

## *Eighteenth Century Indian Veterans: Example*

Compiled by Thomas Doughton

*“Citizenship, Property, Identity & Representation: the Historical Journey of Southern New England’s Native Peoples*

Confirmation of the degraded Indian sketched by historian Berkhofer, impoverished and sometimes desperate Native women had a male counterpart: the needy, wounded Indian veteran of various eighteenth-century military conflicts. For example, as early as 1690, the Indian William Robeson was among Dorchester men sent on an expedition to Canada, and within the next decade, Native men were seeking relief for war injuries. An Indian veteran at Scituate in 1706, Ben had lost a hand fighting under Benjamin Church in Maine, and was petitioning for an “allowance.” The General Court granted Ben some money and promoted him to the rank of private sentinel, while in the same year an allowance was provided to Simon Sinkawah, of Natick, who had been badly frozen while in military service.<sup>1</sup>

In 1709, the General Court agreed to provide money from the public treasury for the “cure of the Indian Jacob Skenaskon who became lame while in military service. In 1714 began a series of actions for support of Thomas Oncuncanog for injuries received while in the army. At the time Roger Billings and other Dorchester residents requested from the General Court £5-0-0, an amount granted to be “improved in the best Manner he can for the necessary Relief & Supply of the blind Indian.” More than sixty years old, Oncuncanog had been born in Braintree, living “the greatest parts of his time” in and about town. He was “a faithful Soldier in the Country Service under twelve several Captains, And particularly under Cpt. Robinson as they were guarding the Mast Cutters at the Eastward.” While in the Maine region a “Chip from one of the Trees flew into one of his Eyes which soon occasion’d the Loss thereof, By Reason of which Accident he soon lost the other, “ and since the accident “has been entirely blind, & thereby render’d incapable of providing any subsistence for himself & in a very miserable & destitute Condition,” some annual allotment sought “to preserve him from perishing.” In 1715, an additional award of £6 was made to Billings for the Indian’s support. <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mass. Archives, 36:153, list of Dorchester volunteers from June 30, 1690. Ibid., 31:7-7, for Ben, and 13-13a, 14, for Sinkawah

<sup>2</sup> Petition of John Russell, of Barnstanle for £7 for “the Cure of Jacob Skenakson (Indian) of a Callous & Cavous Ulcer, Whereby he became exceeding lame, Whilst in her Majesties Service at Caso Fort.” Sum to be paid out of public

Additional awards for the upkeep of Thomas Oncuncnog were authorized by the legislature in 1715, 1716, and 1717. Again, in 1720 Captain John Billings requested and received another £6 for the Indian, while in 1721 Billings claimed that “tho in no ways obliged” he has “taken care of the Said Indian for Several Years,” as Tom “labours under Great Infirmities.”<sup>3</sup>

Another Native wounded while in service was William Jeffrey of “Harwich Indian.” In 1724 he petitioned the legislature showing that while under the command of Captain Josiah Winslow, the previous May, when Winslow was killed at St. Georges River, “he received a Shot in his Left hand, Which broke the bone of his Wrist, by Which Means he Uncapable at present of doing any thing with that Hand, & is likely to Continue lame for Some Considerable Time, And therefore Praying Some Allowance from this Court for the Support of himself & family.”<sup>4</sup> Then, next came a subsequent petition in 1725 from William Pigg “alias Will Jeffrey an Indian” wounded eastward praying an allowance “in Consideration of his being much disabled by his said Wounds to do any thing for the Support of him self & Family.” In 1728, William Jeffrey “of Harwich Indian...in the service of this Province... received a Wound through his Wrist which has disabled him from labouring for his Support,” sought an allowance.<sup>5</sup>

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treasury, passed Nov. 9, 1709, Acts & Resolves, 9. Petition of Roger Billings et al, passed June 24, 1714, some £5 awarded, Acts & Resolves, 9; petition approved.

