

*The Reverend
Ebenezer Parkman's Farm Workers,
Westborough, Massachusetts, 1726-82*

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PERHAPS,' lamented the Reverend Ebenezer Parkman of Westborough, Massachusetts, in the early summer of 1726, 'there may be many more Tedious and Chafing things in Hirelings than ever Mention has been made of' (June 2, 1726). He thus gave voice to a frustration that most rural ministers must have experienced at one time or another: by choice and calling, Parkman was a minister, but by necessity he was also a farmer, and in this instance he was a master supervising the labors of a servant, Robert Henry, whom he had hired three months earlier. Parkman did not record Henry's specific shortcomings that day, but three weeks later he noted in his diary: 'I grew Weary of Robert Henry; having set me up Some Lengths (perhaps a Score) after his Manner, I made up accounts with him and gave him his Liberty' (June 21, 1726).¹

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1. Dates in parentheses refer to the diary of Ebenezer Parkman. The extant portions of the diary through 1755 (except 1736 and 1742, which were recently acquired by the American Antiquarian Society) appear in *The Diary of Ebenezer Parkman, 1703-1782: First Part, Three Volumes in One, 1719-1755*, ed. Francis G. Walett (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1974). Diaries for 1737 and November 1778 through 1780 are printed in *The Diary of Rev. Ebenezer Parkman, of Westborough, Mass., for the Months of February, March, April,*

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Thus rid of a worker whose services he found inadequate, within a week Parkman found himself out in the fields, raking, turning, and poling hay with his 'little Boy,' a youngster whom he had taken into his household, and a neighbor's son. As he ruefully commented, 'Notwithstanding such Exercise last mentioned was my Diversion and Choice, yet I found it sometime tir'd me very much.' This prompted him to reflect upon the 'unhappy times' and 'the Ingratitude of most of the people of the Country to their Ministers' on account of their inadequate support. Most ministers, he believed, 'do groan under their pressures,' and he lamented that the people's 'inward Respect' was 'much proportion'd' to the ministers' 'Externall appearance.' When their appearance 'becomes mean' because of the people's neglect, 'it will be in Danger of becoming worse thro their Contempt' (June 29-30, 1726).

While the twenty-three-year-old Parkman admitted he had 'little Experience, as yet,' his salary would never be adequate to support his family. As a result, throughout his fifty-eight-year ministry farming was an essential part of his life and livelihood. Although he had grown up in Boston and received a liberal education, he was compelled to oversee farming operations, make decisions about the production of crops and livestock, and sell some farm products locally or in the Boston market. Although he rarely contributed his own physical labor to the farm, the recruitment and supervision of workers were frequent preoccupations that required considerable time and energy.

This essay focuses on the workers whom Parkman hired on a seasonal basis, typically from April to October. Apart from the work of his sons, whose availability was limited by their number and age, these seasonal workers were his most important source of labor. Although he occasionally hired workers on a daily or weekly basis, exchanged work with neighbors, or received gifts of

October and November, 1737, November and December of 1778, and the Years of 1779 and 1780, ed. Harriette M. Forbes ([Westborough:] Westborough Historical Society, 1899). Unpublished portions of the diary are held by the American Antiquarian Society (1736; 1742; 1756-May 1761; June 1764-June 1769; November 10-21, 1772; June 1773-October 1778) and by the Massachusetts Historical Society (August 1771-June 1773; 1781-82).

work from his parishioners, only seasonal workers could provide an adequate and reliable form of labor.

While much has been written about agriculture in colonial New England,² historians know relatively little about farm workers.³ It is generally, and correctly, assumed that farmers obtained significant labor from their sons and exchanged labor with their neighbors. But these sources were not necessarily sufficient, as a son's labor could be counted on for only a limited number of years, and exchanges of labor could not be guaranteed, especially at peak times during the agricultural year. As a result, those who had the means sought to hire workers on a seasonal basis. Ebenezer Parkman's diary, of which about forty years are extant from 1724 through 1782, along with other local sources, provides information about origins, ages, recruitment, contracts, tasks, and supervision of his seasonal workers.

Westborough, some thirty miles west of Boston, had been set off from Marlborough in 1717 and was divided into two parishes in the mid-1740s. By 1765 the town had some 1,100 people. The north parish was made the District of Northborough in 1766 and became a separate town in 1775. Throughout the colonial period, the town's economy was primarily agricultural—that is, Westborough's male inhabitants were farmers or artisan-farmers. Even the town's few professional men, ministers and doctors, owned farms and depended on agriculture for part of their livelihoods.

In Parkman's case, the management of a farm appears to have

2. See Ross W. Beales, Jr., comp., 'Selected Bibliography of New England Farm Studies,' in Peter Benes and Jane Montague Benes, eds., *The Farm: Annual Proceedings of the Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife, 1986* (Boston: Boston University, 1988), pp. 154-69.

3. See T. H. Breen, 'Back to Sweat and Toil: Suggestions for the Study of Agricultural Work in Early America,' *Pennsylvania History* 49 (1982): 241-55; Stephen Innes, *Labor in a New Land: Economy and Society in Seventeenth-Century Springfield* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); and especially Stephen Innes, ed., *Work and Labor in Early America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988). Thomas C. Hubka places labor exchanges into a larger context in 'Farm Family Mutuality: The Mid-Nineteenth-Century Maine Farm Neighborhood,' in Benes and Benes, eds., *The Farm*, pp. 13-23. On farm labor in England, see Alan Everitt, 'Farm Labourers,' in *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, 8 vols. ed. H.P.R. Finberg (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 4:396-465, and Ann Kusmaul, *Servants in Husbandry in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

been essential for the maintenance of his family. Unlike the Wards of nineteenth-century Shrewsbury or Levi Lincoln's farming operations in Oakham, Parkman's farming operations did not have a significant market orientation. While he occasionally sold livestock, poultry, and crops locally or in Boston, most of what he produced appears to have been destined for domestic consumption either as food for his table or as feed for his animals. His salary, rather than farm products, enabled him to make purchases in Boston and to hire workers.

Despite his relative wealth in terms of a salaried income, Parkman was never relieved of concerns about his farm, and much of his concern focused on the recruitment and supervision of labor to perform a wide range of farming or farm-related tasks. Some work involved relatively specialized skills or experience for projects such as pointing chimneys, carpentry, digging wells, glazing windows, cooperage, blacksmithing, castrating animals, and butchering, dressing, and salting up beef and pork. Such tasks were relatively finite in duration and, because they were seldom urgent, could be scheduled according to the availability of workers and in light of other more pressing tasks.

Much farm work had to be done on a regular, even daily, basis and could not be long delayed. Such tasks included chores around the farmyard—cutting wood for fires and tending livestock. Field work involved regular and hard labor as the agricultural year advanced—plowing, sowing, weeding, or harvesting. Relatively slack periods were filled in by work that was essential to the maintenance and improvement of the farm: carting and spreading muck (manure), digging and hauling stones from fields, cutting rails for fences, and building or repairing stone walls.

