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The Families of Wentworth Point (1760s-1800)

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The Families of Wentworth Point (1760s-1800)

Johnston reports there were scattered houses of settlers along the east side of the Damariscotta River up to the present bridge in Damariscotta during the 17th century before the outbreak of the bloody King Phillip’s War in 1675. The first of six wars, the settlements of Pemaquid were destroyed by the Indians. There was a determination to maintain English settlements, but these efforts eventually failed when the French and Indians under Castine and D’Iberville captured Fort William Henry in 1696 at the end of King Williams War. Subsequently the area lay unpeopled. After Queen Anne’s War there was an attempt at resettlement in 1717-1718 before Dummer’s War. In 1729 Governor David Dunbar arrived and rebuilt the fort at Pemaquid and named it Fort Frederick. He laid out townships including Walpole, laying out lots, settling people without regard to prior claims.

In 1744-1745 Shem Drowne under the Pemaquid Patent deeded to Baker Hutchins 80 acres on east side of Damariscotta, James Miller 80 acres in Walpole, William Kent 80 acres at Damariscotta River in Harrington. During the Fifth Indian War (1745-1748), many depredations were committed at Pemaquid, Walpole and other settlements. Afterwards the peace was short lived.

Figure 1: Signatories to a 1742 petition to Governor Shirley that a chaplain be sent to Pemaquid. The petition states the nearest gospel minister is 20 miles away, that they would contribute to the support of a minister, but they had insufficient funds to maintain one themselves. It says many of them have for 12 years been clearing and improving a wilderness country, by the blessings of God they are mostly provided with temporals. Notice the signature of a [?Joseph?] Orr a few signatures above the signatures of Clarks Cove residents Will and John Kent, perhaps the person for which Orr’s Meadow Brook (the brook that flows into Clarks Cove) is named. (Courtesy of the Pemaquid Historical Association)
During the beginning of the French and Indian War the local inhabitants were obliged at times to leave their settlements and come to Fort Frederick for protection. By 1759 Quebec had fallen, and the local area became safer from attack, and having built Fort Pownall on the Penobscot in 1759, Governor Thomas Pownall dismissed the garrison at Pemaquid.

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THE WENTWORTH FAMILY

William Wentworth was baptized on 15 March 1615/16 in Alford, Lincolnshire, England. He was a puritan and a follower of John Wheelwright. He arrived in New England with Wheelwright in 1636. He became a sawmill proprietor and a church elder in Dover, New Hampshire. One of his sons was named Gershom.

Gershom Wentworth married Hannah French. One of Deacon Gershom and Hannah’s sons was named John (b. 1706). John married Jane Richards; they lived in Rochester, N.H.; they had four children: Hannah Wentworth (born in 1735), Abigail Wentworth (born in 1738), James Wentworth (K) who was born on Christmas day in 1741, and Gershom Wentworth (N) who was born in 1744. On June 27, 1746 John Wentworth was killed in an Indian raid at Rochester.

Jane Richards remarried some time prior to 21 December, 1748 to a Daniel Palmer. The family moved to Bristol, Maine, but it is said that Mrs. Palmer died in the family of her daughter Hanna (G) of Goffstown, New Hampshire. Hannah Wentworth (G) married Enoch Page, of Goffstown, N.H., and died there in 1812. She did not have any children but they did adopt a girl, Lydia Wright (B). Lydia Wright Page married Abraham Buswell in 1811, and they had Hannah Kelsey Buswell, Sarah Buswell, and Enoch Buswell. Enoch Page died in 1821. He left half of his real estate to the New Hampshire Bible Society, and he left the other half of his real estate to the New Hampshire Missionary Society. He left with Abraham Buswell, who was living with him, his clock, his Meeting House pew, his desk and gun, on condition that Enoch got a decent Christian burial, and that Abraham erects over his grave and the grave of his wife hands and grave stones with suitable inscriptions not less in value than ten dollars a pair. He left various monies and personal property to others, including his second quality bed and bedding to Hannah Kelsey Stevens, and ten dollars to an Enoch Page Hurd of Rochester.

James Wentworth (K) made his way to Bristol, ME. when quite a young man, and was one of the first settlers of that time period.

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The New England Town: A Way of Life

In the four decades preceding the American Revolution the population of New England more than doubled, increasing from about 325,000 to 675,000. Much of this gain was the result of natural increase of the original English stock or of immigration from England, but this accounts for only about 70% of the inhabitants. The remaining 30% was composed of Scots, Scotch-Irish, Celtic Irish, Germans, and other folk. These were the people who shaped town life, and were in turn shaped and molded by it. New Englanders were not merely old Englishers transplanted; they were a new breed; they were Yankees.

Wherever they lived, in village or on isolated farm, these Yankees made the family their most fundamental and enduring association. The family tie derived its strength as much from its economic and social as from its moral and religious significance. Not only was it a means for increasing and perpetuating the race; it was also the principal unit of agricultural, industrial and business life, and the basic agency of social intercourse. It guaranteed the permanence, stability, continuity and orderly development of the community. With ten or twelve children, several relatives, the hired-men, servants and slaves, all living together, frequently under the same roof,
the colonial family was very large. The larger the family, the more hands to aid in cultivating the soil and doing the chores, the more members for the church, the more citizens for the town.¹⁴

The most considerable part of the whole province of New England was the yeomanry, or, as contemporaries defined them, the independent, industrious, freeholding farmers.¹⁴ In contrast with the genteel existence amid comfortable surroundings enjoyed by the gentry, the farmer and his family lived plainly and frugally in a severe, unpainted frame farmhouse. Beyond prime necessities, he might possess a Bible, a musket, a looking-glass, and perhaps a piece of carpet. His food and drink were plain, and probably monotonous. Throughout rural New England flour was a luxury indulged in chiefly by the upper class. Thomas Hutchinson told King George in 1774 that the average New Englander preferred coarse bread made of rye or corn to the wheaten variety, and as late as 1800 corn meal remained the yeoman's staple food. Fresh meat appeared rarely on his table. Each autumn a hog was slaughtered and salted down, regularly to be served at future meals. This constant use of salted meat generated the insatiable thirst for which the Yankee became notorious, and which he variously treated, according to his purse or the season, with generous applications of beer, cider, or rum. He thereby supplied his parson with inspiration for countless homilies on the evils of baneful intemperance.¹⁴

Soil and climate conspired to force the New England farmer to struggle incessantly for a bare living.¹⁴ Economy and thrift were essential to survival, and the Yankee farmer rationalized his necessity into a creed and made a cardinal virtue of unremitting physical labor. Although basically a farming community, each New England town had its little coterie of artisans and craftsmen. The blacksmith, the wheelwright, the weaver, the cabinetmaker, and other workers needed to render the community self-sufficient, may also be classed with the yeoman stock. Of course, every farmer had to be a jack-of-all trades, and many tiny industries were conducted in the home.¹⁴

Toward the close of the colonial period the rural population of New England, especially that part of it which enjoyed contact by water or highway with Boston, experienced a rise in its standard of living.¹⁴ Tea and coffee came into general use after 1750, because farmers were producing a small surplus sufficient to buy such foreign luxuries as were necessary to make life pass comfortably. The best informed observer of the period believed the yeomanry to be in general a very happy people.¹⁴

This "middling sort," then as now, formed the backbone of the village community.¹⁴ They were a hard-working and self-respecting lot. To their economic and social superiors they cheerfully accorded due respect but no subservience. Socially as well as politically the yeomen were sure of themselves. They were as jealous of their rights as any colonial governor, and insisted upon the importance of their position as freeholders, independent farmers, heads of families, church members and voters. This led to a certain aggressiveness in their attitude toward outsiders who might not appreciate their importance and worth, and an absence of formality from their manners that gave foreign observers an impression of rampant democracy. An English official reported of inhabitants of rural Connecticut, "They seem to be a good substantial Kind of Farmers, but there is no break in their Society; their Government, Religion, and Manners all tend to support an equality. Whoever brings in your Victuals sets down and chats to you." But in his own community the yeoman farmer or artisan infused a thrifty, sober steadiness into the tempo of village life."

