

# **Addison Callahan Grounds Tour 2008**

## **Part I: Context**

### **1) Native American Agricultural Practices**

(Probably in Corn Barn; ideally there will be maps to illustrate points)

Info for this section taken from *Plants and People*, pgs. 12-24

Before looking at land use in early Hadley, and farming at Forty Acres, we must first look at Native American agricultural practices. We know many settlers to Massachusetts and the Connecticut River Valley described the environment they found to be “park-like.” Feeling like it was Providence that provided them such a fertile environment, the Native agricultural practices that created this “park-like” environment have been largely ignored.

What do we mean by “Park-Like?”

New England Indians burned the underbrush of their forests annually, for several reasons. The term “park-like” infers that the settlers saw forests comprised of large, old trees and very little underbrush. The burnings allowed older trees to survive, while it killed off younger trees. (Let visitors know we will see timber from such trees on back veranda- wide, old growth pine boards) The reasons for these burnings are:

- It cleared the underbrush and allowed for a clearer sightline through the forest for hunting
- It also encouraged the growth of young plants, which was a food source for game.
- The burnings created an “edge environment,” somewhere between a pasture-like field and a forest. This created a favorable environment for game animals and, by creating such an environment, the Native Americans increased the animals’ numbers. A form of husbandry like keeping cattle in pastureland.

- The annual burning would create clearings, in which the Native Americans would plant poly-cultural fields of beans and corn. When burned every year, the Natives would rotate the crops, and some clearings were left to lie fallow
- The ashes from the annual fire were used to fertilize these “forest farms”

## **2) Native Meets Western**

(Still in corn barn? I don't want to spend much time inside, however, and I think I want to do the Phelps part on the veranda.)

It is easily apparent to us that the Native Americans did indeed have well defined agricultural practices. What, then, allowed the early settlers to feel that it was acceptable to take Native land for their own use?

### **Early Massachusetts Settlement**

- Consider the religious context in which many early English settlers were arriving in America
- Gen 1:28 was used as the basis of Puritan land rights in New England: “And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.” The key here, is the “subdue it” part
- Puritans used the concept of “subdual,” or taming and improving the land, as the reasoning behind their New England plantations.
- They were completely unable, or unwilling, to recognize Native American agricultural practices
- Since the Native Americans did not farm the land in the same way they, and since they did not use fences and land deeds, the Puritans

did not feel that the Native Americans had “subdued,” or “improved” the land in any way. Therefore it was a-ok to take it!

- In answering the protest that colonists had no right to take N.A. land, John Winthrop, Governor of Mass Bay Colony, states in his *Reasons to be Considered for Justifying the Undertakers of the Plantation in New England*: “that which lies common, and hath never been replenished or subdued, is free to any that possess and improve it” (Field, 14).
- The N.A. land practices were recognized as an “improvement” upon the land (early settlers characterized N.A.’s as merely living off the spoils of the land- their polycultural fields confused them, and were not at all like the crop fields they were used to seeing in England), and therefore they did not have the right to a title to the land they tended.

### **Early Hadley Settlement**

(Veranda? I suppose it depends on where we can set up maps.)

Info for these sections are taken from Judd’s *History of Hadley*, p. 100-108, and Ginny Leonard’s thesis

- Hadley was settled by dissenting Congregational parishes from Wethersfield and Hartford, Connecticut in 1659. This settlement followed closely on the heels of Northampton (1654) and Hatfield (1657).
- The land was purchased from the Norowottuck Indians on behalf of the Hadley settlers through a Springfield merchant by the name of John Pynchon
- Sachems of the Norowottuck (also spelled Nolwotogg) Chickwollop, Umpanchella, and Quonquont sold the land to Pynchon

- The initial deed of Hadley (originally called “New Towne”) lists the lands as “from the mouth of Fort River, and Mount Holyoke on the south and the mouth of Mohawk brook, and the southern part of Mount Toby on the north, extending easterly 9 miles” with the Connecticut (often spelled Quenecticott or Quonicticot) River on the west.
- The land was purchased for “two hundred fathom of wampum, and twenty fathom and one large coat of eight fathom.” This was, even at the time, considered a small fee. However, Judd notes in *History of Hadley* that even though it was not very much, it was no more than the land was worth and the Indians were “fully aware” of what they were getting for their land

### **3) Early Hadley Agricultural Practices**

Ask the visitors if they know where West Street and describe the green.  
There should be a map, too!

