

SIMSBURY

Genealogical and Historical Research Library

Volume 9 Issue 4

Winter 2002-03

The Terry Family Account Book Business Records That Cover Almost a Century

Two generations of men in the Terry family in Simsbury kept accounts in a single account book from 1739 to 1829. These men were members of the third and fourth generations of Terrys born in the New World. They were descended from Stephen Terry who emigrated from England to Dorchester, Massachusetts in 1630 and who moved to Windsor, Connecticut about 1636. Later he was one of the founders of Hadley, Massachusetts.

Stephen Terry's son John was the first Terry to settle in Simsbury. He was born March 6, 1637/8 in Windsor and was married in 1662 to Elizabeth Wadsworth, daughter of William Wadsworth, one of the founders of Hartford. A record quoted by Noah A. Phelps in his *History of Simsbury, Granby and Canton* (page 13) shows that someone named Terry was granted meadow land in 1667 in the area later called Terry's Plain. This area is west of the Talcott mountain ridge, east of the Farmington River, and north of East Weatogue. In 1677, the year after Simsbury was burned by the Indians, John Terry purchased the Aaron Cook grant (the first that was settled within the present bounds of the town) from John Parsons of Boston and John Terry is thought to have moved to Simsbury soon after.

John Terry was recognized by the General Court as one of the proprietors of Simsbury when the Court approved the town's 1685 patent, which confirmed the grant of territory made when the town was incorporated in 1670. John Terry's name appears in many early records having to do with the government of the town and of the Congregational Church. Along with Thomas Barber, John Moses and Ephraim Howard he built the town's first grist mill and saw mill, in 1679, on Hop Brook. In 1684 he became the first leader of the train band, or town militia, with the rank of Ensign; later he was advanced to Lieutenant when the increased size of the force warranted that rank. He held that position until his death in 1691.

John Terry and his wife had six daughters and five sons. The youngest of their sons, John Terry (1684-1725) was the father of John and Stephen Terry who first kept the account book studied for this article. While they were children, John, Stephen and their brother Solomon inherited multiple parcels of land from their father and his unmarried brother, Martin Terry.

Stephen Terry (1717-1773) bought the account book in 1739 for one pound, as he recorded inside both the front and the back covers. He was a twenty-two-year-old bachelor who apparently remained unmarried throughout his life. His brother John Terry (1715-1807) was twenty-four years old and that year he married. Perhaps it was the marriage that prompted the brothers to begin the book. John and his wife, Martha, who was the daughter of John and Elizabeth (Ellsworth) Gridley

of Farmington, eventually had six daughters and three sons. These sons later entered the business.

Stephen Terry never signed a "reckoning" with a customer, but it appears that he and his older brother John intermingled their business accounts, at least for a time. John's signature occasionally appeared in a reckoning during the first thirty-six years of the ninety-year business, but many of the reckonings were unsigned or signed only by the customer. A reckoning, or balancing of an account, was done to settle a deceased customer's estate or to periodically determine how much was due the Terrys or the customer.

For example, in Jonathan Buttolph's account the entry for January 20, 1745 says "then recovered with Jonathan Buttolph and ballanced accounts due to me." Neither of the parties signed. Undoubtedly, one of the Terry men got together with Buttolph, who probably displayed charges against the Terrys in his own account book, and they worked out a settlement that cleared all debts. Buttolph, who was a neighbor of theirs on Terry's Plain, settled with them twice more and continued to run up debts with the Terrys until 1753, about the time he moved to the Salmon Brook section of Simsbury (now Granby).

Also, some of the accounts in the book, especially the smaller accounts, are merely crossed off, indicating that the debt had been settled without stating what goods or services had been proffered as payment. It should be noted, too, that the account book does not record goods or services bartered for and traded (or paid for in cash) on the spot, so it does not reflect each of the Terry brothers' entire enterprise. Nor does it "take into account" the amount of work done in the John Terry household to produce most of the food, clothing and other basic needs of a large family.

The great majority of the entries in the Terry account book deal with agricultural goods and services, but John and Stephen Terry had two interesting sidelines. At least one man was a glazier and at least one was a weaver. The entries for window glazing appear in the years from 1742 to 1765. What is interesting about them is that the glazier used lead and solder. So, the type of windows he was glazing were either the casement windows with small, diamond-shaped panes that are associated with the oldest New England houses, or they were very early double-hung sash windows that still used very small panes and leading. Rural areas such as Simsbury tended to be slow to adopt innovations in architecture.

