



Somes House - Somesville, Maine

Early Records of Mount Desert

Transcription by Patti Leland-Hanson

Foreword

Abraham Somes and James Richardson came to Mount Desert Island in 1761 for the purpose of establishing a permanent settlement. Over the next several decades they were joined by other families including the Mayos, Higgins, Lelands, Stanleys, Spurlings, Bunkers, Richardsons, Hadlocks, Prays, Youngs and Hadleys to name just a few.

It is important to note that during this time Mount Desert, then known as Mount Desert Plantation, included all of Mount Desert Island and several of the outer islands. In 1796 Eden was set apart from Mt. Desert, Cranberry Isles in 1830, Tremont in 1848 and Southwest Harbor in 1905.

Around 1775 the town fathers began recording town meetings, some of the marriage intentions and cattle marks. The Mount Desert Island Historical Society has a copy of the original Town of Mount Desert Record book that has been partially transcribed by History Journal Editor, Patti Leland-Hanson. Every effort has been made to have an accurate transcription of the original book. The original spelling, grammar and punctuation has been left intact.

The History Journal will be including a series of the transcription in the next few volumes. The first in the series includes all of the town meeting minutes up to 1778.

The language is that of the early settlers. It can, at times, be difficult to follow, nevertheless the decision was made not to edit out some of the minutes but instead to include all of them from the first town meeting to several years prior to the process the townspeople went through to incorporate Mount Desert as a town.

Throughout the transcription of the town meeting minutes there are blank spaces indicating that the writing in the original document was not legible. It was decided to leave the space blank instead of trying to determine what words were once written there. The numbers 20 - 23 represent the pages numbers from the original book.

From a historical prospective the information contained in the meeting minutes helps paint a picture of the lives of the early settlers. From a genealogical prospective the minutes can be an invaluable source in confirming the location where ancestors lived and town activities they were involved in.

It is interesting to note that although more than 225 years have passed since the first town meeting was recorded, some of the same procedures are still in place today.

Early Records of Mount Desert

20

In the House of Representatives February y: 15 1776 Resolved that the Plantations within this Colony not Incorporated and they are

hereby impowered to call a meeting of the Inhabitants Which meeting shall be warned by a Justice of the Peace who resides nearest said Plantation or Place where the meeting is to be held Justice shall issue his warrant in proper form to call a meeting some principal Inhabitant of said Plantation Directing him to said copy of his warrant in the same Public Place in said Plantation to stand fourteen Days before said meeting and when the Inhabitants of Plantation or Place so warned and assembled as aforesaid they shall have thesame Priviledge of choosing Committees of Correspondence Inspection and Safety as if they were incorporated into a town as Provided by a Resolve of this Court voted February yr 13th 1776 and Doings Shall be Valid to all intents and purposes as if they were incorporated into a town. Sent up for concurrence

William Cooper Speaker Pro: Tem

In Council February 16, 1776 Rec'd and Concurt'd

Perez Morton Dep: Dec'ry

Benjamin Greenleaf	Eloud Taylor	Walter Spooner
Michael Farley	Caleb Cushing	Jabez Fisher
Thomas Cushing	Moses Gill	John Weteon

John Taylor	Jedediah Foster	Benjamin Whe
Joseph Palmer	Samuel Holten	Benjamin Lin

A true copy Attest Perez Morton Dep: Sec"ry

To Mr. Stephen Richardson of the Island of Mount Desert

According to a late Resolve of this Colloney you are hereby Required Warn and Notiffie all of the free Holders and other Inhabitants of Islands of Mount desert & the Cranberys & Placentia Islands to assemble meet to gather at the House of the above named Stephen Richardson on Satterday the the thirtiseth Day of this instant march at ten of the before noon then and there to act on the following Porticulars first to vote & to choose a moderator to regulate said meeting first to vote & choose a clerk first to vote & choose three five seven or nine suteable persons for committee of Correspondence, Saffetey and Inspection think most convenient To vote and act on any other article or matter when you may then think best & Agree on when assembled as above this to be Posted up in

the Same Publick Place within the above Mentioned ___ery or Coppeys thereof fourteen days before hand and for which this shall be your Warrant

