

61 Church Hill Rd., North Colebrook

The allocation of land was determined by the proprietors in Windsor on July 16, 1760. The determination of the amount owned was based on these figures: strips 240 rods, or 3,900 feet wide, which is also $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, were referred to as tiers. Colebrook was further divided into three divisions, going from west to east. A measurement going from south to north in these tiers determined the amount of acreage. The properties are further described as being bounded east and west by a ten-rod (165 foot) wide highway. All of these highways are theoretical, allowing for landowners to be compensated when the actual roads were constructed. Connecting these 165-foot north-south “main” roads were 66-foot wide east-west roads, also theoretical. In your case, your house is located on lot #38, first division, first tier.

Beginning with the property adjacent to yours on the south (lot #37, 1st tier), we find it assigned to Thomas Clap in the 1760 allocation with the phrase “on the original right of Joseph Owen”. This original right phrase refers back to 1732, when Windsor first drew up a map reflecting the proposed allocation of western lands, so called, but which were not actually implemented until 1760, by which time the majority of original owners had either died or had sold their interest to other parties.

To continue with the 1760 description: [property #37 is to be] 8 chains (528 feet) wide to a small beech studdle marked “J.L.”

Lot #38 to Samuel Hall on the original right of Joseph Loomis 5 chains, 64 links (372.24 feet) to a stone marked “D.P.”

Lot #39 surveyed to Daniel Phelps in width 3 chains and 60 links (237.6 feet) to a black ash tree marked “J.A.” (Note that these initials always refer to the adjacent property and were apparently actually carved into the designated marker.)

When the actual roads were constructed, landowners were compensated by the town. So it was noted in the selectmen’s journal that on March 16, 1797, Thomas Hoskins and John Hoskins were so compensated. “Road crosses our lot #41, 1st tier, laid out to Hannah Newberry on which we now live. Road leads from Sandisfield Road (present Connecticut Route 183) near Arah Phelps to Norfolk.” (This is just west of Bill Haskell’s place, although the land extended eastward and included the road which is today known as CT Rt. 183. It is likely that their dwelling house was at this location, although all traces of foundations have been eradicated by highway improvements.)

In vol. 1, Colebrook Land Records, we find an entry dated March 1788 reading: “Thomas Miner bought 36 acres from Josiah Phelps. Bounded north by heirs of Isaac Sheldon, west on the Norfolk line, east on a highway, south on Jonathan Balcom’s land (or land reputed to belong to him.)”

In the Proprietor’s Record Book II, on page 109, is an entry of peripheral interest to you. “Mary Wooster, of New Haven, for £54, sold to Samuel Pierpont of Colebrook, lots #36 and #37, first division, 1st tier, which did belong to Rev. Mr. Thomas Clap, deceased, with appurtenances thereof.” (January 9, 1779)

Note: The use of the word “appurtenance” means that something has been done to the land, such as clearing of trees and possibly the construction of fences. It never means or intimates that any structures or dwelling house is in existence.

The chronological sequence of lot #38 in the first tier is as follows:

1760. Samuel Hall shows up on the list of Windsor Proprietors as the owner of lot #38. He probably never set foot in Colebrook, and on November 9, 1767, he signed all his Colebrook holdings over to his daughters Ann (wife of Mr. Werham Williams of Brandford), Mary (wife of deacon Samuel Beach), and Abigale, all of New Haven, and his grandson Samuel Hall Williams. Proprietor's Book 1, page 299 (red)

May 29, 1787 finds Werham Williams, Samuel Beach, John and Abigale Foot, all of New Haven, heirs of Reverend Samuel Hall of Cheshire, selling for £6/9 (six pounds, 9 shillings) in lawful money, lot #38 to Samuel Rockwell of Colebrook, which was described as having been originally laid out to Joseph Loomis in 1732, with appurtenances thereof. Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 1, p. 193 (red)

June 4, 1787. Samuel Rockwell of Colebrook, for £46, sold to Jonathan Balcom of Winchester, 55 acres of land, being lot #38, first division. Bounded west on Norfolk line, north on Josiah Phelps, east on a highway, south on land of Nathaniel Beach. With appurtenances thereof. Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 1, p. 166

