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**INVENTORY
OF
TOWN AND CITY ARCHIVES
OF
MASSACHUSETTS**



**NO. 10 MIDDLESEX COUNTY
VOL. V AYER**

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

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THE HISTORICAL RECORDS SURVEY
DIVISION OF PROFESSIONAL AND SERVICE PROJECTS
WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION**



**THE HISTORICAL RECORDS SURVEY
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
1941**

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OF MASSACHUSETTS



No. 10 Middlesex County

Vol. V. Ayer

Prepared by
The Historical Records Survey
Division of Community Service Programs
Work Projects Administration

* * * * *

The Historical Records Survey
Boston, Massachusetts
1941

The Historical Records Survey Program

Sargent B. Child,
Carl J. Wennerblad,

Aron S. Gilmartin,

National Director
State Supervisor of Research and
Records Programs in Massachusetts
State Supervisor of the Historical
Records Survey in Massachusetts

Division of Community Service Programs

Florence Kerr,
Robert Y. Phillips,
Harold G. Dunney,

Assistant Commissioner
Regional Supervisor
State Director

WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION

Howard O. Hunter,
John J. McDonough,
Denis W. Delaney,

Acting Commissioner
Regional Director
State Administrator

SPONSOR OF THE HISTORICAL RECORDS SURVEY PROJECT IN MASSACHUSETTS

Frederic W. Cook,

Secretary of the Commonwealth

PREFACE

By authority of a Presidential Letter, the Historical Records Survey was established in January, 1936, under the national direction of Dr. Luther H. Evans, as a federally sponsored project of the Work Projects Administration. Since August 31, 1939, the sponsorship of the Massachusetts unit of the survey has been undertaken by Frederic W. Cook, Secretary of the Commonwealth. Since March, 1940 the individual state projects of the Historical Records Survey have been under the national direction of Sargent B. Child, who, as field representative of Dr. Evans, had had technical supervision of the work of the survey in New England from its inception. The present writer has been in direct charge of the project in Massachusetts from August 1936 to September 1940 when he was succeeded by Aron S. Gilmartin.

The purpose of the project is to survey, preserve and render accessible historical source materials of all kinds. Its work has fallen naturally into the following main divisions: public records, private manuscripts, church records, early American imprints, historical portraits and newspapers. Practically all historical material falls under one or another of these divisions. In bringing this material under control certain techniques have been found practicable, depending on the nature of the subject matter, and using variously the methods of the inventory, the guide, the calendar, the check list or the index in the publication of the result. For public records, church records and portraits, the method of the inventory has worked best; for historical manuscripts, the guide or, in rare cases where the material was of unusual importance, the calendar; for imprints, the check list; for newspaper and court records, the index; and so on.

The actual work of gathering information concerning historical materials at their place of storage or custody has in most cases been preceded by a most necessary and, for both the custodian and posterity, important task, that of putting records in order; of cleaning, dusting, re-filing, and treating them; and, in short, doing everything possible to ensure their preservation. This function of the project, often performed by its workers under almost indescribable conditions of dust, filth, dampness, poor ventilation, and even vermin may well be regarded by future generations as a most important contribution of the survey.

Scarcely less important, however, are the editorial processes to which all field information must be subjected before publication. Here gaps and inadequacies are spotted, inconsistencies reconciled, and order brought out of chaos. In the field of public records it has been found necessary not only to sketch briefly the history of the county or town and its government but also to preface the inventory of each subordinate office or institution with an outline of its development, based upon its own records or upon statutory or other sources. In the inventories of

Preface

church records, similarly, the preparation of the history of each church constitutes a task equally arduous with that of locating and listing its records. In Massachusetts two broader works have also been undertaken. The general historical background, statutory origin and functioning of county, city, or town offices have been studied with a view to providing satisfactory accounts of the development of county and municipal government generally. These latter undertakings are now happily nearing completion.

The inventory of the town archives of Ayer is the fifth in the series of such inventories covering the towns of Middlesex County. A full list of publications of the survey to date appears after the index at the end of this book.

The Survey is indebted to the town officials of Ayer for their cooperation and to the Secretary of the Commonwealth, Frederic W. Cook, without whose sponsorship this project would not be possible.

Aron S. Gilmartin
State Supervisor of Historical
Records Survey

FOREWORD

The Inventory of the Town and City Archives of Massachusetts is one of a number of bibliographies of historical materials prepared throughout the United States by workers on the Historical Records Survey of the Work Projects Administration. The publication herewith presented, an inventory of the Archives of Ayer in Middlesex County, is volume V of number 10 of the Massachusetts series.

The Historical Records Survey was undertaken in the winter of 1935-36 for the purpose of providing useful employment to needy unemployed historians, lawyers, teachers, and research and clerical workers. In carrying out this objective, the project was organized to compile inventories of historical materials, particularly the unpublished government documents and records which are basic in the administration of local government, and which provide invaluable data for students of political, economic, and social history. The archival guide herewith presented is intended to meet the requirements of day-to-day administration by town officials, and also the needs of lawyers, business men and other citizens who require facts from the public records for the proper conduct of their affairs. The volume is so designed that it can be used by the historian in his research in unprinted sources in the same way he uses the library card catalogue for printed sources.

The inventories produced by the Historical Records Survey attempt to do more than give merely a list of records--they attempt further to sketch in the historical background of the county or other unit of government, and to describe precisely and in detail the organization and functions of the government agencies whose records they list. The county, town, and city inventories for the entire country will, when completed, constitute an encyclopedia of local government as well as bibliography of local archives.

The successful conclusion of the work of the Historical Records Survey, even in a single town, would not be possible without the support of public officials, historical and legal specialists, and many other groups in the community. Their cooperation is gratefully acknowledged.

The Survey directed by Luther H. Evans from its inception in January 1936 to March 1, 1940 when he was succeeded by Sargent B. Child formerly National Field Supervisor. It operates as a nation-wide project in the Division of Professional and Service Projects, of which Mrs. Florence Kerr, Assistant Commissioner, is in charge.

Howard O. Hunter
Acting Commissioner of Work
Projects Administration

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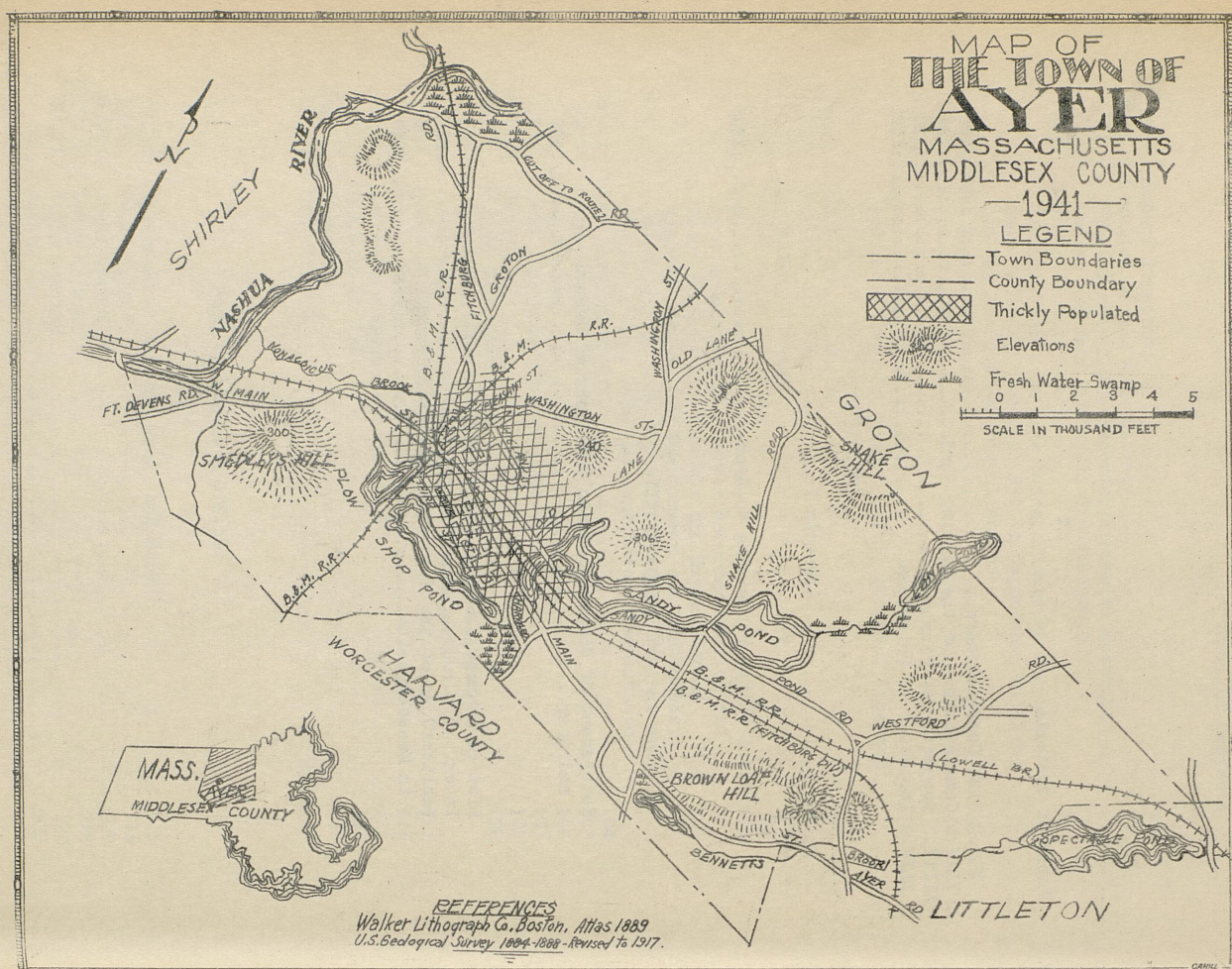
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PART A. AYER AND ITS RECORD SYSTEM

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Ayer, one of the largest towns in its section of northern Middlesex County,¹ is an important farming and commercial center 36.1 miles northwest of Boston. It is situated on the Nashua River and the Boston and Maine Railroad,² is partly occupied by Camp Devens and in 1935 had a population of 3,681.³ The corporate town has existed only since 1871, when the General Court set it apart from Groton and Shirley,⁴ but its history dates back to one of the earliest Massachusetts land grants. It was known as Groton Junction after the advent of the railroads in the 1840's,⁵ as South Groton before this,⁶ and occupies the site that was once the Indian village of Nonacoiacus.⁷

The settlement of the area that later included Ayer began after the General Court, on May 23, 1665, ruled that:

There being a petition pferd by Mr. Dean Winthrop, Mr. Tho. Hinkley and diuers others for a plantation vpon the riuer that runs from Nashaway into Merimacke, called Petawage, & another from some inhabitnats of Concord, for a plantation in the same place, to both of which the court returned this answer: that the court thinks meet to grant to the petitioners eyght miles square . . . which henceforth shall be called Groaten. . . .⁸

A map published later showed this grant to have included what became the towns of Shirley, Groton, Pepperell, and Ayer, and parts of Harvard, Dunstable, Littleton and Westford. A tip of it extended into New Hampshire.⁹

More directly connected with the history of Ayer was the grant made in 1659 to Major Simon Willard "conteyning fiue hundred acres, scituate, lying and being, for the most part, on the east side of the Groaten River, betwixt the plantation graunted to the inhabitants of Lancaster, and the now inhabitants of Groton, at the place which is called by the Indians Nanajcoyijcus. . . ."¹⁰ Major Willard, a prominent figure in early Massachusetts affairs, is believed to have occupied this property from about 1671 to 1676; one of the important Groton garrisons was located on

1. Massachusetts Secretary of State, Decennial Census 1935, pp. 13, 14 hereafter cited as Massachusetts Census, 1935.

2. Atlas of Middlesex County, p. 269.

3. Massachusetts Census, 1935, p. 14.

4. Acts, 1871, ch. 23.

5. Atlas of Middlesex County, p. 269.

6. Groton, Mass., Reports of Town Officers, 1868, p. 15; hereafter cited as Groton Reports.

7. Col. Rec. IV, 411, 142.

8. Ibid., III, 388.

9. Samuel A. Green, M. D., The Boundary Lines of Groton, map at beginning of volume.

10. Col. Rec., IV, part 1, pp. 411, 412.

his land.¹ A number of other settlers lived in the section during the early days, some perhaps before the Willard grant was made. Included among these were Daniel Pearse, who settled between Sandy Pond and Ridge Hill; John Page, Jr., builder of the first mill dam in the vicinity, Cornelius Church, on whose farm one of the garrisons was situated, and Simon Stone, later important in Groton town affairs.²

Although the Groton area, including the Nonaicoiacus settlement, suffered serious setbacks at the hands of the Indians (Major Willard's garrison was one of those completely wiped out)³ the settlers made certain definite progress. On "the twelfth day of the tenth month in the year 1677" a meeting of Groton landholders was held in Concord, and it was voted that "we return to Groton in the Spring and begin to repair our habitations".⁴ By 1680-81 there were 73 residents listed in the Groton records;⁵ a sawmill was erected at Stony Brook about 1683,⁶ and it is believed that there was a road that ran to Lancaster along the Nashua River through the Nonaicoiacus settlement,⁷ and later another that led from Groton to the corn mill of Jonas Prescott in the area that became Harvard.⁸ About a century after the settlement of Groton a highway was laid out from Lunenburg to Littleton;⁹ a sawmill and grist mill was built on the old Willard property around 1778.¹⁰

With its relatively small population and its distance from the center of Groton town life, the Nonaicoiacus area did not enjoy all of the benefits received by other parts of the town. One of the chief causes for complaint was the matter of inadequate school facilities. In 1741 Groton had voted to keep the school in five places, one of them presumably in the Ayer section;¹¹ in 1745, however, it was voted that no school would be held over two miles away.¹² By 1758 the grammar school was being held in "the south part of the town" but only for a part of the school term.¹³ One of the Groton school districts, Number Five, was situated in the Sandy Pond section in 1792;¹⁴ in 1805 a set of "Bye Laws of Groton Relative

1. The Boundary Lines of Groton, pp. 32, 63. See also sketch on Ayer in A History of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, D. Hamilton Hurd, ed., II, 642.

2. Ibid., II, 642, 644.

3. Ibid., p. 675

4. Samuel Abbott Green, ed., The Early Records of Groton, Mass., pp. 52, 53; hereafter cited as Early Groton Records.

5. Ibid., p. 70.

6. Hurd, op. cit., II, 642.

7. Ibid. See also Early Groton Records, p. 32.

8. Hurd, op. cit., II, 652, 653.

9. Ibid., p. 653.

10. Ibid., p. 642.

11. Ibid., p. 661.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

to Schools" called for twelve school districts, Districts 11 and 12 in South Groton.¹ Prudential school committees were set up to conduct certain of the school affairs of these districts;² the matter of a high school remained unsettled and was one of the factors probably involved in Ayer's plea for separation later.³ "From 1860 to 1871 there was seldom a town meeting at Groton in which there was not some kind of an appeal for better school conditions at Groton Junction", one writer stated.⁴

The South Groton section also sought some other town improvements which were slow to materialize. For a number of years its residents fought to secure a fire house and equipment;⁵ an expense entry was shown in the Groton Town Reports in 1862 for building the fire house at South Groton, the second floor of which later housed a school.⁶ As early as 1843 a committee had been appointed to consider the establishment of ten-volume libraries in the school districts, but this effort failed,⁷ as did a subsequent one two decades later, when it was proposed that the Groton town meeting "see if the town will allow a part of its library to be kept at Groton Junction".⁸ Private funds during this period maintained a few books at the Junction, kept at first in a schoolhouse, later in a store, then in the home of a resident,⁹ but up to the time of Ayer's incorporation the parent community had provided Groton Junction with no library facilities.

The part that the South section of Groton played in the Indian wars was probably duplicated to a large extent in the Revolution; although available historical material does not distinguish clearly between the activities of those who lived in Groton proper and those from the Nonacoiacus area. At least one Revolutionary hero, Col. William Prescott, noted for his exploits at Bunker Hill, was claimed by one historian to have been born in the village,¹⁰ but this contention has been disputed.¹¹

From 1800 to 1840 the growth of South Groton was not phenomenal. There were some few industries, a considerable production of farm and dairy goods and the section was an important center on several stage routes.¹² The

1. Ibid., p. 662. Groton School Committee, Bye Laws of Groton Relative to Schools and Instructions of the School Committee, 1805, art. V. Hereafter cited as Groton Schools Bylaws.

2. Groton School Bylaws, 1805, art. V.

3. Hurd, op. cit., II, 663.

4. Ibid.

5. Groton Reports, 1859, p. 11.

6. Ibid., 1862, pp. 3, 4; see also Hurd, op. cit., II, 662.

7. Ibid., II, 663.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p. 664.

10. Drake, Samuel Adams, History of Middlesex County, II, 236.

11. Hurd, op. cit., II, 650.

12. Drake, op. cit., II, 236, 237.

chief crops were barley, corn, hops, potatoes and apples; the industries included an 'oil and batting' mill, lumber, gravestones and a cornmeal mill.¹ A more unusual period of growth began after the coming of the railroads around the middle of the century. South Groton became a connecting point for a number of lines; new businesses were established and a postoffice and railroad station opened.² The first of the railroads to be chartered was the Nashua Railroad, incorporated in 1839 and given permission to build its road to the New Hampshire state line, running through Shirley and Groton along the valley of the Nashua River.³ The Fitchburg Railroad was incorporated in 1842; it built its first tracks to Shirley in 1844 and a second line in 1847.⁴

A number of other lines were given charters by the General Court between 1840 and 1855; some later became parts of other existing lines. Among these were the Groton Branch Railroad in 1844,⁵ the Groton and East Wilton Railroad in 1845⁶ and a road for the transportation of ice, under the direction of the Fitchburg Railroad, in 1853.⁷ The Worcester and Nashua Railroad was incorporated in 1845⁸ and became a part of the Boston and Maine System in 1886;⁹ in the latter year the Stony Brook line, with several others, were consolidated with the Boston and Lowell Company.¹⁰ An atlas published in 1889 showed Ayer as a junction-point for the Boston and Maine's Winthrop Division and two lines of the Fitchburg Railroad.¹¹

With the railroads came a general business and industrial improvement and a heightened necessity for centering more of the Groton town functions in the Junction area. A union railroad station and a postoffice had been opened;¹² a hotel company was incorporated in 1859.¹³ A tannery, which soon became one of the section's leading enterprises, was opened during this period;¹⁴ other concerns to begin business in the growing community were a factory for the manufacture of soap, an iron furnace, and a large plow shop.¹⁵ The population steadily increased; by 1875, when the first State census was made shortly after the incorporation of Ayer, its

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1. Ibid.
 2. Hurd, op. cit., II, 661.
 3. Acts, 1839, ch. 84.
 4. Ibid., ch. 143.
 5. Ibid., 1844, ch. 137.
 6. Ibid., 1845, ch. 225.
 7. Ibid., 1853, ch. 189.
 8. Ibid., 1845, ch. 102.
 9. Ibid., 1886, ch. 96.
 10. Ibid., ch. 121.
 11. Atlas of Middlesex County, p. 269.
 12. Ibid., see also Hurd, op. cit., II, 660, 661.
 13. Acts, 1859, ch. 151.
 14. Hurd, op. cit., II, 652-675.
 15. Ibid.

population was almost as large as that of Groton; it had 1,872 people as against 1,908 for the older town.¹ While no great improvements appear to have been made to the educational facilities in the Junction up to the time of separation, there were at least eight teachers employed there at one time,² and the section had, in addition, its own lockup, armory, fire house and engine, and liquor agent.³ In one year 150 tramps and paupers had been cared for in the Junction;⁴ to some extent the Junction residents participated in some of the town governmental affairs of Groton.⁵

The desire of residents of the Junction to be set off into a separate community had gained in popularity by 1855. That year an organization called the South Groton Literary Society arranged a debate on the question, following which a committee was appointed to investigate the possibilities of incorporation.⁶ Newspaper editorials advocating separation from Groton appeared from time to time;⁷ in 1870 a petition, dated Nov. 10, was presented to the General Court stating that "We, the undersigned legal voters of Groton, Shirley and Littleton . . . represent that public exigency requires that we . . . be incorporated into a town by the name of Groton Junction. . . ."⁸ A town meeting held in January of the following year in Groton voted not to oppose the separation and appointed a committee of citizens to act with the selectmen in considering it.⁹ A meeting of the Junction residents was held later and several persons appointed to make a census of the area proposed for the incorporation.¹⁰ At a later meeting in Groton it was again voted to offer no opposition.¹¹ Hearings on the separation were held before the Legislative Committee on Towns early in January,¹² the General Court ruled on Feb. 14th that the section would henceforth be incorporated into a town called Ayer. The conditions generally prevalent at the time were imposed on the new town: that it share the existing public debts of Groton and Shirley, that a settlement be made with the older towns concerning their corporate property situated within the Ayer limits, that tax arrears be paid and that proper care be provided for paupers.¹³

1. Massachusetts Chief of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor, Census of Massachusetts, 1875, I, 5, 21, 22.

2. Groton Reports, 1870, pp. 7, 8.

3. Ibid., 1859, p. 13; 1862, pp. 3, 11, 12; 1866, p. 13.

4. Ibid., 1870, p. 19.

5. Ibid., pp. 7-19 passim.

6. Hurd, op. cit., II, 684.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., p. 685.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. Acts, 1871, ch. 23.

During the period of agitation for separation one Dr. James C. Ayer of Lowell, one of the first men to make a large fortune from the sale of patent medicines, had been interested in the village and its needs. It was his name that appeared in the town's charter, although the first suggestion had been to keep the name of Groton Junction. Shortly after the incorporation he made a large donation that was eventually used for town improvements.¹ Originally this bequest had been intended to provide medals for school children and some other educational purposes; in view of the immediate need of better roads, sidewalks, a town hall and various town facilities, the donor later changed the nature of the gift.² Officers for the new town were elected and appointed at one of the sessions of the first town meeting.³ A town hall was begun the following year.⁴ Later a poor-house was built,⁵ and several new schools.⁶

The town suffered a serious setback on April 13, 1872, when a disastrous fire destroyed several of its most important buildings, including a church, a hotel, and the enginehouse, and partially destroyed the library. Many families were made homeless.⁷ The fire caused an immediate effort to be made to obtain a water system for protection and for domestic use. Surveys were made⁸ and a committee later chosen to petition the General Court for permission to establish such a system.⁹ The Court acted favorably on this petition the following year.¹⁰ When finished the system had a collecting well at what was called the Balch Meadow, 25 feet in diameter and 25 feet deep; 4.8 miles of pipe were laid and a reservoir built at the site of the well, using water-power at first for its motive force.¹¹ The system served an average daily consumption of 55,000 gallons at first,¹² more than double this amount fifteen years later.¹³ Subsequent additions to the system gave it 28 pipe wells with an estimated 500,000 gallons extra capacity in 1906,¹⁴ and a 45-foot standpipe 50 feet high in 1912. The latter addition gave the town a higher pressure.¹⁵

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1. Town Records, I, 31, 32, see entry 35.
 2. Ibid., pp. 31, 34, 51, 89, 90.
 3. Ibid., p. 8.
 4. Ibid., pp. 89, 90.
 5. Ibid., p. 291.
 6. Ibid., pp. 126, 521.
 7. Hurd, op. cit., II, 660.
 8. Town Records, I, 89, 90, see entry 35.
 9. Annual Reports, 1888, water committee report, p. 3, see entry 2.
 10. Acts, 1877, ch. 152; Town Records, I, 383-385, see entry 35.
 11. Annual Reports, 1888, water committee report, pp. 4-13, see entry 2.
 12. Ibid., 1906, water committee report, p. 5.
 13. Ibid.
 14. Ibid., 1907, water committee report, pp. 3-10.
 15. Ibid., 1912, pp. 117, 118, 121.

By the beginning of the present century the new town had made several notable improvements in its management and operation. Bylaws adopted in 1882 had created a board of health;¹ the public library which had been established in 1871 was incorporated in 1894 and it moved into a building of its own.² Two park sites had been donated for the use of the citizens and a board of park commissioners elected for their supervision.³ The population of Ayer had grown faster than that of most surrounding towns: in 1900 it was 2,446.⁴ Two banks had been chartered, street car transportation had been authorized by the General Court⁵ and at least one effort had been made to secure a municipal system of supply of electricity.⁶ In addition to the construction of new schools, the teaching personnel had been enlarged and the town had been made a part of a union superintendency district.⁷ Improvement of the streets had reached the point that a special committee reported in 1898 that the town had seven miles of streets, five miles of them gravel surfaced, and three miles of concrete sidewalks.⁸ Electric lights began replacing the kerosene lamps in the streets in 1901⁹ (there were over a hundred of them in 1904).¹⁰ The fire, police and other departments had become larger and more efficient,¹¹ and in 1901 it was reported that the town was well out of current debt and had a considerable credit balance.¹²

Ayer entered upon another period of accelerated development in 1917, after the outbreak of the World War in Europe and after the United States Government had opened Camp Devens. Miles of roads were built or improved and housing and training facilities at the camp installed to care for thousands of men. The camp was largely situated in Ayer; work on it began in June, 1917, and at one time there were approximately 10,000 laborers employed. There was a marked upturn in the business transacted in Ayer, both by the local concerns and by merchants from Boston and other cities who had come after the establishment of the camp.¹³ Some Ayer governmental functions, like the board of health and the police department, had to be greatly expanded to care for the immense additional population.¹⁴ In these two departments particularly Federal aid was given to the town by the camp;¹⁵

1. Ibid., pp. 262, 265.

2. Ibid., pp. 14, 15, 560.

3. Ibid., pp. 586, 716, 719.

4. Massachusetts, Chief of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor, Census of 1905, I, 811.

5. Acts, 1901, ch. 272; Hurd, op. cit., II, 661; see also Acts, 1875, ch. 85.

6. Town Records, I, 663, see entry 35.

7. Ibid., p. 423.

8. Annual Reports, 1898, report of special committee, p. 4, see entry 2.

9. Ibid., 1901, p. 20.

10. Ibid., 1904, p. 20.

11. Ibid., 1901, pp. 46, 47; 1902, pp. 2, 3, 4.

12. Ibid., 1901, p. 38.

13. Ibid., 1917, p. 138.

14. Ibid., pp. 111, 137; 1918, p. 172.

15. Ibid., 1916, p. 98; 1918, p. 172.

in general, however, the cost of operating the town was higher the year after the opening of the camp than it had ever been.¹

The period of economic crisis which began in 1929 and continued through the hurricane of 1938 has brought Ayer, like most other communities, certain serious problems, among them mounting costs of town government and widespread unemployment. The town has received material aid in the solution of many of these problems through the CWA, ERA, WPA and other Federal agencies which have provided work for the jobless, loans to farmers, house owners and business men, foodstuffs and clothing for needy families and numerous other benefits. Through these projects the labor has been provided for many general improvements in town buildings, parks, schools, etc. which otherwise might have proven a drain on the town's appropriations.² The Federal programs have assisted in making old-age and unemployment payments;³ projects have provided employment for women⁴ and others, the Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration, have provided work and instruction for the youth.⁵

With the return of a large occupancy at Camp Devens virtually assured early in 1941 and the certain boost it will make in Ayer's labor and industry, its excellent transportation facilities, its proximity to tide-water at Boston and the stability of its town government, Ayer appears to be one of those Massachusetts towns in a strategic position for immediate future progress.⁶

1. Ibid., 1918, pp. 145, 146.

2. Ibid., 1933, p. 36; 1934, p. 79; 1936, p. 89; 1937, p. 61.

3. Ibid., 1939, p. 43.

4. Ibid., 1934, p. 79.

5. Ibid., 1939, p. 67.

6. The Boston Herald, Dec. 4, 1940. According to an article in this issue, new barracks at the camp were being completed daily and 2,000 draftees could be received each three or four days in the following January. With some men from various parts of New England already at the camp, plans were being made for the reception of a total of at least 9,000 during the first month of 1941.

