

SIMSBURY

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A Hartford Blacksmith Moves to Simsbury

Isaac Ensign (1747-1816), Grandfather of Ralph Hart Ensign

In 1770 a committee appointed by the Proprietors and Town of Simsbury laid out a lot "for the Use and Improvement of a blacksmith." The "Blacksmith's Lot" was bounded "East on the Highway [now Hopmeadow Street] North on the land of Jacob Pettibone South on a passway to be Left thirty feet wide Between Said Land and the Burying Yard [now Simsbury Cemetery] West at the foot of the Hill." The committee, made up of Hezekiah Humphrey, John Case and John Owen, then released the land to Isaac Ensign, a blacksmith from Hartford. (Simsbury Town Records, Book 11, p. 306.)

The twenty-three-year-old blacksmith was the son of Moses Ensign and Love Andrews Ensign. His father had died in 1751, leaving three-year-old Isaac and two older brothers in the care of their mother. About seven years later she married Capt. Benjamin Kent of Suffield.

As the town record reveals, in 1770 the blacksmith set up his shop on a lot adjoining the property of Capt. Jacob Pettibone and his wife Jemima Pettibone (*nee* Cornish and widow of Jonathan Barber). The oldest of this couple's four children was their twenty-year-old daughter Lurannah. A little more than a year later, on December 29, 1771, Isaac Ensign married Lurannah Pettibone and eventually they had ten children. Their youngest was Moses Ensign, who married Martha Tuller Whiting, with whom he had seven children. Their youngest was Ralph Hart Ensign, who brought the name Ensign to Simsbury's Toy, Bickford & Company, the forerunner of Ensign-Bickford Industries, Inc.

Eight of blacksmith Isaac Ensign's daybooks and two of his account books are preserved in the Connecticut State Archives in Hartford. The first daybook, which is the only book extensively studied for this article, begins with a delivery of charcoal from Thomas Phelps Jr. in September 1770. Ensign's first customers, on Thursday September 6, were John Slater Jr. and Ensign's neighbor and future father-in-law Jacob Pettibone. "Dr. to sharpening plow irons," the blacksmith recorded twice, and charged them each a shilling.

As would be expected, a great deal of his business during the seven months recorded in this daybook involved the manufacture and repair of agricultural implements. He also did a quite a bit of business dealing with items used in mills, both gristmills and sawmills, and some having to do with household tools and accouterments. Last, but not least, he shod horses.

Maskel Bacon brought his horse to be shod on September 8, along with three and a quarter pounds of old iron to sell to the blacksmith. Ensign charged him two shillings for the work on the horse and credited him with five pence for the iron. Next, the Congregational minister, Rev.

Mr. Benajah Roots, brought his horse, for which Ensign charged three shilling, two pence.

He recorded in his daybook "shewing a hors" for forty-nine patrons. Twenty-two of these brought him just one horse during the seven months while others bought as many as ten (see box). He did not record how many shoes he fitted on each horse. The usual charge was two shillings and a few pence, but in one instance it was as high as nine shillings and in another it was as low as five pence. There were some days when no customers came to the shop and a few like Monday, February 4, 1771, when five showed up with horses to be shod.

Other entries related to horses show that Ensign made one curry comb, two staples for a saddle and pairs of stirrup irons and roweling irons, and that he mended bridle bits, saddle irons and fetters. John Owen, Esq., who by 1770 held the offices of Town Clerk, Justice of the Peace and Judge of Probate, owned a chair (or gig), a light, two-wheeled, open carriage drawn by one horse. In Owens's account on September 8 Ensign recorded the entries "making a Spring for the Chear £0-9-6" and "making [an] axeltre £0-18-0."

The only other wheeled vehicles mentioned are carts, which in those days were usually drawn by oxen. The patrons who needed work on carts were Amaziah Barber, Capt. Charles Case, John Owen, Jacob Pettibone, Elisha Phelps and John Slater. Ensign made Barber "a set of Cart Bands" weighing thirteen and a quarter pounds at one shilling per pound. Typically, Ensign indicated the weight of the iron he used to make large items. Smaller things, like grips, he usually sold by the piece. Two grips for his cart wheel cost John Owen one shilling, six pence apiece, for a total of three shillings. Capt. Charles Case paid four pence for having twelve cart tire nails headed and Jacob Pettibone paid eight pence for two rivets for a cart wheel.

Elisha Phelps paid expenses for an "ash box" for Daniel Moses and a cart. The ash boxcart needed a linch pin and twelve grips. The other cart needed one large staple, a grip for the cart wheel and four dogs for the "cart ladders." Ladders (not the climbing variety) were placed horizontally around the open sides of a cart to hold the load. Dogs were iron devices of many sizes that roughly resembled two spikes with a bar between them. They were used to fasten one

Horses Shod

Isaac Ensign shod horses for these patrons between September 8, 1770 and April 15, 1771. The number in parentheses indicates how many entries the patron's account had for horse shoeing. The greater the number, the greater the probability that the patron was breeding horses for sale.

