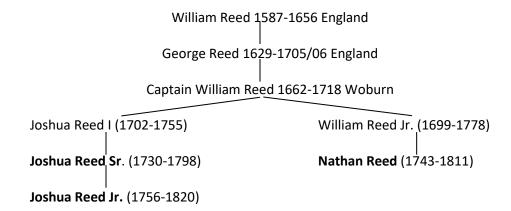
Joshua Reed Sr. and Joshua Reed Jr. Brief Biographies By Bill Poole

There were three members of the Reed family who participated in the action on Lexington Common on the morning of April 19, 1775. Joshua Sr. and Jr. were father and son, and Nathan was their first cousin



The progenitor of the Lexington Reed family was **William Reed, great, great grandfather** of **Joshua Reed Sr., and 3**rd **Great Grandfather of Joshua Jr., the subjects of this biography**. William was born in England about 1587. He, with his wife, Mabel (maiden name unknown), and their three children, George age 6, Ralph age 5 and Justice 18 months, were enrolled in London on July 18, 1635 for the voyage to New England of the ship *Defence*, Edward Bostocke, master, that arrived in Boston on October 8, 1635. They first settled in Dorchester where he held the position of fence viewer in the years 1626 to 1638. He was admitted to Dorchester's First Congregational Church by 1638 and enrolled as a "freeman" of the Massachusetts Bay Colony on March 14, 1638/39.²

On March 18, 1637/38, he was granted land on "Squantum Neck," now part of the town of Quincy, and on August 26, 1639 he sold that land to Thomas Clark. By June 5, 1644 he was in Scituate where he held the office of Constable. In 1648 the family was living in the hamlet of Muddy River, now part of Brookline, when he purchased land in Woburn, MA.³

"On 7 July 1648, 'Nicholas Davis, of Charlestown' sold to William Reede of Muddy River 'his house & land in Wooburne containing fifty acres of upland, four acres of meadow before the door, four acres of meadow in Rock Meadow, & two acres in Brook Meadow, with all barnes, outhouses, fences & all privileges to the same belonging."⁴

"Their dwelling-house stood in a pasture, called the Baldwin Pasture, on the road from Kendall's mill to the Messrs. Duren. The pasture is now owned by them; and remains of Mr. Reed's cellar and well are still to be seen there." 5

At the time of William's death, his estate was the largest in New England at the time (L=400). His farm in Woburn contained 50 acres of upland, 4 acres of meadow before the door, 4 acres in Rockbrook, 2 acres in Brook Meadow. The farm was located on the old road from Salem to Concord. As of 1861, only the cellar hole was left.⁶

The "old Road From Salem," also called "The Old County Road," ran from Woburn through the northeast part of Lexington along North Street, then along the high ground somewhere in the vicinity of Willard's Woods. It eventually reached and crossed the Bedford Road (modern day Hancock Street) just north of Revere Street. The route then continued along that last named street, over Hill Street (formerly Hillside Street) and eventually

joined up with today's Massachusetts Avenue (the Concord Road) via Cedar Street. This route avoided the swampy areas that existed then to the north and west of Lexington Common.

William and Mabel had 8 children: 1. **George, Great Grandfather of Joshua Sr., and Great, Great Grandfather of Joshua Jr.,** born in 1629 in England; 2. **Ralph**, born about 1630 in England; 3. **Justice/Abigail**, born about January 1634 in England, baptized December 30, 1638 in Dorchester;** 4. **Bethia**, born about 1637; 5. **Israel**, born in Scituate but baptized in Dorchester, MA July 31, 1642; 6. **Sarah**, born about 1644, probably in Scituate; and 7. **Rebecca**, baptized December 26, 1647 in Roxbury, MA. ⁷

**There is confusion concerning Justice and Abigail with some, like Charles Hudson, postulating a name change. In any event, the name Justice did not appear in any records other than the manifest of the ship *Defence*.8

William returned to England sometime before 1656. Whether his return was motivated by the change in the religious and political atmosphere with the establishment of the Commonwealth, or because he still owned property there, or both, he settled in Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumberland. He died there between April 9, 1756 when he wrote his will and October 31 when it was proved in London. Mabel was granted full power and authority to carry out the provisions of the will under the authority of "Oliver, Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland, or the dominions thereto belonging."