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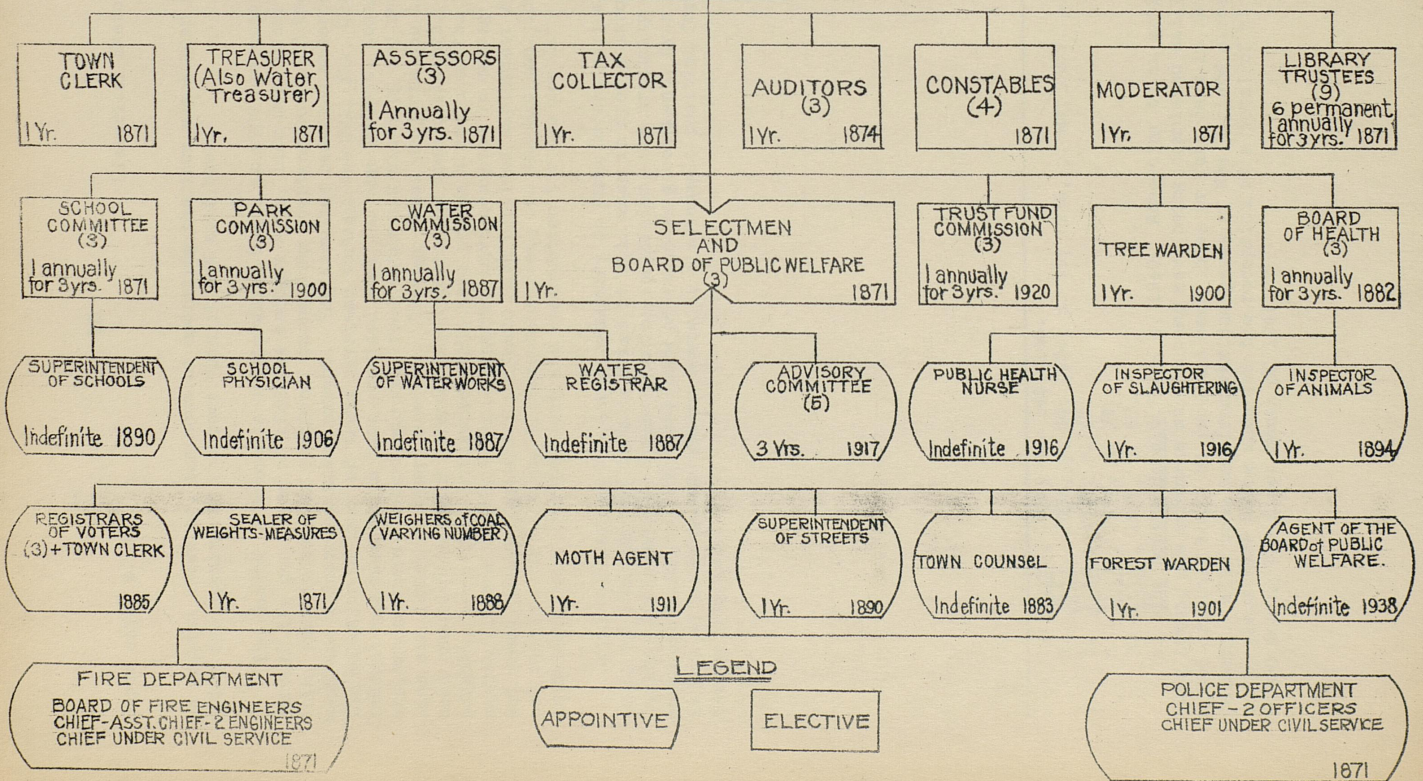
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CHART OF TOWN GOVERNMENT - AYER - 1941

ELECTORATE



GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND ITS RECORDS SYSTEM

Governmental Organization

Seventeen major departments provide Ayer with a comparatively efficient town government in the essential fields of public health and welfare, the protection of lives and property, education and recreation, public utilities, and town management and finance. Some 39 elected officers were functioning in these departments in 1939; in addition to these officials there were a number of appointed officers, employed by the selectmen or by certain town departments. Included in the number were ten elected and three appointed boards of three or more members each.¹

To care for the public health and welfare of the community there was a board of health of three members, one elected annually and each member serving a three-year term, and a board of public welfare.² The members of the latter board have been the selectmen, with few exceptions, since the incorporation of the town.³ A board of three fire engineers and three police officers, both departments filled by appointment, provide protection for the lives and property of Ayer residents.⁴ Four constables, more directly concerned with affairs of general town management, are elected each year.⁵ To care for the educational and recreational needs of the town, there is a school committee of three members,⁶ and a board of nine trustees of the public library (only three of which are elected by the town)⁷ and three park commissioners.⁸ Three water commissioners supervise the operation of the town's one municipal utility, the water system.⁹

Several boards function in connection with town management and finance. Chief of these is the board of three selectmen, elected annually and serving as the appointing agents for a number of town officers. The selectmen exercise control over the roads through a superintendent of streets: they appoint the police and fire department personnel, the forest fire warden, the local superintendent of moth work (for the control of brown-tail and gypsy moths and other tree pests), a board of three registrars, a sealer of weights and measures, public weighers (usually referred to as weighers of coal), and some other officers. The selectmen also serve as a recommending and certifying body for WPA employment and projects and appoint counsel for

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1. Annual Reports, 1939, pp. 3-150 passim, see entry 2.
 2. Ibid., p. 6.
 3. Ibid., p. 3; Town Records, I, 8; II, 615; IV, 22, see entry 35.
 4. Annual Reports, 1939, pp. 100, 108.
 5. Ibid., pp. 3-6.
 6. Ibid.
 7. Ibid.
 8. Ibid.
 9. Ibid.

the town's legal affairs. An advisory board of five members is appointed by the selectmen to investigate and consider all requests for departmental appropriations.¹ Other officers in this branch of town government are the board of three auditors, three assessors, a tax collector, a town clerk, and a treasurer.² A board of three commissioners directs the spending of the income from two trust funds in possession of the town.³

A number of governmental functions of the parent town of Groton were largely centered in the section that later became Ayer for many years before the incorporation of the latter community. In these years, when the section was known as South Groton and Groton Junction there were prudential school committees as early as 1828; these committees were empowered to make certain physical improvements to their school buildings and to make other recommendations and expenditures for their school districts.⁴ At their request and at least partially under their direction various sums were spent for the building and operation of the schools;⁵ at one time these schools had eight teachers,⁶ and for some time prior to Ayer's incorporation there had been almost constant agitation for a public library and a high school in the Junction.⁷ During this period the Junction had its own lockup, engine-house, fire force and armory.⁸ The earlier Groton annual reports show numerous expenditures for the care of paupers and transients in the Junction, the building and upkeep of roads, culverts, bridges, and miscellaneous items.⁹ A liquor agent at the Junction made annual reports to the Groton selectmen.¹⁰ Such was the nature and condition of town property located in the South Groton area that at the time of separation Ayer agreed to pay its parent community a large cash sum in settlement.¹¹ A smaller amount was paid to the town of Shirley.¹²

With a few exceptions, the first town meeting elected a slate of officers that functioned in nearly every necessary department common to towns at that period. Three selectmen were elected to serve also as overseers of the poor, and, at first, as also the assessors. A school committee of three was elected by the same method and for the same length of tenure still followed today. Other officers elected at the 1871 meeting were a clerk, treasurer, tax collector (for a number of years he was the person submitting

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1. Ibid., pp. 42-150 passim.
 2. Ibid., pp. 3-5.
 3. Ibid., p. 89.
 4. Groton School Bylaws, 1828, art. I.
 5. Ibid., 1837, art. VII; Groton Reports, 1860, p. 11.
 6. Ibid., 1870, pp. 7, 8.
 7. Hurd, op. cit., II, 642.
 8. Groton Reports, 1862, pp. 3, 12; 1866, p. 13.
 9. Ibid., 1859, p. 4; 1860, pp. 3, 11; 1870, p. 15.
 10. Ibid., 1859, p. 3; 1860, p. 12.
 11. Ibid., 1872, p. 22.
 12. Annual Reports, 1872 (unfolioed), see entry 2.

the lowest bid for the collection), three trustees of a \$10,500 fund donated to the town, three trustees for the public library established that year, three surveyors of highways, four surveyors of lumber, two constables, two field drivers, and two fence viewers. A pound keeper and a sealer of weights and measures were appointed by the selectmen.¹ Two regular police officers, one special officer, and two firewards were appointed.² The town clerk served as the registrar of voters until the creation of a board of registrars some years later.³

The town meeting form of procedure was adopted the first year and has been used to the present time.⁴ An act of the General Court shortly afterward placed Ayer in the 31st Representative District with Groton and Pepperell,⁵ and subsequent action the next year established the First District Court of Northern Middlesex, to meet in Ayer. Groton, Pepperell, Townsend, Ashby, Shirley, Westford, Littleton, Boxboro, and Ayer made up the district.⁶

A total of \$9,609.75 was raised by taxation toward town expenses the first year, of which \$3,000 was spent for schools, \$500 for roads, and \$3,500 for town incidentals.⁷ A building program was undertaken which eventually added new bridges,⁸ a new school building,⁹ reservoirs for fire protection on several streets,¹⁰ and other improvements. An agreement was reached with Groton and Shirley concerning obligations growing out of the separation of Ayer, \$13,169¹¹ of which was paid to Groton in 1873.¹¹ A movement to build a town house was begun in 1872.¹²

Borrowing by the new town was heavy during its first years. In 1876 there was a total of over \$40,000 in outstanding notes, although Groton had been paid its separation settlement.¹³ At the time of the separation the Groton tax rate had been \$10 per \$1,000 of property valuation;¹⁴ this low rate was not maintained by Ayer. For the years 1873-74 the latter town's rate was \$15 per \$1,000,¹⁵ although this rate was considerably

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1. Town Records, I, p. 8 et seq., see entry 35.
 2. Ibid., p. 19; Annual Reports, 1876, pp. 16, 17, see entry 2.
 3. Ibid., p. 7; Acts, 1884, ch. 298, sec. 14.
 4. Town Records, I, p. 2 et seq., see entry 35; Annual Reports, 1939, pp. 6-20, see entry 2.
 5. Acts, 1871, ch. 317, secs. 1, 2.
 6. Ibid., 1872, ch. 269.
 7. Annual Reports, 1872 (unfolioed), see entry 2.
 8. Ibid.
 9. Ibid., 1874, (unfolioed).
 10. Ibid., 1873, (unfolioed).
 11. Ibid., 1874, (unfolioed).
 12. Town Records, I, 89, 90, see entry 35.
 13. Annual Reports, 1876, p. 4, see entry 2.
 14. Groton Reports, 1872, p. 6.
 15. Annual Reports 1874 (unfolioed), see entry 2.

reduced later.¹ Taxes were levied on 545 ratable polls in 1875,² a number greater than the total of polls in Groton;³ six years later approximately \$1,000,000 of personal property and real estate was cited in the tax returns.⁴

A number of fires, at least one of them bringing widespread disaster, and a general need of adequate water supply caused the town to make a survey for a municipal water system in 1880.⁵ A committee was appointed in 1886 to petition the General Court for permission to establish the system,⁶ it was granted on April 5, 1887. The "Act to Supply the Town of Ayer with Pure Water" provided that a board of three water commissioners be set up, this board to exercise all powers granted to the town by the water act subject to vote of the town. The act made the commissioners trustees of the sinking fund to be created to defray costs of constructing the system. The town was permitted to take water from Sandy Pond or other sources in Ayer and to issue notes or bonds to the extent of \$75,000.⁷ The commissioners reported the following year that an engineer had been employed, work begun on the system, and that some premises were already being piped. A reservoir had been built and was in operation.⁸ Later improvements to the system gave it additional sources of supply⁹ and a higher pressure than was at first provided.¹⁰

The town did not receive a poor farm when it was separated. Ayer's poor were cared for at first in the homes of citizens, the costs met by town appropriation.¹¹ A committee of four persons was appointed in 1883 to erect a suitable building for the care of the poor at a cost not to exceed \$5,000.¹² Two years later the overseers of the poor reported that the poor farm had been put in operation and that a superintendent had been engaged.¹³ Produce raised at the poor farm was later sold to help defray the cost of operation of the institution¹⁴ and for a number of years the labor of the inmates was used on the streets and highways.¹⁵ The decreasing number of inmates at the farm in more recent years led to a movement to sell it, but this action was not taken because of the nature of the bequest that gave the town the land on which the poorhouse is situated.¹⁶

1. Ibid., 1879, p. 4.

2. Census of Mass., 1875, I, 13.

3. Ibid., p. 14.

4. Annual Reports, 1881, p. 4, see entry 2.

5. Ibid., 1888, water committee report, p. 3.

6. Town Records, I, 359, see entry 35.

7. Acts, 1887, ch. 152, secs. 1-10.

8. Annual Reports, 1888, water committee report, pp. 3-18, see entry 2.

9. Acts, 1906, ch. 424; Annual Reports, 1929, p. 27, see entry 2.

10. Ibid., 1912, p. 83.

11. Ibid., 1872 (unfolioed).

12. Town Records, I, 291, see entry 35.

13. Annual Reports, 1885, pp. 7-32, see entry 2.

14. Ibid., 1893, pp. 7, 8, 17; 1907, p. 7.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., 1925, pp. 102-106.

During the first decade after the incorporation of the town certain sums were spent for medical care of presumably needy persons, usually under the direction of the overseers of the poor.¹ The bylaws of the town, submitted by a committee in 1881, called for the creation of a board of health of five members.² The overseers sometimes served as members of this board.³ In 1895 the membership of the board of health was fixed at three, one to be elected at each annual meeting and each member to serve for three years.⁴ This method of election has remained unchanged.⁵ Since 1889 the board has included yearly reports of its work in the annual reports of town officers. It has appointed an agent most years since 1893;⁶ some of its other appointments have been inspectors of animals,⁷ plumbing,⁸ slaughtering⁹ and milk;¹⁰ public health nurses¹¹ and physicians.¹² The town contributes to the support of the sanatorium operated for the Middlesex County Tuberculosis District.¹³ In 1914 it deeded a tract of land to be used for the erection of a hospital in Ayer¹⁴ and for several years has made an annual appropriation to maintain a bed in it for the use of Ayer residents.¹⁵ In 1931 Ayer became a part of the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health, an organization of health boards of fourteen towns, each town represented by three members on a joint board of forty-two. The association employs and directs a personnel which includes milk inspectors, a director of public health, an advisory public health nurse, laboratory technicians, and clerks. These employees act as agents of the local boards in the various towns; a laboratory is maintained in Ayer.¹⁶ In 1937 the association moved into a building of its own, made possible through large donations.¹⁷

Notable additions and improvements were made to the school system after the incorporation of the town. In twenty years the few schools that had

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1. Ibid., 1872, 1873, 1874 (unfolioed).
 2. Town Records, I, 262-276, see entry 35.
 3. Annual Reports, 1887, p. 32; 1890, pp. 44, 45, see entry 2.
 4. Town Records, I, 581, see entry 35.
 5. Annual Reports, 1939, p. 6, see entry 2.
 6. Ibid., 1893, p. 3; 1894, p. 2; 1915, p. 115.
 7. Ibid., 1894, p. 2.
 8. Ibid., 1896, board of health report, p. 4.
 9. Ibid., 1922, p. 75.
 10. Ibid., 1931, p. 142.
 11. Ibid., 1916, p. 120.
 12. Ibid., 1908, p. 26.
 13. Ibid., 1939, p. 197.
 14. Ibid., 1914, p. 28.
 15. Ibid., 1930, pp. 16, 17; 1932, p. 14; 1939, p. 197.
 16. Ibid., 1931, pp. 144-146; 1939, pp. 121-129 incl.
 17. Ibid., 1937, p. 107.

been acquired in the separation from Groton were increased to eleven schools, one high school, one mixed school, four primary and five grammar schools, conducted in four buildings owned by the town and one rented building.¹ A total of 523 children were enrolled in 1891, when the superintendent of schools published his first report to the school committee.² They were taught by twelve teachers.³ The town still lagged behind the state and Middlesex County in its expenditures for education, however; its cost per pupil for 1891 was \$12.81, compared with \$14.85 for the state and \$16.09 for the county.⁴ Several years later, in 1905, Ayer's expenditures was considerably higher, \$18.16, but such had been the general increase throughout the state that Ayer was still 274th out of 353 Massachusetts towns.⁵ As late as 1921 Ayer spent less per pupil for education than Shirley, Pepperell, Littleton, Townsend, Ashby, and Groton, and less than one-half as much as the town of Harvard.⁶

The enrollment of the Ayer schools has not undergone any great changes despite the fact that in one year it accepted 70 of Shirley's high school pupils.⁷ There were 696 pupils enrolled in 1939, 271 of them in the high school grades. The teaching personnel included supervisors of drawing, music and physical education, principals, teachers, and a superintendent.⁸

The town's first fire department was the Colonel Needham Engine Company, which served from 1871 to 1889, when it was disbanded.⁹ One hook-and-ladder company and two hose companies were set up in the latter year.¹⁰ Including volunteer call men, the department at times had from 45 to 55 or more members;¹¹ a set of bylaws adopted by the fire department in 1905 fixed the personnel at three engineers, one forest fireward, and six special fire police, all to be appointed by the selectmen, ten regular and three call men in each of the hose companies. The hook-and-ladder company was allotted fifteen regular and three call men, and each company was permitted to have its own captain.¹² The forest fireward (later called the forest warden) during some years was one of the fire engineers.¹³ The department employed a driver for its motor truck in 1919 and thereafter,¹⁴ and some years has appointed an inspector of petroleum.¹⁵ There are three engineers in the department at present, one of them the chief.¹⁶ The latter

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1. Ibid., 1891, school committee report, pp. 3, 4.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Ibid., 1906, school committee report, p. 18.
 6. Ibid., 1921, pp. 151, 163.
 7. Ibid., 1933, pp. 196, 197.
 8. Ibid., 1939, pp. 187, 188.
 9. Ibid., 1889, p. 35.
 10. Ibid.
 11. Ibid., 1882, p. 10; 1889, p. 35.
 12. Ibid., 1906, p. 52.
 13. Ibid., 1887, p. 34; 1889, p. 45.
 14. Ibid., 1919, pp. 26, 138.
 15. Ibid., 1909, p. 3; 1931, p. 138.
 16. Ibid., 1939, p. 4.

officer serves under civil service regulations.¹ Police protection for the town has been furnished by varying numbers of regular and special officers appointed by the selectmen since 1871.² The records of the selectmen for 1879 referred to one of the police officers as chief;³ reports signed by him appear with the reports of other town officers after 1897.⁴ During some early years the police officers also served as lighters of the street lamps⁵ and enforced the truancy laws,⁶ and in one year the selectmen voted to have the night officer serve also as janitor of the Town Hall.⁷ The chief of police, like the fire chief, is subject to civil service requirements.⁸

Since 1890 the care of bridges, highways, streets, and sidewalks has been supervised by a superintendent of streets, appointed by the selectmen.⁹ Previous to 1890 there were highway surveyors some years¹⁰ and in other years the selectmen authorized certain expenditures on the roads.¹¹ For some time the superintendent of streets was one of the selectmen, the two offices were separated in 1904.¹² Expenditures for roads have been made by town appropriation and by other sums received through the state or the Middlesex County commissioners,¹³ and some expenditures for bridges have been partly borne by the town of Shirley.¹⁴

From 1871 to 1894 the Ayer Public Library was supervised by a board of three library trustees elected by the town.¹⁵ The library was incorporated in 1894 by an act of the General Court and a board of six permanent trustees was established, in addition to three elected trustees. The permanent trustees were first designated by the General Court and since that time have made replacements in their number by vote.¹⁶ The permanent board elects a chairman and other officers and has entrusted to its care two trust funds created for the use of the library. The library receives the bulk of its support from appropriations made by the town.¹⁷

1. Ibid., 1938, p. 12.

2. Town Records, I, 38, 39, see entry 35; Selectmen's Records, I (unfolioed), see entry 1.

3. Ibid.

4. Annual Reports, 1897, pp. 4, 25, 27, see entry 2.

5. Ibid., 1887, p. 14.

6. Ibid., 1911, p. 55.

7. Ibid., 1902, p. 28.

8. Ibid., 1938, p. 12.

9. Ibid., 1890, p. 20.

10. Ibid., 1887, p. 33; 1889, p. 19.

11. Ibid., 1884, p. 16; 1887, p. 14.

12. Ibid., 1904, p. 34.

13. Ibid., 1906, p. 24; Town Records, II, 142, see entry 35.

14. Annual Reports, 1913, pp. 34, 35, see entry 2.

15. Ibid., 1895, library trustees' report, pp. 2-12; Town Records, I, 15, see entry 35.

16. Acts, 1894, ch. 123, secs. 1-4.

17. Annual Reports, 1939, pp. 146, 197, see entry 2.

A board of three park commissioners directs the work and operation of the town's four parks.¹ A "park or commons committee" of three members appears in the town records for 1871;² the present system of electing one commissioner for three years at each annual town meeting has been followed since 1900.³ The warrant for the 1903 town meeting asked that the office of park commissioners be entered on the ballot;⁴ it has appeared with other positions to be filled from that time to the present.⁵

From time to time the town has been the recipient of certain large gifts for education, town operation, and other purposes. One such gift was made in 1871 when Dr. J. C. Ayer gave the town \$10,500. Three persons were elected trustees of this fund.⁶ A second fund was established in 1920, when the will of a former Ayer resident bequeathed \$1,000 to the town, its income to be used to aid the poor not residing at the poor farm or deriving their whole support from the town. A board of three trustees was again elected; for a number of years it was known as the board of trustees of this 1920 fund.⁷ After 1929, when \$15,000 was donated to the town for education, the trustees were called the commissioners of the trust funds. The three members of the commission are elected for three years, one member at each annual meeting.⁸

Improved methods of keeping the town accounts and a closer control over appropriations have been found necessary to keep pace with mounting costs of town operation in recent years. From two to three auditors reported annual inspections of some accounts since 1874;⁹ in 1904 they reported an audit of the books of the treasurer, tax collector, selectmen, and the water committee.¹⁰ Two years later the town meeting voted that in the future the auditors would audit all town accounts each year.¹¹ Another vote in 1908 ordered that the treasurer be bonded,¹² and a revision of the bylaws in 1912 gave him custody of all bills, receipts, etc., except the receipt for his own bond.¹³ An attempt was made to secure the employment of an accountant in 1913, but the motion put before the town meeting was indefinitely tabled.¹⁴ An important change in the method of making appropriations for departmental expenditures

1. Ibid., 1939, p. 6.

2. Town Records, I, 15 to 163 passim, see entry 35.

3. Ibid., p. 716.

4. Annual Reports, 1903, p. 66, see entry 2.

5. Ibid., 1939, p. 6.

6. Town Records, I, pp. 31, 32, see entry 35.

7. Annual Reports, 1920, p. 83, see entry 2.

8. Town Records, II, 662, see entry 35; Annual Reports, 1939, p. 6, see entry 2.

9. Ibid., 1874 (unfolioed); 1881, p. 20.

10. Ibid., 1904, p. 51.

11. Ibid., 1906, p. 83.

12. Ibid., 1908, p. 64.

13. Ibid., 1912, p. 78.

14. Ibid., 1915, p. 22.

was introduced in 1917, when an amendment to the bylaws created an advisory committee of three members, appointed by the selectmen.¹ The membership of this committee was later increased to five.²

A number of activities connected with the operation of the town have been carried on by committees or other bodies not functioning as town officers, but often receiving appropriations from the town for their work. One such activity has been the decoration of the graves of Ayer soldiers and sailors, first undertaken by the George S. Boutwell Post, GAR, in 1876 with a town appropriation.³ The local post of the American Legion later aided in the work of decoration,⁴ and in 1932 the legion, the GAR and the Veterans of Foreign Wars combined their efforts in the work.⁵ For many years a committee of five citizens was appointed annually to arrange a Fourth of July celebration; various sums were taken from the treasury for the purpose.⁶ A committee of three acted as a town forest committee in 1928 and for some years afterward; with a part of its expenses paid by the state forestry committee it planted and weeded trees and did other work to create a town forest.⁷ While the committee made no formal report of its work after 1931, expenses for the town forest were included in the annual reports through 1938.⁸ A body called the Ayer Improvement Society functioned in 1887 and 1888, reporting the former year that it had spent a sum of money for setting out trees⁹ and in the latter year that it had made a donation toward sidewalks in the town.¹⁰ The Ayer Law and Order League received a small sum from the town in 1885, presumably for work done in connection with the enforcement of liquor laws.¹¹ One of the most recent of these committees was the Civic Welfare Committee, organized in 1932 as "a clearinghouse for the problems of relief in Ayer." Its membership was made up of representatives from the board of selectmen, the board of trade, and some women's and civic organizations.¹²

Since 1933 Ayer has received the benefit of CWA, ERA, WPA, and other Federal administrations. In addition to the distribution of food, clothing, and other commodities,¹³ the government-aided projects have improved streets, public buildings, parks, the water system and town properties. In one year several projects were approved; they included work on the drainage system,

1. Town Records, II, 293, 294, see entry 35.

2. Annual Reports, 1933, p. 17, see entry 2; By-Laws, art. IX, secs. 1, 4, see entry 67.

3. Annual Reports, 1876, p. 12, see entry 2.

4. Ibid., 1930, pp. 14, 15.

5. Ibid., 1932, p. 12.

6. Ibid., 1906, p. 26; 1920, p. 11; 1922, p. 11; 1929, p. 15.

7. Ibid., 1929, p. 97.

8. Ibid., 1938, p. 11.

9. Ibid., 1887, p. 15.

10. Ibid., 1888, p. 21.

11. Ibid., 1885, p. 15.

12. Ibid., 1932, pp. 103, 104.

13. Ibid., 1933, p. 122.

tennis courts, and a \$20,000 fire and police department building,¹ in another year there were projects for farm-to-market roads, painting schools, gypsy-moth control, and a sewing project for women.² The combined wages paid on ERA and CWA projects for one year totaled nearly \$40,000.³ A member of the board of selectmen was the Ayer CWA administrator in 1933;⁴ in other years local administrators or WPA sponsors' agents have been appointed.⁵

The costs of operating the town have risen tremendously since Ayer's incorporation. While the total amount raised by taxes for operation was less than \$10,000 in 1871,⁶ four decades later the appropriations were \$77,500;⁷ in 1918 a total of approximately \$125,000 was appropriated,⁸ and in 1939 the appropriations were in excess of \$150,000.⁹ Some of the cause for the sharp increase in governmental cost is due to the existence at present of departments like the board of health and the water department which did not figure in the first appropriations; other reasons can be found, too, in the fact that many departments like the school system, the overseers of the public welfare, and the police department have greatly expanded the scope of their activities to keep Ayer in step with the growth of the rest of the state.¹⁰

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1. Ibid., 1933, p. 176.
 2. Ibid., 1937, p. 61.
 3. Ibid., 1934, p. 77.
 4. Ibid., 1933, p. 176.
 5. Ibid., 1935, p. 86; 1937, p. 61.
 6. Ibid., 1872 (unfolioed).
 7. Ibid., 1908, p. 36.
 8. Ibid., 1918, pp. 145, 146.
 9. Ibid., 1939, pp. 197, 198.
 10. Ibid., 1939, pp. 42-192 passim.

