

**Timothy Wellington Jr.**  
**A Brief Biography**  
**By Bill Poole**

There were three Wellingtons who stood on Lexington Common on April 19, 1775, Benjamin, his brother, Timothy, and first cousin, Enoch. They were all descendants of Roger Wellington, or Willington, the first of this family to immigrate to Massachusetts. His birth date is estimated at 1609 from a document he signed in 1676 in which his age was given as about 67, and also from his death record of March 11, 1697/98, in which his age was given as 90. His parentage and origins are in some dispute, but it is certain he was born in England and came to Massachusetts during the Great Migration of the 1630s. He settled first in Boston and then moved to Watertown, MA. He married before 1638, Mary Palgrave, daughter of Dr. Richard and Anna Harris Palgrave of Charlestown, MA.<sup>1</sup>

Roger was granted a 20 acre homesite on July 25, 1636, which it is said is now part of Mt. Auburn Cemetery.

An Homestead of Sixteen Acres more or les bounded the East with Edward Goffe the Northeast with John Warrin & the Pond the Northwest with William Gutterig Edmund White & Simon Stone the Southeast & North with his owne Meddow Abram Browne William Bridges & Simon Stone.<sup>2</sup>

He then purchased seven other lots totaling 145 acres. On April 4, 1659, he bought for £100 a dwelling house and 12 acres of land in Watertown, and on November 29, 1669 he purchased for £50 a house, barn and about 10 acres of land in Cambridge. That town then comprised a much larger area than today, encompassing the towns of Cambridge Village, now Newton, West Cambridge or Menotomy, now Arlington, Cambridge Farms, now Lexington, and Little or South Cambridge, now Brighton. Some of Rogers' Cambridge lands were in what is now Lexington.

Roger was a plasterer by occupation, and served Watertown in several capacities, including Hog Reeve, Fence Viewer, Surveyor, Constable and Selectman in 1678-79, 1681-84, and 1691. He also was a corporal in the militia, and is almost always referred to as Corporal Willington in the Watertown town records. Despite his standing in the community, Roger occasionally run afoul of the law. He was complained of for having an insufficient fence and fined 10 shillings.<sup>3</sup> Not keeping fences in good shape allowed animals to graze on others property and was a continual source of complaint. More seriously, he was charged with not giving a sufficient account of the tax rates "to great dissatisfaction both to pastor and selectmen." Two individuals were appointed

"to deale with him to bring him to a more tollarable account or else to p[re]sent him to the grandjury."<sup>4</sup>

Apparently satisfaction was given since Roger was trusted with assessing the rates in the following years. Another infraction was noted in 1664, but this concerned Roger's eldest son, John. To wear clothing that was extravagant or considered to be above one's social status was a fineable offense. The first Massachusetts Bay Colony law limiting excessive dress was passed in 1634, and prohibited citizens from wearing "new fashions or long hair, or any thing or like nature," such as silver or gold hatbands or belts, cloth woven with gold thread or lace, shirts with short sleeves or sleeves slashed to show undergarments, great boots, and silk hoods or scarves. Apparently, John Wellington, a young man of 26, must have either defied propriety or exceeded his station in life by dressing inappropriately or wearing something considered to be finery.

"At a meetinge of the Select-men att Joseph Tayntors 11(8)1664... Roger willington & John wilington; being warned to the meetinge of the selectmen: Upon Complaynt of sum delinquence about Fashion of John willingtons aparill: & not apearance: they weare Fined 5s apiece: for non appearance."<sup>5</sup>

Sometime before 1638, Roger married, Mary Palgrave, daughter of Doctor Richard and Anna (maiden name unknown) Palgrave of Charlestown. Mary was born about 1619 in Norfolk, England. She and Roger had six children: 1. John, born July 25, 1638; 2. Mary, born February 10, 1640/41; 3. Joseph, born October 9, 1643; 4. **Benjamin, Great Grandfather of Benjamin Wellington, the subject of this essay**, born about 1646, 5. Oliver, born November 23, 1648; and Palgrave, born about 1653.<sup>6</sup>

Roger died on March 11, 1697/98 and Mary died on January 21, 1695. They were both buried in Watertown's Old Burial Ground, now called the Arlington Street Cemetery. Their grave markers apparently have not survived.

