

HERITAGE GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

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Final Research Report

Date:

Addressed to: *Name and Address Removed*

Objective: Obtain Civil and Patriotic Proof of Service for Jotham Blanchard
Obtain Jotham Blanchard's last Peterborough, NH land records
Determine Jotham Blanchard's arrival in Nova Scotia
Obtain Jotham's First Land Transactions and Land Grant in Nova Scotia
Research and find arguments against the Loyalist theory
Research and find reasons cited for Jotham Blanchard's move to Nova Scotia

Analysis of the Problem:

Jotham Blanchard is listed in Sabine and Miller's *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution*. Was he a Loyalist or Patriot? What evidence supports either claim?

Itemized Research Findings:

Jotham Blanchard's Civil and Patriotic Service (April 1774-Nov 1786)

- 1774, April- chosen for committee to settle with the Select Men [Peterborough Town Records (PTR) Vol. 1, p. 48]
- 1774, April- chosen as moderator [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 49]
- 1776, Jan 3- Layer of Highways [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 51]
- 1776, Jan 3- served on Safety Committee [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 51]
- 1776, Feb 20- chosen as Moderator [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 52]
- 1776, April 25- chosen as Selectman [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 53]
- 1776, June 17- Signed the Association Test, Peterborough, [NH State Papers Vol. XXX, *Misc. Rev. Doc. of N.H.* p. 111-112]
- 1777, Dec 17- Delegate to the NH House of Representatives [NH State Papers, Vol. VIII, p. 737-739]
- 1778, Sept 12- chosen as Selectman [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 54]
- 1778, Dec 10- chosen as Moderator [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 54]
- 1778, Dec 10- chosen as Selectman [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 54]
- 1779, March 14- chosen as Selectman [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 55]
- 1779, April 1- chosen as Selectman [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 56]
- 1779, Aug 9- chosen for committee to proportion what each person did in war [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 60]

- 1779, Oct 5- chosen as Selectman [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 57]
- 1780, Jan 9- chosen as Selectman [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 58]
- 1781, Feb 8- chosen as Moderator [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 64]
- 1781, Feb 8- chosen as Town Counter [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 64]
- 1781, June 26- chosen as Moderator [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 67]
- 1782, Jan 17- voted to committee to plan of gov't amendments [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 68]
- 1782, Nov 26- voted to committee to plan of gov't amendments [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 69]
- 1783, Aug 4- chosen as Moderator [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 82]
- 1783, Aug 4- voted to committee on 8th article of confederation [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 83]
- 1783, Sept 25- voted to committee on completing mtg house [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 86]
- 1783, Oct 31- Delegate to 2nd Constitutional Conv. in Concord [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 84]
- 1784, Feb 3- voted to town committee [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 88]
- 1786, Nov 1st-10th - chosen as Town Clerk, ProTemp [PTR, Vol. 1, p. 136] during friend and neighbor Sam Cunningham's absence

[Last Record of Jotham Blanchard in Peterborough, NH Minutes]

Jotham Blanchard's Last Land Transactions as Grantor in Peterborough, NH

1783, Nov 11 Jotham Blanchard to Nathan Abbot et al, Book 12, Page 161
1784, May 15 Jotham Blanchard to Samuel Sherburne, Book 13, Page 37
1784, July 5 Jotham Blanchard to Caleb Boynton, Book 12, Page 577
1784, July 9 Jotham Blanchard to Joseph Blanchard, Book 12, Page 585
1784, Aug 7 Jotham Blanchard to Nathan Boynton, Book 12, Page 343
1788, Mar 26 Jotham Blanchard to Bartholomew Thayer, Book 20, Page 129

In the final land transaction on the 5th of May 1787 (Recorded March 26, 1788), Jotham Blanchard states he is living in Peterborough, NH and he is selling the farm in which he now lives to his neighbor Bartholomew Thayer #A113949. This is the last NH land transaction listed in the index under his name. (Transcribed copy of the last deed attached)

Arrival in Nova Scotia in 1787

According to a petition to the General Assembly of Nova Scotia on March 30, 1790, Jotham Blanchard states that he arrived in Truro, Colchester County, Nova Scotia in 1787. In this petition, Jotham requests reimbursement of fifteen pounds for what he has been out on supplies and tools in the manufacturing of potash (Series A, vol 3, no 27 in NS Virtual Archives).

First Land Transactions and Land Grant in Nova Scotia

Jotham purchases tracts of land in Truro, Colchester County, Nova Scotia:

1792, Jan 27 John Barnhill to Jotham Blanchard, Book 2, Page 469 (the deed states that Jotham's house was already on part of this land- attached)

1793, Feb 20 James Archibald to Jotham Blanchard, Book 2, Page 527

Jotham dies in Truro on March 18, 1807.

In the *History of Antigonish County* (1876) J. W. MacDonald, MD writes that Jotham Blanchard "obtained a license of occupation of 200,000 acres, partly in the County of Sydney and partly in the County of Pictou with the view of inducing people from New Hampshire to come and settle upon it." However, failing to get the settlers Jotham had hoped, the license is reduced to 23,000 acres on April 29, 1796 (Whidden, 1933, *Pictou Advocate*).

