

Joseph Baker

of

**Tisbury on Martha's Vineyard,
Readfield and Moscow, Maine**

By Dale Marie Potter-Clark

BAKER, Joseph 1744 - 1816

A few words from the author...

For years I was curious about Joseph Baker – the man who lived his last days in a cage.

I knew that when he lived in Readfield 1770-1783 he served his community, church and country as a responsible, energetic and ambitious man. I knew that in addition to helping establish Readfield (then part of Winthrop), he moved his family to Moscow, ME - the first to settle there. I knew the people of Moscow named a mountain after him. But that was about all I knew.

In researching Joseph for my Readfield 1791ⁱ project I uncovered a story that deserved more telling than a short paragraph. He lived more than eight decades - a pioneer, Revolutionary War Veteran, Methodist preacher, adventurer, husband and father. He deserves to be remembered as more than “the man who died living in a cage.” I think you will agree after you read his story.

Dale Marie Potter-Clark
December 2013

Joseph Baker is an interesting read, comfortably written, with the scholarship evident.

Florence Drake, President, Readfield Historical Society

The monographs that Dale M. Potter-Clark is writing about the little known and unsung pioneers of Maine's backcountry will help future scholars have a better understanding of what actually happened here in 18th and 19th centuries.

Kent G. London, Board of Directors,

Kennebec Historical Society and Vassalboro Historical Society

Dale's research about Joseph Baker is an important addition to our knowledge about one of our earliest settlers in the upper Kennebec River Valley.

Marilyn Sterling Gondek, Board of Directors,

Old Canada Road Historical Society, Bingham, ME

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This book and others about the history of Readfield, Maine and her people are available at
www.readfieldmaine.blogspot.com or email crossings4u@gmail.com

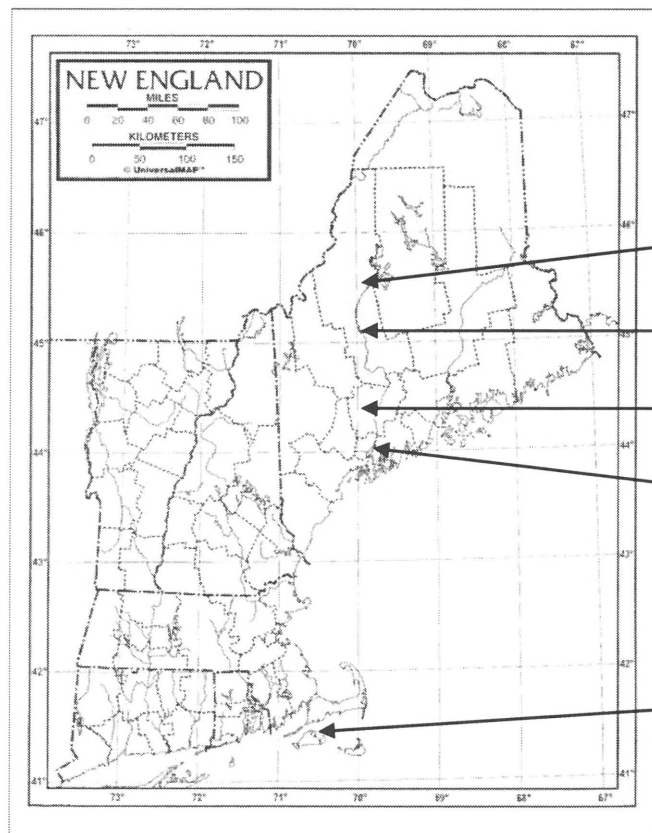
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INTRODUCTION

Joseph Baker was born in 1744 on Martha's Vineyard in Tisbury, Massachusetts. He was a son of Thomas Baker but his mother's name is not known. One sibling has been identified as Samuel.ⁱⁱ We know nothing else (at this time) about Joseph's family of origin.

Joseph Baker lived the first 27 years of his life in Tisbury where he was surrounded by family and friends who had lived on the Vineyard for generations. You will see when you read his story that he was ambitious, faith filled, and had a great sense of adventure.

In 1768 he set off for the first of many adventures he would experience in his life. He boarded a coastal schooner - with others from Martha's Vineyard and nearby Cape Cod - and set sail for Phippsburg, Maine at the mouth of the Kennebec River. From there they traveled upriver to Hallowell, at the head of tide, and then proceeded on a blazed trail westward into the backwoods of Maine. There he would establish roots for his new family in Pondtown - the first central Maine settlement to be established away from a major navigable waterway. And that was just the beginning...



Joseph Baker Martha's Vineyard to Maine 1744-1826

Moscow, Somerset, ME
1786 - 1826

Kennebec River

Winthrop, Kennebec, ME
1769 to 1786

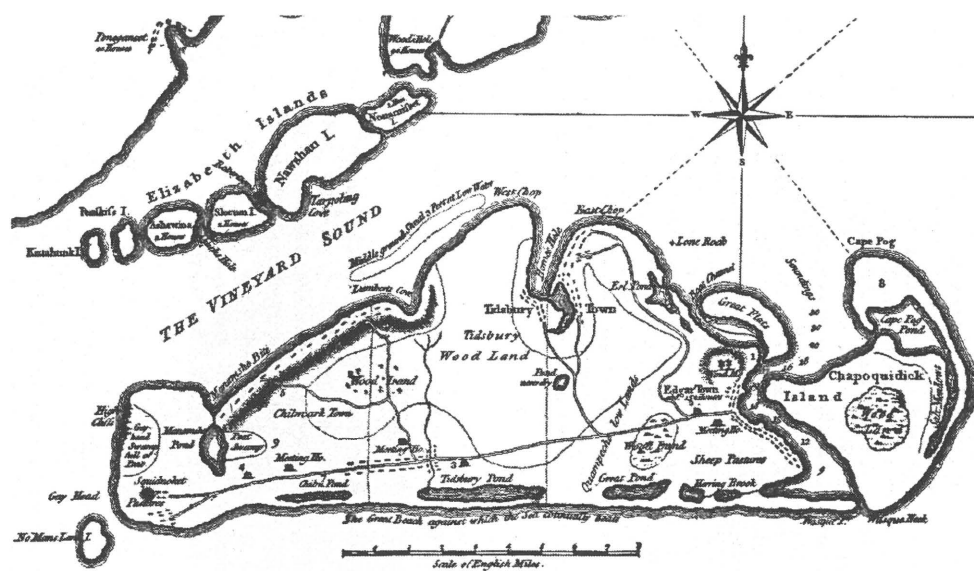
Phippsburg at the mouth of the
Kennebec River

Tisbury, Dukes, MA
Born 1744; married 1769

The arrows indicate approximate locations.

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MARTHA'S VINEYARD



MARTHA'S VINEYARD WITH ITS DEPENDENCIES.
FROM CREVECOEUR'S "LETTRES D'UN CULTIVATEUR AMERICAIN." LONDON, 1784

Martha's Vineyard is the largest island on the southeastern coast of Massachusetts - it is twenty miles long and nine miles wide. "The Vineyard" was incorporated in 1668 and is comprised of six towns. Edgartown on the east; Oak Bluffs on the northeast - named for its location and oak trees; Chilmark and Aquinnah (formerly Gay Head) on the west; and Tisbury and West Tisbury on the north side.

An early explorer described this island in 1602 as "...large, well wooded, and with luxuriant grape vines, many beautiful lakes, and springs of the purest water..." Before 1700 pitch pine trees grew there in abundance and were vital to many aspects of life on the island - building, warmth and for lighting the homes to mention a few.

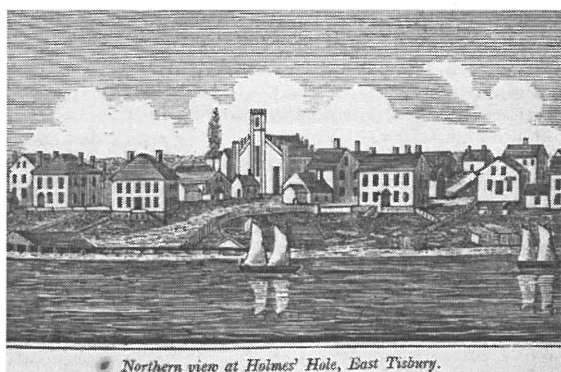
In the beginning whales were plentiful off shore and were caught by the islanders, both white men and Indians, from small boats. Soon those whales were fished out, which forced men to search further from shore. As a result, whaling became a way of life there - the first whale ship on record that sailed from the Vineyard was the schooner "Lydia," which left Edgartown in 1765. Men were obliged to go farther and farther away from home, until finally they were compelled to go on voyages lasting from three to five years.ⁱⁱⁱ

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ENTER, JOSEPH BAKER

By the time Joseph Baker was born, Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard had been inhabited by the Europeans for 100 years. Trees had become so sparse from over cutting that acquiring enough wood and lumber to meet everyone's needs had become challenging. Lumber was shipped to southeastern Massachusetts from other areas of New England but many of the islanders did not have the financial means to buy it.

To compound their dilemma the soil was not as fertile as it had once been. Farmers who had lived there through the 17th and 18th centuries had no knowledge of crop rotation or other means of land and forest preservation. Raising adequate food for their families was becoming more difficult.



Northern view at Holmes' Hole, East Tisbury.

