry and Becky Jensen) offered a contemporary, albeit short-lived, option from September 1983 to October 1986. The Inn was established by John Farrell, a graduate of Lyndon State College, and Cynthia Giarraputo, from Brooklyn, New York. Cindy came from a family of chefs and had worked at a Lyndonville restaurant and the Old Cutter Inn in East Burke. With the support of owners Gordon and Ann Mills, this team converted a single-family home into an inn with four guestrooms, each with a private bath and two working fireplaces, which were available for \$60 per night.

Guests could enjoy a range of notable attractions, including occasional gatherings in the living room around a grand piano (reputedly played by Vladimir Horowitz) and winter sleigh rides provided by Ralph Page. The Peacham Inn also offered elegant, candle-lit dining. The room fee included a phenomenal breakfast. John and Cindy also offered dinner with seasonal menus that changed every other day and occasional themed dinners accompanied by appropriate music and decor. These included a Szechuan night, a Caribbean evening with conch and deep-fried

snapper, a paella evening featuring Spanish classical guitar music played by the late Chris Kane of East Hardwick, an Indian dinner served while Indian musicians played from a dais-topped Persian rug, and, for July 4, a hard-shelled lobster dinner served with New England clams.¹

Such variety required considerable effort. Cindy and John established a large kitchen garden and raised chickens for eggs to provide the freshest ingredients. They obtained most of the ingredients they did not produce at Boston’s Chelsea Market. Every Tuesday at 3:30 a.m., John made a trip to the Market where he bought produce and purchased seafood at Turner Fisheries, pasta from Tony Trio’s, port and rare brandies from Cirace & Sons, and choice cheese, mushrooms, and specialty fruits and vegetables from Formaggio Kitchen and Le Jardin.² John returned to the Inn by 4:30 pm to help Cindy put the finishing touches on a Tuesday evening dinner.

Additional menu items, including most meats, came from New York City’s meatpacking district and specialty shops, such as Balducci’s and Zabars. Of course, Cindy and John served local maple syrup and Cabot cheese.

All of this effort paid off. The Inn became known for serving the “best food between Boston and Montreal.”³ Snagging a reservation became a challenge.



The Inn appealed to local and summer residents and visitors from further afield. Among the regular guests were anti-war activist David Dellinger and his wife, Elizabeth Peterson; accused Communist spy Alger Hiss; authors Reeve and Anne Lindbergh; former Vermont governor Madeleine Kunin; and former ambassador Harry Barnes and his novelist wife, Betsy. Judith Jones, who edited James Beard’s books and the original *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* by Julia Child, came from Greensboro with her husband Evan, a culinary historian; Judith included Cindy’s recipes for chilled blueberry soup and strawberry chocolate torte in *The L.L. Bean Book of New England Cookery*.⁴ Harold Miller, CEO of Houghton Mifflin, and his wife frequently came from their Harvey Lake residence and often brought visiting authors. (John Farrell recalls that, in October 1983, the Beirut, Lebanon bombing was the topic of conversation at Miller’s table.) William J. “Bill” Lederer, co-author of *The Ugly American* (1951), is remembered by John as a regular guest who “held court” and peppered his dinner conversations with frequent “that reminds me of”

Farrell worked on the Peacham road crew to keep the Inn and his family afloat, doing everything required, from digging ditches to plowing snow. After a few years, the couple realized they needed to move on.

After the Inn closed, John and Cindy worked at the Ritz Carlton. They are now Coldwell Banker realtors in Massachusetts. During a phone interview, John reflected on his time in Peacham. He chuckled before sharing a shopping experience. Dispatched to the South Peacham Store by Cindy for an unspecified amount of heavy cream, John found five half pints in the cooler. He decided it was wise to purchase all five. He took them to the cashier, who asked, “Do you need all that cream? What if someone else needs some heavy cream today?” John then added:

I love Peacham and talk about it to anyone who will listen. Our son, Jesse, born in St. J, preserves our connection to Vermont. We moved when Jesse was six, but he insisted from a very young

age that he would attend UVM. Now a UVM graduate, he is the CEO of United Way of Northwest Vermont and the father of our two grandchildren.

We appreciate the time and effort expended by innkeepers and restaurateurs. Patrons acknowledged the quality of the meals the Farrells served as being as pleasing as that of a “five-star” restaurant.