In his seminal work *The Domestic Architecture of Connecticut*, J. Francis Kelly says "The use of casement windows probably continued for some years after 1700, for double-hung sash were not employed before the first quarter of the eighteenth century, and it is doubtful if any extended use of them was made much before 1725." (89-90) He then says that a transitional, leaded double-hung window was found in an attic in Guilford, Connecticut. "The glass was stiffened or supported by the horizontal wooden stays to which the leading was wired at intervals." He adds that "like many features of our oldest houses, [leaded windows] were supplanted by replacements of more modern design." He may have the reason why the Terrys had no more glazing jobs after 1765.

The Terrys charged sixteen clients for replacing broken panes or installing new glass in windows. Charges for repair ranged from one shilling billed to Timothy Adams Sr. "To mend one lite [pane] of glase" to twelve shillings billed to John Humphrey "By mending glase."¹ "Setting

¹ The Terrys consistently spell the word glass with an "e," as it is also spelled in early records (See page six of Albert C. Bates' introduction to *Rev. Dudley Woodbridge: His Church Record at Simsbury in Conn., 1697-1710*). It may be that the pronunciation at that time was closer to "glaze" than it is today.

glase" ran up bigger bills. The largest was Stephen Pettibone's bill; he was charged £2 in December 1750 "by setting of glase for two windows." On the other hand, John Case was charged only ten shillings "By setting two lits of glase." Sometimes the charges mention the amount of material used. In December 1750 Charles Case had to pay fourteen shillings "By setting of five feet and eight inches of glase." The year before Andrew Robe had to pay eighteen shillings, six pence for "setting of glase & soder." John Humphrey was charged ten shillings for "setting of glase and finding lead," suggesting that sometimes the client supplied the lead strips, called calmes, that held the glass panes together.

Their work was not done just on houses. In 1748 they charged Benoni Buttolph twelve shillings "By glase for shop" and two years later Dudley Case was billed eleven shillings "By setting glase for shop." The other men who paid the Terrys for replacing or installing glass panes were Daniel Adams, Peter Buel, Jonathan Buttolph, Jonathan Case Sr., Joseph Fowler, Thomas Marvin, John Owen and Haynes Woodbridge. Over the twenty-three-year period ending in 1765 the Terrys set down charges of about £17 for their glazing work.

Entries for weaving began in 1744, with that year being the most fruitful. They earned more than £8 for weaving that year. John Gridley, John Terry's father-in-law who had moved from Farmington to Simsbury, was their first customer. He had them weave twenty-three and a half yards of "plain cloth" at ten pence a yard, and eighteen yards of "lining cloth," meaning "linen." Joseph Hoskins had them weave nine and a half yards of linen and other cloth and fourteen yards of tow cloth, a coarse linen. They also charged him two shillings, six pence for "making cords for loome." Joseph Segar's account has a £1-11-00 charge for weaving fifteen and a half yards of cotton, the only mention of cotton in the book. He also had them weave twenty-three and half yards of linen cloth. Elias Slater ordered twelve and a quarter yards of woolen shirting at twenty pence per yard. Noadiah Phelps also ordered eight and a quarter yards of shirting of an unspecified kind.

The total recorded yardage that year was one hundred forty-five and a half yards. In her book *Handwoven Textiles of Early New England: The Legacy of a Rural People 1640-1880*, Nancy Dick Bogdonoff states that "an experienced weaver could weave five or six yards of cloth per day once the loom was warped." (45) So, this amount of cloth represents about twenty-four days of steady weaving. Bogdonoff goes on to say that a "public weaver" was a welcome addition to a rural community because he lifted some of the responsibility of this task from the shoulders of the colonial housewives. His clients often brought him their own homespun yarns to use, she says. (49)

The Terrys must have provided at least some of their own yarn for the cloth they produced that year because they credited Joseph Hoskins for the preparation of fibers and yarn, some of which was done by his fourteen-year-old daughter Sara Hoskins. The credit begins with "a days work of Sara puling flax" and includes the spinning of tow yarn and linen yarn, and the coloring of yarn. For these services and for processing some completed cloth by "whiting of nine yards & a half," Hoskins earned credit of more than £2. The Terrys also credited Elias Slater for spinning tow and linen yarns and Joseph Segar for "spinning and carding of nine runs of wollen yarn." The carding and spinning was probably done by the women in the Slater and Segar households. Other men bought flax by the pound, probably unspun flax fibers, from the Terrys. That year Joseph Fowler bought a pound and a half for three shillings. In October John Case Sr. bought thirteen shillings worth of flax seed.