May 11, 1791. Molly Balcom of Winchester, for £3/10 (three pounds, ten shillings), released and quit-claimed to her son, John Jr. of Winchester, all rights or claims she had on the improvement of a parcel of land in Colebrook, being the improvement of 1/3 part of lot #38, first division. Bounded west on Norfolk line, north on land lately belonging to Josiah Phelps, east on a highway, and south on land belonging to Nathaniel Beach. It is the same lot my late husband Jonathan Balcom of Winchester purchased in Colebrook. To have and to hold the premises with appurtenances thereof unto him.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 1, p. 456

Sept 21, 1791. Nathaniel Balcom, Michael and Susanah Grinnel of Winchester and Joel Goodrich and his wife of Sharon, for £13/13 lawful money from John Balcom Jr. of Winchester, released the land, which had descended to them from their brother, Jonathan Balcom, deceased. Bounded west on Norfolk, south on land of Thomas Miner, east on a highway, south on land of Nathaniel Beach, being lot #38, first division, first tier, originally laid out to Samuel Hall. Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 1, p. 457

April 28, 1795. Elias Kinne of Colebrook, for £150, sold to his brother Nathaniel of Colebrook, ½ both for quantity and quality of 2 certain lots of land lying in the first division, first tier, with a cow barn standing thereon; being lots #36 and #37 originally laid out to Thomas Clap, bounded west on Norfolk line, south on land laid out to John Bartlett's heirs, east on a highway and north on land laid out to Samuel Hall and contains on the whole of both lots 180 acres, more or less.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 2, p. 152

May 12, 1795. John Balcom of Colebrook, sold to Nathaniel Kinne of Colebrook, for £14, 10½ rods of land lying on the south side of the road running **across the farm which I the grantor now live on** and is bounded as follows: Beginning at a point on the south

line of my lot made by said road entering on said lot and running westerly on the south line of said road 6 rods (99 feet), and running westerly from said point on the south line of the lot 7 rods (115.5 feet), being a little more than 3 rods (49.5 feet) in width at the west end. [This proves that the house was built between Sept. 21, 1791 and May 12, 1795].
Colebrook Town Records, Vol2, p. 159

October 13, 1795. John Balcom of Colebrook, for £12, sold to Thomas Miner Jr. of Colebrook, 9 acres, being part of the same farm, which I now live on. Bounded east on a highway, north on Thomas Miner's land, south on land now belonging to Nathaniel Kinne and others, and to extend west from the highway at the east end so far as to contain 9 acres, the north and south lines to be of equal length.
Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 3, p.36

March 28, 1797. John Balcom, for £150, sold to David Tibbals of Norfolk, 146 acres of land in the first tier with a dwelling house, being part of lot #38. Bounded north on Thomas Miner's land, west on Norfolk, south on Arah Phelps, east on part of the same original lot now owned by Thomas Miner Jr.
Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 2, p. 254

December 2, 1799. David Tibbals of Hillsdale, Columbia County, N.Y., sold lot #38 back to John Balcom for \$259.00, which he purchased from him on March 28, 1797.
Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 3, p. 394

January 10, 1800. John Balcom sold to Rufus Babcock for £179 (figuring the pound at that time to be \$4.44, this equals \$794.76), 1st tier. Bounded south on Arah Phelps, west on the Norfolk line, north on Thomas Miner's, east on 9 acres of the original tract of land, with dwelling house standing.
Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 3, p. 9

March 17, 1803. Thomas Miner Jr. sold to Rufus Babcock (in exchange for other lands), a lot in the first tier of lots. Bounded west on Rufus Babcock, north on Thomas Miner, east on a 10-rod highway, south on Arah Phelps. It is the east end of a lot formerly owned by John Balcom consisting of 9 acres.
Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 3, p. 258

June 25, 1844. Maria Babcock of Colebrook, administratrix on the estate of Cyrus G. Babcock, late of Colebrook, and guardian of Amerillis Babcock and Arianda Babcock, minors under the age of 21, did, on June 18, 1844, issue a statement proposing to sell the farm belonging to the minors. Described as the premises that Rufus Babcock had purchased. She sold the farm to Wing Persons for \$683.00.
Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 11, p. 400

[What happened here is that Rufus left the farm to his son Cyrus, who died unexpectedly in early middle age, leaving no will. No papers were ever filed with the town, as it was considered a family situation, which makes for a researcher's nightmare.]

