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Descendants of Andrew and Rebecca McFarland Six Generations of Family, Farm, and Homestead 1730 - 1910



A view from Newton Hill, 1891

Generation 1: Andrew and Rebecca (Gray) McFarland, p.11

Generation 2: James and Elizabeth (Barber) McFarland, p. 19

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On August 4, 1718, five ships arrived in Boston harbor carrying families immigrating to the colony from Ireland, most of them presbyterians of Scottish descent by way of the Province of Ulster.¹ They would become known as the “Scots-Irish,” or “Scotch-Irish,” and this would be the first of many such arrivals throughout the 18th century. This group had been organized by four presbyterian ministers who petitioned the royal governor for land grants in Massachusetts for themselves and members of their congregations. They numbered 113 applicants and their families, totaling about 700 persons. Governor Shute encouraged them to come and extended to them grants, or rights to acquire land, in various locations throughout the colony. Among them were Londonderry (later New Hampshire), which became one of the largest Scots-Irish communities and had the ‘honor’ of using the name of the principal protestant and pro-English city in Ulster, as well as Worcester, Rutland, and several other towns in Worcester County. The settlement of the Scots-Irish in the colony was generally successful, although not without issues, and their numbers grew to the point that by the time of the revolution half the population of Massachusetts consisted of persons of at least partly Scottish ancestry.²

Among the arriving families was that of Daniel McFarland, age 54, with four sons and at least two daughters, and his brother Duncan. In the genealogical account of the family by Ellery B. Crane there was no mention of a wife.³ She may have died in Ireland before the family emigrated. The McFarlands settled in Marblehead and remained there for about a decade. The oldest of the four sons, Andrew, born in 1690 in Ireland, was one of eleven members of the Scots-Irish awarded land grants in Worcester in 1718 as part of the Governor’s arrangement with the newcomers. There were at that time, according to William Lincoln, nearly fifty eight families in the settlement.⁴ About 1720, Andrew married Rebecca Scott Gray, who was also from Ireland and who probably came over in the same passage. By 1729 they had five children and were living in Marblehead, with a move to Worcester on the horizon.

¹ Accounts of the Scotch-Irish in Worcester can be found in histories by Lincoln, Wall, Nutt, and Moynihan, each a major source on the larger context of the history of the town. William Lincoln, *History of Worcester, Massachusetts, From Its Earliest Settlement to September, 1836*, published by Charles Hersey, Worcester, 1862; Caleb A. Wall, *Reminiscences of Worcester, from the Earliest Period, Historical and Genealogical*, published by Tyler and Seagrave, Worcester, 1877; Charles Nutt, *History of Worcester and Its People*, vol. I, Lewis Historical Publishing Company, New York, 1919; Kenneth J. Moynihan, *A History of Worcester 1674-1848*, Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2007. There are other valuable sources on Worcester history, but these four provide most, if not all, that is to be found concerning the Scottish settlement in Worcester.

² Nutt, p. 28

³ Ellery B. Crane, *Descendants of Daniel McFarland, One of the Scotch Presbyterians who Settled in Worcester, Massachusetts*, Blanchard Press, Worcester, 1907. Unless otherwise noted, Crane’s research, as incorporated in accessible genealogical listings, constitutes the source of the names and dates pertaining to members of the McFarland family throughout this document.

⁴ Lincoln, p.46. Actually, he said there were believed to be fifty-eight *dwelling houses*, based on proprietary records. Thus we infer *approximately* that number of families.

In 1727, Daniel and his son Andrew McFarland purchased a tract of land in Worcester, which at that time was still in Middlesex County, as Worcester County had not yet been established. From the original deed of transfer:

GERSHOM KEYES, of Shrewsbury, yeoman, sold to Daniel McFarland and Andrew McFarland, both of Marblehead, in the county of Essex, Laborers, Oct. 26, 1727, for two hundred and sixty-one pounds, ten shillings, "a Certain Tract or parcel of Land Situate lying and being in the South Part of Worcester in the County of Middlesex aforesaid containing by Estimation one hundred Eighty and five acres ⁵

By "the South Part of Worcester" was meant the area that later constituted the town of Worcester (more or less), after the "north part" was removed, in 1741, to form the town of Holden. Subsequent text of the transaction, not shown here, identified bordering land parcels by the names of their owners. From these names it is established that this land was in fact the land on the west side of the south part of Worcester with which the McFarlands were thereafter associated.

In terms of reference points available today, the McFarlands' newly-acquired land was located in the vicinity of the intersection of Pleasant Street and Richmond Avenue, about two miles west of City Hall. Heading out Pleasant Street toward Tatnuck, the tract began at about Hadwen Lane and Intervale Street, and extended beyond Lenox and South Lenox Streets, possibly as far as May and Flagg Streets, and ranged several hundred yards to either side of Pleasant. Because of difficulties in the interpretation of 18th century property deeds - with their measures from "heaps of stones" to old oak trees and the like - it has proven infeasible here to identify the boundaries of the McFarland land in its original state, or during its first century or so, with the kind of precision needed to plot it on a map. By the mid-19th century, however, the boundaries had become clear enough to allow for a sufficiently detailed map, although the size and shape of the land still owned by the family had changed a great deal by then. Such a map is presented at a subsequent point in the narrative.

Before the land belonged to Mr. Keyes of Shrewsbury, from whom the McFarlands bought it, there had been a previous owner. Continuing the quoted portion above, the 185-acre tract was described in the deed as "*the Same more or less Said hundred and Eighty Five acres was laid out to m^r Gardner upon the Right granted for the first Settled minister in Worcester....*" Worcester's first "settled minister" was the Rev. Andrew Gardner. His sale of the land to Mr. Keyes had taken place only six months earlier:

ANDREW GARDNER of Turkey Hill, in the county of Middlesex, sold to Gershom Keyes, of Shrewsbury, Innholder, April 20, 1727, for two hundred and twenty pounds, "a Certain Tract or Parcel of Land ... containing by Estimation one Hundred Eighty and five acres be the same more or less Said Hundred and Eighty five acres was laid out to the said Gardner upon the Rights Granted for the First Settled minister in Worcester as Second and Third Division Land in the South Half Part of Worcester" ⁶

⁵ *Abstracts of Early Worcester Land Titles, Copied from Middlesex County Records*, Worcester: The Worcester Society of Antiquity, 1907, pp.47-48. This publication provides the reader access to land title transactions prior to the formation of Worcester County in 1731, from which date such records are found at the Registry of Deeds.

⁶ *Abstracts of Early Worcester Land Titles*, pp. 49-50.

Mr. Keyes, an innholder in Shrewsbury, emerges here as a very early, possibly the first, dealer in real estate in central Massachusetts. His profit on this pair of transactions amounted to forty-one pounds, ten shillings, a gain of nearly twenty percent in six months, thus setting the bar high for realty operators to follow.

The text of the Gardner-to-Keyes transaction suggests that the hill upon which lay all or part of the 185-acre tract had by 1727 been given the name *Turkey Hill*. The reference said Mr. Gardner was *of* Turkey Hill, as if to say a resident thereof, but it seems unlikely that the town's minister would have resided that far, about two miles, from the small and barely-established community which was still in its first decade of existence. In any case, the name evidently did not stick.

The story of the Rev. Andrew Gardner's tumultuous tenure as minister in Worcester originates in the account of William Lincoln, and has been retold and supplemented in various ways by Wall, Nutt, and Moynihan. A native of Brookline and a graduate of Harvard in 1712, Mr. Gardner was induced to come to Worcester to serve as its first minister in 1719, leaving behind the greater safety and established ways of the eastern edge of the colony. Presumably he did so in part because of the lure of the financial arrangement, which included a salary of sixty pounds, as well as ministerial land set aside for the purpose of attracting a suitable candidate to the "wilds" of the frontier settlement. Gardner's tenure in the position was rocky and brief. According to Nutt, "*Friction with his parishioners began soon . . . his salary being arrears, and he was accused of too much attention to hunting deer and other game.*"⁷

After much tension and recriminations between the townspeople and Mr. Gardner, including petitions to the General Court and meetings of church councils, it was decided to dismiss the minister. Gardner's tenure as Worcester's first minister came to its end on October 31, 1722. He then sued the town for his salary, and the financial matters of the case, according to Nutt, were settled by arbitration. The agreement included Gardner's free title and right to sell the ministerial lands, and in 1727 that is what he did, and thus did the land of the town's first minister become the land of the McFarlands.⁸

Generation 1: Andrew and Rebecca (Gray) McFarland

It is not clear exactly when the McFarlands moved to Worcester, and there is no existing documentation by which to ascertain when or how or by whom land was cleared and converted

⁷ Nutt, p. 114

⁸ Writing more than a century later, Lincoln took a comparatively conciliatory tone in his assessment of this controversial character, his account providing additional insight into the ways of the man which apparently caused part of the problem: *The errors of Mr. Gardner seem to have been more of the head than heart. Eccentricities, resulting from secluded habits, and ignorance of the ways of the world, united with that independence of spirit regardless of its opinions, diminished his usefulness. Less mindful of clerical dignity than of the exhibition of wit in its practical sports, the strict sense of propriety was sometimes shocked by acts in themselves innocent. Tradition relates, as illustrative of manner, that he once secretly substituted a large stone for the better food in the pot of a friend who had invited him to dinner, by the gratification of witnessing the astonishment created by the appearance of the unusual dish of boiled granite.* (p. 114) If nothing else, the Reverend Mr. Gardner seems to have possessed a peculiar, and perhaps unsophisticated, sense of humor in an era of stern puritanical propriety.

from forest to farm, either in the case of the McFarlands or any other early Worcester family. All that is possible is to assume that what is known about the plight of early settlers gained elsewhere applies in some degree to the situation facing the McFarlands upon their arrival in the town's second decade.⁹ Almost surely they were looking at a mostly, if not entirely, wooded parcel of land, one which would require untold weeks and months of cutting and clearing, making timbers, lumber, and firewood, and, most likely, potash from the ashes of burnt branches and stumps, the products of the trees not suitable for lumber. They would also have to build a house and the necessary out-buildings of a working farm, substantial enough to get them safely through a hard winter; secure access to water suitable for drinking; raise crops sufficient to feed the family and the animals; and eventually sell excesses for the cash needed to buy products from others.¹⁰ Very little could have been done to clear or otherwise improve the land before their arrival, since only the town's first minister, no longer employed there after 1722, had owned it, aside from the six-month tenure of the real estate dealer, Mr. Keyes. The McFarlands, like many other frontier settlers, were looking at a daunting and seemingly endless array of tasks, most involving hard physical labor.

From land deed records it is evident that the McFarlands were able to acquire significant quantities of land, not only in Worcester but also in Rutland, where Daniel's brother Duncan settled. Presuming that they had some savings beyond the costs of these acquisitions, it follows that they probably were able to hire help for these tasks, and that such help would have moved them along the schedule of completion far more quickly than otherwise would have been possible. As to when the house was built and the family settled on the land, a good guess is about 1730, plus or minus a year or so. Andrew's wife Rebecca gave birth to her fifth child in August, 1729, recorded in Marblehead, according to Crane's genealogy, and to her sixth in September, 1731, recorded in Worcester.

The original house may well have been a small, temporary structure, possibly in the log cabin format, intended to get the family through a winter or two before a more substantial, permanent

⁹ Alan Taylor, *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic*, Vintage Books, 1995; and *American Colonies: The Settling of North America*, Penguin Books, 2001; Howard S. Russell, A Long, Deep Furrow: Three centuries of Farming in New England. Two additional sources, each of which is concerned primarily with colonial life in later stages, nevertheless provide implications regarding the requirements of this early stage of settlement: Jack Larkin, *The Reshaping of everyday Life, 1790-1840*, HarperPerennial, 1988; and Alice Morse Earle, *Home Life in Colonial Days*, The Macmillan Company, 1898, reprinted 1939.