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By late 1760 an economic depression gradually overtook the colonies. The summers of 1761 and 1762 were exceedingly dry in all New England, and the crops in consequence were very short.² By 1763 the depression had become severe. The hard times soon came to be connected in American minds to new imperial measures like the Sugar Act and the Currency Act.⁵⁸ When the hostilities of the French and Indian War ended in 1763 something of an eastern migration took place in Maine.³

A new and most favorable impulse was given by the conquest of Canada, and the prospects of a perpetual peace with the Indians, to every species of enterprize and improvement.⁵⁶ Ship-building, trade and settlement, were even promoted, by the stories of soldiers and visitors, who, having lately seen the country, gave extravagant representations of its goodness, beauties, and water privileges. A sailor’s or traveler’s tales
about remote places, often carry with them such an air of romance, as to have an irresistible influence upon the curious and enterprising.\textsuperscript{56} There was a peculiar air of happiness, and a momentary lapse of factionalism.

In 1760 Lincoln County was established which at that time comprised all of Maine except York and Cumberland counties. In 1760 there were 17,000 settlers living in the district of Maine, mostly in the western part. By 1764 the population had increased to 24,020. The census of 1764 records about 200 persons residing in Pemaquid, Harrington, and Walpole (the parishes of Bristol).\textsuperscript{4} Most houses up to this point were still near the shore and communication from place to place was by means of boats, no substantial roads having yet been made.\textsuperscript{2} There was some livestock and agriculture but people obtained a livelihood chiefly by getting out lumber or wood, or by fishing. Many young men became expert sailors in the carrying trade to Boston. The women manufactured their families clothing from the wool and flax of domestic growth.\textsuperscript{2} In 1765 Bristol was incorporated, and it then included the present towns of South Bristol and Bremen, and parts of Damariscotta, which later separated from Bristol.

In the early years bears and wolves were abundant in Bristol.\textsuperscript{2} Considered the natural enemies of the settlers they were, of course, hunted and destroyed without mercy. Soon after the incorporation of the town of Bristol a bounty of 2 pounds was voted for wolves’ heads. For a year or two during the revolution the bounty offered was less. By 1800 the bounty seems to be discontinued. Johnston also reports that when the first Europeans visited the Maine coast beavers were abundant in the country; but, as they cannot exist in the presence of civilized man, it is probable they became extinct, at a very early period.\textsuperscript{2}

Initially dwellings in the Bristol area were log cabins of one or two rooms, sometimes with a loft bedroom.\textsuperscript{4} These were replaced by modest but more commodious wooden-frame dwellings, typically a Cape Cod house, a square or oblong house of one story with a gabled roof. The interior space would be divided by a central chimney into a front room for sleeping and sitting, and a back kitchen for cooking and eating. There would be a loft under the gabled roof, lighted by small windows in the gable ends, where the children often slept. These early Cape houses were unadorned, compact, and serviceable as befitted pioneer families.

\section*{THE KELSEY FAMILY}\textsuperscript{12}

William Kelsey (b.1690) is said to be the son of Hugh Kelso (born in Scotland).\textsuperscript{44} William married Margaret Hay at Scarvchion in Tyrone County, No. Ireland. They had six children before sailing to America. William, Margaret, and children left Port Rush, Northern Ireland, with relatives and others, 7 August 1726, and arrived in Boston, Mass., on 8 Oct 1726. They stayed in Boston until Mary was born on 26 April 1727, and then went up the Merrimac River and after a brief stop in Haverhill, settled at Nottingham, N.H., where their relatives had settled.\textsuperscript{44} Willea Killse (b1690) died sometime between 1750 and 1758.\textsuperscript{46}

One of William and Margaret’s sons, Hugh Kelsey, was killed at the siege of Louisbourg in 1745.\textsuperscript{45} Another son, Moses, served as a sergeant and quartermaster in the Seven Year's War. He was slain in New York some time in 1758. They also had a son named William Kelsey (b1716). He married Mary \_, and they had a number of children:*\textsuperscript{13} William Kelsey \{1\} (b.1747), Hugh Kelsey (b.1749),\textsuperscript{13} Margaret Kelsey, George Kelsey, James Kelsey, and Sarah Kelsey.\textsuperscript{42, 44} Hugh, Margaret, and George, children of William Kelsey (b1716), were baptized with their aunt Jean Kelsey by Rev. John Adams in Durham, N.H., 31 Jan. 1754.\textsuperscript{47} At some point members of William (b1716) & Mary Kelsey’s family made their way to Bristol, Maine.

The Wentworth Genealogy states Abigail Wentworth \{1\} married William Kelsey \{1\} on the 4th of January, 1765. However Marriage Returns say they—both of a place called Walpole—were married Mar. 27,
1765. They were married at Rochester, N.H.\textsuperscript{44} They had five children. John Kelsey \textsuperscript{2C} was born 10 February 1766. James Kelsey \textsuperscript{2D} was born 15 April 1768. William Kelsey \textsuperscript{2E} was born 18 July 1770. Hannah Kelsey \textsuperscript{2F} was born in 1772. Abigail Kelsey \textsuperscript{2I} was born 22 October 1775. Abigail \textsuperscript{2I} married James Richards \textsuperscript{2H} 1 June 1804. They lived in Bristol and had 7 kids.

In 1766 news of the repeal of the Stamp Act set off celebrations in small towns and cities throughout America.\textsuperscript{58} March 13, 1766 the town of Bristol swore in George Clark and Baker Hutchins to be Surveyors of Highways; James Gaul and Robert Paul were chosen Fence Viewers.\textsuperscript{21} New roads were laid out. There was a great revival of religion in Bristol in 1766 when a church was gathered under the advisatory influence of Rev. Mr. Murray.\textsuperscript{56}

One of the first business transactions for the new town of Bristol was the settling of a minister of the gospel, and locating and building a meeting house.\textsuperscript{2} The debate about the construction and location of a meeting house was of a contentious nature. The territory of the new town was extensive, and many were obliged to travel great distances to attend a town meeting.