<sup>3</sup> An amount of £6 was awarded for Oncuncnog’s maintenance, Acts & Resolves, 9; On Tuesday, June 18, 1717, a resolve that some £6 be allowed out of the public treasury to Roger Billings “to be improved according to best Discretion, for the use and benefit of Thomas Oncononuck the Blind Indian.” p. 208 Petition of Roger Billings of Dorchester and Jonathan Gulliver of Milton & John Billings of Dorchester “relief for Thomas Onconcoug, an Old Blind Indian, that he has been very Serviceable as a Soulder in the late Wars, and received a hurt in one of his Eyes while in the Service, which is supposed to have occasioned his Blindness. And an Account was Exhibited of the Expenditure of Six Pounds that was granted in the Year 1715 for his relief,” Tuesday, June 11, 1717, House Journal 1: 198. Petition from Billings passed Nov. 11, 1720, Acts & Resolves, 10: 31-32; Petition from Billings, passed June 16, 1721, awarding £6 for Ocunanog, *ibid.*, 86;

<sup>4</sup> Jeffrey petition, approved Nov. 13, 1724, orderinmg sum of £10 be paid out of the public treasury, to be put in the hands of John Mayo of Harwich for Jeffrey, Acts & Resolves, 10: 481.

<sup>5</sup> Will Pigg petition, approved Nov. 5, 1725, allocating £5 to Capt. Edmund Freeman “to be supplied the Said William Jeffrey alias Pigg for ye Support of him self & Family, as they may have Occasion & call for it,” Acts & Resolves, 10: 650. Will Jeffrey petition, approved in Dec. 13, 1727, sum of £10, from public treasury to Capt. Edmund Freeman “for the Support of the Petitioner as the Necessity may

Although discussed in greater detail elsewhere, numerous Massachusetts Indians were involved in military campaigns during conflicts through the eighteenth century. In May 1725, for example, Captain Richard Bourne of Cape Cod commanded a company including the following Indian soldiers:

Amos Allmiquit, private  
John Allmiquit, private  
John Commosion, private  
Nehemiah Coneet, private  
Tim Daniel, private  
Elisha Peters, private

Timothy Quack, private  
Eliakim Quacom, private  
Amos Quason, private  
Joseph Quason, private  
David Quasor, private

While these eleven enlistees appeared on Bourne's muster rolls without comment on their status, the following twenty-six Native people were recorded as "servants," all of their masters listed.

Once seventeenth century immigrants addressed themselves to the conversion of aboriginal peoples, they expressed concerns about a necessity to remove Native children from their parents, as part of their efforts to "reduce them to civility."

Simon Abraham, pvt, ser. Maj. Goreham  
John Attimon, pvt, ser, to Joseph Done  
Joseph Capee, pvt, ser, to Eben. Hinckly  
Thomas Chamuck, pvt, ser. to John Davis  
John Comsett, pvt, ser to Thomas Jenkins  
Joel Daniel, pvt, ser. Samuel Sturgis  
Peter Dogamus, pvt, ser. Paul Sears  
George Gedediah, pvt, ser. Maj. Goreham  
George George, pvt, ser. Samuel Noles  
Moses James, pvt, ser. Col. \_\_\_ Otis  
Peter Job, pvt, ser. John Otis  
David Job, pvt, ser. Jonathan Dellingham  
Isaac Moit, pvt, ser. Capt. \_\_\_ Nye  
Thomas Ned, corp, ser. John Baxter  
Peter Newasoonuck, pvt, ser. John Otis  
Nehemiah Notmannick, pvt, Jas. Barker  
William Nummock, pvt, ser. Benj. Nye  
Jacob Paul, pvt, ser. T.. Cushing

Moses Peig, pvt, ser. Col. \_\_\_ Bourne  
John Peter, pvt, ser. Joseph Sturgis  
Josiah Peter, sgt, ser. John Otis, Jr.  
John Pockonnet, sgt, Capt. Rich. Bourne  
Joseph Pockonnet, pvt, ser. Silas Bourne  
Joseph Popnamuck, pvt, Benj. Crocker  
John Quoy, pvt, ser. Benjamin Bourne  
Samuel Quoy, pvt, ser. Benjamin Bourne  
George Sachama, pvt, ser. Josiah Dote  
Elisha Sachem, pvt, ser. Colonel \_\_\_ Otis  
John Scimiquit, pvt, ser. William Hodges  
Elisha Sahamus, pvt, ser. John Otis  
Benjamin Sennuit, corp, John Goreham  
Amos Shanks, pvt, ser. Capt. \_\_\_ Wills  
Joseph Takonosh, pvt  
Abel Tom, pvt, ser. John Goreham  
Ed. Jno. Wampetuck, pvt, Capt. John Otis  
Steven Wampi, pvt, ser. John West

The Bourne family —Benjamin, Richard, Silas, and Colonel {Metaliah?}, provided five Indian "servants" to the Captain Richard's company while Col.