¹⁰ No evidence exists (as far as is known here) concerning the making and selling of potash specifically by the McFarlands or anyone else in Worcester at this time, but it is likely that they did so, given what is known generally about its role in early settlements. Some early settlers, facing acres of forested land which they needed to clear in order to establish farms, found in potash production a way to get the most productivity out of the trees they had to cut down. Potash, or potassium hydroxide, was important in the making of lye soap, gunpowder, glass, bleach, and other products, and the demand for it was sufficient to render it worth the time and effort required to produce it for sale, a way to bring in cash while clearing trees for farming. It was made from the ashes of burnt trees, involving only water and a modest amount of time and effort. It was often the first cash crop of a settler, a way to earn enough cash to survive before the land had been sufficiently cleared to allow more traditional methods of agriculture to begin. Useful perspectives on the uses of potash, how it was made, and how much of the old timber of northeastern woodlands was destroyed on its account can be found by an on-line search on the word. Today, potash continues to be an important ingredient in fertilizers, and a major location of supplies is western Canada. Taylor discusses the significance of potash production to the early settlers of Otsego County, New York in *Mr. Cooper's Town*, esp. pp. 103-104, and 108-110.

house could be erected.¹¹ The house now standing at 830 Pleasant Street almost surely does not trace back *intact* to the original house constructed around 1730. More likely, a second house was built somewhat later, replacing the first one, possibly using one or more stone fireplaces and chimneys, as well as the cellar hole dug for the original house, and likely adding to them – thus a larger cellar, more fireplaces and chimneys.

By this time in his mid-to-upper sixties, Daniel McFarland deeded his land in Worcester to his two sons who had remained in town, Andrew and John, in two separate transactions occurring about three years apart. In January, 1729/30¹² he transferred 109 acres to Andrew, land which would become and remain, albeit with various additions and subtractions, the McFarland homestead for six generations, enduring into the 20th century. In January, 1732/33, he transferred ninety-one acres to John with the stipulation, according to Nutt, that John take care of him for the remainder of his life.¹³ Given the total of 200 acres in these two transactions, it appears that Daniel had acquired an additional fifteen acres after the original purchase of 185 acres from Gershom Keyes. Other surviving children of Daniel were cited as beneficiaries in his will,¹⁴ and a deed in 1740 referred to money left to John to take care of Daniel, Jr., a brother of John and Andrew, for reasons that are not known.¹⁵

Most likely, the McFarlands first cleared a large enough portion of the land, and built a home and other structures necessary for farm operation in order to get Andrew and his family settled. John and his wife Margaret, as well as Daniel, may also have lived there until similar procedures could be followed to build on John's land adjacent to Andrew's.

During this time of coping with the formidable tasks of settling and building a farm, the McFarlands quickly emerged as "up-standing" members of the small but thriving community of Worcester. Writing in 1877, Caleb Wall listed the families assigned in 1733 to the various sections of

¹¹ Whether or not log-style houses were prevalent in the early days of Worcester (and other New England communities) is subject to debate. The town's first historian, William Lincoln, writing in the 1830s, in the absence of "hard evidence," relied on *tradition*, in the sense of the folk-knowledge passed down through time, to suggest that they were: "*Tradition says they were humble edifices, principally of logs, one story high, with ample stone chimneys.... It is hardly necessary to add, that all have long since sunk in decay, or been removed to give place to the more splendid habitations of modern times.*" Lincoln, p. 46. The case that log homes probably were not prevalent here was made in a 1984 publication of the Worcester Heritage Preservation Society (since changed to Preservation Worcester), *Worcester's Best: A Guide to the City's Architectural Heritage*, Elliott B. Knowlton, ed., p. 130. Preservation Worcester's current education director, architectural historian Susan M. Ceccacci, supports this view and adds that timber frame construction was used in 17th century New England home building (personal correspondence).

¹² The year of the transaction is written in this manner, as is traditional, to indicate that it occurred before March 25 in a year prior to the adjustment of the Gregorian calendar in the American colonies which occurred in 1752. Prior to the change, the first day of the new year was March 25, so January came near the end of the year. After the change, a date of January 1729 in the old scheme would have been January 1730 in the new. So looking back on the date from a modern standpoint, the event occurred in January, 1730.

¹³ Nutt, p. 184, drawing upon deeds recorded with the Registry of Deeds, believed to include Book 4, Page 563 (4:563), which, while available for viewing, is very difficult to read and accuracy can not be assured.

¹⁴ Will of Daniel McFarland dated March 14, 1737/38, as cited by Nutt, p. 184

¹⁵ Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Book 14 Page 71, 1740. The documentation style used hereafter for deeds will be in the format of *book-number:page-number, date of recording*; thus, 14:71, 1740. Also, unless otherwise noted, all references to the Registry of Deeds are to the *Worcester District Registry of Deeds*.

the meeting house, as had been determined by a committee of deacons and other early notables.¹⁶ There were ten sections, or *pews*, of which the first six were on the main floor, conferring (or reflecting) somewhat greater status on their assignees, and the other four on the second floor in balcony format. Andrew McFarland was one of eight men who, with their families, was assigned to “ye second section of ye body,” and his brother John was one of seven assigned to “ye fifth section.”¹⁷ Wall’s purpose in listing the names in the seating plan was explicit: “*These names give us an idea of who were the principal residents here at that period – the then ‘solid men of Worcester.’*” The McFarlands had achieved such status within the short span of time in which they had resided in the community.

Besides the McFarlands, numerous other Scots-Irish immigrants were listed among the “solid men of Worcester.” Moynihan counted forty-one Scots among the eighty-nine men of the 1733 list, forty-six percent of the total.¹⁸ Nevertheless, despite their substantial representation in the primary institution of the community, the Scots-Irish were far from satisfied with their circumstances. The source of their discontent was, once again, their status as religious dissenters in a place of orthodoxy, for them the wrong orthodoxy.

According to William Lincoln, the desire to get away from the established church in Ulster, the Church of England, had been a primary cause of the Presbyterian emigration to the Massachusetts Bay colony.

*Adhering with conscientious fidelity to the presbyterian tenets, they endured the persecution which pressed on the protestants during successive reigns. The accession of William, although it lightened their burdens, did not relieve dissenting christians from galling exactions. Allowed to retain their form of worship, they were compelled to contribute from their resources, to the support of another church. Loaded with tythes of the harvests of lands held by tenancy under exorbitant rents, they embarked for a country where religious freedom was united with civil liberty, and neither tythingman nor taxgatherer had oppressive jurisdiction.*¹⁹

Or so they thought. Actually, the quest of the presbyterians for religious freedom had led them into a new version of the same story, replacing the Church of England with the established church of the colony, which later would be known as the Congregational Church, then simply as *the congregation*. According to Lincoln, Worcester’s new Scottish settlers were tolerated, dating from the first arrivals about 1719, in their endeavor to assemble to practice their Presbyterian faith, meeting in an old garrison house with their own minister, the Rev. Edward Fitzgerald,²⁰ as long as they were also members in good standing of *the church*. This key stipulation, of course, meant that they attended services and paid their tithes for its costs like other citizens. To be a member of the congregation was virtually the same as to be a member of the community. Church and the town hall

¹⁶ Wall, pp. 113-114. Wall was a former editor of the *Daily Transcript* and the *Weekly Aegis and Transcript* (1864-1866), the former of which became the *Evening Gazette*, now part of today’s *Telegram and Gazette*.

¹⁷ An *Andrew McFarland, Jr.* was also shown assigned to section five. His identity is unknown to us. If he were the first son of Andrew and Rebecca, based on available genealogical information on the family, he would have been thirteen years of age that year. Moreover, according to Nutt, this Andrew, Jr. died young. (p.184)

¹⁸ Moynihan, *A History of Worcester, 1674-1848*, note 140, p. 160

¹⁹ Lincoln, p. 48

²⁰ Lincoln, p. 163

were one and the same, the *meeting house*, just as the common religion and the civil society were wholly interconnected, essentially one and the same. This implied an expectation that the Scottish settlers would be full members of that community. But to the protesting Scots, the religious orthodoxy was not their own, and the tithes required of them along with their attendance did not sit well.

At some date in the late 1730s, a group of the Presbyterians endeavored to build their own meeting house, or *kirk*, but in so doing encountered difficulties with some of the townfolk. As described by Lincoln: “...they commenced the erection of a meeting house on the Boston road; after the materials had been procured, the frame raised, and the building was fast rising, a body of the inhabitants, assembled by night, hewed down and demolished the structure.”²¹ Among other points of contention between the Scottish settlers and the town was a complaint lodged with the court in 1734 by a group of citizens to the effect that some twenty men had been failing to attend public worship services “at the usual place of meeting.”²²

As the 1730s wore on, the Scottish dissatisfaction continued unabated. For some, it reached the point of willingness to leave Worcester in search of a more suitable environment. Attention was focused on a new settlement being planned in the hill country east of the Connecticut River on the other side of the mid-state range, in what would become the town of Pelham. In 1738, two men of Worcester’s Scottish community, Robert Peables and James Thornton, purchased a tract of land in the hill country east of Amherst, and shares were to be sold in the enterprise to suitable persons. Again drawing from Moynihan, the intention was clearly to devise a “presbyterian refuge.” From Parmenter’s *History of Pelham, Mass.*, Moynihan quoted the defining principle of the endeavor, that Peables and Thornton were to recruit...

...such as were Inhabitants of the Kingdom of Ireland or their descendants, being Protestants, and none to be admitted but such as bring good and undeniable credentials or certificates of their being good persons of good conversation and of the Presbyterian persuasion as used in the Church of Scotland and conform to the discipline thereof. ²³

In response to their having been the dissenting minority in Ulster and again in Worcester, the resettling Scots then opted to repeat the pattern in Pelham, this time with Presbyterians as the established church. The time had not yet come for freedom of religion.

For the McFarlands, as for other Scottish settlers in Worcester, the plan for the settlement of Pelham forced them to make a critical decision: whether to leave Worcester for Pelham for the advantage of pre-eminence in matters of religion, or to stay in Worcester to maintain and build upon the gains of a decade’s hard work building a farm and establishing a place in the community. At least one third of Worcester’s Scottish settlers chose to relocate to Pelham or other Scottish settlements, according to Moynihan, and of twenty-nine proprietors of Pelham at its incorporation in 1741, he counted twenty-two from Worcester. ²⁴

²¹ Lincoln, p. 164

²² Moynihan, p.50, from Worcester County, Mass. Papers, Box 1, folder 6, holdings of the American Antiquarian Society

²³ Moynihan, p.51, quoting from C. O. Parmenter, *History of Pelham, Mass., Amherst*, 1898, p. 15

²⁴ Moynihan, note 140, p. 160

Andrew McFarland had been an active participant in the meetings of the Scottish community in Worcester concerning the Pelham resettlement plan. He had been one of five men appointed to survey the tract in preparation for the original sale of the parcels, a “first division” of Pelham. Somewhat earlier, his brother John had opted to leave Worcester, selling his land in 1736 and departing for a location unknown (to us), although he is said in the genealogies to have died after 1748 in Pemaquid, Maine.²⁵ Their father, Daniel, one of the two elders of this family in America, had died May 8, 1738, in Worcester. In 1740, Andrew was fifty years of age with a wife and seven children, and another coming the following year. They had worked for more than a decade building the farm and home about two miles out from the town center on the road to Rutland, and they had become established members of the community. They chose to stay.

Andrew and Rebecca McFarland were the first proprietors of the McFarland farm, which would last six generations, producing an agricultural yield for about 180 years, lasting through the first decade of the 20th century. They had ten children, five sons and five daughters, born from the early 1720s into the early 1740s. Their first son, Andrew, Jr., is believed to have died young. Another son, John, married, served as a private in the Revolution, moved away from Worcester, and is otherwise unknown. Five daughters all married and had families, three of them residing in Worcester, two in neighboring towns.

The oldest of the surviving sons, William McFarland, was born in 1722 in Marblehead, married Elizabeth Browning of Rutland in 1745, and farmed in Worcester along the west side of what would become Salisbury Street just beyond Flagg Street.²⁶ The land, consisting of some sixty-two acres, was deeded to him by his father Andrew in 1743, but this land was not part of the original McFarland purchase of 1727. The deed included a statement to the effect that the land had been purchased from William Jennison.²⁷ William McFarland was active in town affairs for many years,²⁸ holding various appointed positions, and he served as a lieutenant in the Minutemen company of Captain Benjamin Flagg (his neighbor), marching to Lexington on April 19, 1775.²⁹ He was elected to the Board of Selectmen in 1781 and 1782.³⁰ William died in 1805, two years after the passing of

²⁵ Registry of Deeds, 8:60, Apr-16-1736

²⁶ Nutt, p.184. Also, Wall’s composite map marks the site of the farm, although without boundaries. A photograph of the William McFarland house on Salisbury Street, taken many years later, is in Nutt, p.183.