- The settlers homes were close together around the green.
- There would often be small colonial gardens, containing herbs or a few vegetables (it’s important to illustrate what a “colonial garden” is here, because when we talk about ornamental gardening later on the visitors will understand why Morrison’s garden was so unique. Typically colonial gardens would follow the “Plymouth type arrangement”; which essentially means no arrangement at all but rather a random assortment of vegetables and herbs)
- They also had a “home lot” of about 8 acres
- The bulk of the settlers’ farmlands were in communal lots, 1 to 2 miles away from the settlement (there is a map in Leonard’s thesis showing where the settlers lots were within the stockade, c. 1663)
- The four original communal tracts were called Forty Acres, to the north of the village; the Great Meadow, all land west of the village extending

to the Connecticut River; Fort Meadow, lands to the south and Hockanum Meadow, which was further south.

- The common lands the settlers farmed corresponded to where they lived in the stockade. Ex; Samuel Porter, Moses's grandfather, lived in the northeastern quarter, farmed Forty Acres (which lies to the north of the green)

## **Part II: Farming in Valley and 40 Acres**

### **1) Apple Orchard**

#### **Valley**

\*First harvested for profit in Hadley by Henry Walcott in 1648 (he sold apples as well as cider)

\*No cider mills in NoHo, Hadley or Amherst until after 1700- used manual pounders (like big hammers) in wooden troughs to juice the apples and make cider

\*A small distillery for making the area's apples into hard cider was built in NoHo in 1770. Though beer remained a more popular beverage, hard cider consumption increased rapidly after the Revolution, spurring farmers to create bigger orchards for cider (both distilled and un-fermented)

\*According to one local historian (Judd) Hadley, though it did not have a distillery, could not avoid the "curse" of the "intoxicating drink" as Hadley apples were trucked from the village to distilleries in NoHo and Amherst. "Every distillery produces drunkards." –Judd. Though this didn't stop mills of private property from being used to make brandy and hard cider

\*An issue of the Hampshire Gazette in May 1792 includes a humorous poem describing local cider lovers, calling attention to their "rosy countenance, ruddy nose and running eyes"

\*Cider (non-fermented) and other apple products, however, remained a staple at family gatherings and meal times in Old Hadley.

\*In 1771, each family in Hadley went through about 4 1/3 barrels of cider

\* Apple molasses- made by boiling the cider or the apples themselves, the molasses was then used as a topping on pudding and pies.

\*The types of apples used were known as “skunk sweetings,” and were of the sweetest variety grown in the area

### **40 Acres**

\* The apple orchard was located on Mt Warner, and the cider mill seems likely to have been located near the animal barn, though we are not sure

\*Thanksgiving- “It was one of the days we reckoned by the dividing line between summer and winter as well as the days reunions and festivities. The seasons work, as far as the land was concerned was expected to be done before Thanksgiving... The winter supply of apple-sauce must have been made ere this. The apples from the Mt. Warner orchard had been laid up, and a generous quantity of the juice had been boiled down to the consistency of thin molasses, with which to sweeten the sauce... The apple paring, with its array of tubs and baskets and knives and jolly faces before the bright kitchen fire, was completed, with the Halloween games of counting the apple seeds, and throwing the paring over the head to see its transformation into the initials of some fair maiden. The great day for the conversion of apples into sauce had lately come and gone, for it must be delayed as long as possible that it may not ferment and spoil. The stout crane that swung over the huge fireplace was loaded with one or more brass kettles filled with apples, sweet and sour in proper proportion, the former being put at the bottom because they required more time to cook... It was an all day process, but when completed an article was produced which was always in order for the table, and which, if slightly frozen, was

enjoyed with a keener relish than the ice cream of the restaurants of today” Aria Huntington, p. 107-109

\*It seems that, though there was a local market for apples and cider, the Phelps and Huntington families tended to keep their produce for family use. The account book keeps track of seeds and apples, though there is no mention of their exportation.

\*They had a cider mill that made brandy, as Aria writes; “the old cider-mill, which had been all the season screeching its protest against the sacrilegious use of one of Nature’s best gifts by turning it into brandy had uttered its last groan [by Thanksgiving time] and stood with its snaked jaws and bending sweep a ghastly spectacle, until another season should compel a renewal of its doleful cries.