Daniel Adams (7)	Daniel Hoskins (1)
Roderick Adams (2)	David Hoskins (1)
Samuel Adams (1)	Hezekiah Humphrey, Esq. (2)
Shubel Adams (1)	Joseph Humphrey (2)
Timothy Adams (3)	Joshua Lewis (1)
Timothy Adams Jr. (9)	Abel Loomis (1)
Maskel Bacon (4)	Daniel Moses (2)
Thomas Bacon (2)	Jonathan Noble (1)
Daniel Barber (1)	Abel Pettibone (6)
Elisha Barber (3)	Jacob Pettibone (1)
Thomas Barber Jr. (3)	Widow Abigail Phelps (1)
Thomas Barber 3rd (3)	David Phelps (1)
Benjamin Bodwell (2)	Elisha Phelps (10)
Amasa Case (3)	Noah Phelps (2)
Capt. Charles Case (1)	Thomas Phelps Jr. (2)
Jacob Case (2)	Capt. Abraham Pinney (2)
Job Case (1)	Rev. Mr. Benajah Roots (4)
Capt. John Case (9)	John Slater (4)
Martin Case (3)	John Slater Jr. (2)
Micah Case (1)	Seth Smith of Suffield (1)
John Chick (1)	John Terry (4)
Jonathan Edgerton (1)	Solomon Terry (3)
Elisha Francis (1)	Samuel Tuller (1)
Brewster Higley Jr. (1)	Timothy Woodbridge (1)
Joseph Higley (1)	

thing (usually a log or piece of wood) to another to hold it temporarily in place.

Ensign's daybook mentions two types of vehicles that ran on runners: sleighs and sleds. John Terry had Ensign alter and attach "old Shews," or strips of metal, beneath his sleigh runners. Mr. Roots purchased two iron plates for his sled. Jacob Pettibone needed a band for his sled neap. "Neap" is a dialectical term for the tongue or pole of a vehicle drawn by two animals. He also had Ensign make a "clavis and pin," a clevis being an iron bar bent to form a U with the two ends perforated to receive a pin. A clevis was placed on the end of the tongue of a vehicle or plow for the purpose of attaching a crossbar to which the traces of two animals' harnesses could be attached.

It is interesting that Ensign was never called upon to shoe an ox. He did, however, make plenty of iron parts for wooden yokes. Five times he recorded making "a kee for a yoak," a "key" being a device that holds two things together; in this case, it held the shoulder piece to the bow, which fits under the animal's neck. He also mended the rings and staples that go on yokes. Seth Case had a ring and staple made, which required four and a half pounds of iron at one shilling per pound. Thomas Phelps Jr. was the only patron who ordered hog rings; he got four for two pence.

Since the economy of the town rested on agriculture, it is not surprising that Ensign made and repaired many types of agricultural tools. He sharpened plow irons for Daniel Adams, Jacob Pettibone and John Slater Jr.; he sharpened and altered plow irons for Rev. Mr. Roots; and sharpened and mended plow irons for Thomas Barber Jr. Several men bought iron plates and nails for their plows. Joseph Humphrey was charged for a land side and nails, a land side being the flat side of a plow which is away from the furrow and which presses against the unplowed land. Ensign charged Capt. John Case, Jacob Davis Jr., Joseph Humphrey and John Terry each for repairing a coulter. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* a coulter is "the iron blade fixed in front of the share in a plough; it makes a vertical cut in the soil, which is then sliced horizontally by the share."

Ensign also worked on drag teeth (harrows), shears, shovels, hoes scythes forks and knives. Two men each brought in a "Brush hoe" and one a "Brush syth." He mended five dung forks, two hay forks and a flesh fork. He mended two hay knives and made two butcher knives and a "Craked knife," probably a crooked knife, so called because the handle was offset from the blade. He also made and repaired the iron rings that reinforced the heads of beetles, the large wooden mallets used to drive wedges, tamp earth, and so forth.

All the accounts in the daybook are for individuals but one. The exception is an account for a sawmill and it states that the partners in this mill are Amaziah Barber, Daniel Bevin, Solomon Buel, Jacob Tuller and Elisha Willcocks. Whether or not the mill was the one on Hop Brook that was the first in town when it was established in 1689 is uncertain. A 1792 Connecticut map in the Connecticut Historical Society archives shows five sawmills and six gristmills within the limits of Simsbury at that time, after the separation of Granby but before Canton became independent.

The entries of several men not listed among the partners show charges for goods and services related to sawmills and gristmills. These are Daniel Adams, Jonathan Edgerton, Maskel Bacon, Elisha Barber, Benjamin Bodwell, Israel Foster and, particularly, Thomas

Phelps Jr. The Phelps genealogy states that "for a time he owned one-half the saw and grist mill in Hop Meadow" (p. 1354) and that he was the father of Anson Greene Phelps, founder of the Phelps-Dodge Company. Thomas Phelps Jr.'s account includes many entries for services for a sawmill and also for sharpening mill picks, which were the implements used to dress the grindstones used in gristmills.

The sawmill generated a great deal of business for the blacksmith. Ensign made and repaired dogs, keys and bands; he even cut a saw and made the keyhole. The entry in Solomon Buel's account for "105 Hatchet teeth" probably applies to the sawmill. Also, for Maskel Bacon he mended a "coam for a Rag Wheel." A rag-wheel has projections which catch into the links of a chain passing over it.

Twenty-eight men came to the blacksmith for chains and their repair; many of these chains were probably being used in logging operations during the fall and winter months. The crops had been harvested by then and snow cover made it much easier to "twitch" logs out of the woods and bring them to the sawmill. Timothy Humphrey had the blacksmith make him a fourteen-pound draft chain and Jacob Pettibone paid for a draft chain weighing fifteen and a half pounds; both cost a shilling a pound. He charged John Burlet of Hartford the higher rate of one shilling, three pence for a pair of horse chains weighing nine and three quarter pounds.