Benjamin along with John Guy was warned to appear before the Selectmen for "meaking youse of the woode of a tree that stood in the highway" and "thay wear adjudged to pay a fine of 5s to the towne." On November 9, 1675 he was appointed as a surveyor of swine, cattle and fences in Watertown, and on November 4, 1675 he received 4 shillings for work he performed on the "mill bridg."<sup>7</sup>

On January 16, 1683/84 he was chosen a tithing man, quite a powerful position in Colonial New England. Tithing men were responsible for the observance of the Sabbath Day and maintaining order during the services. They would bring attention to the authorities those who were lax in attendance.<sup>8</sup> However, despite his having served as a fence surveyor, at a meeting of the Selectmen on April 10, 1685, he was complained against by his neighbor Thomas Underwood, for neglecting to put up his portion of a fence between their properties. The two disputants appeared before the Selectmen and agreed:

"That Benjamin willington should meake and maintain his particular fence betweene them twaine and that it should be a sufficient fence to fence Thomas Underwoods Corne & pasture all the yeare so far as Consarns him betwene his land and goodman underwoods: Thomas Underwod also ingageth that he will makeup and maintaine That fence which he now chargeth Benjamin willington with all his proportion belonging unto general fields."<sup>9</sup>

On november 2, 1685, Benjamin was chosen a hog reeve, responsible for taking up and impounding swine that were wandering uncontrolled and perhaps raiding others fields. The following year on November 23, 1686, rules for controlling swine were adopted "and Nathaniel Brightand Benjamin Willington are shosen to see that these orders are attended thie year: and to have Thear Salary as formerly."<sup>10</sup> On march 21, 1693/94, Benjaamin was appointd to the very important position of "First Constable," responsible for keeping order in the town and supervising the other constables.<sup>11</sup>

Benjamin married on December 7, 1671 in Watertown, Elizabeth Sweetman (Swetman) Born January 6, 1646/7 prrhaps in Cambridge, Daughter of Thomas amd Isabel Cutter Sweetman. They had eight children, all born in Watertown: 1. Elizabeth, born December 29, 1673; 2. **Benjamin II, grandfather of Timothy Jr.**, the subject of this essay, born June 21, 1676; 3. John, born July 26, 1678; 4. Ebenezer, birthdate unknown but mentioned in his father's will; 5. Ruhamah, born about 1680, mentioned in her father's will, died July 1, 1772, age 92, married Joseph Brown; 6. Mehetabell, baptized March 4, 1687/88; 7. Joseph, baptized January 4, 1690/91; and 8. Roger, birthdate unknown, but mentioned in his father's will.<sup>12</sup>

Benjamin's will was dated July 13, 1709 in the eighth year of the reign of Queen Anne, who came to the throne on March 8, 1702. Thus, 1709 seems to be correct, except that the probate record is dated 30 Jan. 1709. With the double dating at that time between January 1 and March 25, we can presume the probate was done in January 1710, so that Benjamin died sometime between July 13, 1709 and January 1, 1710.<sup>13</sup> The inventory of his estate was valued at £439 17 shillings and 05 pence.<sup>13</sup>

Benjamin II grew up in Watertown, then moved to the part of Cambridge Farms that later became Lexington, where his marriage to Lydia Brown on January 18, 1698/99 is the first Wellington entry found in the Vital Records of the town.<sup>14</sup> This was over a dozen years before the town was incorporated in 1713. They were admitted to the church in Lexington in 1705. "He was very popular and held office as assessor for sixteen years, from 1716, 1727, 1729, 1731, 1733, 1737, 1738, and treasurer 1727-29. He was representative to the General Court 1728-31."<sup>15</sup> From the Watertown Records of the town meeting of April 15, 1723 we find Benjamin acting as one of the two representatives for Lexington to review the bounds between Lexington, Watertown and Weston.