Parkman obtained labor for these necessary tasks in several ways. First, when his eight sons were old enough, he used their labor. (For the Parkman children, see Appendix 1.) His sons worked at the full range of agricultural tasks in their boyhood and adolescent years, but Parkman did not want them to become farmers. Although only his last son, Elias, had the talent, inclination,

and resources to attend Harvard College, Parkman believed that education and apprenticeships were essential. As a result, he could count on his sons' labor for only about ten years: from the age of five or six, when they first began to do light work around the farm, until their mid-teens, when they entered apprenticeships.⁴

Parkman therefore had to obtain help for much of the labor. While he could hire some men or exchange labor for short periods, he needed workers who would be available on a day-by-day basis to carry out farm tasks throughout the agricultural year. For this work, he relied on two kinds of laborers. First were boys, typically between eleven and fourteen years of age, who did some of the lighter work such as tending cattle and cutting firewood in exchange for board and some instruction but no wages.⁵ Second, and most important, were young men whom he employed for the wide range of labor-intensive activities in the fields during the growing and harvesting seasons. These young men, whose lives and labor are the focus of this essay, became part of the Parkman household and were essential to Parkman's farming operations for long periods during the life cycle of the Parkman family.

The composition of Parkman's family determined the extent to which he had to rely on outside workers. In the early years of his marriage, from his settlement in Westborough in 1724 through the 1730s, when his sons were young and unable to work, Parkman needed help for both yard and field tasks. As his sons grew older,

4. See my essay, 'Boys' Work on an Eighteenth-Century Farm,' a paper presented at the twenty-second annual Duquesne University History Forum, October 26-28, 1988, which will appear in the forum's *Proceedings* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, forthcoming).

5. Eleven-year-old Nathan Knowlton came to live with Parkman for twelve months (March 27, 1745). When William Winchester came to live with Parkman in 1779, Parkman agreed to do what he 'could conveniently and reasonably in teaching and influencing him in Reading, Writing and Cypering, according as his Business in taking Care of the Cattle, Cutting the Wood etc. would give opportunity and as his Capacity would admit it' (December 27, 1779). James Hicks was eleven when he came to live with Parkman (May 11, 1776); he was to stay until age fourteen but left when he was thirteen (May 26, 1778). Parkman's grandson Elias lived with his grandfather for at least two years, starting at age eleven. A Captain Storey of Boston asked Parkman to keep his son until age fifteen or sixteen (January 20, 1726). Eleven-year-old Benjamin Clark was to live with Parkman until age fourteen; in this case Parkman wrote out 'a memorandum' of what the boy's father 'promised about his Son,' and the father signed the memorandum (November 12-13, 1773).

they could take on these responsibilities; this was especially true from the 1740s into the 1760s. In the last two decades of his life, when most of his children were grown and had established separate residences, his household again depended heavily on outside workers. He could sometimes rely on a grandson for the yard work, but most chores were performed by nonrelatives. Finally, in the last year or two of his life, he shifted responsibility for his farm to his son Breck and son-in-law Elijah Brigham. At this point, he needed only the help of a boy.

What did Parkman look for in a worker? Although he never explicitly spelled out his criteria, he clearly had three concerns: that the worker be knowledgeable and skilled, hard-working and reliable, and of good character. While we can assume that all employers sought similar qualities, for Parkman they were especially important. He was not a farmer by background or inclination, and throughout his life he relied on others for judgments about at least some farming operations. Nor was he in a position, by calling or available time, to instruct or closely supervise a young man in agricultural tasks. As a result, his workers had to bring both skill and maturity to their jobs. Whether in his study reading and preparing sermons, calling on parishioners, or traveling on professional or personal business, he had to be confident that his farm work was being done in an orderly and timely manner. Finally, as the town's minister, with a large family of his own and a role of special prominence in setting and maintaining standards of conduct among all townspeople, including the young, he required workers who would observe the order of his household.

In finding workers, Parkman could sometimes rely on family connections. His father, a Boston shipwright, sold him a slave in 1728; and his brother Samuel, a Boston merchant, obtained an indentured servant for him in 1738. Neither arrangement lasted. The slave, Maro, died after little more than a year.⁶ The inden-

6. Parkman must have seen Maro as a long-term source of labor; as he noted shortly after the purchase, 'Under the Engagements of my Family, by reason of our want of Help, our Negro being New, I am much taken off from my Work, but I trust in God it may be better with me and more leasure ere long' (August 27, 1728). Parkman lamented Maro's

tured servant, 'an Irish Lad of 15 years' named John Kidney (December 5, 1738), worked out satisfactorily for seven months.⁷ However, on June 2, 1739, Kidney attempted to rape Parkman's oldest daughter, fourteen-year-old Molly. Parkman consulted several leading men and appears to have been ready to have the youth jailed, but, responding to advice, he accepted Kidney's 'Humiliation on his Knees with flowing Tears so far as to putt a stop to his going to the House of Correction' (June 16, 1739) and sold his indenture to a farmer in a neighboring town (June 18, 22, 1739).

Other family connections were more successful. Thomas Winchester, who worked for Parkman from 1742 to 1746, was a relative on his first wife's side of the family. Parkman's son Alexander, while serving an apprenticeship in Framingham, secured the services of Caleb Winch in 1766. Similarly, his son Breck, upon whom Parkman increasingly relied in the last decade of his life, obtained Asa Ware to work in 1774.

Most commonly, Parkman hired workers from Westborough families or from families in towns where his professional duties took him. Several examples illustrate this pattern. Benjamin Bowman, John Fay, brothers Ebenezer and Jonathan Maynard, and Reuben Bellows were sons of Westborough families, as was Phinehas Forbush, whose father, then deceased, had been a deacon in the Westborough church. Daniel Hastings of Watertown was a nephew of Simon Tainter, a member and later a deacon in Parkman's church. Other workers came from neighboring towns or from towns through which Parkman frequently traveled. Thus, Joseph Chamberlin's parents lived in Hopkinton, as did Capt. Joseph Wood, whose son Joseph also worked for Parkman. Ephraim

death as 'The First Death in my Family!' (December 6, 1729). The price of the slave was seventy-four pounds, and Parkman had given his father a note for sixty-six pounds. Since little of the diary is extant for the period in which Parkman owned Maro or the ensuing years, it is not clear how or whether Parkman repaid his father.

7. Kidney was bound to Parkman on December 8, 1738. Parkman's references to him before June 1739 note only the tasks that he was carrying out: thrashing barley (January 10, 1739); going to Marlborough to bring a doctor for Mrs. Parkman (February 4); clearing land (March 3); sledding wood (March 8); carrying a log to the saw mill (March 10); driving a team to get hay (April 18) and to get sand (April 19); carting muck (April 25, May 1); plowing (May 3); and shearing (May 17).

Parker was from Shrewsbury, Richard Temple from Framingham, and Aaron Warrin from Upton, where his father Jonas was a deacon. These young men were not only known to Parkman, but it is also clear that they came from respectable and, in some cases, even prominent families.

On a few occasions, persons who were unknown to Parkman offered their services, but he preferred local youths. Clearly there was less risk in hiring persons known to him than taking a chance on a stranger's skills and temperament. In Parkman's rural world, face-to-face relationships and connections formed the background for most arrangements between master and servant and provided a measure of certainty.

The agreements between Parkman and his workers do not appear to have been written (except in Parkman's diary), although he occasionally mentioned the presence of a witness and usually noted the length of service and the amount of wages. Most contracts were for six months, typically starting sometime in April and ending in October. Shorter contracts—for three or four months—appear to have reflected the availability of sons who could work in September and October. Thus, in 1746 and 1748–50, when Parkman hired workers for two-, three-, or four-month terms, his two oldest sons, Ebenezer and Thomas, were available to work for him. From 1751 to 1764, when Parkman did not hire seasonal workers, his next three sons, William, Alexander, and Breck, were also assuming increasingly larger burdens of work. In the last decade of his life, Parkman also hired workers during the winter months—this presumably necessitated by his old age and his increasing inability to rely on his sons.