Old Tisbury on Martha's Vineyard.
The birthplace of Joseph and Dorcas (Smith) Baker,
their parents and siblings.

By mid 18th century, wrote one historian, "The population growth on Martha's Vineyard and careless exploitation of the land and resources had wrought worsening scarcities of land, hay, fish, lumber and firewood." There was a total public disinterest in creating any system for preservation of the forests.

There came to be many poor families as a result of this deterioration. So those men -

who did not have the propensity for a life at sea - began looking towards other possibilities for their home ground. The Maine frontier was appealing to many of them.^{iv}

FREE LAND IN THE BACK COUNTRY

"Free land" in Maine's backcountry was being offered by the Proprietors of the Kennebec Purchase. They claimed ownership of a vast track 15 miles east and west of the Kennebec River. In 1761 they ran their first persuasive advertisement in England and America. It read (in part):

"The Proprietors will grant two hundred acres altogether, to each family who shall become settlers on condition that they each build a house not less than 20 feet square, and seven feet stud; clear and make fit for tillage five acres within three years, and dwell upon the premises personally, or by their substitutes for the term of seven years or more." The Proprietors planned to

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survey each township with 200 acres for the first settled minister, 200 acres for the ministry, and 100 acres for a schoolhouse lot, training field and burying ground. They went on to say that *“this land was the best offer of any yet offered in any part of America, had “plenty of meadows and interval, and that many settlers have carried with them 20 head of cattle which they have been able to keep year round... It is well stored with great quantities of the best and most valuable timber...”* They further exclaimed that *“the water-carriage made for ready access to the Boston market 24 hours with favorable wind, and the river and sea abounded with various kinds of fish.”*

By this time several towns had been established on the lower Kennebec River.

The men who owned this “free land” were The Kennebec Proprietors. They did not intend for the islanders and other southern New Englanders to obtain ownership without personal cost, however. They planned to profit from the land needs of the growing population.

The Proprietors knew there was valuable timber in Maine and reserved as much of that as possible for their own gain - about one-third of their holdings. They reserved the rest as settlers’ lots which they envisioned the yeomen would clear and develop into more valuable farmland. They knew that some settlers would clear the land, build a cabin and stay for the full seven years - the conditions required in their sales agreements. They also knew some would become discouraged and leave and others would succumb to sickness or the elements and die. At this juncture the Proprietors would realize a greater profit by selling the lots and woodlands they had reserved, plus the improved acreage they would reclaim.

With this in mind the Proprietors adeptly appealed to the southern New Englanders patriarchal goals to own large parcels. They knew that both men and women settlers would be drawn to the idea of owning large lots of land, and to the possibility of dividing that property among their children.^v The potential of having their children settle nearby was perhaps the most alluring to the struggling husbandmen and their families.

JOSEPH BAKER TAKES A WIFE AND PLANS FOR THEIR FUTURE

In February 1769 Joseph Baker and Dorcas Smith were married on Martha’s Vineyard. They were both 26 years old. Her parents, Thomas and Elizabeth (Basset) Smith, were also of Tisbury. Dorcas was the youngest of eleven siblings. Joseph Baker’s education was meager, but he was bolstered by his Smith family connections - all people of intelligence, faith and strong character.^{vi}

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Immediately after Joseph Baker and Dorcas Smith were married they began the process of moving to the backcountry of Maine - west of the Kennebec River. There, they would claim 200 acres of "free land" which, they'd heard, held great promise. They, like many of the islanders, were poor and faced dismal futures if they stayed, so this was an opportunity to behold!

The allure of owning land aside - Joseph and Dorcas Baker had other considerations to ponder. Maine's backcountry was a wilderness that was remote and could only be accessed by primitive trails. Taking on such a proposition was no small feat! The adventurers would need courage, skill, strong minds and backs to surmount the obstacles they assuredly knew they would encounter along the way. Joseph Baker's imagination must have flowed with thoughts about what trials might be in store when they reached their final destination.

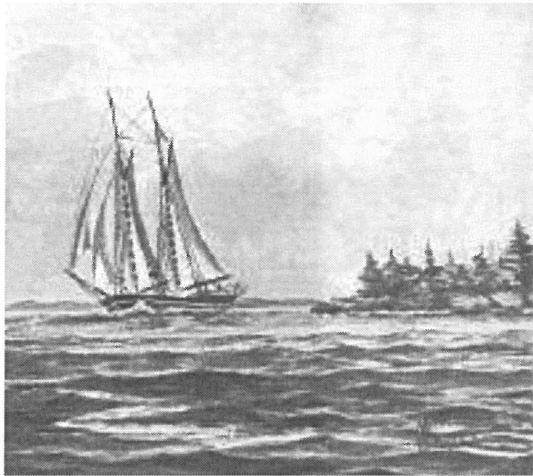
Most men did not take on the challenge alone but traveled with others - usually fathers, brothers or grown sons. The prospect of free land and all its resources was appealing to Joseph Baker and to some of Dorcas' relatives. Her forty year old brother, Mathias, and two of her nephews - Ransford, Jr. and Elisha - weighed in on the proposition of moving down eastward.^{vii} The Smith men also had wives and children to consider.

During this time there was the threat of Indian attacks - Mathias had actually served in the French and Indian War so he was aware of those dangers firsthand. The settlers knew that life would be very difficult and they would have to survive under the stringent expectations set forth by the Kennebec Proprietors. There would indeed be harsh living conditions when they reached the back woods of Maine.

After much deliberation they decided to all forge ahead together - into that unknown territory.^{viii} Both Joseph's and Dorcas' fathers were gone by 1769 but Dorcas' mother - Elizabeth Smith - was 71 years old and still living. One can only imagine the tearful parting as she said goodbye to three of her children and several grandchildren all at the same time - not knowing if she would ever see them again.

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THE JOURNEY TO POND TOWN



Cargo schooners - called “wood coasters” - were the quickest and cheapest route to the Maine frontier from Martha’s Vineyard and other parts of southeastern Massachusetts. During the warmer months dozens of them plied the coastal waters carrying country goods to Boston from ports in Maine.^{ix} Hallowell was one of those places. These vessels were the work horses for coastal trade and carried everything from timber and coal to bricks, general cargo, or loads of hay.^x They also provided cheap transport for aspiring pioneers.^{xi}



Baker, with others from Cape Cod, traveled down east by “wood coaster” to Phippsburg, then up the Kennebec River to Hallowell.

With good weather and favorable winds mid-coast Maine was a day’s sail away from Boston for a fare of about \$2.00.^{xii} It is probable the Baker and Smith families traveled down east to Maine on one of these vessels.

Most likely, Joseph Baker and the Smith men went ahead first to pave the way and prepare homes for their wives and children.

They sailed from Cape Cod (or perhaps Boston) to Phippsburg, and then upriver to Hallowell^{xiii} at the head of tide. From there they would have stopped at Fort Western^{xiv} to purchase needed provisions, familiarize themselves with the area and to find out what they might encounter on the journey ahead.

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Travelers who came to Hallowell stopped by General Howard's Store at Fort Western to purchase supplies they needed before proceeding into the backcountry.

Fully equipped with tools and whatever provisions they needed to complete the tasks at hand, they may have hired an ox cart in Hallowell to haul their belongings. The trail into the backcountry was still rough and rugged at that time, so more than likely they rigged up some kind of primitive carriers and did their own lugging. From Hallowell they proceeded on towards Pondtown.

Some newcomers had the benefit of following a marked trail, which was created sometime around 1766. It was a primitive pathway on

which a few bushes had been cleared and a line of trees blazed, and it led to the more populated southern section of Pondtown.^{xv}

In the northwestern part of town there were very few - if any - settlers before Baker and the Smiths came. It is reasonable to say they would have followed another trail used by the Indians - from Bombahook (Hallowell) towards the Sandy River.^{xvi} They wound their way by foot over steep hills, forded streams and inched their way through dense forest until they reached their destination. There was no semblance of civilization when they stopped - fifteen miles west of the Kennebec River. The trail from Hallowell to northern Pondtown was described as a "tortuous road" by someone who used that route in 1799 - more than 30 years later - on their way to Sandy River. Imagine what it must have been like in 1768 when Joseph and the Smith men traveled through.



It was around this time that geographer Thomas Prentiss wrote of the mid Maine backcountry:

"When a traveler attains the summit of a hill, the whole around him appears like an ocean of woods, swelled and depressed in its surface like the great ocean itself."

The countryside was completely unsettled, and populated with animals such as bear, wolves, fishers and wildcats. The pioneers

were constantly vigilant for any signs of marauding Indians - or worse yet - attacks. No one had warned them about the terrible onslaught of the tiny but virulent black flies and mosquitoes. The trekkers had no immunity to the venom of black flies. Their eyes

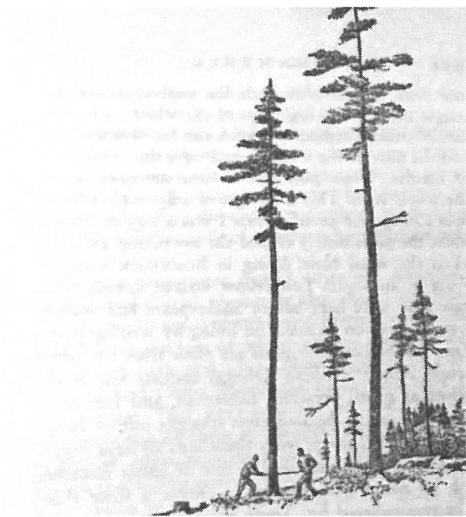
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swelled shut and the insects literally became embedded in their swollen, inflamed skin.