April 15, 1723. At sd. Meeting the preambulators for this present year made their return as follows. We the Suscrib<sup>rs</sup>, being appointed by the Selectmen of Watertown, to go preambulating w<sup>th</sup> the Selectmen of the adjacent towns or oth<sup>rs</sup> of their appointing, have accordingly done the work. April the 8<sup>th</sup> 1723, we meet with Jona<sup>n</sup> Hastings and Stephen Hastings for Cambridge and began at a mark near the Charles River and thence Renewing the marks to Lexington, where we meet with Benj<sup>a</sup>. Wellington & Benj<sup>a</sup>. Smith for s<sup>d</sup> Lexington, and Renewed the marks between Watertown and Lexington till we came to Weston and there we met with Daniel Warren and Benj<sup>a</sup> Harrington, for Weston. April 12<sup>th</sup> we met with Abraham Jackson Richard Ward and Ensign John Spring for Newton and renewed the marks between Watertown and Newton

Richard Coolidge  
Thomas Livermore<sup>16</sup>

Benjamin II was married three times. His first wife was Lydia Brown, born March 31, 1677 in Watertown, daughter of Jonathan and Mary Shattuck Browne. Lydia died on May 13, 1711. He then married in Lexington on December 25, 1712, Mrs. Elizabeth Stevens Phipps, born August 21, 1675 in Roxbury, MA, daughter of Timothy and Sarah Davis Stevens, and widow of Samuel Phipps. Elizabeth died on January 7, 1729/30 and he then married, thirdly, in Lexington on October 21, 1731, Mary Whiting.<sup>17</sup>

Children of Benjamin II and Lydia Browne: 1. Benjamin, born in Cambridge Farms, May 21, 1702; 2. Lydia, born in Cambridge Farms, August 24, 1704; 3. Kezia, born in Cambridge Farms, March 28, 1707; and 4. John, born in Cambridge Farms, November 12, 1709.

Children of Benjamin II and Elizabeth, Stevens Phipps Wellington: 5. Abigail, born in Lexington, MA, July 19, 1715; and 6. **Timothy Sr., father of Timothy Jr., the subject of this essay**, born in Lexington, July 27, 1719.

Children of Benjamin II and Mary Whiting Wellington: 7. Mary, born in Lexington, October 20, 1732; and 8. Oliver, born in Lexington, April 14, 1735.<sup>18</sup>

Mary, his seventh child was born when Benjamin II was 57 and Oliver when he was 60. When he died, his children with Lydia were in their late twenties to mid thirties. Those with Elizabeth were 23 and 19, but he left Mary with two young children ages six and three. I do not yet know if Mary married again. The Vital Records of Lexington do not indicate that she did. Perhaps, she relied on the support of her step-children.

Benjamin, Lydia and Elizabeth were buried in Lexington's Old Burial Ground. There apparently is not a gravestone there for Mary, and there is also no record of her death in Lexington.<sup>19</sup>

I do not know anything about Mary's birth or parentage, but there was a Mary, daughter of Oliver and Anna born in Billerica on May 4, 1695 and another Mary, daughter of Jonathan and Rachel born in Dedham on April 13, 1694.



Here lyes Buried ye Body of BENJAMIN WELLINGTON who departed this Life Nov. 14th Anno Dom. 1738 in ye 63rd Year of his Age