The Archives of Nova Scotia could not locate a copy of a petition or memorial for this 1796 license, and it cannot be found in their online virtual vault. Jotham remains in Truro, Colchester County and never lived in Sydney nor Pictou Counties (Whidden, 1933).

The land grant is finally approved on April 18, 1804 when Laurence Hartstorne requests and receives 17,250 acres of the original 23,000 acre license (MacLean, 1976, *The History of Antigonish*).

Jotham's son Jonathan settled in Pictou and his son-in-law Nathaniel Symonds settled in Antigonish around 1804.

Sabine and Miller incorrectly interpret Jotham Blanchard's move to Nova Scotia as sympathy to the British cause

Historian Lorenzo Sabine (1864) in *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution* interprets Jotham Blanchard's move to Canada as sympathy to the British cause in the Revolution, and Sabine misidentifies him as serving in the Loyalist Corps. Thomas Miller (1873) in *Historical and Genealogical Record of the First Settlers of Colchester County* also interprets Jotham's move to Canada as loyalty to the British cause.

Jotham Blanchard is not listed in *Bounty and Donation Land Grants in British Colonial America* (Bockstruck, 2007) nor in *Loyalists and Land Settlement in Nova Scotia* (Gilroy, 1990).

Arguments against the Loyalist theory

Jean Peterson in *The Loyalist Guide, Nova Scotian Loyalists and their Documents* (1983) writes “Excerpts from D.G. Whidden’s writings on the early history of Pictou County... traces Jotham Blanchard’s family history and concludes that they were not Loyalists, as often claimed” (p. 192).

Historian, Ezra Stearns (1911) disputes the loyalist theory in *The Early Generation of the Founders of Old Dunstable*, “Overlooking his record Sabine includes Blanchard in his sketches of the Tories of the Revolution, but misstates his residence and erroneously says he ‘served in a Loyalist corps...’” (p. 12) “...His frequent election to office by his townsmen is certain proof that he was not a tory” (p. 12).

Jonathan Smith (1913) disputes the loyalist theory as well in *Peterborough, New Hampshire in the Revolution*. “It has been suggested that he went to Nova Scotia on account of his tory sympathies, but in view of his action in Peterborough during the war- and he appears to have been one of the town’s most trusted citizens- this is without a doubt an error” (p. 52).

D.G. Whidden (Mar 9, 1933) disputes the loyalist theory in *The Pictou Advocate* newspaper, “There can be no doubt that the sympathy of Jotham Blanchard was with the revolutionists, but that is no reason why after they had been victorious, he would not have been a good citizen in Nova Scotia, and he did become one; highly esteemed and of considerable influence” (p. 4).

J. Crawford Hartman (1939) disputes the loyalist theory in *Joseph Blanchard of Boston, Mass., and Some of His Descendants*, NEHGR, VOL XCIII, January, 1939, “Earlier historians interpreted this last move [to Nova Scotia] to his sympathy to the British cause in the Revolution”... “and to the fact that he was thought to have served in the Loyalist Corps”. “However, his actions and attitude during that struggle contradict these premises, although he was not an active combatant” (p. 236)

Fred C. Crowell (1920-1930) disputes the theory in the Yarmouth Herald, NEHGS Database, *New Englanders in Nova Scotia* Manuscript. R. Stanton Avery Special Collections, “His frequent election to office and the appointments given him is certain proof he was never suspected of being a Loyalist” (No. 41).

Reasons cited for Jotham Blanchard’s move to Nova Scotia

“At the close of the Revolution there was an animated controversy over the proposed and the adopted measures of organic law, and it is possible that Jotham Blanchard was not in sympathy with the provisions of the state constitution adopted in 1783” (p. 12). Ezra Stearns (1911) in *The Early Generation of the Founders of Old Dunstable*

“... the post-war spirit of retaliation and greed displayed by the victorious colonists disillusioned him, and he wound up his affairs at Peterborough and removed to Nova Scotia” (p. 236) J. Crawford Hartman (1939) in *Joseph Blanchard of Boston, Mass., and Some of His Descendants*, NEHGR, VOL XCIII, January, 1939

...”His brother-in-law Rev. Joshua Wingate Weeks of Nova Scotia, and his old friend of Peterboro, John Morrison, who had settled at Truro, may have had some influence in Mr. Blanchard’s removal

to Nova Scotia.” Fred C. Crowell (1920-1930) Yarmouth Herald, NEHGS Database, *New Englanders in Nova Scotia* Manuscript. R. Stanton Avery Special Collections, (No. 41).

“It is quite possible that in making this move [to Nova Scotia] he had an eye to business, for he and his brother Jonathan, while living in Portsmouth had been active in the settlement of the Monadnock district, where Jonathan owned and sold a larger tract of land” (p. 4). DG Whidden, *The Pictou Advocate*- March 9, 1933.

Summary:

Jotham Blanchard was elected to office in Peterborough, NH as late as 1786 and no land was confiscated; there is no evidence to support that Jotham Blanchard was ever a Loyalist. After the war had ended, Jotham simply sold his Peterborough, NH property in 1787 and moved to Nova Scotia.