Sometimes Ensign had to mend a chain by creating a new link, but more often he had to shut links that had pulled open. His entry for Thomas Barber 3rd was typical, "to mending a chane with one Link shet £0-0-2. (Ensign used the dialectical variations "shet" and "sheting" throughout his daybooks.) Draft chains had hooks on their ends and Ensign made and mended those. He charged David Phelps £0-0-9 for "mending a hook for a chane." He also made a swivel for a chain.

The primary tool for dealing with wood was, of course, the axe. Colonial woodsmen used their axes for felling trees, trimming and chopping logs, and squaring beams, among other things. Ensign sold a broadaxe to Daniel Adams for twelve shillings, and a smaller axe to Alexander Ross for six shilling. It is unclear from his notations whether the blacksmith made the axes himself or sold imported ones.

The blacksmith did a brisk business tending to the axes that customers already had. Five men paid him for "upsetting an ax" and they were charged from eight pence to one shilling, six pence. A smith upset a tool by pounding the red hot end of it to thicken or bulge the iron. According to Aldren A. Watson in *The Village Blacksmith* (p. 42), "A worn-out axehead could be repaired by first upsetting, or pushing back, the iron along the cutting edge. With this extra iron the smith could reshape it." Other items that Ensign upset included an auger and the cock pin of a gun.

There were also nine entries for "laying" an axe. This involved re-steeling the cutting edge of an iron axe. In two instances Ensign records "new laying," which hints that he may have been modifying an iron axe for the first time. Kathryn McNerney writes in *Antique Tools: Our American Heritage* (p. 21), "In the 18th century with American practicality craftsmen devised a steel band about 1 ½ inch wide forged onto the cutting base of the broadaxe for more strength and endurance." Ensign supplied the steel he used, except on the axes Jacob Pettibone and Elisha Francis brought him. In their accounts Ensign noted "he found steel." The blacksmith

A Young Daughter Overlooked

The genealogy of the Ensign family lists the children of blacksmith Isaac Ensign and Lurannah (Pettibone) Ensign as eight sons (Isaac, Isaiah, Ariel, Zebe, Zopher, Bildad, Eri, Moses) and one daughter (Lurannah). Isaiah, Ariel, Zebe and Zopher eventually moved westward into New York State, but the rest remained in town and are buried, as are their parents, in Simsbury Cemetery.

Another daughter, who is not mentioned in the genealogy, rests there, too. Love Ensign died on August 25, 1794 at the age of eleven years and two months, just ten months after her paternal grandmother, the widow Love Andrews Ensign Kent. Their similar red sandstone tombstones stand side by side in Section B, Row 18.



Photo by Joyce A. Cahill

charged between three shillings and four shillings for laying an ax, except for Elisha Phelps's "meet ax" for which he charged six. Other items that he laid included a staple, a hook and two coulter. Also, axes sometimes needed their eyes mended or shut.

Logging and sawmill operations required numerous dogs and their repair. To make a dog Ensign charged eight pence per pound of iron. Micah Case, Timothy Woodbridge, Amaziah Barber and Noah Phelps each ordered "a dog to draw logs." Their dogs weighed between two and three pounds. Thomas Phelps Jr. supplied the iron for a five-pound dog for the sawmill, so he was charged only six pence per pound. Some dogs were called by specific names, such as, "bale dog," "canting dog" and "bench dog."

Iron wedges were indispensable for felling trees and splitting logs. The ones Ensign made weighed about three pounds. Thomas Phelps Jr. ordered four wedges for the mill and had a wedging chisel mended. Israel Foster also had a wedging chisel mended for the mill.

The daybook entries for Elihu Hall seem to indicate that he was a joiner, the craftsman who

fashioned paneling and decorative wood work for a building and who made furniture. Hall paid Ensign for a broad hatchet, a turning chisel, a set of lathe irons, a shave, a gouge, a plane iron and a pair of snipe bills. The latter were tools used for making wooden moldings. Abel Strickland and Capt. John Case also bought pairs of snipe bills. Case bought a shave and "2 chissels for a Jynor." Several men bought shaves, augers, adzes, awls and a square.

Entries in the daybook indicate other crafts and occupations. Seth Barber and Solomon Buel each paid Ensign for making a shoe knife. Widow Elizabeth Woodbridge paid him for a crank for a small wheel and Joseph Humphrey, Jonathan Case and Jacob Davis paid him for spindles for small wheels, which were used for spinning flax. Jacob Davis and Henry Grimes paid him for making spindles for great wheels, which were used for spinning wool. William Case ordered a pair of "Temple Irons," probably the devices that were used to keep the cloth in a loom stretched to the correct width during weaving.

Several men's accounts include tools for working with stone, which was hand dressed with a pointed hammer or pick. Three men had him make stone hammers (weighing between two and three and a quarter pounds) and several other men had him mend, sharpen or steel their stone hammers. He also made or sharpened steel gads, pointed tools associated with breaking up stone, and he sharpened one "ston sleg." The men whose accounts showed these tools were Elisha Barber, Thomas Barber 3rd, Jonathan Edgerton, Jacob Pettibone, Elisha Phelps, Alexander Ross and John Slater. Then, of course, Ensign fashioned tools that had any number of uses like hammers, gouges, a punch and a pair of pliers.