Flax was an important crop in New England during this period when so much of the household and personal linen actually was made of linen. Many historians remark that fields of flax must have been a pretty sight when it blossomed, an acre or so of tall stalks topped by blue flowers. Benoni Buttolph grew it; he paid the Terrys £2 for "flax ground and plowing and sowing the same." Reuben Slater bought six pounds of seed in 1775. The last recorded sale of flax seed was one peck of it bought by Daniel Humphrey in May 1799. However, the Terrys charged Levi Tuller in 1804 for "turning and carting your flax" and in 1808 for "work flax two days."

The account book shows charges to Elisha Harrington for "carting flax," for "thrashing and fanning flax seed" and for "rotting your flax." Fanning blew the chaff away from the seed, and the Terrys probably had a fanning mill for this purpose. (The 1846 inventory of John's son Timothy's estate lists a fanning mill.) Rotting, usually called retting, involved soaking the flax stalks in water to soften the gum and loosen the fiber from the woody portions.

The long, inner fibers of the stalk made the finest linen, shorter fibers made tow cloth, which might be made into bags or towels, and the very coarsest fibers were used for things like bed cord. There were two charges in the account book for bed cord, in Joseph Fowler's account and Benoni Buttolph's. The latter owed the brothers ten shillings for "help to make a bed cord."

After the initial burst of weaving in 1745, the account book records weaving in many years until 1778, but never to the extent of the first year, even though their repertoire expanded to include plaid and check. John Gridley remained a good customer. They dyed, fulled and pressed some cloth for him. Their other customers included their brother Solomon Terry, Samuel Smith, Widow Mary Eno, Reuben Eno, John Saxon, Michael Humphrey, Jonathan Buttolph, Joshua Moses, Elisha Francis, Richard Adams and Oliver Case. In 1750 they gave John Fowler, their mother Mary (Roby) Terry's second husband, credit for "weaving ten yards and half in my house of cloth," so he must have been a weaver, too. He also received credit for one week of spinning and "By Hannah giving a fortnight to spin." Hannah was the Fowlers' eighteen-year-old daughter and the Terrys' half sister. Stephen Pettibone also received credit for spinning, as did Widow Mary Eno.¹

Although the Terrys wove plenty of woolen cloth, the account book makes few references to sheep, shearing or buying or selling wool. There is an undated entry that says "Received seven pounds and three oz sheep wool £8-10-0." Another dated June 1, 1799 is a contract written by Campbell Humphrey that says that he took from Timothy Terry nine sheep, weighing 528 pounds "for which I am to give one half pound of wool for a year a head." Timothy Terry was John Terry's son, who eventually became the sole keeper of the account book.

The account book mentions mills dozens of times, but does not often specify which mill. For instance, many entries charge men for "my horse to mill" and one charges "for my oxen to mill." As stated earlier, the first John Terry in Simsbury helped to establish a grist mill and saw mill. Josiah Higley is given credit in November 1776 "By 10 days and a half work at the saw mill." Whether this indicates that the Terrys were still associated with that business is uncertain.

This generation of Terrys had apple trees and a cider mill. They sold apples by the bushel, cider by the barrel and the gallon, and vinegar by the barrel, gallon and quart. The Connecticut Code of Laws of 1650 stipulated that a barrel was to contain twenty-eight gallons. Judging by the General Court's rulings against selling cider to the Indians, most of the cider drunk was fermented.

¹ Widow Mary Eno is probably the great grandmother of Amos Richards Eno. He donated the Simsbury Free Library building.