To put their trek into perspective - imagine hiking in Baxter State Park with no firsthand knowledge of the area, without a map, compass, insect repellent or sufficient shoes and clothing. Add to that vision - with all of your worldly possessions in tow.

These men and women were truly courageous, adventuresome and desperate for a new start.

PREPARING THE HOMESTEAD



They made it! Now, where would they begin? How would they conquer the challenges ahead? First things first - find and claim their respective 200 acre lots and clear five acres of land on each one.

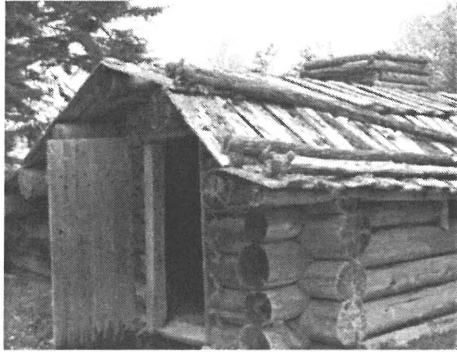
It usually took a man two weeks to cut five acres of trees. Among the four men they would need to clear 20 acres as soon as possible. A skilled ax-man could fell an acre a day by using the “driver tree” method - a commonly used technique by our early settlers. To do this the ax man chose a semi-circular line of trees and cut halfway through each of them in a strategic way so they would fall towards the center of the semi-circle.

He picked the largest tree and cut it all the way through. As it fell and hit the nearest partly severed tree a domino effect was created and they all toppled in succession.^{xvii} The ax man cut them so the tops fell together which made for less hauling and easier burning after they dried.

Once the trees were cut they were left to dry for a few weeks. The settlers proceeded to remove what logs and firewood were needed and then burned the dead wood and brush.^{xviii} This technique - referred to as “a good burn” - was a God send as it conserved a great deal of manpower and saved valuable time.

A “good burn” left the residual of a soft and fertile layer of fine ash. The unplowed soil was then ready to be planted with winter rye or Indian corn seed. The yield of crops per-acre on clearings made in this way was double that of land that had been tilled for a long time.^{xix} “Good burns” became so popular in Maine that they actually caused what came to be known as “dark day” on May 19, 1780. On that day a vast canopy of thick smoke plunged northern New England into complete darkness.^{xx} There will be more about this “dark day” later on.

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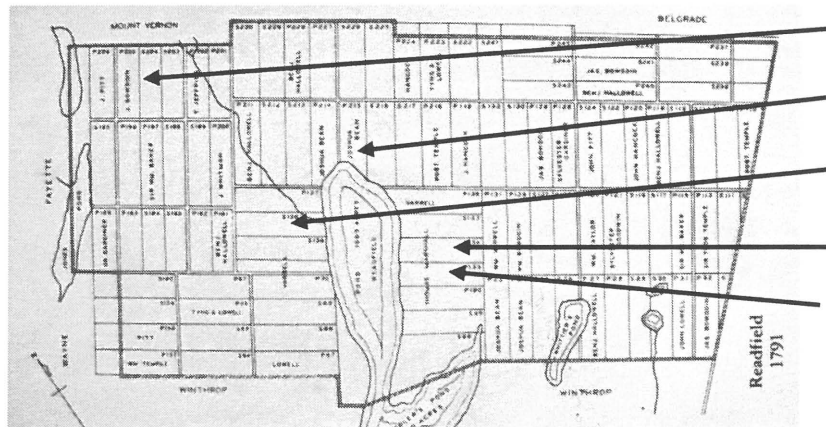
A cabin similar to the ones built by our early settlers can be seen at The Lumberman's Museum in Patten, Maine.

The next task at hand was to set about building a very basic log cabin. An example of these rustic abodes was described through the eyes of a young Sandy River settler when his father brought the family to their homestead for the first time:

"We found it a rude, forbidding, desolate, looking place. Trees about the house and opening were mostly spruce and hemlock. They had been cut down on about five acres, a strip forty rods long and about twenty feet wide on the first of July, then burned over. The whole surface was as black as coal. The trees on the north side of the opening were burned black to their tops, as was the the timber on the ground. A small bed of English turnips on a mellow knoll, sown after the fire was the only green thing visible. A log house forty feet long and twenty wide has been laid on the bank of a brook. The building was formed of straight spruce logs about a foot in diameter, hewed a little on the inside. It was laid up seven feet high with hewed beams and a framed roof, covered with long sheets of spruce bark secured by long poles withed down. The gable ends were also rudely covered with bark. The house stood near the felled trees, there was neither window, nor chimney nor floor but space has been cut near the center of the front side for a door opening." ^{xxi}

This log home was larger than normally built at the time but otherwise is an accurate description. Later, after the wives and children came, they would all help to add "frills" such as a split basswood floor; window openings; a stone hearth; moss chinking in gaps between the logs; and a hole in the roof so smoke could rise and escape. Needless to say, these were far from frills but provided only the very basic of life's necessities.

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Thomas Smith

Joseph Baker

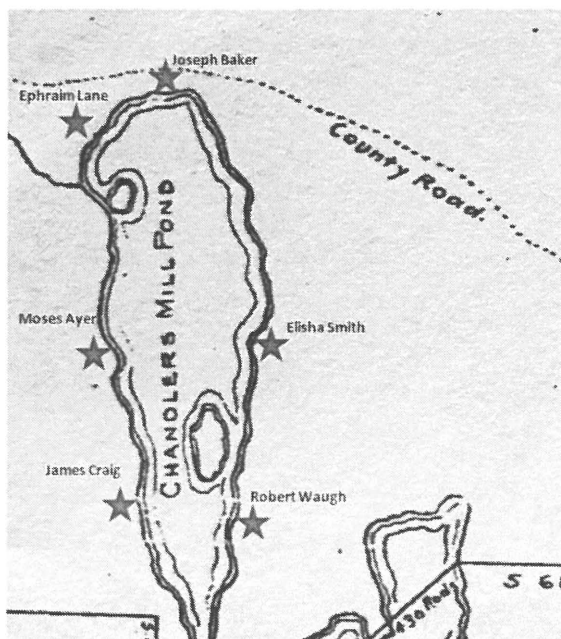
Mathias Smith

Elisha Smith

Ransford Smith

The arrows indicate approximate locations.

The surveyed lots in 1791, when Readfield separated from Winthrop, included the land where Joseph Baker and the Smiths settled 23 years before.



In 1771 when Winthrop Selectman planned and laid out a road around Chandler's Mill Pond (now called Maranacook) there were only six settler's cabins in the northern parish (now Readfield) near the lake's shore. They are noted above in the *approximate* areas they were located. The road passed near their doors – much closer to the lake than the South and Winthrop Roads do today. The County Road (route 17) noted on this map followed the old Indian Sandy River Trail. This is part of a map that was drawn in 1795 and found on record at the Kennebec County Registry of Deeds.

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Above left and below right is part of the interior of a primitive cabin that is on display at The Lumberman's Museum in Patten, ME. This is an accurate depiction of the living conditions our pioneers endured. Cut through the roof, above the "hearth", is a hole made to facilitate the escape of smoke to the out of doors (see below middle left for outside view). Above right is an example of the moss chinking used to plug the gaps between logs.



Above left is an example of a sleeping loft lined with hay where the man slept before his family came. After the wife and children came improvements were made to the cabin. At that point the interior evolved until it looked more like the picture on the right. Near the bunk beds is the kitchen bench (counter).

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TIME TO FETCH THE FAMILY

It is not known exactly when Baker and the Smiths returned to Martha's Vineyard to fetch their wives and children. James Lane, a neighbor who came in 1771 to settle on nearby Kents Hill worked on his homestead for two years before he returned to Tisbury. He was a single man at the time so was not feeling pressured about bringing a family "home". Nevertheless, Lane's story is interesting and gives a glimpse into some of what our subjects may have done when they first arrived in Readfield.

For two years James Lane worked to clear his land, build a log cabin, and to plant corn. He bought a pig at Fort Western and carried it to Readfield in a sack. Once the corn was harvested, and the pig slaughtered and salted down, he figured he had prepared a home fit for a bride. He returned to Massachusetts that winter where he found and courted Miss Eunice Chase at her family home in Tisbury. When Lane returned to Readfield the following spring the cabin had been broken into by Indians and the corn and pork was all gone. James had to carry all of his supplies from Fort Western until the next harvest came in.^{xxii}

Since Baker and the Smiths had wives and children they likely returned to Tisbury that first fall - after they'd cleared and planted their land; built their log cabins; harvested their corn; and slaughtered and salted down a pig. Then, and only then, could they sustain themselves through the harsh Maine winter ahead.