Blacksmith Ensign must have spent many an hour manufacturing brads, spikes and nails. In seven months he sold 4,577 brads by count and forty-eight pounds of them by weight. John Slater Jr. ran up a bill of £1-4-6 for brads. Elisha Phelps bought £1-4-0 worth. A pound of regular sized brads (about fifty) cost a shilling. Capt. Charles Case paid two shillings, twelve pence for 100 large brads, Jacob Pettibone paid eight pence for fifty small brads and John Owen paid nine pence for six long ones. Twenty-four customers bought varying amounts of brads.

Small spikes sold for the same price as regular-size brads, a shilling a pound, but there was less demand for them. Elisha Willcocks and Jacob Case each bought seven pounds and five other men and the sawmill partnership bought smaller amounts. John Owen purchased two spikes of undisclosed size "for the Syder mill." (John Terry also came to Ensign for a part for a cider mill, "a gripe for the Syder mill skrew.")

Nine men's accounts have entries for nails of various sorts. Moses Cook and Alpheus Brown both bought truss hoop nails. Truss hoops were the temporary hoops that coopers used to hold barrel staves in place before attaching permanent hoops. (Also, Alpheus Brown purchased a compass and a plane iron. He was from the section of Simsbury that is now northern Bloomfield. The Brown family had several coopers and, eventually, drum makers.)

Charles Case paid to have twelve nails headed and Jacob Davis had the blacksmith nail two plates to his plow. Only Richard Adams and Joseph Grimes bought nails in large quantities. Adams bought one and a half pounds, while Grimes bought five hundred of them.

The patrons who bought large quantities of brads, spikes and nails were probably constructing buildings: houses, barns, stables, sheds, shops and so forth. The daybook

mentions a number of other items that hint at construction. Ensign sold pairs of hooks and hinges to Jacob Pettibone, Thomas Phelps Jr., Capt. John Case, Joel Case, William Case, Joseph Grimes and John Hoskins Jr. These hooks and hinges weighed between three pounds and seven and a half pounds.

For doors he provided accouterments that he called "tacling." One set of tacing went to William Case, two sets to Daniel Humphrey and four sets to Joseph Grimes, along with "a pare of Joynts for Door." John Terry bought a bolt for his door and Elisha Phelps provided the iron for a bar for a cellar door. Phelps also bought 213 bricks from Ensign

Amasa Case was evidently having a well dug because he was charged for two grips for a well curb and sharpening a crowbar "by order of John Drommond, well digger." Jacob Pettibone had Ensign mend "the iron for well" and make a chain for a bucket.

In the course of the seven months Ensign made or repaired quite a few household items. His biggest order was from Capt. John Case who, on January 17, 1771, purchased a pair of andirons weighing twenty-one pounds, two trammels weighing ten and three-quarters pounds, a pair of tongs and a slice. He also had Ensign make new ears and rivet two hoops for a bucket. The bill that day came to £2-5-9. Later that month, Case came back with a pail that needed a bale (curved handle). He came again for bales for two kettles and a pot, a lid for a tea kettle, and to have a pair of andirons mended.

Martin Case, Jacob Pettibone and Maskel Bacon also bought andirons. Elisha Phelps had the blacksmith mend a trammel, William Case needed a bale for a pot and Daniel Moses and David Hoskins needed bales for iron kettles. John Slater had him rivet a handle onto his brass ladle and Jacob Pettibone had him attach a handle to a skimmer.

The daybook shows that customers sometimes came to the blacksmith for personal items as well as tools. In the winter Solomon Terry had him make a pair of "skate irons," and Roderick Adams had him make two pairs. Mr. Roots had him mend a case knife and make a tobacco knife. And several men had him repair their guns. For example, Richard Andrus paid him for "mending a gun Lock with 2 new skrew pins and 1 spring" and John Owen paid him for "harding the hammer of a gun and cleaning."

When patrons having the same surname are listed in the daybook on the same day, one usually finds that they are relatives. For instance, on January 11, 1771, Capt. John Case was there and also Capt. Charles, Micah and Jacob Case. On subsequent days Capt. John Case's name appears with Joel, Job and Martin Case's names. Amasa Case's name appears on days with Martin, Jonathan Jr., William and Micah Case's names. On February 25 William and Micah were there. A look in the Case genealogy reveals that Capt. John Case had brothers named Job and Charles (who was a Captain) and a brother-in-law Jonathan Case Jr. Jonathan Case Jr. had brothers named Martin, Micah and William and so on.

Likewise, Elisha Phelps's name appears the same day as his mother Widow Abigail Phelps and on a day with his brothers David and Noah. With entries on thirty-three days, Elisha Phelps was the blacksmith's most frequent customer, followed by Jacob Pettibone, Capt. John Case and Thomas Phelps Jr. Elisha Phelps sixty-two entries for goods and services amounted, as closely as can be determined, to a debt of £8-3-11 and a credit of £0-5-3. His entries mention

the names of men who may be working with him or for him. They are Amasa Case Jr., Thomas Holcomb Jr., Daniel Moses, John Moses, Jacob Pettibone, Darius Pinney and particularly Ezra Pratt. There are several references to building materials and furnishings for "Prats shop," as if Phelps was helping to set Pratt up in business in town. Ezra Pratt, a hatter, was a native of Hartford who moved to Simsbury and lived there for the remainder of his life, as shown in his probate records.