At one point in the late 1760s it was decided to build a meeting house in each one of the town’s three parishes. In late 1768 a protest (also called a decent in the records) was presented by 39 people that included a James Wentworth \textsuperscript{1K} and a Wm. Celso (Kelsey?). The reason given for the groups opposition was that the building of so many houses would require too heavy a tax of at least ten pounds “on every single poll.”\textsuperscript{2} Besides a number of neighboring locals, there is also a Peter Celso listed in the decent.

\textbf{Figure 2: A 1768 Decent (protest) about funding numerous meeting house entered into the town records.}
THE RICHARDS FAMILY

John Wentworth, James Wentworth’s \text{\cite{1}}\textsuperscript{K} father was slain in an Indian raid at Rochester N.H. in 1746--one of four men who perished.\textsuperscript{38} One of the other men killed was a Joseph Richards. His brother John Richards was captured in that raid, and taken captive to Canada, where he subsequently escaped into the wilderness.\textsuperscript{*10} Finding his way home, starving and fatigued, John Richards and a companion discovered some deer entrails which they broiled over a fire.\textsuperscript{39} John later declared that was the sweetest meat he ever ate. The hunters who left the entrails afterwards found the two companions and carried them back to Rochester.

John Richard’s brother Benjamin removed to Goffstown, and Benjamin’s son Jesse Richards then removed to Bristol, ME. Jesse’s son James Richards \text{\cite{2}}\textsuperscript{H} married William and Abigail Kelsey’s \text{\cite{1}}\textsuperscript{I} daughter Abigail \text{\cite{2}}\textsuperscript{I}; they resided in Bristol.\textsuperscript{1}

Yet another brother of John Richards, James Richards married Sarah Foss.\textsuperscript{39} They had 4 children: Sarah, James (b.1743), Dodiphar, and Joseph. Varying accounts have the children removing to Bristol in 1767.\textsuperscript{40} The next year James Richards (b.1743) went to Megunticook Harbor (Camden) to cut ship timber.\textsuperscript{*10} Charmed with the place, he built a log cabin, and the next year removed with his family to their new abode, the first settlers of \textbf{Camden, Maine}. The cabin was said to be erected somewhere between Elm, Mechanic, Washington, and Free streets in the center of town. James Richards Jr. (b.1743) was said to be an exceptional hunter; he became a miller.\textsuperscript{39} His father James Richards Sr. removed to Camden in 1774.

James’ sister Sarah married a Joseph Hardy and died in Camden, Maine at about 80 yrs. of age.\textsuperscript{39} James’ brothers also removed to Camden and built their log cabins near to his.\textsuperscript{40} \textbf{One story about Dodipher} says he went out on an errand, when at night he became surrounded by a pack of wolves which he beat back with a club.\textsuperscript{41} Afterwards he would relate, “I should rather have been at home in my log hut than out in the woods fighting them cussed varmints.” Dodiphar’s son Oliver Richards \text{\cite{2}}\textsuperscript{T} married Gershom and Mary Wentworth’s \text{\cite{1}}\textsuperscript{O} daughter Sarah \text{\cite{2}}\textsuperscript{T}; Dodiphar’s son Dodivah Richards \text{\cite{2}}\textsuperscript{U} married Gershom and Mary Wentworth’s \text{\cite{1}}\textsuperscript{O} daughter Mary \text{\cite{1}}\textsuperscript{U}.\textsuperscript{1}

William Kelsa of Bristol won a judgement against Archibald McPhetrels a yeoman of Bristol at the Inferior Court of Common Pleas held at \textbf{Pownalborough} for the sum of eleven pounds seventeen shillings.\textsuperscript{24} Not having received the judgement, it was ordered that Archibald be sent to the gaol at Pownalborough, and such of his property was to be attached to satisfy the judgement and court cost.\textsuperscript{*6} The said William Kellsa desired that the execution of judgement be levied on the real estate of said Archibald. Three appraisers were appointed to impartially satisfy the execution & charges. They proceeded and set out by meets and bounds a piece of land containing about 50 acres in Bristol, part of a 100 acre lot. It began at a stake on the on the east side of the Damariscotta River being the northwest corner of James Fleming’s lot. The possession and seizure of this land was delivered to the said William Kellsa in full satisfaction of the execution and all charges by Thomas Boyd, Deputy Sherriff, Oct 2 1770; it was entered into the Lincoln County land records by the registrar Thomas Rice, Decemb’ 15, 1770.
Lincoln’s George the Third by the Grace of God of Great Britain France and Ireland King Defender of the Faith and.

To the Sheriff of our County of Lincoln his under.

Seal. Sheriff or Deputy—

Greeting,

Whereas William Kellsa of Bristol in our County of Lincoln yeoman by the consideration of our Justices of our Superior Court of Common Pleas helden at Downalborough within a for our County of Lincoln aforesaid on the last Tuesday of September last recovered judgment against Archibald McPhetres of said Bristol yeoman for the sum of eleven Pounds seventeen shillings & sixpence lawful Money Damage a two Pounds a two pence costs of said suit to us appurs of record whereas execution remains to be done, we command you therefore that of the goods chattles or lands of the said Archibald with in your Precinct you cause to be paid a satisfaction unto the said William at the value thereof in money the aforesaid sums with two shillings for this Whible and thereof also to satisfy yourself for your own Fees. And for want of goods chattles or lands of the said Archibald to be by him shewn unto you or found within your Precinct to the Acceptance of the said William to satisfy the sums aforesaid, we command you to take the body of the said Archibald to him commit unto our Goal in Downalborough in our County of Lincoln aforesaid and detain in your custody within our said Goal untill he pay the full sums abovementioned with your Fees or that he be discharged by the said William.

Figure 3: The first page of a Lincoln County land record awarding William Kellsa of Bristol land owned by Archibald McPhetres to satisfy a judgement against Mr. McPhetres.
The Wentworth Genealogy

Long John Wentworth was born on March 5, 1815 in Sandwich, New Hampshire. After graduating Dartmouth in 1836, he joined the national westward migration, and moved to Chicago. A towering man at six feet six inches tall, he became the owner and publisher of Chicago’s first newspaper, the Chicago Democrat, and acquired a large fortune in the real estate business. He became the Republican mayor of Chicago from 1857 to 1858 and 1860 to 1861, and he also served 12 years in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Long John’s circle of acquaintances had been greatly expanded as a result of his genealogical investigations, which drew him into extensive correspondence with persons all over the country. He had begun during his school days to collect information about the Wentworth family in America, and the interest had gradually become a passion. For years he scanned newspaper files, searched public records, tramped through cemeteries, and catechized distant relatives, in an endless pursuit of births and marriages and deaths. By the 1860’s, having accumulated an impressive mass of materials, he was writing articles for the New England Historical and Genealogical Register. In 1871, at a rumored cost of $30,000, he published privately a two-volume Wentworth Genealogy, and distributed free sets to members of the family all over the world.