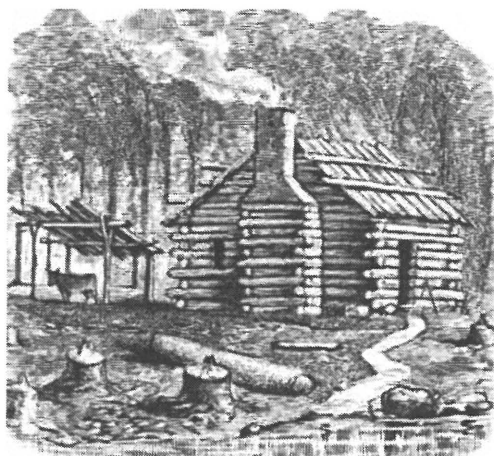
Again, we surmise that they traveled by coastal schooner from Hallowell to Tisbury, and quickly packed everyone up for the move to Maine.^{xxiii} After all - one never knew when winter would set in - and they had heard it could happen almost overnight.

To paraphrase the account of one such trip:

They all boarded a crowded 40 ton wood cruiser along with other passengers and their effects and livestock. Along with the family many settlers also brought some furniture, a horse, cow, heifer, hog, 6 sheep and some personal effects. When they disembarked in Hallowell they gathered together all the children, animals and their belongings and loaded the large items in a hired oxcart. Then, driving the livestock ahead of them, they made their way to Pondtown on the same treacherous trail the fathers had traveled alone several months before.^{xxiv}

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LIFE IN READFIELD



They set about adding a hovel for the animals; winterizing and improving the cabin.

As mentioned previously the Smith men and Baker were among the very first settlers to arrive in this section of Pondtown.^{xxv} They were more fortunate than many settlers because they all came together and lived in relative proximity to each other. Further enhancing their ability to visit back and forth - their lots bordered the north, west and east sides of Lake Maranacook - which gave them easy access by water or ice at different times of year. In contrast, many early settlers were miles from the nearest neighbor, and that lasted for years in some cases.

Joseph and Dorcas Baker settled at the head of Lake Maranacook^{xxvi} on the 200 acre lot #213, a little east of present day Readfield Corner.^{xxvii} That section of the shoreline came to be called "Joseph Baker's landing."^{xxviii} Ransford and Elisha Smith built their homes near Waugh's Landing on the east shore of Lake Maranacook; and Mathias near Dead Stream on the west shore of the lake. Thomas Smith lived at what is now known as Readfield Corner.

Life was not easy - especially the first year or more. William Allen of Farmington wrote of his family's experience their first year, which could just as well have been written by a Baker or Smith of Readfield:

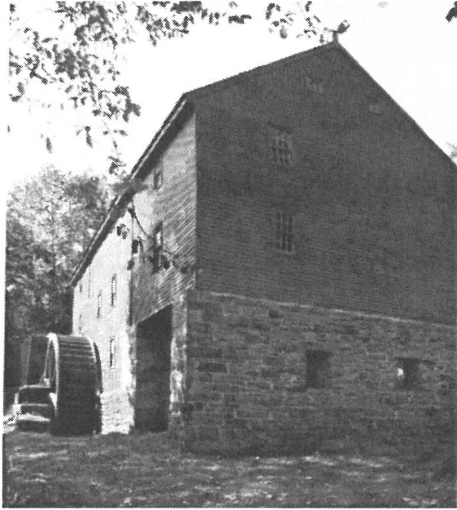
"Our fare was coarse and scanty and our work was hard. The land was hard to clear and unproductive when cleared not one eighth of it being fit for cultivation, and that a mile from the house. Our clothes were worn out and torn to pieces from going through the bushes. Our bare feet and ankles scratched, and our necks bleeding from the bites of flies and mosquitoes. When we cleared land and planted corn at the further end of our lot the bears ate it up and we seemed doomed for suffering and poverty."^{xxix}

In October of 1770 Dorcas gave birth to their first child, Elizabeth. Two years later Polly was born, and in 1774 Lemuel^{xxx} came along. The Smith's families were also growing exponentially. By then Pondtown had become incorporated as Winthrop and residents were beginning the business of getting organized. Joseph Baker honored his civic duties and was active in public affairs.

In 1774 the town voted to build a house for public worship and to locate it in the nearest convenient place in the center of town (today that is Winthrop village).

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Townpeople agreed the meeting house was to be 36x40 feet and they approved £20 to commence building it. Joseph Baker was one of three men appointed as the building committee^{xxxii} and he accepted the position of chairman.^{xxxiii} Two years later he was among the 25 people who signed a covenant affirming adherence to the doctrines of the Congregational Church,^{xxxiii} but as you read on you will see that his religious affiliation changed.



For a few years Joseph Baker and other settlers in the northern parish had to carry corn and wheat on their backs for 10 miles to John Chandler's grist mill, in Winthrop Village. Chandler's mill would have looked similar to this one.

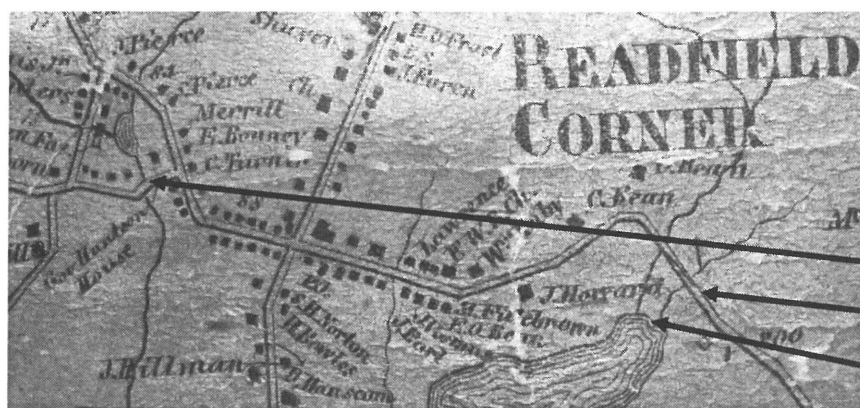
Since 1769 those who were living in the northern parish (Readfield) had been carrying corn all the way to Chandler's Grist Mill, in Winthrop village, for grinding. In Joseph's case that meant about 10 miles.^{xxxiv} Chandler also ran a sawmill in Winthrop - starting in 1767^{xxxv} - but there was no feasible way for men living in the northern parish to haul logs all the way to Winthrop village over land.^{xxxvi} This problem was solved when another saw mill and grist mill were built in the northern parish.

About 1770 James Craig came to America from England then migrated to Winthrop's northern parish. He settled near Mathias Smith on the eastern shore of Lake Maranacook (then called Chandler's Mill Pond). Four - five years later he built a saw mill nearby. He also constructed a grist mill on the same stream at what came to be known as Craig's Mills in Readfield (later known as Factory Square).^{xxxvii}

Expansion such as this, in the northern part of Winthrop, demanded taxpayer's attention and so in 1774 townspeople voted to lay out a road around the head of Lake Maranacook to Joseph Baker's house. Five years later, in 1779, the road was extended from Joseph Baker's Landing at the northerly end of Lake Maranacook, past Baker's house in a westerly direction, through Craig's Mills towards the house of Thomas Smith and Kents Hill.^{xxxviii} That road, of course, we know today as route 17 and Old Kents Hill Road.

By this time Joseph and Dorcas Baker had six children - Joseph, Jr. who was born in July 1778, Asa came along in early April 1779, and Nathan joined the family a little shy of nine months later on December 29, 1779. The Bakers had been married for ten years. Their family was growing and so was their community.

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This map is of Readfield in 1856 so Craig and Baker were gone by then, and the area was a thriving community. The arrows depict locations of Bakers landing, Craigs Mills and the sections of road built in 1774 and 1779.

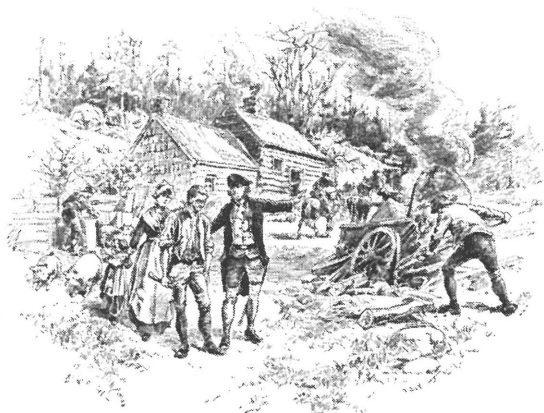
Craigs Mills / Factory Square

Route 17 / Main Street

Joseph Baker landing on Lake Maranacook.

Section of an 1856 map of Readfield

MILITARY SERVICE



When British raids on Lexington and Concord occurred in April 1775 the citizens of Winthrop rose to the occasion. Word quickly spread throughout the town about an emergency meeting that all should attend.

In January 1773 the people of Winthrop went on record in support and sympathy with the movement towards independence from England. By March 1775 a Committee of Correspondence, Inspection and Safety was formed and Joseph Baker was among those chosen to serve. Their duty was to determine what purchases were needed in the way of provisions, ammunition and other necessary stores to ensure the public safety. They were also given authority to raise the monies necessary on behalf of the town, and constables were directed to give them any money they had collected for province taxes.^{xxxix} A weighty responsibility to be sure!