Cynthia Giarraputo Farrell’s Peacham Inn Cold Blueberry Soup

INGREDIENTS

3/4 cup blueberries
1/2 tablespoons maple syrup
tablespoons orange juice
Pinch of ground cinnamon
A few drops of lemon juice
3/4 cup half-and-half, or equal parts
milk and heavy cream

PREPARATION

Put everything except the lemon juice and the half-and-half in a small saucepan. Heat, and when it comes to a boil, remove from the heat and purée in a food processor or a blender. Add lemon juice to taste, and chill. Just before you are ready to eat, stir in the half-and-half, and then pour into a chilled bowl.

KATHLEEN MONROE

1. Jones, Evan. “Bread, Beans and Banter.” *The Hardwick Gazette*, July 9, 1986.

2. If you are motivated to try a selection of the beverages served at Peacham Inn, order Heitz Cellars, Martha’s Vineyard Cabernet, and Warres Port (especially from the 1940 or 1960 stock).

3. Interview with John Farrell.

4. Levin, Debbie. “Greensboro Is Quiet Place to Write L L Bean Cookbook” *The Caledonian-Record*, July 12, 1985, p. 16

From the Collection: Parker Family Letters

As Jutta Scott notes in her article *Documenting the History of Your House*, the PHA collection of diaries, letters, documents, and photographs may, if your house’s earlier occupants are represented, offer a far more detailed picture of past life in your home than deeds and tax records can provide. For example, the PHA collection includes 83 letters written, between 1853 and 1890, by the family of Dr. Luther Fletcher Parker (1821–96) and Louisa Martin Parker (1821–98). Dr. Parker was born in Coventry, Vermont, and came to Peacham at age 20 to study at the Peacham Academy. In Peacham, he met Louisa, a Peacham native. They married in 1850. The family letters contain rich descriptions of contemporary life in Peacham and neighboring Barnet, where the Parkers lived before moving to Peacham Village in 1854. The three letters that follow (two by Louisa, one by Luther) were all written to Louisa’s brother Ashbel Martin (1830–99) when he, like 22 other Peacham men who went to California between 1849 and 1853, was panning for riches in the gold fields.¹ The letters reveal how much young Dr. Parker was earning, what relatives were staying with Luther and Louisa, and who was back from California. They also remind us of the constant threat of illness and death that families faced during this period. Baby Arabella, whose death is described in the last of the letters, was one of three children whom the Parkers lost in infancy. You can learn more about the Parkers and Ashbel Martin in PHA’s *Preserving Peacham’s Past*.

Barnet May 3rd, 1852
My Dear Brother,

It is a long long time since you left us four months & I have as yet written nothing to you but think it is high time. I mean the next mail-steamer shall carry a message from me to thee to convince you that you are not forgotten by us although “the ocean wide & deep rolls its restless waves between us.” I cannot realize that you are so far away from us but when I go home I miss you there –

your vacant seat at table & all around tell a tale that I would fain not believe. It hardly seems like home without seeing you and Elisabeth there —and now Aunt Brock is gone—But never mind I hope we shall all live to meet once more around that fireside & talk talk over what has transpired while we have been separated I would give two pairs of old shoes to see you to-night just as you are situated—write to me the particulars of your situation —what you have to eat how it is cooked what kids of beds you have etc. You know little minds are interested in little things although I do not consider what makes life comfortable when you are so far from home of very small importance—

I do not know what you have heard from home but I will try to tell you some of the “news” as I can recollect—There has been a good deal at Peacham & a number of deaths Aunt Brock you have probably heard is dead Sunk away by degrees did not appear to suffer a great deal—& [unintelligible] district there has been a number of sudden deaths & young man that came up to see Mary Johnson died of the smallpox Jessie Craig Mrs. Ralph Blanchard Mrs. Alvin Farnham & child of Erysipelas Mr. Colburn of consumption Mrs. Simon Blanchard died of apoplexy after lying in an insensible state about six days—was sick a good deal as Dr. Shedd was—So we see that people die let them be where they will—when they are called & suddenly too as nearly all these cases show us. May our lamps be trimmed & burning so that if we are called we may not be found unprepared—there has been a few death in our vicinity but considerable healthy now—Josiah Shedd came home [from California] last week said he did not see you—it would have been worth a good deal if he could have seen you—to you & to us—James Merrill is at home now but going back soon [to California]. Hellen P. alias G. is at home intending to spend the summer with her “tot” Mr. Patteridge is failing some—but keeps his strength wonderfully for one that suffers so much—