"My first edition," he later asserted, "was sent out to show what I did not know; then there came to me a vast amount of very useful information." A sizeable staff labored for another seven years before the corrected and enlarged version of The Wentworth Genealogy was ready. Published by Little, Brown and Company in 1878, it amounted to three imposing volumes. Long John made no effort to conceal his scholarly pride, and callers frequently found him turning the pages with an admiring eye. Joseph Forest once disdainfully suggested that it was the only book he ever read since graduating from Dartmouth.

All of Long John’s personal papers were destroyed in the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. Though there is now a collection of his papers at the Chicago History Museum, the museum’s entire collection was also destroyed in that fire. So the original correspondence that could have taken place between Long John Wentworth and the inhabitants of Wentworth Point may probably have been lost, but this is the origin of some of the early history of the Wentworths of Wentworth Point.

A year before he died in 1887, Wentworth wrote to a Reverend Jacob Chapman, "... as to myself, I have been entirely done with genealogical pursuits ... I resolved to read nothing on the subject and write nothing on the subject, because I found it seriously affecting my mind ...."

THE WENTWORTH FAMILY OF WENTWORTH POINT

It is not known if any Native Americans encamped or lived at Wentworth Point before European settlement. It is not known if any Europeans settled this place before the arrival of the Wentworths. So the first known settlers were James and Elizabeth Wentworth {1}. James Wentworth {1K} married Elizabeth Williams {1K} in 1769. Another source has James Wintworth {1K} and Elisabeth Williams marrying 10 January 1770 in Bristol, ME. They had a daughter named Jane Wentworth {2} born on the 20th of November, 1770. Their son John Wentworth {2K} was born May 30th, 1772. Their daughter Esther Wentworth {2M} was born 19 February 1774. Their son Samuel Wentworth {2P} was born 3 March 1776. Their son James Wentworth {2R} was born 9 February, 1778.

In 1770 it is said army worms destroyed all foliage and crops which came their way. Fields of grass were almost instantly destroyed. At night the worms could be heard gnawing on the vegetables. They disappeared suddenly in the water, where they perished.

In 1771 the Reverend Jacob Bailey of Pownalborough had noted the conditions of his parishioners:

I might here add many affecting instances of their extreme poverty--that multitudes of children are obliged to go barefoot through the whole winter, with hardly clothes to cover their nakedness,--that half the houses were without chimneys,--that many people had no other beds than a heap of straw,--and whole families had scarce anything to subsist upon, for months together except potatoes, roasted in the ashes.

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Between 1770 and 1775 a survey of New England was done by British surveyors. They mapped the coast, the harbors and channels for the purpose of benefiting trade. This survey ended up aiding the British Navy during the American War of Independence and later in the War of 1812. Ensign George Sproule, of his Majesty’s 59th regiment surveyed and drew the map of figure 4 sometime in 1770 or thereafter, and it was
published in 1772. It depicts a dwelling house at Wentworth Point. The Wentworth genealogy states James {1L} built the house when Jane Wentworth was but 3 years old, which would have been around 1773-1774. At any rate by the early 1770s the Wentworths had settled Wentworth Point.

In 1772 it seemed that advocates for a single meeting house for the town had prevailed and tradition informs us a meeting house frame was constructed at the central location of Bristol Mills.² But public sentiment shifted again, and the frame was removed by a self-appointed mob to one of the three parish locations that was previously approved by voters, William Sproul’s land in the parish of Harrington.

At a subsequent town meeting the parishes of Walpole and Broad Cove were by vote authorized to locate their own meeting houses, and they were authorized to raise among themselves the money necessary for the construction of a meeting house.² Any money previously paid into the treasury for this purpose was to be refunded. Several persons at this meeting were not allowed to vote, but no reason was recorded. Very probably it was for non-payment of taxes for at the next meeting it was voted that any man who pays two-thirds as much of his poll tax shall be allowed to vote. One of those persons who was not allowed to vote was a William Kelsey.²¹

Few of the yeomanry, or the laboring class of citizens anywhere, were attached to the ceremonies of the ecclesiastical government of the Episcopal Church, and were more in favor of the congregational order.⁵⁶

At some point Gershom Wentworth {1N} also came to settle in Bristol, Maine. Gershom Wentworth {1N} married Mary Richards {10} in Bristol March 3, 1774 and they had seven kids. Sarah Wentworth was born 15 March 1776. She married Oliver Richards in Searsmont, Me. Mary Wentworth was born the 20th of May in 1778; she married Dodivah Richards. John Wentworth {2V} was born in Bristol 13 January 1780. James Wentworth was born May the 14th, 1782. He married Mary Little, and died childless in 1846. Hannah Wentworth was born 20 July, 1784; she married and had three children. Samuel Wentworth was born 8 August 1786; he died single, in Searsmont, Me., March 1863. Benjamin was born in the month of February, 1790. At the time Long John Wentworth must have corresponded with this side of the family, 1867, he was single and living at Hazelton’s Corners, Searsmont, Me.

Food was scarce in Maine during the winter and spring of 1775.⁴³ Several leading citizens of Bath informed the General Court in August that the sale of lumber had ceased and drought and mildew had “cut off our hopes from the English Harvest and rendered bread extremely scarce among us.”

In 1775 William Kelsey {11} died at the age of 28.¹

1775 onwards were times of distress and economic misery until 1790 when the national government assumed state and continental debts.⁴³ To a large degree because of these hardships settlers poured into Maine over the oncoming years to seek opportunity, unnumbered farms were cleared in the wilderness, new towns arose almost overnight and the population doubled almost twice over.

In April 1775 people from all parts of Bristol gathered on Walpole Hill to raise the front wall of the meeting house. Once this task was accomplished the men celebrated with a barrel of rum. Further construction, however was halted by the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. It was not until 1783 when peace was restored that work resumed on the structure.²

In March 1775 Bristol voted to raise 3 militia companies of 60 men each.² In accordance with the provincial congress they appointed a Committee of Inspection. May 2d, 1775 the town voted to send Thomas Bracket as agent to Congress to represent the difficulty of the town for want of ammunition and other stores. The 3rd Regiment of Lincoln County was commanded by Col. Wm. Jones of Bristol; the regiment protected the
coast against the depredations of the British. Though the young town of Bristol sympathized fully with the patriot cause, it staggered under the enormous burden of the war. It struggled to meet quotas for articles of clothing for soldiers and for beef and other articles of food. Prices skyrocketed as the currency depreciated.

William Kelsey’s brother James Killsa purchased of David Robbins the adjoining lot to his brother Hugh at Madambeticks, November 5, 1776, afterwards somewhat celebrated as “the Killsa farm.” James Killsa of Thomaston, while residing at Bristol, enlisted as private Mar. 18, 1777, for 3 years in Captain Barton’s Co. Col. Henry Sherbourne’s Regt. He was later transferred to Capt. Trafton’s Co. Col Jackson’s Regt. He was discharged at West Point Mar. 17, 1780.

In late 1777 the post road from Falmouth to Georgetown was re-established and extended to Thomaston/Rockland, however there is reason to believe that service on this route did not continue beyond a year.

Almost four months after James Wentworth was born his father James Wentworth died on the 2nd of June, 1778 at the age of 36; he drowned while attempting to cross the Damariscotta River.