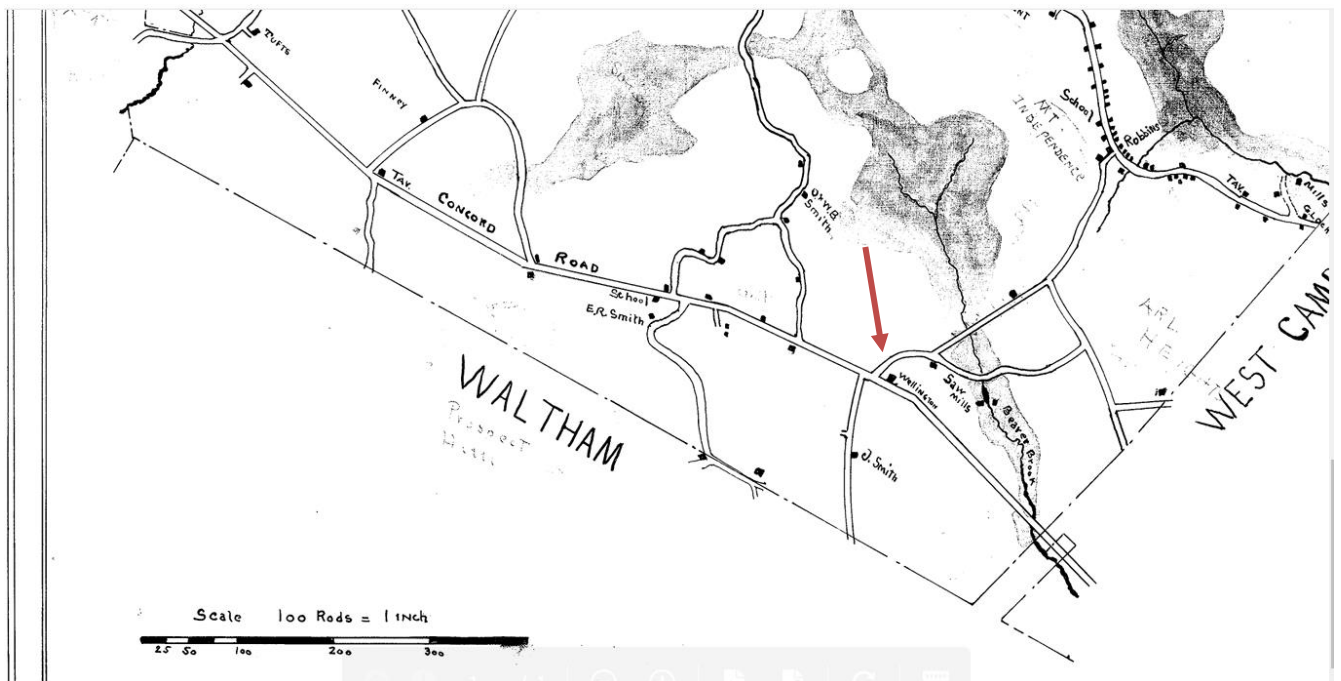
MEMENTO MORI FUGIT HORA HERE LYES ye BODY OF LYDIA WEELLINGTON WIFE TO BENJAMIN aged 34 Years & 5 weeks 6 Days died May 13th 1711



Here lyes ye Body of Mrs Elizabeth Wellington Wife of Mr Benjamin Wellington Who Died Janry. 7 1730 in ye 54th Year of her Age

The Wellington's had gradually moved from the Mount Auburn, area where Roger's homestead was located, up current Belmont Street, then along today's Trapelo road, where Joseph's land was located, and then into southeast Lexington where according to A. Bradford Smith in his article entitled "Kite End," the Wellington homestead stood at the Junction of Pleasant Street and Concord Avenue, then known as the Concord Road.<sup>12</sup> This is the homestead on which Benjamin II had lived since 1698.<sup>20</sup>

The unnamed road shown intersecting with "Concord Road" is today's "Pleasant Street" in Lexington. At this intersection was the "Wellington Homestead" indicated by the arrow. Concord Road is now Concord Avenue.



This is Hales, 1830 map as adapted by Edwin B. Worthen

Timothy Sr. lived in his father's home, and married on September 23, 1742, Rebecca Stone, born in Lexington on January 22, 1721, daughter of Jonathan and Chary Adams Stone.<sup>21</sup> See the spreadsheet on page (8) for the unusual role of Chary Adams Stone within the Wellington family.