## **2) Field Crops**

### **Valley**

#### *A) Indian Corn*

\* “The people of New England could hardly have been sustained without this American grain. It has furnished them with much of their food in all generations” Judd, 356

\* The process of planting and harvesting Indian corn changed little over the two decades or so during which it was a New England farmstead staple.

\*A 1750 account of the planting and harvesting of Indian corn reads much the same as one from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. “The land was plowed twice, and furrows made for the rows, making the hills about 4 feet apart. The planting was done at the end of April and beginning of May... The stalks were cut for fodder. The ripe corn was gathered at the end of September and beginning of October, and on average yielded 25 bushels to an acre.” Judd 356-357

- \* By 1831 Indian Corn surpassed all other crops in terms of rates of production and in the same year Hadley farmers produced over 37,000 bushels

### *B) English grains*

#### *-Wheat*

- \*CRV produced most wheat in New England (1650-1700 or so)

- \*Soon after the area's settlement, every farmer in Hadley, Northampton and Hatfield raised wheat. This is partly because the CRV had not been affected by the "wheat blast" a disease that hit the southern and eastern colonies, very hard beginning in 1644.

- \*Wheaten bread and Indian Corn were the most common foods in the region

- \*Wheat from Hadley was sent to Boston to pay debts and to trade for other goods

- \*The pressure on CRV towns to provide New England's wheat (following the "wheat blast" as well as King Phillip's and the French and Indian wars) soon exhausted the soil, and by 1700 wheat crops began to fail.

- \* By the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, most farmers were only growing enough wheat for their families and their Thanksgiving celebrations

#### *-Rye*

- \*Did not begin to be raised in region until late 1600's.

- \* Spike in raising of rye occurred after soil had been exhausted from extensive wheat production

#### *-Flax*

- \*Until the establishment of cotton factories, Flax was an important crop grown for generations in New England.

- \* It was common practice for the wives of farmers to spin the flax in order to make linen



## **40 Acres**

### *A) Indian Corn*

\* The Phelps and Huntington families used their Indian Corn a number of ways. First of all, it was a staple at meals, both in its original form and in corn meal used for baking. It was also used as feed for their sizable herds of pigs and cows. Dan Huntington also seems to have sold his corn at the market

\* Phelps was one of the largest growers of Indian Corn in Hadley at the turn of the century

\* It was grown from 1777 until 1814

\* Much of the hired labor on at 40 Acres worked on the Indian Corn harvest, particularly the planting, hoeing, picking and husking of the corn.

\* Under the management of Dan Huntington, Indian Corn continued to be the staple crop at 40 acres

\*Despite the fact that land was sold by Dan Huntington to pay for his children's education, the cornfield spread further north, all the way to the sound foot of Mt. Warner

\* Edward Huntington was in charge of the corn, and in a letter written to his father in 1825 he describes the cornfield as "about as handsome a piece as [he] ever saw."

\*Frederic Dan Huntington also raised corn, "as is evidenced by the construction of a silo and the presence of a two-story corn barn" (Leonard, 121)

### *B) English Grains*

-Wheat

\*Phelps grew wheat but, like many CRV farmers, eventually switched focus to rye after exhausting their soil

\*Dan Huntington grew some wheat, but by 1831 wheat production all but stopped in Hadley. The town reported only 52 bushels cultivated that year

-Rye

\*While not as extensively grown as Indian Corn, rye soon began to be cultivated in greater quantities at 40 acres

\*Phelps began growing rye in 1777, likely on a portion of Mt. Warner close to the Apple Orchard.

\* Phelps paid for help with the rye harvest up until 1814, though it is likely that it was grown after this date

\*Dan Huntington raised ten dozen acres of rye each season

\*Theodore Huntington wrote that “the rye harvest was quite an event in the work of the season” and the family referred to the harvest as “reaping the mountain.”

\* Huntington sold rye at \$0.75 per bushel.

-Flax

\*During the Phelps era, flax was considered by many to be the most profitable crop that a New England farmer could grow

\*Flax provided the Phelps family with clothing and very valuable seed, as well as stalks and oil

\* The oil cake of flax was also used to fatten cattle and hogs for market, which was another source of income for the Porter, Phelps and Huntington families.

### **3) Livestock**

#### **Valley**

\* Excellent pasturage in CRV meant the area was perfect for cattle and hog fattening industry

\*The Valley also became a hub of horse raising. The rise in popularity of the Morgan Horse helped aid in the development of this industry in the area.

\* The CRV provided fattened cattle and hogs, beef and salted pork, as well as horses to the Hartford and Boston markets.