In 1779 the British adopted a strategy to seize parts of Maine, especially around Penobscot Bay, and make it a new colony to be called “New Ireland.” It was intended to be a permanent colony for Loyalists and a base for military action during the war. In early July a British naval and military force under the command of General Francis McLean sailed into Castine's commodious harbor, landed troops, and took control of the village. They began erecting Fort George on one of the highest points of the peninsula. Alarmed by this incursion, the state of Massachusetts sent a military expedition to drive out the British. Thirty-five year old Gershom Wentworth served as a private under the command of Capt. Benj. Plummer in Colonel William Jones 3rd Lincoln County Regt. Mass Militia on the ill-fated Penobscot Expedition from the 6th of July to the 24th of September, 1779.

In November 1779 Lincoln County’s magistrates lamented:

After having struggled through the miseries of a hard and pinching winter, the people’s countenances pale, and their bodies become feeble, through want and hunger, they were in the spring of the year, from the first appearance of things, in great hopes of a fruitful summer, but their early hopes were soon cut off, by amazing swarms of grasshoppers, and other insects which in many parts of this county almost covered the face of the ground, and destroyed a great part of the grain and grass and almost all vegetables that grew out of the earth.

The town of Bristol voted £114 to be given to Jacob Eaton for taking care of William Kent and his wife. It was also voted to see what the town will do about William Kent and wife and other poor of the town.

The winter of 1779-1780 was particularly severe, both to the great depth of snow on the ground and the intense cold. For several days in the month of February people passed on the ice to and fro on the Penobscot Bay between Camden and Castine. The occupation and burning of new lands in New England became so extensive that it produced the famous "dark day" on May 19, 1780, when a vast cloud of smoke combined with a thick cloud cover to plunge northern New England into near total darkness.

In 1780 after much anxious discussion the town of Bristol voted to petition the general court for some “easement” in the collection of their taxes, and also more aid in protecting the coasts, which were infested with marauders east of them, and tories from among themselves. 1781 finds the town being fined for not having supplied the required number of men for the army, and the town was arrears in their taxes. Local shipping was disrupted by the war, and it is estimated one fourth of the able bodied men of Bristol died in the war.
close of the war the economy was in shambles. The merchant fleet was reduced next to nothing, and the years ahead were those of scarcity and hard struggle. The following is a petition of the town to the General Court of Massachusetts:

To the Honourable the Senate Council & House of Representatives in General Court Assembled—

The Petition of the Town of Bristol in the County of Lincoln humbly sheweth that by reason of the late War this Town has been reduc’d to great distress & tho now by the Blessings of Providence peace be restor’d unto us yet we still sorely feel the Effects of the War—By our Enemies taking Post at Penobscut & continually infesting this Coast with their privateers & small Boats our lumber & fishing Trade in which alone we had any Concern has been almost totally Suppress’d Almost every Vessel we own’d in the Beginning of the War fell into their hands & tho from time to time Vessels have been purchas’d—with money borrow’d for this purpose whereby a debt has been contracted as the Inhabitants could not possibly subsist without some to convey their lumber to Market yet of this we have been stript with our lumber & Fish on Board or the returns of it in Provision for the Support of our families So that by a late Computation our losses by Water amount to £4240 besides the Arms Ammunition provisions & Apparel that have been taken out of our Houses by plundering Refugees—The Seasons for a Number of Years past have been very unfavourable & the Drought So Severe that tho people’s Attention have been more than ever turn’d to the Cultivation of their Farms yet they have not been able to raise above half enough of Bread for their Consumption & the risque of Importation being so great & many dispos’d to take Advantage of the Necessities of others thereby the Price of the Necessaries of life has been rais’d—so high that people were involv’d in the greatest difficulties & oblig’d to part with every Commodity they had to dispose of at the Buyers Price So that Corn has been sold for four Dollars or more & other Articles in Proportion—Our Hay has also been cut of with the Drought for several years so that our Stocks are greatly diminish’d by what they were at the Beginning of the War & at present there is such a Scarcity of Bread that hardly all the Lumber we have on hand can procure us bread for the Season a Cord of Wood not fetching above half a Bushel Corn—Besides the debt contracted by Individuals thro the distresses Occasion’d by the War the most part of the State Taxes for some Years have not been discharg’d We acknowledge that a few Individuals could at the proper time have paid their proportion & were willing to do so, but the majority however dispos’d to pay their part were utterly unable & numbers among us inimically inclin’d—to these States who carried on a clandestine Trade with the Enemy greatly to the detriment of the Town threaten’d the Collectors with utter destruction so that they durst not discharge the duties of their Office— If your Honours should now exact from us these Taxes it would utterly ruin Individuals & give such a crush to the whole Town as it could not for many Years recover of & put it out of its power for the future to pay such a proportion of Taxes for defraying the Expenses of Government as otherwise it might We would therefore beg your Honours would take our distressing Situation under your Serious Consideration & discharge us of these Taxes that were due before Peace was made & your Petitioners as in duty bound shall ever pray

Sign’d in name & by Appointment of the Town by

Henter Hunter {Selectmen of}
Thomas Johnston {Bristol}

In 1781 the town voted to settle with Mr. William McClain for keeping old Wm. Kent & wife in the year 1779. They also voted that year that the selectmen should provide a place for old Mis Kent. In 1782 the town voted to warn Sally Vinson out of town afraid that she might become a charge to them. A bounty of 12 shillings was voted for wolves heads, 6 shillings for bears, 6 shillings for wild cats, and 6 pence for crow heads. Samuel Clark was 1 of 9 chosen to be on the Committee of Correspondence, & Safety.

Bristol yeoman William Kellsa Junior had aforetime settled his son William Kellsa Jr. on a certain tract of land that he purchased, but his son deceased before such a deed could be executed. Now, in 1781, so
that justice be done, and in consideration of the labor his son had done on the land, and because of the natural affection he bore his son’s children, to wit, his grandchildren, John Kellsa, James Kellsa Jun., William Kellsa Jun., and Hannah Kellsa, he conveyed an unspecified sized parcel of land bounded by his property, the property of Gershom Wentworth (1N), and the shore of the river, to hold as Tenants in Common and not as Jointtenants.*17 Mary Allson was one of two witnesses.*18

Figure 5: 1781 Land Record of William Kellsa (b.1716) deeding land to his grandchildren; land he had intended to deed their father and his son, William Kelsey (1I) before his untimely demise in 1775.
In 1782 William Kellse and his wife Mary redescribed a couple tracts of land, on the river between their land and land of Jonas Fitch that they had sold to gentleman Zebulon Howard in 1775, as it had been wrongly described in his deed.\textsuperscript{54} In 1782 William and Mary Kelsey conveyed a 90 acre tract of land between the Damariscotta River and Orrs Meadow Brook, including their dwelling house, barn, and all appurtenances, unto Moses Kelsey for £100.\textsuperscript{55}

\textbf{Liberty Men}

After the war’s end in 1783 thousands from all over New England moved into the backcountry of Maine—hard-pressed by the post-war depression—in search of lands where they could directly procure their own food and fuel.\textsuperscript{37} It was widely rumored that backcountry lands were free for the taking because of the loyalty of many of the proprietors, and they hoped the commonwealth would confiscate their patents to bestow free homesteads on their impoverished families. Settlers insisted that loyalists’ property ought to be the just reward of those who, in the words of Bristol’s William Rogers, “fought under the idea that they were to have the lands they were defending.”\textsuperscript{37} It was estimated that in Bristol and the surrounding communities the majority of the residents were squatters.\textsuperscript{37} With good weather and favorable winds, a day’s sail bought a family from Boston to mid-Maine.
During the warm months, dozens of small vessels, known as wood coasters, regularly plied the waters between Massachusetts’ coastal towns and Maine’s many coves, offering migrants cheap transport. Moreover the fleet of wood coasters permitted those who settled along the coast and rivers to obtain an immediate, albeit scanty, subsistence by harvesting cordwood and timber for shipment to market in southern New England.  