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required, Legislative Records of the Council, 12: 476; House Journal ,31; Acts & Resolves, 11: 234

\_\_ Bourne had an Indian named Thomas Tarror in another unit. Additionally, members of the Otis family of Barnstable supplied four Indian men to the service. John Otis enlisted his Indian men Moses Attiquin, Thomas Queach and Col. -- Otis enlisted his Indian Elisha Sachem another company. Benjamin Crocker who had a man in Bourne's unit also had Reuben Jeremy in William Canada's company.

Some of other Natives appearing on muster rolls from 1725 campaigns include: John Attamon; Solomon Babesuck from Woodstock; Samuel Capehick; Casaum or Cosaump from Lonetown; Philip Catanow; Ephraim Chaundler; Christian, a "Mohawk" living at Dunstable; Nipmucs Samuel and Joseph Comiger, from Natick and Grafton; William Cushore; Simon George from Natick; Alexander, Benjamin, James, John and Joel Jatosh; Peter Lawrence from Grafton; Nipmuc Joshua Misco from Grafton; Nesatauney from Springfield; Aaron Nesmick; William Nummock; Benjmain Numposh; Joseph Olo from Westfield; Thomas Pegan from Natick; Samuel Pegan from Woodstock, another Nipmuc; Nipmuc Amy Printer from Grafton; James Quack; Job Quasockanish; Jonas Quasockanish; Jonathan Quasockanish; Josiah Quasockanish; John Quonnum; Nipmucs Samuel and Israel Rumneymarsh; Sango, from Dunstable; Joseph Sconodo; Nipmucs Benjamin and Josiah Speen; Jacob Squam; Thomas Tassamon; Nipmucs John and Solomon Thomas from Natick; Benjamin and John Tray from Natick; Tuckkeecoo Indian, recorded residing at "Seahtacocks;" John and Joshua Wamsquam from Natick; Isaac Wannoo; John Wartegue; Daniel Washanks from Hatfield; Peter Washawk, a "servant" to James Barker; Indian Won and John Wormageham or Marblehead.<sup>6</sup>

Of these fifty-four individuals on these muster rolls, only four individuals are "servants" with recorded masters—Indian enlistees Moses Attaquin, Samuel Capehick, Robin Jeremy, Sango, and Peter Washawks.

From subsequent petitions for relief from campaign veterans, Native enlistees were frequently wounded and once demobilized unable to support themselves or their families.

In 1726, Isaac Barker of Pembroke, sought payment from the legislature claiming "that whereas David Job an Indian lately a Soldier in the Service upon his Return Home lodged in a Barn at Pembroke upon a Hay Mow & accidentally fell off & was exceedingly hurt thereby, of which Hurt he died." Barker provided a doctor's care and other things "necessary to preserve his Life and after his Death was at the Charge of his Burial," requesting

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<sup>6</sup> Veterans List., 9-10, 46-48, 65; 68, 97, 129, 148, 170, 179, 183, 185, 191, 204, 216, 218, 222, 235-237, 245-246, 250, 252

reimbursement from the public treasury.<sup>7</sup> In the same year, a Yarmouth resident claimed that he had an “Indian Servant” named Joseph Crook who enlisted in the service, receiving a wound in his knee costing the petitioners some 52s.6d. for his cure, so he sought reimbursement.<sup>8</sup>

Also in 1726, Isaac Wannoe “Indian Soldier late in ye Service,” showing that Moses Markham received nine months pay due him “under presence of an Order from the Petitioner, ”— which was “scalp Money only” and had lost one of his eyes in the fight at Norridgewick in 1724 “by the blowing up of his Powder-Horn.” Therefore, Wannoe sought relief.<sup>9</sup>

And, in the same year, Nathaniel Donnel sought reimbursement for lodging, feeding and providing fire wood for Benjamin Solomon “a wounded Indian” in the public service, charges totaling £5.10s. while another Massachusetts was paid for “making a Cradle and Coffin for an Indian that died in Service.”<sup>10</sup>