²⁷ Registry of Deeds, 18:30, August 1, 1743. Lands adjacent to the parcel were owned by Joseph Heath, Joshua Winslow, Benjamin Flagg, and Elijah Flagg.

²⁸ The phrase ‘active in town affairs,’ as used here and elsewhere, means that he was listed in the early town records as being appointed to various positions in the town, or otherwise involved in the town activities. See Franklin P. Rice (ed.), *Worcester Town Records From 1753 to 1783*, The Worcester Society of Antiquity, 1882, Volumes 3-7. These transcriptions of the original town records constitute a very important means by which one can discern who did, or said, what “on the record” at Town Meetings, and in associated reports and other documents maintained by the Town Clerk in early Worcester.

²⁹ The militia service reference, in Nutt, p.558, is interesting for the manner in which it was entitled: “Roll of Capt. Benjamin Flagg’s Company, in the Colony Service on the Alarm of April 19, 1775.” It consisted of Captain Flagg, Lieutenant McFarland, an Ensign, two sergeants, and twenty-five privates.

³⁰ Nutt, p.379.

his wife Elizabeth. Their children included William McFarland, Jr. (1758-1839), who also served in the revolution and who succeeded his father on the farm.³¹

Daniel McFarland, born in 1731, married Sarah Barber in 1753, and was active in town affairs before and after his service in the French and Indian War, 1759-60. He was a lieutenant in the militia helping the British in the taking of Fort Saint-Frederic (renamed Crown Point after its taking by the British) in 1759, and was promoted to captain in February, 1760, in which capacity he remained in active service throughout that year.³² In 1767, Daniel and his family moved to Burlington, New Jersey, where they resided for a few years before moving to Amwell Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania, on the Monongahela River south of Pittsburgh. In the revolution, Daniel, now a colonel, commanded a company of militia known as the Monongahela Rangers in 1778. Later, in Amwell Township, he owned and operated a fulling mill. According to Nutt, descendants of Daniel and Sarah McFarland have included many "useful and distinguished citizens."³³ Col. Daniel McFarland died in 1817.

Between William and Daniel, chronologically, was James, born in 1727, who was to become the eventual successor to the farm of Andrew and Rebecca. In 1746, at the age of eighteen, James married Elizabeth Barber (whose younger sister Sarah would later marry James' brother Daniel), herself barely seventeen, and they took up residence at the homestead with his parents and several of his younger siblings.³⁴ Andrew was only fifty-six that year, and Rebecca only forty-six, and there were still under-age children in the home, including James' brother Daniel and his five sisters. This seems likely to have been a time of either a major expansion of the house or possibly the construction of a second home on the property, although no factual evidence of either is known.

For a few years, the generations overlapped, with Andrew continuing as proprietor of the farm, and James working with him, presumably as a kind of manager-in-training. In 1755, as Andrew reached the age of sixty-five and James turned twenty-eight, the two executed a pair of inter-related deeds, one transferring the farm to the son, the other establishing a commitment on the part of the son to provide residence, substance, and financial support of his parents for the rest of their natural lives. In the first deed, executed on January 13, 1755, Andrew conveyed to James the homestead farm, consisting of "about eighty acres with the buildings thereon," the language of the document then providing the usual definition of the boundaries of the land, mainly by reference to the owners

³¹ A photograph of the original McFarland house, which is now gone, can be seen on p.183 of Nutt. A second, somewhat smaller, house on the property, presumably built for William, Jr. and his family, now stands with the address 525 Salisbury Street. The original house faced southeasterly and therefore had its long side adjacent to the road, making it essentially perpendicular to the existing house.

³² Nutt, pp.185, 516, 517, 518.

³³ Nutt, p.185. *Fulling* is the process of making felt from woven wool.

³⁴ A total of four McFarland siblings married four Barbers, two sons and two daughters on each side. Like the McFarlands, Robert and Sarah (Gray) Barber were Scotch-Irish immigrants who had resided elsewhere before coming to Worcester, in their case the town of Weston in Middlesex County. Relocating to Worcester in 1731, they purchased a ninety-acre tract east of North Pond, the area now known as "Barber's Crossing." In a similar vein, a son and a daughter of the McFarlands married a daughter and a son of a family in Rutland, that of James and Elizabeth Browning. From this family surname came Browning Pond, on which the local Boy Scout camp is located and which is partly in Rutland, Paxton, Spencer, and Oakham. Thus, six of the McFarland children married into only two families, each of which has left its name on a local feature.

of adjacent lands.³⁵ Thus, the McFarlands effected the transfer of legal ownership of the land from father to son during the lifetime of the former, thereby eliminating the matter from the province of the elder's will.

The second transaction, executed immediately upon the first, was what would come to be known (and may already have been known then) as a "life-lease" - a kind of retirement plan for family elders.³⁶ James conveyed to his parents, using the farm itself as collateral, a legally enforceable commitment to provide a place for them to live, along with an adequate share of the proceeds from the farm, for the rest of their lives.³⁷ The language of the promise included "... shall yearly and ... during the natural life of said Andrew McFarland pay... one half of the whole produce of the said tract of land...." The mortgage-like nature of this commitment had the effect of guaranteeing that if James should die, or otherwise prove unable to meet that commitment, his parents could reclaim the land and then come to some alternative arrangement for their care, such as a similar agreement with another son or a son-in-law, or with someone else, or even the sale of the property.

Thus the McFarlands either initiated or continued in a tradition passed down to them a clearly formulated manner for the accomplishment of two essential functions: the transfer of real property ownership from one generation to the next, and the commitment of the younger generation to assure the care of the older generation in their retirement. A generation earlier, as was noted by historian Charles Nutt, when Daniel McFarland (1664-1738) passed land on to his son John, the arrangement had included John's promise to take care of him for the remainder of his life.³⁸ That most likely was a "life-lease" arrangement as well, but it is not known for sure because the deed (4:459-60) is substantially illegible.

Andrew McFarland died June 4, 1761 at his home. Rebecca McFarland died within a year, on March 20, 1762. The couple had come to Worcester three decades earlier with five small children, late-coming members of the town's first generation, and from woodlands had built a working farm, become established and respected members of the community, and reared nine surviving children. Each of those nine had married and had families of their own, members of the second generation of McFarlands and of the town of Worcester itself. Six of them, three males and three females, remained in Worcester; two resided in adjacent towns, Leicester and Shrewsbury; and the eventual location of the other is unknown. Two of their sons had served in the French and Indian War, and two sons and at least two grandsons would serve a few years later in the American Revolution.

Andrew and Rebecca had been the settlers, the original builders of the homestead farm, and by all available measures they appear to have been successful in matters of family, farm, and citizenship. They were the principals of that homestead from the purchase of the land in 1727 through the deed of transfer to son James in 1755, a period of twenty-eight years. As has often been the case

³⁵ Registry of Deeds, 36:101, Jan-13-1755.

³⁶ The term itself, as applied to arrangements of this kind, expressed in documents recorded at the registry, has been seen only as a descriptor in the index books of the registry. There clerks have noted whether various documents were deeds (conveying property), mortgages, partial releases on mortgages, special agreements, subdivision plans, and the like. The term "life lease" can be found there in a small number of cases, presumably for situations such as this one.

³⁷ Registry of Deeds, 36:102, Jan-13-1755.

³⁸ Nutt, p.184

among immigrant populations, the matter of their Scottish, or Scots-Irish, background played a very important part in the lives of Andrew and Rebecca McFarland. At a key point they had had to decide whether or not to relocate with their Presbyterian kinsmen, and it seems to have been to the benefit of Worcester that they opted to remain to continue building upon the product of a decade's efforts. Both were buried on the Common.³⁹

Generation 2: James and Elizabeth (Barber) McFarland

James McFarland managed the farm through its second generation, a span of some twenty-seven years which included the turbulent period preceding and encompassing the revolution, and which ended in the transfer of the property to one of his sons in 1782. He was a husband, father, active citizen of the town, volunteer in the militia, participating member of the congregation, and a buyer and seller of real estate, as well as a successful farm proprietor.

Following in his father's pattern of active civic participation, James held a variety of appointive positions in the town over the years, as did his brothers William and Daniel.⁴⁰ He served as *hog reeve* in 1754 and 1756, as *warden* in 1763, as *deer reeve* in 1767, and as *hog reeve* again in 1768, positions involving tasks that the community deemed necessary and that were carried out by the 'solid men' of the town, divided among them and made official by vote of the annual town meeting.⁴¹ These appointive positions were of an agricultural nature, and it was to be expected that they would be filled mostly if not entirely by farmers, the town's *yeomen*. James also was at various times included on the list of qualified jurors for the Inferior Court of Common Pleas, and no doubt was called upon to sit from time to time.

In his fifties, James served as Surveyor of Highways and Collector of Highway Taxes, first in 1779, and again every year until his death in 1783.⁴² This clearly was a task of a higher order, or

³⁹ Wall, p.204.

⁴⁰ *Worcester Town Records From 1753 to 1783*, The Worcester Society of Antiquity, edited by Franklin P. Rice, 1882, Volumes 3-7. Useful perspectives on the public life of the McFarlands and other early residents of Worcester can be seen in these early town records transcribed from original records by Rice for the Worcester Society of Antiquity in 1882

⁴¹ Definitions of various positions of early towns can be found at a number of websites, some better than others, of course, including the following which have been helpful in the present context: the Chelsea (Ma.) Historical Society: (www.olgp/chs/mayors/officeholders/positions.htm); Old Sturbridge Village: Glossary of New England Town Officers (www.Osv.org/explore_learn/document_viewer.php?DocID=1127); Genealogy and History of New Hampshire: Glossary (www.nh.Searchroots.com/glossary.html). See also: Alice Morse Earle, *Home Life in Colonial Days*, NY: Macmillan Co., 1898 (1939 edition); and George S. Roberts, *Historic Towns of the Connecticut River Valley*, Schenectady, NY: Robson and Adey, 1906 (per Google book search).

The *hog-reeve*, according to Earle, dealt with the hogs which roamed freely "... to see that all those swine had rings in their noses [to minimize rooting], were properly marked, and did not do damage to crops." (pp. 402-3) They also were to impound offending hogs, which would result in fines being assessed to their owners. Several sources, including Earle, note that it was customary to appoint young, newly-married men to the position, one example being Ralph Waldo Emerson in Concord (p. 403). A *deer-reeve* differed in that the purpose to protect deer or other animals "... whose flesh and hides had value." (Roberts, p. 384).

⁴² Rice, Vol. 3, pp. 327, 351, 356, 384, 392, and 393. The job of highway surveyor, as defined by the Chelsea Historical Society (website): "By order of the General Court of Massachusetts, in 1643, continuing a long tradition brought over from England, each municipality in the colony was required to appoint officials, known as surveyors, who were authorized to "call out every Teeme and person fitt for labour, in their course, one day every yeare, to

standing, in the community than some of the appointive jobs, since it involved the collection of taxes and an accounting of those taxes before the town. Records of the early town meetings make clear the close attention paid to such matters.

In the early stages of the French and Indian War, James served as a private in a unit of the local militia under Col. Gardner Chandler which, in August, 1757, marched to Sheffield, in the Berkshires, in response to a threat of the French to attack English forces following the fall of Fort William Henry on Lake George. When they arrived they were notified that the danger had passed and so were disbanded, having had to march a considerable distance but not having had to fight.⁴³

As was noted earlier regarding James' father Andrew, the meeting house seating plan of 1763 conveyed a sense of the relative stature of the McFarland family, and others, in the social fabric of the town. By decision of the town meeting, a diagram of which was provided by Wall, James was assigned pew number 48 on the main floor near the pulpit. His brother Daniel was assigned pew 49, and a few rows behind them was William in pew 54.⁴⁴ Rights to these pews in the meeting house were *real* property, subject to purchase and sale established in deeds filed with the county registry of deeds. James' active involvement with the church is also evident in a notation by Caleb Wall in his list of burials on the common. In reference to the burial of a William Swan, who died in 1774, Wall mentioned that Swan was

*... one of the first choir of the Old South Church in March, 1770, with James McFarland, Jonathan Stone and Ebenezer Flagg, when the first introduction of choir music in the church service caused so much excitement that the venerable Dea. Jacob Chamberlain, who strenuously opposed this interference with his prerogative in leading the psalm reading, absented himself from the church services for several Sabbaths.*⁴⁵

While this anecdote may say more about an internal controversy within the church at the time than it does about James McFarland, it does show his involvement and suggests that he probably was not among the conservative element in the congregation objecting to the addition of music to the liturgy. (It also suggests that he could sing.)