In April 1775 - within days after the British raid on Lexington and Concord - the town fathers of Winthrop called an emergency meeting and shortly after nineteen men from Winthrop joined the militia and set off for headquarters in Cambridge, MA.^{xl} Joseph Baker was among them.^{xli} He was a 2nd Lieutenant in Prescott's regiment May-December 1775; 2nd Lieutenant in the 2nd Continental Infantry in 1776; and 1st Lieutenant in the Second Massachusetts Regiment in 1777.^{xlii} In the way of interpretation, Joseph Baker must have spent most of that time away from home because there were no children born September 1774 - July 1778. Prior to that Dorcas gave birth in the fall of 1770, 1772, and 1774 - every two years. Upon his return home

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there were three Baker children born - each less than a year apart in July 1778, April and December 1779.

1779 - 1780: ATTACK OF THE "ARMY WORMS"



Settlers were truly not prepared for the constant torment of black flies and mosquitoes. Fly bites became raw and bleeding, and eyes buttoned closed. The effects were compounded by their lack of immunity to the bug bite toxins introduced into their systems. Working outdoors in their forest-surrounded clearings became unbearable.

In an attempt to repel the insects they maintained "smokes" at the doors of their cabins. These straw and brush fires burned day and night - even on the hottest of days. Cabins became filled with dense and almost suffocating smoke. Those conditions were preferred over the insect attacks! With time they gained some resistance to the insects - in both body and spirit - and developed some coping strategies. They learned to live in harmony, such as it was.

Then, in the year 1779 another pest appeared on the scene that caught them off guard again. This time the insects were more than annoying. They brought utter destruction.

After the yeomen had struggled through a moderately difficult winter, the early spring looked promising. All signs pointed towards a productive planting season. Things progressed quite nicely, and then came "the army worms" - so named because they marched in a straight line like the ranks of an insatiable army. They were actually grasshoppers, and they destroyed everything that was green. The infestation was not any worse on the Maine frontier than elsewhere except our settlers did not have any surplus of grain and food nor the money to buy any.

In November of 1779 the Lincoln County magistrates lamented:

"After having struggled through the miseries of a hard and pinching winter, the people's countenances pale. And their bodies become feeble, through want and hunger, they are in the spring of the year, from the first appearance of things, in great hopes of a fruitfull summer, but their hopes were soon cut off, by amazing swarms of grasshoppers, and other insects which in many parts of this country almost covered the face of the ground, and distroyed a

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great part of the grain and grass and almost all vegetables that grew out of the earth.”^{xliii}

1780: THE WORST WINTER OF THE 18TH CENTURY



The following winter - on the heels of the “army worm” invasion - settlers encountered the worst winter of the 18th Century.^{xliv} There was deep snow and severe cold with widespread suffering throughout the east, including Maine. Travel ceased, social interaction was non-existent and shipping halted.^{xlv} It was so cold that ice was piled 20 feet high along the Maryland and Delaware coastline and stayed there until spring.^{xlvi} In January 1780 the temperature fell devastatingly

cold and remained below zero for so long that every harbor from North Carolina to Maine froze over - eight feet thick in some places.^{xlvii}

George Washington wrote from Morristown, NJ on March 18, 1780:

“... The oldest people now living in this Country do not remember so hard a winter as the one we are now emerging from. In a word the severity of the frost exceeded anything of the kind that had ever been experienced in this climate before.”^{xlviii}

Then came the spring thaw and on March 7th a major flood ensued. Many bridges were damaged and homes lost. In spite of that, people were relieved by the warmer weather conditions and happy to finally see some signs of springtime.

MAY 19, 1780: “DARK DAY”

That same year - in the days leading up to May 19th - residents in the Northeast had noticed a strange copper-colored hue to sunsets and sunrises. By 10 AM on May 19th the sky went dark. Chickens retired to their roosts, crickets began chirping and cows returned to their stalls. All over New England, every farmer, schoolboy, fisherman, maiden, cordwainer, blacksmith, clergyman and laborer looked upward for the missing sun. The noontime meal was served by candlelight. Some thought that judgment day was upon them. At Sudbury, Massachusetts, one man remarked that “*it was so terrible dark that we could not see our hand before us*”. Another observed “*it*

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looked like a powerful storm was approaching but while the sky churned and boiled at higher altitudes, not a blade of grass stirred at ground level”.

From the thickness of the clouds, they expected a violent gust of wind and rain but a storm did not come in Massachusetts - only the darkness and clouds. Maine, on the other hand, experienced severe lightning and thunder storms. By 1:00pm the last bit of light was gone and by 2 PM an odd luminescence shone in the west and became brighter with time. The clouds became yet thicker and brassier and there appeared to be quick flashes similar to those of the Northern Lights. By 3:00pm some observers perceived a strong sooty smell in the air - like that of burnt leaves. The surface of water in rain barrels developed a light scum that, on closer inspection, was discovered to be black ashes and burnt leaves. Accounts poured in from all over New England that indicated a whiff of burnt leaves and smoke. Many birds were found dead on the ground, having blindly flown into structures or possibly asphyxiated by the thick smoke.

By the next morning, things got back to normal and the sun returned to its usual self. New England had experienced what went down in history as “Dark Day”. A phenomenon caused by the excessive clearing and burning of woodlands on the Maine frontier.^{xlix}

Come fall, in the aftermath of all that devastation, the settlers were forced to slaughter or sell their livestock. They would have all they could do to feed themselves the coming winter, say nothing of their animals.^l What a year!

Perhaps the extreme events of 1779-1780 are what got Joseph Baker to thinking that he would be better off moving yet further north into a fresh and newer frontier? In March, 1780 he gave his address as Readfield when he sold 100 acres, the southern half of lot #213, to Josiah Mitchell. Seven years later when he sold the rest of his land with buildings to Daniel Wyman the deed stated “Joseph Baker, of a place known by no particular name but in the County of Lincoln.”^{li} He had already moved north by then to prepare a new home for his family.

THE BINGHAM PURCHASE

In 1786, when Massachusetts was in need of money, legislators disposed of large tracts of unsettled lands in Maine by lottery. William Bingham, a wealthy Philadelphia banker, won several townships in the drawing and purchased others. He acquired a total of about 2 million acres at that time.^{lii}

The first tract was in the south-east of Maine. General Henry Knox had signed a contract to buy another 1,000,000-acre tract, in the western part of Maine, but his

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duties as Secretary of War kept him from developing it, so Bingham took it over. The territory covered by these grants included most of the then-undeveloped land between Penobscot Bay and Passamaquoddy Bay (Washington County). Bingham's new holdings also included 1 million acres in the upper Kennebec River Valley^{liii} - for several years called "the Million Acres, Kennebec, Maine".^{liv} Some of the towns that are now within that tract are Concord, Bingham, Brighton, Pleasant Ridge, Mayfield, Caratunk, The Forks, West Forks and Moscow.^{lv}

Part of the sales contract required that Bingham would solicit and bring at least 2,500 settlers to live on those lands by 1803. Apparently Bingham felt there was a better chance of enticing people into the coastal region in Washington County, Maine because he did nothing to encourage migration to the upper Kennebec River Valley i.e. improvement of the land holdings there.^{lvi} All of his focus was on populating his tract down east.^{lvii}

Early on, though, Daniel Cony of Hallowell was hired as Bingham's land agent^{lviii} so word soon spread in this immediate area about the land available upriver. As word spread there were some settlers from early Readfield who migrated to the Machias area, but not Joseph Baker. He took the road less traveled.

In January 1800 Daniel Cony wrote to Bingham to report on his recent trip to the Million Acres tract. Cony had gone after receiving a request from his superior in October 1799. His charge was to "*visit the settlers, ascertain such information from them and of the premises as was attainable at the time and within the period allotted to one tour.*" Cony's report included the men's names who had already settled in the "Million Acres" and Joseph Baker was listed among them. According to Cony, Joseph Baker had settled on the front lots near the (Kennebec) river. He described those men in particular as hardy and good men. Baker reportedly lived in a frame house in 1799 and his barn was constructed of timber as well. Of the twenty-seven families that had settled in the "Million Acres" between 1780 and 1793 only ten men had built frame houses^{lix} Joseph Baker had settled furthest north, in 1785, and was seemingly the only one who lived north of the current Bingham line.^{lx}

JOSEPH BAKER IN MOSCOW

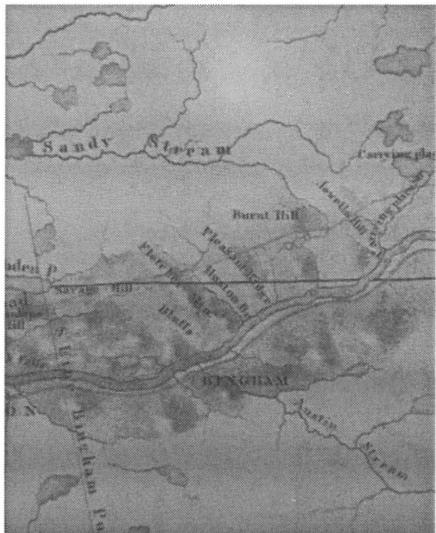
Joseph Baker was the first to settle in what is now Moscow, Maine. Some sources relate that he was the first white man to be there since Benedict Arnold's troops had passed through several years before.^{lxi}

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There is still some discrepancy on exactly when Joseph Baker moved to Moscow from Winthrop (Readfield). Some sources say he migrated there in 1783 but on September 5, 1785 he is named as a resident of Winthrop. On that date Baker and his brother-in-law Mathias Smith were named as sureties on the will of Samuel Wing of Readfield.^{lxii} However, when Wing's estate was inventoried on June 8, 1786 Joseph Baker was not one of the three men who took stock. Robert Page and Mathias Smith were - as was Joshua Bean. In view of this legal documentation one might think that Baker came back and forth until he was finally settled and secure in Moscow. In the interim he was still a legal resident of Winthrop. Whenever he went, Baker must have gone ahead to scout for land and prepare for his family's arrival. This is supported by the previously mentioned deeds (1780 and 1787) and by calculating the birthdates of his children. There were no babies born after December 1779 until July 1784. So, Baker probably returned to Winthrop sometime in 1783 - most likely that fall in time to hunker down for the winter months.