His wife Mabel accompanied him as did perhaps his younger children. She and they returned to New England where William's will was submitted for probate. 10

On November 21, 1660, Mable married Henry Summers (Somers) Sr. That same year, Israel Reed had appeared in court on June 19, 1660 to request that he be placed under the guardianship of his older brother, George. Israel, George and Mabel requested this "pleading the infirmity of said Israel by reason of his lameness."

the Court ordered that the said Israel Read be by his guardian and mother put forth an apprentice to such as he is most meet for & that the charges & disbursements for effecting thereof be allowed his guardian, out of the said Israel's portion [of his father's bequest]¹⁰

In his will dated October 14, 1675, Henry Summers Sr. included bequests "to my beloved wife Mabel" and to "my wife's children." Following his death, it was agreed that "lest there should arise contention between us that are relatives we therefor resolve to divide the said estate as followeth" with Henry Summers Junior agreeing to the maintenance of his stepmother and to the division of the land to his stepsiblings if he should die without issue. The signers were Mabel, Henry Summers, Jr, his sister, Susannah and all the Reed children.¹¹

Israel prospered, married and had at least seven children. However, Mabel was not very happy with the care and maintenance given her by her stepson, Henry Jr. In August 1684, she sued him, giving reasons why she had to remove from Henry's house.

- 1. I feared I should be blind and therefore thought by the tendance I should then be a sufferer.
- 2. The food prepared for me was such as my stomach through age and infirmity would not comfortably bear nor such as my nature did necessarily require.
- 3. I must either be confined to that room without any company though so aged, or else must go to some other house for it having but little quiet when in any other room.
- 4. Henry Summers affirming that I was so strong in drink that I could lay three men under the table, which knowing I took only for necessity I could not well bear to hear.
- 5. The pulling down part of the end of the house which exposed me to so much cold and the often want of comfortable firing and the much noise and lumbering overhead and otherwise that rendered my life uncomfortable.

6. These things premised and thinking I might enjoy myself more to the comfort of my life that little time I have to live are the reasons of my moving to the place where I am now.¹²

Robert Charles Anderson in *The Great Migration, Immigrants to New England* states that:

The Middlesex court files contain dozens of depositions and other documents relating to this dispute, including lengthy responses from Henry Summers Jr., spread over 1684, 1685, and 1686.¹³

I have not bothered to delve into this. Mable moved into her son George's Woburn home where she died on June 15, 1690.¹⁴

George Reed, Great Grandfather of Joshua Reed Sr. and Great, Great Grandfather of Joshua Jr. George married first, in Woburn on October 4, 1652, Elizabeth Jennison, born in Watertown on April 12, 1637. George and Elizabeth had eight children: 1. Elizabeth, born July 29, 1653; 2. and 3. twin sons, born November 14, 1654, but died a few hours old; 4. Samuel, born April 29, 1656; 5. Abigail, born June 27, 1658; 6. George, born September 14, 1660; 7. William, the Grandfather of Joshua Sr. and Great Grandfather of Joshua Jr., born September 22, 1662; and 8. Sarah, born February 12, 1664/65. 15

George's wife, Elizabeth, died February26, 1664/65, most likely from complications of childbirth. With six children twelve and under, one an infant, it was imperative for William to find a partner to help raise them. He married on November 9, 1665, **Hannah Rockwell.** born in 1639 in Charlestown, with whom he had five children. George died in Woburn on February 21, 1705/06, and Hannah survived George dying on April 16, 1724. ¹⁶

Captain William Reed, Grandfather of Joshua Sr. and Great Grandfather of Joshua Jr. Charles Hudson said of Captain William:

In the northerly part of the town, on Bedford Street, and on land still in possession of his descendants of the same name, William Reed from Woburn settled about 1685. William was known as Captain William Settled in Lexington about 1685. He was a large landowner, and had numerous descendants. He and his son William became prominent in the town. Northwesterly of the Reeds, on the other side of Tophet Swamp, so called, Thomas Kendall, probably from Woburn, settled at an early day.¹⁷

Although greatly reduced in area as a result of being drained through the years to create arable land, Tophet Swamp still exists, located north of Interstate I-95 (Route 128), and the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway passes through its western edge.