James and Elizabeth McFarland had a total of nine children between 1747 and 1769. By 1755, the year James assumed proprietorship of the farm, they had three, ages four, six, and eight, and at the homestead were two or more of James' siblings, the youngest of whom was only a few years older than their oldest child. Dating back to the construction of the homestead about 1730, there had always been a number of children there, probably never fewer than three.⁴⁶

*ment said highways wherein they are to have a spetiall to those Common ways which are betwixt Towne and Towne.*⁴⁴ They were also empowered to levy fines on men who failed to meet their annual road work obligation. Despite the title, these men did not actually engage in survey work relative to the building of roads.

⁴³ Lincoln, p.63.

⁴⁴ Wall, fold-out diagram opposite p.112: "Ye Plan of Ye Lower Floor of Ye Meeting-House, 1763" See also Rice, Vol. 3 p.106 (1764).

⁴⁵ Wall, p.205. Deacon Jacob Chamberlain, who resided in the district west of Salisbury Street, on land bordering that of the McFarlands, was a very distant relative of the Chamberlain who would later reside on part of the McFarland homestead land.

⁴⁶ This statement is based on deduction from the ages of the children in the families of each generation, based on Crane's genealogy of the family.

At least one of the nine children of James and Elizabeth achieved notable success in a non-farming life's work. Their youngest child, named Asa, born in 1769, graduated from Dartmouth College in 1793 and in 1789 was ordained as a minister and designated pastor of the First Congregational Church of Concord, New Hampshire. In 1809, he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Divinity by Yale College, and, according to Crane, he was a "*prolific writer, a very popular teacher, and left at his decease the manuscripts of two thousand and fifty-four sermons.*"⁴⁷ The Reverend Dr. Asa McFarland was third-generation Scots-Irish in America and a lifelong third-generation Congregationalist who became a notable and important figure in that church.

Like most of the residents of the outlying districts of the town, James, (and presumably Elizabeth, as well) was a proponent of local schools administered by the families in the districts. The primary issue at stake, which had arisen in the 1730s and remained active throughout most of the century, stemmed from the excessive distance to schools located in the town center, which made it difficult for children of the outlying areas to attend.⁴⁸ The town could not at that time afford to operate schools in each of the outlying districts as well as the center, especially if, as was desired by many living in the town center, they also maintained a grammar school (a secondary school emphasizing Latin and Greek in preparation for college).

James McFarland was one of several petitioners in a 1775 request for remission of a portion of their taxes paid for education so that they could apply it to the cost of operating their own school in the district: "*Praying that they might be allowed to have their own school money and lay it out among themselves for the education of their children they being very remote from those schools that are kept.*"⁴⁹ The decision at the town meeting was to grant the request "for the present year," which suggests that the practice might have been to make such allowances on an annual basis and to maintain oversight, rather than to institutionalize such a policy.⁵⁰ Within a few years district schooling became more fully accepted and the town turned its attention to devising a means by which to operate a district school plan. At the town meeting of March 20, 1780, James was one of eleven men appointed to a committee established "... *to Examine the several Squadrons of schooling in this town, and to Regulate the Squadrons and apportion the money that shall be Granted to Support Schools in Sd Town and make report....*"⁵¹

As for the farm itself, a measure of its dimensions and composition can be found at one moment in time, the year 1771, in the results of a taxable property valuation survey mandated that year by the General Court of Massachusetts.⁵² The McFarland farm of 1771 was not one of the larger farms of the town, by any means, but it was somewhat above average in size, productivity, and, presumably,

⁴⁷ Online genealogy derived primarily from Crane. By implication, the quote is from Crane, but attribution is not given in the specific instance.

⁴⁸ Moynihan, pp. 48-49, provides a good, substantive description of the issue of schooling in the town, drawing heavily on Franklin P. Rice's "Records of the Courts of General Sessions," as well as the early town records.

⁴⁹ Rice, Vol. 3, p.263, Town Meeting of May-29-1775.

⁵⁰ Moynihan, p.49. He described this solution as having "...*to settle for a system in which their share of the school taxes would be made available to them to cover the costs of such schooling as they could provide in their own districts.*" In addition, Moynihan added, "*the outlying farmers wanted no part of the cost of maintaining a grammar school for the benefit of the town's aristocracy.*"

⁵¹ Rice, Vol. 3, p.351, meeting of Mar-06-1780.

⁵² *The Massachusetts Tax Valuation List of 1771*, edited by Bettye Hobbs Pruitt, G. K. Hall & Co., Boston, 1978.

valuation. In addition to an acre or two for the house, barn, shops, sheds, and other out-buildings, as well as a pig-pen with three pigs, there were thirty-one acres of land in productive, taxable use: six acres of pastureland, accommodating five cows and one horse (but no sheep, goats, or oxen); seven acres in tillage, including an orchard, yielding 130 bushels of grain (unspecified) and twenty barrels of cider annually; ten acres in "English" or "upland" mowing grasses, yielding eight tons of hay per year; and eight acres of fresh meadow, yielding four tons of fresh meadow hay annually. In view of the fact that the McFarland property consisted of at least eighty acres at the time, there may have been additional cleared acreage lying fallow, thus not yielding taxable value that year, and most likely other acreage remained wooded, some being too difficult to farm due to steepness of terrain. Although not mentioned in the tax list, it is likely that lumber was harvested for sale to exporters, probably in winter when snow would facilitate sledding the timbers to saw mills in the town.

Most likely, the numbers of cows, pigs, and sheep, and to a lesser extent horses, belonging to the various farms, including the McFarlands, would have varied somewhat over time, owing to births and deaths, including slaughter, of livestock, but the one-time snapshot of the farming community offered by the taxable property list of 1771 provides an approximate sense of the character, composition, and relative sizes of its various agricultural enterprises. Ownership of only a single horse, probably used mainly for transportation in most cases, was very common; most farms claimed only one or two, and, surprisingly, the largest number of horses claimed by anyone was only four. That the McFarlands had no oxen, as was also the case of about forty percent of the farms, means that when the primary "power source" of 18th century farming was needed they rented, or bartered with a neighbor, yielding an informal arrangement by which the animals would be put to greater and more efficient use. As for sheep, it seems somewhat surprising that the McFarlands, second generation Americans of Scots-Irish descent, had no sheep. It is possible, of course, that they had no sheep in 1771 but did have them at other times.

The McFarlands did not operate a store or have valued merchandise for sale, and the tax list did not credit them with any money lent at interest, as was the case with about fifteen percent of the identified estates. Aside from the livestock and acreage in productive use, the only measure of their relative affluence was the "annual worth of the whole real estate," which, in the absence of adequate explanation in the source, appears to have represented buying power derived from surplus production, presumably cider, grains, and hay, mainly. In a rank-ordering of the 235 agricultural entities shown with such "annual worth," the McFarlands' estimate of nine pounds, thirteen shillings, and four pence puts them at about the 80th percentile, suggesting that they might have been among the top one-fifth of the community in this very imprecise and "fuzzy" measure. On the whole, the picture that emerges of the McFarland farm is one of membership in the broad base of relatively prosperous family farm operations which seem to have characterized Worcester in the pre-revolutionary era.

The period 1773-75 saw dramatic events unfold in Worcester amounting to a heated run-up to the outbreaks of violence in 1775 and outright revolution the following year. The names of nearly half the voters of the town became subscribed to either of two separate lists, one of activist resistance to the British, those calling themselves "Whigs," after the Whigs of revolutionary England, the other of Loyalists, those maintaining their loyalty to the British and opposing the increasingly

radical activities of the Whigs. A newly-formed organization known as the American Political Society was formed by the Whigs of Worcester to express their views and demands. To a list of thirty-one originators of the Society was added in time another thirty-two signers, for a total of sixty-three. In response to actions taken by the Whigs at the town meeting of March, 1774, a group of fifty-two loyalists published their grievances in the *Boston Gazette*, and also had them written into the official records of the town by the clerk, both actions resulting in swift, punitive, and effective counter measures by the Whigs, who were in full control.⁵³

The name McFarland did not appear on either list. This fact suggests that while James had always been one of the town's "solid men," he may not have been among its most politically active. There are several reasons, however, to believe that James was a supporter of the rebellion, in effect, a Whig. Although at age 48 in 1775 he did not serve in the military during the conflict, his brothers William and Daniel both served as officers, one at Lexington, the other in western Pennsylvania. His son, James, Jr., while in his teens, marched with the militia in 1776 and 1777, and his nephew, William, Jr., also served. Moreover, James had served in the militia himself in the effort to assist the British in the Berkshires in 1757, and he apparently was viewed by his fellow citizens as enough of a patriot to be chosen by the town to administer a fund for the "*support of noncommissioned Officers and Soldiers familys....*"⁵⁴

The fact that James was appointed to this position shows that he maintained his standing through the tumultuous times of the Revolution as one of the "solid men of Worcester," not as a member of its commercial, political, or ecclesiastical elite, but as a *yeoman*.⁵⁵ In deeds filed with the registry and other documents, it was customary to attach a title of social rank or occupation as a suffix to one's name, some of the most common being esquire (attorneys), gentleman, yeoman, journeyman, and laborer. In the deed records of his land dealings, James referred to himself as "James McFarland, yeoman."

Of the nine children of James and Elizabeth, it was to be the middle child, fifth in the order, named James, Jr., born in 1758, who would succeed his parents on the homestead farm. By the time James, Sr. signed over the farm to James, Jr. in 1782, its extent, not all in active agricultural use, had increased to about a hundred acres, from the eighty he had inherited from his father in 1755. James the elder had engaged in a modest number of land transactions in the town. The largest was the purchase of his brother Daniel's 77-acre tract, adjacent to his own land, when he opted in 1767 to relocate to New Jersey (and later to western Pennsylvania). James promptly sold the tract to Joseph

⁵³ Lincoln estimated that "The whole number of voters of the town at this time could not have exceeded two hundred and fifty." (p. 82) Presuming as much, the sixty-three and fifty-two men who made the two lists amounted to a bit less than half. Lincoln's account of the events of the period, as well as Rice's transcripts of the town records, provide fundamental sources of information on the subject, while more recent accounts by Moynihan (Chapter 4) and Ray Raphael have provided solid summaries and interpretations. See Ray Raphael, *The First American Revolution: Before Lexington and Concord* NY: The New Press, 2002.

⁵⁴ F. P. Rice, Town Records, Vol 3, p.445, May 12, 1783. The town formed a committee at its meeting of May, 1783, shortly after James' death, "*to inquire of the Excr or administrator to the Estate of Mr James McFarland late of this town deceased, respecting monies he received of Government for the support of noncommissioned Officers and Soldiers familys....*" This act appears to have been an effort to find out how much money had been distributed and to whom, how much was remaining, and the like.

⁵⁵ From Merriam-Webster online: www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/: a "person who owns and cultivates a small farm, one belonging to a class of English freeholders below the gentry."

Blair.⁵⁶ For nearly a century thereafter the Blairs and the McFarlands would be neighbors and associates, and eventually connected through marriage.

In 1778, James sold twenty-four acres on the western edge of the property (along the easterly side of May Street between Pleasant and Chandler) in the format of two adjacent 12-acre parcels (more or less), one to James Moore and the other to John Moore, presumably a brother.⁵⁷ The net effect of this and other purchases and sales by James during his lifetime was to add about twenty acres to the homestead property.⁵⁸

As in previous generational changes within the family, the transfer of ownership of the farm from James to his son, James, Jr., involved a provision for the care of the parents in their retirement. Two agreements were signed by the principals in October, 1782, and recorded at the Registry of Deeds a few months later. First, James deeded to James, Jr. his "homestead farm," consisting of about 100 acres, for the sum of 500 pounds,⁵⁹ the money presumably to enable James to leave appropriate sums to his other children and to his wife Elizabeth.

In the second, James, Jr. employed the format of a mortgage, as had his father a quarter century earlier, to provide assured care of his parents in their retirement, the arrangement serving as another instance of the "life-lease" concept in practice. Use of the mortgage format meant that in the event of the death or incapacity of the successor to provide the promised care, ownership of the farm would revert to the parents., thus providing the desired element of assurance.