In 1728, a petition was received from Jethro Harry “an old Indian of Mashpee...for an Allowance from this Court for his Wounds received in the Narragansett War, which are still very painful to him, & he is without means of supporting him self & his Wife, who is almost blind with Age.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Barker petition, order that wages due to David Job in Cpt. Kennedy’s roll being £4. 8.7 be allowed and paid to Melatiah Bourn to be paid by him “for the Use & Support of the said David Jobs Wife and Family as they may stand in Need thereof,” and that the sum of £4.8.7 be paid to Isaac Barker 1726, Acts & Resolves, 10

<sup>8</sup> Petition from Thomas Hallet, of Yarmouth, passed June 10, 1726, allocating £4 allocated out of treasury, Legislative Records of the Council, 12: 152; House Journal, 31], Acts & Resolves, 11: 22

<sup>9</sup> Petition from Isaac Wannoe, passed June 17, 1726, ordering that £5 to be paid to the petitioner “in Consideration of the Loss of his Eye,” Legislative Records of the Council, 13: 174; House Journal, 37,54] Acts & Resolves, 11: 39.

<sup>10</sup> Donnel petition, June 28, 1726, payment of £5.10, Legislative Records of the Council 13: 197; House Journal, 52; Acts & Resolves, 11: 54; Peter Walton petition, approved Dec. 5, 1726, payment awarded, Legislative Records of the Council, 13: 233; House Journal, 21; Acts & Resolves, 11: 79

<sup>11</sup> Harry petition June 18, 1728, that £10, out of the public treasury, be provided to Ezra Bourne Esq. for Harry and his wife. Passed: June 18, p. 327 Legislative Records of the Council,14: 90; House Journal, 49, Acts & Resolves, 11: 327

Also in 1728, the Native Jabez Agramont of Falmouth, requested “for some Allowance from this Court on account of his Fathers being wounded by the Indian Enemy in one of the former Wars...and for the Charge he has been at for his Mother who died lately being Aged One hundred & twelve years.”<sup>12</sup>

Other Native men sought relief or back pay for military services in the 1740s. For example, in 1746, Nipmuc Andrew Abraham Jr. died at Grafton, still owed wages for his military service in the Port Royal Campaign.<sup>13</sup> As is the case with many Indian veterans of imperialist wars fought in New England, Abraham’s family began experiencing financial hardship at his death, within a short period of time losing portions of their real estate holdings.

Although the story of the Abraham family belongs more to the discussions in Chapter Three, Andrew Abraham Jr., was one of the children of Andrew and Deborah Abraham. Andrew Abraham Jr. and his wife Abigail were parents of children including David Abraham (1744-1785), John Abraham, and (born 1740), Jonas Abraham (born 1742). On August 5, 1746, Andrew Abraham Jr. “soldier” made his last will & testament, specifying the following bequests: to “my well beloved wife Abigail twenty pounds old tenor that is in Colonel Brattle’s hands and all my wages that is or shall be dew to me by going into the King’s Service (if any their be),” and his land at Grafton; and, to his sons land at Natick to be divided equally among them.

On August 13, 1747 the Worcester Court named Thomas Pratt, Ebenezer Wadsworth and Benjamin Chapin to appraise the estate of Andrew Abraham Jr. They reported to the Court that his estate consisted of twenty-three acres of land valued at £280, some personal property valued at some £10, and £32 in money. Pratt & al. also provided within their report the following statement from Aaron Wilder, sworn at Worcester, August 31, 1747, “I certify that James Printer and Andrew Abraham, two Indian soldiers who went to Port Royall...are both deceased.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Agramont petition, approved Oct. 12, 1728, order that the sum of £10 be allowed and paid to Ezra Bourn Esq., Legislative Records of the Council, 14: 177; House Journal, 94,95], Acts & Resolves, 11: 375

<sup>13</sup> Abraham died in August 1746, his will probated at Worcester Court, “Andrew Abraham Junior “Indian Planter,” leaving his widow Abigail Abraham “20 pounds, and all my wages that is or shall be due to me by going into the King’s Service” & a tract of land he owned at Natick and additional lands at Natick to be divided among his sons Jonathan, David & Jonas Abraham, Worcester County Probate Registry, 2: 645.