Wages were set in terms of the prevailing currencies. On a few occasions, Parkman and a worker agreed on a minimum amount with provision for additional wages if the worker proved satisfactory or, in the case of winter service, if the weather were good.⁸

8. Thus, Joseph Chamberlin was to receive seventy-five pounds if Parkman were 'satisfyed he earns it; otherwise he is to have but 70' (April 19, 1771). In late December 1772, twenty-one-year-old Elijah Brigham agreed to live with Parkman for the first three months

Parkman also agreed to raise the wages of the one married worker whom he hired, but this was not out of consideration for the worker's marital status. Nathaniel Chamberlin, whose wife and children lived with another Westborough resident, agreed to attend to Parkman's business 'in fowl weather as well as fair' and to be available in the evening if Parkman wanted 'a small Chore to be done' (March 19, 1776). Parkman later agreed to raise Chamberlin's wages because the worker would go 'home' on Saturday nights and stay with his family over the Sabbath, and his wife would do his washing and mending (March 26, 1776).

Wages sometimes took a form other than cash. This was particularly true during the inflation of the Revolutionary War. In early 1779 Parkman went to Isaac Parker's to see whether Parker's brother, twenty-one-year-old Ephraim, might live with him. Parker seemed 'disposed' to give up his younger brother's services (February 25, 1779), and a week later Ephraim came to work for Parkman 'by the Day' (March 3, 1779). Nothing was said, or at least recorded, about wages, and Ephraim worked for Parkman for the next nine months. In late November, Ephraim came to reckon with Parkman, asking to receive Parkman's 'biggest Oxen' for the first six months of work and to be paid 'as the price is stated' for the other three months (November 22, 1779). Parkman valued his oxen at £500, but learned from two neighbors that they had not paid more than £250 to their workers (November 23, 1779). He agreed to give Ephraim the 'principal Oxen' for seven months of work and to pay him 'in Money or Indian Corn for the two months of October and November, according to common custom, in the old way or in proportion as men's wages are for youths' (November

of 1773. His wages were to be eight pounds a month, but, as Parkman noted, 'If the Winter should prove a good Season (evidently So) for our Business, and we do accomplish and Succeed well, in getting Wood especially, then he must have 4 Dollars per Month' (December 30, 1772). Two days later Parkman noted that Brigham 'tells me he is sent for to keep School at *Royalstown*, according to his word to them heretofore; but he did not receive their Letter for him to come, though writ some time past, till since he had promised me; and therefore can't serve me; he is Sorry for the Disappointment' (January 1, 1773). Parkman then hired John Fay for the three-month period, agreeing to pay twenty-four pounds, 'or if the weather be good, 25 £' (January 4, 1773).

25, 1779). Two days later they disagreed on 'what was the Usual Custom at this time of the great Alteration of Money within these few weeks.' Ephraim demanded sixty pounds; Parkman offered fifty-five. The minister was obliged to borrow the money from his son Breck, who had a shop in Westborough; Breck gave Ephraim the full sixty pounds (November 27, 1779).⁹

Several months later, Ebenezer Crosby offered to work for Parkman but insisted that he have 'Cloths to pay for His Labour.' Parkman was unwilling to make such a commitment, and Crosby left (April 11, 1780).¹⁰ Both Crosby and Parkman were obviously affected by war-time inflation, the one unwilling to risk set wages in the face of inflation, the other unable to provide the cloth that would substitute for wages.

The impact of inflation is most vividly seen in Parkman's negotiations with Isaac Ruggles for one day's wages. Ruggles was not satisfied with the order that Parkman gave for the constable to pay him seventy-five pounds and insisted on a bushel of rye and two yards of tow cloth. Parkman recorded in his diary, 'My Wife interposed and said she would make it for him. I asked him whether I did ever promise him Tow Cloth? He Said, No: I did not. But *That* would satisfie.' Ruggles was willing to take seventy dollars, but, as Parkman noted, 'I was not willing to give him so great a price for one Days work, and would rather give him tow-Cloth, if I knew of what kind. He said, Such as was strong and fit for a Blacksmiths Trowzers or shirts to work in. Thus we parted' (January 12, 1781).

Yet another form of wages was provided to twenty-one-year-old Benjamin Bowman. In 1781 Bowman agreed to take care of Parkman's cattle and to cut wood during the winter of 1781-82 if he could board with the Parkmans and 'learn to write and cypher' (December 6, 1781). This agreement resembles the kind of arrangements that Parkman made with the boys who lived with him.

9. Ephraim's older brother, Elisha, who had witnessed the negotiations with Parkman, may have felt some concern for the minister, for he later brought Parkman 'several worthy presents, Beef and Tea, 10 lb. of one, ½ lb. t'other' (December 14, 1779).

10. 'Mr. Crosby insists for Cloths to pay for His Labour; which I not being able to engage him, he leaves me.'

One would expect that a twenty-one-year-old could have obtained better compensation, especially in 1781, but perhaps his hunger for learning was stronger than his need for cash wages.

Most agreements with workers appear to have been entered into with little negotiation, perhaps reflecting a customary understanding of the value of a season's work. On one occasion, however, Parkman rejected a worker's demands. He offered Phinehas Forbush seventy-six pounds for six months, but Phinehas asked for an additional one pound, ten shillings, a price Parkman was unwilling to pay. He noted that Phinehas was willing to work for another person for seventy-five pounds. Phinehas may have seen the minister as a demanding employer or as an overly strict head of household. Two years later, Parkman did hire Phinehas, with his diary entry suggesting that Phinehas had driven a hard bargain: 'But I must give him £11 Lawfull Money.' Parkman was careful to add the proviso: 'But I Shall depend upon his doing my Business without further Charge' (March 18, 1772).

Parkman's agreements with workers included conditions beyond wages and length of service. These related to tools the worker should supply, days that the worker might miss, work that might be done in bad weather, and Parkman's expectations as to conduct. Joseph Chamberlin was 'to bring a scythe with him' (April 19, 1771), while Ebenezer Maynard was to 'find an Ax' and 'to fill up the Week Days, and make allowance if he be not well and able to work' (February 27, 1769). Richard Temple was to have 'half a Day at Election, but he must be at home in season and to Observe Order.' Parkman would not 'pay him for Lectures, Fasts or Thanksgivings,' but since Parkman would pay him 'for foul weather,' Richard was to 'improve it as well as he can, contriving,' as Parkman phrased his understanding of the matter, 'what may best be done for my Benefit' (April 28, 1769). David Batherick,¹¹ who came to work for six months in 1736, was 'to take and do one sort of Business as well as another, whether Husbandry or Carpenters, or whatever I have to be done, that he is able to do; and to be

11. Also spelled Bavrick.

as handy and helpfull as he can in the Family also; which if he Shall be, his *Mending* shall be done' (March 26, 1736). Jonathan Maynard expected 'to have his Mending, and liberty to go to Lecture without making up the time.' He also wanted to be able to use Parkman's horse 'to ride a mile or two in an Evening a few times' (February 19, 1773). This last agreement led to a confrontation later in the year when Jonathan stayed out late two nights in a row. Parkman reminded him that he had promised to 'observe the order of my House,' and warned, apparently to good effect, that 'he that would not be orderly Should not live in my House' (October 27, 1773).