The language of the agreement provides details of the manner in which the McFarlands handled the retirement of the older generation, and is also instructive regarding the nature of the farming enterprise as well:

[I, James McFarland, Jr.] ... tender unto the said James McFarland & his wife year by year and each year during their natural life one half of the produce of said farm, that is to say the one half the Indian corn husked and stored, the one half the rye and other grain threshed, winnowed, stored and fit for the mill, half of the cyder laid into the cellar, half of the hay laid into the barn, a sufficient quantity of fire wood laid at the door cut fit for the fire, half of the flour laid into the barn fit for the swingle... (etc.) [commas added for readability]

There was also provision for the continued support of Elizabeth in the event of James' death, whereby she would receive the same benefits reduced from one half to one quarter for the remainder of her life.

⁵⁶ Registry of Deeds, 89:81, 90:37, 1767. In partnership with the same Mr. Blair, James also sold thirty-six acres in 1769, to Gardner Chandler, his commanding officer a few years earlier in the aborted march to relieve Fort William Henry (60:201). In the Tax Valuation List of 1771 it is seen that Blair had twenty-four of the seventy-seven acres, about one-third of the land, in productive use at the time.

⁵⁷ Registry of Deeds, 84:97, rec. 1781 (James Moore); and 98:112, rec. 1785 (John Moore). Both deeds were signed by the parties on June 4, 1778.

⁵⁸ Several transactions were recorded with James as either grantor or grantee, and some must have involved additions to or subtractions from the homestead farm. However, the difficulties involved in trying to determine the geographic specifics rendered the idea of providing a clear and concise accounting of the McFarland land to be, unfortunately, beyond the scope of this narrative.

⁵⁹ Registry of Deeds, 87:430, agreement signed Oct-07-1782, Apr-16-1783.

It was barely six months later that James did die – on April 9, 1783, at the age of fifty-five,⁶⁰ in Brunswick County, Maine, probably while visiting relatives. The fact that he still held his position in Worcester dealing with benefits to families of veterans suggests that he had remained actively involved in town affairs until the end and presumably did not expect to die when he traveled to Maine. Like his parents, he was buried on the town common.⁶¹ As for Elizabeth, neither the date of her passing nor the place of her burial is known. She is not mentioned in either of Wall's burial lists, that of the old common or the Mechanic Street cemetery.

Measuring from the date of James' inheritance of the farm from his father to that of his passing it on to his son, the second generation of McFarlands on the homestead farm extended some twenty-seven years, 1755-1782. His father had owned the land for virtually the same length of time, 1727-1755.

Generation 3: James, Jr. and Betsy (Moore) McFarland

James McFarland, Jr., born September 19, 1758, grew up on the farm and resided there his entire life. In January, 1776, at the age of seventeen, he enlisted as a private in the militia and began the first of three tours of about two months each that he would serve that year and the next in the cause of the revolution. Although his rank during the conflict rose only to that of corporal, he has been identified in genealogical listings, and at least once in a property deed, as *Captain* James McFarland.⁶² Circumstances of his attaining this rank are unknown, but it was not uncommon to receive such promotions after the war.

In January, 1778, now nineteen and a veteran of service in the revolution, James married Elizabeth Moore (Betsy, or Betty), a daughter of Asa Moore, one of the several related Moores in the neighboring environs of the McFarland farm.⁶³ James and Betsy had nine children, the first seven of whom lived to maturity, married, and left descendants, while each of the last two, died at about the age of two. In 1805, a few months after the death of the second of the unfortunate baby girls, Betsy herself passed away. James remarried a year and a half later. His second wife was Esther Cutting, by whom one child, a daughter, was born in 1808.

James, Jr. followed in the tradition of his father by serving in various positions of responsibility in the town. In 1784 he was appointed *tythingman*, a kind of constable responsible mainly for matters of morals and religious propriety, especially attendance at services.⁶⁴ In 1787 he was named

⁶⁰ Genealogies of the McFarlands (based primarily on Crane) show James having died in Brunswick, Maine, leaving the implication that he had relocated there. Given his recent and continuing involvement in Worcester affairs, as well as the life-lease arrangement with his son, it seems clear that he was visiting there, probably with a relative. Also, given that he had only a few months earlier deeded the farm to James, Jr., a reasonable inference is that he may have been in poor health and expected not to survive much longer.

⁶¹ Wall, p.204.

⁶² Registry of Deeds, 235:599-600, Feb-06-1824. The reference was by James' son Ira. Historian Charles Nutt noted that "He seems to have become [a] captain after the war." (p.184). That he was known as James McFarland, *Junior* is also evident in various recorded deeds.

⁶³ Wall, p. 382

⁶⁴ Rice, p. 10, meeting of Mar-01-1784. The position of tithingman originated in an act of the General Court of November 3, 1675, requiring that "the selectmen of every town shall choose some sober and discrete persons to be authorized from the County Court, each of whom shall take charge of ten or twelve families of his neighborhood,

to the first of several terms as a member of the school committee, continuing the focus on education that his father had shown.⁶⁵ Also like his father, he was designated as a *Surveyor of Highways and Collector of Highway Taxes* in 1797 and 1801,⁶⁶ and he was at various times on lists of qualified jurors for both the supreme and the inferior court.⁶⁷ In an inexplicable oddity, James, who does not appear to have been a major player in the politics of the town, received a (single) vote for Lt. Governor in the gubernatorial election of 1808.⁶⁸ These perspectives on James' active and continuing participation in the civic life of the community, including his service in the war effort, suggest that he was, using Wall's phrase again, one of the "solid men of Worcester" - a substantial and respected member of the community, and the third generation of his family to hold that distinction.

Of the seven surviving children of James and Betsy, it was a son, Ira, born in October, 1785, who would remain on the farm and eventually take it over. Ira had two older brothers, Daniel and James, each of whom chose alternate pursuits, leaving the farm and farming to their father and Ira. James, born in 1782, the third James in the line, appears in the genealogical chart as *Dr. James McFarland*, a resident of Rutland.⁶⁹ The oldest son, Daniel, born in 1780, became established as a merchant in Leicester, and in 1813, at the age of thirty-three, married Sophia Sargent of a leading family of that town. Daniel died only five years later, in 1818, leaving his wife and two small children. Four years later, his brother Horace McFarland, twelve years younger than he, married his widowed wife, Sophia. This couple would factor substantially in the lives of James, Jr. and Ira during the years ahead.

In 1809, following the family tradition, James, Jr. and his third son, Ira, made formal arrangements for the transfer of ownership of the farm and a life-lease for the care of the parents in their later years. Now age fifty-one, James deeded to Ira *half* ownership of the homestead farm, thus maintaining a direct interest in its management while establishing Ira as the successor to proprietorship of the family enterprise.⁷⁰ Also included in the property arrangement forged that day was a half interest in a twenty-two acre parcel which James, Jr. had acquired at auction (for \$210) in 1805 from the estate of the late Deacon Samuel Miller, as well as half ownership of Miller's family pew in the

and shall diligently inspect them, and present the names of such persons as transgressed the law, receiving as compensation for their services one third of the fines allowed, if faithful in the discharge of their duty, otherwise to be liable to the same fine as the unlicensed houses." (from Chelsea Historical Society website). This "morals police" function may have reflected the high point of the puritan order of early New England, and its intensity may have waned somewhat in time. By 1784, when James was appointed to the position, Worcester was approaching the date at which it would finally, after years of pressure building in this direction, allow the establishment of a second church, the movement for its establishment having come mainly from the commercial and legal elite of the shire town. See Moynihan, pp. 95-102 regarding the second church, and pp. 51-55 on the origins of the issue in an earlier time.

⁶⁵ Rice, vol. 4, p.108, meeting of Mar-12-1787 (first appointment to school committee). James was also appointed to serve on the school committee in 1791, 1794, 1797, 1798, and 1802.

⁶⁶ Rice, vol. 4, p.328, meeting of Mar-06-1797; vol. 5, p.11, meeting of Mar-02-1801.

⁶⁷ Rice, vol. 4, p. 43, meeting of Mar-15-1798; vol. 4, p. 237, meeting of Mar-04-1793.

⁶⁸ Rice, vol.5, p.150, meeting of Mar-14-1808. There is a chance, of course, that James cast the vote for himself.

⁶⁹ It follows that he was another farmer's son from the outlying districts who got enough schooling to go on to higher education at one or another of the accessible colleges. (For reasons that will be seen, it is reasonable to believe that he may have received that education at Leicester Academy.)

⁷⁰ Registry of Deeds, 240:342, agreement May-08- 1809, recorded Dec-06- 1824.

south meeting house.⁷¹ Although dated May 8, 1809, this agreement was not recorded with the registry until December, 1824. Most likely this delay occurred because the agreement was viewed as a family matter not requiring the formality of an official recording until it became necessary to do so because of subsequent transactions involving parties outside the family. In the case of each of the three properties, James and Ira thereafter owned equal shares of the same entities.

The corresponding life-lease contract was also agreed in 1809, although the deed was not recorded until later, as was the case with the deed of property transfer. Ira mortgaged his “undivided half” of the three properties with his father for \$600, promising to provide financial support from the operation of the farm for the rest of his father’s life. As in the earlier examples, the agreement involved using the farm as collateral in a mortgage to ensure against loss to James and his wife in the event that for any reason Ira should be unable to carry out his obligation.

Beginning that same year, a series of other mortgage transactions both within the family and with outside parties appears to have led to, or possibly resulted from, serious financial difficulties facing James and Ira. In 1809, the father and son, acting jointly, used all three properties - the homestead (now consisting of about 120 acres), the parcel purchased from the Miller estate (about 22 acres), and the pew in the meeting house - as collateral in a mortgage obligation to the Trustees of Leicester Academy for \$800, due and payable the following year, 1810.⁷² No information could be found regarding reasons for this loan, but schooling of children in the family is a possibility.

James also borrowed, during that same year, from his son Daniel McFarland of Leicester, \$909.26, again using the three properties as collateral.⁷³ This mortgage remained in effect beyond Daniel’s death in 1818, and the receivable was left in trust to his two young children, Daniel and Mary. Ira used his half-share of the property again in 1824 to secure a loan from his brother Horace, who by this time was married to Daniel’s widow, for the sum of \$251. This mortgage also carried the responsibility for a prior mortgage of \$300 held by Mr. Wing Kelley, a neighbor of Ira and James (and father of Abby Kelley Foster), as well as the outstanding obligation to Leicester Academy, which meant that in the event of a default the mortgagee could claim the property but would also have to assume the obligations to Mr. Kelley and the Academy.⁷⁴ What gave rise to these circumstances is unknown, but James and Ira appeared to be falling more deeply into a financial hole by this time, as overdue mortgages piled up on the books. The mortgage with Horace carried a short term of thirty days, “with interest.” It, too, ran overdue and remained in that status for four more years.

In 1828 the hammer finally came down. Joseph D. Sargent, brother of Sophia and legal guardian of the two minor children of the late Daniel McFarland, acting through his attorney, Mr. Rejoice Newton, Esq., of Worcester, took legal possession of the farm and other properties of James

⁷¹ Registry of Deeds, 160:168-170, 1805 (regarding the auction). The location of the land is not clear, being essentially indecipherable in the deed, otherwise said to be described in a report filed in Probate Court upon the death of Miller’s wife). See also Registry, 120:174, 1794.

⁷² Registry of Deeds, 174:19, recorded Sep-21-1809. This loan may have been for education of one or more children at the prestigious academy but we have evidence to that effect.

⁷³ Registry of Deeds, 176:205, May 10, 1810. The odd amount may reflect the discounted value of \$1000 at some interest rate for the designated period of time of the loan.

⁷⁴ Registry of Deeds, 235:599-600, recorded Nov-26-1824.

and Ira McFarland “...for a breach of the conditions of said mortgage.”⁷⁵ Both of the legal half-interests in the property which had been established by James and Ira were taken. Thus, complete ownership of the McFarland homestead had passed to the trust for the two children of the late Daniel McFarland of Leicester.