COST OF TOWN OPERATIONAppropriations for Some Major Departments, 1871¹ to 1939

<u>Department</u>	<u>1871</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1908</u>	<u>1939</u>
Schools	\$3,000	\$3,500	\$10,250	\$43,389
Highways	500	800	4,000	11,500 ²
Town Incidentals	3,500 ³	2,500	4,000	4,000 ⁴
Public Welfare		1,200	2,500	36,325 ⁵
Notes and Interest		4,000	2,000	12,000
Fire Department		800	1,600	5,500
Town Library		200	800	1,700
	<u>\$7,000</u>	<u>\$13,000</u>	<u>\$25,150</u>	<u>\$114, 414</u>

This table does not show all town departments; those shown are departments in which marked increases occurred.

1. The 1871 figure is based on the amount raised by taxation for the operation of the departments shown. The 1939 figure is the appropriation recommended by the advisory committee.

2. The high appropriation for 1939 included maintenance of Chapter 90 highways and \$500 spent for road machinery.

3. Town incidentals for 1871 may have included public welfare.

4. This sum is listed "Miscellaneous" for 1939.

5. The 1939 public welfare figure represents expenditures for administration outdoor relief, indoor relief, aid to dependent children, soldiers' relief, and old age assistance.

TABLE OF TAX AGGREGATESPolls, Houses, Personal and Other Property, 1881-1939

	<u>1881</u>	<u>1912</u>	<u>1921</u>	<u>1939</u>
Polls	540	840	744	1,010
Houses Assessed	351			722
Real Property			\$2,514,665	\$2,946,450
Personal Property	\$995,014 ¹	\$2,227,482 ¹	\$ 626,678	\$ 575,125
Acres Land Assessed				4,165
Tax Rate	\$14.00	\$17.20	\$28.60	\$34.80 ²

1. These figures are totals of real and personal property.

2. Included in the 1939 tax receipts were 1031 motor vehicles with a total valuation of \$210,035, and income and corporation taxes.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

DATE	FOUND IN:	MBRS.	PURPOSE
1871	Town Rec. I, 33	3	To ask that gift to town be modified
1873	<u>Ann. Repts.</u> (no p.)	-	To act as town house committee
1873	<u>Ibid.</u>	-	Fire Relief Fund committee
1873	<u>Ibid.</u>	-	"Ayer Levee Committee" (no explanation in report)
1886	Town Rec. I, 359	-	To petition General Court for water system
1888	<u>Ann. Repts.</u> , p. 18	3	To act as committee on sidewalks
1888	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 34	3	To relocate certain streets
1897	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 35	3	To act in matter of grade crossings
1898	<u>Ibid.</u> , pp. 1-8	8	To consider electric lighting
1906	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 65	5	To consider municipal electricity
1907	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 69	3	To act with selectmen on new walk across railroad
1907	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 3	4	To act as building committee for new school
1910	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 77	5	To consider improved fire protection
1910	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 94	3	To make bylaw revisions
1915	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 22	5	To stage Fourth of July celebration
1915	<u>Ibid.</u> , Feb. p. 24	3	To act with fire engineers on alarm whistle
1916	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 21	3	To investigate fire alarms
1917	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 25	-	To consider improvements on water system
1918	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 38	7	To investigate fire apparatus additions
1918	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 41	5	To act with selectmen on fire, police building
1919	Town Rec. II, 373	5	To investigate need for sewers
1919	<u>Ann. Repts.</u> , p. 14	9	To act with selectmen, engineers, on motor fire apparatus
1919	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 38	10	With selectmen, to welcome soldiers
1920	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 12	3	To consider salaries of town officers
1920	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 12	3	To prepare tax bills
1921	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 20	6	Selectmen and water commissioners, to study improvements
1922	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 13	6	To act with selectmen, school comm., on new schools
1923	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 14	4	With school committee, to recommend new high school
1923	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 27	5	To act with selectmen on memorial to war dead
1924	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 10	7	To act with selectmen on new school
1925	<u>Ibid.</u> , pp. 102, 103	6	To make recommendations on poor farm
1925	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 107	3	With selectmen and fire engineers, to consider additional work for fire truck driver
1926	<u>Ibid.</u> , pp. 7, 8	3	To act with overseers on refitting poor farm
1926	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 11	3	To study water improvements with water comms.
1927	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 20	5	With selectmen, on highway equipment
1928	<u>Ibid.</u> , pp. 102, 103	3	To consider town forest
1929	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 99	15	To arrange tercentenary celebration
1930	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 14	12	To act with selectmen on "Old Home Day"

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Date	FOUND IN:	MBRS.	PURPOSE
1930	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 16	3	To nominate 10 members of school building comm.
1930	<u>Ibid.</u>	10	To act as committee on new school building
1932	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 10	5	To make recommendations on Washington St. School
1932	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 15	5	To consider questions of town government
1933	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 18	2	With moderator, to consider preserving town records
1936	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 14	5	To act on grade crossings
1938	<u>Ibid.</u> , p. 14	3	To act with water commissioners on extending mains

Records System

Since the town of Ayer is of comparatively recent origin, it is not surprising that its records show no serious gaps. It cannot be said that any single department is the center of the record-keeping system, as the town clerk, treasurer, and water commissioners' departments have an approximately equal number of records.

The assessors, board of public welfare, and park commissioners show no minutes of meetings, and it is recommended that these departments keep such records. Although the registrars of voters, commissioners of trust funds, school committee, trustees of Ayer Library, and board of health keep minutes of meetings (entries 77, 171, 175, 193, 229), in no case do these records begin with the date of inception of the department.

The fact that it was necessary to assign many descriptive or explanatory titles indicates that many of the records are neither marked nor well titled, and it is suggested that steps be taken to remedy this situation.

Most records requiring indexing were found to be indexed; however, entries 53, 173, 205, 215, 231, 232, and 297 are not so provided, and in our opinion indexes to these records would be an improvement in Ayer's record-keeping system.

HOUSING, CARE, AND ACCESSIBILITY OF RECORDS

The Town Records of Ayer, most of which are kept in the Town Hall, are for the most part in good condition and easily accessible, with the exception of two depositories which serve as storerooms for records not currently used.

The present Town Hall, constructed soon after the incorporation of the town in 1871, is a three-story building of artistic design. All depositories are conveniently located on the street floor.

The vault and storeroom need immediate consideration for future service. Due to the faulty arrangement, poor accessibility, lack of protection from fire, and limited space in these depositories it is earnestly recommended that an additional vault be constructed to relieve these unsatisfactory conditions.

Other public buildings housing records for their respective departments are as follows: the Town Infirmary, the Ayer Library, the Fire Station, the Ayer High School, and the Ayer Water Works.

The following tables summarize conditions for the housing of records in the public buildings of Ayer:

TOWN HALL, EAST MAIN STREET, AYER

Depository	General Vault	Assessors' Room	Store Room	Selectmen's Room
Location	1st Floor	1st Floor	1st Floor	1st Floor
*Dimensions	8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x6 $\frac{1}{4}$ x8	13x16x10	12x5x7	12x20x10
Cu. Ft.	425	2080	420	2400
Class of Construction	1st	2nd	3rd	2nd
Shelving	Steel	Wood	Wood	Wood
Containers	Steel	Wood	Wood	Wood
Light	Poor	Good	None	Good
Phys. Cond.	Good	Good	Poor	Good
Accessibility	Fair	Good	Poor	Fair
Arrangement	Fair	Good	Poor	Fair
Fut. Cap.	None	Ample	None	None
Department using	Town Clerk Selectmen Treasurer	Assessors	Selectmen Town Clerk Assessors	Assessors Town Clerk Selectmen Bd. of Pub. Wel. Tax Coll., Treasurer, Tree Warden, Supt. of Sts.
Assessors; Tax Collector; Bd. of Pub. Wel; Agent for Bd. of Health; Water Comms. Reg. of Voters; Supt. of Sch.; Sealer of Wts. & Mrs.				

*Dimensions are given in length by width by height in feet.

	FIRE STATION	AYER HIGH SCHOOL	AYER WATER WORKS		
Depository	Engineers' Rm.	Supt's Off.	Room 9	Supt's Off.	Loft
Location	1st Fl.	2nd Fl.	1st Fl	1st Fl.	Attic
*Dimensions	19 $\frac{1}{2}$ x14 $\frac{1}{2}$ x15	16x12x10	18x18x10	12x12x13	47x25x6
Cu. Ft.	4241 $\frac{1}{2}$	1920	3240	1872	7050
Class of Const.	1st	3rd	3rd	2nd	3rd
Shelving	Wood	Steel,wood	Steel,wood	Wood	Wood
Containers	Wood	Steel,wood	Wood	Wood	Paper.bdl.
Light	Good	Good	Good	Good	None
Phys. Con.	Good	Good	Fair	Fair	Fair
Accessibil-ity	Good	Fair	Good	Good	Fair
Arrangement	Good	Fair	Good	Good	Good
Fut. Cap.	Ample	None	Ample	Ample	Ample
Department using	Fire Engs.	School Com. Supt. of Schools	School Com. Supt. of Schools	Water Comms.	Water Comms.

*Dimensions are given in length by width by height in feet

In addition to the public buildings already mentioned there are records stored in private depositories as follows:

First National Bank	Safety deposit box of Mr. Berton Williams	Library Trustees Records
Alfred P. Richardson	47 Highland Ave.	Library Trustees Records
Berton Williams	86 Pleasant St.	Library Trustees Records
Esther A. Stone	45 Washington St.	Supt. of Schools Records
Ralph H. Richardson	8 Washington St.	Comms. of Trust Funds
Hill's Drug Store	East Main St.	Water Comms..Records

ABBREVIATIONS SYMBOLS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

Abbreviations and Foreign Terms

alph.	alphabetically	hdw.	handwritten
arr..	arranged, arrangement	ibid.	in the same place
art.	article	Lib.	Library
Ave.	Avenue	Mass.	Massachusetts
bdl.(s)	bundle(s)	no.(s)	number(s)
ch.	chapter	num.	numerically
chron.	chronologically	off.	office
cl.	clerk	op. cit.	work cited
Co.	Company	p. pp.	page, pages
comms.	commissioners	ptd.	printed
dept.	department	rm..	room
discont.	discontinued	sec..	section
ed.	editor	secy.	secretary
env.(s)	envelope(s)	sel.	selectmen
estab.	established	St. .	Street
et. seq.	and following pages	strm.	storeroom
etc.	and so forth	supt.	superintendent
fl.	floor	T.H. .	Town Hall
f.b.	file box(es)	treas.	treasurer
f.d.	file drawer(s)	va..	vault
gen.	general	vol.(s).	volume(s)

Symbols

--	continues to date	:	equivalent
"	inches	x	by
'	feet	...	denotes omission in quoted matter

Explanatory Notes

Inventory Arrangement

The city and town offices are arranged in the order of their importance from a functional viewpoint, with related offices grouped together. Records within an office are classified by subject. Within each subject classification entries are listed in the order of their importance and, for records considered of equal importance, a chronological sequence is used.

Titles

Exact titles of records are shown in upper case without parentheses. The contents of untitled records are indicated by assigning titles to them.

Titles of this kind are shown in upper case enclosed by parentheses. When an exact title does not adequately describe the true nature of the record, such information is inserted in the title line but in the lower case and enclosed within parentheses. The current or most recent title of a record is used as the entry title, and any variation of title within the record series is noted.

Labeling

The numbering, lettering or other markings on a record are shown in parentheses following the quantity.

Cross References

Title-line cross references are used to show the continuity of a record series which has been kept separately for a period of time and with other records for different periods of time. An example is shown in entry 116: "1872-1917 in (Property) Tax (Commitment) List, entry 114. There is a corresponding body-of-entry reference in entry 114, showing the title and entry number of the record from which the cross reference is made: "also contains: Poll-tax commitment list, 1872-1917, entry 116." Dates shown in the body-of-entry reference are only for the part of the record contained therein, and are shown only when they vary from those shown in the title line of the entry.

Title-line cross references are also used in artificial entries; i.e., those set up for a record which is not kept separately, but is found in two or more records of miscellaneous content, such as entry 207. As indicated in the example shown above, there are corresponding body-of-entry references from entries 70-ii and 205-ii to entry 207. Separate third-paragraph cross references from entry to entry and "See also" references with subject headings or subheadings are used to show prior, subsequent or closely related records which are not parts of the same series.

Indexing

If there is no index to a record, the fact is stated in the entry. If no mention is made of the absence of an index, it is either contained in the entry or in a separate entry, immediately following it, if possible.

Dimensions

Except where otherwise indicated, dimensions of volumes, file boxes, or maps are shown in inches; dimensions of volumes in the order of length along binding edge, width, and thickness; dimensions of file cases, boxes and drawers in the order of height, width and depth.

Location

The location noted is that of the date of the final field check of the inventory, approximately four months prior to publication. Many records, especially current ones, are in constant use by officials, and subject to frequent transfer from office to vault or from vault to office. Shifts from one vault to another also occur, but less frequently. The Historical Records Survey cannot guarantee that the record will be found in the location noted, but merely that the record was found there at the date of the inventory field check.

Condition of Records

If no comment is made regarding the condition of records, it may be assumed to be satisfactory.

PART B. TOWN OFFICERS AND THEIR RECORDS

I. BOARD OF SELECTMEN¹

When three selectmen were elected at the first town meeting to serve for one year, they were given the additional duties of assessors and overseers of the poor.² They filled the former office most years until 1886, when a vote of the town officially separated the two offices.³ With few exceptions, they have been elected overseers at each annual town meeting to the present time.⁴ Two of the exceptional years were 1890 and 1915; in the former year only two of the selectmen were overseers,⁵ and in the latter a separate board of three overseers was elected.⁶

During some years the selectmen have held other town offices, either as a board or as individuals. With two other citizens, the selectmen acted as the board of health from 1887 to 1889.⁷ In the latter year they also signed themselves highway surveyors,⁸ and were the commissioners of the sinking fund that had been established when the town borrowed a sum of money for the construction of its water system.⁹ One of the selectmen was also a truant officer in some years.¹⁰ In 1894 and for some years thereafter one of the selectmen was the superintendent of streets¹¹ and in 1904 one was also the town treasurer.¹²

Between the establishment of the office and the present time the powers of the selectmen have been exercised in most of the town departments. Since the first town meeting they have made recommendations, appointments, and expenditures in connection with fire department.¹³ They acted with the firewards in 1872 to study the placement of certain reservoirs;¹⁴ they appointed three engineers, one of them a chief, in 1875,¹⁵ and have

1. For statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Town Records, I, 8, see entry 35.

3. Ibid., p. 343.

4. Ibid., p. 418; Annual Reports, 1939, p. 3, see entry 2.

5. Ibid., 1890, p. 14.

6. Ibid., Dec. 1915, p. 3.

7. Ibid., 1887, p. 32; 1889, p. 44.

8. Ibid., 1889, p. 45.

9. Ibid., p. 45.

10. Ibid., 1884, p. 14.

11. Ibid., 1894, p. 2; 1904, p. 34.

12. Ibid., 1904, p. 25.

13. Town Records, I, 19; 90, 95, 161; II, 376, 377, see entry 35.

14. Ibid., I, 90-95.

15. Ibid., I, 161.

appointed a forest fire warden in some years.¹ Regular and special police officers have been appointed by the selectmen since shortly after the incorporation of the town,² and the selectmen direct the chief of police in the enforcement of certain town ordinances affecting junk, traffic, taxicabs, and minor law violations.³ Their control over matters affecting the roads, streets, sidewalks, and bridges dates back to the first corporate year of the community;⁴ at times they have been empowered to lay out streets,⁴ have petitioned the Commonwealth or the county commissioners for other streets and improvements,⁵ and they have appointed a superintendent of streets since this office was made separate from the functions of the selectmen themselves.⁶ While the selectmen have not acted in a directly supervisory capacity in connection with schools, there have been occasions when they have functioned with the school committee on certain school matters.⁷ They also served as a special committee in the interest of the public library when they accepted in 1871 a donation which helped establish that institution.⁸ They served as part of a committee in 1872 to decide a location for the Town Hall.⁹ In legal affairs affecting the town the selectmen are empowered under the bylaws to act as counsel or to employ such legal assistance as they deem necessary to the town's best interests.¹⁰

The selectmen have always maintained a partial supervision over the town's finances. Early receipts and expenditures were reported almost solely by the selectmen, and various sums were voted to the selectmen's care for necessary town expenditures.¹¹ For many years they exercised the power to transfer unused balances from one town department to another;¹² this power was abolished by vote in 1921.¹³ In 1917 it was voted that an advisory board of three members be established,¹⁴ and from 1920 to 1933 the selectmen reported making the three appointments.¹⁵ They began appointing five persons to the advisory committee in the latter year, after

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1. Annual Reports, 1901, p. 3, see entry 2.
 2. Town Records, I, 38, 39, see entry 35; Selectmen's Records, 1879 (unfolioed), see entry 1; Annual Reports, 1888, p. 49, see entry 2.
 3. By-Laws, art. V, secs. 1, 2, art. VII, art. X, sec. 21, see entry 67.
 4. Annual Reports, 1900, p. 66, see entry 2.
 5. Town Records, I, 96, see entry 35.
 6. Annual Reports, 1904, p. 34, see entry 2.
 7. Ibid., 1873, p. 126; 1886, school committee report, p. 6; 1922, p. 13.
 8. Town Records, I, 14, 15, see entry 35.
 9. Ibid., pp. 89, 90.
 10. By-Laws, art. III, sec. 1, see entry 67.
 11. Annual Reports, 1872-1875 (unfolioed) see entry 2; Town Records, I, 19, see entry 35.
 12. Annual Reports, 1904, p. 59, see entry 2.
 13. Ibid., 1921, pp. 80, 81.
 14. Town Records, II, 293-4, see entry 35.
 15. Annual Reports, 1920, p. 78; 1928, p. 3; 1933, p. 17, see entry 2.

the bylaws had been amended to permit the increase.¹ In one year, 1914, the selectmen were given authority to examine all town departmental accounts and to approve all bills for payment.²

Since 1885 the selectmen have annually appointed a board of three registrars of voters (with whom the town clerk serves as clerk of the registrars);³ they have appointed a sealer of weights and measures since 1871⁴ and have appointed varying numbers of weighers of coal.⁵ They themselves served in 1932 as part of a committee on civic welfare to act as a clearing-house for the problem of public relief,⁶ and in 1933 the local Civil Works Administrator was one of the selectmen.⁷ In 1931 they were given the authority to certify applications for free hospitalization at the Community Memorial Hospital at the expense of the town.⁸

Although efforts have been made to change the method of election of the selectmen, providing three-year terms and the election of only one selectman at each annual meeting,⁹ they are still elected by ballot for one-year term at each annual meeting.¹⁰

Except where otherwise noted, all records are in the general vault, Town Hall.

Minutes and Reports

1. (MINUTES OF MEETINGS), 1871--. 4 vols.

Discussion and decisions regarding tax assessments, appointment of officers, granting of licenses and petitions, approval of bills, drawing of jurors, lay-out of roads, perambulation of town lines; place, date of meeting. Arr. chron. by date of meeting. No index. Hdw. 800 pp. 14 x 9 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

2. ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES OF THE TOWN OF AYER, 1872--. 4 broadsides in 1 folder (unlabeled), 60 reports bound in 7 vols. (1-7, dated); 5 vols. (dated). Title varies slightly.

Reports of town officers and committees giving summary of work accomplished and recommendations. Also contains warrants for town meetings and jury lists. Arr. by subject. Indexed alph. by subject. Ptd. 1 folder, 1872-75, 10 x 6; 7 vols. (bound reports), 1876-1935, 700 to 1800 pp. 10 x 6 x 2 to 10 x 6 x 5; 5 vols., 1936--., approx. 200 pp. 10 x 6 x $\frac{1}{2}$. State Library, State House, Boston.

1. Ibid.; By-Laws, Art. IX, secs. 1, 4, see entry 67.

2. Annual Reports, 1914, p. 116, see entry 2.

3. Ibid., 1885, p. 16.

4. Town Records, I, 8, see entry 35.

5. Annual Reports, 1888, p. 49; 1908, p. 4; 1911, p. 115; 1939, p. 5, see entry 2.

6. Ibid., 1932, pp. 103, 104.

7. Ibid., 1933, p. 176.

8. Town Records, II, 710, see entry 35.

9. Annual Reports, 1924, pp. 7, 17, see entry 2.

10. Ibid., 1939, p. 6.

Financial Records

3. SELECTMEN'S LEDGER, 1921, 1931--. 5 vols.

Record of departmental accounts: Name of department; amount of town appropriation; amounts, dates of receipts, expenditures; monthly total receipts, expenditures; balance. Arr. alph. by name of dept. No index. Hdw. 300 pp. 17 x 9 x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$. 4 vols., 1921, 1931-35, gen. va.; 1 vol., 1936--, filing cabinet, sel. rm., T.H.

4. (Copies of) SELECTMEN'S ORDERS (on Treasurer), 1931--. 25 f.b., 8 bdl. (dated and labeled by contained order nos.). Prior records destroyed.

Name of department, payee; amount, purpose, number, date of order; amount, date of payment; signatures of selectmen. Arr. num. by order no. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 25 f.b., 1931--, 14 x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$; 8 bdl., 1931--, 8 x 6 x 2. For original orders, see entry 129.

5. (RECORD OF ORDERS ON TREASURER), 1888-1933. 8 vols.

For description, see entry 4; omits signatures of selectmen. Arr. chron. by date of payment. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 450 pp. 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15 x 2 and 500 pp. 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 21 x 2.

Licenses and Permits

6. (Copies of) LICENSES AND PERMITS, 1934--. 1 folder in 1 f. d. Prior records destroyed.

Copies of auctioneer, taxi driver, bowling and pool, innholder, lodging house, junk dealer, Sunday entertainment licenses; firearm permits, permits to sell and store gasoline and oil, to sell wood or denatured alcohol, to sell second-hand clothing, to locate advertising signs, to transport trees: Name of municipality; name, address of applicant; purpose, period, date of issue of license; signature of applicant, approval of selectmen. Arr. chron. by date of issue. No index. Hdw., typed., hdw. or typed on ptd. form. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 24 $\frac{1}{2}$. Filing cabinet, sel. rm., T.H.

7. COPY OF LICENSE TO CARRY A PISTOL OR REVOLVER, 1922--. 11 vols.

Name, address, sex, physical description of licensee; place, date of birth; date of naturalization (if foreign-born); number, purpose, period, date of issue of license. 1935-- includes photograph of licensee. Arr. chron. by date of issue. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 50 pp. 4 x 7 x 1. 7 vols., 1922-23, 1926--, gen. va.; 4 vols., 1923-26, off. of chief of police, T.H.

8. (Copies of) PERMITS TO SELL FIREARMS, 1924--. 1 vol.

Name of municipality; name of dealer or owner, maker, person making sale, person to whom delivered; name, address, age, sex, occupation of purchaser; name of employer of purchaser, if any; calibre, maker's number, type of firearm; date and hour of delivery of firearm; number, dates of issue and expiration of permit; signature of purchaser, remarks. Arr. num. by permit no. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 50 pp. 4 x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1. Table drawer, sel. rm., T.H.

Board of Selectmen- Licenses and
Permits

[9-15]

9. (STUBS OF MISCELLANEOUS LICENSES), 1927, 1929--3. vols.
Name, business address of licensee; number, purpose, dates of issue and
expiration of license. Arr. chron. by date of issue. No index. Hdw. on
ptd. form. 25 pp. 14 x 6 x 1/16. Filing cabinet, sel. rm., T. H.

10. (BOSTON AND MAINE BUS LICENSES), 1927-29. 1 folder.
Name, address of licensee; conditions, date of license; route to be fol-
lowed; signatures of selectmen. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. on ptd.
form. 15 x 10 x 1.

11. (RECORD OF LICENSES GRANTED TO AUCTIONEERS), 1898-99. 1 vol.
Name of licensee, amount of fee paid, date of issue of license, signatures
of selectmen. Arr. chron. by date of issue. No index. Hdw. 100 pp.
8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 7 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

Petitions

(See also entry 29-ii)

12.. (PETITIONS OF INHABITANTS FOR LAYING OUT NEW ROADS), 1854-1924.
2 bdls.
Signatures, addresses of petitioners; location, boundaries of proposed
road; date of petition. Includes reports by selectmen giving reason for
approval. Arr. by date of petition. No index. Hdw., typed. 10 x 4 x 4.

13. (Reports on) PETITIONS AND PLANS FOR LAYING OUT HIGHWAYS, 1854-
1924 intermittently. 1 f.b.
Reports to selectmen by engineer of highway department: Location, esti-
mated cost of proposed highway; amount of highway appropriation already
allocated under contracts, records of bids on proposed highway, date of
report, signature of engineer. Includes orders to constables to notify
abutting property owners. Arr. chron. by date of report. No index.
Hdw., hdw. on ptd. form. 14 x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$.

14. (Public Utilities) PETITIONS, 1915-22. 1 f.b.
Petitions from Ayer Electric Light Company, New England Telephone and
Telegraph Company, Fitchburg and Leominster Street Railway, and Lowell and
Fitchburg Street Railway for permission to erect poles, wires, and conduits,
and to maintain all other property necessary to give service: Name of
company; text date of petition, signatures of petitioners. No obvious arr.
No index. Hdw. 13 x 11 x 5.

15. (PETITION OF NEW ENGLAND POWER COMPANY TO CONSTRUCT TRANSMISSION
LINES), 1927-28. 2 sheets.
Permission to locate, construct, maintain, and operate transmission lines
across public highways: Names of highways; specifications regarding poles,
wires, conduits; date of petition, signatures of petitioners. Typed.
11 x 9. Shelf.

16. (PETITIONS FOR SALE OF LIQUOR AND FOR APPOINTMENT OF LIQUOR AGENTS), May 1871 - Apr. 11, 1872. 1 bdl.

Petitions by certain inhabitants urging selectmen to insert articles in town-meeting warrants to vote upon the sale of liquor and to appoint liquor agents; Text date of petition; signatures of petitioners. Arr. chron. by date of petition. No index. Hdw. 8 x $3\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$. Strm., T.H.

State and Military Aid

17. (APPLICATIONS FOR MILITARY AID), 1916--. 1 f.d.

Name, age, address, period of service of applicant; place, date of enlistment; name of regiment or vessel to which assigned, date of discharge from service; date of application, signature of applicant, attestation of justice of the peace. Arr. alph. by name of applicant. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2}$ x $15\frac{1}{2}$ x $23\frac{1}{2}$. Sel. rm., T.H.

18. (RETURN OF MILITARY AID), 1931--. 1 f.d.

Monthly returns of military aid granted, sent to commissioner of state aid and pensions: Name of veteran, regimental and company designations or name of vessel to which assigned, monthly amount of aid granted or pension; name of recipient, relationship to veteran. Includes certification of return: Name of town, certification of truthfulness of return, date thereof, signatures of selectmen; attestation, signature of justice of the peace, date of oath. Arr. alph. by name of veteran or recipient. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2}$ x $15\frac{1}{2}$ x $23\frac{1}{2}$. Sel. rm., T.H.

19. (CERTIFICATE OF REASONS FOR DISBURSING STATE AND MILITARY AID), 1931--. 1 f.d.

Name, age, address, financial resources of applicant; nature and extent of disability; amount, nature of previous aid received; whether relief temporary; names, number of dependents; date of application for aid, signatures of selectmen, attestation of justice of the peace. Arr. alph. by name of recipient. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2}$ x $15\frac{1}{2}$ x $23\frac{1}{2}$. Sel. rm., T.H.