The eastern country attracted the poor rather than the prosperous. New land presented new hope that farmers could pass on their freehold prosperity and status to their children and thereby preserve them from tenancy. The eastern country offered many hard-pressed families their last, best hope of securing their liberty as independent producers; they sought freedom from economic dependence of being wage laborers in the older more established New England towns.

It usually took a man 2 weeks to clear five acres. Known as a “good burn” deadwood and brush were hauled into piles and set ablaze, thus covering the clearing with a soft, fertile layer of fine ashes ready for winter rye or Indian corn seed without plowing. In clearing land clothes were worn out and torn to pieces going through the bushes; bare feet and ankles were scratched, and the laborer’s necks bled from the bites of flies and mosquitoes which often drove them from their work in the spring and summer. Typically the settler would first build a hovel. Then when a log cabin or a more substantial structure could be erected for the family’s dwelling, the hovel would be used as the barn for the animals.

When Talleyrand visited Maine in 1794 he observed: “In very long stretches of completely settled coast there is no specie . . . All their transactions are in the form of barter. Six thousand feet of boards are exchanged for a cow, a gallon of rum for 6 days labor, etc. Even prostitution is bought more or less publicly and is paid for with pins; that is the small coin of the country.” At times, many people lacked enough to eat. Dollars were shown about as curiosities. Some observers of these times describe the settlers as “all very poor, but as ‘happy as clams’ and as friendly to each other as monkeys; there was a general spirit of good neighborhood. Mutual support sustained the settlers’ tenuous hold on their liberty as freeholders. They frequently pooled their resources and labor. Neighbors customarily exchanged labor, a system they called “changing works.” Settlers staggered their butchering in the fall and winter and shared the meat with neighbors. During the hay harvest, settlers put aside all other work and enlisted every available pair of hands, straining to harvest as much fodder as possible in the short Maine summer to maximize the number of livestock they could sustain through the long, cold winter. Neighbors united their labor in husking bees, house building, wood clearing, etc., and the women in quilting and the like. When fire destroyed a settler’s cabin, his neighbors united to help him rebuild and to contribute spare furniture and tools.

Through work parties, settlers rotated their labor, providing all with needed assistance and social companionship. During the day’s work the host provided abundant rum; and once the task was completed, he supplied a supper, usually followed by a dance. Settlers cherished the sociability of work parties as a respite from a mundane, often harsh routine on lone farms.

Widespread intemperance lent a dark undercurrent to the settlers’ sociability. Many believed they could not perform their heavy physical labor unless partially intoxicated, especially when the weather was unusually hot or cold. Every visit, work party, election, funeral, marriage, militia muster, and birth called for sharing alcohol. The more liquor a man could give, the higher his local standing. Drunkenness allowed men to vent their jealousies and resentments that the “good neighborhood” suppressed. The morning after settlers could mend strains by blaming any unpleasantness on the alcohol. Widespread intemperance also had pathological consequences. Poverty and sickness promoted the settlers’ drinking, which in turn, for many, worsened their health, increased their debts, and paralyzed their industry, perpetuating their marginality.

Between 1783 and 1785 crops were ruined by summer frosts. On March 5, 1787 the town of Bristol voted to build a bridge at Amos Gowdy’s Mill. Within the same article on that warrant the town voted to allow Robert Miller to hang a gate between his house and the mill for that year.
In 1787 William Killsa, yeoman of Bristol, sold to his son George Killsa a 97 acre plot along the east side of the Damariscotta River, bordering Moses Killsa’s property and Zebulon Howland’s farm. It was witnessed by Leighton Colbath and Stuart Hunt, and Will Killsa bought the signed instrument to Justice of the Peace Alex Nichols and acknowledged it as his own free act and deed. The same day Will Killsa appeared before Alex Nichols, his son George Kelsey also appeared with a deed before Mr. Nichols. He and his wife Agnes deeded 50 acres to John Little for the same price he paid his father for the 97 acres, £50. Both deeds were entered into the county registry 2 days later. In 1788 a George Killsa is among the petitioners of Thomaston to the Massachusetts General Court for relief from taxation.

In 1779 widow Esther Williams of Lincoln County--no town is specified--bought from Edward Emerson of Boothbay a certain parcel of land in Edgecomb on the west side of the Damariscotta River bounded by the Salt Marsh Cove. In the inflationary era of the Revolutionary War she paid £600. The parcel contained 100 acres with dwelling houses and hovels. It was not entered into the records until August 7, 1784. September 26, 1787 widow Esther Williams of Bristol, in consideration of her maintenance in her life, deeded this tract of land to her daughter, the widow Elizabeth Wentworth of Bristol.

Figure 7: Land record of widow Esther Williams deeding land at Salt Marsh Cove in Edgecomb to her daughter widow Elisabeth Wentworth in consideration of her maintenance through life. (Source: Lincoln County Registry of Deeds)
A cold, hard winter following the summer drought and early frosts of 1789 produced famine in the spring of 1790. To compound the woes there was an astonishing number of devourers, grasshoppers more numerous than ever before known. 15 Feb. 1790 it was entered into the town records of Bristol that Solomon Gidons has come into the town of Bristol for the purpose of abiding there without the town's consent. He, his family, and other family & persons were given 15 days to depart the town. An Ephraim Woodbury and his people were similarly treated. That year the town voted a bounty of 20 shillings for wolves heads. Amos Goudy was chosen...
constable for the southern part of town. The constable was also ordered to warn and give notice unto Judith Tar a transient person who had lately come into the town for the purpose of abiding therein not having obtained the Town's consent. She and her Child were to be ordered to Depart the limets [sic] thereof within 15 days.

In 1790 the first U.S. Census recorded a population of 896 people for all of Bristol, a third of whom may have resided in Walpole and the southern part of present-day South Bristol. The beginning of George Washington’s administration marked 15 years of prosperity for Maine.

Hardships though prolonged the settlers’ poverty. In September, 1791 Bristol’s selectmen wrote, “We are a poor people in general and the one half of our houses is small huts not sufficient to shelter us from the storm nor are we able to get better and many poor famelys has none at all.” In 1791 the town voted that any rams going at large from the first of September to the middle of November shall be forfeit and the owner pay 20 shillings. Any stallion going at large shall pay 40 shillings. The town also voted a pound be built at Walpole. The town was also to vote on what it will do about the district of Maine being a new state.