Captain William was a justice of the peace, selectman in 1713, Representative to the General Court in in 1714, 1716 and 1717, and subscribed to the meeting house, and the purchase of the common. Members of the Reed and Bowman families were often rivals for office, sometimes one succeeding the other, and with the Reeds from the north part of town and the Bowmans from the south, the sections also were frequently pitted one against the other.¹⁸

Captain William married at Woburn on May 24, 1686, twenty year old Abigail Kendall, born April 6, 1666, daughter of Francis and Mary Tidd Kendall. They had eight children: 1. **Abigail**, born May 29, 1787; 2. **William**, born May 8, 1693, (father of Nathan, whose biography also appears on this site); 3. **Mary**, born April 8, 1695; 4. **Benjamin**, born October 22, 1696; 5. **Samuel**, born October 24, 1688; 6. **Joshua I, father of Joshua Sr., the subject of this biography**, June 20, 1702; 7. **Ruth**, died February 7, 1703/04 aged about three weeks; and **Hephzibah**, born December 10, 1705. 19

Hudson has two other children of Captain William and Abigail: **Elizabeth**, married Joseph Munroe of Lexington, and **Rebecca**, married Edward Johnson of Woburn, but I have not been able to verify either the births of marriages of Elizabeth or Rebecca.

Captain William died May 12, 1718 and Abigail on October 12, 1734. They are buried in Lexington's Old Burying Ground.



Here lyes Buried ye Body of Mrs ABIGAIL REED Wife to Capt. WILLIAM REED Who Died Octobr. ye 12th AD 1734 in ye 68th Year of Her age Here lyes Buried the Body of Capt. William Reed, who departed this Life May 12th 1718. Aged 55 years & 8 months.

Joshua Reed I, Father of Joshua Reed Sr. and Grandfather of Joshua Jr.

Joshua I was 16 years old when his father, Captain William died. On February 16, 1718, Joseph Simon posted a £200 bond in assuming the guardianship of 17 year old Joshua I.²⁰ Joshua I may have seen service for a short period of time May 1 to June 5, 1725, three weeks and 6 days, under Sergeant Thomas Newhall, during Governor Dummer's War (1722-1725.²¹ He married in Lexington on January 21, 1724/25, Elizabeth Russell, daughter of Jonathan and Elizabeth (maiden name Unknown) Russell, born July 15, 1702 in Lexington.²²

Joshua I and Elizabeth had six children: 1. **Elizabeth**, born February 28, 1725/26; 2. **Hepzibah**, born March 8, 1727/28; 3. **Joshua Sr.**, one of the subjects of this biography, born May 15, 1730; 4. **James**. died young on March 22, 1737; 5. **Joseph**, born June 21, 1730; and 6, **Rebecca Susan**, birth date unknown.²³

Elizabeth died on February 29, 1744 at age 42, and Joshua I on October 5, 1755 at age 53. He died intestate, meaning he left no will, and his estate was evaluated at £404, 14 shillings, 9 pence and 3 farthings to which was added £1, 4 shillings and 5 pence value in cloth for a total of £405, 19 shillings and 2 pence. They were buried in Lexington's Old Burying Ground. They were buried in Lexington's Old Burying Ground.



Left panel: Here lyes Buried the Body of Mr JOSHUA REED Who departed this life Octobr. ye 5th AD 1755 in ye 53d Year of His Age Right panel:
Here lyes Buried
the Body of Mrs.
ELIZABETH REED
wife of Mr.
JOSHUA REED
Who departed
this life Febry ye
29th AD 1744 in ye
42 year of her Age

Joshua Reed Sr., father of Joshua Jr.

Joshua Sr. was among the most important men in town, not only holding offices, but also called upon to write and present the position of the town on important matters. On October 21, 1765 he wrote the protest against the Stamp Act, and with others a similar protest against the Tea Tax on September 29, 1768. He was chosen a selectman in March of 1775 and served in the same capacity in 1778 and 1780. ²⁶

Joshua Sr. along with his son, Joshua Jr. and cousin Nathan Reed, all were members of Captain John Parker's Militia Company and all were on Lexington Common on the morning of April 19, 1775. The three were among thirty-four participants who swore a combined deposition concerning the events of April 19, 1775.