The original Baker Mountain in Moscow, ME. This picture was taken from the top of Wyman Dam looking north. Joseph Baker built his cabin at the base of this mountain on the eastern bank of the Kennebec River. The old road to Canada used to run along the river edge but this area was all flooded when Wyman Dam was constructed. The road and Baker's home site are now beneath the waters of Wyman Lake.



This map shows the section of the Kennebec River that is now Wyman Lake. Compliments of the Old Canada Road Historical Society.

Dorcas gave birth to a daughter (also named) Dorcas the following July of 1784. Somerset County historians claim her as the first white child born in Moscow. Could it be the Bakers traveled to Moscow that spring and then returned to Winthrop for a while? Events that have been recorded for that time make that seem likely.

Joseph Baker built his log cabin on a bend in the Kennebec River near the water's edge. His son, Asa, told of how that home got washed away in a freshet.^{lxiii} Though the exact year the house washed away is not documented, the flood that Asa Baker referred to was probably the one recorded as one of the biggest flood of modern times.

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In the fall of 1785 there was a considerable amount of rainfall in September and October. Then rivers were pushed over the brink when nine inches of torrential downpour bombarded this area October 20-22. Every river overflowed in Maine and New Hampshire. Bridges washed out; houses and businesses were carried away. Water levels rose higher than within anyone's memory at the time and set records that were not broken for 100 years or more.^{lxiv} This was, most likely, the year that Joseph Baker's cabin washed away. It makes perfect sense that - after the flood - Baker would have returned his family to Winthrop to stay until he could build a new home.

We do know the Bakers went back to Winthrop during troubled times. A Moscow pioneer^{lxv} wrote in his diary that in 1789:

"Isaac Temple saw old grandsire Baker with his wife and boy cross the river at Waterville on their return to home on the upper Kennebec in which is now Moscow. They had left sometime previously on account of a rumor that the Indians were coming from Canada with hostile intentions."^{lxvi}

Perhaps Baker kept rights - or was welcome - to return his family to their old home in Winthrop when they wished or needed to. If not, there were certainly enough Smith family members back in Readfield to welcome them in.

After the flood Baker built a house on a lot that belonged to his brother Samuel. It was the first frame house in Moscow and remained so until 1800.^{lxvii}

As mentioned earlier, the Baker's seventh child, Dorcas was born July 29, 1784.^{lxviii} The following year their youngest child, John, was born. Unlike so many early settlers, the Baker's children all lived to adulthood. In view of the events reviewed thus far, Joseph's and Dorcas' efforts to protect and provide nourishment in order to keep all eight of their kids healthy and alive must have been challenging indeed!

By 1800 the population of Moscow was 127 and by 1810 it had doubled. About one-third of them came from Litchfield, Maine. The area they settled on the Kennebec River came to be known as Bakerstown in the early days as the surname became so predominant. Following Joseph's arrival Abner and Reuben Baker - who were twin brothers - came to town.^{lxix} The three men fathered a total of thirty children. The name Bakerstown was actually requested in the petition for incorporation in 1816, but it was denied because at that time Poland/Minot, Maine was also called Bakerstown. So Moscow, the second name choice on the petition for incorporation, was approved.^{lxx}

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In spite of that, the Baker name still lives on in Moscow but in another form. Joseph and his family settled near the base of a mountain which is now called Baker Mountain.^{lxxi} There is a Baker Pond in the area as well.

REV. JOSEPH BAKER, METHODIST MINISTER

There is some confusion about whether Joseph, Sr. was a minister as well as his son Joseph. Since Stephen Allen's *History of Methodism in Maine* identifies the senior Baker as a Methodist minister I am going to position this section based on the information presented in that book. My decision to do that is also based on the lack of documentation about the senior Joseph Baker in Moscow Maine's annals. This was confirmed by my personal visit at the *Old Canada Road Historical Society* and a meeting with their historian in September 2013.

With influence from the Smith family^{lxxii} Joseph, his brother Samuel and son Joseph, Jr. all became able Methodist preachers.^{lxxiii} It was not until after Joseph moved to Moscow that he accepted the calling to the ministry though, and by then his affiliation had changed from Congregational to Methodist.

The Methodists were among the fastest growing churches in post-Revolutionary America - between 1770 and 1820 membership rose from fewer than 1,000 to more than 250,000.^{lxxiv} Success of the Methodists was because of their dedicated force of itinerant preachers, also known as circuit riders. During this era, most people lived on widely scattered farms or in tiny remote villages - 95% of northern New Englanders lived in scarcely populated areas. Circuit Riders provided preaching, the sacraments, and church structure to communities that would not otherwise have been able to attract or afford a minister.

Between 1800 and 1810 the Baptist and Methodist evangelists established three times more new churches than the Congregationalists. The majority of Congregational churches were located in the more prosperous front country communities. In the back country towns, where they did exist, these congregations were small compared to the Methodist and Baptist flocks. The efforts of Congregational missionaries were largely fruitless - unlike the works of men like Rev. Isaac Case and Rev. Jesse Lee who, it seemed, were like magnets to those living on the Maine frontier. In part, the evangelicals were handed success because of a philosophical chasm that had occurred within the Congregational Church. As a result, the Congregational missionaries came from two schools of thought, and they discredited one another with their dissention.^{lxxv}

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Maine pioneers, who had been isolated in the backcountry for years, were hungry for spiritual leadership. The Baptists and Methodists filled that need for many of them. The Methodist doctrine must have set well with Joseph and he was received on trial to the New England Conference in 1800.^{lxxvi}

Rev. Joseph Baker, Sr. was now 56 years old and had accomplished a great deal in his life already. It seems as if he should have been paring down at this point. Instead, he was about to set out on an admirable venture of great importance. His constitution was still strong!

Rev. Baker's initial appointment was the Bethel, Maine circuit - he was the very first circuit rider appointed in the (then new) Bethel circuit of western Maine. Rev. John Martin, a Methodist preacher from Rumford, Maine, wrote to a colleague in 1801 saying:

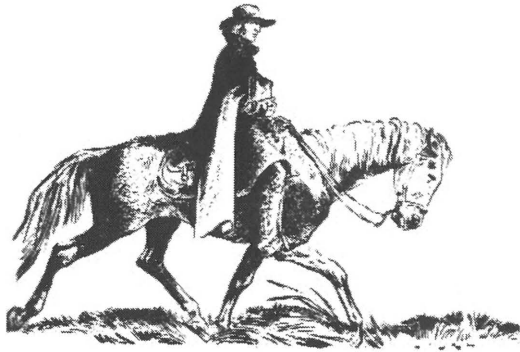
"...They (Bethel Methodists) were then connected (in 1796) with the Portland circuit, and during that winter, they were visited about once a fortnight by Brother Merritt, Brother Becker and Brother Merick, who rode on the (Portland) circuit. The spring following, Brother Joseph Baker came and staid with the people, and at the (New England) conference in Lynn (Massachusetts) in July, 1800, Bethel was set off as a separate circuit and Joseph Baker was appointed as their preacher. The following September, a society was formed with only fourteen members. There was no revival of special account till a preacher (Joseph Baker) was stationed among them. Although at times the prospect has been gloomy, yet there has been a glorious work for several months past, and I trust a number have been converted..."^{lxxvii}

Rev. Baker had been successful on his first assignment. From 1800 to 1816 he was appointed annually to various itinerant circuits in Maine. Included were Farmington in the early days of that church (formed in 1794)^{lxxviii} and in 1811 he served in Orrington, ME.^{lxxix} A fellow Methodist clergy once said that Joseph Baker preached one of the best sermons he had ever heard.^{lxxx}

Then, in 1816 - the same year his wife died - Joseph's name was withdrawn from the New England Conference.^{lxxxi} He died later the same year.

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THE NEXT GENERATION LOOKS WESTWARD...



Joseph and Dorcas Baker's son - Joseph Jr. was also a minister. He set his eye westward and served as a minister in New York State starting in 1820.

Settlement in southwestern New York had begun in earnest by 1820. Presbyterians had been the predominant religion in that area - until the Methodists reached out to expand their options. Rev. Joseph Baker, Jr. was among the first to go in support of that effort.

In 1820 Rev. Joseph Baker, Jr. was appointed a position in Auburn, New York^{lxxxii} as a member of the Genesee Circuit.^{lxxxiii} It is not known why he chose to leave Maine but Auburn New York's history gives some glimpses into what may have attracted him.