<sup>14</sup> Worcester County Probate Registry, 2: 3, 47

On November 19, 1748, Nipmucs Sarah Printer, Abigail Abraham “formerly Abigail Printer, Indian Widows of Grafton” along with Martha Printer “a Minor” requested permission from the General Court to sell thirty-two acres at Grafton. January 19, 1750, Elizabeth Abraham of Grafton petitioned the General Court claiming that her father Andrew Abraham, now deceased had given her a deed to fifty acres “Upon Condition of her supporting her aged Mother” but as yearly profits on the land are “insufficient for that End,” she wished to convert the land to money as was so ordered. Elizabeth Abraham’s actual petition read: “Father Andrew Abram before he went into the Service of the King at Annapolis Royall where he died, gave a gift of about 50 acres...” On March 11, 1750, through authority of the General Court, on her petition allowed Jan. 18, 1749, some fifty acres on the western side of the Blackstone River at Grafton were sold for £81 to Ephraim Sherman, of Grafton, highest bidder at a public auction of land sold for the benefit of Elizabeth Abraham.<sup>15</sup>

On March 30, 1750 through authorization of October 1748 on a petition to sell land for Sarah Printer & Abigail Abraham [which mentions about thirty-two acres?], property was auctioned off to the highest bidder, Nathaniel Sherman of Grafton paying £163 “old Tenor bills of credit” for some 122 acres abutting the land of Andrew Abraham. On May 4, 1750, again through authority of the General Court, some 32 acres at Grafton were sold for £60. 5s to Joseph Batchellor & Jonathan Ross, the highest bidders at the auction of property disposed for the benefit of Sarah Printer & Abigail Abraham. A month later, accounts for land sold to benefit Sarah Printer & Abigail Abraham.<sup>16</sup>

The summary details on the plight of the Abraham family at Grafton suggest the difficult situations of many impoverished Indian veterans of eighteenth-century military conflicts. In the same period, on June 11, 1747, the General Court approved a request from Oliver Partridge Esq., Hatfield representative, demonstrating that an “Indian Man named Neso Tawney of the Mohegan Tribe, who lived at Hadley, is now dead & his Wife also, that there is due to him for his Service at Cape Breton £6.17.8...that it may be put into some proper hand for the use of his Children.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Acts & Resolves, 14: 188-189; Acts & Resolves,14: 463; Mass Archives: 32:85; Worcester Worcester of Deeds: 29, 250

<sup>16</sup> Worcester Registry of Deeds, 29: 295-296; *ibid.*: 29, 512; Mass. Archives, 32:134

<sup>17</sup> Acts & Resolves, 14:15-65, money to be paid to Eleazer Porter, Esq., Hatfield representative of the children of Neso Tawney; cf. House Journal,:38

In 1748, Indian Anne Covitt and her husband Pompey, a “servant” at Milton, successfully petitioned the General Court for £15 in pay for her father, Jesse Covitt, a soldier in the Cape Breton expedition who died before receiving his wages.<sup>18</sup>

On June 2, 1748, the legislature also authorized payment wages due for service at Cape Breton, to Samuel Knowles Esq., Eastham representative, in behalf of Patience Adams, “Relict Widow of Joseph Adams late of Harwich Indian deceased,” while in the next year Patience Wampam was successful in petitioning for pay of her late husband, who had also died in the Cape Breton campaign.<sup>19</sup>

In 1751, Indian Peter Dogamus, of Yarmouth, petitioned explaining that “he has Spent a great Part of his Life in the Service of the Province, as a Soldier & was kept a long time in Captivity in Canada, from whence he is lately returned, and being now grown old & unable to Support himself...praying for Some relief.”<sup>20</sup> A year later, funds from the public treasury were also awarded on a petition of John Simons a Middleborough Indian seeking “some Relief...in Consideration of Wounds received from the Enemy in the publick Service by which he is disabled from Labour.”<sup>21</sup>

In 1753, Indian Daniel Job sought help for “his many Services in the late Wars against the French & Indians, and that by Reason of Age & Blindness he is unable to provide for himself;” he was awarded £3, out of the public treasury “for the time past,” and an annual allowance of forty shillings to be paid the guardians of the Indians in the west part of Barnstable

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<sup>18</sup> Mass. Archives, 31:565-566a, for £15 awarded on March 11, 1784. In Acts & Resolves, 14:113, Pompey is described as “a free Negro.