Once a worker was hired, there was no guarantee that he would stay or would work out satisfactorily. As noted above, Parkman dismissed Robert Henry, death took Maro, the slave, and Parkman sold John Kidney's indenture after the attempted rape. Two of Parkman's workers were pressed into military service in the 1740s,¹² and a third was 'prevailed upon' to accept a bounty and enlist in 1776 (July 2, 1776).¹³ Another worker, Ebenezer Maynard, was badly wounded by an ax and, with no prospect of recovering sufficiently to do Parkman's work, agreed that Parkman should hire someone else (April 28, 1769). In this case, Parkman was able to hire a replacement on the same day.

In wartime, however, the loss of workers proved very difficult. On one occasion Parkman used his pulpit to appeal for help. As he recorded in his diary, 'I Spake to the Congregation just before the Blessing, to the following purposes. "In my present peculiar Circumstances I am obliged to acquaint the Inhabitants of this Precinct that my Help being taken away I must depend upon you to help me. I must depend upon you respecting my Temporals, if you would have me attend to your Spirituals"' (June 30, 1748).

12. Thomas Winchester (July 16-17, 1746) and Joseph Bowker (June 24-25, 1748).

13. This third individual was Nathaniel Chamberlin, the married worker. As Parkman noted, '*Nathaniel Chamberlin*, though he has often assured me that he would not 'list till he was forced—yet I was informed he was prevailed upon; and did' (July 2, 1776). Despite second thoughts, Chamberlin was unable to avoid the military service to which he had committed himself (July 6, 1776).

While some workers voluntarily left his employment, Parkman recorded few problems with his hired laborers' work or conduct. The dismissal of a worker such as Robert Henry was unusual. More typical perhaps was the case of Abraham Moss. Shortly before Moss finished working for Parkman, the minister recorded that Moss was 'in a great Fret after Dinner' (September 4, 1738), but Moss later returned and 'acknowledg'd his unfit Conduct and Language in his Passionate Heat on the 4th Instant' (September 26, 1738). The tables seem to have been reversed in the case of James Hopkins, whose 'Conduct and Language' were reported to the minister after three days of work. Hopkins asked to leave the next day, a request to which Parkman agreed somewhat reluctantly. The year was 1780, and workers were not easily obtained. Hopkins asked nothing for the work he had already done and even offered to 'pay the Damage of Disappointment.' Left without a worker and with no prospect of finding a replacement, Parkman accepted a neighbor's offer to take his north field 'to the Halves' (April 27-28, 1780).

Given the nature of eighteenth-century New England farming, both master and servant knew what to expect, and Parkman's record of the tasks and conduct of his workers varied little from year to year. One season's work was much the same as another; there was, indeed, little that was new under the summer's sun at Parkman's farm. The example of Caleb Winch illustrates some of the variety of tasks. Twenty-one-year-old Winch was born in Framingham, a town located between Westborough and Boston and therefore a place where Parkman occasionally stopped or preached. Parkman's son, Alexander, had been apprenticed to William Brown of Framingham (August 30-31, October 26, 1764),¹⁴ and in April 1766, Parkman wrote to Alexander 'about a Young Man to live with me' (April 21, 1766). Caleb Winch arrived the next day.

Winch's first three weeks on the Parkman farm found him sowing peas and mending fences (April 25, May 9-10), carting muck

14. Brown was elected a deacon in the Framingham church in 1771.

(or manure) from the stables at the meeting house (April 26, 28-29) and from the barn (April 30, May 1), harrowing (May 6, 13), drawing stones from the fields, building or repairing walls (May 8, 10), and working in the garden (May 9).

By mid-May Winch was sowing oats and flax (May 14), furrowing (May 15), and planting Indian corn and potatoes (May 16-17). With this work behind him, he mended and moved fences (May 21-22) and dug stones out of a field for more than a week (May 23-24, June 2). Four days of weeding the Indian corn (June 3, 6) were followed by more digging of stones. This strenuous work was interrupted when Parkman had Winch work for a neighbor (June 9) and then assist in whitewashing a room (June 10-11). Mid-June found Winch digging more stones (June 12), working for Lt. Edward Baker (June 14), hoeing beans and setting plants in the garden (June 16), plowing and doing the second hoeing (June 20, 23-25), mowing the English grass (June 26-27), and helping one of Parkman's neighbors with his corn (June 28). In early July Winch sledded stones (July 1-2) and mowed the balks around the orchard and another field (July 3). Bad weather brought some respite: 'Caleb bottoms Chairs, being foul Weather, and teaches John [Parkman] to do it' (July 4). The third hoeing apparently took four days (July 7-10), which were followed by haying (July 11, 12) and carting sheaves of rye and hay (July 22). The end of the month brought another lull, with Winch working for a neighbor one day (July 25) and 'about sundry Chores' on another (July 29).

The last day of July and the first day of August saw Winch reaping rye and cradling wheat, followed by work for another neighbor (August 2), mowing (August 4) and carting hay (August 5-6), bringing in a load of stover—'some Grass, Some Weeds, Some Oates cut before ripe' (August 7)—and mowing bushes (August 8). For the rest of August Parkman omitted references to Winch's work, finally noting 'See of Caleb in the Almanack' (August 29).¹⁵ In early September Winch helped plow a new field,

15. Parkman's almanacs do not survive. A reasonable assumption is that his almanacs included day-by-day records of what Winch did and noted days that he might have missed.

possibly the one from which he had dug stones (September 4), mowed the rowing or perimeter of the fields (September 5), harrowed the new field (September 8), and assisted in building a stone wall (September 12). After another reference to his almanac (September 15), Parkman mentioned Winch only once before mid-October,¹⁶ when fifty-one neighbors cut, carted in, and husked the Indian corn (October 13). In his last reference to Winch during the period of his contract, Parkman noted that Winch carried the corn into the barn (October 14).

The record of Caleb Winch's work illustrates more than the alternation between the demands of essential tasks such as plowing, sowing, weeding, and reaping, which had to be done in a timely fashion, and less pressing but still necessary chores such as digging stones and building fences and walls. Winch's work was only sometimes solitary; more often he worked with one or more boys or men. Plowing and other work with oxen or horses (carting muck and fencing materials, harrowing) required two persons, and such occasions found Winch working with Parkman's thirteen-year-old son John. John also helped Winch sow oats and flax, plant corn and potatoes, dig stones, weed, hoe, and set out plants. This work relationship between the twenty-one-year-old and the thirteen-year-old undoubtedly represented an informal but essential kind of apprenticeship in which the older youth's greater strength, experience, and skills served to instruct the younger boy. This relationship is seen most clearly on a day of 'foul Weather' when Caleb Winch bottomed chairs and taught young John how to do it (July 4, 1766).