Three Hartford men came into Isaac Ensign's blacksmith shop. John Burlet ordered the horse chains mentioned earlier. James Church and Isaac Oaks both came on November 3, 1770, to buy rye from him. They each took two bushels at two shillings, ten pence per bushel. The only other patron who was identified as being from out of town was Seth Smith of Suffield, who had his horse shod.

Ensign's daybook shows a few credits to Simsbury men, most notably to three who supplied him with charcoal. Timothy Humphrey provided forty-six bushels, John Slater Jr. sold him 100 bushels and Thomas Phelps Jr., 201 bushels. On the other hand, Jonathan Noble bought a total of eight and a half bushels of charcoal from the blacksmith.

Ensign's Simsbury Daybook Number One ends on Monday April 15, 1771. He continued as a blacksmith in Simsbury until his death on May 12, 1816, at the age of sixty-eight. His wife Lurannah and seven of their sons survived him. His eldest son, Isaac Jr., apparently kept the blacksmith business going until he died in 1818. Lurannah Ensign lived until 1845, reaching her ninety-fifth year. In his history of Simsbury published that year, Noah A. Phelps mentioned that she was then the oldest person in town.

By Mary Jane Springman

Jean Bishop spent many hours in the Connecticut State Archives transcribing Isaac Ensign's daybook, for which the author is most grateful. Mrs. Bishop is a devoted volunteer for SGHRL and a genealogist. Mrs. Springman would also like to thank the staffs of the Connecticut State Archives, Connecticut Historical Society and Simsbury Public Library for their help.

Isaac Ensign's other daybooks and account books held by the Connecticut State Archives cover his blacksmith business up to the time of his death in 1816. As part of SGHRL's ongoing study of eighteenth-century Simsbury account books, they will be read and items of particular interest will be reported.

Selected Sources

Anyone wanting clear illustrations of eighteenth-century tools and their component parts will benefit from the drawings and text in *The Village Blacksmith* by Aldren A. Watson (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1968) and *A Museum of Early American Tools* by Eric Sloane (New York: Ballentine Books, 1964). The Sloane-Stanley Museum in Kent, Connecticut, displays Mr. Sloane's extensive collection of tools used by early farmers and craftsmen.

The Chronicle of the Early American Industries Association, the quarterly publication of that association, has too many articles of interest to list here, but these were particularly helpful: "Tudor Farming, Thomas Tussler and

Continued on page nine.

A Small Mystery

Did Capt. Jacob Pettibone live long enough to attend his daughter's wedding? Lurannah Pettibone, daughter of Jacob and Jemima Pettibone, married blacksmith Isaac Ensign on December 29, 1771. A handsome tombstone in Simsbury Cemetery (Section B, Row 35) says that Mr. Jacob Pettibone died on November 18, 1771 "by a fit of Arpoplex." However, a Simsbury town record (Simsbury Town Acts, vol. 4, p. 215) says "Jacob Pettibone Departed this Life the 19th of November 1772. being found Dead of the appoplexy. aged about 62."

A search of Simsbury probate records revealed that Pettibone wrote a will on May 22, 1762, after he had volunteered to go on the military expedition to Havana under the command of General Phineas Lyman of Suffield. According to historian Noah A. Phelps, "This expedition was signalized by the great loss of life, chiefly by sickness, which it sustained. It is believed that less than one third of the troops ever returned home."

Pettibone survived, but died in 1771 or 1772. Searching further, the next record showed that his widow, Jemima, appeared before the Simsbury Court of Probate on December 6, 1772, and exhibited the will, which named her as executor. John Owen was the judge who approved the will and Elisha Phelps was the clerk who recorded it. The inventory of the estate was begun on December 17, 1772 and the rest of the probate proceedings followed.

In addition, a search of Isaac Ensign's second daybook, which covers April 1771 through October 1772, showed that Pettibone continued to make his customary purchases from Ensign well after the date that the tombstone would have him dead. For instance, on November 19, 1771, Ensign charged him two shillings for "an Iron on Joseph Humphry Cart neap."

Lastly, when compiling his genealogy of the Pettibone family in 1885, I. Fayette Pettibone gave Jacob Pettibone's date of death as November 19, 1772. He definitely believed Pettibone lived to attend the wedding. Anyone researching family history must conclude from all this that dates are not necessarily certain even when they are carved in stone.

Continued from page eight.

American Tools" by Charles M. Keller (June 1990), "George Washington's Fort Loudoun Inventory, 1758" by Richard F. S. Starr (June 1990), "Eighteenth Century Blacksmith Served Diversified Needs" (March 1991). The last two were in the "Ledger-Domain" column edited by Frank G. White and the last was written by him. The book *Selections from The Chronicle: The Fascinating World of Early Tools & Trades* edited by Emil and Martyl Pollak (Mendham, New Jersey: The Astragal Press, 1991) also yielded much useful information.

Genealogies used include:

Duncan, Ruth Cost, comp. *John Case and his Descendants*. West Simsbury, Conn: by the author, 2000.
Hesketh, Frederick A. *The Browns of Wintonbury: Makers of Brown Drums*. Bloomfield, Connecticut: Wintonbury Historical Society, 1999.
Nelson, Martha Eunice Ensign, comp. *Record of the Descendants of James Ensign And His Wife Sarah Elson*. vol. 2. Salt Lake City: by the compiler, 1960.
Pettibone, I. Fayette, comp. *Genealogy of the Pettibone Family*. Chicago: Brown, Pettibone & Kelly, 1885.
Phelps, Judge Oliver Seymour, and Servin, Andrew T. *The Phelps Family in America*. 2 vols. Pittsfield, Mass.: Eagle Publishing Company, 1899.