Timothy and Rebecca had 5 children all born in Lexington: 1. Benjamin, born August 7, 1743; 2. Chary, born July 12, 1745; 3. **Timothy Jr., the subject of this essay**, born April 13, 1747; 4. Abigail, born March 14, 1749; and 5. Ruhamah, born September 4, 1751.<sup>22</sup>

Timothy Sr. died 23 days after the birth of Ruhamah, on October 21, 1751 at age 32, leaving Rebecca with five young children ranging in ages from Benjamin age 8 to Ruhamah a newborn. Rebecca married secondly at Waltham on February 14, 1754, John Dix of Waltham, born May 18, 1702, died June 11, 1787, son of John and Martha Lawrence Dix. John was a 51 year old widower with mostly grown children, but also with two younger children ages eleven and eight or nine. Rebecca and John would have one child, Joel, born in Waltham, February 16, 1755.<sup>23</sup>

Timothy Sr. was buried in Lexington's Old Burying Ground, and his epitaph reads: "Here Lies Buried ye Body of M<sup>r</sup> TIMOTHY WELLINGTON Who Departed this Life Oct. 21 Anno Dom<sup>ni</sup> 1751 Aged 32 Years."<sup>24</sup>

Timothy Jr. was only four years old when his father died, and it is hoped that John Dix proved to be a kind step-father to Timothy and his siblings. When John died in 1787, his will, written on January 13, 1783, was probated on September 5, 1787. His property was divided one third to Rebecca as her widow's dower, and two thirds to their son, Joel, with the stipulation that upon Rebecca's death Joel would inherit that portion as well. There were sums left to his sons, John and Samuel, and to his daughters Mary and Abigail. It was made clear that each of the four had already been given the bulk of their inheritance prior to John's death. None of the Wellington children were mentioned in the will. However, Timothy witnessed the will and supported the probate process, suggesting that, at least as far as he was concerned, the relationship was cordial.<sup>25</sup>

On April 19, 1775, Timothy was six days past his 28<sup>th</sup> birthday when he and his brother, Benjamin, and his first cousin, Enoch, stood on Lexington Common and faced off against an overwhelming force of British Regulars. Throughout that day, Lexington saw ten of its citizens killed and ten wounded, the most of any community. In the morning engagement on the Common, eight were killed and nine wounded. Of the eight father and son combinations, five were broken by death, and in that tightly knit and interrelated community, each victim was a family member, neighbor or friend. Fortunately, the three Wellingtons escaped unscathed.

Following the engagement on Lexington Common, Timothy performed additional service. The following entries appear in *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War*

WELLINGTON, Timothy, Lexington. Private, in a detachment from Lexington militia co. commanded by Capt. John Parker; service 2 days; detachment reported on command at Cambridge from June 17 to June 18, 1775 by order of Committee of Safety; *also*, Sergeant, Capt. John Bridge's co., Col. Eleazer Brooks's regt.; service from March 4 to March 8, 1776, 5 days; company stationed at Roxbury.<sup>26</sup>

This service was in constructing fortifications on Dorchester Heights to house the cannon brought from Fort Ticonderoga by Colonel Henry Knox, the mounting of which forced the British to evacuate Boston.

Wilmington, Timothy. Sergeant, Capt. Simon Hunt's co. Cp. Eleazer Brooks's regt.; engaged Nov. 3, 1777, service to April 3, 1778, 5 mos., with guards at Cambridge; company detached from militia.<sup>27</sup>

Timothy married in Lexington on May 1, 1776, Hannah Abbott of Lincoln, born in Lincoln, MA, March 29, 1757, daughter of Joseph and Sarah White Abbott. Timothy was twenty-nine and Hannah just nineteen.<sup>28</sup>

Hannah and Timothy had four children, all born in Lexington: 1. Rebecca, born February 5, 1777; 2. Timothy, born March 29, 1778 on Hannah's twenty-first birthday, but drowned April 8, 1780 age two; 3. Nehemiah, born January 1, 1780; and Timothy, born October 8, 1781, named in honor of their lost child.<sup>29</sup>

Hannah died November 11, 1785 at age twenty-eight according to the vital records, but age 29 as stated on her gravestone.<sup>30</sup> Timothy was left with four young children, ages eight, seven, five and four. He did not marry again, and hopefully the close ties that bound families together served to assist him in raising the children.