Parkman's workers spent six days a week at their tasks, and only the Sabbath provided a predictable interlude. The diary is silent on workers' participation in the public and private religious observances of the Sabbath, but there is no reason to doubt that Westborough's minister included his workers in the family's daily devotions and expected their attendance at church. For some

16. On September 26, Winch went to a neighbor's 'to get a Well-Sweep, but without Success.'

workers the Sabbath provided opportunity to visit their families, leaving Parkman's household late Saturday afternoon and returning early Monday morning. Caleb Winch, for example, borrowed Parkman's mare to go home for one Sabbath (June 21, 1766), and he visited his sister in the neighboring town of Shrewsbury on another occasion (October 18, 1766). Although such absences had Parkman's approval, he did note his displeasure when a worker left late Saturday, thereby violating the Sabbath, which, in Parkman's practice, started at sundown Saturday. He also noted the few occasions when their return on Monday morning was delayed.

Given the monotony and demands of farm work, the occasional house or barn raising must have afforded a welcome relief. Both Caleb Winch and John Parkman attended a house raising (May 15, 1766), and Winch and Alexander Parkman went to a barn-raising, which prompted Parkman to talk with them the next day 'for being out last night' (June 10-11, 1766).

While Parkman recorded considerable information about the tasks that his workers carried out, there is little information about the place of the workers in his household. We know nothing about where they slept or when, and with whom, they ate. They were expected to attend church and precommunion lectures, although Parkman occasionally noted their absence (as well as his sons') from lectures at times of intense work in the fields. They also took part in the Parkman family's daily religious observances. John Kidney, who later asked Parkman's forgiveness for his assault on Molly, recalled with gratitude that 'when he was in Darkness and Distress from Day to Day and not able to find what method to take nor what to do, he was greatly relieved and directed by calling to mind those Lines he was wont to repeat with my Children, at the End of the morning and Evening Hymns, *Praise God from whom all Blessings Flow etc.*' (April 28, 1742).

At the end of a worker's contracted service, Parkman typically noted the worker's departure, what he was owed in the way of wages, and how many days remained due to Parkman because of the worker's absences. The need to make up lost days brought

some workers back to Parkman's farm, if not into his household, during the fall and winter. There were also instances when workers continued their services on what seems to have been an ad hoc basis, working a few days here and there as Parkman's needs dictated or as their own commitments provided occasion. Caleb Winch's contract ended on October 23, 1766, and Parkman paid him in cash and notes. A month later Winch returned for two days to thrash wheat (November 21-22, 1766). He then left 'to go into the Woods to look him a Place' (November 24) but returned nine days later (December 3), apparently from Oxford, to which John Parkman had journeyed to pick up 'Calebs Cloths' (December 10). On December 13, Parkman borrowed money to pay part of what he owed Winch, and the young man left for his home town of Framingham. Four days later, Deacon Simon Tainter took 'Six large Fowls' to the Boston market for the Parkmans and also took with him Winch's 'Bundle' (December 17, 1766).

While the arrangements between Parkman and his workers were brought about by mutual economic necessity, master and servant interacted on a variety of levels. As head of the household, Parkman was responsible for his workers' spiritual as well as material welfare, and they answered to him for their conduct both in and outside the household.¹⁷ There was also opportunity for the development of affection between master and servant. Although most arrangements lasted only a season, in the case of Thomas Winchester there was a genuine sense of personal, as well as economic, loss when Winchester was pressed into military service. As Parkman lamented, 'It was very difficult as to my Business to part with him, but so it must be and I desire to committ myself to a Mercifull and faithfull God. It was also Somewhat difficult to part with one that had been of my Family so long [1742-46] and had endear'd himself to us by his good Conduct. The Lord go with him and give him to return to us again in Safety!' (July 18, 1746).

Winchester did return safely from military service (November

17. See Edmund S. Morgan, *The Puritan Family: Religion & Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England*, rev. ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1966).

20, December 12, 1746), and two years later Parkman officiated at his marriage (November 24, 1748). Although there is no record of Winchester's birth or age, the timing of his service to Parkman and his marriage suggests that he, like most of Parkman's workers, was in his late teens or early twenties when he began to work on the minister's farm. Indeed, many of the workers married within a few years of leaving the Parkman household.

This brings us to the larger question of how the lives and events revealed in Ebenezer Parkman's diary fit into the framework of eighteenth-century New England life. What brought Parkman and his workers together was the convergence, however brief, of two life cycles. The first was the economic and familial cycle of the Parkman household. In the early years of his settlement in Westborough, with a young and growing family, Parkman was obliged to hire workers to carry out the tasks of yard and field work. As his sons matured, his household became increasingly less dependent upon outside labor. Finally, as his sons left home for apprenticeships, education, or the formation of their own families, his household returned to its former dependence on outside labor.

For their own part, the individual workers came into the Parkman household at a point in their own lives when their fathers could presumably spare their labor and when they themselves could look forward to the day when they would establish farms and families of their own. Indeed, their wages may have been the major source of the capital needed to achieve independent status as heads of households and farmers in their own right. Parkman provided their room and board during the months of their work on his farm, and, apart from incidental expenses, they had the opportunity to save most if not all of their wages. However respectable their families, the workers' fathers probably did not have anything like the source of cash that Parkman had in his tax-supported salary.

Parkman recorded two cases that suggest this transitional phase in his young workers' lives. As noted above, after finishing his period of service, Caleb Winch worked off and on for Parkman,

on one occasion leaving 'to go into the Woods to look him a Place' (November 24, 1766). In 1741, John Henry wrote to Parkman to inform the minister that, despite his promise to 'Com and Live with you,' he had bought a farm and was 'determined to goo and Improve it.'¹⁸

While Ebenezer Parkman's primary calling and income as a minister made him unusual among farm employers, the changing relationship between his need for workers, the age and gender composition of his family, and the aspirations of the sons of other local families was common. The needs of one family at particular moments in its own cycle were met by the needs of other families that were at different points in the familial cycle. The establishment, growth, and contraction of families created, at some points, a demand for labor and, at others, a surplus of labor that could serve other families. For the most part, Parkman appears to have had relatively little trouble finding suitable workers. In contrast to the nineteenth-century Ward family of Shrewsbury, he was probably aided by the larger forces of population growth and rising land values, which placed increasing pressure on eighteenth-century families to devise new strategies for their children's welfare.¹⁹ The colonial wars against the French and Indians and the war for American independence were the principal disruptive forces that affected Parkman's ability to secure workers. Some young men found military service an attractive alternative to farm work,²⁰

18. John Henry to Ebenezer Parkman, September 28, 1741, Parkman Family Papers, box 2, folder 2, written on a sheet of paper that Parkman subsequently used to record the relation of Eleazer Beeman.

19. The changing conditions have been variously examined by Charles S. Grant, *Democracy in the Frontier Town of Connecticut* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961); Kenneth A. Lockridge, 'Land, Population, and the Evolution of New England Society, 1630-1790,' *Past and Present* 39 (1968): 62-80; Philip J. Greven, Jr., *Four Generations: Population, Land, and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970); Douglas Lamar Jones, 'The Strolling Poor: Transiency in Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts,' *Journal of Social History* 9 (1975): 28-54; Gary B. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979); and Christopher M. Jedrey, *The World of John Cleaveland: Family and Community in Eighteenth-Century New England* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1979).

20. This was true also of Parkman's sons, two of whom served against the French and Indians; Thomas died of a camp fever in New York. Parkman's eldest son and namesake

while others found that they had no choice but to serve. The Revolution was particularly disruptive; inflation, a scarcity of labor, and an inadequate salary worked to Parkman's disadvantage.