A series of legal transactions in 1832 had the combined effect of restoring to James and Ira about half the acreage of the estate, roughly 65 acres, including the residence and the farm buildings, bringing the net value of the recovery to well over half of what had been lost to foreclosure. How they managed to reacquire the property, and how much it cost them, lies buried in an extensive and complex set of deeded transactions, the resolution of which lies beyond the scope of this endeavor.⁷⁶ Despite the temporary loss of ownership of the farm, James and Ira were never forced to abandon the premises, a fact likely reflecting the fact that the episode was “in the family.” At the mid-point of the four-year hiatus in ownership, the census of 1830 found them residing in the town’s eighth ward, in the enumeration order where they would have been expected if they had not moved.⁷⁷

The remaining acreage was now held by attorney Rejoice Newton, the former district attorney for the county and state Representative who had purchased it from the estate of the minor children, more specifically, from his client, Joseph D. Sargent, guardian of the two minor children and brother of their mother.⁷⁸ Newton sold the parcel in 1839 to John Hammond, a relative newcomer to Worcester, who, two years earlier, had purchased a 121-acre parcel from Levi Lincoln and established a farm on Highland Street near what would later become Park Avenue.⁷⁹

Prior to these transactions, the McFarlands had owned about 120 acres, plus the twenty-two acres acquired from Deacon Miller in 1805, as well as the Miller pew in the meeting house. James and Ira held divided ownership of the combined properties, each with a half-share of the whole. As a result of the division of the properties in 1832, boundaries had to be delineated, based on a survey, to establish exactly what land had been removed from the original tract. Thus, for the first time, there came to be a tract consisting of nearly 36 acres, or, more precisely, “thirty-five acres and three quarters and six rods,” now owned by Rejoice Newton, who, within a few years, would convey it to John Hammond. This land had been part of the homestead farm since 1727, constituting its southwesterly section, comprising a bit more than a third of its total acreage.

⁷⁵ Registry of Deeds, 263:474, 475, both recorded November 17, 1828.

⁷⁶ Key transactions include, but may not be limited to: Registry of Deeds, 293:511-512, date; Ira McFarland to R.Newton Apr-10-1832, recorded Jun-05-1833 See 300:16, Apr-10-1832 and 331:140, Jan-16-1839, two deeds from Newton to Ira McFarland in which the boundaries of the land were specified.

⁷⁷ U. S. Census of 1830, Census place: Worcester, Ma., Roll 68, P. 332 (Ancestry.com). Street addresses were not provided in that census, but the family of Ira McFarland preceded the expected neighbors in the enumeration sequence: first Charles Blair (whose wife was Betsy McFarland, daughter of James, Jr.), and after him Robert Blair.

⁷⁸ Registry of Deeds, 284:617-18, rec. Feb-07-1832. Witnesses to the mortgage transaction were William Lincoln, lawyer, historian of Worcester, and Newton’s brother-in-law; and William Sever Lincoln, son of Gov. Levi Lincoln II. As was noted in Chapter Two, Newton had served as member of the state legislature, 1829-31, and in 1834 became a state senator. His wife was Rebecca Lincoln, brother of Levi Lincoln, Jr., Governor of Massachusetts 1825 through 1833, and of William Lincoln, the historian.

⁷⁹ Peter Viles, M.D. ret., of Worcester, “John Hammond and Family,” unpublished paper formerly posted on the Internet. The sale from Newton to Hammond in 1839 was recorded at the registry as 342:296-97, Jun-07-1839.

Generation 4: Ira and Judith (Lyon) McFarland

The date at which Ira took the reins of the family farm from his father, even in approximate terms, is more difficult to estimate than were preceding generational transfers. In this case, the ownership and life-lease arrangements were made much earlier, when Ira was only twenty-four, and father and son co-managed the farm for a relatively long period of time, each having a legal claim to half the estate. There may have been factors involved that can not be discerned with the information that is available, such as James' health or finances.

Ira was somewhat late to marry. In 1820, at the age of thirty-five, he married Judith Lyon, a native of Rhode Island, who was then about twenty-one, and the two took up residence at the homestead and began a family there. The occasion of Ira's marriage may serve as a good guess as to when he became the primary manager of the farm, especially since his father James turned sixty-two that year. Regardless of the date, Ira and Judith were the fourth generation of McFarlands to make their living on the land first settled by his great-grandparents, Andrew and Rebecca McFarland.

Ira and Judith had six children, one son and five daughters. In 1840, their youngest child, a daughter, died at the age of three, of unrecorded cause. This was to be first in a series of family tragedies. In June, 1846, their son Edwin died at the age of twenty-three, also of cause not available in the records of the town, and he was followed only a month later by his sister Mary, age nineteen. Misfortune visited the family yet again a few years later when another daughter, Caroline, died in 1853, also age nineteen, the cause attributed in city death records to consumption, what would later be called tuberculosis.⁸⁰ In 1852, Ira once again used the family farm as collateral in a mortgage transaction, this time a \$1,000 obligation to Dr. John Green.⁸¹ In the absence of evidence, one can only speculate that this debt might have been incurred for medical bills for one or more of the ill-fated children. Dr. Green was one of the most respected medical practitioners in Worcester at the time.

All that misfortune in the family left two surviving daughters. The oldest of the six children, Adeline Augusta McFarland, was born in 1821. Four years younger was Maria Allen. Both Adeline and Maria married in the late 1840s, and both remained on portions of the farm with their husbands. In July, 1847, Maria, at age 22, married Ephraim Forbes Chamberlain, 25, of West Brookfield, son of Eli and Achsah (Forbes) Chamberlain, and a descendant of the first Chamberlain immigrant from England to Massachusetts in the 1640s.⁸² They would reside at the homestead and become its fifth generation of proprietors.

⁸⁰ Office of the City Clerk, Death Records. Included in the records of the City of Worcester, not previously kept when it was a town, are the cause and the location of death, as well as various items of identifying information. Consumption, now recognized as tuberculosis, was a leading cause of death at the time.

⁸¹ Registry of Deeds, 497:131-133, Aug-25-1852.

⁸² Information on the Chamberlain genealogy provided by James Parker of the World Chamberlain Genealogical Society, from its extensive and well documented database of persons of the surname, by all spellings. The first Chamberlain of this line in America had the given name William. Ephraim was one of eleven children in his family, several of whom had notable careers, including a Reconstruction-era Governor of South Carolina, two college professors, and a widely known Presbyterian minister and leading figure in the U.S. Evangelical Association. Register Report on descendants of Eli Chamberlain, by James Parker of W.C.G.S.

The following year, Adeline Augusta married a young newcomer to Worcester named Willard Richmond. He had come to the city from Rhode Island two years earlier as a tailor, at the age of twenty-three, to begin his career in business. Although Richmond was never a farmer, he and Adeline resided on the homestead property in a new house they had built across the road from the Chamberlains and the McFarlands.⁸³ In 1856, Ira McFarland deeded to his son-in-law Willard Richmond a lot consisting of 21,246 square feet “... on which said Richmond has lately erected a dwelling house... on the northeasterly side of said Pleasant street and nearly opposite the house of the grantor....”⁸⁴ The half-acre parcel of the Richmonds was entirely surrounded by the McFarland farm, and had frontage on the street, which had recently been renamed *Pleasant Street*.

Generation 5: Ephraim F. and Maria (McFarland) Chamberlain

In 1855, Ephraim and Maria Chamberlain purchased from its current owner, John Hammond, the 36-acre parcel that had been lost to the family nearly three decades earlier, thus restoring the old homestead to its previous glory at about 100 acres, with all major parcels intact.⁸⁵ But the reunification of the estate did not last long. The Chamberlains eventually fell behind on the mortgage of \$4,473, and in April, 1862, John Hammond “quietly and peaceably” reclaimed possession of the premises.⁸⁶ This was the second time the McFarland-Chamberlain family had lost this parcel to foreclosure, the two events separated by some thirty-four years.

Late in 1866, now eighty-one years of age, Ira McFarland divided his land, consisting of about sixty-five acres, into two parcels on opposite sides of Pleasant Street, between his two surviving daughters and their husbands. The approximate locations of the two parcels, as well as the 36-acre tract lost in the 1820s, now owned by John Hammond, can be seen in the maps in Figure 1.1 (page 27).

To Maria and Ephraim Chamberlain Ira deeded the land on the south side of Pleasant Street, comprising 34 acres and 46 rods, for \$4000 and “other valuable consideration,”⁸⁷ the latter consisting of a life-lease mortgage given by Maria to her father.⁸⁸ Thus occurred at least the fourth, and probably the fifth, consecutive generational transfer of property tied to mortgage-backed assurances for the continuing welfare of the retiring parties. The details of this life-lease arrangement are of interest not only for the manner and format of the welfare assurance but also

⁸³ Richmond borrowed \$1000 from his father-in-law by mortgage deed 497:163, in 1852, probably to build this house. The 1850 census showed the Chamberlains and the McFarlands as two households in the same house (or double-house), and the Richmonds as a separate house.

⁸⁴ Registry of Deeds, 570:394, recorded November 13, 1856. This deed marked the first time the old “road to Paxton” was cited as Pleasant Street.

⁸⁵ Registry of Deeds, 544:582, recorded July 10, 1855. Recall that Hammond had purchased the parcel from Attorney Rejoice Newton, who had acquired it from Joseph Sargent in the foreclosure of 1832.

⁸⁶ Registry of Deeds, 544:582-83, Jul-07-1855 (deed of conveyance); 551: 85, Jul-07-1855 (mortgage); and 650:463, Apr-30-1862, repossession by Hammond.

⁸⁷ Registry of Deeds, 735: 625, Dec-20-1866.

⁸⁸ Registry of Deeds, 735: 627, Dec-20-1866. A type classification note in the Registry entry used the term “life lease.”

for what they say about the necessities of life on the farm during this era following the Civil War. Maria Allen Chamberlain conveyed to her father, Ira McFarland, and her mother, Judith...

"... one half acre of land in the northwest corner of the lot on which the dwelling house now occupied by him stands. Also one half of the house which he now occupies... Also the right to use and occupy so much of the barn standing on the premises this day conveyed to said Maria A. by Ira McFarland by a deed of even date herewith as may be necessary for the keeping of one horse and the storing therein three tons of hay. Also room in the carriage house on said premises for one carriage. Also sufficient room in the wood house for the keeping and storing one year's stock of wood for the use of said McFarland's fires.... To hold for the term of the joint natural lives of said Ira and Judith and the life of the survivor of them. The said lessee yielding and paying therefor at the dwelling house of the said lessors the rent of one peppercorn payable one year from the date hereof."

Thus is seen that the property included a barn, a carriage house, and a wood shed, all typical components of a farm in the nineteenth century, but also that the parents maintained a horse for themselves, which required three tons of hay for a year's keep, and had a carriage in which they would ride behind the horse. Attention is also drawn to the importance of fire wood, cut, split, and stacked in the wood shed for heating the house and for cooking, probably amounting to a dozen cords or more for a year, depending on the number and types of stoves in use.

By the time of the transfer of ownership, Ephraim and Maria Chamberlain had lived on the homestead property for nearly two decades. They had had five children, three sons and two daughters born between 1850 and 1869. The census of 1860 listed them as the first of two families in the house, which, as will be seen subsequently, was actually a double-house consisting of two connected structures. Ira and Judith McFarland were listed as the second family. In the 1870 census, all five children of Ephraim and Maria Chamberlain, ages six months to nineteen years, were in the home with their parents. The middle child, a son named Frank Willis, who was eleven and in school in 1870, would die from an illness two years later.⁸⁹ Ira and Judith McFarland again were listed as the second family on the property, still residing in their own portion of the double house, their ages eighty-four and seventy-two.

To his daughter Adeline and her husband, Willard Richmond, Ira transferred 31 acres and 142 rods, comprising all of his land on the north side of the road, including the broad level plain where Beeching, Lenox, and Berwick Streets now lie, as well as the slope down to and encompassing part of the flat plain, which once had been a pond, where parts of Richmond Avenue, Intervale Road, and Amherst Street now lie.⁹⁰ Either of these plains, excluding the slope between them, seems likely to have been among the first cleared and most productive acreage of the farm for grains or other crops requiring tillage. In exchange for this acreage, Willard Richmond paid Ira McFarland \$2000

⁸⁹ Massachusetts Vital Records, Worcester, deaths, 872, Vol. 249, p. 420: Frank Willis Chamberlain, son of Ephraim and Maria... died on December 21, 1872 of Inflammation of the Bowels, at age 14y, 1m.

