

News from the Stow Historical Society

A newsletter for all friends of Stow history. Please feel free to pass it along to others who might be interested!

January 2, 2016

Ring in 2016 with Intrigues at Hillside Cemetery

Intrigues at a Stow cemetery?

Absolutely!

Hillside Tidbit #1

JANNETT or JENNETT (Brydon) KITCHEN

- Jannett was born about 1777 in Penicuik, Scotland, which is near Edinburgh.
- The 1820 Federal Census included Jannett and her husband, William, living in Rockbottom

(Gleasondale) with Euphemia, born in Scotland c. 1805, and William, Jr., born in Scotland c. 1813.

- Daughter Jannett was born in Rockbottom in 1821.
- Mother Jannett Kitchen died in Stow on November 1821.



Jannett or Jennett Kitchen has two gravestones back-to-back.

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

Hillside Tidbit #2

WHOSE HEADSTONE AM I?



THE CLUE

This broken stone is **BESIDE** the memorial for William S. Bass.

- The 1855 MA Census included in one home:
 - Seth Bass, 75, Physician
 - Ann L Bass, 53
 - William S Bass, 22, farmer
 - Fanny Bass, 19
 - Samuel H Bass, 1
- William married Francenia Agnes Howe, 16, daughter of Abel Howe, in Stow on November 30, 1852
- 1860 Federal Census, Stow
 - Seth Bass, 80, Physician
 - Ann L Bass, 59
- 1860 Federal Census, Stow
 - Wm. S Bass, 26, Inn Keeper
 - Agnes F Bass, 23
 - Samuel H Bass, 6
 - Francis E Bass, 4



William's parents died in Stow.

1. **Dr. Seth Bass**, 87, died Dec. 31, 1867. The assets listed in his probate will included ownership of a Stow inn. His survivors included his wife, Ann Lovell Bass and his two grandsons, Samuel H. and Francis E.
2. **Ann Lovell Bass**, 70, died on July 11, 1870 in Stow and was buried in Stow.

Dr. and Mrs. Bass were buried in Stow.

COULD THIS BE THEIR DOUBLE GRAVE?

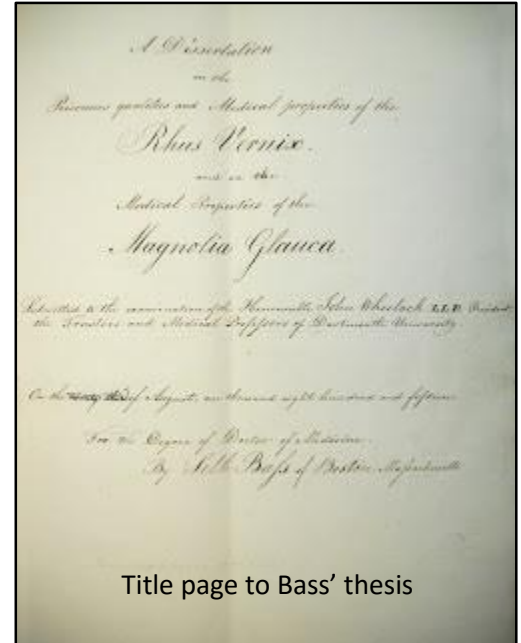
Who was Dr. Seth Bass?

The answer can be found at both the Dartmouth College's Rauner Special Collections Library and at the Peabody Essex Museum, East India Marine Hall.

“We know very little of Dr. Bass' life and medical career. He was born in Quincy, Massachusetts, in 1780, and received his medical degree from Dartmouth in 1815. In 1824, he was hired by the East India Marine Society in Salem, Massachusetts, to organize and oversee the Society's extensive collection of artifacts. In 1825, he became the librarian of the Boston Athenaeum, a position he held until 1846. Upon his retirement, the trustees of the Athenaeum gave Dr. Bass \$1,000 as an indication of their esteem and gratitude for over 20 years of service. Ultimately, Dr. Bass removed to Stow, Massachusetts, his eyesight too poor to allow the practice of medicine. He died there in December 1867.”

<http://raunerlibrary.blogspot.com/2011/03/bass-on-rhus-vernix-and-magnolia-glauca.html>

<http://www.salemweb.com/tales/eastindiamarinehall.php>



Title page to Bass' thesis

Hillside Tidbit #3

Jacob Whitney Vault, dated 1817



IS THE DATE A RED HERRING?

A THEORY

There is no documentation of a Stow Whitney family member dying in 1817. The Whitney's were a large extended family.

JACOB WHITNEY

- Jacob Whitney, was born in Stow on November 7, 1756,
 - son of Abraham and Marcy (Perry) Whitney
- Jacob was a private in Capt. Jonathan Davis' Co., Col. John Whitcomb's Regt. of Minutemen which marched on the alarm of April 19, 1775 to Cambridge. He continued to serve in various companies through 1777.
- He married Esther Walcott (of Bolton) in Stow on September 30, 1779.
- Their 9 children all reached adulthood.
- Esther Whitney died in Stow on December 18, 1837.
- Deacon Jacob Whitney died in Stow on October 12, 1844. } **They were both buried in Stow.**

WHERE?

FACT: Deacon Abraham Whitney, Jacob's father, died in Stow in 1818 at the age of 93 and was buried in Lower Village Cemetery along with 38 additional Whitney's, whose gravestones have survived the centuries. The oldest Lower Village Whitney gravestone dates to 1723.

FACT: At the time that this 1817 vault was built Jacob's father was 92 years old.

FACT: Lower Village Cemetery was nearly full.

SUPPOSITION: It could have been a time to pause and consider Jacob's place of interment.

FACT: The town of Stow had newly established Hillside Cemetery in September, 1812.

FACT: The Whitcomb family vault, which abuts the 1817 Whitney vault, received its first burial in 1821. These two structures were built during the same time period. Thankfully, the Whitcomb's listed those whom they laid to rest in their vault.

DILEMMA: WHO WAS BURIED IN THE JACOB WHITNEY VAULT?

If Jacob and Esther Whitney were not buried there, then who was?

Hillside is a quaint-sized burying ground with 234 surviving memorials: 212 headstones, 18 monuments and 4 vaults. These standing memorials commemorate 379 individuals with connections to Stow.

The 2015 GPR (ground penetrating radar) mapping has identified at least 51 unmarked gravesites at Hillside. For three of the four vaults there are no documents recording who were buried there. There is much to ponder. And there is rich history flowing from our cemeteries.

The final GPS and GPR maps are in presently in draft format and should be ready in the summer.