WE NATHANIEL MULLIKEN, PHILLIP RUSSELL, MOSES HARRINGTON, Junior. THOMAS and DANIEL HARRINGTON, WILLIAM GRIMER, WILLIAM TIDD, ISAAC HASTINGS, JONAS STONE, Jun., JAMES WYMAN, THADDEUS HARRINGTON, JOHN CHANDLER, JOSHUA REED, Jun., JOSEPH SIMONDS, PHINEAS SMITH, JOHN CHANDLER, jun., RUEBEN LOCK, JOEL VILES, NATHAN REED, SAMUEL TIDD, BENJAMIN LOCK, THOMAS WINSHIP, SI | MEON SNOW, JOHN SMITH, MOSES HARRINGTON, the third, JOSHUA READ, EBENEZER PARKER, JOHN HARRINGTON, ENOCH WILLINGTON, JOHN HOSMER, ISAAC GREEN, PHINEAS STEARNS, ISAAC DURANT, and THOMAS HEADLY, Jun., all of lawful age, and inhabitants of Lexington, in the county of Middlesex, and Colony of the Massachusetts-Bay, in New-England, do testify and declare, that on the nineteenth of April instant, about one or two o'clock in the morning, being informed that several officers of the regulars had, the evening before, been riding up and down the road, and had detained and insulted the inhabitants passing the same; and also understanding that a body of Regulars were marching from Boston, towards Concord, with intent (as it was supposed) to take the stores belonging to the Colony in that town, we were alarmed; and having met at the place of our Company's parade, were dismissed by our Captain, John Parker, for the present, with orders to be ready to attend at the beat of the drum. We further testify and declare, that about five o'clock in the morning, hearing our drum beat, we proceeded towards the parade, and soon found that a large body of Troops were marching towards us. Some of our company were coming up to the parade, and others had reached it; at which time the Company began to disperse. Whilst our backs were turned on the Troops we were fired on by them, and a number of our men were instantly killed and wounded. Not a gun was fired by any person in our Company on the regulars, to our knowledge, before they fired on us, and they continued firing until we had all made our escape.²⁶

It is not known if any of the three Reeds joined the portion of Captain Parker's Company that marched to meet the Regulars returning from Concord at the site on the border of Lexington that has come to be known as Parker's Revenge. After April 19, 1775, there are several entries for additional service. All but one are in the name of Joshua Jr. and one in 1776 under just Joshua. The latter should most likely be credited to 20 year old Joshua Jr., and not 46 year old Joshua Sr., a father with young children. In reality, Joshua Sr. was closely involved with local activities in Lexington, having been c

Joshua Sr. married Susannah Houghton in Lancaster, MA on November 27, 1753, Susannah Houghton, born October 1, 1733, daughter of James and Sarah (maiden name unknown) Houghton. Joshua Sr. and Susannah had six children, all born in Lexington: 1. Elizabeth of Betty, born November 26, 1754; 2. Joshua Jr. the second subject of this essay, born September 11, 1756; 3. Susanna, born March 11, 1759; 4. Hepzibah, born February 26, 1769; 5, James, born December 8, 1771; and Rebecca, baptized July 10, 1774. 28

Joshua Sr. died August 11, 1798 and his grave is in Lexington's Old Burying Ground. I have not found Susannah's date of death or her grave.



SACRED
To the memory of
Mr. Joshua Reed,
who died
Augt. 11th 1798.
Aged 69.
The sweet remembrance of the just
Shall flourish when they sleep in dust. 29

Joshua Reed Jr.