Hannah Kelsey \( {2}^{G} \) died in 1792 at the age of 20.

James Kelsey \( {2}^{D} \) married Olive Colbath on October 2\(^{nd} \), 1792, and they had: John Kelsey 20 Sept 1793; Enoch Kelsey born 15 Oct 1797; James Kelsey \( {3}^{W} \) born 15 Nov. 1799.*

In 1793 James Kelsey \( {2}^{D} \) paid £20 to his brother’s William \( {2}^{E} \) and John \( {2}^{C} \) for a 52 acre tract between Orrs Meadow Brook and the Damarascotty River on the northern line of Gershom Wentworth’s \( {1}^{N} \) property.

During 1793, in the words of one Mainer, the grasshoppers “destroyed almost every green thing.” The infestations were not more serious than elsewhere in rural America, but settlers here felt them more severely here in Maine because they rarely possessed any surplus of grain to draw upon in adversity.

William Kelsey \( {2}^{E} \) married his cousin Esther Wentworth \( {2}^{M} \), daughter of James Wentworth \( {1}^{K} \), 23 January 1794. They had: Eliza Kelsey, born 2 March 1797. She married Charles Sprague of Waldoborough, Me., and died 27 May 1827. George Kelsey was born 5 August 1798, and he died 8 October 1798.\(^{1} \)

An Act of Congress effective June 1, 1794 established post roads from Passamaquoddy in Maine to St. Mary’s in Georgia. The route passed from Passamaquoddy to Waldoborough through Bristol to Nobleborough to St. Mary’s.

In 1795 Bristol yeoman John Kelsea \( {2}^{C} \) and John Wentworth \( {2}^{K} \) bought 75 acres of land along Orrs Meadow Brook from Mariner John Hutchins of Bristol to be held as tenants in common. It was entered into the county records 30 December, 1801.

In 1795, that eminent servant of God, Jesse Lee passed through Bristol, and preached a sermon from 2d Peter, 3d chapter, 14\(^{th} \) verse ; “Wherefore, brethren, seeing you look for such things, be ye diligent,” &c. which was the first sermon preached in town by a Methodist. Probably he came down no further than Col. Jones in Walpole, who had become much disaffected from his Presbyterian brethren. There were occasional sermons till 1798, when the town was embraced in what was called the Bath and Union Circuit.\(^{33} \)

On 16 April, 1797 John Wentworth \( {2}^{K} \) married Patty (Martha) Williams \( {2}^{L} \).* Martha Wentworth \( {2}^{L} \) was the daughter of Henry & Susanna Williams who lived on land bordering the Salt Marsh Cove in Edgecomb. On the 30th of January, 1798 Martha Wentworth \( {2}^{L} \) had twins, Harriet \( {3}^{D} \) and Susan \( {3}^{E} \). In June 1801 John & Martha sold to Bristol yeoman James Curtis & heirs as tenants in common 36 acres of land that bordered the NW corner of Hugh Paul’s land, Orrs Meadow Brook, and the SW corner of Curtis land, and...
the highway that leads from Walpole to Harrington. It said, “I with Patty my wife release her right of dower.” It was signed and sealed by John and Patty Wentworth, and witnessed by Samuel Wentworth; John Wentworth personally appeared before James Nickels Justice of the Peace for him to acknowledge the instrument, entered into the county records 30 December 1801.1

In 1798 a Lincoln County grand jury fined Bristol for not being provided with Powder and Balls as according to Law.2 In June 1798 the town voted not to move Saml. Lermond's wife, nor pay costs without the law obliged them. Article 2 in the town warrant of Sept. 9, 1798 reads, whereas Sally Lermond wife to Samuel Lermond an inhabitant of the town is ['?Desstracted?'] ['?&?'] is become charged to this town -- This is to see what the town will do in the matter. The town voted that William Kelso is to keep Saml Lermond’s wife at twelve shillings until the Next Town meeting.

The real properties of five Wentworths and three Kelseys from Bristol--the heads of their families or owners of land--were valued in 1798 for the assessment of a direct tax. One dwelling house was valued at $105 and 50 acres valued at $400 for Elizabeth Wentworth. Gershom Wentworth had 1 dwelling house valued at $30 and 50 acres valued at $150. John Wentworth had 1 dwelling house valued at $15 and 50 acres valued at $150. James and Samuel Wentworth each had 100 acres of land that were both valued at $300 each. John Kelsey had 1 dwelling house valued at $30 and 100 acres valued at $400. James Kelsey had 50 acres valued at $200 and William Kelsey had 58 acres valued at $300.3

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**Direct Tax**

The direct tax provision of the U.S. constitution proved useful in times of a national emergency. It actually was implemented four times: once in 1798, twice during the War of 1812, and once during the Civil War.4 In 1798 trade was threatened due to French attacks on American shipping.5 President Adams sent three envoys to Paris, where French diplomats offered to negotiate a treaty if the United States would pay a bribe to the French foreign minister Charles Maurice de Talleyrand.6 The French diplomats were known as Agents X, Y, and Z.7 This so-called “X Y Z” affair aroused a patriotic fervor in the United States. The threat of war loomed, and four months later in July the Congress passed the direct tax on real property. The tax was widely resented.8

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Millions of stone walls were built after the beginning of the American Revolution between 1775 and 1825.9 Wood was becoming scarcer while the stones were becoming more plentiful. It was estimated that an average Yankee household used thirty to forty cords of wood per year, each measuring four feet high, four feet deep, and twenty feet long.10 At that rate many farm woodlots would have soon been exhausted.

By the end of the 18th century Bristol had recovered from the disastrous effects of the previous wars, and was enjoying a degree of prosperity before unknown.2 The lumber business, in particular, was very active, as the region had not been entirely despoiled of its immense forests. There was much ship building along the coast, and many vessels were employed in transporting lumber to domestic and foreign ports, bringing back in return West India goods, for which there was a great demand, and manufactured articles mostly from Europe.

By 1800 Maine’s population had grown to 151,719, and by the time Maine became a state in 1820 it had 298,687 inhabitants.3

At the end of the 18th century, among the aged people of Bristol, the wild horses that roamed the woods in this region were a common topic of remark.2 It was supposed they were descendants of horses left here by the early settlers a century before. Occasionally some of them were caught and appropriated; and not unfrequently when guilty of breaking into fields and destroying the growing crops, they were shot without mercy.11
Notes

This is a third and final edition of a Wentworth Point History Bulletin. It was edited, put into chapter form, and reissued in 2017.

Note about further research: the author was not able to access all the records at the town of Bristol and other places. Any source cited could be revisited to yield more information. The author has not seen Pemaquid (Me.). Papers [manuscript], 1633-1774 at the American Antiquarian Society at Worcester which may or may not have records of Kelsey and Wentworth land purchases. The author has not visited any archives, historical societies, or libraries in New Hampshire that might shed light on when or in what circumstances these families moved to Maine.