20. STATE AID (and Soldiers' Relief), 1909-31. 1 vol.

Record of aid rendered to volunteers or their beneficiaries in state aid and soldiers' relief cases: Name, address, relationship to volunteer of beneficiary; name, address of volunteer; regimental, company designation; signature of beneficiary or volunteer acknowledging monthly payment; amount, date of payment. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. 125 pp. 14 x 12 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

Plans

21. (PLAN OF RAILROAD GRADE CROSSING ON MAIN STREET), Mar. 1915. 1 plan.

Communication plan showing profile of Nashua branch of Boston and Maine Railroad: Names, locations, dimensions of streets; location of proposed crossing, poles, gates, Ayer railroad station. Draftsman unknown; Pratt & Davis, publisher; place of publication unknown. Blueprint. 1":30'. $29\frac{1}{2}$ x $19\frac{1}{2}$.

22. (Plans of) POLE AND WIRE LOCATIONS (of) AYER ELECTRIC LIGHT CO., July 20, 1916. 2 plans.

Communication plans showing proposed pole locations, together with location of hydrants and abutting property lines. Author, publisher, place of publication unknown. Blueprint. 1":80'. 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$.

23. (PLAN OF WOODLAWN CEMETERY), 1928. 1 plan.

Land-tenure plan of land deeded to town, used for burial of poor and cared for by small yearly appropriations. Draftsman, H. R. Draper; publisher and place of publication unknown. Blueprint. 1":20'. 28 x 35.

Miscellaneous

24. MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE, 1916-17, 1922--. 2 letter files. Prior records destroyed.

Correspondence with corporations, individuals, state, town departments regarding town business. Arr. alph. by name of correspondent. No index. Hdw., typed. 12 x 12 x 3. Sel. rm., T.H.

25. CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (Correspondence), 1933. 1 folder.

Correspondence with state commissioner of public welfare pertaining to persons making application for enrollment in Civilian Conservation Corps. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 15 x 10 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

26. LIST OF JURORS, 1898, 1930--. 12 sheets.

Names, addresses, occupations of jurors; date of list. Arr. alph. by name of juror. No index. Ptd. 14 x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$. 1 sheet, 1898, strm.; 1 sheet, 1930, desk, town cl. off.; 7 sheets, 1931-37, gen. va.; 3 sheets, 1938--., sel. rm.; T.H.

For assignment of jurors drawn 1871--., see entry 62-i.

27. RECORD OF APPOINTMENTS OF POLICE OFFICERS), 1870-1935. 1 f.b.

Name, title of appointee; date of appointment, signatures of selectmen. Includes administration of oath of office by town clerk. Arr. chron. by date of appointment. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 8 x 13 x 13.

For notices of appointments 1936--., see entry 319.

28. (NOTIFICATIONS OF APPOINTMENTS OF ELECTION OFFICIALS), 1924. 1 bdl.

Copies of letters of notification sent to appointees: Name, address of appointee; place, date of town meeting at which appointed by moderator; signature of chairman of selectmen. No obvious arr. No index. Typed. 11 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 18.

29. SUNDRY PAPERS, 1871-73, 1887-1907. 3 bdls.

Contains:

- i. Correspondence with individuals and town officers regarding appointments to and resignation from town offices.
- ii. Petitions from inhabitants requesting that certain matters be discussed at town meeting: Text, date of petition; signature of petitioners.

SUNDRY PAPERS (Cont'd)

- iii. Receipts acknowledging payment of money for land damages: Name of payer; amount, date of payment; signature of payee acknowledging payment.

Arr. by subject and chron. thereunder by date of paper. No index. Hdw. $8\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{4} \times 1$. 2 bdls., 1871-73, strm., T.H., 1 bdl., 1897-1907, gen. va.

30. FITCHBURG RAILROAD CROSSING AND TARIFF, 1872-80. 1 bdl.

Vote of railroad directors to transport all lumber for rebuilding burned part of Ayer at half rate for three months, correspondence from railroad superintendent regarding right to close and fence dangerous crossing. Arr. chron. by date of correspondence. No index. Typed. $9\frac{1}{2} \times 6 \times 1/8$. Strm., T.H.

31. (WARRANTS TO KILL UNLICENSED DOGS), 1873-91. 1 bdl.

Orders to constable to kill or cause to be killed all unlicensed dogs: Text, date of order, signature of chairman of selectmen. Includes constables return of performance of duty: Name, address of dog owner; number of dogs killed, date of return, signature of constable. Arr. chron. by date of warrant. No index. Hdw. $8 \times 3 \times 1/16$.

For warrants kept by police department 1934--, see entry 309.

32. (LAND DONATION FOR TOWN PARK), Mar. 30, 1895. 1 sheet.

Proposal of Levi W. Phelps to donate certain land for a town park; proposal accepted by town. Hdw. 2 pp. $14 \times 8\frac{1}{2}$.

33. (PAPERS RELATING TO CONSTRUCTION OF MITCHELVILLE BRIDGE OVER NASHUA RIVER BETWEEN AYER AND SHIRLEY), 1912-13. 1 env.

Correspondence, specifications, agreements, relative to construction of bridge. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw., typed. $10\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$. Shelf.

34. (TRAFFIC-SIGNAL DATA), 1931. 1 vol.

Estimates of materials and labor costs necessary in construction of traffic signals; statement of need of additional signals; time schedule of present signals; plans of streets affected; photographs of street signs. Arr. alph. by subject. No index. Typed. 8 pp. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 9 \times 1/8$.

II. TOWN CLERK¹

The office of town clerk was established at the first town meeting in 1871, when the clerk was elected for one year.² The election of the clerk

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Town Records, I, 7, see entry 35.

at each annual meeting has continued to the present time;¹ since 1889 his office has appeared on the single uniform ballot with other elective officers.²

During the first years of the office the clerk kept the registry of voters;³ this function was made a part of his regular duties in 1884, when the General Court passed an act making town clerks ex-officio members of the boards of registrars.⁴

The clerk began making the returns on deaths in 1879; previous to this time the returns had been made by sextons or burial agents.⁵ A vote of the town in 1885 required the clerk to publish the births and other statistics with the Annual Reports.⁶ Until 1933 the clerk usually cast the ballot for the election of the moderator at the town meetings.⁷

Since 1894 the clerk has employed an assistant.⁸

All records are in the Town Hall, except where otherwise noted, they are in the general vault.

Minutes and Reports

35. MINUTES OF TOWN MEETINGS, 1871--. 4 vols., 4 f.b.

Discussions and decisions regarding articles in town-meetings warrants and departmental and committee reports; place, date of meeting; signature of clerk. Arr. chron. by date of meeting. No index. Hdw. 4 vols., 1871--, 860 pp. 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 12 x 3; 4 f.b., 1872--, 4 x 13 x 11.

36. (SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS), 1885-1930. 1 bdl.

Contains report of:

- i. Committee to enforce liquor laws, Apr. 5, 1885: Number of liquor raids and convictions; recommendations; date of report, signatures of committee members.
- ii. School building committee, Feb. 6, 1930: Recommendations of committee and subcommittee relative to erecting school building; date of report, signatures of committee members.
- iii. Town poor farm committee, Apr. 5, 1886: Report on donation of land and offer to build poorhouse by Alfred Page; dimensions of land, estimated cost of building; date of report, signatures of committee members.

No arr. No index. i, iii, hdw.; ii, typed. 9 x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{4}$.

1. Annual Reports, 1879, p. 14; 1887, p. 32; 1894, p. 2; 1939, p. 6; see entry 2; Town Records, I, 418; see entry 35.

2. Ibid., I, 418; Annual Reports, 1939, p. 6, see entry 2.

3. Town Records, I, 7, see entry 35.

4. Acts, 1884, ch. 298, sec. 14.

5. Annual Reports, 1872 (unfolioed); 1879, p. 14, see entry 2.

6. Town Records, I, 329, see entry 35.

7. Annual Reports, 1907, pp. 54, 63; 1914, p. 13; see entry 2; Town Records, II, 772, see entry 35.

8. Annual Reports, 1894, p. 2, see entry 2.

Vital Statistics
(See also entry 62-v)

37. (Record of) BIRTHS, 1871--. 2 vols. (B, C).
Name, sex, color, registered number of child; place, date of birth; names, address, birthplaces of parents; occupation of father; date of entry.
Arr. num. by registered no. For index, see entry 29. Hdw. on ptd. form. 150 pp. 18 x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$.
38. BIRTHS (Certificates), 1871, 1876--. 1 f.d.
Name, date of birth, sex, color of child; names, address, birthplaces, occupations of parents; number, date of certificate; date of receipt of certificate; signature, address of attending physician; signature of clerk. Arr. num. by registered no. For index, see entry 39. Hdw. on ptd. form. 4 x 18 x 20.
39. (Card Index to) BIRTHS, 1871--. 1 f.d.
Index to (Record of) Births, entry 37; Births (Certificates), entry 38:
Name, date of birth, registered number of child; volume and page reference to entry 37. Arr. alph. by name of child. Typed. 5 x 16 x 26. Cl. off.
40. DEPOSITION (of) BIRTHS, 1896--. 1 bdl., 1 vol.
Record of corrections of birth records in entry 37: Name, sex of child; place, date of birth; names, address, birthplaces of parents; occupation of father, maiden name of mother; signature, address, relationship to child of informant; date of deposition, signature of clerk. Arr. chron. by date of deposition. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 1 bdl., 1896-1906, 11 x 8 x 1/8; 1 vol., 1906--, 100 pp. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 x 3/8.
41. (Certificates of) MARRIAGE INTENTIONS, 1911--. 3 f.b., 1 bdl.
Missing: 1871-1911.
Names, addresses, birthplaces, ages, occupations of contracting parties; names, address, ages of parents; date of certificate. Arr. alph. by names of contracting parties. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. F.b. 12 x 25 x 14; bdl. 12 x 25 x 4.
42. (Record of) MARRIAGES, 1871--. 3 vols.
Names, addresses, birthplaces, ages, occupations of contracting parties; names, address, ages of parents; registered number, date of marriage; signature, address of official performing ceremony, date of record. Arr. num. by registered no. For index, see entry 43. Hdw. on ptd. form. 100 pp. 18 x 12 x 1.
43. MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES, 1871--. 2 cardboard boxes, 1 f.b.
For description, see entry 42. Arr. num. by registered no. For index, see entry 44. Hdw. on ptd. form. Cardboard boxes 18 x 6 x 20; f.b. 4 x 8 x 20. 2 cardboard boxes, 1871-1936, gen. va.; 1 f.b., 1937--, cl. off.

Town Clerk -
Vital Statistics

44. (Card Index to) MARRIAGES, 1871--.. 1 f.b.
Index to (Record of) Marriages, entry 42; Marriage certificates, entry 43:
Names of contracting parties; registered number, date of marriage; volume
and page reference to entry 42. Arr. alph. by names of contracting parties.
Typed. 5 x 16 x 26. Cl. off.
45. DEPOSITION (of) MARRIAGES, May 29, 1927--.. 1 vol.
Record of correction of marriage records in entry 42: Names, addresses,
birthplaces, ages, prior marital status of contracting parties; names of
fathers, maiden names of mothers; place, date of marriage; name, address
of person officiating; signature, address, relationship to contracting
parties of informant; date of deposition; signature of clerk. Arr. chron.
by date of deposition. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 100 pp. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 x 3/8.
46. RECORD OF DEATHS, 1871--.. 3 vols. (A-C).
Name, address, birthplace, age, sex, color, occupation, marital status of
decedent; place, cause, date of death; registered number; names, birth-
places of parents; date of burial. Arr. num. by registered no. For index,
see entry 48. Hdw. on ptd. form. 150 pp. 18 x 12 x 1.
47. DEATHS (Certificates), 1871--.. 1 cardboard box, 1 f.d.
Name, address, age, sex, color, marital status of decedent; cause, date,
place of death; registered number; name, birthplace of spouse; names, ad-
dresses, birthplaces of parents; occupation of father; place, date of
burial; name, address of undertaker; signature of attending physician;
date certificate received and filed by clerk. Includes certification by
board of health that certificate was filed before burial permit was issued.
Arr. num. by registered no. For index, see entry 48. Hdw. on ptd. form.
Cardboard box 18 x 6 x 20; f.d. 4 x 8 x 20. 1 cardboard box, 1871-1936,
gen. va.; 1 f.d. 1937--., cl. off.
48. INDEX TO DEATHS, 1871--.. 1 vol.
Index to Record of Deaths, entry 46; Deaths (Certificates), entry 47:
Name of decedent, volume and page reference. Arr. alph. by name of dece-
dent. Hdw. on ptd. form. 200 pp. 12 x 8 x 3.
49. DEPOSITION (of) DEATHS, 1900--.. 1 vol.
Record of correction of death records in entry 46: Name, address, birth-
place, age, sex, marital status of decedent; maiden name (if decedent was
a woman); name, occupation of spouse; cause, place, date of death; place
of burial; names, birthplaces of parents; statement that deponents per-
sonally appeared and made oath to clerk that statements made by them were
true; date of deposition, recording; signatures, addresses of deponents;
signature of clerk. Arr. chron. by date of deposition. No index. Hdw.
on ptd. form. 100 pp. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 x 3/8.
50. CERTIFICATE OF THE REGISTRY OF A DEATH AND PERMISSION (by
Clerk) TO REMOVE FOR INTERMENT (in Out-of-Town Cemetery) 1871-84.
1 bdl. System discont. 1884.
Name, age of decedent; place, date of death; location of present, proposed
interment; date of certificate. Arr. chron. by date of certificate. No
index. Hdw., hdw. on ptd. form. 8 x 3 x $\frac{1}{4}$. Sel. rm.

Property Records

51. TOWN OF AYER RECORDS, 1872--. 4 vols. (1-4, dated).
Contains transcriptions of the following property and legal documents:
- i. Affidavit of foreclosure of mortgage: Name, address of mortgagee, mortgagor; cause of default, place of publication of notice of foreclosure, date mortgage recorded; date of foreclosure; signature of mortgagee, attorney; attestation by justice of the peace; date, time affidavit received, recorded. Includes notice of sale by auctioneer.
 - ii. Assignment for benefit of creditors: Name, address of assignor, assignee; amount, period, date of assignment; rate of interest, signatures of assignor and witnesses; signature, acceptance of assignee.
 - iii. Assignment of wages: Name, address of debtor, creditor; place of employment of debtor, date of assignment and receipt thereof; signature of debtor, creditor; attestation of town clerk.
 - iv. Bill of sale of personal property: Name, address of vendor, vendee; description, terms of delivery of articles sold; amount paid, date of bill of sale; time, date received, recorded; signature of vendor, witness, clerk; attestation by notary public.
 - v. Conditional sale contract: Name, address of vendor, vendee; method of financing, description of items purchased, conditions of default, security by promissory note, date title effective, date of contract; date, time contract received, recorded; signature of vendor, vendee, clerk.
 - vi. Discharge of mortgage: Name of mortgagee, mortgagor; place of recording of mortgage; discharge of mortgagor for full payment of mortgage; date of discharge, date, time discharge received, recorded; signatures of mortgagee, witnesses, and clerk.
 - vii. Indenture mortgage: Names, addresses of parties involved; amount of transaction, description of goods or chattels purchased, amounts of payment by promissory notes, conditions of default, date of mortgage; time, date mortgage received, signatures of parties involved, witnesses, and clerk.
 - viii. Memorandum of lien: Name, address of vendor, vendee; type, description of items purchased; amount of purchase, method of payment, conditions of default, date of lien; time, date lien received, recorded; attestation of justice of the peace; signature of vendor, vendee, clerk.
 - ix. Notice of foreclosure of mortgage: Name, address of mortgagor; intention of mortgagee to foreclose for breach of mortgage; location, description of property; date of mortgage, foreclosure; signature of mortgagee, attorney, clerk; time, date of recording. Includes return under oath of deputy sheriff showing service of notice.

Town Clerk -
Property Records

[51-53]

TOWN OF AYER RECORDS (Cont'd)

- x. Promissory notes: Name, address of payer, payee; amount and rate of interest, period, date of note; place of payment, conditions of default, date, time recorded; signature of payee, clerk.

- xi. Release of conditional sale of personal property: Name of vendor, vendee; type of article sold, date of sale; date, time release received, recorded: signature of clerk acknowledging payment in full, signature of vendor.

Arr. chron. by date of entry. For index, see entry 52. Hdw. on ptd. form. 650 pp. 15 x 12 x 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ and 856 pp. 16 x 12 x 3.

52. (INDEX TO TRANSCRIBED PROPERTY AND LEGAL DOCUMENTS), 1871--.
2 vols.

Index to Town of Ayer Records, entry 51: Type of document, volume and page reference. Arr. alph. by type of document. Hdw. on ptd. form. 75 pp. 16 x 11 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

53. (MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS), 1847-1932. 2 bdls.

Contains:

- i. Land-sales agreements for purchased of land for Town Hall, parks, and other town uses, 1847-71: Names of contracting parties; location, description, dimensions of land; terms, date of agreement; date of recording of final papers; signatures of contracting parties, witnesses.
- ii. Lease of room in Town Hall to post office, 1897: Name of lessee, lessor; amount, conditions, period, date of lease; signatures of lessor, lessee, and witnesses; acknowledgment of notary public.
- iii. Mortgages on town property: Name of mortgagor, mortgagee; amount, conditions, term of mortgage; covenant that property is free from incumbrances, covenant of right to sell and convey property, date of mortgage, signatures of witnesses; signature, seal of mortgagor, spouse; attestation, seal of justice of the peace.
- iv. Quitclaim deeds: Name, address of grantor, grantee; amount of consideration, quitclaim clause; location, description of devised premises, appurtenances; covenant of title, number of preceding certificate of title, release of dower and homestead rights; date of deed, recording; volume and page reference to instrument recorded in county registry of deeds; signature, seal of grantor, spouse; signatures of witnesses, attestation of notary public or justice of the peace.
- v. Releases of claims against town by property owners, 1913-17: Names, addresses of property owners; location of property, statement of release of all damage claims against town, date of release; signatures of property owners, town officials.
- vi. Warranty deeds: Name, address of grantor, grantee; location, description of property; amount of consideration, warranty

(MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS)

vi. Warranty deeds (Cont'd)

covenant; date of deed, recording; volume and page reference to instrument recorded in county registry of deeds, signatures of grantors and witnesses, acknowledgment of notary public.

Arr. chron. by date of document. No index. Hdw. or typed on ptd. form. 9 x 4 x $1\frac{1}{2}$ and $9\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 x 2.

54. (AGREEMENTS BETWEEN AYER, GROTON, AND SHIRLEY), 1871-73. 1 bdl. Agreements between town committees in settlement of property disputes. Includes copies of proceedings at Groton town meetings relative to disputes. No arr. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $7\frac{1}{2}$ x $3\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$.

55. PUBLIC PROPERTY, TOWN OF AYER, 1873-93. 1 vol. Record of land takings for highway construction: Location, description, dimensions of land taken; date of taking, recording. Arr. chron. by date of record. No index. Hdw. 86 pp. $15\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 x 3.

Licenses and Permits
(See also entry 62-iii, -vii)

56. (STUBS OF DOG LICENSES), 1928--. 6 vols. Name, address of dog owner; name, age, sex, breed, color of dog; amount of fee, number of license; date of issue, expiration. Arr. chron. by date of issue. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 250 pp. 5 x 12 x $1\frac{1}{2}$. 4 vols., 1928-34, gen. va.; 2 vols., 1935--, cl. off.
For record of dog licenses 1871--, see entry 62-iii.

57. (Applications for) MINORS' SPORTING LICENSES, 1927-30, 1934--. 3 envs. Name, birthplace, age, physical description of applicant; place, length of residence; type of license, date of application; signature of parent or guardian, applicant. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $9\frac{1}{2}$ x 7 x $\frac{1}{2}$. 2 envs., 1927-30, 1934-35, va., sel. rm.; 1 env., 1936--, cl. off.

58. (STUBS OF SPORTING LICENSES), 1936--. 6 vols. Prior records sent to state department of conservation, division of fisheries and game. Name, address, age of licensee; amount of fee; type, number, period, date of license. Arr: chron: by date of issue of license, with licenses numbered consecutively. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 50 pp. 3 x $9\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$. Cl. off.

Plans and Pole Locations

59. (MISCELLANEOUS PLANS), Oct. 15, 1872--. 157 plans.

Communication plans showing locations of railroads, streets, telephone and light poles; land-tenure plans showing locations, numbers, dimensions, total area of lots in Ayer; engineering plans showing construction diagrams of sections of Town Hall. Various authors, publishers, places of publication. Black-and-white, blueprint. Scales vary. $7\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 to 28 x 77.

60. PETITIONS (and Plans of) Ayer Electric Light Co. (and) N(ew) E(ngland) Tel(ephone) & Tel(egraph) Co., 1909--. 1 vol., 1 f.b. No title, 1909--., 1 vol.

Petitions and communication plans submitted by public utility companies for construction of communications system, showing locations of poles, wires, attachments, highway crossings, high-tension lines, conduits, man-holes, cables; date of plan, petition. Arr. chron. by date of plan. No index. Author, publishers, places of publication unknown. Scales vary. 1 vol., 1909--., $22\frac{1}{2}$ x 25 x 2; 1 f.b., 1916-22, $4\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 x $13\frac{1}{2}$.

61. RECORDS (of) POLE AND WIRE LOCATIONS, TOWN OF AYER, 1911--. 1 vol.

Copies of orders by selectmen granting authority to public-utility companies to erect and maintain poles and stretch wires over streets: Names of utility companies, location of streets; conditions, date of order; signatures of selectmen. Arr. chron. by date of order. No index. Hdw., typed. 352 pp. $14\frac{1}{2}$ x $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 2.

Miscellaneous

62. GENERAL (Miscellaneous) RECORD - TOWN OF AYER, 1871--. 2 vols. (1, 2).

Contains:

- i. Assignment of jurors drawn: Name of juror, court to which assigned; date of selection, summons, hearing; signature of clerk. For list of jurors 1898, 1930--., see entry 26.
- ii. Auditor's oath of office: Name of candidate for office, date of oath, signature of clerk.
- iii. Dog licenses, record of: Name, address of dog owner; name, age, sex, breed, color of dog; amount of fee, number of license; date of issue, expiration. For stubs of dog licenses 1928--., see entry 56.
- iv. Election ballots received from Secretary of the Commonwealth, record of: Number of ballots received; purpose, date of election.
- v. Marriage intentions, record of: Names, addresses, ages of contracting parties; date of filing of intention, signature of clerk.
- vi. Militia enrollment, 1872: Name, age of militiaman; company and regimental designation; period, date of enrollment.
- vii. Permits for burial or removal, record of: Name, age, date of death of decedent; date of permit, signature of clerk. For stubs of permits kept by board of health 1921--., see entry 239

GENERAL RECORD (Cont'd)

- viii. Persons eligible for military duty, list of, 1873: Name, address, age of person eligible; date of list.
 - ix. Soldiers in Ayer, list of, 1871: Name, age of soldier; company and regimental designation; date of enlistment.
- Arr. chron. by date of record. For index, see entry 63. Hdw. 856 pp. $15\frac{1}{2}$ x 12 x 3.

63. GENERAL RECORD, 1871-- , 6 vols. Title varies slightly. Index to General (Miscellaneous) Record - Town of Ayer, entry 62: Type of record, volume and page reference. Arr. alph. by type of record. Hdw. on ptd. form. 75 pp. 13 x $8\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{4}$ to 100 pp. 16 x 11 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

64. (DOG LISTS SUBMITTED BY ASSESSORS), 1875-1918 (scattered), 1925-- . 2 bdls., 1 f.b.
Name, address of dog owner; name, sex, description of dog. Arr. alph. by name of dog owner. No index. Hdw., typed. Bdls., 12 x 5 x $\frac{1}{2}$; 12 x 12 x 3 . 1 bdl., 1875, 1882, 1884, strm.; 1 bdl., 1908-11, 1913, 1916-18, gen. va.; 1 f.b., 1925-- , cl. off.
For copies of lists, see entry 109.

65. (VETERINARIAN'S CERTIFICATES OF SPAYED DOGS), 1901-29, 1931-- . 1 env., 1 letter file.
Statement that dog was spayed on date mentioned; name, address of dog owner; name, color, breed of dog; date of certificate. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw., typed. Env. $9\frac{1}{2}$ x 12 x 16 ; letter file, 12 x 12 x 3 . 1 env., 1901-29, gen. va.; 1 letter file, 1931-- , cl. off.

66. CORRESPONDENCE, 1908-- . 3 f.b., 1 f.d. Prior records destroyed. Correspondence relative to vital statistics, property records, licenses, etc. Arr. alph. by name of correspondent. No index. Hdw., typed. F.b. 12 x $11\frac{1}{2}$ x 3 ; f.d. $11\frac{1}{2}$ x $15\frac{1}{2}$ x $23\frac{1}{2}$. Cl. off.

67. (Published) BY-LAWS OF THE TOWN OF AYER, 1871, 1882-1901, 1910-11, 1918, 1933. 7 vols. (dated).
Regulations relating to town meetings, town officers and departments, includes list of penalties for bylaw violations. Arr. alph. by subject. No index. Ptd. 30 pp. $8\frac{1}{2}$ x $5\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{4}$. 4 vols., 1871, 1882-1901, 1910, gen. va.; 3 vols., 1911, 1918, 1933, strm.

68. (COPIES OF ELECTION RETURNS), 1917-20, 1922, 1924-26, 1928-29, 1930-- . 2 envs. Prior records destroyed.
Name, address, party designation of each candidate; name of office sought; number of ballots cast for nominee in each precinct, ward; total number cast for each candidate, office; hours of polling, date of election, signature of town clerk. Name, party affiliation of candidate; name of office to which elected. Arr. chron by year. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $4\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 x $1/8$.

Town Clerk -
Miscellaneous

[69-74]

69. (PERAMBULATIONS), 1875-1922. 2 sheets.

Record of perambulation of town lines: Description, boundaries, dimensions of lines; date of perambulation, signatures of selectmen. Hdw. 11 x 8.

70. MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS, 1855-82. 9 bdl's.

Contains:

- i. Assessors' returns of persons liable to do military duty: Names, addresses of persons eligible; date of list. For assessors' militia enrollment 1917, see entry 113.
- ii. Lodging given vagrants, record of, entry 207.
- iii. Reports (annual) of board of fire engineers: Names, number of men on duty; number of hours worked and amount paid therefor; record of fires showing locations, descriptions, dates of fires; type of new equipment purchased, amount of appropriation requested, suggestions for improvements; date of report, signatures of board members.

- iv. School committee teaching certificates, entry 192.

No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. 9 x 11 x 4. Strm.

71. (SUMMONS TO APPEAR FOR OATH OF OFFICE), 1879-84. 1 bdl. System discount 1884.

Summonses issued by clerk to constables requiring persons named to appear for oath of office within specified time: Name, address of person; position for which elected or appointed, time limit for oath, date of summons, signature of constable certifying that summons was served. Arr. chron. by date of summons. No index. Hdw. 8 x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$. Cl. off.

72. (NOTICES OF RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS FOR NATURALIZATION), 1885-1900

Notices sent from county district courts on receipt of residents' applications: Name, address, age, occupation of resident applicant; date of notice, receipt of application; signature of clerk of court. Arr. chron. by date of receipt of application. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 100 pp. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 12 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

73. (NOTICES FROM COUNTY DISTRICT COURTS ON FINAL HEARING ON APPLICATION FOR NATURALIZATION), 1885-1900. 1 bdl.

