

THE PELHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

and

KAREN GENOTER

**Director of Computer Services
for
The Pelham Historical Society**

Are pleased to present to you in CD-ROM format materials from the William Thomas Hayes Historical Collection. The Hayes Historical Collection is an eclectic collection of historical materials assembled over a lifetime by Mr. Hayes.

Attorney Hayes is a life long resident of the Town of Pelham. He was educated in the Pelham School system and graduated from Kimball Union Academy, Dartmouth College and the University of Virginia School of Law.

He co-authored “Reflections, A Pictorial History of Pelham” and has served the Pelham Historical Society as President and a Member of the Board of Directors for a number of years.

These materials made their way into the Hayes Collection because they all shed, in one way or another, information on the long and varied History of Pelham, New Hampshire.

The publication of the Hayes Collection materials in CD-ROM format is an ongoing project of the Pelham Historical Society. All proceeds from the sale of Hayes Collection CD-ROMs are used to support the Pelham Historical Society building, museum, library and programs.

Please visit the Pelham Historical Society online bookstore to learn what other materials are available for your reading and research pleasure.

VOLUME 11

Pelham Tax Maps

2006

During the preparation of “Reflections, A Pictorial History of Pelham”, the six co-authors Eleanor H. Burton, Philip R. Currier, Josephine L. Fletcher, William T. Hayes, Carrolyn M. Law and Joyce E. Mason determined that the Pelham Tax Maps would be used to identify the location of historical buildings, sites, cemeteries, public buildings, old homes etc.

The William Thomas Hayes Historical Collection utilizes the same protocol for identifying locations within the Town of Pelham.

Pelham’s first tax maps were prepared between 1973 and 1978 by the engineering firm of Davis, Benoit & Tessier, H. Tracy Davis, President. The work was supervised on behalf of the Town of Pelham by Planning Board Member William T. Hayes.

Many materials from the William Thomas Hayes Historical Collection were used in the preparation of the Tax Maps. These materials include old Grafton Power Company high-tension wire right of way maps, the Tennessee Gas Transmission Line right of way maps, New Hampshire Department of Transportation maps, old and new HCRD Plans and over 1,000 deeds retrieved from the Hillsborough County Registry of Deeds by Attorney Hayes.

Carrolyn M. Law, past President of the Pelham Historical Society, and co-author of “Reflections, A Pictorial History of Pelham”, worked full time for one year at the Town Hall to organize the tax map materials.

The first set of maps consisted of thirteen pages. Each parcel was assigned a two field hyphenated Page and Parcel number. Whenever a parcel was subsequently subdivided, a third field was created and a sequential number assigned to the newly created lot.

At a later date, in order to enlarge the mapping scale, the number of Tax Map Pages was increased from 13 to 42. However the original numbers were maintained for historical identification purposes.

Today, a typical parcel of land is assigned a four-field tax map number. The first field is the current page number (1-42), the second field is the original page number (1-13), and the third field is the original parcel number. The fourth field, except for parcels that have not been subdivided since the initial preparation of the tax maps, is the new subdivision lot number.

Historians interested in a particular parcel of land should begin by ascertaining its Tax Map Number on this CD-ROM. Armed with the tax map number, the researcher can log on to the Pelham Tax Assessor’s online database.
<http://data.visionappraisal.com/PelhamNH/>

From the Assessor’s data base the researcher can learn the parcel’s street address, current use, value and size. In most instances the researcher can also get a deed reference for the last conveyance recorded at the Hillsborough County Registry of Deeds.

By logging onto www.nhdeeds.com the researcher can begin a recent title search of the property. A lengthy historical title search would have to be completed at the following “period appropriate” Registry of Deeds.

Pelham grants and deeds were recorded at the following Registry of Deeds for the periods indicated:

1660-1741 Middlesex County Registry of Deeds, East Cambridge, Massachusetts. (large dog eared poorly maintained deed books located in lower vault)

1741-1824 Rockingham County Registry of Deeds, formerly located in Portsmouth and Exeter and now in Brentwood, New Hampshire. (Micro film copies are available at the New England Historic Genealogy Society at 101 Newbury Street, Boston, Massachusetts, and at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire).

While only the more recent Rockingham County Deeds are available on line, the entire index from 1643 to the present is on line, enabling you to

identify deeds of possible interest before traveling to a site where the actual deeds are available.

1824-Present Hillsborough County Registry of Deeds, Pearl Street, Nashua, New Hampshire. (lower level- books are in excellent condition. Copy equipment available)

The Town of Lowell, Massachusetts was not created until 1826 in an area formerly known as East Chelmsford, Massachusetts. It became a city in 1836. Subsequently Lowell annexed additional land on the east side of the Concord River from Tewksbury and the north side of the Merrimack River from the Town of Dracut. In the mid 1800's, the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds was split into Middlesex South, located in East Cambridge, Massachusetts and Middlesex North, located in Lowell, Massachusetts.

When Middlesex North Registry of Deeds was created, scribes were employed to copy all of the original East Cambridge deeds that related to the Middlesex North Communities. The Middlesex North Communities include, among others, Dracut, Tyngsboro (Nottingham) and Dunstable. Portions of Pelham were once parts of these three towns.

The earliest Pelham deeds (1660-1741) can, therefore, be found in Lowell. In fact the Lowell copies of the original East Cambridge Deeds are easier to read because of more recent penmanship, better ink, better paper and less use.

The early Middlesex North deeds are segregated into separate books by community, which has subjected them to less use, wear and tear. Photocopy equipment is available at the Middlesex North Registry of Deeds. (These books can be found in the back room of the lower level)

You need to know that from 1673 to 1731-2 the western one third of Pelham was part of Old Dunstable, Massachusetts and a part of Nottingham, Massachusetts from 1731-2 to 1741. The eastern two thirds of Pelham were part of Dracut, Massachusetts from 1701 until 1741.

Deeds provide more information than just property line descriptions. They provide the names of owners (often with titles and means of employment), names of prior or adjacent property owners, dates of ownership, acreage, property sales values, property uses etc.

Additional information (size, shape, location, topography, aerial photography) about any given Pelham parcel of land can be learned by logging on to the Nashua Regional Planning Commission, MicroSoftTerraServer, DigitalGlobe, MapQuest, Google Maps or USGS websites.

While this CD-ROM shows lot lines as of 2006, much historical information can still be learned. For example, parcels with the same three first field numbers were once part of the same farm. Smaller lots created by the subdivision process after 2006 can still be identified on the 2006 Tax Maps as part of the larger parcel from which they were created.

The original 1673 southwest to northeast line between Old Dunstable and Dracut from the end of Long Pond to near Beaver Brook can still be recreated from existing property lines. The 1673 Dunstable Dracut Northwest Line from near Beaver Brook to Londonderry can also be recreated.

The maps presented here are essential to a comprehensive understanding of Pelham's History.