⁹⁰ Registry of Deeds, 738:255, Dec-19-1866.

through a mortgage and also assumed his father-in-law's obligation for the \$1000 mortgage held by the estate of the late Dr. John Green.⁹¹

Not engaged in farming himself, Richmond probably leased out the land or left its use in the hands of Ephraim Chamberlain over the next quarter century – at least that part of it which had been cleared and put into agricultural use. The census of 1860 gave “tailor” as Willard’s occupation, but some time thereafter he changed careers, becoming a realtor and in time a major presence on the city real estate scene. He was credited with erecting one of Worcester’s first large buildings, at 411-413 Main Street, the Richmond block at 233 Main Street, and a number of apartment houses. Very successful in his practice of real estate, Richmond’s property tax assessment in 1900 totaled over \$180,000.⁹² In 1892, he sold the land on Pleasant Street to James W. Sullivan and Frank H. Howland who subdivided it into the “Richmond Heights” development, which the *Telegram* called “a prominent residential section, where thousands of dollars are invested in fine homes.”⁹³ Thus did the first major part of the old McFarland farm come to the end of the line as agricultural land. By the turn of the century, its conversion to a high-value residential neighborhood was well underway.

The Richmonds had four children, only one of whom, a daughter, married and had children, thus bringing Willard’s line of the surname Richmond to an end. In 1867, Adeline died of consumption (tuberculosis) at the age of forty-five, leaving the four children ages three through fourteen.⁹⁴ She was thus the fifth child of Ira and Judith McFarland to die before either of them. Later that year, Willard married Adeline’s first cousin, Mary Caroline McFarland, 41, daughter of Ira McFarland’s younger brother Asa. She died in 1889, after which Willard Richmond remained at his home on Pleasant Street until his passing in July, 1916, a few days shy of ninety-three years of age.⁹⁵ The Richmond home at 835 Pleasant Street stood until 1926 when it was taken down and replaced by the Beth Jacob synagogue (later renamed Shaari Torah).

The third major piece of the old McFarland farm was the 36-acre tract which had been lost to the family in the foreclosure problem of the 1820s. It had been acquired by attorney Rejoice Newton in 1828, then sold to farmer John Hammond in 1839, who sold it to the Chamberlains in 1855 and then reclaimed it by foreclosure in 1862. Six years later, in 1868, Hammond sold the tract again, this time to Horace E. Chamberlin, a 26-year-old partner with his father in a lumber business, Chamberlin & Co., located on Grove Street.⁹⁶ There was a very distant family relationship between

⁹¹ Registry of Deeds, 738:256, Dec-19-1866. This mortgage was discharged in 1883 by E. F. Chamberlain, “Admr of the estate of the mortgagee” (margin note added to mortgage deed).

⁹² Worcester House Directory, 1900, Real Estate Record.

⁹³ Sale of the land, Registry of Deeds, 1396:422-425, Nov-23-1892; mortgage 1396:425-48, Nov-23-1892. Richmond’s private acreage for his homesite was increased from 21,246 square feet which he had purchased from Ira McFarland in 1856 to 53,142 feet after the sale. Source: House Directories, various years.

⁹⁴ Office City Clerk, Death Records.

⁹⁵ Obituary: Worcester *Daily Telegram*, Jul-14-1916. In 1923, seven years after Richmond’s death, a trust fund was established in his name in the city’s Department of Health for the Belmont Hospital, a city-owned facility specializing in infectious diseases. From the original endowment of \$53,257, annual amounts usually approximating revenues earned on the investments were part of the Department’s budget, and the total grew most years, even during the Depression. By 1992 the fund had grown to \$249,646 and was the eighth largest of 109 trust funds administered by the City Treasurer’s office that fiscal year.

⁹⁶ Registry of Deeds, 780:22, Nov-09-1868

Horace Chamberlin and Ephraim Chamberlain,⁹⁷ but it is unknown whether the families knew each other. The fact of a Chamberlin buying the 36-acre site adjacent to the Chamberlains, land that had earlier been part of the latter's homestead farm, appears more likely to have been a matter of coincidence than any kind of family connection.

By the early 1870s, Horace Chamberlin had fallen behind in payments on the mortgage which he had given to Hammond, likely as a result of business losses sustained in the severe recession which began with the "panic" of 1873. In 1876 he lost the property to foreclosure,⁹⁸ the third time this parcel of land had been lost through foreclosure within the past half century. The mortgagee reclaiming the property was the estate of the late John Hammond, who had died in 1871. The land was put up for auction by the heirs in 1876, and notice of the auction published in the *Evening Gazette* described the property as "valuable pasture land."⁹⁹ Acting through his attorney, John Hammond's son Otis, who was a clerk with the Boston and Albany Railroad and not a farmer, reacquired the property through a high bid of \$1,789.37. He then sold it to his brother Fred,¹⁰⁰ who presumably used it for pasture land and hay fields the next two decades as supplemental acreage for the Hammond farm on Highland Street.

In the late 1880s, Fred and his brothers and sisters drew up plans for the development of the Highland Street property as a residential district, one aimed at an affluent segment of the city's social spectrum. After a delay in getting underway, "Hammond Heights" began to emerge from the old fields by the early 1890s, and by mid-decade Fred and Alice Hammond had decided to relocate, even though the old farm house was not slated for demolition, and still stands as 264 Highland Street. In 1896 they moved, with some of their grown children, to their newly-erected home on the old McFarland hill site, above the steep slope overlooking Pleasant Street, where Morningside Road would later pass by its front, now standing as 16 Morningside. "Footprints" of the house and the barn were included in the Atlas of 1896 (Plate 27) and the property was called the "McFarland Heights Farm." As evidence of his intention to continue farming, Hammond also had the old barn from Highland Street taken down in "kit" style and part of it reconstructed on the new site, to the rear of the house, now the locations of 37 and 41 South Lenox Street.¹⁰¹

In a bizarre coincidence, Fred Hammond's wife's maiden name was Alice J. McFarland, but she was not related to the McFarland family of present concern. She was a daughter of Hosea McFarland of Upton, whose great-grandfather had immigrated from Scotland, not Ireland, and with whom there

⁹⁷ The two lines both traced back to the arrival in Massachusetts of brothers William and Thomas Chamberlain about 1648, a span of five generations for Ephraim and seven for Horace. Genealogical information on both Horace Chamberlin and Ephraim Chamberlain was provided by James Parker of the World Chamberlain Genealogical Society, from a very extensive database on persons of the surname (regardless of spelling), in an email received March 11, 2009. The author of this work, incidentally, with still a third spelling of the name, is not related to either Ephraim or Horace.

⁹⁸ Chamberlin's mortgage, Registry of Deeds, 780:23, Nov-09-1868; the foreclosure 981:339-341, date 1876

⁹⁹ Worcester Evening Gazette, April 18 and April 26, 1876.

¹⁰⁰ Registry of Deeds, affidavit pertaining to the auction in 981:341, May 2, 1876; sale of land by Otis to Fred by deed of 979:508-509, recorded June 2, 1876.

¹⁰¹ This was the occasion, as was mentioned in the 1909 story on the sale of the farms in the *Telegram*, of the reconstruction of part of the old Hammond barn, the one which had been the cause of the great "jollification" when it was originally built.

was no known relationship to the line of the same surname descended from Daniel and Andrew McFarland.¹⁰² Thus, women of the maiden name McFarland were the wives and mothers in the families of all three parcels of the old McFarland farm, yet only two of them were related.

The Hammonds continued farming the land through 1909, and residing in the house until 1913 when, with the new neighborhood streets laid out and houses appearing on the landscape, they moved out of the house now bearing the address 6 Morningside Road (later 16), and into a new home on Wetherell Street near Newton Square. Fred died late in 1917 at the age of seventy-four.¹⁰³ His widow, Alice (McFarland) Hammond, died in 1928.

To this point it has been feasible to describe the geographic location of the McFarland farm only in general, descriptive terms. The Richards Atlas of Worcester for 1886 finally makes it possible to provide an imperfect but fairly accurate map of the farm encompassing, more or less, the 109 acres which Andrew McFarland received from his father a century and a half earlier. By this time the farm had been divided into three main sections, and three smaller parcels which had been carved out of the property and sold between 1855 and 1870.

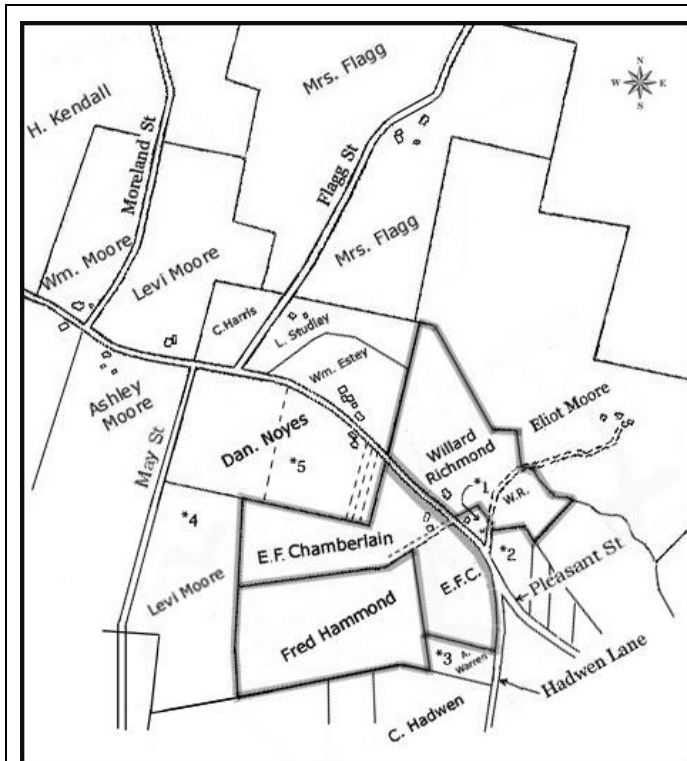
The two side-by-side maps below show the same information in two ways: one as a property ownership diagram abstracted from the 1886 Atlas (parts of Plates 23 and 24); the other showing the principal areas superimposed on a map of the present-day pattern of streets. The map on the left, from the Atlas, with minor augmentation based on deeds, shows property boundaries of the three main sections of the old farm as they existed at that date - the Chamberlain, Hammond, and Richmond parcels. Numbered asterisks mark the three smaller parcels, totaling eight to nine acres, which had been sold prior to 1886. The total acreage of the six parcels was in the vicinity of 105 acres - slightly less than the 109 acres said to have been received by Andrew McFarland from his father in 1731, but, in view of difficulties in finding and interpreting the deeds of property transfer, "close enough."

Each of the two larger areas was owned for a short time and then sold by James McFarland, Sr. in the latter 1700s, neither seeming ever to have been part of the McFarland homestead farm.

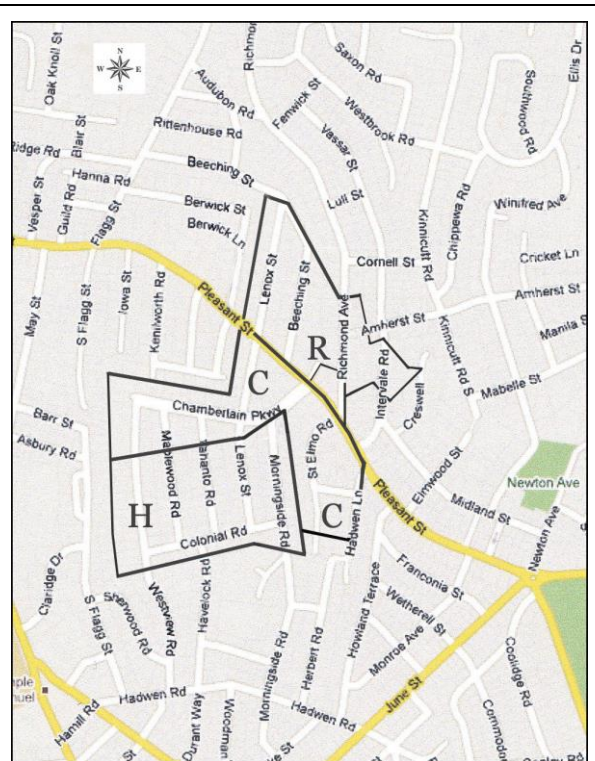
¹⁰² Alice's death record in Worcester establishes that her father was Hosea McFarland of Upton.: book 15 page 160. The genealogical trace found online ran as follows: Hosea (4), b. 1821 in Upton, Ma.; son of Thomas (3), b. 1779 in Hopkinton, Ma.; son of James (2), b. 1750 in Hopkinton, Ma.; son of Robert (1), b. 1703 in Scotland. Thus, Alice's line of McFarlands was of direct Scottish descent, without having migrated through Ireland, as had the McFarlands of Worcester descended from Daniel. (It is believed that Scottish families typically used "Mac" in place of "Mc," in surnames based on this variant of the "son of" prefix. Nevertheless, the spelling of the name in records seen of this line was usually *McFarland*, and in one instance *Macfarland*. There is no way to know to what extent clerks writing surnames for people, and spelling them for the record, may have expressed them differently. An online search on this line of McFarlands, through Ancestry.com, uncovered a listing of her ancestors going back three generations to Scotland, with no sign or likelihood of any link to the Scotch-Irish McFarlands of Worcester. This online genealogical evidence is, however, not sufficiently documented to be certain that there was no link between her line of McFarlands and that of the homestead in Worcester, but if there was a connection it apparently was quite remote.