Name, address of resident applicant; date of notice, hearing; signature of presiding justice. Arr. chron. by date of notice. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$.

74. (BONDS - NEW ENGLAND TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH CO.), 1905-18. 1 cardboard box.

Bonds for indemnity to town for losses, costs, and damages arising from the laying of cables, construction of manholes, and the maintaining of conduits along Main and Cambridge Streets: Memorandum of contract, statement of agreement, amount of consideration for damages; amount, date of bond; signature, seal of principal, surety. Arr. chron. by date of bond. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 13 x 13 x 8.

75. BOARD OF REGISTRATION IN MEDICINE, 1933--. 1 vol. Prior records destroyed.

Physicians' certificates of intention to practice medicine in town: Name of physician, dates of certificate. Arr. chron. by date of certificate. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 20 pp. 5 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{4}$. Cl. off.

76. DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL SERVICE AND REGISTRATION, 1921. 1 vol. Optometrists' certificates of intention to set up practice in town: Name of optometrist, date of certificate.. Arr. chron. by date of certificate. No index. Hdw., hdw. on ptd. form. 20 pp. 5 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{4}$.

III. REGISTRARS OF VOTERS¹

Three registrars of voters were appointed by the selectmen in 1885 to serve for three years;² previous to this time, however, the town clerk had kept the registry of the voters since 1871.³ At the time of the 1885 appointment the clerk was also appointed, to act as clerk of the registrars.⁴

The number of registrars and the method of appointment have remained unchanged to the present time.⁵

All records are in the general vault, Town Hall.

77. RECORDS (Minutes of Registrars' Meetings), 1905--. 4 vols. Action taken regarding adding or dropping names to voting list; investigation of illegal voters, questionable names, determination of other matters relating to voting and elections, date of meeting, names of registrars. Arr. chron. by date of meeting. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 200 pp. 14 x 9 x 1.

78. (Published) LIST OF VOTERS, 1877-- intermittently. 6 vols. Name, address, occupation, date of registration of voter; date voter removed from list and reason therefor. Arr. alph. by name of voter. No index. Ptd. 100 pp. 22 x 19 x 2.

79. VOTERS REGISTERING SLIP, 1935--. 2 bdls. Prior records destroyed. Name, address, birthplace, age, marital status, occupation, place of employment

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Annual Reports, 1885, p. 16, see entry 2.

3. Town Records, I, 7, see entry 35.

4. Annual Reports, 1885, p. 16, see entry 2.

5. Ibid., 1939, p. 4.

of voter; residence on April 1 of previous year; date of naturalization of voter, spouse, father (if foreign-born); birthplace of spouse; period of settlement in town, State; attestation of registrar that foregoing information is true. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. on printed form, form. 11 x 8 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

IV. ASSESSORS¹

The board of assessors is one of the Ayer town departments established at the first town meeting and has undergone comparatively few changes in composition or duties to the present time. Three assessors were elected in 1871 to serve for one year.² Similar elections were held in succeeding years, with the selectmen sometimes serving as the assessors.³

The two offices were separated in 1886, when one assessor was elected for one year, one for two years, and one for three years, their successors to be elected one each year for a three-year term.⁴ The annual reports do not show this method of election to have been uniformly employed immediately after 1886; in 1887 three assessors are shown again as elected to serve for one year.⁵ From 1908⁶ to the present time, however, one assessor has been elected each year for a three-year term on a board of three members.

All records are in the Town Hall; except where otherwise noted, they are in the assessors' room. In addition to the following records, see entry 119 for advance tax payments 1932-33; entry 163 for notices to treasurer 1929-35.

Valuations and Assessments (See also entry 110-ii)

80. VALUATION LIST, 1871-- . 68 vols. (dated).

Annual list drawn up for taxation purposes, one copy of which is submitted to collector and another copy to state commissioner of corporations and taxation: Name, address of taxpayer; number of polls in family, value of stock in trade, machinery, live stock, other taxable personal property; location, description, valuation of real estate; total valuations; amount

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Town Records, I, 8, see entry 35.

3. Ibid., I, 343; Annual Reports, 1873, p. 3; 1879, pp. 14, 15, see entry 2.

4. Town Records, I, 343, see entry 35.

5. Annual Reports, 1887, p. 32, see entry 2.

6. Ibid., 1908, p. 59.

7. Ibid., 1939, p. 6.

of tax on polls, personal property, real estate; total tax. Includes certified table of aggregates: Number of real-property owners, personal-estate owners, polls; number, value of livestock according to type; value of machinery, stock in trade, other personal property, land, buildings; total personal, real property valuations; current tax rate, tax rate on polls, real estate, personal property; signatures of assessors, date of certification. Arr. chron. by year thereunder alph. by name of taxpayer. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 300 pp. $18\frac{1}{2}$ x 16 x 1. Gen. va. For commitment list, see entry 114.

81. (Real and Personal) PROPERTY (Valuation) LIST, 1932--. 5 rolls. Prior records destroyed. Name, address of property owner; location, description, valuation of property. Arr. alph. by name of property owner. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 8 x 7.

82. (Published) INVENTORY AND VALUATION OF THE REAL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY IN THE TOWN OF AYER, 1871, 1886, 1906. 3 vols. (dated). Name, address of property owner; type, location, valuation of property; amount of real and personal property, poll taxes; date of inventory. Includes table of aggregates. 1906 also includes yearly tax rate from 1871-1906, list of stockholders of First National Bank of Ayer; list of tax-exempt properties and exemptions granted at request of property owner. Arr. alph. by name of property owner. No index. 50 pp. 9 x 6 x $\frac{1}{2}$. Strm.

83. (LIST OF PERSONS ASSESSED FOR POLL TAX), 1887-91, 1893-1910, 1929--. 18 vols. Name, previous and present addresses, age, sex, occupation of taxpayer. Arr. alph. by name of person taxed. No index. Hdw. 1887-1910; typed 1929--. 50 to 100 pp. 14 x 8 x $\frac{3}{4}$ to 14 x 8 x 1. Gen. va. For commitment list, see entry 116.

Warrants and Abatements
(See also entries 86, 87)

84. (COPIES OF TAX-COLLECTION WARRANTS SENT TO COLLECTOR), 1927--. 16 vols. 1928-- also in (Incoming) Correspondence, entry 110-1. Name, address of taxpayer; amount, type, date of tax; amount, date of abatement; date of warrant, signatures of assessors. Arr. chron. by date of warrant. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 60 pp. 4 x $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 1. For original warrants, see entry 115.

85. ABATEMENT RECORD, 1909--. 2 vols. Name, address of taxpayer; amount, type, date of tax; amount, date of abatement. Arr. chron. by date of abatement. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 150 pp. $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 x $\frac{3}{4}$.

Motor Vehicle Excise

86. APPLICATION FOR ABATEMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLE EXCISE, 1933--.
5 rolls. 1931-32 destroyed.

Name of municipality; name, address of applicant; make, type, model, valuation, year of manufacture of vehicle; engine, maker's number of vehicle; number, date of registration; date of purchase of vehicle; date of application for abatement, reason therefor; amount of abatement asked; amount of original, adjusted excise; if hearing on application, date notice of hearing sent, date of hearing, signatures of applicant and assessors. Arr. chron. by date of application. No index. Hdw. or typed on ptd. form. 8 x 7.

For commitment list, see entry 117.

87. (RECORD OF ABATEMENTS), 1929--. 1 vol.

Name, address of vehicle owner; make, type, year of manufacture, valuation, serial number of vehicle; number, date of registration; amount, date of assessment, commitment; date application for abatement, amount, date of abatement and reason therefor. Arr. alph. by name of vehicle owner. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 125 pp. 11 x 9 x 1.

Plans

88. PLAN OF WOODLOT SURVEYED FOR PERRY THAYER, Dec. 4, 1855.
1 plan.

Land-tenure plan showing dimensions, total area, locations, dimensions of lots east of Shirley Road. Welcome Lothrop, surveyor; publisher, place of publication unknown. Black-and-white. No scale. 16 x 17.

89. PLAN OF JACKSON STREET, 1868. 1 plan.

Land-tenure plan showing names of property owners of lots bordering Jackson Street; numbers, dimensions of lots. Draftsman, Josiah K. Bennett; publisher, place of publication unknown. Black-and-white. No scale. 11 x 8½.

90. PLAN OF ROAD AT AYER, MASS., 1873. 1 plan.

Copy of engineering plan showing area and dimensions of land taken from abutters of road. Horace C. Hovey, surveyor; publisher, place of publication unknown. Black-and-white. 1":50'. 20 x 38.

House Lots

91. HOUSE LOTS IN SOUTH GROTON BELONGING TO H. FORSTER AND W. E. FAULKNER, July 2, 1880. 6 plans.

Copies of land-tenure plans showing names of owners; locations, dimensions, total area of lots. Draftsmen, Parker, Stearns, and Sanborn, publisher, place of publication unknown. Black-and-white. 1":30'. 11 x 9.

92. NONAICOICUS PARK, July 1886. 1 plan.
Land-tenure presented to assessors by Edward H. Richardson, showing land north of Fitchburg, Stony Brook Railroad belonging to Mrs. S. J. Bennett, numbers and dimensions of house lots; names, widths of streets; boundaries, dimensions of park. Horace C. Hovey, surveyor; publisher, place of publication unknown. Blueprint. 1":100'. 21 x 29.

93. PLAN OF THAT PORTION OF NASHUA STREET BETWEEN HIGHLAND AVENUE AND WASHINGTON STREET AS PRAYED FOR, Feb. 1902. 1 plan.
Land-tenure plan showing names of lot owners, abutters; numbers, dimensions, locations, total area of lots; names, widths of streets. Horace C. Hovey, surveyor, publisher, place of publication unknown. Black-and-white. 1":60'. 10 x 28½.

94. PLAN OF HOUSE LOTS FOR AYER, MASS., June 20, 1902. 1 plan.
Land-tenure plan showing house lots on each side of Mountain Avenue from Washington Street, with numbers and dimensions of each. H. C. Hovey, surveyor; publisher, place of publication unknown. Black-and-white. 1":40'. 17 x 15½.

95. PLANS OF HOUSE LOTS - AYER, MASS., June 20, 1902. 2 plans.
Land-tenure plans showing names of lot owners, abutting streets; numbers, dimensions of lots. Horace C. Hovey, surveyor; publisher, place of publication unknown. Black-and-white. 1":40'. 19½ x 15½ and 22 x 17½.

96. (HOUSE LOTS BETWEEN MOUNTAIN AVENUE AND NASHUA STREET), 1902. 1 plan.
Land-tenure plan showing names of lot owners, abutters; numbers, dimensions of lots. Author, publisher, place of publication unknown. Black-and-white. No scale. 17 x 22½.

97. HOUSE LOTS AT AYER, MASS., 1904. 1 plan.
Land-tenure plan showing names, locations of streets; numbers, dimensions, locations, total area of lots. Horace C. Hovey, surveyor; publisher, place of publication unknown. Black-and-white. 1":80'. 14½ x 23.

98. LAND TO BE CONVEYED BY STONE HEIR TO E. A. RICHARDSON, Sept. 1905. 1 plan.
Land-tenure plan showing names of abutting streets; location, dimensions, total area of land; volume and page reference to deed to land recorded in county registry of deeds. Good, Parker & Bateman, civil engineers; publisher, place of publication unknown. Black-and-white. 1":80'. 8 x 21.

Sandy Pond

99. SHORE ACRES (Lots), SANDY POND, Aug. 1907. 1 plan.
Land-tenure plan showing names of lot owners; locations, sizes of lots, boundaries, widths of streets, volume and page to deeds to lots recorded in county registry of deeds. Author, publisher, place of publication unknown. Blueprint. No scale. 23 x 33½.

100. PLAN OF ROAD AT AYER, MASS., Jan., 1908. 1 plan.

Engineering plan of proposed road construction showing names of petitioners, lot owners, abutting streets; table showing amount of land taken from land owners for proposed road; lay-out of road. Horace C. Hovey, surveyor; publisher, place of publication unknown. Black-and-white. 1":50'. $37\frac{1}{2}$ x 18.

Miscellaneous

101. PLAN OF AYER HEIGHTS, Nov. 1917. 1 plan.

Land-tenure plan showing names, lay-out of abutting streets; numbers, dimensions, total area of lots. Frank T. Sweet, civil engineer; publisher, place of publication unknown. Black-and-white. 1":60'. $21\frac{1}{4}$ x $27\frac{1}{2}$.

102. SUNNYSIDE (House Lots), Sept., 1923. 2 plans.

Land-tenure plans showing names of lot owners, streets; numbers, dimensions of house lots. J. A. Latham & Son, surveyors; publisher, place of publication unknown. Ptd. 1":50'. 12 x 9.

103. VICTORY PARK PLOT, May, 1924. 1 plan.

Engineering plan showing triangular piece of park land with south corner at junction of Park Street and Fitchburg Road, belonging to Biltmore Land Company, Providence, Rhode Island. Draftsman, Ralph J. Regmer; publisher, place of publication unknown. Blueprint. 1":40'. $22\frac{1}{2}$ x 26.

104. SUNNYSIDE PLOT, 1934. 1 plan.

Land-tenure plan showing locations, dimensions, areas of lots. Includes letters from Edward P. Masse of the Land Association of Providence, Rhode Island, giving list of customers who received deeds to property in 1924, and advertisement having similar plan with names of lot owners. Author, publisher, place of publication unknown. Blueprint. 1":100'. 12 x 11.

105. SUNNYSIDE FLAT, undated. 1 plan.

Land-tenure plans showing numbers, dimensions of house lots. Author, publisher, place of publication unknown. Blueprint. 1":100'. $13\frac{1}{2}$ x $12\frac{1}{2}$.

106. PLAN OF F. S. PIERCE LOTS AT SANDY POND, Jan. 1935. 1 plan.

Land-tenure plan showing names of lot owners; locations of pond, streets, lots; numbers, dimensions, areas of lots. Author, publisher, place of publication unknown. Black-and-white. No scale. 9 x 11.

107. PLAN OF SANDY POND & SURROUNDING LAND, undated. 1 plan.

Engineering plan showing locations of Sandy Pond, Fletcher Pond, Boston Ice Company, marks of boundaries surrounding Sandy Pond. Horace C. Hovey, surveyor; publisher, place of publication unknown. Blueprint. 1":160'. 32 x $21\frac{1}{2}$.

108. PLAN PAGE-RICHARDSON LOT, 1938. 1 plan.

Land-tenure plan showing names of grantors, grantees; locations, dimensions, areas of lots; volume and page reference to deeds to lots recorded in county registry of deeds. Includes two letters from Ralph N. Richardson regarding correct listing of lots. Author, publisher, place of publication unknown. Blue-print. No scale. $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 11.

Miscellaneous

109. (COPIES OF DOG LIST RETURNED TO CLERK BY ASSESSORS), 1909-11, 1913, 1916-18, 1925--. 1 bdl., 1 f.b.

For description, see entry 64. Arr. alph. by name of dog owner. No index. Typed. 1 bdl., 1909-18, 12 x $5\frac{1}{4}$ x 1, gen. va.; 1 f.b., 1925--, town cl. off.

For original lists, see entry 64.

110. (Incoming) CORRESPONDENCE, 1928--. 1 f.d. Prior records destroyed.

Correspondence from taxpayers regarding tax abatements; from credit departments of various business firms regarding credit standing of individuals; correspondence and bulletins from state department of corporation and taxation, division of accounts, regarding interpretation of taxation laws, legal procedure in matters pertaining to tax titles, changes in law or procedure. Also contains:

1. Copies of tax-collection warrants sent to collector, entry 84.
11. Real and personal property assessments, list of: Name, address of person assessed; number of poll-tax assessments; value, classification of real, personal property; location of real estate; amount of real, personal property tax, date of assessment.

Correspondence arr. alph. by name of correspondent; warrants and assessments arr. chron. by date of warrant or assessment. No index. Correspondence, hdw., typed; warrants and assessments, typed. 11 x $16\frac{1}{2}$ x 26. Filing cabinet.

111. (LIST OF TAXPAYERS), 1930--. 3 f.b. Prior records destroyed. Name, address, age, occupation of taxpayer. Arr. alph. by name of taxpayer. No index. Typed. 6 x 9 x 15.

112. (STREET NUMBER ASSIGNMENTS), 1900. 1 vol.

Record of street numbers assigned and numbers available for future assignment to buildings: Name of building owner; number, location, frontage of building. Arr. alph. by name of st. location. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 200 pp. 12 x 9 x $\frac{3}{4}$.

113. (MILITIA ENROLLMENT), 1917. 1 bdl.

Militia list drawn from list of polls, entry 83: Name, address, age of poll. Arr. alph. by name of poll. No index. Hdw. 28 pp. $10\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 x $\frac{1}{8}$.

For return to town clerk of persons eligible for military duty, 1855-88, see entry 70-i.

V. TAX COLLECTOR¹

The office of tax collector is one of those set up at the first town meeting and which has undergone few changes since.² The position was let out on a bid system during the first years, the lowest bidder receiving the office.³ When the Australian method of election was adopted in 1890 the office of tax collector was one of those on the ballot.⁴ Although the office was elective in 1891, the collector still received his pay on a percentage basis.⁵

The town now makes a regular appropriation for the collector's salary.⁶ Since 1908 the officer has been bonded.⁷ The term of office is one year.⁸

All records are in the Town Hall; except where otherwise noted, they are in the general vault. In addition to the following records, see entry 164 for notices to treasurer.

Commitments

114. (Property) TAX (Commitment) LIST, 1872-1921 (intermittently), 1922--. 39 vols.

Name, address of taxpayer; valuation of real and personal property; amount of moth, street-sprinkling, betterment assessment; amount of abatement; total assessments; amounts, dates of payments. Also contains: Poll-tax commitment list, 1872-1917, entry 116. Arr. alph. by name of taxpayer. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 250 pp. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 6 x 1. 35 vols., 1872-1932, gen. va.; 4 vols., 1933--., town cl. off.

For valuation list, see entry 80.

115. ASSESSORS' WARRANTS, 1873-1881, 1895-96, 1910--. 6 bdls.

Warrants to collector for collection of taxes: For description, see entry 84. Arr. chron. by date of warrant. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 13 x 13 x 8. Sel. rm.

116. (POLL-TAX COMMITMENT LIST), 1918, 1920, 1925--. 1872-1917 in (Property) Tax (Commitment) List, entry 114. 6 vols.

Name, address of poll; amount of assessment; amount, date of payment. Arr. alph. by name of poll. No index. Hdw. 100 pp. 8 x 5 x 3/8.

For assessment list, see entry 83.

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Town Records, I, 14 to II, 234 passim, see entry 35.

3. Ibid., I, 62, 126, 129.

4. Ibid., p. 445.

5. Ibid., p. 471.

6. Annual Reports, 1939, p. 198, see entry 2.

7. Ibid., 1908, p. 64.

8. Ibid., 1939, p. 6.

[117-122]

Tax Collector -
Commitments

117. (COMMITMENT LIST OF EXCISE TAXES), 1929--. 10 vols.

Name, address of vehicle owner; years of manufacture, date of registration of vehicle; amount, period of assessment; amount of abatement, total assessment; amount, date of payment. Arr. alph. by name of vehicle owner. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 40 pp. $16\frac{1}{2} \times 14 \times \frac{1}{2}$. 5 vols., 1929-33, gen. va.; 5 vols., 1934--., town cl. off.

For applications for and record of abatements, see entries 86, 87, respectively.

118. NOTICES, 1932-34. 3 bdls.

Copies of notices to taxpayers requesting payment of taxes: Name, address of taxpayer; amount, date of assessment; date of notice, signature of collector. Arr. chron. by date of notice. No index. Typed. $7\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$.

119. ASSESSORS' CERTIFICATES TO COLLECTOR OF TAXES AUTHORIZING
ADVANCE PAYMENTS, 1932-33. 2 bdls.

Authorization by assessors to accept advance payment of taxes on which 6% interest is allowed, showing names and addresses of taxpayers advancing payment, amount and date of payment, certificate number, signatures of assessors. Arr. chron. by date of payment. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $9 \times 9\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$. Sel. rm.

Receipts

120. CASH, 1902, 1911--. 30 vols.

Record of monies received from payment of real and personal property taxes and special assessments: Name of taxpayer; amount, source, date of receipt; amount of abatement, interest (if any); total tax; amount, date of payment. Also contains: Poll-tax cash receipts, 1902, 1911-30, entry 121; motor vehicle excise receipts, 1929-30, entry 122. Arr. chron. by date of receipt. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 52 pp. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{2} \times 1$. 27 vols., 1902-33, gen. va.; 3 vols., 1934--., town cl. off.

121. POLL TAX CASH, 1931--. 6 vols. 1902, 1911-30 in Cash,
entry 120.

Record of money received from poll assessments: Name, address of taxpayer; amount of assessment; amount of interest (if any), total assessment; date of receipt. Arr. alph. by name of taxpayer. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 152 pp. $12 \times 10 \times \frac{1}{2}$. 3 vols., 1931-34, gen. va.; 3 vols., 1935--., town cl. off.

122. CASH - MOTOR VEHICLE EXCISE, 1931--. 8 vols. 1929-30 in
Cash, entry 120.

Record of money received from motor vehicle excise assessments: Name, address of vehicle owner; make, model, date of registration of car; period, amount, date of assessment; amount, date of payment. Arr. by name of vehicle owner. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 72 pp. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 9 \times \frac{1}{2}$.

Tax Collector -
Receipts

123. (TREASURER'S RECEIPTS), 1931-35. 1 bdl.

Treasurer's acknowledgment of receipt of tax collections from collector: Name of collector; amount, type of tax collected, amount of interest, total collection, signature of treasurer, date of receipt. Arr. chron. by date of receipt. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 200 pp. 7 x 5 x 2.

For copies of receipts kept by treasurer, see entry 133.

VI. TREASURER¹

The office of treasurer was one of those set up at the first town meeting when one was elected to serve for one year.² The election has been held in the same manner until the present time.³ The only change in the method has been the inclusion of the treasurer on a ballot with other officers after 1890.⁴

The treasurer has held the usual powers given to his office in other towns in the state, and at various times has been empowered to transfer sums from one town appropriation to another at the order of the selectmen.⁵ In 1908 it was voted that thereafter he would be bonded,⁶ and in 1912 he was given authority by the town bylaws to have custody of all town receipts of bills, notes, bonds, coupons, etc., except those of the water department (the town treasurer is also the treasurer of the water department), and the receipts for his own bond.⁷

All records are in the Town Hall; except where otherwise noted, they are in the general vault. In addition to the following records, see entries 123, 268, 311 for acknowledgment of payments to treasurer.

Reports

124. (SEMIANNUAL STATEMENT TO COUNTY TREASURER OF DOG LICENSE FEES COLLECTED), 1933--. 4 bdls.

Name of municipality, total number of licenses issued; amount of fees collected, deductions by town; amount returned to county treasurer; date of statement, signature of treasurer. Arr. chron. by date of statement. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 11 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1/8. Sel. rm.

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1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.
 2. Town Records, I, 8, see entry 35.
 3. Annual Reports, 1939, p. 3, see entry 2.
 4. Town Records, I, 418, see entry 35.
 5. Annual Reports, 1904, p. 59, see entry 2.
 6. Ibid., 1908, p. 64.
 7. Ibid., 1912, p. 78.

125. REPORT OF FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS, 1926-27. 2 pamphlets (dated).

Copies of reports containing the following schedules, submitted to the state department of corporations and taxation, division of accounts:

- i. Schedule A - report of receipts and expenditures: Name of municipality, official furnishing information, person receiving schedule; period of fiscal year; receipts from taxes, licenses and permits, fines and forfeits, grants and gifts, special assessments, various departments, public-service enterprises, cemeteries, trusts and funds; payments for departmental expenses, public-service enterprises, trusts and funds, cemeteries, date report mailed from municipality; remarks.
- ii. Schedule C - report of outstanding debt: Name of municipality; name, type, purpose of loan; rate of interest, amount outstanding; amount of annual payments, sinking funds, net debt; period of fiscal year; date of loan issue, maturity; signature of official furnishing information.
- iii. Schedule E - report of public trust fund: Name of municipality; name of fund, period of fiscal year, cash and appraised values of real property, savings-bank deposits; par value of securities on hand at beginning and end of year; sources or purposes of receipts or payments; date of report, signature of official furnishing information.
- iv. Schedule G - report of investment fund: For description, see iii.
- v. Schedule H - report of cemetery perpetual care trust fund: For description, see iii.
- vi. Schedule I - report of municipal properties and public improvements: Name of municipality, period of fiscal year; cost of improvements in various departments for land and buildings, furniture, other property; total cost for each department, for all departments; date of report, signature of official furnishing information.

Arr. chron. by date of report. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 75 pp. 13 x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{4}$.

Receipts and Expenditures
(See also entries 124, 125-i)

126. JOURNAL (Cash Book), 1871-1922, 1933--. 9 vols. Title varies: Cash Book, Town of Ayer, 1871-99, 3 vols.; Cash, 1871-87, 1 vol.; Treasurer's Book, 1899-1922, 4 vols.

Receipts from tax collections, sale and rental of town property, other sources: Name of payer; amount, source, date of income. Expenditures for departmental and other expenses: Name of payee; amount, accounting, date of payment; order number. Arr. chron. by date of transaction. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 500 pp. 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15 x 2.

127. (RECORD OF DEPARTMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS AND EXPENDITURES), 1935--. 1 folder. Prior records destroyed.

Name of department; amount, date of appropriation, expenditures; total expenditures, appropriation balance. Arr. chron. by date of expenditure. No index. Hdw., typed. 100 pp. 11 x 9 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

128. (RECORD OF FEES RECEIVED FOR DOG LICENSES), 1933--. 4 envs. Prior records destroyed.

Itemization of fees collected, total amount collected, amount, date received by treasurer. Arr. chron. by date of receipt. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $9\frac{1}{2}$ x $12\frac{1}{2}$ x $1/16$. 2 envs., 1933-34, gen. va.; 2 envs., 1935--, filing cabinet, town cl. off.

Orders, Bills, Vouchers

129. ORDERS, 1929--. 154 envs. (labeled by contained order nos.). Prior records destroyed.

Selectmen's orders to treasurer for payment of town bills: For description, see entry 4. Arr. num. by order no. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 12 x 9 x $1/8$.

130. VOUCHERS, 1929, 1933-35. 4 envs. (dated). Prior records destroyed.

Contains:

- i. Departmental authorizations for payment of bills: Name of payee; amount, purpose of payment; date of voucher, signature of authorizing official.
- ii. Notations of receipts and payments: Name of payer or payee; amount, source or purpose, date of receipt or expenditure; signature of treasurer.
- iii. Notification (copy) of abatement of motor vehicle tax, received from assessors: Name of taxpayer; amount, year of tax; date of notice, signatures of assessors. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2}$ x 9 x $\frac{1}{4}$.

131. BILLS - CITY OF WORCESTER, MASS. - INDEPENDENT INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS, 1932--. 8 bdls. Prior records destroyed.

Bills for tuition of Ayer pupils attending outside industrial schools: Name of payee (Ayer superintendent of schools); names, addresses of pupils; tuition rate for boys, girls; total tuition due, signature of superintendent of industrial school, date of bill. Arr. chron. by date of bill. No index. Typed on ptd. form. 7 x 6 x $1/8$. Sel. rm.