Auburn was located only a few miles from the Erie Canal which was first proposed in 1807. The actual building of Erie Canal did not begin until 1817 and it officially opened eight years later, on October 26, 1825. In that interim its construction gained a great deal of attention throughout the US - including right here in Maine. In 1816, Auburn Prison (now the Auburn Correctional Facility) was founded as a model for the contemporary ideas about treating prisoners, known now as the Auburn System. Visitors were actually charged a fee for viewing the facility and its inmates. Perhaps this system was of interest to Rev. Baker and he saw some potential rewards in preaching to those prisoners? Another attraction could have been the Auburn Theological Seminary which opened in 1818 and was known as one of the preeminent theological seminaries in the United States.^{lxxxiv} Or - perhaps he simply needed to sprout his wings and expand his horizons far away from the back country of Maine. Whatever the case, he served the people of New York for about six years and left in good standing.

In the summer of 1826 Rev. Joseph Baker, Jr. returned to Maine. Rev. Stephen Allen says, in his *History of Methodism of Maine*,^{lxxxv} that Baker came back home for a visit at that time and preached several times in Norridgewock that fall where he was regarded as a very able preacher.^{lxxxvi} His name does not appear among the Methodist Conference appointments after 1826.

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JOSEPH BAKER SR. - HIS LAST DAYS



The section of Union Cemetery in Moscow, ME
Is where Joseph Baker and other Baker family
members are buried. Three cemeteries were moved
to this place when Wyman Dam was built and their
original locations were flooded by Wyman Lake.
Thus the name Union Cemetery.

Though Joseph Baker, Sr. was a man of commanding appearance and of superior natural talent, energetic and successful as a preacher, he became unstable in his later years. Allen alluded to Baker's mental instability when he wrote about him in 1887, but he was diplomatic in doing so and did not include details. In 1964 a poem was written by William Baker^{lxxxvii} called "Baker Mountain". The poem tells much about Joseph Baker and his life after he left Readfield - including his last days.

BAKER MOUNTAIN

By
William Baker

Baker Mountain that's its name
And I try and tell you how that came.
Way back in 1783 Joseph Baker came this way
and at this mountain decided to stay.

An eccentric man with strange ideas
that he carried out for many years.
He built a log cabin and set it on ledge
but built it too close to the water's edge.
Then left in the fall and came back in the spring
to find raising water had ruined the thing.
At the foot of the mountain he made a new start
but going was hard and living was tough.
For food it was killing, this was not enough.
They lived on ground nuts, fern roots and such stuff.
And even bog onions to give them enough.

But the harvest was good, it gave them a treat
they gathered it in and had plenty to eat.
But Baker went crazy, that's what they say
So they kept him a prisoner to his dying day.
In a large oaken cage he at last passed away.
Joseph Baker somehow never reached the Hall of Fame
But that's how Baker Mountain got its name.

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EPILOGUE

I do not wish to leave you with this lasting impression of the elder Joseph Baker. I think you will agree that he lived a strenuous, full and honorable life. During his lifetime he helped establish two towns on the Maine frontier; served his country well during the American Revolution; touched many souls with his ministry. He fathered eight children who lived to adulthood. Some of them were accomplished and have their own interesting stories as well.

We do not know what happened to Rev. Joseph Baker's mind. Today perhaps he would be diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or the like. That seems very probable given his high level of functioning prior to that. Perhaps the information I have shared will alleviate any lasting impressions to the contrary.

When you drive by Joseph Baker's landing in Readfield, or enjoy a ride up the Old Canada Road past Baker Mountain in Moscow, or take in a Sunday morning service in a little country Methodist church, remember Rev. Joseph Baker as he must have been during his prime. As a man who was intelligent, energetic, adventuresome, ambitious and always prepared to serve God, his country and fellow humankind. I think he would like to be remembered that way.

GENEALOGY IN BRIEF

Joseph Baker b.1744 Tisbury, Dukes, Massachusetts on Martha's Vineyard s/o Thomas Baker and __?__. He m. 2/16/1769 to Dorcas Smith of Tisbury. She was born 7/27/1744 d/o Thomas and Elizabeth (Barrett) Smith. Joseph died June, 1816 in Moscow, ME. Elizabeth d. 2/16/1816 in Moscow, ME. Both are buried in Union Cemetery, Moscow.

Children of Joseph and Dorcas (Smith) Baker:

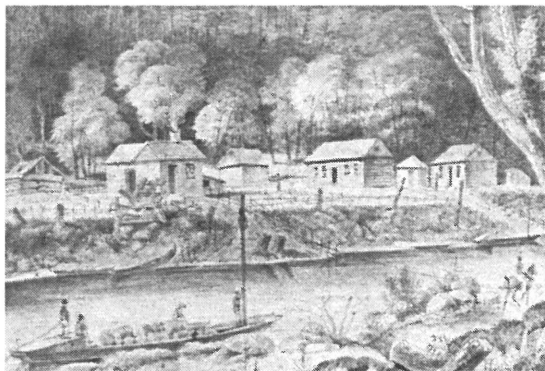
1. Elizabeth b.10/19/1770 Winthrop ME m. Amos Fletcher b.1765 Concord, MA. s/o of William and Mary (Parrott) Fletcher the Somerset County pioneer. She d.6/4/1819 He d.7/13/1812. Both d. in Bingham and are buried in Bingham Village Cemetery. 11 children
2. Mary "Polly" Baker b.11/10/1772 Winthrop ME m. Moses Chamberlain b.12/15/1761 s/o John and Mary (Patch) Chamberlain of Pepperell, Middlesex, MA. Revolutionary War Veteran. She d.11/28/1830 he d.11/18/1834. Both buried Bingham Village Cemetery. 10 children
3. Lemuel (Leonard) b.9/16/1774 Winthrop m. Mary Fletcher d/o William and Mary (Parrott) Fletcher. He d. bet. 1850-1860 She d.9/1860. Both in Harmony, ME. 1 son to my knowledge
4. Joseph b.7/11/1778 Winthrop ME unmarried d.1/2/1853 Buried in Union Cemetery, Moscow.
5. Asa b.4/3/1779 Winthrop ME m1. Sarah Thompson b.1783 d.1821 in Bingham, ME 3 children m2. Phebe Weeks Bassett (her second marriage) b.1786 d.1863 Moscow, ME 4 children. Asa and both wives buried at Moscow Union Cemetery.

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6. Nathan b.12/29/1779 Winthrop ME m. Sophia Rice b.1785 Brookfield, MA d/o Enoch and Olive (Bruce) Rice. He d.1821 in Madawaska, ME 4 children She m2. Nathan's brother John (see #8 below) There is more about Nathan on pages 26-27.
7. Dorcas b.7/29/1784 the first white child born in Moscow. m.1812 Laskey Jackson b.1787 Moscow. She d.1842 He d.after 1860. 5 children Both are buried in Union Cemetery, Moscow
8. John b. 1785 Moscow m.1823 Sophia Rice in Madawaska, ME (her first marriage was to his brother Nathan - see #6 above). He d.1868 in New Brunswick, Canada She d.1883 in Fort Fairfield, ME. Both are buried in Riverside Cemetery Fort Fairfield, ME. 3 children. There is more about John on pages 26-27.

BROTHERS NATHAN AND JOHN BAKER

I would be remiss in not including more about John and Nathan Baker - the youngest sons of Joseph and Dorcas (Smith) Baker.



Moscow, Maine historians tell us that John and his older brother Nathan were engaged in some trading with the Indians that was deemed dishonest. Charges were pressed against them but they fled to northern Maine to avoid their court appearance.^{lxxxviii}

John Baker later gave September 1816 as the date of their arrival in the Madawaska Territory.^{lxxxix}

Upper St. John River Valley historians tell it this way: The Baker brothers were among the first group of "Yankee" settlers, or people who migrated from the southern part of Maine, to settle in the Upper St. John River Valley (Madawaska Territory). The Bakers, and the other lumbermen who accompanied them, came from the upper Kennebec River valley, in Somerset County, drawn by the abundant timber available there.^{xc}

John Baker did not stay in Madawaska, however; he continued on to the Gaspé, and worked in the woods of the Bay of Chaleur until his brother's death in 1821. He then returned to Merumticook to take over Nathan's gristmill and sawmill operations, and eventually married his brother's widow, Sophia.^{xc1}

Over time, John Baker became the namesake of the towns of Baker Lake (Lac Baker) and Baker Brook, New Brunswick, Canada, just west of Edmondson. He came to be well-known as a pro-American activist in New Brunswick and Maine.

The Madawaska territory was a disputed territory, at that time, and claimed by both the U.S. and Great Britain. Baker declared the area as "the Washington of the Republic of Madawaska." He did this in response to President Van Buren's unwillingness to support Maine's claim to that territory. The area of Maine that was in

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The families of Nathan and John Baker:

Nathan married Sophia (Rice) about 1809. There were four children. The first three were born in Moscow: 1) Amanda b.1809 2) Lavinda b.1811 3) Sophronia b.1816 4) Enoch b.1819 in Madawaska. He was the fourth child and the only son between the two Baker brothers. Nathan died in 1821 in Madawaska. Sophia married his brother John. They had two daughters together: 5) Elizabeth b.1824 6) Adaline b.1829

ENDNOTES AND SOURCES

ⁱ Readfield 1791 is an ongoing project in which I am researching 250 of the earliest families to settle in Readfield. FMI visit www.readfield1791.blogspot.com

ⁱⁱ Allen, Stephen; Methodism in Maine; pub. Charles E. Nash, Augusta, ME 1887; pages 400-402

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://history.vineyard.net/hfnorton/history.htm> accessed 9/22/2013

^{iv} Taylor, Alan; Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: the Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820; pub. for The Institute of American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, 1990; page 62

^v Taylor, Alan; Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: the Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820; pub. for The Institute of American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, 1990; page 61-62

^{vi} Allen, Stephen; Methodism in Maine; pub. Charles E. Nash, Augusta, ME 1887; pages 400-402

^{vii} Thomas Smith was also an early arrival in Readfield/ Winthrop though it is not known at this time exactly how he was related.

