

ADDENDUM TO REPORTS TO THE TOWN OF WESTBOROUGH ON ITS TWO FORGOTTEN MILITIA COMPANIES

The Reports:

My **Report of April 2, 2021** described the historical records relating to the 101 men of Westborough who responded to the Lexington alarm of April 19, 1775, and proposed the erection of a new monument in Minuteman Park which would (a) correct the names and ranks of the minutemen who were honored by the Bicentennial Commission in 1975 and (b) state the names and ranks of the men in the Town's two forgotten militia companies who also served on that occasion.

My **Supplemental Report of May 31, 2021**, detailed the mistakes on the existing monument and provided a proposed Plan for a new monument setting out the names and ranks of all those who served, as set out in the muster rolls from which they were paid for their services.

The purpose of this Addendum is to resolve all issues respecting the spelling of the names of those who served and to provide a final list of names as derived from an official source.

Consideration of differences in the spelling of names:

As anyone who has reviewed documents from the era of the Revolutionary War can attest, there is a wonderful variation in the way people's names were then recorded. In my initial Report (at page 6) I noted that there were different spellings for a number of the Westborough men who responded to the April 19th alarm, creating a problem for those trying to compile an accurate list. Also, the fact that the muster rolls and related documents were handwritten poses an additional problem, particularly for those of us in the 21st century who no longer see much script.

I believe the solution to these problems is to adopt the spellings set out in the Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth's multi-volume publication entitled *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War*, referred to in my initial Report (at page 3), hereinafter referred to as *Soldiers and Sailors*. This indexed compilation of the information on muster rolls and other documents in the Massachusetts Archives was published during the period 1896-1908 pursuant to the 1891 direction of the General Court. The clerks in the Secretary's office had the advantage of looking at the original documents in the Archives (rather than the photocopies now available to us) and they no doubt were more familiar with script than we are today. These factors suggest that they probably recorded the names correctly. Also, this publication is essentially an official record on which I believe we are entitled to rely, making it an appropriate source for us to use in constructing a public memorial. Accordingly, I have conformed the spelling of all names to those recorded by *Soldiers and Sailors*.

The *Soldiers and Sailors* records:

While *Soldiers and Sailors* has been digitized and can be scanned by a computer, I have tried to make its information more readily accessible by downloading the entries for all of the men of Westborough who marched in response to the Lexington alarm into a single document, a copy of which is attached as Exhibit A. In doing so I have used the link for Ebooksread, <https://www.ebooksread.com/search.php?q=Massachusetts+soldiers+and+sailors+of+the+revolutionary+war>, and have chosen the PDF version of the text rather than the TXT version. Minor errors occurred in the downloading, principally in punctuation, which I have attempted to correct.

I have searched the digitized text of *Solders and Sailors* for every reference to “Westborough” and have found entries for every man on the three muster rolls, copies of which are attached as Exhibits A, B and C to my Report. In every case the publication shows the man’s name, rank, company and regiment, as, for example, “ADAMS, DANIEL, Westborough, Private, Capt. Edmund Brigham’s co., Maj. Gen. Ward’s regt.” and contains the statement “which marched on the alarm of April 19, 1775” together with the number of days of service. I do not believe that there can be any question that all of these 101 men of Westborough, and no others, responded to the Lexington alarm.

Please note that I have not attempted to download the full service records for the men but have focused on the entries in the publication recording a response to the Lexington alarm. Many of the men served on additional occasions and for extended periods.

The corrected Plan of Monument:

Guided by the spellings used in *Soldiers and Sailors*, I have made two minor revisions to the Plan of Monument, a copy of which is attached as Exhibit B. The first is to show the name as “Reuben Gashet” (4th from the bottom in the list of Captain Seth Morse’s militia company) rather than as “Reuben Gasket”, as shown on page 1 and in Exhibit E of my Report. The second is to show the name of “Benajah Brigham” (20th from the bottom of the list of Captain Morse’s company) rather than as “Benajar Brigham”, as shown on a prior version of the Plan. I believe that the names on the Plan now conform in all respects to the names used in *Soldiers and Sailors*.

Sincerely

David A. Nourse

December 29, 2021

Exhibit A: Downloaded Entries from *Soldiers and Sailors*

Exhibit B: Corrected Plan of Monument