Given under my hand at my dwelling House at Narrquaquas this twelfth Day of March in the sixteenth Year of his Majesties Reign Anno Dominin 1776

Alex Campbell Just Peaces

Mountdesert March y: 30th 1776

In Destrect meeting Asembled acording to the fourgoing Warrant: voted Mr Josiah Black Moderator for this Meeting

by voted James Richardson Clerk fr y: Destrect = also sworn by the moderator

by Voted that there be five men chosen a Committee of Correspondence Safety and Inspection for the Insuing year

by Voted that Mrss: Ezra Young & Levi Higgins & Stephen Richardson & Isaac Bunker & thomes Richardson be a committee of Correspondence Safety and Inspection for y Insuing year

by Voted that Mrss: John Thomas and Abraham Somes and Ezra Young be a Committee to bring in the order of the day

by Voted that Mrss: John Tinker & Thomas Wasgatt & Abrham Somes be a Committee to take care of the meddows on this and the adjacent Islands in this Destrect both salt and fresh that Strangers may not Destroy then or any other of the Previlidges belonging to said Islands

by Voted that a book be provided for Records for this Destrect by hibscription

by Voted that James Richardson be tresheur for this Destrect by Voted that the Committee for the meddows call on Mr John Tinker and Mr Amariah Lealland to Render an account of what hay was cut and carred of the Island last year

by Voted that there be a Publick Pode lade out & opned from Mr Parkers at Camp Cove to Crummels harbor or Mr Burrds

by Voted that Mrss: John Thomes Elisha Cusons & Siles Parker be a committee to lay out the aforsaid Rode

by Voted that MrJosiah Black and Mr Ebenezer S alsbury be Savaryes to Repair the afore said Rods

by Voted that the Committee for laying out the aforesaid Rode lay out a Rode from Mr Thomes Wagsatts to Mr Blacks Cove
by Voted that their be three landing places lade out one at Mr Blacks Cove and Hadleys brook & one at Mr Higgins Landing near Bar Island

21 MountDesart June y 10th 1776

15 by Voted this meeting stand adjourned till Munday the tenth day of June Next to meet at the House of Mr Stephen Richardson at ten a clock fore noon In Destrect meeting Asembled at y: House of Stephen Richardson by Adjournment

16 by voted that we proceed this Day to Choose one Capton & two Luiet + for the Company of Militia in this Destrect

17 by voted that Mr Ezra Young be Capt & Abrham Somes be first Luiet and Levi Higgins be second Luit for the Company of Militia in this Destrect

18 by voted that we choose three men to Settlet Mr Daniel Sullven with him in Presence of Capt A green Crabtree and Capt Ezra Young.

19 by voted Mt Elisha Cousons & Mr Ammariah Lealand & Mr Silies Parker be a Committee to Settlet the above acount with Mr Sillven

20 by Voted that the Committee of Correspondence Safety Inspection app to majere Shaw for a Shar of the Provision Granted by the Colleny

21 by Voted that no man intrud on any other mans former Portions for Hay or any other artickel with out Leavi from the former Posesenr

22 by Voted that Mr James Cockle be alowed a shear in the Marsh equal other settlers and no more

Lincoln ss

To Capt Ezra Young of a Place Called Mountdesert

Without the bounds of any town but in the County of Lincoln Sir y_____ being one of the Present Committee & acording to a Request from the major part of the Committee of said place and

agreeable to an act of this St passed on the fiftenth day of February 1776 you are hearby Required and Derected to Nottefie and warn all the free holders and others inhabitants of said Mountdesart Cranbery Island & Little Plecentia to assemble and meet together at the house of Mr Stephen Richardson of said Mountdesart on Tuesday the twenty fifth day of this instent at ten a clock before noon then and there to act on the following par Viz to choose a moderator to regulate said meeting -

2 to choose a _____

3 to choose three five seven suitable parsons to sarve as a Committee of Corrospandence Inspaction and safety for the presant year given under my hand and seel at No 4 the third day of March Anno Domini 1777 and in the first year of the Independent States of America

Campbell Justice a Peace.