Thus far I have said nothing about me or our folks. We are all well as usual have had Mr. Caswell’s people here all winter but they are about leaving us—going to housekeeping. Jane has been here this

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peachamhistorical.org



Louisa Parker

spring is now teaching on the other side of the brook—boards at the tavern Addison has been here about & I should think by the appearance of things he means to stay this summer. The Dr will write a little and speak for himself—I myself am very well but a little tired & discouraged just now from having so much to do but shall get over it soon I hope—hope I shall not have so large a family always—but the most important part of the family is the part I have said nothing about yet it is our great baby. She weighs 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs has eight teeth can bite a great deal & show some spunk I guess you would think —begins to walk by being led—is about ten months old To take her as “a nation” I don’t think she is anything very wonderful—about as is common for babies—but seems rather different to us—that is all—I have not heard from home for two weeks since I came from there after a two weeks visit—I had a nice time I can tell you—Saw all the neighbors—went up Moses sugar place & got some nice sugar—thought you had ought

to have been there guess you would like to have been—Now I want to know all about you I feel so impatient to how you fare & what you are doing—Don’t think you must be so reserved and cautious about communicating your matters and feelings—give us a minute description of everything—I have made up my mind that you are homesick & wish you had staid at home—but hope you will not feel so until you get gold enough to come back with—try and keep your health but if you are sick get Timothy Cowles to take care of you he would know just how—But keep up good courage & we will try to do the same about you—Mr Boutelle says that he thinks it almost impossible for a young man to go to California & be under the influence that they must necessarily be under without being contaminated in some measure by it—I hope & believe it will not be so in your case—Obey the dictates of your conscience let it not get seared & blunted—while you are looking for earthly treasures keep your eye fixed steady

on your heavenly treasure —don’t let the desire or possession of gold become so fixed in the eye of thee mind as to becloud the vision U keep out that crown of Glory that fadeth not—I believe that there is one (Almira) at home that prays for you & I hope they (her prayers) may be answered for your best good—I hope you will never violate the sabbath—your body needs it & your soul could hardly sustain a good life without it—Write soon U & often —let us know all about you how much you are getting—I think you will not say that I do not deserve an answer for I have made an exertion to write—my eyes keep coming together as you can judge by the looks—It is the 6th and I am thinking this can go in the next mail steamer that sails the 9th—but am a little afraid it will be too late—Think of me some times & pray for me often & hope I can do the same for you—be sure & write to me with your hand & make a matter of conscience of it.

Louisa M (no room for the rest)
Good night dear brother

Barnet May 6th 1852
Our Brother Ash,

Louisa is writing the news all of it I suppose, but thinks that it would be well enough for me to write a little of something—thinking that you would be pleased with anything coming from this region if not very cunning—it is now May 6th & people are some of them whose farms are naturally dry are beginning to plow & are sowing a little while many others who are blest with moist land have done but little at spring work—we have had the longest & coldest winter that was ever know in this country—Everything in the shape of hay is gone—While we have been freezing you in the beautiful Calefornia have been enjoying the pleasures of extreme heat—this only that there is an odds in countries—

You have not seen my fiz in Cal yet I believe & I’m not sure you will this year, you that are there will have the better chance to get a pile on account of my being in Barnet, for I should get that which the rest will now. Yet—I don’t know that I am any sorry that I staid. My business has been good & is increasing—it has not been very sickly in Barnet—only just

what may be called middling—My business has averaged about 100\$ pr month² April the best month, 150\$ so you will understand that I have been tolerably busy—I think therefore that I will ride against Brother Tattle a little longer & let Cal grow richer before I go there.

Josiah Shedd arrived here Saturday & tells us that you are all having the Measles & Mumps. We hope that you have had a good time with them got over them now digging out the pure stuff in great abundance this being the case just be diligent & persevere Save the health as much as possible Keep up good pluck —& when the bag is full come & see us—

You have doubtless had a good deal of the Calefornia fun ? this—that is fun in getting there—such as Sea Sickness—Starvation—Sleeping outdoors after arrival etc. Well, I can't mention all of them—but you know what they are—hardships and privations are not the worst of troubles. I hope that you will be able to Stand under them not be discouraged or homesick but as I have said before persevere.