SGHRL Marks Its Fifteenth Anniversary

Long before the Directors of the Simsbury Public Library moved their staff and collections from the Simsbury Free Library building in 1985, the Trustees of the Simsbury Free Library had begun assessing what manner of library services they could install in the building. Under the terms of the trust established by Amos R. Eno, the building he built and endowed in 1890 must be used for library purposes. Many proposals were made and explored, but the one that gained the most support was a proposal for establishing a research library to serve the Farmington Valley as a genealogy and history center.

The public library cooperated by leaving behind its genealogy collection, much of which had been purchased with funds from the Eno trust, and Simsbury resident Dee Dupuis offered to add her genealogy collection and serve as the volunteer Executive Director. Not waiting for the refurbishing of the main floor to be completed, Mrs. Dupuis and the trustees moved their collections into the former Children's Room in the basement, which had been given a fresh coat of paint by the Codgers and a new carpet installed. The Simsbury Genealogical and Historical Research Library officially opened on March 6, 1988. In 1993 Mrs. Dupuis resigned and the trustees hired Stephen E. Simon, M.L.S. This year Mr. Simon will have been the Librarian of SGHRL for ten years.

To refurbish the empty first floor, Chairman Margaret Donohue appointed trustee Richard Wagner to head the Building Restoration Committee. The other trustees on the board as this project began were Vice-Chairman Amy Reid, Secretary Arnold Storrs, Treasurer Thornton Morris, Mary Jane Guerry, Paul McAlenney, Emanuel Psarakis, Robert Senger and Theona Tuller.

Look for articles in the next several issues on the improvements to the building and the library and the many friends who have helped.

One of the earliest entries in the account book is a credit given to Jonathan Buttolph "By your girls to pick up apples for one barrel & half of cider." One of the last entries is a charge to Dudley Humprey, "To my horse part of two days to grind apples." This would indicate that the mill used to grind the apples was the type that was powered by a horse walking in a circle.

Yearly sales of cider varied from none at all in many years to twenty-four and a half barrels in 1804. Prices fluctuated quite a bit, too, with a barrel costing one or two pounds. Matthew Adams earned credit by selling the Terrys six barrels of cider for £11. Over a period of nine years Austin Phelps purchased twenty-nine and a half barrels (and a half-bushel of pears), but his reckoning in 1827 showed that Timothy Terry still owed him another full barrel. The Terrys also made money carting barrels of cider, with several references to carrying it "over the mountain" and one to carrying some "to the landing," indicating that it was to be transported via the Farmington River.

By Mary Jane Springman

The Terry Family Account Book is preserved in The Simsbury Historical Society archives and it will be the subject of future articles.

The author would like to thank Ruth Cost Duncan, who gave countless hours of her time to the very challenging job of transcribing the accounts, which are extremely difficult to read. She also researched genealogical, land and probate records for many of the colonial people. She is well known as the compiler of William Bunnell and his Descendants (1986) and John Case and his Descendants (1991).

Mrs. Springman also called on Ann Arcari of the Farmington Library for information about the Gridley family.

Some Recent Acquisitions

- 1920 Avon, Hartford County, Connecticut, Population Census* by James H. Holcombe Jr. (donated by the author)
- The Barbour Collection of Connecticut Town Vital Records: Huntington 1789-1850, Kent 1739-1852, Killingly 1708-1850* (donated by the Abigail Phelps Chapter, DAR)
- Beneath These Stones: More Granby, Connecticut Cemeteries, Fourteen Granby Cemeteries, Two East Granby Cemeteries, Granby Vital Records, Private Journals* by Carol Laun (donated by the author)
- The Conservation Diaries of Gifford Pinchot* edited by Harold K. Steen (donated by Grey Towers National Historic Landmark)
- Descendants and Ancestors of Consider Wood and his Wife Mary Adams of Middleborough, Massachusetts; Pomfret, Connecticut; Dutchess County, New York; Bradford County, Pennsylvania* compiled and written by Norris Philip Wood (donated by the author)
- The Edmonds Families of Connecticut: Their Resting Place and Other Statistics, 1754-1933* by Jay Robbins (donated by the author)
- The Flower Family: A History of the Branch of the Flower Family Who Did Not Migrate West But Chose to Stay in Connecticut, 1684-1996* by Marcia Flower MacCullagh (donated by Jay Robbins)
- Gifford Pinchot and the Making of Modern Environmentalism* by Char Miller (donated by the author)
- Gravestone Chronicles II: More Eighteenth-Century New England Carvers and an Exploration of Gravestone Heraldica* by Theodore Chase and Laurel K. Gabel (donated by Nancy Poole)
- Hartland, CT Cemetery Records* compiled by Carol Laun (donated by the compiler)
- The History of the Old Town of Derby, Connecticut, 1642-1880 with Biographies and Genealogies* by Samuel Orcutt (donated by the Abigail Phelps Chapter, DAR)
- Obituary Extractions from the "Aroostook Republican" for the year 1990* extracted and compiled by Linda J. Zapatka (donated by the compiler)
- The Ohio Society, Sons of the American Revolution: Centennial Register, 1889 to 1989* published by the Ohio Society, SAR (donated by Nancy Poole)
- The Public Records of the State of Connecticut, Volume XVII: From May 1814 Through October 1815* (donated by Celia A. Roberts)