#### **40 Acres**

- The livestock not only provided the Porter and Phelps families with income (from fattening and selling them to the Hartford and Boston Markets), but also with beef, pork, grease and lard for cooking, and leather (there used to be a tanning house on the property)
- Other local farmers would pay Charles for use of his pasture land
- The Phelps family kept a small dairy herd of about 12 cows and calves. Elizabeth made cheese (a section on cheese making will follow)
- Their cattle would graze on Mt. Warner during the summer, and every three days were provided with fresh water and salt
- They had a herd of sheep (about 25), used for food and wool
- Charles Phelps dabbled in horse raising, while Dan Huntington purchased horses to be used as draught animals

### **4) Ornamental Gardening**

#### **Valley**

- The vast majority of colonial gardens in 18<sup>th</sup> century New England followed the “Plymouth type arrangement.”
- The “Plymouth type arrangement” consisted of a random assortment of vegetables and herbs
- “Plymouth type arrangements” remained popular in New England until about 1840, when Victorian tastes took over
- Flowers, if grown in the garden at all, were grown for specific purposes. Ex; rose petals were dried and used for fragrance in the home, coat pockets, etc. Many flowers were medicinal

- There was no ornamental garden in Hadley before the Phelps's garden.

### **40 Acres**

- \* John Morrison was a Scottish Highlander sent by the British to fight in the Revolutionary War
- \* He arrived in Boston Harbor the day after Evacuation Day (March 18) in 1777, so essentially he got off the boat and immediately became a prisoner of war
- \* The recruiting of soldiers caused a severe shortage of farm labor, and the surplus of prisoners of war in Massachusetts provided a labor pool to fill the shortage
- \* Morrison came to work at 40 Acres soon after he was taken as a POW
- \* Morrison was warmly welcomed by the family, and soon he was considered a member of the extended Phelps family (Carlise, 90)
- \* Morrison had a pretty expansive ornamental garden back home in Scotland and, when he came to the 40 acres, he wanted to make one for the Phelps family
- \* The basic layout of the North Garden is similar to the way Morrison laid it out in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century
- \* The original layout is described as “a rectangle, subdivided by paths into 4 parts, a circular rosebed at the center, the whole lined by fruit trees on the long sides.” (Carlisle, 178)
- \* “The house, outbuildings, planted fields, woods, pastures, and orchards, along with John Morrison's orderly gardens, created a northern version of the Jeffersonian dream (Carlisle, 177).
- \* A rock on Mount Warner came to be known as “John's Rock.” It was where he took many naps, slept off hangovers, and he was also able to admire his garden from the rock.
- \* James Huntington wrote, in 1949, that “the plan of the old garden can still be traced: the lilac to the left of the flagstones leading to the south

door and the bed of lilies-of-the-valley are believed to have been planted by him.” FYI Lily-of-the-valley was used to “ease the pain of the Gout!” (Favretti & DeWitt, 63)

## **5) Cheesemaking**

### **40 Acres**

- Elizabeth Porter-Phelps ran an extensive cheese and butter making operation from 40 Acres.
- A look at her diary allows us to see how much work she, her mother, and other hired women put into the venture; she states that “the butter was churned all last week” and talks about waking up early to “strip [milk] the cows” and immediately turning the milk into butter
- The operation was clearly more than just a hobby for Elizabeth, as when she went away for long periods of time, such as visiting her daughter in Litchfield, Charles Phelps found replacements.
- In 1797 a new ell was added, that included a new kitchen and buttery, to accommodate Elizabeth’s growing cheese industry.
- I haven’t been able to find a record of how much cheese was made/how much money was made from the venture, but both Charles and the elder Elizabeth contributed to the process, and at least three people were hired to help with cheese making.

## **6) Labor**

### **40 Acres**

- Family records indicate that the Phelpses owned at least two slaves.
- A bill of sale from 1770 states that Phelps bought “a negro fello named Caesar of about 18 years of age” for 66 pounds, 13 shillings, and four pence (Leonard, 53)
- In 1778 a woman named Peg was sold by the Phelpses to Captain Fay of Hadley for 20 pounds. One family account states that she left of her

own choice, and voluntarily re-entered slavery in order to marry a man who was a slave.