An Iron Works in Simsbury

A notice appeared on February 20, 1769, in the *Connecticut Courant* announcing the dissolution of the partnership of Smith & Caldwell, the partners being Richard Smith and George Caldwell. The notice called upon all who had outstanding debts to the partnership to settle them; it ended with the statement, "The business of casting and refining of Iron will be continued at Salisbury, & Simsbury by George Caldwell. Barr Iron to be sold by Capt. William Tiley, in Hartford."

More than two years later, in June 1771, the paper published a long list of men who still were indebted to the company. Among these were forty-seven listed as living in Simsbury and fifteen living in Norfolk who had contracted their debt in Simsbury. Two men were listed under "Salmon Brook." Some Simsbury names also appeared on a list of people who had credits with the company.

In his book *A Landscape Transformed: The Ironmaking District of Salisbury, Connecticut*, Robert B. Gordon mentions both Smith and Caldwell (pp. 30-33). He says that the brothers Charles Caldwell of Hartford and George Caldwell of Salisbury were the largest shareholders of an iron furnace in Salisbury by 1765. They became "indebted to Richard Smith, a Boston merchant and shipowner knowledgeable in the iron trade, for store merchandise," Gordon says. Smith eventually gained control of the furnace. "The Caldwell's' iron making venture wiped out the family wealth and left George jailed for furnace debts," Gordon writes. He adds that Richard Smith went on to make a success of his iron refining business in Salisbury, but at the beginning of the Revolutionary War his fellow Bostonians began to suspect him of "Tory sympathy," so he removed to England. Shortly thereafter the Connecticut Council of Safety seized his blast furnace for cannon making.

Just when the Smith & Caldwell iron casting and refining business began in Simsbury and where it was located has not been determined. However, its demise seems to have occurred in 1770. The *Connecticut Courant* of January 15 reported disastrous flooding "in consequence of the plentiful rain (which began on Saturday night the 6th inst. and continued till Monday Morning)." Writing of the conditions in the Connecticut River, the paper said, in part, that "about 25 boats, canoes and bateaus, together with a great quantity of saw mill logs, and other timber have been seen floating down the stream, which could not be saved by reason of the cakes of Ice with which the River was throng'd."

The paper goes on to say, "And we hear the Iron-Works in Simsbury, are entirely swept off with the flood, together with one or two houses which stood contiguous with the river there [the Farmington River] with several bridges of considerable importance that stood upon the same river, and with great difficulty the large and commodious Store which contain'd a great quantity of English Goods was saved." So, in the year 1770 Simsbury gained blacksmith Isaac Ensign, but lost an iron works.

Thoughts on a Glossary

Jean Bishop, who is transcribing Isaac Ensign's records, has suggested that a glossary specific to his records be developed. That will be done sometime in the future and a copy will be given to the Connecticut State Library as well as SGHRL. In the meantime, to find the meaning of archaic words or technical terms used in the 18th century, the best place to start is the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which can be found in most large public libraries.

In Memory of Mary-Jane Guerry

The Trustees of the Simsbury Free Library note with sadness the passing of their colleague Mary-Jane Guerry. Mary-Jane was a devoted Trustee for almost twenty-five years. She served the Board as Secretary for many years and was a very conscientious Chair of the House Committee.

Mary-Jane was a long-time resident of Simsbury and was active in many other organizations, including the First Church of Christ, the Simsbury Visiting Nurse Association and the Abigail Phelps Chapter of the D.A.R.

The Trustees send their condolences to her loving family. Mary-Jane will be missed by the Board for her ever-present charm and good humor.

SGHRL UPDATES

On June 4 the Board of Trustees held the Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon. Twenty-two volunteers, staff and board members attended. Chairman of the Board Peg Donohue thanked the volunteers, trustees and luncheon committee for their support during the past year.

Joyce Cahill was honored for her work on *Simsbury Cemetery Gravestone Inscriptions*, which was awarded a first prize at the annual meeting of the Connecticut Society of Genealogists. Mrs. Cahill addressed the luncheon guests, at which time she generously donated half of her \$500 award from the state organization to the Simsbury Free Library.

Chairman of Library Operations Bob Lindauer remarked on the sad loss of long-time volunteer Catharine Sherman, who died during the past year.

The Spring Slide Lecture by Judith Ellen Johnson, Genealogist of the Connecticut Historical Society, drew more than thirty attendees. Ms. Johnson spoke about many of the collections in her organization's library and archives and explained how they can be useful to people researching their family history. The audience was most enthusiastic and stayed to ask her a number of questions.

Each year's budget allows for painting one side of the library building, which Trustee Richard Schoenhardt, AIA, oversees. This year, while the front was being painted, Mr. Schoenhardt decided to have the corner quoins painted white, in contrast to the yellow of the rest of the brickwork. This restores the look of the library as shown in an early photograph of the building.

In addition, Mr. Schoenhardt has replaced the treads on the stairs leading to the second floor and has installed new carpeting in the adjacent vestibule. He has also had the hatchway on the south side rebuilt and pachysandra planted near it. There have been many favorable comments on all these improvements.