SGHRL UPDATES

Beneath These Stones: More Granby Connecticut Cemeteries, a new book by Carol Laun, is now for sale at SGHRL. It was published by the Salmon Brook Historical Society and costs \$25.00.

SGHRL has a new e-mail address: genhist93@hotmail.com

Heritage Quest is no longer lending microfilm. We are now renting census films from the National Archives. Films are available at \$3.50 each for a one-month rental. Ask our librarian Stephen Simon.

Come to the talk **Saturday, May 31, 2003, 11 A.M.** to hear a representative from the Connecticut State Library in Hartford speak about the many resources at that library for researching family history. As always, our Spring Talk is free and open to the public.

SIMSBURY MARRIAGES

Date	Name	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Sept 3, 1870	William Coeyman	26	Mechanic	New York
	Martha Hughes	21		Ireland
Oct. 29, 1870	Charles B. Wood	48	Manufacturer	Danbury, Ct.
	Nettie Eno	28		New York
April 7, 1870	Bruce E. Stannard	30	Farmer	West Brook, Ct.
	Emma Randal	36		England
Nov. 19, 1870	Dennis Kelley	27	Farmer	Ireland
	Julia O'Meara	26		Ireland
Dec. 1(?), 1870	Gavett B. Holcomb	25	Farmer	Granby
	Ellen M. Humphrey	22		Simsbury
Nov. 3, 1870	Chauncey H. Eno	21	Farmer	Simsbury
	Mattie S. Goodrich	20		Simsbury
Dec. 27, 1870	George G. Walker	22	Merchant	Rhode Island
	Mattie A. Sherwood	24		New York
Dec. 28, 1870	Watson Woodford	23	Mechanic	Avon
	Belle Sidelle	19		Simsbury
Jan. 15, 1871	John McMahon	33	Blacksmith	Ireland
	Barbary Garrity	27		Ireland
Mar. 24, 1871	Charles E. Edwards	21	Farmer	Pennsylvania
	Julia Wilcox	21		Simsbury
June 7, 1871	J. Clarence Gains	26	Machinist	West Hartford
	Kate Carter	21		Simsbury
May 16, 1871	Patrick McCarty	24	Mechanic	Ireland
	Margaret Burns	23		Ireland
Apr. 19, 1871	Charles T. Croft	26	M. E. Clergyman	New York State
	Julia M. Mather	38		Simsbury
June 13, 1871	Charles Webster	27	Farmer	England
	Agnes Beckwith	30		Simsbury
Feb. 6, 1871	James Stewart Watts	51	Sailor	Scotland
	Margaret Morris	41		Ireland
Oct. 24, 1871	Charles A. Keyes	23	Wood turner	Fair Haven
	Sarah J. Siddell	22		Simsbury

This continuing series on Simsbury's early marriage records has been copied by Stephen E. Simon from microfilmed records at the Connecticut State Library.

GENEALOGY TALK: CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY

A representative from the History and Genealogy Unit at the Connecticut State Library in Hartford will speak about the many resources at that library and archives for everyone researching family history.

Saturday, May 31, 2003

11 A.M.

At the Library

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

This is a change from the previously announced date.



SIMSBURY FREE LIBRARY

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860 658-5382

E-mail: genhist93@hotmail.com

Open Thurs.-Sat. 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Stephen E. Simon, Librarian & Genealogist

Mary Jane Springman, Editor

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