Timothy died April 2, 1809 at age 62, but had lived to see his children married and Timothy graduated from Harvard and become a medical doctor.<sup>31</sup>

The grave of Young Timothy who drowned is in Lexington's Old Burying Ground.



Tim Willington  
son of Tim &  
Hannah Willington  
was Drowned  
April ye 8th  
1780. Aged 2  
years & 10 Days.<sup>32</sup>

Timothy and Hannah are buried together in The Old Burying Ground.



TIMOTHY WELLINGTON

died

Apr. 2, 1809

Æt. 62.

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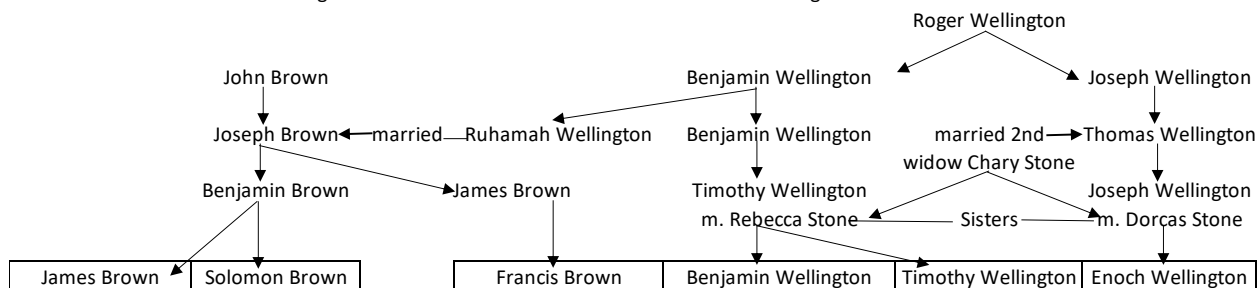
HANNAH

his wife

died Nov. 11, 1785

Æt. 29.<sup>33</sup>

Most of the families in Lexington were related either directly or through marriage. This spreadsheet shows for example how the three Wellingtons and the three Browns all of whom stood on Lexington Common were related.



James, Solomon and Francis Brown are 2nd cousins to Benjamin and Timothy Wellington & 3rd cousins to Enoch Wellington, while Benjamin and Timothy are 1st cousins to Enoch.

You can find interweaving relationships with almost every family in Lexington in 1775, and you can see why David Hackett Fischer used the term "cousinage" to describe the complex family interrelationships.

An unusual relationship occurred when Thomas Wellington took as his second wife his son's mother-in-law, and then had a child.

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Watertown Vital Records at <https://ma-vitalrecords.org/MA/Middlesex/Watertown/aDeathsW.shtml>; Vital Records from the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Volume 102, p. 97; Clarence Almon Torrey,, original Manuscript "W"-page 133; Clarence Almon Torrey, *New England Marriages to 1700*, Volume 3, page 1624, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, 2011, p. 1624; Robert Charles Anderson, *The Great Migration Begins, Immigrants to New England, 1620-1633*, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, 1995, Volume 3, page 1375.

<sup>2</sup> Bond, Henry M.D., *Genealogies of the Families & Descendants of the Early Settlers of Watertown*, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, 1860, Volume. I, p. 627; <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Wellington-43>.

<sup>3</sup>Watertown Historical Society, *Watertown Records Comprising the First and Second Books of Town Proceedings with the Land Grants and Possessions also the Proprietors' Book and the First Book and Supplement of Births Deaths and Marriages*, Watertown, Mass. Press of Fred G. Barker, 1894, Volume 1, p. 76.

<sup>4</sup>Watertown Records, Volume 1, p. 77.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>6</sup>Bond, p. 627; Hudson, Charles, *Bi-centenary Edition History of the Town of Lexington Massachusetts in Two Volumes*, Volume II, *Genealogies*, Lexington Historical Society, Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, The Riverside Press, 1913, pp. 726-27.