Finally, the young men or 'youth'²¹ who worked for Parkman generally appear not to have been part of any permanently disadvantaged rural underclass or representative of the 'strolling poor' who were increasingly a part of the New England social structure. There were some obvious exceptions: the indentured servant, John Kidney; Maro, the slave; perhaps Robert Henry, as well as Nathaniel Chamberlin, the only married worker. These cases aside, the workers whom Parkman hired were young men at a stage of semi-independence: they were no longer working for their fathers or turning over wages to their fathers; yet they were still subordinate members of a household.²² Their work for Parkman was an important stage in the transition from dependent youth to full adulthood. And, at the same time that their work for Parkman and the wages that they received formed an essential bridge between two stages of life, the young workers satisfied a need that Parkman had at various points in his own family's life cycle.

served during the Revolution after losing his farm. On the impact of war, see Fred Anderson, *A People's Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years' War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

21. On the use of the term 'youth' in the colonial period, see Ross W. Beales, Jr., 'In Search of the Historical Child: Miniature Adulthood and Youth in Colonial New England,' *American Quarterly* 27 (1975): 379-98.

22. For the nineteenth-century experience, see Joseph F. Kett, *Rites of Passage: Adolescence in America, 1790 to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

APPENDIX I

Ebenezer Parkman's Family

EBENEZER PARKMAN: b. Sept. 5, 1703

m. July 7, 1724

Mary Champney

bapt. May 21, 1699

d. Jan. 29, 1736

m. Sept. 1, 1737

Hannah Breck

b. Feb. 10, 1716

d. Aug. 20, 1801

d. Dec. 9, 1782

CHILDREN:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Birth</i>	<i>Marriage</i>	<i>Death</i>
Mary	Sept. 14, 1725	Aug. 6, 1752	Jan. 16, 1776
Ebenezer	Aug. 20, 1727	Sept. 21, 1752	July 5, 1811
Thomas	July 3, 1729		Oct. 5, 1759
Lydia	Sept. 20, 1731		(in childhood)
Lucy	Sept. 23, 1734	Feb. 12, 1757 (int.)	
		Nov. 13, 1793	
Elizabeth	Dec. 28, 1738		Jan. 14, 1739
William	Feb. 19, 1741	Sept. 9, 1766	
Sarah	Mar. 20, 1743	Sept. 28, 1769	Mar. 12, 1825
Susanna	Mar. 13, 1745	Oct. 13, 1768	Nov. 30, 1792
Alexander	Feb. 17, 1747	Dec. 12, 1768	
Breck	Jan. 27, 1749	Nov. 14, 1776 (int.)	Feb. 3, 1825
Samuel	Aug. 22, 1751	Feb. 11, 1773	
John	July 21, 1753		Sept. 10, 1775
Anna Sophia	Oct. 18, 1755	Sept. 21, 1780	Nov. 26, 1783
Hannah	Feb. 9, 1758		Oct. 14, 1777
Elias	Jan. 6, 1761		

APPENDIX 2

Ebenezer Parkman's Farm Workers
Westborough, Massachusetts, 1726-82

* indicates that the worker did not serve Parkman

marr. : married

int. : intention of marriage recorded rather than the date of marriage

- 1726 Henry, Robert. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single. *Terms*: 'I rode down to Captain Wards to Engage Robert Henry to Live with me and I did so and Silence Bartlet, one for 23 t'other for 8 pounds per Year' (March 31, 1726). Parkman dismissed Henry on June 21, 1726.
- 1728 Maro (slave). *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single. Purchased from Parkman's father, August 8, 1728; died December 6, 1729.
- 1736 Batherick, David. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single; marr. May 12, 1742. *Terms*: 'My agreement is (by Divine Leave) for six Months, for 24 £ and he is to take and do one sort of Business as well as another, whether Husbandry or Carpenters, or whatever I have to be done, that he is able to do; and to be as handy and helpfull as he can in the Family also; which if he Shall be, his *Mending* shall be done' (March 26, 1736).
- 1738 Moss, Abraham. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single? *Terms*: 'P. M. came Abraham Moss, whom I at Eve hired for 4 Months for 20 £' (May 4, 1738).
- 1738 Kidney, John (indentured servant). *Age*: 16. *Marital status*: single. Bound to Parkman December 7, 1738. After Kidney attempt to rape Parkman's daughter Molly (June 2, 1739), Parkman sold the indenture to William Gray of Worcester (June 22, 1739).
- *1741 Henry, John. In a letter to Parkman, Henry wrote: 'theas may Inform you that although I Promessed that I would Com and Live with you if I left Mr. Brigham yet the Sceal of affairs Seems to turn me otherwies for I have bought a farm I am not only obliged to goo and See it but am determined to goo and Improve it therfor I desier you would not dessapoint your Self by Depending upon your Humbel Sarvant.' (John Henry to Ebenezer Parkman, Worcester, September 28, 1741, Parkman Family Papers, box 2, folder 2, written on a sheet of paper that Parkman subsequently used to record the relation of Eleazer Beeman.)
- 1742 Winchester, Thomas. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single; marr.

- (by Parkman) November 24, 1748. *Terms*: 'N. B. Thomas Winchester came to live with me on the 1st Day of this Month—for 35 £ 6 Months' (April 5, 1742).
- 1743 Winchester, Thomas. *Age*: unknown. *Terms*: The diary for 1743 is not extant, but the agreement for 1744 suggests that he worked for Parkman in 1743.
- 1744 Winchester, Thomas. *Age*: unknown. *Terms*: 'Thomas Winchester came again for another six Months (by Gods Leave) but insist'd for £ 40 old Tenor for it' (April 9, 1744).
- 1745 Winchester, Thomas. *Age*: unknown. *Terms*: 'Towards Night Thomas Winchester came, went to Work about the Fences and thereby began another half year with me, for the same Wages as last' (April 1, 1745).
- 1746 Winchester, Thomas. *Age*: unknown. *Terms*: 'Agreed with Thomas to help me from June 15 to August 15 and to have 22 £ Old Tenor' (May 2, 1746).
- 1748 Bowker, Joseph. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single; marr. November 21, 1749. *Terms*: 'Joseph Bowker came to work for me for 4 Months, Wages 50 £, Old Tenor' (May 2, 1748).
- *1749 Knowlton, Nathan. *Age*: 15. *Marital status*: single. 'I rode up to Mr. Knowltons to obtain one of his sons to come and live with me, Ebenezer being about to go to Harvard' (January 3, 1749). Ebenezer, Jr., was about to leave for Harvard, Massachusetts, for an apprenticeship. 'Nathan Knowlton does not come as I expected' (January 7, 1749). Ebenezer, Jr., returned home, March 28, 1749. Nathan Knowlton had served Parkman at age 11–12 (see March 27, 1745; November 18, 1745).
- *1749 Knowlton, Jacob. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single. 'I rode to Mr. Joseph Knowltons after his son Jacob to hire him for the year' (January 24, 1749).
- *1749 Chaddock, Thomas. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single; marr. August 11, 1757. 'Proceeded as far as to Mr. Thomas Chaddocks (at Hopkinton)—agreed with him about his Son Thomas's living with me. This was an Affair of great Necessity because my son Thomas has tarried so long at home that there are several Dangers by means of it; and I foresee that I can't go in the beginning of the week—but then indeed my son must (if possible) go away' (February 24, 1749). Parkman noted that 'Mr. Chaddock brought his son Thomas to live here with me' (February 26, 1749), but the diary contains no other references to Thomas Chaddock. The

negotiations with Thomas's father suggest that Thomas was especially young—perhaps young enough to be classified as a lad or boy to do the yard rather than field work.

