

Researching History of Your House using Old Deeds

Many people want to research the history of their house. Here's how you do it

- 1) Use the Book of Deeds in the Washington County Clerk's office in Ft Edward
- 2) Your deed tells the ***Book number*** and ***Page number*** where your deed is filed in Ft Edward
- 3) It also has the Book number and Page number of the ***previous deed*** with names and dates.
- 4) Find that previous deed using Book number and Page number and you'll have the owner before that
- 5) From that deed you'll have the Book number and Page number of the deed before that and so on
- 6) Within a couple of hours, you'll have names and dates associated with the history of your house

As you browse through the Book of Deeds pay close attention to two other things

- 1) Look at the last page to see who signed the deed for the seller.

Quite often you will see that the owner has passed away and the executor of his estate signed the deed when selling the house. The executor is likely a descendant. If the name is familiar, you can call the local person and ask for some history about the house or the former owners

- 2) Look at the description of the tract of land.

It often lists the neighbors whose property abuts yours. You may recognize the name and can find local descendants. They may have photos taken from their property with your house in the background

The following pages illustrate using the deed where I transferred some land owned by the Cambridge Water Works

58

Between

THE CAMBRIDGE WATER WORKS COMPANY, a/k/a THE CAMBRIDGE WATER WORKS COMPANY, INC., a corporation organized under the laws of the State of New York on September 10, 1885, with its office at 506 Babcock Road, Tully, New York,

Page Number

This is who owned the land before me

and

KENNETH A. GOTTRY of 506 Babcock Road, Tully, New York,

Book Number

691

Witnesseth that the party of the first part, in consideration of ~~COURTESY of the second part,~~ ONE ~~THOUSAND~~ -----

----- Dollars (\$ 1,000)

This is where my deed is filed in the Washington County Clerk's office in Ft Edward

United States, and other good and valuable consideration the second part, does hereby remise, release and quitclaim unto the party of the first part, their heirs, assigns or successors and assigns of the party of the second part forever, ~~xxx~~

ALL THAT TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND OR WOOD LOT lying and being in the Town of Jackson, County of Washington, State of New York, and being part of Lot Seventeen (17) of the Annaquasacook Patent and bounded as follows: Beginning at the oak on the southwest corner of lands now or formerly of Edward West and running thence S. 30' E. (old survey) two chains fifty links to a stake and stones thence N. 78° E. twenty-one chains; thence N. 30' W. two chains fifty links to the southwest corner of lands now or formerly owned by John Doanes; thence S. 78° W. twenty-one chains to place of beginning, containing five acres, one rod, more or less.

Witnesseth that the party of the first part, in consideration of ~~the~~ party of the second part, ONE -----

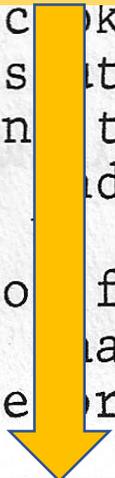
----- Dollars (\$ 1.00)

lawful money of the United States, and other good and valuable consideration

This tells who owned the land before the person who sold it to me

- The first page said I bought the land from the Camb Water Works
- This page says the Camb Water Works bought the land from J.B. Rice

being part of Lot Seventeen (17) of the Annaquasacok Patent and bounded as follows: Beginning at the oak on the southwest corner of lands now or formerly of Edward West and running thence S. 30' E. (old survey) two chains fifty links to a stake and stones thence N. 78° E. twenty-one chains; thence N. 30' two chains fifty links to the southwest corner of lands now or formerly owned by John Doanes; thence S. 78° W. twenty-one chains to place of beginning, containing five acres, one rod, more or less.



Being a portion of the lands conveyed by Jerome B. Rice and Laura J. Rice to The Cambridge Water Works Company by deed dated September 19, 1885, and recorded in the Washington County Clerk's Office on march 26, 1886 in Book 99 at page 483 and being the second parcel described therein said deed.

Witnesseth that the party of the first part, in consideration of ~~ONE~~ ^{part of the second part,} ~~-----~~ Dollars (\$ ~~1.00~~) lawful money of the United States, and other good and valuable consideration

But this tells me even more

- It says the Camb Water Works bought the land from J.B. Rice on **19-Sep-1885**
- And the deed between J.B.Rice and CWW is located in **Book 99 Page 483**

I can go Book 99 Page 483 to find out from whom J.B.Rice bought the land and when
And so on and so on

E. (old survey) two chains fifty links to a stake and stones thence N. 30° E. twenty-one chains thence N. 30' W. two chains fifty link to the southwest corner of lands now or formerly owned by John Doanes; thence S. 78° W. twenty-one chains to place of beginning, containing five acre one rod, more or less.

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- The description of the tract of land often identifies who owns or owned adjoining land
- I see Edward West and John Doanes were neighbors at one time
- Sometimes the names of neighbors are familiar and you can contact locals who may be descendants and may have photos from their land that has your house or land in the background

ALL THAT TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND OF WOOD LOT lying and being in the Town of Jackson, County of Washington, State of New York, and being part of Lot Seventeen (17) of the Annaquasacook Patent and bounded as follows: Beginning at the oak on the southwest corner of lands now or formerly of Edward West and running thence S. 30' E. (old survey) two chains fifty links to a stake and stones thence N. 78° E. twenty-one chains; thence N. 30' W. two chains fifty links to the southwest corner of lands now or formerly owned by John Doanes; thence S. 78° W. twenty-one chains to place of beginning, containing five acres, one rod, more or less.

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- The original settlers received land grants known as **Patents**, such as the Cambridge Patent, Embury-Wilson Patent (Ash Grove) or Annaquasacook Patent (Rt 313).
- Many deeds trace the origins of the tract of land being sold back to its Lot Number on the original patent
- The next slide shows the original patents for this area

Office on march 26, 1886 in Book 99 at page 483 and being the second parcel described therein said deed.

- According to one of my early maps, Lot #17 of the Annaquasacook Patent was part of the Dyer-Schermerhorn Tract

- To help you orient yourself, this red dot is about where the traffic light is today at the intersection of Main and Park streets.

- Lot #9 of the Cambridge Patent was owned by Thomas Morrison, whose son was likely the first child born in Cambridge