March 3, 1851. Wing Persons of Winchester, sold the farm to Michael Sullivan of Canaan for \$1,150.00. Bounded north on Isaac Thompson, east on Waterbury River Turnpike, south on heirs of Arah Phelps, west on Norfolk. Being the property I bought from the estate of Cyrus Babcock.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 12, p. 165

February 19, 1852. Michael Sullivan of Colebrook sold the farm to Jeremiah Carey of Colebrook for \$10.00.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 12, p. 108

January 10, 1867. Jeremiah Carey of Colebrook sold the farm on which he lived for \$1,800.00 to John H. Stanwood of Colebrook.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 15, p. 312

September 3, 1867. John Stanwood of Colebrook sold the farm to William M. Bennett of Torrington for \$1,750.00.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 16, p. 1

April 12, 1882. Diantha Bennett of Winchester sold the farm to Arthur B. Canfield of Norfolk.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 17, p. 256

July 23, 1884. Arthur B. Canfield of Norfolk, for \$775.99, sold the 70-acre farm to Martin H. Bowman of Washington, N. Y.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 18, p. 47

March 12, 1904. Martin H. Bowman of Winchester sold the farm to Felix B. Winter of N.Y.C.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 21, p. 59

April 27, 1905. Felix B. Winter of N.Y.C., for a valuable sum, sold the farm to Ralph H. Turner of Colebrook.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 20, p. 108

April 27, 1905. Ralph Turner of Colebrook, for a valuable sum, sold the farm to Serafina Winter of Colebrook.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 20, p. 111

August 6, 1909. Sophia Hall of Norwalk, Conn., for a valuable sum, sold the farm to Wyllys and Saima Smith. Said conveyance was made to the grantor before her present marriage, and she is therein described by her former name of Serafina Winter, and she has also been known as Sophia Winter.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 21, p. 452

[These names reflect the immigration into these parts of a sizeable number of Finnish people.]

July 12, 1912. We, Sophia Hall of Norwalk, Conn. and Wyllys P. Smith and Saima S. Smith of Colebrook, for a valuable sum, sold the 70 acre farm to Aina and Mauri Eskolin.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 21, p. 259

November 13, 1929. A conservator's deed dated October 16, 1929 grants Uno Stenman, conservator of the estate of Aina Eskolin, an incapable person, the power to sell the 70-acre farm, with dwelling house and buildings. Stenman, on the strength of this authority, immediately sold the property to Louis Guerin of N.Y.C. for \$1,200.00.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 26, p. 249

June 29, 1931. Louis Guerin sold the farm to Clara B. Lewis of N.Y.C.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 25, p. 435

Early 1934. Clara B. Lewis died and left the farm to her husband, George F. Lewis of Brooklyn, N.Y.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 22, p. 575

July 3, 1934. George F. Lewis sold the farm to Mary L. Breen of Brooklyn, N.Y. for \$1.00.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 25, p. 489

August 15, 1946. Mary L. Breen sold the farm to Louis Guerin for \$1.00.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 31, p. 352

March 26, 1955. Evanita A. Guerin of Brookline, Mass., for a valuable sum of money, sold the 70 acre farm to Warren M. and Dorothea E. Humes of West Hartford, Conn., being the same premises devised to this grantor by will of Louis G. Guerin, deceased.

Colebrook Town Records, Vol. 29, p. 285

Compiled by Robert Grigg, 1998

[When I was a child, I had heard the adults mention the name of the owner of this property, and my young ears heard "Lou Gehrig". For years, every time I went by the place, I would hope to catch a glimpse of the fabled Yankee player!]