- 1749 Hastings, Daniel. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single. *Terms*: 'Daniel Hastings came with his Cousen Benjamin Tainter, and agrees to work for me, without determining how long, or for how much but leaves it with his uncle Tainter' (March 21, 1749). In July, Parkman 'reckon'd with him and paid him all (for 3 Months and 4 Days)—Scil. 10 £ old Tenor per Month, and for the odd Days 10 shillings per Day) 32 £ old Tenor' (July 7, 1749).
- 1750 Bruce, Joseph. *Age*: 23. *Marital status*: single; marr. December 14, 1752. *Terms*: 'Agreed with Joseph Bruce to live with me for three months; from yesterday, till the first of August, for 41 £ old Tenor. But then by taking in the Days that he had work'd for me before this month came in on one hand, and allowing him two Days to Spend for himself of the Time to come, on the other; we agree that I shall pay him 42 £ in the whole, when his Term shall be up' (May 2, 1750).
- *1754 Dunlop, John. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single? 'John Dunlop here and wants to let himself to me' (February 27, 1754).
- 1765 Arnold, Thomas. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single; marr. November 24, 1768. *Terms*: 'Thomas Arnold here: I agree with him to live with me for Six Months, every other Week and to give him 5 £ lawful' (April 25, 1765).
- 1766 Winch, Caleb. *Age*: 21. *Marital status*: single. *Terms*: Parkman did not record the terms when Winch started working for him on April 22. On October 23, Parkman noted 'Calebs Time is out, and having given him two Notes—one of 30 £, the other of £7.10, besides what Cash I paid him, he left us, having behaved well, whilst he lived with us. N. B. I gave Caleb Winch 20 £ Old Tenor.'
- 1767 Temple, Richard. *Age*: 22. *Marital status*: single; marr. (int.) May 31, 1776. *Terms*: 'P. M. Richard Temple comes, and offers himself to live with me 4 months for 55 £ old Tenor' (April 10, 1767).
- 1768 Rice, Enoch. *Age*: 21. *Marital status*: single; marr. (int.) November 26, 1768. *Terms*: Enoch Rice came to live with Parkman on April 4, 1768. On April 13, Parkman's son Alexander returned from Framingham, where he had been serving as an apprentice. On April 18, Enoch contracted to work for Benjamin Tainter for May and June because Alexander had returned home. On July 7, Enoch sought to reduce his remaining service to six weeks, but Parkman

was able to 'reason him into steadiness, and he promises to stay his Time out upon the old Terms.' Further demands by Enoch led to a dissolution of the agreement (July 11, 14, 16, 1768).

- 1768 Stim(p)son, Alexander. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single; marr. (int.) February 16, 1771. *Terms*: 'But as I have now little or no Hope of recovering *Enoch* [Rice], I mounted for Hopkinton p. m. to hire a man, viz. that *Stimson* before said. Rode to him. Agreed with him at his Fathers—for 8 Dollars the month ensuing, to begin next Monday morning, if he heard nothing from me to the Contrary' (July 14, 1768).
- 1769 Maynard, Ebenezer, Jr. *Age*: 21. *Marital status*: single; marr. December 6, 1769 or March 19, 1776. *Terms*: '*Ebenezer Maynard* junior here. I hire him to live with me Six Months from the first of April to the first of October. He is to fill up the Week Days, and make allowance if he be not well and able to work. He is also to find an Ax; I am to find other Tools—Diet, Washing, etc., and give him 10 £ Lawfull money' (February 27, 1769).
- 1769 Temple, Richard. *Age*: 25. *Marital status*: single; marr. (int.) May 31, 1776. *Terms*: 'With *Ebe*'s free consent I proceed to Agree with *Richard* for four Months—to begin next Week; for 56 £ old Tenor. I am to allow him half a Day at Election, but he must be at home in season and to Observe Order. I am not to pay him for Lectures, Fasts or Thanksgivings. And seeing I pay him for foul weather he shall improve it as well as he can, contriving what may best be done for my Benefit' (April 28, 1769). Ebenezer Maynard, Jr., had been injured by an ax and could not continue to work for Parkman.
- *1770 Forbes (Forbush), Phinehas. *Age*: 22. *Marital status*: single; marr. June 13, 1776. *Terms* (not accepted): 'Went over to Mrs. Kendals to hire her son Phinehas Forbes for the ensuing Six Months, but he will not consent to work for me under 77 £ 10/, even although he would for another who will work with him for 75 £. I offered him 76 £ but he is inflexible' (March 30, 1770).
- 1770 Wood, Joseph. *Age*: 21. *Marital status*: single; marr. November 11, 1773. *Terms*: '*Joseph Wood*, Son of Capt. Joseph Wood of Hopkinton, came to work for me, and to fulfill six months for 75 £ old Tenor' (May 1, 1770). Joseph's arrival and the terms of his service ended a month of negotiations. His father had initially asked for £ 80, which Parkman refused (April 2, 1770). Joseph later asked to delay the start of work (April 18), a request seconded by his father, who also requested on his son's behalf that the term be

only four months. Parkman refused this 'unless he provides an Equivalent person in his room for the other two months' (April 20, 1770).

- *1771 Bruce, Reuben. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: unknown. 'One Reuben Bruce from Paxton here to let himself to me.' This is Parkman's only reference to Bruce, an apparent stranger.
- *1771 Wood, Benjamin. *Age*: 19. *Marital status*: single. *Terms*: Thomas Wood asked that one of his twin sons receive £ 80 for six months, which Parkman refused (April 3, 1771). He and Parkman subsequently agreed on £ 75, but '*Benjamin* came down and tells me they want to be alike in Wages—that his uncle would give him 78, and that his Father thinks I must give him t'other 40/. I told him I had not given any more than 75; that I did not care to break over this, to make it a bad Precedent—but as I had a Mind to have him, So I would do equivalent, to encourage him, and therefore I would depend upon his coming next Monday or Tuesday to work. This he promised to do' (April 5, 1771). Benjamin's brother John then agreed to work in Brookfield, which disappointed his uncle, who had depended on him; the uncle therefore insisted that Benjamin live with him (April 11-12, 1771). The uncle in turn obtained another worker, and Parkman again entered into agreement with Benjamin: 'Only I must give him 78 £ and he is to come to my Work tomorrow Morning.' Despite Parkman's understanding, the uncle acquainted Parkman '*of Ben's* backwardness and says he has not promised me absolutely' (April 15, 1771). Benjamin failed to show up for work (April 16, 1771).
- *1771 Batherick, Solomon. *Age*: 24. *Marital status*: single; marr. (int.) May 9, 1772. 'After Funeral Mr. *Batherick* here. N. B. Talk of his Son *Solomon* to live with me' (April 15, 1771). This was during the negotiations with Benjamin Wood and his family.
- *1771 Whitney, John. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single; marr. (int.) May 24, 1781. 'John Whitney came, and offers to live with me' (April 15, 1771). This was during the negotiations with Benjamin Wood and his family.
- *1771 Sever, Samuel. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: unknown. '*Samuel Sever* here to let himself to Me. Took it into Consideration till next Monday' (April 1, 1771). Parkman evidently decided to hire Joseph Chamberlin.
- 1771 Chamberlin, Joseph. *Age*: 18. *Marital status*: single; marr. (int.) March 11, 1786. *Terms*: 'Rode over to Mr. John Chamberlains in