Margaret and Bob Lindauer have been noted weeding and watering throughout this long dry summer. The plantings are looking very good, thanks to their care and that of the several civic groups that donate their time.

Some Recent Acquisitions

Books

- The Barbour Collection of Connecticut Town Vital Records: Torrington 1740-1850, Union 1734-1850, Voluntown 1708-1850, Wallingford 1670-1850, Warren 1786-1850, Washington 1779-1854, Waterford 1801-1851, Watertown 1780-1850, Westbrook 1840-1851, Waterbury* (All volumes donated by the Abigail Phelps Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution)
- Border Town Cemeteries of Massachusetts* compiled and edited by Charles D. & Edna W. Townsend
- Descendants of William Alderman Who Settled First at Windsor, Connecticut and Later Simsbury, Connecticut: 1671-2002*, 2 vols., compiled by Verne R. Spear (donated by the compiler)
- Descendants of William Richardson: b. 1752 in England* compiled by Leon R. Petersen (donated by the compiler)
- Farmers Against the Crown: A Comprehensive Account of the Revolutionary War Battle in Ridgefield, Connecticut, April 27, 1777* by Keith Marshall Jones III
- A Finding Aid for Rhode Island Town Records in Arnold's Vital Record of Rhode Island, Beaman's Rhode Island Vital Records: New Series and the Rhode Island Genealogical Register*, by Helen Schatvet Ullmann, CG
- The Handybook for Genealogists: United States of America*, 10th Edition, published by Everton Publishers (donated by Bruce A. Hale)
- A Humphrey Family: Descendants of Michael Humphrey, Born 1620, Through Alfred Franklin Humphrey, Born 1826, and Continuing to Date August 2001: Included are Lydia Adams Griswold's Descendants From Her First Marriage to Anson Gardner Mills* compiled by Leon R. Petersen (donated by the compiler)
- Immigrants to New England: 1700-1775* by Ethel Stanwood Bolton (donated by Frank Pinney)
- Italian Genealogical Records: How to Use Italian Civil, Ecclesiastical, & Other Records in Family History Research* by Trafford R. Cole, Psy.D.
- Landholders of Northeastern New York 1739-1802* by Fred Q. Bowman (donated by Celia A. Roberts)
- The Nathman Family: The Descendants of Bernard Heinrich Nathman and Maria Francisca Gerding* compiled and written by Barbara Mouser Nathman (donated by the author)
- New York State Probate Records: A Genealogist's Guide to Testate and Intestate Records*, by Gordon L. Remington, FASG
- New York State Towns, Villages, and Cities: A Guide to Genealogical Sources* by Gordon L. Remington, FASG
- The Proprietors of Carolina* by William S. Powell (donated by Celia A. Roberts)
- Shoots: A Guide to Your Family Photographic Heritage* by Thomas L. Davies (donated by Celia A. Roberts)
- Some Early Records and Documents of and Relating to the Town of Windsor Connecticut, 1639-1703*, published by the Connecticut Historical Society (Donated by Stephen E. Simon)
- The Story of Butler's Rangers and the Settlement of Niagara* by Ernest Cruikshank (donated by Celia A. Roberts)

Congratulations to Joyce Cahill

The Connecticut Society of Genealogists has honored Joyce A. Cahill for her book *Simsbury Cemetery Gravestone Inscriptions, Simsbury, Connecticut 1688-2000, Volume I: The Old Section*. Mrs. Cahill was awarded First Prize in the category of "Other," out of a field including "Genealogy" and "Family History," in the organization's Literary Awards 2002 Contest.

At a recent awards luncheon, she received a handsome plaque, now on display in SGHRL. It says, in part, "CSG commends Ms. Cahill for this beautifully done book which is a priceless gem of historical value and will be of tremendous benefit to many future generations of researchers." In addition, she received a cash prize which she generously shared with SGHRL. Mrs. Cahill is a volunteer at the library and we are all proud to have her with us.

1930 Federal Census: Connecticut

Through a much appreciated donation made by the Abigail Phelps Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, SGHRL now owns the microfilm of the 1930 Federal Census for Connecticut. Come in and follow up on the grandparents or search for some elusive cousins. This new genealogical tool is too important to overlook. In the near future we will be able to rent or purchase 1930 census films for other states.

New Volunteers

SGHRL welcomes two new volunteers. Shirley Damato has been helping Librarian Stephen Simon prepare the 1930 Federal Census microfilm for shelving and Muriel Winzer has been putting her hand to whatever is needed. We are all glad to have you with us.

Now in Hard Cover

Simsbury Cemetery Gravestone Inscriptions, Simsbury Connecticut 1688-2000, Volume. 1: The Old Section compiled by Joyce A. Cahill, is now available in a hard bound edition. The cover is blue with gold lettering. It is for sale at SGHRL for \$40, plus \$2.40 tax.

Book Signing

On Saturday, September 14 between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., the East Granby Public Library is celebrating the republication of *East Granby: The Evolution of a Connecticut Town* by holding a book signing session at the library. Authors Mary Jane Springman and Betty Finnell Guinan will be there. Books may be purchased that day at the library or other days at the East Granby Town Clerk's Office or SGHRL. The price is \$35.00.