As stated above, Joshua Jr. was credited with several terms of service during the Revolution. Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War has the following entries:

REED, JOSHUA, JR., Lexington. Private; pay roll of detachment from Lexington militia co. commanded by Capt. John Parker; service 5 days; detachment reported on command at Cambridge from May 6 to May 10, 1775, by order of Committee of Safety; also, Capt. John Bridge's co., Col. Eleazer Brooks's regt.; service from March 4 to March 8, 1776, 5 days; company stationed at Roxbury.³⁰

The May, 1775 duty was during the initial days of the siege of Boston, and the March, 1776 duty involved the fortification of Dorchester Heights upon which were mounted the cannon brought from Fort Ticonderoga by Henry Knox. This soon resulted in the British Evacuation of Boston on March 17, 1776.

Joshua Jr. also served for a lilt over three months in Cambridge in 1778.

REED, JOSHUA. Private, Capt. Isaac Wood's co. Col. Jonathan Read's regt. of guards; muster rolls dated Cambridge, May 9, and June -, 1778; enlistment, 3 months from April 2 (also given April 1), 1778; also see co. ad regt.; joined April 1, 1778; service to July 3, 1778, 3 mos. 3 days, at Cambridge.

Hudson also has him serving in White Plains in 1776, but I have not found a record for this service.

Joshua Jr. married on September 11, 1780, in Charlestown, MA, **Susanna Leathers**, born November 4, 1760, in Charlestown, daughter of William and Ruth Richardson Leathers.³¹ They had three children: 1. **Charles**, born July 10, 1781; 2. **Susanna**, born January 30, 1783; and **Phebe**, born August 28, 1792.³²

Susanna Leathers Reed died September 8, 1802 before her 42nd birthday. Joshua then married in Concord, MA, **Mrs. Elizabeth Brooks**, widow of Abel Brooks, born in Lincoln, MA September 23, 1766. She and Joshua did not

have any children, but she did have two children with her first husband: 1. **Abel**, born August 9, 1788 in Lincoln; and 2. **Elizabeth**, born July 19, 1791 in Concord. The husband Abel died in Concord March 29, 1804 at age 44.³³

Joshua Jr. died in Lexington on September 29, 1826, and Elizabeth died in Concord on December 24, 1840. She had most likely moved to Concord to live with one of her children.³⁴ Joshua was buried in Lexington's Old Burying Ground and Elizabeth in Concord's Old Hill Burying Ground.



In memory of MRS. ELIZEBETH, widow of Mr. Joshua Reed who died Dec. 24, 1840, Æt. 74.³⁵ This Monument is erected to perpetuate the memory of MR. JOSHUA REED who was born Sept. 11, 1756 and died Sept. 9, 1820 aged 70 years³⁶

Footnotes

¹Dorchester antiquarian and historical society, The history of the town of Dorchester, Massachusetts, By a committee of the Dorchester antiquarian and historical society, Boston, Ebenezer Clapp, Jr., 1859, p. 123; manifest of the ship Defence, 1635 at https://www.packrat-pro.com/ships/defense.htm

²Anderson, Robert Charles, *The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England, 1630-1645, Volume VI, R-S*, Great Migration Study Project, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, 2009, p. 30. ³Ibid., p.31.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Sewell, Samuel, *The History of Woburn, Middlesex County, M* ass. *From the Grant of Its Territory to Charlestown, in 1640, to the Year 1860, Boston, Wiggin and Lunt Publishers, 1863, p. 630.*

⁶Reed, Jacob Whittemore, *History of the Reed Family in Europe and* America, Boston, John Wilson and Son Printers, p.62; and at https://www.geni.com/people/William-Reed-of-Woburn/6000000002931141809
⁷Anderson., pp. 33-34; 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, p. 557.

⁸Hudson, *Genealogies*, p. 557.

⁹Reed, pp. 63-64.

¹⁰Anderson, p. 32.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., pp. 34-35.13²Ibid., p. 35.

¹³Anderson, p. 35.

¹⁴Hudson, *Genealogies*, p. 557.

¹⁴lbid., p. 558.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Hudson, *Genealogies*, pp. 557-58.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 558.

¹⁷ Hudson, Charles, *Bi-centenary Edition History of the Town of Lexington Massachusetts in Two Volumes,* Volume 1, *History*, Lexington Historical Society, Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, The Riverside Press, 1913, p.26.

¹⁸Hudson, *Genealogies*, p. 558; and *History*, pp. 53-54, 457 and 463.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 558.