- Hopkinton and hired his son Joseph for 75 £ if I shall be satisfied he earns it; otherwise he is to have but 70, and he is to bring a scythe with him' (April 19, 1771).
- 1772 Forbush, Phinehas. *Age*: 24. *Marital status*: single; marr. June 13, 1776. *Terms*: 'Phinebas Forbush (whom I had Sent to) came, and I agreed with him to live with me Six Months from the middle of April (if the Weather shall suit to begin then), but I must give him £ 11 Lawful Money. But I Shall depend upon his doing my Business without further Charge' (March 18, 1772).
- *1772 Hardy, Daniel. *Age*: 22. *Marital status*: single. *Terms*: 'Daniel Hardy (Mr. Phinehas' son) to See whether he is to come and live with me the ensuing months. Asks 8 £ per Month. I acquaint him with Reuben's offer; and give up Expectations from Daniel, depending on Reuben' (December 2, 1772). See Reuben Bellows, below.
- 1772 Bellows, Reuben. *Age*: 33. *Marital status*: single; marr. ca. 1775 or 1776. *Terms*: 'Reuben Bellows came and offered to live with me this Winter at 3 Dollars per month—to come next Monday Morning, if I Send him no word to the Contrary' (December 1, 1772). Reuben left Parkman's service on December 25.
- *1773 Brigham, Elijah. *Age*: 21. *Marital status*: single; marr. September 21, 1780 (Anna Sophia Parkman). *Terms*: 'At Eve Elijah Brigham here; and I agreed with him to live with me three months; for 8 £ old Tenor per Month to begin next Monday or Tuesday. But if the Winter should prove a good Season (evidently So) for our Business, and we do accomplish and Succeed well, in getting Wood especially, then he must have 4 Dollars per Month' (December 30, 1772).
- 1773 Fay, John. *Age*: 24. *Marital status*: single; marr. January 11, 1776. *Terms*: 'At Eve agree with John Fay (Capt. Benjamin's son) to live with me 3 months for 24 £ old Tenor, or if the weather be good, 25 £' (January 4, 1773).
- *1773 Willard, Joshua. *Age*: 21. *Marital status*: single; marr. June 13, 1776. *Terms*: See Jonathan Maynard, 1773 (above). 'Capt. Brooks of Grafton here—tells me Joshua Willard is engaged' (February 20, 1773). See Jonathan Maynard, below.
- 1773 Maynard, Jonathan. *Age*: 20. *Marital status*: single; marr. August 25, 1774. *Terms*: 'Jonathan Maynard (Son of Mr. Ebenezer Maynard) was here and is willing to live with me Six Months for 80 £ old Tenor—8 Months for 95 £ of like money—12 Months for 50 Dollars—but expects to have his Mending, and liberty to

- go to Lecture without making up the time; also to have my Horse, if he wants to ride a mile or two in an Evening a few times. N. B. I had Sent by Mr. *Daniel Willard* to *Joshua Willard* of *Grafton*; and therefore can't Settle the Agreement till I hear from and have done with him. *Jonathan* engages not to let himself to any body else, till he hears from me' (February 19, 1773).
- 1774 Ware, Asa. Age: 22. Marital status: single; marr. December 27, 1779. Terms: 'At Eve came *Asa Ware* from *Needham* to live with me Six Months for 78 £ old Tenor or if after a Months Tryal he behaves and works well and deserves it, 80 £ of like Money' (April 12, 1774).
- 1774-75 Ware, Asa. Terms: 'At Eve I agree with *Asa Ware* to live with me Still. He thinks he made up the time of the first Agreement, the 17th of October. So that he now begins again on Oct. 18 and is to continue to serve me—Six Months: for which I am to give him fifty pounds old tenor So that for the whole year (if we live to finish it) he is to have £ 130 old tenor' (November 5, 1774).
- 1775 Warrin, Aaron. Age: 17. Marital status: single. Terms: 'In the morn- ing walked up to *Lt. [Bakers?]* to Speak with Aaron Warrin, son of Deacon *Jonas Warrin* of *Upton*. Agreed with him to live with me and do my work six months for 75 £ old Tenor. He begins to Day—and I am to let him have a few Things out of my sons Shop pritty Soon; also Some Money once in a while, if he shall need it (when he has earned it) and he is not to disappoint me' (April 28, 1775).
- 1776 Chamberlin, Nathaniel. Age: unknown. Marital status: married. Terms: 'Agreed with *Nathaniel Chamberlin* to live with me six Months to do my Work on the Place for 11 £ to begin the First of April next; but has Liberty to lodge at Mr. *Moses Nurse's*, where his Wife and Children are: agreed that he must attend my Bus'ness in fowl weather as well as fair, and that he be here in the Evening if I want a small Chore to be done' (March 19, 1776). 'Agreed further with *Nat Chamberlin*, that on Consideration of his going home on Saturday Nights and tarrying at home over the sabbath, and that his wife will wash and mend for him, I shall allow him 13/4 more than the 11 £ which I before engaged to him for 6 Months—and that he must begin next Monday Morning' (March 26, 1776).
- *1778 Harback, Henry. Age: unknown. Marital status: unknown. Terms: '*Henry Harback* comes and offers to let himself but asks me sixty

pounds Lawful Money for six Months—an hundred pounds if he should live a Year. Terms too high for me, so that he leaves me' (March 26, 1778).

- *1779 Warren, Moses. *Age*: 18. *Marital status*: single. *Terms*: 'In the evening came Moses Warren to let himself to me for six months, and asks an hundred pounds lawful money for that term. I defer giving him an answer till next Monday' (February 24, 1779). 'N. B. Moses Warren was released from serving me this season' (March 1, 1779). Parkman spoke with Isaac Parker concerning his brother Ephraim (February 25, 1779), who came to work for Parkman on March 3.
- 1779 Parker, Ephraim. *Age*: 21. *Marital status*: single. *Terms*: At the end of Parker's service, Parkman paid him 'my Principal Oxen for seven months of his work' (November 25, 1779) and sixty pounds for the last two months (November 27, 1779).
- *1780 Crosby, Ebenezer. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: unknown. *Terms*: 'Mr. Crosby insists for Cloths to pay for His Labour; which I not being able to engage him, he leaves me' (April 11, 1780).
- *1780 Hopkins, James. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: unknown. *Terms*: 'N. B. James Hopkins of Mansfield came to let himself, and he lodged here. I have made him the best Offer I could' (April 24, 1780). Hopkins left after four days (April 28, 1780).
- 1781 Moulton, John. *Age*: unknown. *Marital status*: single. *Terms*: 'A Youngster, whose name is *John Moulton* has come to work here; procured by Mr. *Brigham*, goes to plowing in the West part of the Mid field' (April 12, 1781). 'John Moultons Time is out at Eve' (October 20, 1781).
- 1781-82 Bowman, Benjamin. *Age*: 21. *Marital status*: single; marr. November 15, 1786. *Terms*: 'Benjamin Bowman says he would live here on the following Terms, He will take Care of my Cattle and cutt my Wood etc. if he may board here, and learn to write and cypher' (December 6, 1781). Bowman stayed until February 28, 1782.

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