Acknowledgments

132. RECEIPTS BOOKS, 1919-20, 1929, 1931--. 8 vols.

Stubs of receipts used in recording monies transferred to treasurer: Name of department, payer; amount, date of transfer; number, date of receipt. Arr. chron. by date of receipt. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 100 pp. 11 x 3 x $\frac{1}{2}$. 7 vols., 1919-36, gen. va.; 1 vol., 1936--, town cl. off.

133. (Copies of) TREASURER'S RECEIPTS TO COLLECTOR OF TAXES, 1931--. 7 bdl. Prior records destroyed.

For description, see entry 123. Arr. chron. by date of receipt. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 7 x 5 x $\frac{1}{8}$. 6 bdl., 1931-36, town cl. off.; 1 bdl., 1937--, filing cabinet, treas. rm.

134. (PRINCIPAL-AND INTEREST-PAYMENT RECEIPTS OF BANKS), 1929-33. 1 f.d.

Name of bank; amount, source, date of receipt; signature of bank official. Arr. chron. by date of receipt. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 14 x 25 $\frac{1}{2}$. Sel. rm.

Notes and Bonds

(See also entries 125-ii, 146, 147)

135. (NOTE STUBS), 1920--. 16 vols. Missing: 1923-1935.

Stubs of notes issued in anticipation of taxes: Name of department making loan, date of town meeting authorizing loan; amount, purpose, date of loan; date of issue, maturity; amount of previous issue, balance of loan unissued, interest rate; provisions for payment at maturity; signatures of treasurer and selectmen. Arr. chron. by date of issue. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 20 pp. 18 x 13 x 1/8.

136. NOTES - PAID AND CANCELED, 1932--. 1 bdl.

Name of payee, payer; amount, purpose, rate of interest of note; date of issue, maturity; signatures of treasurer, selectmen, and clerk. Arr. chron. by maturity date of note. No index. Typed on ptd. form. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 25 $\frac{1}{2}$. Town cl. off.

137. SURETY BONDS FOR OFFICIALS OF TOWN OF AYER, 1871--. 1 bdl. 1 f.b.

Bonds guaranteeing faithful performance of duty: Name, address, occupation of principal; name, address of surety; amount, conditions, duration, date of bond; signatures of principal, surety, and witnesses. Arr. chron. by date of bond. No index. Hdw. or typed on ptd. form. 9 x 4 x 2; f.b. 5 x 6 x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$.

138. SURETY BONDS (for Liquor Licenses), 1875, 1878-81, 1883-87, 1899-1907, 1909, 1934--. 1 bdl., 1 env.

Bonds guaranteeing observance of terms of license: For description, see entry 137. Arr. chron. by date of bond. No index. Hdw. or typed on ptd. form. Bdl. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 x $\frac{1}{2}$; env. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 8.

Treasurer

Tax-Title Accounts

139. COLLECTOR'S DEEDS (and) INSTRUMENTS OF (Land) TAKING, 1933--.
1 env.

Contains:

- i. Instruments of land taking: Name of municipality, county; name of property owner; location, description of property; amount, date of tax overdue; amount of interest, costs incurred; date of demand of payment, reason for taking, date of instrument, attestation of collector.
- ii. Tax-title deeds to property foreclosed for nonpayment of taxes: Name, address of taxpayer; location, description of property; amount, date of regular, special assessments; amount, period of tax; date of demand of payment, date of notice of sale of property, redemption; volume and page reference to deed recorded in county registry of deeds; date, day, hour, minute of recording; date of deed, signature of collector, attestation of notary public.

Arr. chron. by date of deed. No index. Typed on ptd. form. $4\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{2} \times 1$.
Treas. rm.

140. TAX TITLE ACCOUNT, 1933--. 1 vol.
Record of money received for partial payments on and redemption of property taken for nonpayment of taxes: Name, address of taxpayer; amount, type of tax due; amount of interest, process and advertising costs, fees; dates of demand of payment, advertising, foreclosure, redemption, release; name of newspaper advertising sale of property, volume and page reference to tax-title deed recorded in county registry of deeds. No obvious arr. No index. Typed on ptd. form. 50 pp. $12\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{2} \times 1$.

141. (RECORD OF REDEEMED TAX TITLES), 1928--. 1 env.
Name, address of property owner; amount, date of interest, taxes, costs paid; date of redemption, amount due. Arr. chron. by date of redemption. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $4 \times 9\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$. Town cl. off.

Water Department Accounts

142. TREASURY DEPARTMENT, Mar. 11, 1899--. 3 vols. (dated).
Record of checks issued for water department: Name of payee; amount, date of check, deposit; check, voucher number; balance in bank, amount of outstanding checks, reconciliation of bank balance. Arr. chron. by date of check. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 350 pp. $10 \times 11 \times 2$. 2 vols., 1899-1937, gen. va.; 1 vol., 1937--., treas. rm.

143. CANCELED CHECKS, TOWN OF AYER WATER DEPARTMENT, FIRST NATIONAL BANK, AYER, 1925--. 21 bdls. Prior records destroyed.
Name, endorsement of payee; amount, number of check; date of issue, cancellation; signature of payer. Arr. numer. by check no. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $8\frac{1}{2} \times 6 \times 9$. 20 bdls., 1925-35, gen. va.; 1 bdl., 1936--., sel. rm.

[144-150]

Treasurer -
Water Departments Accounts

144. TOWN OF AYER, WATER DEPARTMENT (Bank Statements), IN ACCOUNT WITH FIRST NATIONAL BANK, AYER, 1923-26, 1929-32, 1934--.
11 bdl.

Name of bank, account; amount, date of each deposit, withdrawal; balance at beginning and end of month. Arr. chron. by month. No index. Typed on ptd. form. 4 x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 to 4 x 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$. 9 bdl., 1923-35, gen. va.; 2 bdl., 1936--., treas. rm.

145. VOUCHERS (Water Department Bills Receivable), 1929--. 2 bdl.
Name of payer; amount, number, date of bill, signatures of water commissioners. Arr. chron. by date of bill. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 9 x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$. 1 bdl. 1929-35, gen. va.; 1 bdl., 1936--., town cl. off.

High School Construction Accounts

146. LEDGER, 1930-33. 1 vol.

Name, number of account; amount, date of debit, credit posting. Includes record of bond issue, correspondence, bond statements, and purchase slips. Arr. alph. by name of account. No index. Hdw. 275 pp. 10 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1.

147. (CANCELED BONDS), 1931--. 1 vol.

Name, number, amount of bond; date of authorization, issue, maturity; interest rate; method, place, date of redemption; signature of treasurer. Also contains paid coupons containing above information and including amount of coupon, cancelation stamp. No index. Ptd. 30 pp. 16 x 10 x 1.

148. BANK STATEMENT(s) - SPECIAL SCHOOL FUND, TOWN OF AYER, FIRST NATIONAL BANK AYER, 1930-33. 1 bdl., 1 f.b. No title, 1930-32, 1 bdl.

For description, see entry 144. Arr. chron. by date of statement. No index. Typed on ptd. form. Bdl. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 x $\frac{1}{2}$; f.b. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 25. Sel. rm.

149. TOWN OF AYER, HIGH SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION (Pass Books), 1930-33.
2 vols.

Record of bank deposits: Name of bank; amount, date of deposit. Arr. chron. by date of deposit. No index. Hdw. 15 pp. 6 x 3 x 1/8. 1 vol., 1930-31, gen. va.; 1 vol., 1932-33, sel. rm.

150. (VOUCHERS FOR PURCHASE OF MATERIALS USED IN CONSTRUCTION), 1931. .1 env.

Name of creditor; amount, number, date of issue of voucher; itemization of purchases, signatures of selectmen. Arr. chron. by date of issue. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 12 x 9 x 1.

Treasurer

Checks and Bank Accounts

(See also entries 142-144, 148, 149, 157-159, 162)

151. TOWN OF AYER, CHECK REGISTER, TREASURY DEPT., 1931--. 2 vols.
For description, see entry 142. Arr. chron. by date of check. No index.
Hdw. on ptd. form. 400 pp. $14\frac{1}{2}$ x $14\frac{1}{2}$ x $1\frac{1}{2}$.

152. (CANCELED CHECKS), 1929--. 134 envs., 4 f.b. Prior records destroyed.
For description, see entry 143. Arr. num. by check no. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. Env. $12 \times 8\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{4}$; f.b. $11 \times 12\frac{1}{2} \times 25$. 134 envs., 1929-32, gen. va.; 4 f.b., 1933--, town cl. off.

153. (CHECK STUBS), 1925--. 32 vols. Prior records destroyed.
Name of payee; amount, number, date of check. Arr. num. by check no. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 100 pp. $14 \times 10 \times \frac{1}{2}$. 25 vols., 1925-34, gen. va.; 7 vols., 1926--, town cl. off.

154. BANK STATEMENTS - TOWN OF AYER - FROM FIRST NATIONAL BANK, AYER, 1926--. 1 bdl. Prior records destroyed.
For description, see entry 144. Arr. chron. by date of statement. No index. Typed on ptd. form. $9\frac{1}{2} \times 4 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. Sel. rm.

155. (DUPLICATE DEPOSIT SLIPS), 1931--. 1 bdl.
Name of bank, account; amount, type, date of deposit. Arr. chron. by date of deposit. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15\frac{1}{2} \times 25$. Sel. rm.

156. (PASS BOOKS - FIRST NATIONAL BANK), 1924--. 8 vols. Prior records destroyed.
Record of bank deposits: Name of bank; amount, date of deposit. Arr. chron. by date of deposit. Hdw. No index. 14 pp. $6 \times 3\frac{1}{4} \times 1/8$. Treas. rm.

Fund

(See also entry 125-iii, -iv, -v)

157. THOMAS H. PAGE FUND (Bank) STATEMENTS, FIRST NATIONAL BANK, TOWN OF AYER, 1930--. 4 statements.
For description, see entry 144. Arr. chron. by date of statement. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $9\frac{1}{2} \times 4$. Town cl. off.

158. THOMAS H. PAGE FUND - DEPOSIT TICKETS, FIRST NATIONAL BANK, TOWN OF AYER, 1931--. 2 bdls.
Name of account; amount, type, date of deposit. Arr. chron. by date of deposit. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $6 \times 3 \times \frac{1}{4}$. 1 bdl., 1931-36, gen. va.; 1 bdl., 1936--, sel. rm.

159. PASS BOOK(s), FIRST NATIONAL BANK, TOWN OF AYER, THOMAS H. PAGE FUND, 1931--. 4 vols.

Record of bank deposits: Name of bank; amount, date of deposit. Arr. chron. by date of deposit. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 6 x $3\frac{1}{4}$ x $1\frac{1}{8}$.

For other passbooks, kept by commissioners of trust funds, see entry 172.

160. (BILLS PAID FROM INCOME OF JESSE J. ANGELL FUND), 1933--. 1 env. Bills for necessities distributed to poor: Name, address of creditor; amount, itemization, date of bill. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. or typed on ptd. form. 4 x $7\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{4}$. Sel. rm.

161. (ORDERS OF COMMISSIONERS OF TRUST FUNDS), 1935--. 1 env. Orders to treasurer to pay from trust-fund accounts: Name of vendor; quantity; description of merchandise; amount, date of order; signatures of trustees. Arr. chron. by date of order. No index. Hdw. $9\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 x $\frac{1}{2}$. Town cl. off. For copies of orders 1930--., see entry 173.

162. BANK STATEMENT, FEDERAL SOCIAL SECURITY FUND, FIRST NATIONAL BANK, TOWN OF AYER, 1936. 1 sheet. For description, see entry 144. Typed on ptd. form. 1 p. $9\frac{1}{2}$ x $9\frac{1}{2}$. Sel. rm.

Miscellaneous

163. (ASSESSORS' NOTICES TO TREASURER REGARDING TAX-COLLECTION WARRANTS SENT TO COLLECTOR), 1929--. 1 bdl. Prior records destroyed. Name, address of taxpayer; amount, type of tax due; amount of interest, other charges; date of issue of notice, signatures of assessors. Includes orders to pay specified amounts to state and county treasurers. Arr. chron. by date of issue. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 11 x $8\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$.

164. NOTICES BY COLLECTOR OF TAXES TO TOWN TREASURER, 1932--. 2 bdls. Notices to stop payment of money due certain individuals until further notice, and apply amount to overdue taxes: Name, address of taxpayer; amount due, reason for and date of notice. Arr. chron. by date of notice. No index. Hdw. 7 x $8\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$ and $5\frac{1}{2}$ x $8\frac{1}{2}$ x $1\frac{1}{8}$. 1 bdl., 1932-35, gen. va.; 1 bdl., 1936--., town cl. off.

165. MOTOR EXCISE TAX REFUNDS, 1931--. 1 f.b. Notices from tax collector stating refunds were made to taxpayers covering period of nonownership of motor vehicle: Name, address of taxpayer; amount, date of notice, signature of collector. Arr. chron. by date of notice. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $9\frac{1}{2}$ x $4\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$. Town cl. off.

166. (AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE POLICIES), 1935--. 2 bdls. Policies on town motor vehicles: Name, address of insurance company, agent; description of insured article; conditions, number of policy; amount of principal, premium payments; date of issue, expiration; signature of company official. Arr. chron. by date of issue. No index. Typed on ptd. form. 9 x 4 x $\frac{3}{4}$.

167. INSURANCE POLICIES (on Town Property), 1911-22, 1936, 1938--.
2 bdl.

For description, see entry 166. Arr. chron. by date of expiration. No index. Typed on ptd. form. 9 x 4 x 2. 1 bdl., 1911-36, gen. va.; 1 bdl., 1938-- , treas. rm.

168. (CORRESPONDENCE), 1933--. 2 f.d. Prior records destroyed. Correspondence with state officials, bankers, representatives, town departments regarding financial transactions. Arr. alph. by subject. No index. Hdw., typed. $11\frac{1}{2}$ x $15\frac{1}{2}$ x $23\frac{1}{2}$. Sel. rm.

169. (ASSIGNMENTS OF CONTRACTS TO LOWELL TRUST CO.), July 22-Sept. 30, 1930. 1 env.

Contracts for town work assigned by contractors to Lowell Trust Company and subsequently expired: Name of assignee, assignor; declaration, date of assignment of all rights of assignors in contract; conditions, amount of contract; amount of consideration, signature of assignor. Includes acknowledgment: Attestation, date of act; signature of notary public. Also includes letters from assignees notifying town of assignment and amount due. Arr. chron. by date of assignment. No index. Typed. $9\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

170. (SCHOOL EMPLOYEES' SALARY-REDUCTION AGREEMENT), 1934. 1 sheet. Agreement for a 10% reduction in pay of school teachers and janitors to avoid loss of pension benefits: Names of teachers, janitors; reason for deduction, date of agreement; signatures of treasurer, teachers, and janitors. Typed. 1 p. 11 x $8\frac{1}{2}$.

VII. AUDITORS¹

Since 1874 some form of audit of the town accounts has been shown in most issues of the annual reports. In 1874 a committee of two reported that it had checked the receipts and expenditures of the town officers;² from that year to 1881 two or three auditors are found each year.³ In 1883 two persons signed themselves "The Auditing Committee",⁴ and in 1904 the auditors reported that they had included the accounts of the water department, tax collector, treasurer, and selectmen in their audit.⁵

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Annual Reports, 1874 (unfolioed), see entry 2.

3. Ibid., 1875 (unfolioed); 1880, p. 19; 1881, p. 20.

4. Ibid., 1883, p. 26.

5. Ibid., 1904, p. 51.

Several unsatisfactory features were found in the auditing system of the early years. One was the necessity for carrying a large amount for 'town incidentals' in each year's appropriations;¹ another was the method of transferring unused balances from one department to another on order of the selectmen.² Not all of the departments' accounts were checked by the auditors; in 1906 the town meeting found it necessary to vote "to have the school committee and all other town accounts audited hereafter and to adopt and accept printed reports of the town officers."³ Earlier, in 1900, one of the auditors refused to sign the report of the committee and stated that he was "unable to certify to the correctness of the tax collector's books as I consider it impossible to arrive at any definite result owing to the system now in vogue in the department."⁴

In 1910 the General Court enacted a measure permitting towns to petition the director of the bureau of statistics for a State audit of their accounts;⁵ it amended this act in 1913 and instructed that the warrants for the next succeeding town meetings should provide for a vote on the question.⁶ This article, when brought up in Ayer, was tabled indefinitely;⁷ more detailed reports of the town auditors are found in the next few years, however.⁸ In some of these years the auditors recommended changes in the method of handling funds in certain departments.⁹ A State audit in 1923 found a large discrepancy in one account, stubs of water bills destroyed, and the water registrar handling large sums without being under bond.¹⁰ As recently as 1931 the State audit reported that "The town is in poor financial condition. . . brought about by failure when making appropriations from funds in the treasury to have at hand information as to the financial standing and illegal overdrafts."¹¹

At the present time the work of the auditors is more thorough than in past years. Three auditors are elected at each annual meeting.¹² Their reports, appearing as part of each printed annual report, shows audits of the accounts of the clerk, police department, infirmary, treasurer, water department, and other town offices.¹³

The auditors keep no records.

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1. Ibid., 1903, p. 24.
 2. Ibid., 1904, p. 59.
 3. Ibid., 1906, p. 83.
 4. Ibid., 1900, p. 45.
 5. Acts, 1910, ch. 598, sec. 1.
 6. Ibid., 1913, ch. 706, sec. 2.
 7. Annual Reports, 1915, p. 22, see entry 2.
 8. Ibid., 1916, p. 110; 1917, p. 140; 1924, p. 115; 1937, p. 38.
 9. Ibid., 1918, p. 195; 1924, p. 115.
 10. Ibid., 1923, p. 28.
 11. Ibid., 1931, p. 46.
 12. Ibid., 1939, p. 6.
 13. Ibid., pp. 91-99.

VIII. ADVISORY COMMITTEE¹

A committee to advise the town on its appropriations and expenditures does not appear in the town reports until 1917, when the bylaws were amended to provide for the creation of a committee of three.² Previous to this time decisions on appropriations had been made directly by the voters at the town meeting, or at the recommendation of the town officers. Decisions by vote of the meeting had been made since the first town meeting in 1871;³ from time to time the school committee,⁴ water commissioners,⁵ selectmen, and others advised that certain appropriations be made for the use of their departments.⁶ A more definite control over town funds was given to the selectmen in 1904, when it was voted that at their direction the treasurer might transfer unused balances from the appropriations of one town department to another department.⁷ In 1914 the selectmen were given authority to inspect the accounts of all town departments and to approve all bills to be paid.⁸

The lack of a regular body to approve expenditures proved an unsatisfactory arrangement; it resulted in a large appropriation for unclassified 'town incidentals' each year,⁹ and some departments exceeded their appropriations at the expense of others.¹⁰ When the advisory board was set up in 1917 it consisted of three members, appointed by the selectmen, one to serve one year, another to serve two years, the third, three years, and their successors to be appointed annually for three-year terms.¹¹ This system of appointment was authorized by an act of the General Court, passed in 1910, which also gave the advisory committee the power to examine and consider all municipal affairs making their recommendations and reports thereon to the town meetings.¹²

The advisory committee first appears listed with other town officers in the annual report for 1928.¹³ In some years before this, however, reference to the committee is found in the selectmen's reports. In 1920 the selectmen reported the appointment of a "finance or advisory" committee of three.¹⁴ They referred to work done at the recommendation of the committee in 1925.¹⁵ Separate reports of the committee are made in the annual

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Town Records, II, 293, 294, see entry 35.

3. Ibid., I, 19.

4. Ibid., p. 521.

5. Annual Reports, 1881, p. 14.

6. Town Records, I, 126, see entry 35; Annual Reports, 1888, pp. 13, 14, see entry 2.

7. Ibid., 1904, p. 59.

8. Ibid., 1914, p. 116. See also Acts, 1913, ch. 669, sec. 1.

9. Annual Reports, 1876-1916, passim, see entry 2.

10. Ibid., 1904, p. 59.

11. Town Records, II, 293, 294, see entry 35.

12. Acts, 1910, ch. 130.

13. Annual Reports, 1928, p. 3, see entry 2.

14. Ibid., 1920, p. 78.

15. Ibid., 1925, p. 61.

report for 1931 and subsequent years.¹ In 1933 the bylaws were again amended in regard to the advisory committee; since this time the committee has consisted of five members, still appointed by the selectmen, two for one year, two for two years, and one for three years, their successors to be appointed annually.² A second amendment to the bylaws that year provided that no money be appropriated at special town meetings except by a two-thirds vote of the body present.³

The committee keeps no records.

IX. COMMISSIONERS OF TRUST FUNDS⁴

In 1920 Jesse J. Angell, a former Ayer resident, died in Hudson and left a fund of \$1,000, the interest and income to be used to aid the deserving poor not living in the poorhouse and not receiving their full support from the town. It was stipulated in the bequest that the town elect trustees to administer the fund. Three were elected, to serve one, two, and three years respectively, with the annual election of one trustee for three years thereafter.⁵ This method of election has been used to the present time.⁶

The Angell fund was the only one included in the reports of the commissioners until 1929;⁷ in one year they signed themselves "Commissioners of the Jesse J. Angell Fund."⁸ In 1929, when the town accepted a gift of \$15,000 from the will of Thomas Page to be used for school purposes, this fund was also turned over to the commissioners for supervision.⁹

The trustees did not have supervision over the Ayer Library Fund, established in 1871 expressly for library use and to supervise which three persons were elected at the town meeting,¹⁰ and the Maggie Fury Fund, a smaller fund placed in the hands of the overseers of the poor.¹¹

1. Ibid., 1931, pp. 174-175; 1936, p. 145; 1939, p. 197.

2. Ibid., 1933, p. 17; By-Laws, art. IX, secs. 1, 4, see entry 67.

3. Ibid., art. I, sec. 5.

4. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

5. Annual Reports, 1920, p. 83, see entry 2.

6. Ibid., 1939, p. 6.

7. Ibid., 1924, p. 90; 1925, p. 73; 1929, p. 26.

8. Ibid., 1925, p. 73.

9. Town Records, II, 662, see entry 35.

10. Ibid., I, 32-34.

11. Annual Reports, 1931, p. 160, see entry 2.

All records are in the residence of Ralph H. Richardson (clerk of commissioners) 8 Washington Street. In addition to following records, see entries 125-iii, -iv, -v, 157-161 for trust-fund records kept by town treasurer.

171. (MINUTES OF MEETINGS), 1931--. 1 vol. Discussions and decisions regarding administration of trust funds; place, date of meeting. Arr. chron. by date of meeting. No index. Hdw. 152 pp. $8\frac{1}{2} \times 7 \times \frac{1}{2}$.

172. (CANCELED BANKBOOKS - THOMAS H. PAGE FUND), 1888-1929. 10 envs. in 1 box. Discont. as record of commissioners 1929. Bankbooks representing fund left upon death of Thomas H. Page, in trust for Mrs. Mary E. Heath: Amount of income received by Mrs. Heath, amount of principal transferred to town upon death of Mrs. Heath. No obvious arr. No index. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$.

For other passbooks, kept by town treasurer, see entry 159.

173. (MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS), 1930--. 1 f.b. Contains:

- i. Annual reports to the town, copies of: Amount, source of annual receipts; amount, reason for expenditures; balance on hand at end of period, date of report, signatures of commissioners.
 - ii. Bills for maintenance, supplies, repairs: Name of creditor; amount, itemization, date of bill.
 - iii. Correspondence relative to administration of trust-fund accounts.
 - iv. Orders (copies) to treasurer to pay monies from trust funds, showing same information as in entry 161.
- Arr chron. by date of record. No index. Hdw., typed. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$.

174. (PLANS FOR ALTERATIONS TO SHIRLEY STREET SCHOOL), 1933. 3 plans. Plans for installation of heating plant in basement, first and second floors, paid for out of Thomas H. Page fund. Draftsman, Philip A. Willis; publisher, place of publication unknown. $1/8":1'$. $3\frac{1}{2} \times 17$.

X. SCHOOL COMMITTEE¹

A school committee of three members was one of the first offices established after the incorporation of the town in 1871. The members were elected to serve for one, two and three years respectively, their

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

successors to serve three-year terms and one to be elected at each annual town meeting.¹ This method of election has remained unchanged.²

The creation of the formal committee was not the first move of the south section of Groton, later Ayer, to have a part in the conduct of the school affairs of the area. More than a half century earlier the town of Groton had been divided into 12 school districts, at least two and quite likely three of which were in the South Groton section, and had passed bylaws providing that residents of the various districts should meet annually or oftener, elect officers, and exercise a partial control over school matters. Each district was permitted to employ a schoolmaster or mistress and to receive a part of the school funds set aside by the town.³ Twenty years later prudential committees are referred to in these districts,⁴ and a few years later were empowered to make certain repairs on school buildings and perform other functions.⁵

The committee had supervision over six schools at the time of its formation, including a high school and three primary schools.⁶ For the first year's operation the committee received the largest single appropriation made by the town.⁷ An immediate building program was undertaken which resulted in a new school on Washington Street in 1874,⁸ additions to it in 1884,⁹ and another new building on Pleasant Street in 1894.¹⁰

The committee was asked in 1889 to place its approval on a proposal to unite Ayer in a school union with Townsend, Pepperell and Littleton.¹¹ A union was formed later¹² and changed in 1899 to provide for more of the time of the school superintendent serving all of the towns.¹³ The committee sought to include Ayer in a new three-town union in 1910, but was overruled by the State.¹⁴ The town then became part of a union with Shirley, Boylston and West Boylston.¹⁵ Another change in 1921 united Ayer with Shirley and Boxboro as a school district.¹⁶

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1. Town Records, I, 23, see entry 35.
 2. Annual Reports, 1939, p. 6, see entry 2.
 3. Groton School Bylaws, 1805, p. 3.
 4. Ibid., 1828, art. I.
 5. Ibid., 1837, art. VII.
 6. Annual Reports, 1872, (unfolioed), see entry 2.
 7. Ibid.
 8. Ibid., 1874, (unfolioed); Town Records, I, p. 23 et seq., see entry 35.
 9. Annual Reports, 1884, school committee report, p. 3, see entry 2.
 10. Ibid., 1894, school committee report, pp. 4-9.
 11. Town Records, I, 423, see entry 35.
 12. Annual Reports, 1891, school committee report, p. 6, see entry 2.
 13. Ibid., 1910, p. 154.
 14. Ibid.
 15. Ibid.
 16. Ibid., 1921, p. 158.

The board has undertaken a number of activities in connection with the health of school children. In 1884 it asked that the board of health take steps to prevent the spread of smallpox in the schools.¹ At various times it requested that the children be vaccinated,² and since 1906 the schools have had the services of a school physician³ who visits the schools, holds clinics and makes various physical examinations of pupils.⁴ One year a dental hygienist was appointed⁵ and since 1917 a public health nurse has worked in the schools under the direction of the school physician and the board of health.⁶

Since 1884 the committee has provided free textbooks for the children in accordance with state regulations.⁷ Directors of music, drawing, home gardening and extension work in agriculture and home economics have been employed by, or have worked under, the board during recent years.⁸ Under provisions of the General Court the board may provide certain vocational courses for some students by sending them to other communities.⁹ In 1933 the high school pupils of the town of Shirley were accepted in Ayer.¹⁰

Throughout its history the school committee has been one of the most stable of the Ayer town offices. Its personnel undergoes comparatively few changes; when one of the members of the committee died in 1923 he had completed 40 years of service on the board, 18 years of which he had been chairman of it.¹¹ A predecessor served 35 years until his death in 1904.¹²

The committee annually elects a chairman and secretary.¹³

In addition to the following records, see entry 36-ii for report of school building committee 1930; entry 192 for teaching certificates issued by committee 1855-82.