- Phillis, a young slave girl after whom the upstairs chest is named (maybe tell the story?) may have been Peg's daughter, and was owned by the Phelps family until her death at age 10.
- The Revolutionary War caused a severe labor shortage for Massachusetts farms, many of the young men having left Hadley and surrounding areas to fight. We have already heard of the indentured servant John Morrison, but he was not the only person to serve a labor sentence at 40 Acres
- Timothy Buggy, a "transient person" completed an 8 year sentence with Charles Phelps to learn the "art of mystery of husbandry" (Leonard, 54)
- Phelps also hired temporary farm labor from April to November. Labor helped with plowing in April, seeding in May, haying in June, harvest in July, gathering crops (except Indian corn) in August, harvesting in September and October, and winter preparations in November.
- Phelps also took in many young apprentices from Hadley and the surrounding towns. Mostly the boys (usually about 12 or 13 in age) would be bound to work for Phelps and learn the art of husbandry by their fathers.
- There were also a number of regular farmhands that worked for the Phelps and Huntington families. In one case, a man named Paul Wright began work as a 12 year old boy and continued to work at 40 acres under Frederic Dan Huntington. (Leonard, 57)
- The Phelpses did more than just give their indentured servants an education in husbandry; the young males were also "provided with 'reasonable meat, drink, washing, lodging, physician and nurse care in case of sickness,' and, at the time of their departure, provided 'with two decent suits of apparel proper for their station in life.'" (Carlisle, 65)

- The local Hadley farming community would also help out one another. For example, if farmer Phelps needed help with seeding, he would help farmer Hubbard with harvesting later in the season.
- “In 1773, three women arrived at 40 acres to do clothes work: spinning, weaving and tailoring”
- A Hessian soldier and his wife, (George and Mary Andries), came to live and work on 40 Acres after the revolution. Their integration into the family became clear after George died and Elizabeth and Mary come stay with her in the house.
- Elizabeth and Charles Phelps also cared intensely for both the health and “spiritual well-being” of those they employed as well as their slaves. When Phillis contracted King’s Disease (tuberculosis) Elizabeth had doctors from New York and Boston come out to 40 Acres to try to make her better. When a 12 year old boy named Simon Parcus came to 40 acres as an indentured servant, “Elizabeth prayed: ‘O may we do our Duty to him and will God bless him and us” (Carlisle 65).
- Elizabeth and Dan Huntington, the daughter and son in law of Elizabeth and Charles Phelps, had eleven children. This may explain the apparent drop in the hiring of farm labor, even after slavery had been abolished in Massachusetts. Their able bodied kids provided a good deal of labor on 40 acres
- Theodore and Theophilus helped out the most of any of the children, tending to the livestock and fieldwork.
- Dan Huntington hired as needed, by the task, in contrast to Charles Phelps who would take in indentured servants and hire seasonally. When his sons left for school, Huntington struggled to keep the farm running.
- Frederic Dan Huntington’s position as the Bishop of Upstate New York kept him away from 40 Acres most of the time, and 40 Acres became, primarily, a summer home for the family.

- Frederic Dan hired a series of farm managers to take care of agricultural matters at 40 Acres.
- It was during this generation that 40 Acres came to be known as “The Old Place.”
- George Putnam Huntington began to look after the farm jointly with Mr. Gilbert, who had been hired by Frederic Dan.
- After the deaths of Frederic Dan and Hannah, farm production, livestock and acreage decreased severely.
- Barrett Huntington acted as farm overseer, as the only one of the children of Frederic and Hannah who seemed interested in the “Old Place.”
- Barrett attempted to take part in the dairy boom currently occurring in the Connecticut River Valley, but by 1911 the farm was recording “dead losses.” He also stocked a newly built chicken coops with 60 chicks who died soon after their arrival at 40 acres.
- Barrett gave up the farm in 1918 and it sat vacant until Constant, James and Frederic “decided to rehabilitate the worn estate into a summer domicile for their mother Lilly.”
- The farm was turned into a dairy farm once more under the management of Frederic Dane.
- With the selling of the Great Barn in 1929 to the Pomeroy brothers, 40 Acres ended its time as a working farmstead.
- Throughout the 40’s, James Lincoln Huntington focused on preserving the family’s relics until, in 1949, James and five other met in the Long Room and elected officers of the Porter-Phelps-Huntington Foundation. It became a museum in 1950.



## Bibliography

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I also used the Cosolidated Tour Guide Manual by Jennifer Cadwell, with additions/revisions by Tracey Gilrein and Karen Warren (2003, 2004)