Louisa I expect has told all the Peacham news & Barnet you care but little about Add is here & Jane is teaching in this village across the Brook—My health was never better have rode night & day—Some have died—but not many —When you can get time I should like to have you write me a letter at least three lines long & let us know something about Calefornia—Cal life etc. I must quit by saying be a good Boy and Remember that you are among thieves and so be a friend to yourself & trust but little to others

Give my Respects to the Peacham Boys, with much to yourself

Yours in haste Luther F. Parker

My dear Brother,

It is a long time since I took my pen to write to you but I think it is time that a correspondence was commenced again & I will try to write a short letter for I have only an hour before the mail goes out You have probably heard that I have

lost my little Arabella She was called at the early age of nine months to leave all earthly sorrow for a brighter home I trust though you may be assured that our affections were so entwined around her even at that early age so that it was hard parting—canker rash³ that disease that carries so many children to an early grave laid her low in only one week from the time that she was taken—I suppose that fathers people would write to you about it for we moved right away after the funeral so that I had no time Luther says he is very sure he wrote to you about it, but perhaps he did not You know that we are in Peacham bought Dr Farr's place—we sold our Barnet place to Stanley—his family live there & he is in California at a place they call Oregon Bar I think—we sold for eleven hundred—Addison is at San Francisco sick some has been unable to work for two months We are all well at present Jane is not a very healthy child so we sometimes fear for her she is so slender —but we have had evidence that the strong & well are as often taken Our baby was very healthy until her last sickness—Mr Bradley died about two weeks ago after a long sickness Old Mr Sanborn is not expected to live but a short time—Fathers

folks are about as usual Mother has not been as weak for a few moths past as for a year or two back—we are expecting Lib the last of this week—we shall be very glad to see her once more & shall hope and expect before another year comes round to see your face again we don't want you to think of spending your days in California. I should think if you succeeded as well as you have you would get enough to buy you a farm & that will be enough to start with.

Louisa

1. See Ernest L. Bogart, Peacham: The Story of a Vermont Hill Town 226-27 (Vermont Hist. Soc. 1948).

2. In terms of purchasing power, \$100 in 1853 was worth approximately \$4072 in 2024. See CPI Calculator, <https://www officialdata.org/us/inflation/1853?endYear=2024&amount=100>

3. "Canker rash" was used during this time period to describe a type of scarlet fever characterized by an ulcerated or putrid sore throat.

Dr. Parker as an older man in the sleigh that he used to make house calls.



PHA Board 2024

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ancestry.com: This paid service offers extensive Vermont historical records, including census, church and military records, family trees, and lots of other data.

findagrave.com: The website's cemetery and gravestone records can offer crucial biographical information. It is useful for confirming birth and death dates.

americanancestors.org: This website is run by the New England Historic Genealogical Society and focuses on Vermont and other New England states.

Local newspapers are yet another important resource. *The North Star* and *The Caledonian-Record* often published obituaries, announcements, and community events that can fill in gaps left by official records. (Copies of some obituaries can be found in the PHA biographical files.) There is also a paid service, *newspapers.com*, which allows users to search thousands of newspapers not only for obituaries but also for other announcements.

Conclusion

Before you begin your research, you should keep in mind two important lessons we learned again and again in preparing copy for *Historic Homes*: First, town records and other sources are not always accurate, and it is essential to find a second source to verify information. Second, there will always

be ambiguities. For example, we could neither prove nor disprove the Peacham tradition that Sarah Stevens, mother of Thaddeus Stevens, lived in the Red House Farm in South Peacham.

Tracing the history of your house may be a challenging project, but it will also be rewarding. By leveraging a combination of town records, maps, histories, PHA's collection, and other resources, you can identify the families that lived in the rooms you now occupy and learn about their lives. You will also gain a better understanding of Peacham's rich heritage.

JUTTA SCOTT

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4. Dawson, Philip. "Sources for the History of a House in Peacham". *Peacham Patriot*, vol. 23, no. 2 (Summer 2009): 3-5.
5. Ibid, p.4.