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1. Ibid., 1884, school committee report, p. 4.
 2. Ibid., 1904, p. 30; school committee report, p. 4; 1903, p. 25.
 3. Ibid., 1907, p. 20, school committee report.
 4. Ibid., 1908, school committee report, p. 26; 1939, p. 175.
 5. Ibid., 1930, p. 184.
 6. Ibid., 1917, p. 17.
 7. Ibid., 1885, school committee report, p. 3.
 8. Ibid., 1905, school committee report, p. 24; 1904, school committee report, p. 29; 1920, p. 105.
 9. Acts, 1911, ch. 471, sec. 7.
 10. Annual Reports, 1933, pp. 196, 197, see entry 2.
 11. Ibid., 1923, p. 172.
 12. Ibid., 1904, library report, p. 3.
 13. Ibid., 1939, p. 151.

175. (MINUTES OF MEETINGS), 1907--. 3 vols. Discussions and decisions on appointments, salaries, appropriations and expenditures, curricula, etc. Arr. chron. by date of meeting. No index. Hdw. 200 pp. 11 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1. 2 vols., 1917-31, desk, supt. off., Ayer High School; 1 vol., 1932--, residence of Esther A. Stone (committee secy.) 45 Washington St.

176. (BILLS), 1935--. 3 f.b. Prior records destroyed. Bills for supplies, books, and equipment for schools in Ayer, Shirley and Boxborough: Name, address of creditor; description, cost of items; total amount, date of bill. Arr. alph. by name of creditor. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 12 x 11 x 2. Rm. 9, Ayer High School.

177. (High-school) PLANS, 1931. 4 plans. Architect's plans for the building of basement and first and second floors of Ayer High School. Ralph H. Doane, architect; publisher, place of publication unknown. Blueprint. 1":10'. 10 x 15. Desk, supt. off., Ayer High School.

XI. SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS¹

The warrant for the annual town meeting in 1889 called for consideration to be given to the matter of appointing a superintendent of schools as provided in chapter 431 of the Acts of 1888. The town asked the school committee to consider uniting with Littleton, Townsend and Pepperell for the employment of a superintendent.² In 1890 such a union was effected,³ and the first report of the superintendent was made the following year.⁴ His reports have been made annually since.⁵

Several changes in the union of towns which created the joint superintendent have been made. In 1898 it was voted to withdraw from the existing union because of the relatively small amount of the superintendent's time spent in Ayer. A new union was formed between Ayer and West Boylston; that gave Ayer one-half of the time of the officer, instead of the two-fifths under the previous arrangement.⁶ Another change was made in 1910; although the town voted that year to unite with two other towns and form a three-way district,⁷ the State Department of Education ruled that Ayer

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Town Records, I, 423, see entry 35.

3. Annual Reports, 1891, school committee report, pp. 1-6, see entry 2.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., 1902, school committee report, pp. 2-34; 1939, pp. 156-189.

6. Ibid., 1899, school committee report, p. 5; Town Records, I, 669, see entry 35.

7. Annual Reports, 1910, p. 154, see entry 2.

became part of a district to include Ayer, Shirley, Boylston and West Boylston.¹ Still later, in 1921, this union was again changed, bringing Ayer into a district with Shirley and Boxboro.²

The superintendent stated in 1939 that his report was the 31st annual one made by him and the 51st for the office. In it he included the reports of the high school principal and supervisors of various departments.³ During some recent years the superintendent has also been director of demonstration work for Ayer under the Middlesex County Extension Service.⁴

Except where otherwise noted, all records are in the superintendent's office, Ayer.

Minutes and Reports

178. (MINUTES OF SUPERINTENDENCY-UNION MEETINGS), 1889--. 1 vol. Discussions and decisions regarding election of officers, appointment and salaries of superintendent of schools, clerk of union; amounts of towns' proportionate share for salaries; place and date of meeting. Arr. chron. by date of meeting. No index. Hdw. 500 pp. 11 x 8 x 2. Residence of Esther A. Stone (school committee secy.), 45 Washington St.

179. AYER - COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, (Annual) SCHOOL RETURN (of Administration) TO THE (State) DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, 1897-1910, 1914--. 41 vols.

Names, addresses, term expiration date of school committee members; names, addresses, salaries of teachers, other employees; educational background and teaching experience of teachers; number of male, female teachers, students; daily average, aggregate attendance; number of days in school term, number, description, valuation of school buildings; amount of receipts from appropriation, tuition, miscellaneous sources; amount of expenditures for instruction, maintenance, operating auxiliary agencies; total receipts, expenditures; number of minors classified by age and sex attending public schools, private institutions; names, addresses of private schools; statement of approval of report by school committee; date of return, signature of superintendent. Arr. chron. by date of return. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 8 pp. 12 x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1/16. 13 vols., 1897-1910, gen. va., T.H.; 23 vols., 1914--, filing cabinet, supt. off.

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., 1921, p. 156.

3. Ibid., 1939, 156-189.

4. Ibid., 1920, p. 105-144; 1925, p. 11; 1939, p. 129.

Pupils' Records

180. AYER - MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL REGISTER (of Enrollment and Attendance), 1924--. 181 vols. Prior records destroyed. Name of school; name, address, age, attendance record of pupil; name of parent or guardian; period of school year, number of days in session; number of male, female pupils classified by age; aggregate daily, monthly attendance; average daily, monthly attendance; total enrollment, attendance for year; name, educational background, length of service of teacher. Arr. alph. by name of pupil. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 20 pp. 12 x $9\frac{1}{2}$ x $1\frac{1}{8}$. Shelf.

181. MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL CENSUS SLIPS, 1899-1909, 1936--. 11 vols., 1 f.d. Title varies: School Census of Town of Ayer, 1899-1909, 11 vols. Name, address, age on October 1, sex, physical defects, registration number of pupil; place, date of birth; name of school last attended; name, birthplace of parent or guardian; date of record. Arr. alph. by name of pupil. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. Vols. 50 pp. 10 x 12 x $\frac{1}{4}$; f.d. $5\frac{1}{2}$ x $14\frac{1}{2}$ x 12. 11 vols., 1899-1909, gen. va., T.H.; 1 f.d., 1936--, filing cabinet, supt. off.

182. PHYSICAL RECORDS, 1924--. 1 bdl. Prior records destroyed. Record of physical examinations: Name, address, age, homeroom number of pupil; record of treatment of physical defects; results, dates of physical examinations. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 10 x $8\frac{1}{2}$ x $1\frac{1}{2}$. Filing cabinet.

183. (EMPLOYMENT CERTIFICATES), 1932--. 1 f.b. Educational, special-employment, and temporary-employment certificates: Name of municipality; name, address, age, sex of pupil; place, date of birth; nature of evidence of age submitted, name of school, number of grade last attended; name, address of employer; nature of employment; number, dates of issue and reissue of certificate; signatures of superintendent and pupil. Arr. alph. by name of pupil. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $5\frac{1}{2}$ x $14\frac{1}{4}$ x 2. Filing cabinet.

184. (ELEMENTARY-SCHOOL RECORD), 1928--. 1 bdl. Prior records destroyed. Name, present and prior addresses, birthplace, grade number of pupil; name of school, name of parent or guardian, dates of admission to school and to subsequent grades. Arr. alph. by name of school, thereunder alph. by name of pupil, and thereunder by grade no. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 4 x 6 x 7. Filing cabinet.

185. HIGH-SCHOOL RECORD CARDS (of Undergraduates), 1915--. 1 f.b. Prior records destroyed. Name, address, date of birth of pupil; date of admission to, graduation or discharge from high school; list of courses studied; number of days absent, tardy in each term; statement relative to educational, vocational outlook of pupil. Arr. alph. by name of pupil. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2}$ x 13 x 27. Filing cabinet.

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Superintendent of Schools -
Pupils' Records

186. HIGH-SCHOOL RECORD CARDS (of Postgraduates), 1913--. 1 f.d.

Prior records destroyed.

For description, see entry 185. Arr. alph. by name of graduate. No index.
Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2}$ x 13 x 27. Filing cabinet.

187. (COPIES OF BAPTISM AND BIRTH CERTIFICATES), 1916--. 1 f.d.

Contains certificates of:

i. Baptisms: Name, address, date of birth of pupil; place, date of baptism; name of parent or guardian, signature of person officiating.

ii. Births: Name, address of pupil; place, date of birth; name of parent or guardian, signature of town clerk.

Arr. alph. by name of pupil. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $5\frac{1}{2}$ x 14 x 2. Filing cabinet.

188. (STUDY-PROGRAM CARDS), 1926--. 1 f.d. Last card filed 1935.

Prior records destroyed.

Name, address, age, telephone number of pupil; name of parent or guardian; list of study or recitation classes; locker, home room number. Arr. alph. by name of pupil. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $5\frac{1}{2}$ x $14\frac{1}{2}$ x 2. Filing cabinet.

Miscellaneous

189. SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS - LEDGER, 1922--. 3 vols. No title, 1922-23, 1 vol.

Classification of departmental receipts and expenditures: Name of department; amount, source or purpose, date of receipt or expenditure; totals. Includes analysis of receipts and expenditures for town of Shirley schools. Arr. chron. by date of transaction. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 200 pp. 11 x 8 x $\frac{1}{2}$ and 400 pp. 12 x 4 x $2\frac{1}{4}$. Ayer High School: 1 vol., 1922-23, supt. off.; 2 vols., 1923--, shelf, rm. 9.

190. (CORRESPONDENCE), 1934--. 4 f.d. Prior records destroyed.

Correspondence with school committee and teachers relative to educational and financial matters of school; with state department of education relative to new books, educational reports. Arr. alph. by name of correspondent. No index. Hdw., typed. $10\frac{1}{2}$ x 13 x 2. Filing cabinet.

191. REGISTER OF TEACHERS IN AYER, BOXBORO, (and) SHIRLEY, MASS. 1937--. 1 sheet.

List of teachers classified under name of school in which employed: Name of school; name, address, of teacher; subjects, grades taught. Typed. $13\frac{1}{2}$ x 12.

192. (SCHOOL COMMITTEE TEACHING CERTIFICATES), 1871 irregularly.

9 certificates. 1855-70, also 1871-82 in Miscellaneous Records, entry 70.

Name, qualifications of teacher, period of school term, date of certificate, signatures of school committee members. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $4\frac{3}{4}$ x 8. Shelf, gen. va., T.H.

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XII. SCHOOL PHYSICIAN¹

Although the school committee reported as early as 1884 that the board of health had taken no steps to prevent the spread of contagious diseases², and expenses for the vaccination of school children in the annual reports³, a school physician was not appointed until 1906, after the superintendent of schools had stated that "We have had enough medical inspection in the district to prove . . . medical inspection . . . to be necessary".⁴ That year the General Court ordered that the school committee in each town should appoint one or more school physicians (except where the board of health had already done so) and that examinations be made of children, school buildings, and school personnel.⁵

The physician delivered a report to the school committee the following year citing eye, ear and other tests made;⁶ the following year he reported visits made to the schools and made a number of recommendations for the improvement of health conditions.⁷ Similar reports have been made each year, sometimes signed by the physician as 'medical supervisor' or 'medical inspector.'⁸

The physician keeps no records, but see entry 182 for record of pupils' physical examinations kept by superintendent 1924--.

1. For statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Annual Reports, 1884, school committee report, p. 4, see entry 2.

3. Ibid., 1903, p. 25.

4. Ibid., 1916, school committee report, p. 14.

5. Acts, 1906, ch. 502, secs. 1, 2.

6. Annual Reports, 1907, school committee report, p. 20, see entry 2.

7. Ibid., 1908, school committee report, p. 26.

8. Ibid., 1924, p. 172.

XIII. TRUSTEES OF THE AYER LIBRARY¹

Ayer has a board of nine library trustees, three elected by the town since 1871 when the first appropriation was made for the institution,² and six 'permanent' trustees who had been functioning since 1894, when the library was incorporated.³

The three trustees elected by the town were first elected for one, two, and three years respectively; thereafter one trustee has been elected for three years at each annual meeting.⁴ Six persons were specified as the original incorporators of the institution in 1894, and the General Court provided that they should serve as the permanent trustees, their successors to be chosen by the remaining members of the permanent body.⁵ The joint board was given possession, management, and control of the library and its properties.⁶

One of the first functions of the trustees was to receive in 1871 a donation of \$100 in books from a musical and literary club, with a similar appropriation in cash from the town.⁷ They likewise received a donation from a member of the Ayer family the same year.⁸ The trustees made a formal report in the annual report for 1876;⁹ they reported in 1879 that the town's proceeds from the dog tax has been given to the library.¹⁰ In 1894 the trustees divided into subcommittees on books, finance, and building and grounds.¹¹ The permanent board elects a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.¹² The trustees have supervision over two trust funds, the Ayer Library fund and the B.H. Hartwell fund;¹³ the library receives, in addition, an annual appropriation from the town.¹⁴

Except where otherwise noted, all records are in the residence of Alfred P. Richardson (treasurer of trustees), 47 Highland Avenue.

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Town Records, I, 15, see entry 35.

3. Ibid., p. 560; Annual Reports, 1895, library trustees report, pp. 2-12, see entry 2.

4. Town Records, I, 15, 418, 455, see entry 35; Annual Reports, 1887, p. 32; 1896, library trustees report, p. 2; 1920, pp. 3-5; 1939, p. 6, see entry 2.

5. Acts, 1894, ch. 123, sec. 4.

6. Ibid., sec. 2.

7. Town Records, I, 14, 15, see entry 35.

8. Ibid., pp. 32-34.

9. Annual Reports, 1876, p. 21, see entry 2.

10. Ibid., 1879, p. 15.

11. Ibid., 1895, library trustees report; p. 2.

12. Ibid., 1939, p. 146.

13. Ibid., p. 147.

14. Ibid.

Minutes

(See also entry 203-i)

193. (MINUTES OF MEETINGS), 1894--. 1 vol.

Discussion and decisions regarding election of officers, employees' salaries, acceptance of books, funds, library organization. Includes organization bylaws and amendments thereto, and act of incorporation. Arr. chron. by date of meeting. No index. Hdw. 400 pp. 14 x 8 x 1. Residence of Berton Williams (secy. of trustees), 86 Pleasant St.

Accession Records

(See also entry 196)

194. ACCESSIONS (of Books), AYER PUBLIC LIBRARY, 1873--. 4 vols.

Name of author, publisher; title, number, size, type of binding, cost, source, date of accession of book; total number of volume added, remarks. Arr. chron. by date of accession. No index. Hdw. 450 pp. 14 x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$. Stockrm., Ayer Public Lib.

195. RECORD (Inventory of Articles Donated or Loaned), 1912-30.
1 vol.

Name, address of owner of article; name, description, date of accession of article; whether donated or loaned. Arr. chron. by date of accession. No index. Hdw. 200 pp. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 x $\frac{1}{2}$. Stockrm., Ayer Public Lib.

Financial Records

196. JOURNAL (of Receipts and Expenditures), 1890--. 2 vols.

Prior records destroyed.

Name of payer, payee; amount, date of receipt, expenditure; balance of cash on hand; monthly and yearly balances; also contains summary of circulation and accession records. Arr. chron. by date of receipt or expenditure. No index. Hdw. 288 pp. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1. Stockrm., Ayer Public Lib.

197. (CASH DISBURSEMENT BOOK), 1894--. 1 vol.

Record of payments for maintenance of buildings and operation of library: Amount of town appropriation allocated; name of payee; amount, date of payment. Arr. chron. by date of payment. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 400 pp. 13 x 18 x 1.

198. (Record of Administration of) BENJ. H. HARTWELL FUND AND PERIODICAL FUND, 1895--. 1 vol.

Name, amount, purpose, date of establishment of fund; amount, date of expenditure, interest; fund balance, date of entry. Arr. chron. by date of entry. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 350 pp. 12 x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1.

199. (BILLS AND CANCELED CHECKS), 1934--. 3 envs. Prior records destroyed.

Contains:

- i. Bills for supplies, books, repairs, labor: Name, address of vendor; amount, itemization, date of bill.
- ii. Canceled checks: Name, endorsement of payee; amount, number of check; date of issue, cancellation; signature of payer.

Arr. chron. by date of bill. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 10 x 5 x 1.

Checks and Bank Accounts
(See also entry 199-iii)

200. (CHECK STUBS), 1933--. 2 vols. Prior records destroyed. Name of payee; amount, number, date of check. Arr. num. by check no. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 200 pp. 9 x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1.

201. (BANK STATEMENTS), 1934--. 1 env. Prior records destroyed. Name of bank, account; amount, date of deposit, withdrawal; bank balance, date of statement. Arr. chron. by date of statement. No index. Typed. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1.

202. (BANK DEPOSIT BOOKS), 1902--. 3 vols. Record of deposits made: Name of bank; amount, date of deposit. Arr. chron. by date of deposit. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 6 pp. 6 x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1/8

Miscellaneous

203. (MISCELLANEOUS LEGAL RECORDS), 1894-95. 13 sheets.

Contains:

- i. Act of incorporation (copy) of Ayer Public Library, bylaws of library association, amount of incorporating fee, dates of petition and charter. Includes record of minutes of trustees' first meeting.
- ii. Declaration of trust: Names, addresses of trustees, beneficiaries; location, description of property; amount of consideration, terms of trust; powers, duties of trustees; name of former property owner, assent of beneficiaries, release of dower, date of declaration; signature, seal of justice of the peace.
- iii. Quitclaim deeds to library property: Name, address of grantor, grantee; amount of consideration, quitclaim clause; description, location of devised premises, appurtenances; covenants of title with warrants, number of preceding certificates of title, release of dower and homestead, volume and page reference to deed recorded in county registry of deeds; date of deed, recording; signature, seal of grantor, spouse; signatures of witnesses; attestation of notary public or justice of the peace.

No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. 8 x 11. Safety deposit box of Berton Williams (secy. of trustees), First National Bank.

204. (LIST OF BORROWERS). 1890--. 2 vols.
Name, address, card number of borrower. 1 vol., 1890--., arr. num.. by
card no.; 1 vol., 1890--., arr. alph. by name of borrower. No index. Hdw.
500 pp. 14½ x 9 x 1½. Stockrm., Ayer Public Lib.

XIV. BOARD OF PUBLIC WELFARE¹

Almost without exception, the selectmen appear in the town records and annual reports as the board of public welfare from the year Ayer was incorporated to the present time.² The exceptional year was 1915, when a separate board of three members was shown.³

The report for the first year's expenses of the town shows that the overseers spent some \$643, paid to citizens for the care in their homes of paupers, for feeding tramps, medical care, and rent of a pesthouse.⁴ Similar expenditures are shown for the succeeding years.⁵ In 1883 a committee of four was appointed to build a suitable building for the accommodation of the poor, at a cost not to exceed \$5,000.⁶ Two years later the selectmen reported that the poorhouse and farm had been secured and outfitted, and an overseer employed.⁷ This overseer was later known as the "warden."⁸

The overseers have at times sold the produce of the poor farm to help defray the cost of its operation, and have sometimes used the labor of some of the inmates on the highways.⁹ The number of inmates was never great at the poorhouse and by 1924 it was suggested that the town sell it. This was voted against, however, on the grounds that the donor of the farm property, Alfred Page, had specified that it always be used for the accommodation of the poor.¹⁰ There were 8 residents of the poorhouse in 1939.¹¹

Previous to 1928 the overseers had been known as the overseers of the poor; their title was given as the board of public welfare in 1928;¹² in 1937 they became the board of public welfare and bureau of old age assistance.¹³ Since 1938 an agent of the board has been listed with the

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Town Records, I, 8, 418; II, 615; IV, 22, see entry 35; Annual Reports, 1939, p. 3, see entry 2.

3. Ibid., Dec., 1915, p. 3.

4. Ibid., 1872 (unfolioed).

5. Ibid., 1873, 1874, 1875 (unfolioed).

6. Town Records, I, 291, see entry 35.

7. Annual Reports, 1885, pp. 7-32, see entry 2.

8. Ibid., 1906, p. 6.

9. Ibid., 1893, pp. 7, 8, 17; 1907, p. 7.

10. Ibid., 1925, pp. 102-106.

11. Ibid., 1939, p. 68.

12. Ibid., 1928, p. 2.

13. Ibid., 1937, p. 18.

other town officers; that year he served both Ayer and Shirley.¹

The overseers have charge of the various forms of State, Federal and local aid distributed to Ayer citizens. This includes old age assistance, aid to dependent children, soldiers' relief, participation in the distribution of State surplus commodities and certification of persons for certain Federal work programs.²

Except where otherwise noted all records are in the selectmen's room, Town Hall. In addition to the following records, see entry 36-iii for report of town poor farm committee 1886.

General Cases

205. POOR RELIEF, 1871-79, 1888-89, 1896-1902, 1910--. 4 vols. Register of persons supported: Name, address, age, sex, color, marital status, employability, registered number of recipient; place of settlement; places, dates of birth of recipient and parents; amount, date of aid granted; date of cessation of aid. Also contains record of:

i. Persons sent to state almshouse, 1871-90: Name, age, sex, color, height, complexion, registered number of person aided; date admitted to almshouse.

ii. Vagrants lodged entry 207.

Arr. chron. by date of relief. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 300 pp. 12 x 11 x $\frac{1}{2}$. Gen. va.; T.H.

206. (RECORD OF AID RENDERED RECIPIENTS), 1931--. 2 f.b. Name, address of recipient; number of persons in family; amount, purpose, date of aid. Arr. alph. by name of recipient. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 7 x 19 x 17.

207. RECORD OF VAGRANTS LODGED, 1855-90. 1855-82 in Miscellaneous Records, entry 70-ii, 1883-90, also 1871-82 in Poor Relief, entry 205-ii. Name, age, sex, physical description of vagrant; date lodged.

208. ACCOUNT OF POOR, 1899-1905.. 1 vol.. Record of orders given to recipients: Name of recipient, vendor; amount, number, date of order. Arr. chron. by date of order. Indexed alph. by name of recipient. Hdw. 200 pp. 14 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$. Gen. va., T.H.

1. Ibid., 1938, pp. 2, 94.

2. Ibid., 1939, pp. 42-69.

Outside Cases

209. RECORD OF NOTICES SENT, 1898-1915. 1 vol.

Record of notices sent to other municipalities, requesting reimbursement for aid rendered to recipients having legal settlement in those municipalities: Name of municipality; name, address, case number of recipient; amount of bill, amount already received in behalf of recipient, balance due; date of notice, entry; remarks. Arr. chron. by date of notice. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 100 pp. 16 x 11 x 1. Gen. va., T.H.

210. (NOTICES SENT), 1916. 1 f.d.

Copies of notices sent to other municipalities, requesting reimbursement for aid rendered to recipients having legal settlement in those municipalities: For description, see entry 209; also included signature of welfare official. Arr. alph. by name of recipient. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 23 $\frac{1}{2}$.

211. NOTICES FROM OTHER MUNICIPALITIES FOR AID RENDERED AYER RESIDENTS), 1916--. 1 f.d.

Name of municipality sending notice; name, address of aid recipient; statement that aid is being rendered resident of Ayer, date of notice, signature of welfare official; remarks. Arr. alph. by name of recipient. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 23 $\frac{1}{2}$.

212. (NOTICES OF DENIAL OF SETTLEMENT), 1916--. 1 f.d.

Notices from other municipalities denying settlement claims of persons aided in Ayer: Name of municipality; name, address of aid recipient not legal resident of said municipality; reason for denial, date of notice, signature of welfare official. Arr. alph. by name of recipient. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 23 $\frac{1}{2}$.

Financial Records
(See also entry 216)

213. (BILLS FOR TEMPORARY AID), 1916--. 1 f.d.

Name, address of aid recipient; amount of cash given, itemization of other expenditures made for recipient, date of bill. Arr. alph. by name of recipient. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 23 $\frac{1}{2}$. Gen. va., T.H.

214. (RECIPIENTS' GROCERY ORDERS), 1934--. 17 folders.

Name, address of vendor; name, address, case number of recipient; amount, purpose, number, date of order. Attached are bills for purchases made: Amount, itemization, date of bill; signature of vendor. Arr. num. by case no. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 12 x 9 x 2. Gen. va., T.H.

Town Infirmary Records

215. ALMSHOUSE REGISTER (Record of Inmates), 1900, 1905, 1908-9, 1911-12, 1921--. 2 vols.

Name, birthplace, age, sex, color, physical or mental peculiarities, employability, registered number of inmate; naturalization, settlement status; cause, date of admission, date of discharge, disposition of case. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 100 pp. 14 x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1. Warden's off., Town Infirmary.

216. W. A. BEAN, WARDEN 1935--. 1 vol. Prior records destroyed. Record of cash received by warden from various sources: Amount, source, date of receipt; total amount of cash on hand. Includes total amount of outstanding bills. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. 100 pp. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 7 x 1. Warden's off., Town Infirmary.

Aid to Dependent Children

217. (APPLICATION AND FIRST INTERVIEW), 1916--. 1 f.d.

Name of municipality; name, address, birthplace, age, sex, color, occupation of applicant, spouse; marital, settlement status; amount of rent paid by applicant; cause, place, date of death of spouse (if deceased); whether previously committed to institution or jail; names, sex, school record, employment, places and dates of birth of children; names, addresses, places and dates of birth of parents of applicant, spouse; names, addresses, occupations, wages of brothers and sisters of applicant, spouse; names, addresses, ages of children of brothers and sisters of applicant, spouse; date of entrance of applicant, spouse, parents in municipality, State; location, description, assessed valuation, date of purchase of real property of applicant or family members; amount of mortgages on property; name of straw owner (if any); amount, location of cash or securities owned by applicant or family members; amount of insurance carried by applicant; name of insurance company, beneficiary; amount, date of insurance payments or other claims received at death of spouse (if deceased); record of last employment, estimated weekly income of members of applicant's family; number, date of application; name of visitor; affidavit, signature of applicant; signature of witness. Arr. alph. by name of applicant. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 23 $\frac{1}{2}$.

218. (RECORD OF AID RENDERED), 1916--. 1 f.d.

Name, address, date of birth, citizenship status, sex, total number in household of applicant; status of case, sources of assistance given applicant toward support of children, statement by applicant regarding changes of address during past year; names, birthplaces, sex, color, relationship to applicant of children; case number, date of application; reason for and date of approval or rejection; amounts, dates of payments; reason and date case closed. Arr. alph. by name of applicant. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 23 $\frac{1}{2}$.

Old Age Assistance

219. (APPLICATION AND FIRST INTERVIEW), 1931--. 1 f.d.

Name of municipality; name, prior and present addresses, age, sex, health record, employability of applicant; marital, settlement status; name, address of spouse; place, date of birth of applicant, spouse; names, birth-places of parents of applicant, spouse; names, addresses, ages, marital status of children of applicant; names, addresses, financial status of relatives of applicant; location, description, valuation of real and personal property; amount of outside income received, amount of insurance carried, statement of investigation by welfare official, date of application; signature of applicant, witness. Also contains copy of old age assistance notice sent to state bureau of old age assistance: Name, address, settlement status of applicant, amount, nature of assistance; date of application and approval thereof; signatures of welfare board members. Arr. alph. by name of applicant. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{1}{2}$.

220. (RECORD OF ASSISTANCE RENDERED), 1931--. 1 f.d.

Name of municipality, county; name, address, sex, color, physical condition of applicant; marital, citizenship status; number of case, dates of application and approval thereof, month first payment approved, amount granted, dates of subsequent investigations, reason and date case closed, if case discharged. Arr. alph. by name of applicant. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{1}{2}$.

221. (NOTICE TO APPEAL BOARD REGARDING AID-ALLOWANCE DEDUCTIONS), 1931--. 1 f.d.