Handy Web Sites

"The Dutchess Newsletter" of the Dutchess County (NY) Genealogical Society ran a feature in their Winter 2002 issue that caught the eye of Librarian Stephen Simon. In it Christine Crawford-Oppenheimer submitted a list of the twelve Web sites that she has found most useful. Some are totally free. Mr. Simon says that he has used all of them himself. These are the sites that Ms. Crawford-Oppenheimer recommended as she described them:

Cyndi's List: categorized links to thousands of genealogical sites on the Web:
<http://www.CyndisList.com>

Family Search: the Web site of the Latter Day Saints Family History Library includes their catalog, free databases, links, and helpful information:
<http://www.FamilySearch.org>

National Archives and Records Administration: information and links to information about federal records of interest to family history researchers:
<http://www.nara.gov/genealogy/>

RootsWeb: a multitude of services for genealogists:
<http://www.rootsweb.com>

Ancestry
<http://www.Ancestry.com>

USGenWeb: has a site for every county in the US that includes queries and much more:

<http://www.USGenWeb.org>

Family Tree Magazine
<http://www.familytreemagazine.com>

Family Tree Maker
<http://familytreemaker.com>

Genealogy.com
<http://www.genealogy.com>

Heritage Quest:
<http://www.heritagequest.com>

Everton Publishers, Inc.:
<http://www.everton.com>

GenealogySpot.com: categorized links:
<http://www.genealogyspot.com>

Continued from page twelve.

Surnames and Genealogy: A New Approach by George Redmonds (donated by Nancy Poole)

They Became Americans: Finding Naturalization Records and Ethnic Origins by Loretto Dennis Szucs (donated by Alix Paull Schultz in honor of Mary-Jane Guerry)

Torrington: The Formative Years, 1737 to 1852; The Growth Years, 1852 to 1923; The Annealing Years, 1923 to 1976; 3 vols., by Bess and Merrill Bailey (donated by William O'Dea)

Scottish-American Gravestones: 1700-1900 by David Dobson (donated by Margaret Lindauer)

Your Guide to the Federal Census: for Genealogists, Researchers and Family Historians (Includes Information on the Newly Released 1930 Census) by Kathleen W. Hinckley (donated by Alix Paull Schultz in honor of Mary-Jane Guerry)

Compact Discs

Family Tree Maker's Family Archives, Vital Records: Rhode Island 1500s-1900s: 1636-1930; 1636-1850 (Arnold Collection), 3 discs

SIMSBURY MARRIAGES

Date	Name	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Jan. 12, 1868	Thomas Claghssy	21	Farmer	Ireland
	Catherine Dillon	19		Simsbury
Nov. 20, 1867	William Quin	28	Farmer	Ireland
	Margaret Norton	25		Ireland
Nov. 28, 1867	John B. Brown	23	Butcher	Enfield
	Isabelle O. Seymour	29		Simsbury
Mar. 12, 1868	Orrin T. Wakefield	30		Canton
	Wealthy A. Chapin	33		Simsbury
June 25, 1868	Roswell Barnes	50	Farmer	Canton
	Susan R. Wilcox	36		Simsbury
Apr. 30, 1868	Wheeler M. Case	22	Farmer	Simsbury
	Annie C. Brockett	21		Simsbury
Sept. 17, 1868	Albert A. Thayer	23	Accountant	Canton
	Juliett E. Latimer	20		Simsbury
May 3, 1868	Julius H. Vining	25	Farmer	Simsbury
	Maggie G. Kitchen	21		Simsbury
Sept. 23, 1868	Stephen C. Pierson	27	Civil Engineer	Orange, N.Y.
	Hannah P. Latimer	25		Simsbury
Dec. 29, 1868	Thomas Crosley	27	Merchant	Simsbury
	Mary A. McRoy(?)	25		Simsbury
Dec. 10, 1868	Decater A. Sperry	23	Farmer	Avon
	Sarah E. Chapman	18		N.Y. State
Mar. 30, 1869	Patrick Condon	30	Farmer	Ireland
	Margaret Cusick	25		Ireland
Apr. 6, 1869	Andrew B. Kirk	42	Farmer	Albany
	Hannah Merick	37		Albany
July 22, 1869	Michael Doolan	24	Farmer	Ireland
	Ann Emmett	19		Ireland
June 25, 1869	Darius N. Case	21	Pedler	Halifax, V.T.
	Lilie Viets	16		Granby
Jan. 24, 1869	Edwin T. Griswold	52	Mechanic	Simsbury
	Louise A. Rockwell	28		Thompsonville

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

SIMSBURY FREE LIBRARY

749 Hopmeadow Street

P.O. Box 484

Simsbury, CT 06070

860 658-5382

E-mail: genehist@micro-net.com

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

Stephen E. Simon, Librarian & Genealogist

Mary Jane Springman, Editor

FIRST CLASS

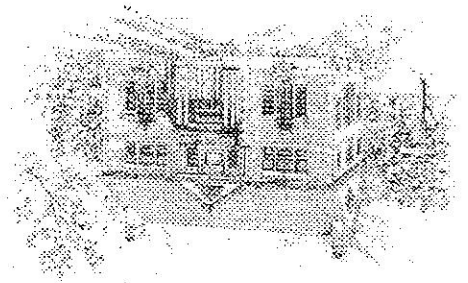


Photo by Joyce A. Cahill

Mr.
ISAAC ENSIGN
was born
Dec. 16, 1747.
& died May 12, 1816.