¹⁰³ Office of the City Clerk, Death Records, 12:192, Dec-29-1917, cause: heart disease

1.1 Two Views of the McFarland Farm Area in 1886



By the author and Gregg Belevick, from Richards Atlas of 1886, Plates 23 and 24, with minor augmentation based on deeds.



The three primary parcels superimposed on a contemporary map of the area from Google Maps. Symbols: C – Chamberlain property (30.5 acres), H – Hammond property (35.8 acres), R – Richmond property (30 acres).

James sold area area *5, consisting of about 77 acres, in 1769, promptly after purchasing it from his brother Daniel; he sold area *4, approximately 24 acres, in 1778 to members of the Moore family. Neither site appears ever to have been in agricultural use by the McFarlands. (*Additional information on the five noted parcels can be found in Supplement 1-A.*)

In June, 1874, at the age of eighty-eight, Ira McFarland passed away. The cause, according to his death record, was simply “old age.”¹⁰⁴ The *Evening Gazette* said of Ira only that he had died, and the *Spy* merely cited his death and noted that he was one of the oldest farmers in the city.¹⁰⁵ His wife Judith continued living with her daughter’s family in the old homestead of her husband’s ancestors into the early 1880s. On February 12, 1883, at the age of eighty-three, she was found dead in her home – the cause, as recorded in death records maintained by the City Clerk’s office: “suicide by hanging.”¹⁰⁶ No obituary notice or other account of her death appeared in the press.

¹⁰⁴ Office of the City Clerk, Death Records, Book 3, Page 97

¹⁰⁵ Worcester *Spy*, app. June, 1874.

¹⁰⁶ Judith was shown in the census of 1880 as age 82, head of her own household, the second family at the same address as the Chamberlains. Her death record filed by the City stated that she was eighty-three. Office of the City Clerk, Death Records.

Along with the good fortune of their long and productive lives, Ira and Judith had experienced personal misfortune as well. Four of their children had died as youth or young adults, and another had succumbed while in her forties, leaving young children behind. They also had suffered the loss of legal ownership of the estate, and eventually the actual loss of more than a third of the acreage, although not the home or the buildings and utilities of the farm. On the positive side, they had two daughters who lived to maturity, married, and had families, and to them the remaining McFarland land had been transferred.

Ephraim and Maria Chamberlain became the fifth-generation proprietors of the homestead farm, dating at least from the deed of ownership in 1866, if not, for practical purposes, owing to Ira's advanced age, somewhat earlier. During their time the farm would grow larger for a while then later become slightly smaller. As previously noted, they had re-purchased the 36-acre Hammond parcel in 1855, but the result had been only a few years of ownership before losing it again to foreclosure in 1862. Taking into account the sale in 1870 of three acres along the southern edge of the property along Hadwen lane, and an additional 20,000 square foot house parcel adjacent to the Warren property in 1892, the Chamberlain land remaining intact after 1892 consisted of some thirty and one-half (30.5) acres.

Generation 6: Sons and Daughters of Ephraim and Maria Chamberlain

On June 9, 1892, at the age of seventy, Ephraim Forbes Chamberlain died of pneumonia, leaving his wife Maria, and four surviving, grown children in their thirties to early forties, all unmarried. The notice of his death in the *Evening Gazette* said he had been President of the Tatnuck Benevolent, Charitable and Literary Association, and a member of the Worcester and New England Agricultural Societies, the Worcester Grange, the Patrons of Husbandry, and the Tatnuck and Chamberlain District Farmers' Clubs.¹⁰⁷ He had also served one term, 1860, on the city's Common Council.¹⁰⁸

His passing left Edwin, 39, the agriculturist of the family, as the sixth-generation proprietor of the farm. His two sisters were the eldest and the youngest of the five offspring. Agnes was a clerk in City Hall, and apparently lived in the house all or most of her life. Bertha, who was only 22 when her father died, also worked as a clerk and was living at home.

Frederick, 31, was at that time beginning to make a name for himself in the community. After finishing district schools in the city, he had worked on the farm and held other jobs for a time before enrolling in Harvard College where he earned the degree of Bachelor of Laws in 1886.¹⁰⁹ After practicing law for a few years in Worcester, in 1893 he was appointed Assistant Register of Probate. According to Charles Nutt, the excellent work Chamberlain performed in the management

¹⁰⁷ Worcester *Evening Gazette*, Jun-10-1892, p. 4. The reference to the "Chamberlain District" is to an early school district designation, an area near Salisbury Street, the name tracing back to Deacon Jacob Chamberlain, who lived in the 18th century. The name bore no known connection to Ephraim F. Chamberlain.

¹⁰⁸ Nutt, p. 403

¹⁰⁹ Nutt, p. 114. Also obituary notices in the *Daily Telegram*, July 4, 1940, p. 1; and the *Evening Gazette*, July 4, 1940, p. 1, each of which includes interesting commentary on the judge's 'old fashioned' approach to marriage and divorce.

of the probate office and system was widely recognized, and resulted in his appointment in 1907 as the district's second Judge of Probate, an office he filled in his time "with dignity and distinction."¹¹⁰

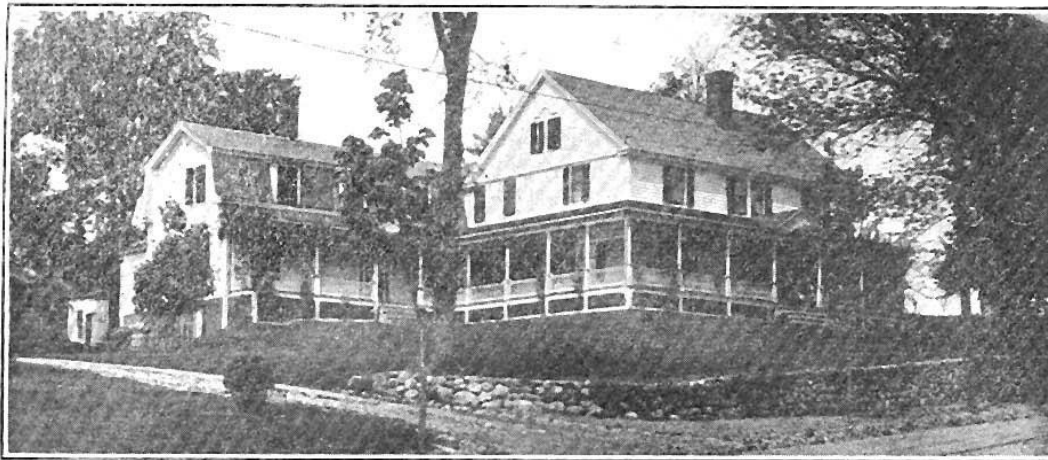
In 1900, according to the census, the two brothers and two sisters were still residing at home with their mother, Maria McFarland Chamberlain, who was now age 74.



Frederick H. Chamberlain,
ca. 1900

A photograph of the McFarland-Chamberlain house taken about the turn of the century, give or take a few years, clarifies what was meant by its description as a "double-house." There were two distinct houses, built at different times, not structurally integrated but close enough that a porch ran along both, connecting them for walking purposes. The original house in the foreground and the addition in the rear were set parallel to each other, facing northeasterly across Pleasant Street, more or less in the direction of the home of Willard Richmond. Dates of construction of the two buildings are not known, but the original house most likely was an expansion and updating of an earlier house dating to the early-to-mid 18th century. A note on the (original, surviving) house in a 1980 newsletter of the *Worcester Heritage Preservation Society* (now *Preservation Worcester*), described it as "a familiar central-chimney, center-entrance, three-window façade type popular in eighteenth century Worcester."¹¹¹

1.3 The McFarland-Chamberlain double-house at 830 Pleasant Street, ca. 1900



Building symbols shown on Atlas maps of 1886 and 1896 make clear that there was a barn between the rear-house and the cart path which became Selwyn Road. Since only a small shed appears there in this photograph, the barn is presumed to have been torn down by the time this picture was taken. (continues)

¹¹⁰ The obituary notice for Chamberlain in the *Evening Gazette*, July 4, 1940, p.1, is well worth reading and can be found as Supplement 1-B.

¹¹¹ *W.H.P.S. Newsletter* Vol. 9 no. 1, January-February, 1980.

The stone wall along Pleasant Street turned at the corner of the farm roadway, which was known as Selwyn Street. It is not clear whether Selwyn lay exactly where the westbound lane of Chamberlain Parkway was to be placed a few years later. The existence of the stone retaining wall dates the photograph to no sooner than 1895, because Maria Chamberlain received permission from the city that year in the form of a deed of agreement, to build the wall where it is shown, which overlapped slightly onto the city's right-of-way. The reason for her request was to save a row of mature trees on the property which required that the wall be constructed farther out than otherwise would have been allowed. (Worcester District Registry of Deeds, 1482: 370, Aug-06-1895)

Another photograph of the house, taken some years earlier but at an unknown date, was included in Nutt's history of Worcester where it was identified as the McFarland house.

1.4 The McFarland house, ca. mid-19th century



Source: Charles Nutt, *History of Worcester and its People*, v. 1, p. 183.

Maria Allen (McFarland) Chamberlain died in January, 1909, at the age of 83, the cause recorded as "apoplexy."¹¹² The *Evening Gazette* noted that she was the "oldest member of Old South church," and a descendant of Andrew McFarland, who "built the old homestead on Pleasant street," adding that "ever since the day of her birth, she has lived in the old homestead."¹¹³ Maria was the only one of six children of Ira and Judith McFarland to have a long life and she was the last of the McFarlands descended from Andrew.

On November 6, 1909, the sale of the Chamberlain and Hammond estates, totaling 65 acres, to the O'Connell Real Estate Company was announced and given a lengthy account in the *Daily Telegram*, its significance for the city, in the view of the publisher, suggested in its placement on page one above the fold. One of the last farms to fall to urbanization between Newton Square and Tatnuck, the area was to be transformed into "Lenox," a luxurious neighborhood of fine homes

¹¹² Office of the City Clerk, Death Records, 10:3

¹¹³ Worcester *Evening Gazette*, Jan-13-1909, p.1, headline: "Judge Chamberlain's Mother Passes Away."

featuring magnificent views and the best of amenities for the city's "discriminating class of buyers." Almost immediately the site was abuzz with activity as workers and teams in numbers beyond the imaginations of the highway surveyors of an earlier time began the work of converting the two components of the old McFarland farm into residential accommodations for the expanding upper middle class of the fast-growing city.

On New Year's Day, 1910, less than two months after the press announcement of Lenox, Edwin Chamberlain died of tuberculosis and a heart condition.¹¹⁴ In view of the fact that victims of tuberculosis usually endured its effects for a period of time, typically months or years, often becoming unable to work during the latter phase before succumbing, it seems likely that Edwin's health had been a consideration in the decision to sell the land. Unfortunately, very little is known of Edwin. Like his siblings, he never married. His notice in the obituary section of the *Evening Gazette* said little more than that "the Schuman Quartet sang."¹¹⁵

Judge Frederick Chamberlain and his sisters Agnes and Bertha continued living in the old house, now 830 Pleasant Street, and a farmhouse only in the sense of tradition, its surrounding fields now undergoing conversion to urban use. The conversion process included the demolition of the rear part of the house. They were the last of the McFarland-Chamberlain line, and their house on less than an acre was the last vestige of the old McFarland farm and homestead.

* * *

¹¹⁴ Office of the City Clerk, Death Record, 10:73. Obituary in *The Spy*, Jan-04-1910.

¹¹⁵ *Worcester Evening Gazette*, January 3, 1910, p. 2