²⁰Middlesex County MA: Probate File Papers, 1648-1871, volume Middlesex Cases 18000-19999, page 13638:2

²¹New England Historic Genealogical Society (American Ancestors), *Colonial Soldiers and Officers in New England, 1620-1775*, volume "Massachusetts officers and soldiers 1723-1743," P. 207.

²²Hudson, *Genealogies*, p. 560.

²³lbid.

²⁴ Middlesex County MA: Probate File Papers, 1648-1871, volume Middlesex Cases 18000-19999, pages 18551:1 to 18551:11.

²⁵Brown, Francis H., M.D., *Lexington Epitaphs, A Copy of Epitaphs in The Old Burying Ground in Lexington, Massachusetts*, The Lexington Historical Society, Lexington, MA, 1905. P. 111.

²⁶Hudson, *History*, pp. 69-70, 73-76, 458.

²⁷Kehoe[,] Vincent J.R., "We Were There April 19, 1775 The American Rebels," Self-Published, January 1, 1975, "Deposition of John Munroe December 28th, 1824," p.

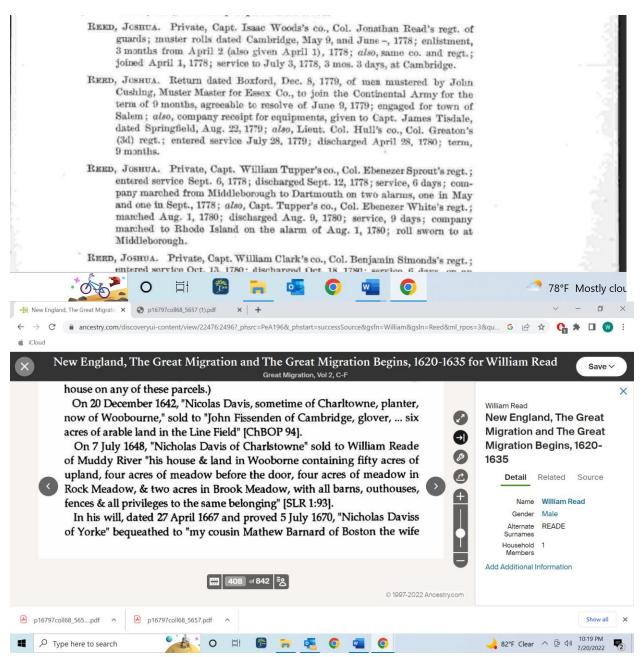
²⁸Hudson, *Genealogies*, p. 563

²⁹Brown, p. 110.

³⁰Massachusetts 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 13, p. 81.

³¹Massachusetts, U.S., Town and Vital Records, 1620-1988, Charlestown 1629-1800 Births Marriages Deaths, 1629-1800; volume 3, page 315.

³⁶Find a Grave, Lexington, MA, Old Burying Ground; Brown, p. 110.



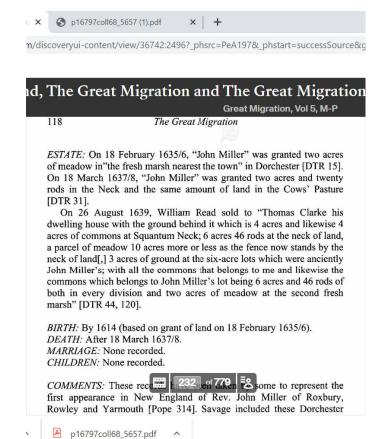
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³²Hudson, *Genealogies*, p. 566.

³³Vital Records of Lexington, MA to the End of the Year 1897 at -vitalrecords.org/MA/Middlesex/Lexington/; Vital Records of Concord, MA https://ma to the End of the Year 1891 at https://mavitalrecords.org/MA/Middlesex/Concord/

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Find a Grave, Concord, MA, Old Hill Burying Ground



New England, The Great Migration and The Great Migration Begins, 1620-1635

<u>The great migration: immigrants to New England, 1634-1635. Volume VI, R-S-by Robert Charles Anderson; Great Migration Study Project (New England Historic Genealogical Society)</u>

Volumes 1-6. Boston: New England Historical and Genealogical Society, 1996-2011.