<sup>7</sup> Watertown Records Volume 1, *Comprising the First and Second Books of Town Proceedings with the Land Grants and Possessions Also the Proprietors Book and the First Book and Supplement of Births, Deaths and Marriages*, Watertown Historical Society, Watertown, Mass. Press Fred G. Barker, 1894, pp. 114, 125 and 141.

<sup>8</sup>Watertown Records Volume 2, *Comprising the Third Book of Town Proceedings and the Second Book of Births, Mariages and Deaths to the End of 1737, Also Plan and Register of Burials of Arlington Street Burying Ground*, Watertown Historical Society, Watertown, Mass., Press of Fred G. Barker, 1900, p. 16.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 23 and 29.

<sup>11</sup>Watertown Records

<sup>12</sup>Watertown Records

<sup>13</sup>Middlex County, MA: Probate Papers, Court, Land and Probate Papers, 1648-1871, Case Number 24037, Volume Middlesex Cases 24000-25999, page 24037: 1-6.



- <sup>14</sup>Vital Records of Lexington, MA to the End of the Year 1897 at <https://ma-vitalrecords.org/MA/Middlesex/Lexington/>
- <sup>15</sup> Hudson, Charles, *History of the Town of Lexington from First Settlement to 1868, Revised and Continued to 1912 by The Lexington Historical Society, Volume II, Genealogies*, Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913, p. 728.
- <sup>16</sup>Watertown Records, Volume 2, p. 303.
- <sup>17</sup>Hudson, *Genealogies*, p. 728; Lexington Vital Records.
- <sup>18</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup>Brown, Francis H., M.D., *Lexington Epitaphs, A Copy of the Epitaphs in The Old Burying-Grounds of Lexington, Massachusetts*, Lexington, The Lexington Historical Society, 1905, pp. 162-3.
- <sup>20</sup>Smith, A. Bradford, "Kite End," *Proceedings of the Lexington Historical Society, and Papers Relating to the History of the Town Read by Some of the Members*, Volume II, Lexington, Mass. Published by the Historical Society, 1900 p. 120; Elizabeth Castner, "The Wellingtons of Trapelo Road," Reproduced by the Waltham Historical Commission, with permission from the Waltham Public Library.
- <sup>21</sup>Hudson, *Genealogies*, p.730
- <sup>22</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>23</sup>Vital Records of Waltham, Mass to the End of the Year 1850 at <https://ma-vitalrecords.org/MA/Middlesex/Waltham/>
- <sup>24</sup>Brown, Francis H. M.D., *Lexington Epitaphs A Copy of Epitaphs in The Old Burying-Grounds of Lexington, Massachusetts*, Lexington, The Lexington Historical Society, 1905, p. 164.
- <sup>25</sup>*Middlesex County, MA: Probate File Papers, 1648-1871*. Online database. *AmericanAncestors.org*. New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2014. (From records supplied by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Archives. Digitized images provided by FamilySearch.org), Volume 60, pages 6307:1 to 6307:7, <https://www.americanancestors.org/DB536/i/14471/6307-co1/38228700>
- <sup>26</sup>Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War, A compilation from the Archives Prepared and Published by the Secretary of the Commonwealth in Accordance with Chapter 100, Resolves of 1891, Boston, Wright & Potter, 1896-1908, Volume 16, p. 830.
- <sup>27</sup>Ibid., Volume 17, p. 365.
- <sup>28</sup>Hudson, *Genealogies*, p. 731. Vital Records of Lincoln, MA to the End of the Year 1850 at <https://ma-vitalrecords.org/MA/Middlesex/Lincoln/>
- <sup>29</sup>Hudson, *Genealogies*, p. 731.
- <sup>30</sup>Ibid.; Vital Records of Lexington, MA to the End of the Year 1897 at <https://ma-vitalrecords.org/MA/Middlesex/Lexington/>; Brown, *Lexington Epitaphs*, p.164.
- <sup>31</sup>Hudson, *Genealogies*, p. 731.
- <sup>32</sup>Brown, *Lexington Epitaphs*, p. 164.
- <sup>32</sup>Brown, Hudson, *Genealogies*, p. 731.