And further for our own regulation to chuse all such Planation assesers as shall be thought nesesity to consider on Some meashur of raising money to Defray the Charge _____ Plantation 6 to make such Roads as shall be thought nesesity and chuse committees for Laying out the same 7 to conclude on sume meathod for securing the medows and the marsh agreabel to the Resolve of the general court and to Chuse a Committee for the Same Ezra Young Committee of Corrospandence Safty & Inspection

Stephen Richardson Levi Higgins

Mountdesart March y.. 25th 1777 being now assembled at the House of Mr Stephen Richardson agreabel to the foregoing warrant Voted Mr Josiah Black Moderator 2 Voted James Richardson clerk

Voted Mrss Daniel Rodack Amariah Lealand Luit Abarhm Somes Benjnm Bowden & Daniel Gott be a committee of Corrospandence Inspection & Safty for the present year

Voted that Mrss: John Thames Elisha Cousens Stephen Richardson Benjnm Bunker & Thomes Richardson be Servairs to see Such Roads Cleard out As they may have derections therefore

Voted that we passover this 5th Artickle

Voted that there be a Road Ladout from the former Road to bas harbor marsh And another Road to Mr Thomes F ooses

Voted that Thomas Richardson and Stephen Richardson and Capt Ezra Young be a committee that Layout the Roads Layout 2 Landing at the head of the Sound & 2 at Southwest harber in Such Places As they Shall think most Proper for the good of the Publick

Voted that thefore Sd Committee Layout the aforesd Roads to Landings And make Mshrs Elisha Cousons Stephen Richardson & Silas Parker A Committee to take Care of the marshes for this year and since Thomas Sr Called Prity marsh and Layout the marshes into Lots as may be wanted which is not allready Passes by y.. Inhabatents _____ Clerk Put up Nottifacations to for bid the Inhabantents

22

of the Neighbouring Plantations from Intruding on this Island for hay or _____

12 Voted that the Roads and Landings Ladeout Last year by Mr John Thomes and Elisha Cousons & Silas Parker be accepted with this altaration & that the Road go through Mr Blacks feald the old way as usual and the landing Remain as usuel and be recorded in this Book.

13 Voted that this meeting be a jurned to June y..10 Insuing at 10 a clock to meet again at the house of Mr Stephen Richardson

A Record of y.. Notifacation Put up by yr Clark

March 25 Agrable to y..ss Vot In a metting of the Inhabentents of _____ Island of mountdesart Now asembled according to Law this

25th Day of March anno dom.. 1777 at the House of Mr Stephen Richardson on S'd Island Voted that y.. Clark Put up Notifacations to forbid the Inhabantents of the Neighbouring Plantations from Intruding on this Island for hay or any other article Agreble to theforsaid Vot these is to forbid all Persons from Coming unto the Island of mountdesart to Cut Hay or an other way to Intrud there on as the Inhabentents have obtained agras of sd Island from the General Asembly of this State

Marchh y.. 25th 1777

James Richardson, Clark

Mountdesart June y.. 10th 1777

In metting asembled at y.. House of Stephen Richardson held by
14th jurnment from march y.. 25th 1777 Voted Capt Ezra Young
moderater in Rume of Mr Josiah black he being absant

15th Voted that y.. Rode from the Great Bridge at the head of the
marsh at y.. head of y..

Sound to y.. Southwest harber & to bass harber Crick & from S:W:
harber to Mr fooses with ye Landing at S:W: harber be Excepted &
Recorded

16th Voted that Mr Daniel Rodick joyn Mr Stephen Richardson &
Elisha Cousens in Roume of Mr Silas Parker he being able to take
care of ye marshes

17th Voted that we agurn this metting to ye 4th of April Next insuing
to meet at ye House of Mr Stephen Richardson at Clock for noon

To Capt Ezra Young on mountDesart Island Sir agrable

To a written requist to me Darrected Sgned by a Number Of
Inhabitants belonging to your Place In the Name of the State of
Massachusetts Bay you are hearby Required to Nottify all the
freeholders and others Inhabitants of mountdesart and Islands
adjesent according to the training List that they assemble and meet
together at the house Of Mr James Richardson on said mountdesart
on Tuesday the twelfth day of may Next at ten of the Clock before
Noon then and there to act on the following Particulars Viz:r