This chapter may be amended in the future if such information comes to light.

There are variations in the records about the way surnames are spelled; those spelling variations are used in this chapter.

* {#} after a name denotes the generation in the Wentworth Point Family Tree, as indicated horizontally at the bottom of the page. {#} The superscript denotes the location of a person in that generation, as indicated vertically on the left side of the tree.*

*1 Special thanks to the South Bristol Historical Society for all of their help and generosity. Over the years the DMC community has made numerous enquiries into the past history of this place and the society has always been readily helpful. I’d like to thank and make special mention of the society’s Co-President Ellen Wells, Co-President Cathy Stockwell, and Historian Dave Andrews for their personal assistance at the time these sources were compiled.

*2 There are a very many Wentworths and Kelseys in the neighborhood. I originally attempted to focus on those members of the family that were living here at the point and the people who are buried in the cemetery. However people moved around and some people buried in the cemetery had lived at places other than Wentworth Point, so a wider net was cast. There are inconsistencies with some dates and records, and it’s not always easy to tell one John or Jane from another. The Wentworth Point Family Tree is the best rendering I can presently make, based on the different sources for the familial relations, of the 4 or 5 generations of Wentworths and Kelseys that occupied this neighborhood up to the time Ira Darling took possession of the property in 1939. All the people interred in the Wentworth Cemetery are related to each other by blood and/or marriage.

*3 Two other sources has John Wintworth of Bristol and Patty Williams of Edgecomb being married by the Rev. William Riddell 30 Nov. 1797.20, 21

*4 Two other sources has Alex Nickels Esq. marrying James Kelso and Olife Corbeth Christmas Day, 1788.20, 21

*5 The will was made out in 1813.23

*6 It is here noted that the first settler of Wentworth Point James Wentworth’s {1} grandfather Gershom Wentworth (1649-1741) gave to James’s father John Wentworth (1706-1746) the 46th lot in the newly formed town of Rochester, N.H., in 1729. That lot was not too distant from a lot for an Archibald McPhidiras. There are varying accounts of
Archibald. He is said to have come over from Scotland in 1716 and settled at Portsmouth, N.H. with a brother. He had a son named Archibald too. One account states he and his family came from Bath to Bangor about 1771.

*7 During this time period the name “Patty” was a diminutive of the name Martha.

*8 For more about poor relief in Bristol and Maine see Source # 35.

*9 The naming of the children of James and Elizabeth loosely follows a pattern that was popular in England from 1700 to 1875. Thus the first son John was named after his father’s father, and the third son James was named after his father. In the cited web page it says the first daughter is named after the mother’s mother, and the second daughter is named after the father’s mother. For this family however the first daughter Jane is named after her father’s mother, and the second daughter Esther is named after her mother’s mother. It’s not known at this time the name of Elizabeth Wentworth’s father. However, in this naming convention the second son was named after the mother’s father. Therefore it may be that the father of Elizabeth Wentworth is a Samuel Williams.

*10 Accounts vary.

*11 There was A Daniel Palmer who married an Elizabeth Goudy, both of Bristol in 1773. They removed to Rockland.

*12 Carolyn Kelsey quotes a Donald Raymond Kelso paper titled “Royal Kelso Kin.” I have not been able to access the paper. THE KELSEY FAMILY I have compiled here from Carolyn’s sources and other sources is the best probable rendering of mine on the Kelseys that came to mid coast Maine. The pieces seem to fit, and so I’ve included it, but my past experience reminds me that doesn’t mean those pieces always go together. I’ve not been able to access private record # 74 in Dodge’s Bristol vital records either, which is often cited in the vital records for Kelseys.

*13 In 1762 the garrison at St. George (Thomaston) was discontinued. Newly arriving immigrants began to use it as a temporary residence until they could erect a more substantial dwelling. Among the earliest of these was Oliver Robbins, with his wife and seven children, from Attleboro, Mass., who built the first framed dwelling house in Thomaston. It was raised Christmas Day 1762 on one of 3 lots just below Mill River. Hugh Kelsey’s sister Sarah Killsa of Bristol married Oliver Robbins Jr. 28 Feb., 1780, and they lived west of the meadows. They are buried at the Tollman Cemetery in Rockland.

*14 Thanks to Ann Morris and the Rockland Historical Society for their assistance.

*15 James Killsa married Lydia Keene in 1785, and they had 5 children. His will is dated 1792, witnessed by Jacob Keen, Lavinia Lewis, and Elisha Keen. Lydia gave notice of her appointment as administratrix in 1794. David Fales, Oliver Robbins and Benj. Blackington, all of Thomaston inventoried his estate. Lydia received a bounty in lieu of a land grant in Maine for James Killsa’s service in the army.

*16 William Kelsey’s brother George Killsa married the daughter of Bristol native Elisha Clarke, Agnes Clarke. They had one son, Captain Daniel Killsea. 1791 was marked by the supposed death by drowning of George Killsa, who had settled and then resided at Owl’s Head. Having visited some of the vessels lying in
that harbor, he set out on his return in the darkness of evening alone in his punt. A man who was nearby in a similar craft, afterwards remembered to have heard a gurgling sound, but suspected nothing at the time; and, though much search was made during the night and following day, no trace of the body was ever found. The probate records state his name as George Kellsy, or Kellsa, late of Bristol. Widow Agnes Kellsy became Administratrix of the estate 20 Sept. 1791. Thomas Johnston and Jacob Dockendorff, both of Bristol were sureties. An inventory was made by Amos Goudy, Henry Fossett, and William Sproul, all of Bristol on 7 Nov. 1791. Thomas Johnston and William Sproul were appointed commissioners to examine claims against the estate.

*17 Curiously he does not mention his granddaughter Abigail {2} born in 1775. In addition it seems odd that James is called James Junior.

*18 Might this be a clue to who Mary Kellsa was? William Kellsa (b1716) had a sister, Sarah Kellsa (b1719) who married a Thomas Allison of Barrington. The surname of Thomas varies though in different sources. It appears as Ellis, Ellison, Allison, etc.

*19 The date this 1797 deed is entered into the records is the same date for the 1795 deed from mariner John Hutchins to John Kelsea {2} and John Wentworth {2}.

*20 Though both have started families, William and James Kelsey are not being taxed for a house. John Kelsey was not known to have had a family but he is being taxed for a house. Perhaps the siblings are sharing that house. When John Kelsey died in 1801 his probate records indicated he had land here in Bristol, but he also had a 70 acre lot and 100 acre lot in Bangor.

*21 In 1760 Amos Goudy and several families removed to Harrington, now Bristol. He purchased 80 acres from Isaac Dupee of Boston for £40. He built a small log cabin, and then by fishing sloop moved his family and all his household goods from York. He established a mill upon Orr’s Meadow Brook where it flowed into the Damariscotta River. He drowned in the millpond in 1764. Tradition has it he was building a gundalo below his mill when the accident occurred.

*22 It is interesting to note that George’s surname is spelled Kellsey at the beginning of this land record and Killsa at the end of it.
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