^{viii} Joseph's brother Samuel also moved to Maine though no evidence has been found that he resided in Readfield. Thomas Smith also came to Readfield about the same time though his relationship to Baker has not yet been discovered.

^{ix} Taylor, Alan; Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: the Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820; pub. for The Institute of American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, 1990; page 63

^x <http://museum.gov.ns.ca/mma/AtoZ/rigs.html> accessed 9/22/2013

^{xi} <http://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/899/page/1310/print> accessed 9/22/2013

^{xii} This equaled four days wages in 1800. Taylor, Alan; Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: the Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820; pub. for The Institute of American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, 1990; page 63

^{xiii} Augusta was part of Hallowell in the early days. The village called "the Fort" was the upriver part of the town incorporated as Hallowell in 1771. In February, 1796, the Fort residents petitioned the Massachusetts Legislature for permission to build the first bridge across the Kennebec. Although "the Hook," as the lower Hallowell village was called, wanted the bridge on its shore, the Fort request was granted. The following February, in 1797, the legislature approved separation of the Fort from Hallowell. Incorporated first as Harrington, the new town changed its name to Augusta on June 9, 1797. <http://www.augustamaine.gov/> accessed 9/24/2013

^{xiv} Fort Western was built in 1754 by the Kennebec Proprietors a Boston-based company seeking to settle the lands along the Kennebec River. Built at the head of navigation on the river, Fort Western served as a fortified storehouse. James Howard's Company garrisoned the Fort and guarded the head of navigation on the Kennebec from 1754 to 1767. When the last of the garrison was discharged, Captain Howard made arrangements to acquire the Fort's buildings and surrounding lands and he ran a store there in the old Fort Western. <http://www.oldfortwestern.org> accessed 9/24/2013

^{xv} Thurston, David Rev.; *A brief history of Winthrop, from 1764 to October 1855*; pub.1855 page 21

^{xvi} Sandy River is a tributary of the Kennebec River. Farmington, Maine was later settled on the Sandy River.

^{xvii} David Linton, ATL Tree Services, Readfield, Maine

^{xviii} This technique was introduced to Downeast Maine around 1762 and word spread fast. The first men to do this in Pondtown were the three Whittier brothers who came to East Readfield in 1765. They immediately cleared 20 acres of trees that summer. They returned to Massachusetts and came back to Pondtown the following spring when they burned the dried wood, and planted corn in the unplowed soil. When other settlers heard of the Whittier brother's success (they'd had doubts that corn would grow in burned and unplowed soil) others adopted the same method.

^{xix} Taylor, Alan; Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: the Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820; pub. for The Institute of American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, 1990; page 64

^{xx} Taylor, Alan; Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: the Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820; pub. for The Institute of American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, 1990; page 65

^{xxi} Taylor, Alan; Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: the Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820; pub. for The Institute of American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, 1990; page 64

^{xxii} <http://www.readfield1791.blogspot.com/2013/05/lane-james-1790-us-census-winthrop.html> accessed 9/23/2013

^{xxiii} In the fall of 1769 Mathias Smith family included his wife, four children and another on the way; Elisha's wife gave birth to their first child in the fall of 1769; Dorcas and Joseph Baker's first child came in the fall of 1770; Ransford was not yet married.

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- ^{xxiv} Taylor, Alan; *Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: the Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820*; pub. for The Institute of American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, 1990; page 65
- ^{xxv} Pondtown was incorporated as Winthrop in 1771. The northern parish separated and was incorporated as Readfield in 1791.
- ^{xxvi} Kennebec County Registry of Deeds; Lincoln County Book of Grants; Lot #214
- ^{xxvii} Stackpole, Everett; *History of Winthrop*; pub. Merrill & Webber, Auburn, ME 1925; page 266
- ^{xxviii} Stackpole, Everett; *History of Winthrop*; pub. Merrill & Webber, Auburn, ME 1925; page 66 and 69
- ^{xxix} Taylor, Alan; *Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: the Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820*; pub. for The Institute of American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, 1990; page 66
- ^{xxx} Stackpole lists Lemuel Baker as Leonard; page 266
- ^{xxxi} The other two men on this committee were Ichabod Howe and John Chandler.
- ^{xxxii} Stackpole, Everett; *History of Winthrop*; pub. Merrill & Webber, Auburn, ME 1925; page 81, 82 and 266
- ^{xxxiii} Stackpole, Everett; *History of Winthrop*; pub. Merrill & Webber, Auburn, ME 1925; page 81-82
- ^{xxxiv} Chandler's Mills were located in Winthrop Village on lot #52. The grist mill was on the west bank of Stream, and the sawmill on the east bank. Stackpole's *History of Winthrop*, page 45.
- ^{xxxv} Ibid Stackpole page 45
- ^{xxxvi} Some readers might question if settlers in the northern parish would have floated logs down Chandler's Pond (Maranacook) to Chandler's sawmill in Winthrop village. This is very improbable given the time, distance and labor it would have taken when settlers needed all that and more to build shelter and clear land. They used the trees they had to cut / clear to build a log home at this juncture and did not taken on the task of building a frame house.
- ^{xxxvii} Craigs Mills were located at Factory Square slightly west of Readfield Corner
- ^{xxxviii} Stackpole, Everett; *History of Winthrop*; pub. Merrill & Webber, Auburn, ME 1925; page 66 and 69
- ^{xxxix} Stackpole, Everett; *History of Winthrop*; pub. Merrill & Webber, Auburn, ME 1925; page 118-119
- ^{xl} Stackpole, Everett; *History of Winthrop*; pub. Merrill & Webber, Auburn, ME 1925; page 120
- ^{xli} Clark, Dale Potter; *To Those Who Led the Way in Readfield, ME: VR's 1768-1913*; self-pub. 2009; Veterans page 2
- ^{xlii} U.S. Revolutionary War Rolls, 1775-1783 (Online publication - Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2007. Original data - Revolutionary War Rolls, 1775-1783; (National Archives Microfilm Publication M246, 138 rolls); War Department Collection of Revolutionary War Records, Record Group 93; N), Ancestry.com, <http://www.Ancestry.com>.
- ^{xliii} Taylor, Alan; *Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: the Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820*; pub. for The Institute of American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, 1990; page 67-68
- ^{xliv} <http://www.ushistory.org/valleyforge/history/weather.html> accessed 9/24/2013
- ^{xlv} <http://www.johnhorrigan.com/darkday.html> accessed 9/24/2013
- ^{xlvi} <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/lwx/winter/TRIVIA.htm> accessed 9/24/2013
- ^{xlvii} <http://www.voxinghistory.com/> accessed 9/24/2013
- ^{xlviii} <http://www.revolutionarywararchives.org/coldwinter.html> accessed 9/24/2013
- ^{xlix} <http://www.johnhorrigan.com/darkday.html> accessed 9/24/2013
- ^l Taylor, Alan; *Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: the Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820*; pub. for The Institute of American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, 1990; page 68
- ^{li} Lincoln County Deeds at Kennebec County Registry of Deeds: book1 page 44; book3 page125; book3 page126.
- ^{lii} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Bingham accessed 9/22/2013
- ^{liii} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bingham_Purchase accessed 9/22/2013
- ^{liv} 1800 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: www.ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2010. Year: 1800; Census Place: Million Acres, Kennebec, Maine; Roll: 7; Page: 41; Image: 206; Family History Library Film: 218677 accessed 9/22/2013
- ^{lv} *Makers of Moscow* by Moscow History Committee; pub. 1966; page 15-16
- ^{lvi} *ibid*
- ^{lvii} *ibid*
- ^{lviii} *ibid*
- ^{lix} Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Volumes 36 and 37. William Bingham's Maine Lands 1790-1820. Allis, Frederick S., Jr., Editor. Boston, The Society, 1954. Volume 37 (William Bingham's Maine Lands II) pages 1012-1013
- ^{lx} Gondek, Marilyn; Old Canada Road Historical Society P.O. Box 742 Bingham, ME 04920 www.oldcanadaroad.org
- ^{lxi} *ibid*
- ^{lxii} Lincoln County, Probate Records of 1760-1800; Picton Press, Camden, Maine 1991; page 148
- ^{lxiii} *Makers of Moscow* by Moscow History Committee; pub. 1966; page 15
- ^{lxiv} Historical Floods of New England; www.pubs.usgs.gov/wsp/1779m/report/pdf accessed 9/22/2013
- ^{lxv} Jabez Hill, who later lived on the original Baker homestead. *Makers of Moscow*; page 15
- ^{lxvi} *Makers of Moscow* by Moscow History Committee; pub. 1966; page 15.