<sup>19</sup> Acts & Resolves, 14: 145, on petition of Samuel Knowles, cf. House Journal, 22. For Wampam petition, approved Feb. 1, 1749, Acts & Resolves, 14:233, House Journal, 118, 122

<sup>20</sup> Acts & Resolves, 14: 477, on Dogamus petition, approved Feb. 1751, ordering £4 out of the public treasury to Maj. Joseph Thatcher of Yarmouth for Dogamus, in consideration of his Sufferings; cf. House Journal, 156

<sup>21</sup> Acts & Resolves, 14: 701, the Simons petition approved March 30, 1752, granting 40s. a year “during his natural life” to be paid annually to the Middleborough overseers of the poor, “to be improved by them for his comfortable Subsistence.” Cf., House Journal, 126, 197, 140

County.<sup>22</sup> In the same year, a second Middleborough Indian named John Simons sought compensation for the loss of a leg while serving in Canada.<sup>23</sup>

Joseph Poignet and his wife Zipporah, resident at Natick in 1756, sought assistance from the legislature "...by Reason of the Wounds received by the said Joseph while in Majesty's Service & the Expence occasioned thereby he is involved in Debt and unable to support his Family," seeking permission to sell a lot of seven acres "of remote Land, for their Support." In the same year Philip Wheeler of Rehoboth claimed that "an Indian Servant of his named Peleg Church" served on the Crown Point expedition, dying in service but because the Indian's name was omitted from muster rolls, Wheeler was petitioning for the wages of Peleg Church.<sup>24</sup>

In 1759, Abner Elisha an Indian "servant" of Dartmouth resident William Peckham, having served in a Canadian expedition returned with small pox and the "King's Evil" and was unable to work. Peckham sought and was awarded Elisha's back wages through the General Court.<sup>25</sup>

In 1760, the Indian Moses Jackson, "servant" of Benjamin Jackson had served in a Canadian expedition, but was requesting the General Court to order payment of wages deprived him.<sup>26</sup> Another veteran who had served in Canada, John Peagon, "servant" of Abner Lowden of Duxborough, had contracted smallpox while in service, his master, also in 1760, seeking reimbursement for money expended in Peagan's care.<sup>27</sup> In 1762, John Pequet from Dartmouth, who had been part of the Crown Royal expedition and the

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<sup>22</sup> Acts & Resolves, 15: 11, petition approved Sept. 11, 1753

<sup>23</sup> Mass. Archives, 32:318a-318b, petition of March 30, 1753

<sup>24</sup> Acts & Resolves, 15:555, petition from Poignets, on June 10, 1757, decision that he be allowed to sell 7 acres of "remote Land, for their Support. Ibid., 571, on Church matter, on Aug. 17, 1757 an order that the Indian's name to be added to muster rolls enabling Wheeler to collect his wages

<sup>25</sup> Mass. Archives, 33:109-110, dated June 5, 1759, the situation confusing since Elisha had "on the muster roll under another name. Petition granted June 9, 1759.

<sup>26</sup> Mass. Archives, 33:138

<sup>27</sup> Mass. Archives, 33:121-122, for petition, March 1760 on behalf of John Pequit

Fort William engagement where he was captured, successfully petitioned the General Court for an allowance.<sup>28</sup>

An Indian “servant” of Major Joseph Josselyn of Hanover, Prince Osgood, returned from service in 1758, taken ill at Sudbury and cared for by Dr. Jeremiah Hall of Pembroke. In 1763, Major Josselyn successfully petitioned for expenses the result of his servant’s illness.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Mass.Archives, 33:194-194a, John Pequet petition. After capture at Fort William Henry, Pequet escaped in May 1761. Petition was submitted in January 1762. On Feb. 15, 1762, the legislature awarded money for Pequet’s support, naming Walter Spooner trustee.

<sup>29</sup> Mass. Archives, 33:226-227, petition from Joseph Josselyn on behalf of Prince Osgood, Feb. 4-9, 1763