1 to vote and choose a moderattar to Rogallate Sd meeting

2.. to vote and choose three five or seven Suteable Parsons to Sarve
as a Committee of Corrospondence Inspection and Saftey for the
present yeair & given under my hand & seal at Number four this 24
day of April 1778 & in the Second year of Amaricain Independency
= Alex.. Campbell Just paice

Mountdesart may y.. 12 1778

at a meeting of ye Inhabants of this Plantation this day assambled at
the house of James Richardson agreabel to the above warrant

1 Voted Capt Ezra Young modrator

2 Voted James Richardson Clark

3 Voted James Richardson & Capt Ezra Young & Mr Elisha Cousens & Mr Thomes Richardson & Mr Andrew tarr to be a Committee of Corrospondance Inspection and Safey for the Present year
4 Voted that this meeting be ajurned to Tuesday y.. 23 day of June Next Insuning at the house of James Richardson at ten of y.. Clock before Noon Warrant for a meeting of y.. Inhabatants of this Plantation State of Msschusets bay Lincoln County Pursuent to a Resolve Passed the General Court of this State theForth day of march 1778 this is to otify and warn all the male Inhabitants that is free and twenty one years of age of this Plantation according to the traning List that they assemble and meet to gether on munday the first day of June Next Insuing at _____ the Clock before Noon at the House of James Richardson

23

for the Purpos of giving your approbation of disapprobation to aferm to a form government agreed upon by the Convention of this State february the 28th 1778 which shall be Lade before you at Sd meeting Given under our hands and seal at mountdesart this Eaightenth Day of May 1778 and in the second year of Amaracan Independency James Richardson

Committee of Correspondence Inspection and Safey

Elisha Cousnes

Ezra Young

mountdesart June y.. 1st 1778

at a meeting of ye Inhabants of this Plantation this Day assambled at ye house of James Richardson for ye approbation or Disapprobation of a form of government agrable to ye foregoing warrant = Voted that Capt Ezra Young be moderatter of this meeting 15 Votes approved with 3 amendments which are as followeth 1st any Person or Persons Shall have free Liberty to Partition the Governer and Senate & House of Representation as often as they shall find occasion

2 by that any member of y.. Senate r house of Representatives shall have free Liberty to spack his mind in y.. Senate or house of Representatives without being questioned afterwards

3 by that ye.. Governor Luett Governer or any Senator or any

member of the house of Representatives having been Elected three or four years Sucsefly shall be Chusen again for three or four years afterwards

3 Vots approved with the 3 above amendments & 2 objectives as followeth Article ye.. 6th against Each town Paying the Expenche of there own Representative ye..7th against the Governor marching ye.. militia without Consent of ye.. Senate 2 Vots approved the whole as know Stated = total 20 Votters Present

Whearas their have been sevril Complaints to the Committee Against the Proceedings of Mr Christopher Bartlet on this Island Insuncing _____ and we not being impowered to act in in such affairs have thought Proper to Notify and warn a meeting of the Inhabants of the Island of Mountdesart to be hold in at the thehouse of James Richardson on Sd Island on Thursday the fifteenth Day of this Instant Octobar at ten of ye.. Clocke before Noon _____

1st to Consider on the affairs of Mr Bartlet &

2 by to Considder whether we shall send a Parttion to ye Court in behalf of this Island and in what manner

3 by to see if we can come into any further Regulation as to marshes

4 by to Settle the acoumpt of Mr Stephen Richardsons going to Court for ye.. _____

5 by to Sees if we shall Chuse a man or men to Regulate further of ye.. settlment

6 by to See if we can agree on Sume method to in Courrey the Destruction of the varmet that Destroy our grain

Brought over

_____ "B" We would hartily Recommend it to the Inhabitants unanomosly to atend Sd.. meeting given under our hands and seal at mountdesart this first day of October 1778

Committee of Corraspondance Inspection & Safty
James Richardson Elisha Cousins Ezra Young