Copies of notices sent to state appeal board informing it of deductions made from applicant's aid allowance: Name, address, case number of applicant; amount of monthly aid, reason for deductions, date of notice, signatures of members of welfare. Arr. alph. by name of applicant. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{1}{2}$.

222. (REOPENING NOTICES), 1931--. 1 f.d.

Copies of notices to state bureau of old age assistance of reopening of certain closed cases: Name, address, settlement status of applicant; statement that applicant is in need of aid; amount, type of aid requested; amount of reimbursement claimed by town; date of notice, assistance; signature of welfare official; remarks. Arr. alph. by name of applicant. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{1}{2}$.

223. OLD AGE ASSISTANCE BILLS, 1931--. 1 f.d.

Bills incurred in administration of aid: Name, address, case number of recipient; amount, period, number, date of bill; signature of welfare official approving payment. Arr. alph. by name of recipient. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{1}{2}$.

Board of Public Welfare - Old
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224. (AID-ELIGIBILITY REPORT), 1931--. 1 f.d.
Questionnaires sent to and returned by relatives of applicant, used in determining applicant's eligibility for aid: Name, case number of applicant; name, address, occupation, salary, assets, total income of relative; date of report; signatures of relatives, welfare official. Arr. alph. by name of applicant. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{1}{2}$.

Miscellaneous

225. (CORRESPONDENCE), 1916--. 1 f.d.
Correspondence with aid recipients, state departments, military quarters relative to case histories, settlement, military records, etc. Arr. alph. by name of correspondent. No index. Typed. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{1}{2}$.

226. (COPIES OF APPLICATIONS FOR ADMITTANCE TO TEWKSBURY STATE INFIRMARY), 1916--. 1 f.d.
Name, address, legal residence of applicant; place, date of birth; birth-places of parents; name, address of nearest relative; reason for commitment to infirmary, statement of applicant's former connection with institution (if any), date of application, signatures of welfare board members. Includes physician's credentials attached to application. Arr. alph. by name of applicant. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{1}{2}$.

227. (COPIES OF APPLICATIONS FOR ADMITTANCE TO PONDVILLE HOSPITAL), 1916--. 1 f.d.
Name, address, sex, color, health record, occupation of applicant; place, date of birth; marital, citizenship status; number, ages of children; responsibility of support, name of nearest relative, record of previous hospitalization (if any); date of application, reason therefor. Arr. alph. by name of applicant. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{1}{2}$.

228. (RECORD INVESTIGATION OF RECIPIENTS' POSTAL-SAVINGS ACCOUNTS), 1931--. 1 f.d.
Name, address, case number of recipient; amount of savings; amount, date of last withdrawal; signatures of postmaster and welfare board members. Includes recipient's authorization to postmaster to release information to board. Arr. alph. by name of recipient. No arr. Hdw. on ptd. form. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{1}{2}$.

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XV. WPA SPONSORS' AGENT

Since 1936 a WPA sponsor's agent has made annual reports to the town on work done under the Work Projects Administration.¹ Previous to this time, however, the select-overseers had had direct charge of this office; in 1933 the overseers reported that they had distributed certain quantities of FERA commodities,² the selectmen reported several CWA projects that had been started,³ and one of the selectmen made the "Report of the Local CWA administrator."⁴

A "Local ERA Administrator" was mentioned in the annual report for 1935; he was not one of the selectmen.⁵ The following year the position of sponsor's agent was created and the superintendent of streets was appointed to fill it.⁶

XVI. BOARD OF HEALTH⁷

A board of health of five members was established in 1882, after the town had accepted a set of bylaws which included provisions for the election of such a board.⁸ The election was annual at first, with the overseers of the poor sometimes serving with two other citizens as the board of health.⁹ The method of election was changed in 1895: one member was elected for one year, one for two years, and one for three years, one member to be elected annually for a three-year term thereafter.¹⁰ This method of election is still used.¹¹

The close connection between the board of health and the overseers of the poor existed even before the actual creation of the latter board. As early as 1871 the overseers spent certain sums for medical care of the town's paupers and for the rent of a pesthouse.¹² In 1883, after the establishment of the board of health, the overseers still listed medical

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1. Annual Reports, 1936, p. 160, see entry 2.
 2. Ibid., 1933, p. 122.
 3. Ibid., pp. 122, 176.
 4. Ibid., p. 176.
 5. Ibid., 1935, p. 86.
 6. Ibid., 1936, p. 160.
 7. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.
 8. Town Records, I, 262-276, see entry 35.
 9. Annual Reports, 1887, p. 32; 1890, pp. 44, 45, see entry 2.
 10. Town Records, I, 581, see entry 35.
 11. Annual Reports, 1939, p. 6, see entry 2.
 12. Ibid., 1872, 1873, 1874 (unfolioed).

care of the poor with their operating expenses.¹

The members of the board were not full-time employees of the town; for the conduct of the duties of the office they have appointed certain persons from time to time as agents of the board, and as inspectors. An agent was appointed in 1893;² his appointment is shown in a number of subsequent years.³ they also appointed inspectors of plumbing⁴, animals⁵, and slaughtering⁶, and nurses⁷ and physicians⁸ in connection with school health. In at least one year, 1904, the board appointed both an agent and a health officer.⁹ The board required milk, herd, and can inspection in 1908,¹⁰ and acted as the milk inspection board in 1916.¹¹ After the opening of Camp Devens in 1917 the board made joint sanitary inspections with officials of the United States Public Health Service.¹² In 1916 the board appointed a public health nurse¹³ and appointed two of these nurses in 1920.¹⁴

Since 1931, when Ayer became a part of the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health, the board has greatly increased its usefulness to the town through the added clinical and other facilities made available through this connection.¹⁵

Minutes
(See also entry 232)

229. (MINUTES OF MEETINGS), 1916--. 2 vols.

Discussion and decisions regarding administration of health; approval of bills, licenses and permits; date of meeting. Arr. chron. by date of meeting. No index. Hdw. 144 pp. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 x $\frac{1}{2}$. Secy. rm.. Nashoba Health Center.

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1. Ibid., 1883, p. 10.
 2. Ibid., 1893, p. 3.
 3. Ibid., 1894, p. 2; 1915, p. 115; 1918, p. 172.
 4. Ibid., 1896, board of health report, p. 4.
 5. Ibid., 1894, p. 2; 1901, p. 4; 1912, p. 5; 1939, p. 5
 6. Ibid., 1922, p. 75.
 7. Ibid., 1916, p. 120; 1919, p. 17; 1936, p. 133.
 8. Ibid., 1908, p. 26; 1924, p. 172.
 9. Ibid., 1904, p. 26.
 10. Ibid., 1908, p. 50.
 11. Ibid., 1916, p. 116.
 12. Ibid., 1918, p. 172.
 13. Ibid., 1916, p. 120.
 14. Ibid., 1920, p. 68.
 15. Ibid., 1939, pp. 121-126.

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XVII. AGENT OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

The term "agent of the board of health" is one that has been used in several ways since it first appeared in the annual reports in 1893. That year it was applied to an individual, who was listed with the other town officers.¹ The following year the officer appeared again; he was also the town clerk.²

In 1917 the public health nurse signed herself 'agent of the board of health',³ as did an official of the United States Public Health Service in 1918.⁴ A 'health officer' is found in the board's report in 1931;⁵ since that time the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health have at times designated themselves "agent of the board of health of Ayer."⁶

Except where otherwise noted, all records are in the secretary's room, Nashoba Health Center.

Patients' Records

230. CASE RECORDS, 1933--. 1 f.b.. 1 bdl. System estab. 1933. Contains the following case papers:

- i. Infant's history: Name, address, date of birth, age, height, weight, temperature, general health habits, case number of infant; place of visit, service rendered, comments by nurse; summary, date of attending physician's order; signature of physician, nurse.
- ii. Family history: Name, present and prior addresses, telephone number, economic status, case number of family; names, addresses, ages, dates of birth, sex, occupations or schools of family members; type of clinical service, facts of case, date admitted to and discharged from clinic.
- iii. Mother's prenatal and postnatal history: Name, address, telephone number, color, age of mother; place, date of birth; marital, economic status; types and dates of diseases of patient, spouse; name, address, telephone number of physician or midwife in charge; case history of prior pregnancies, record of antepartum and postpartum visits; date of physician's report.

1. Annual Reports, 1893, p. 3, see entry 2.

2. Ibid., 1894, p. 2.

3. Ibid., 1917, p. 115.

4. Ibid., 1918, p. 172.

5. Ibid., 1931, p. 143.

6. Ibid., 1936, p. 131; 1939, p. 121.

Agent of the Board of Health -
Patients' Records

CASE RECORDS (Cont'd)

- iv. Preschool and infant's history: Name, address, date of birth, sex, color, case number of infant; names of parents; place, date of birth of mother; description of delivery; infant's condition, feeding, age when talking and walking, age at appearance of first tooth, ages on dates of immunizations; record of visits by physician, nurse; periodic summary of condition, service, progress, and problems.
- v. Treatments, record of: Name, address, color, sex, occupation or school of patient; marital, economic status; names of parents; case history of illness; record of nursing care, summary of physician's order, amount of insurance carried, date of record.
- vi. Tuberculosis records:
 - a. Case histories: Name, address, physical condition, case number of patient; record of visits by nurse, physician; list of services and instructions given, summary of physician's order.
 - b. Nursing cards: Name, address, age, sex, color, marital status, occupation of patient; place, date of birth; diagnosis of illness, dates of previous illnesses, name of attending physician, clinic, or sanatorium; date admitted, discharged; amount of fee of visiting nurse; summary of condition, service, progress, and problems.

Arr. alph. by name of patient. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. F.b. $6\frac{1}{2}$ x $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 12; bdl. $5\frac{1}{4}$ x 8 x 4.

231. RECORD OF DANGEROUS DISEASES, 1884-1934. 5 vols. Name, address, age, occupation, case number, place of confinement of patient; name of person reporting case; type, date of inception of illness; date illness reported; record of notices sent to state department, results of laboratory tests, source of milk supply; date isolation started, ended. Arr. chron. by date illness reported. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 30 to 70 pp. $15 \times 10\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$ to $15\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{2} \times 1$. 3 vols., 1884-1915, gen. va., T.H.; 2 vols., 1916-34, secy. rm.

232. (PHYSICIANS' REPORTS OF CONTAGIOUS DISEASES), 1934--. 1 loose lot. Reports of contagious diseases, filled out and sent to board by attending physician: Name, address, place of employment, type of illness of patient; source of milk supply, conditions of sewage, environment; services rendered and action taken thereon, date of report, signature of physician. Arr. chron. by date of report. No index. Hdw. or typed on ptd. form. $4 \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ x $5\frac{1}{2}$. Gen. va., T.H.

233. (APPOINTMENT CARDS), 1936--. 1 f.b. Record of patients' appointments for clinical treatment: Name, address, sex, age, type of disease of patient, date of appointment. Arr. chron. by date of appointment. No index. Typed on ptd. form. $3\frac{1}{2} \times 5 \times 3$.

School Clinic Records

234. PHYSICAL RECORD (of Pupils), 1922-1934, 1936--. 3 bdl.
Name, address, sex, color, personal history of pupil; place, date of birth; names, birthplaces, occupations of parents; name, grade of school attended; types, dates of diseases and record of defects requiring treatment (if any). Arr. alph. by name of pupil. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 10 x 8 x 1.

235. REPORT OF ABSENCE OF PUPIL, 1921, 1925, 1929--. 1 f.d.
Reports of illnesses sent to board by teachers: Name, address, grade number of pupil; name of teacher; type, date of illness; date of report. Arr. chron. by date of report. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $5\frac{1}{2}$ x $10\frac{1}{2}$ x 25.

236. CLASSROOM HEALTH RECORD, 1934--. 1 bdl.
Name, address, age, weight, height, grade number of pupil; record of health suggestions recommended and acted upon. Arr. alph. by name of pupil. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 11 x $8\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$.

237. (Record of) CHILDREN'S SCHOOL CLINIC (Examinations). 1935--.
1 env.
Name, address of child; results, date of examination. No obvious arr. No index. Typed. $9\frac{1}{2}$ x $12\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$.

Licenses and Permits

238. (COPIES OF APPLICATIONS FOR DEALERS' PERMIT TO SELL MILK).
1916--. 1 bdl.
Name, address of person supplying milk, dealer: date of application. signature of applicant. Arr. chron. by date of application. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 6 x $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 18.

239. (STUBS OF BURIAL AND REMOVAL PERMITS). 1921--. 11 vols.
Name, address, age, sex of decedent: name of petitioner, physician; place of interment; cause, place, date of death; date of permit. Arr. chron. by date of permit. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 75 pp. $5\frac{1}{2}$ x $4\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{4}$.
7 vols., 1921-1934, nurse's rm.; 4 vols., 1934--., gen. va., T.H.
For record of permits kept by town clerk 1871--. see entry 62-vii.

240. (APPLICATIONS FOR UNDERTAKERS' LICENSES), 1930--. 1 bdl.
Name, age, address, occupation, experience of applicant; date of application. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 5 x 9 x 1.

Miscellaneous

241. BILLS, Jan. 1935--.. 1 f.d. (dated).
Bills for supplies, maintenance, hospitalization: Name of creditor; amount, itemization, date of bill. Arr. chron. by date of bill. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 3 x 5 x $9\frac{1}{2}$.

Agent of the Board of Health -
Miscellaneous

[242-243]

242. (CORRESPONDENCE), 1934--. 1 folder.

Copies of outgoing letters to director of Nashoba Associated Boards of Health regarding case histories of patients in Middlesex County Sanatorium, Waltham. Arr. chron. by date of correspondence. No index. Hdw. $9\frac{1}{2}$ x $12\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$.

XVIII. PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE¹

In 1916 the town employed a public health nurse, in accordance with an act of the General Court passed in 1911, which permitted towns to set aside money for the employment of nurses, to be spent under the direction of the board of health or the selectmen.² The nurse made her first report the following year, showing work done in the schools with the assistance of the school physician.³

In 1918 the Ayer public nurse and a nurse from the United States Department of Public Health formed a joint unit to combat an epidemic of influenza,⁴ and in 1919 the board of health made the nurse also the sanitary inspector.⁵

There were two distinct branches of public nursing in the town in 1920, one performed by the public health nurse and the other by the home visiting nurse.⁶ In December of this year, however, certain of the duties were dropped and the two offices given to the same woman.⁷ This system has been employed to the present time.⁸

All records are in the secretary's room, Nashoba Health Center.

243. NURSE'S DAILY REPORT, 1920, May 1936--. 1 bdl., 1 folder.

System discont. 1921; reestab. May 1936.

Copies of report of daily visits, sent to board of health: Name, address, condition of patient visited; treatment given, date of report, signature of nurse. Includes case correspondence. Arr. by date of report. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 1 bdl., 1920, $5\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 x 2; 1 folder, May 1936--., $9\frac{1}{2}$ x 12 x $\frac{1}{4}$.

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Annual Reports, 1916, p. 120, see entry 2; Acts, 1911, ch. 72.

3. Annual Reports, 1917, pp. 115-122, see entry 2.

4. Ibid., 1918, p. 177.

5. Ibid., 1919, p. 139.

6. Ibid., 1920, p. 120.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., 1939, pp. 127-128.

244. RECEIPTS, Mar. 1934--. 41 envs. (dated).

Copies of receipts of nurse acknowledging payment by patients of fees for services rendered: Name of patient; amount, date of fee, payment; signature of nurse. Also contains treasurer's receipts acknowledging payment of fees by nurse: Amount, date of receipt; signature of treasurer. Arr. chron. by date of receipt. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 4 x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1/8.

245. (RECORD OF CHILDREN LEFT IN CUSTODY OF NURSE), 1921-28. 4 bdl.

Name, address, date of birth, sex, weight of child; diet given to child; date of record. Arr. chron. by date of record. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 x 6.

XIX. MILK AND SANITARY INSPECTOR¹

The appointment of a milk and sanitary inspector by the board of health is shown in the annual reports for one year, 1931, at which time the officer reported on analyses of milk samples, visits to farms, dairies, etc., and similar duties performed in other years by the board of health.²

246. (LICENSES AND PERMITS), 1928-32. 1 vol. System discont. 1932.

Record of licenses for sale, delivery, and pasteurization of milk; permits for sale of oleomargarine and grade "A" milk: Name, address of licensee; type, number, term, date of license or permit; signatures of board of health. Also contains record of receipts and expenditures. Arr. chron. by date of license and permit or receipt and expenditure. No index. Hdw. 144 pp. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 x $\frac{1}{2}$. Secy. rm., Nashoba Health Center.

XX. INSPECTOR OF ANIMALS¹

An officer to inspect provisions, fish, and animals intended for slaughter or the production of milk was appointed in Ayer in 1894 after the General Court had enacted a law directing that the selectmen of towns make such an appointment annually.³ The act stipulated that the inspector carry out and enforce all regulations and orders given to him by the board of health and the cattle commissioners of the state. The title given to the officer was inspector of animals and provisions.⁴

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Annual Reports, 1931, p. 142, see entry 2.

3. Ibid., 1894, p. 2, see entry 2; Acts, 1894, ch. 491, sec. 1.

4. Ibid., sec. 3.

Some of the duties of the office in regard to fish and provisions were given to the boards of health by another General Court act in 1899;¹ after this year the officer was known merely as the inspector of animals, his appointment still made by the selectmen.² In 1906 he appears in the annual reports as also the inspector of cattle,³ and in 1912 as animal inspector only.⁴ This is the title still used.⁵

At various times in recent years some of the earlier duties of the officer have appeared in the board of health reports. These include inspection of slaughtering,⁶ and milk inspection, for which a separate report was made in 1931.⁷

247. (RECORD OF INSPECTION OF ANIMALS), 1934--. 2 vols. Names, address of owner of place inspected; kinds, number of cattle, swine inspected; suggestions for improvements, date of inspection. Arr. chron. by date of inspection. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 50 pp. 8 x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$. Secy. rm., Nashoba Health Center.

XXI. INSPECTOR OF SLAUGHTERING⁸

Although the records of the board of health do not show the date of the first appointment of an inspector of slaughtering, reports of that officer are found from 1916 through 1937, and various expense entries for slaughtering inspection are found in the board's budget in some years.⁹ Legislative acts have at times given the duties of the office of an inspector of provisions, cattle, and animals, and to the board of health itself.¹⁰ No appointment to the office is shown in the annual report for 1939.¹¹

The inspector keeps no records.

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1. Ibid., 1899, ch. 408, sec. 20.
 2. Annual Reports, 1901, p. 4, see entry 2.
 3. Ibid., 1906, p. 16.
 4. Ibid., 1912, p. 5.
 5. Ibid., 1939, p. 120.
 6. Ibid., 1922, p. 75; 1929, p. 54; 1931, p. 94.
 7. Ibid., 1931, p. 94.
 8. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.
 9. Annual Reports, 1922, p. 75; 1929, p. 54; 1931, p. 94, see entry 2.
 10. Acts, 1899, ch. 408, sec. 20.
 11. Annual Reports, 1939, pp. 3-5, see entry 2.

XXII. BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS¹

Although a board of water commissioners was not formally established until 1887, an expense entry is found in the annual report for 1881, listing an item for surveying for the water committee.² The General Court enacted a measure in 1887 permitting the town to supply itself with water for domestic, fire, and other uses, and stipulated that a board of three water commissioners should be elected, one to serve for one year, one for two years, and one for three years, their successors to serve three years each.³ This method of election is still used.⁴

The commissioners reported in 1888 that work had been begun on the water system. They reported that an engineer and assistant engineer had been employed, and their report at the end of the year included mention of a superintendent.⁵ The report of expenses was signed by the water treasurer, who was also the treasurer of the town.⁶ The town treasurer still holds both offices.⁷ The chairman of the water commissioners acted as water registrar;⁸ in 1901 the board reported that another member was acting as clerk, and that the election of the clerk and the registrar would be an annual one in the future.⁹

At various times additions and improvements have been made to the Ayer water system under the recommendation or direction of the water commissioners. They received a recommendation for such improvements in 1901 from the board of health;¹⁰ a few years later the General Court permitted a large sum to be borrowed and spent by the commission,¹¹ and similar expenditures were voted to the department in 1912¹² and 1929.¹³ With the 1912 appropriation the commissioners supervised the construction of a standpipe which made the system a high-pressure one,¹⁴ and the latter expenditure extended the water mains to the Groton town line.¹⁵ In their

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Annual Reports, 1881, p. 14, see entry 2.

3. Acts, 1887, ch. 152, secs. 1, 10; Annual Reports, 1888, p. 3, see entry 2.

4. Ibid., 1939, p. 6.

5. Ibid., 1888, water dept. report, pp. 4, 18; Town Records, I, 383, see entry 35.

6. Annual Reports, 1888, p. 25, see entry 2.

7. Ibid., 1939, pp. 3, 136.

8. Ibid., 1888, water dept. report, p. 13.

9. Ibid., 1901, p. 48.

10. Ibid., water dept. report, p. 8.

11. Acts, 1906, ch. 424.

12. Annual Reports, 1912, pp. 82, 83, see entry 2.

13. Ibid., 1929, p. 27.

14. Ibid., 1912, pp. 82, 83.

15. Ibid., 1929, p. 27.

1936 report the commissioners stated that the last outstanding note on the water system had been paid on the town's 50th anniversary of incorporation.¹

Since 1925 the water registrar has been bonded, the costs of the bond being paid by the town.²

Except where otherwise noted, all records are in the water commissioners' room, Town Hall. In addition to the following records, see entry 257-vi for water analysis 1889-90.

Minutes and Reports

248. (Minutes of) WATER COMMISSIONERS' MEETINGS, 1886-- 2 vols. (dated).

Consideration of land-damage claims, meter claims, personnel appointments, water rates, bills, refunds; establishment of procedures in operation and maintenance; date of meeting. Arr. chron. by date of meeting. No index. Hdw. 200 pp. 11 x 8 x 1. 1 vol., 1886-1906, gen. va., T.H.; 1 vol., 1907--, water comms. rm.

249. (REPORTS AND LETTERS OF CIVIL ENGINEERS ON ADDITIONAL WATER SUPPLY), 1906-1917 irregularly. 7 documents in 1 env. (11). Reports on additional water supply: Tables of average daily water consumption; source of present, additional water supply; advantages of and procedure for installation of driven well system; results of state board of health analysis of water samples; method of utilization of new supply, estimate of future supply and cost thereof. Also contains correspondence regarding cost of engineering for proposed work. Arr. chron. by date of report or letter. No index. Typed. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1. Safe.

250. (CIVIL ENGINEERS' REPORTS ON METHODS OF PUMPING WATER), 1912, 1917. 3 reports in 1 env. (22).

Reports by Parker, Bateman, Chase, and William S. Bishop, civil engineers, on comparative costs of pumping water by steam or oil engine pumps. Includes discussion of sources of water supply. Arr. chron. by date of report. No index. Typed. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$. Safe.

251. (REPORT ON PROPOSED CONDUIT AND STEAM PUMPING PLANT), 1898. 2 documents in 1 env. (7).

Report on conduit from Sandy Pond to pumping station, showing description, dimensions, estimated cost of conduit, filtering well, steam pumping plant. Includes suggestions for increasing present water power. Typed. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$. Safe.

1. Ibid., 1936, p. 158.
2. Ibid., 1925, p. 12; 1939, p. 12.

[252-257]

Board of Water Commissioners

Meter Records

252. WATER WORKS REGISTER, 1902-25, 1936--. 2 vols., 1 f.d.
 Consumers' accounts: Name, address, service number of consumer; number of families in building, number of faucets and water outlets in house; water rate; number, size, type of meter; name of person installing, removing meter, dates thereof; date of meter reading; number of cubic feet, gallons of water consumed; amount charged, register number, remarks. 1902-25 arr. chron. by date of entry; 1926-- arr. alph. by name of consumer. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. Vols., 200 pp. 17 x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1; f.d., 5 x 8 x 15. 2 vols., 1902-25, gen. va., T.H.; 1 f.d., 1936-- , water comms. rm.

253. METER RECORD, 1928--. 1 box. Prior records destroyed.
 Care record of meters: Name, address, service number of consumer; number, type of meter used; date of meter installation, removal; reason for removal; cost, date of resetting. Arr. alph. by name of consumer. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$. Supt. off., Ayer Water Works.

254. NEW METERS, 1925--. 1 vol. Prior records destroyed.
 Record of installation of new meters: Name, address of consumer; make, size, number of meter; location, date of installation; date of inspection; name of person installing, inspecting meter. Arr. chron. by date of installation. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 100 pp. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 6 x $\frac{1}{2}$. Supt. off., Ayer Water Works.

255. REPAIR METERS, 1928--. 2 vols. Prior records destroyed.
 Record of meter repairs: Name, address of consumer; make, number, type of meter; date meter removed; type, cost, date of repair. Arr. chron. by date of repair. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 120 pp. 12 x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$. Supt. off., Ayer Water Works.

Service and Plant Operation

256. (APPLICATIONS FOR WATER SERVICE), 1905--. 1 vol.
 Name, address of applicant; reason for application, date thereof; signature of applicant, witness. Includes statement of promise to pay for service. Arr. chron. by date of application. Hdw. on ptd. form. No index. 250 pp. 16 x 10 x 7. Supt. off., Ayer Water Works.

257. SERVICE CARDS, 1921--. 3 bdl., 1 f.b. Prior records destroyed.
 Record of service connections: Name, address, service number of consumer; number of families using meter; number of faucets, water closets, bath rooms; number, size, type of meter; date of installation, removal of meter; name of person removing meter; amount, date of reading; rate per gallon. Arr. alph. by name of consumer. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. Bdl., 5 x 8 x 4; f.b., 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 x 15. 3 bdl., 1921-33, supt. off., Ayer Water Works; 1 f.b., 1930-- , Hill's Drug Store.

Board of Water Commissioners -
Service and Plant Operation

258. RECORD (of New Service, Renewals, Shut-offs), 1928--. 1 vol.
Name, address of consumer; description of pipe connections, gate twin
shut-off; name of person effecting installation, renewal, shut-off, and
dates thereof; date of record. Arr. chron. by date of record. No index.
Hdw. 300 pp. $6\frac{1}{2}$ x $7\frac{1}{2}$ x 1. Supt. off., Ayer Water Works.

259. ADDRESSOGRAPH LIST OF WATER CONSUMERS, 1936. 4 f.d., 1 roll.
Name, address, service number of consumer. Arr. alph. by name of consumer.
No index. Ptd. F.d., $2\frac{1}{2}$ x 5 x 16; roll, 9 x 2.

260. (Records of) DAVIDSON PUMP AND DEMING PUMP, 1914--. 3 vols.,
1 bdl.
Number of gallons pumped per hour, day, week, month; number of pump revolutions per minute; number of hours pumps in operation daily; date of operation, recording. Arr. chron. by date of recording. No index. Hdw. Binding and paper poor; writing faded. $18\frac{1}{2}$ x $1\frac{1}{2}$; vols., 100 pp. 8 x 5 x $\frac{1}{2}$; bdl., $13\frac{1}{2}$ x $18\frac{1}{2}$ x 1. 3 vols., 1914--; supt. off.; 1 bdl., 1928-35, 10ft; Ayer Water Works.

261. DAILY PUMP RECORD AND OCCURRENCES, 1928--. 1 vol.
Daily record of pump operation and maintenance: Names of attendants, laborers; number of hours worked; type, location of work; record of pump repairs; time pumps started, stopped; capacity test of standpipe; number of meters, stops set; statistical summaries of gallons pumped, amount of pressure in system; largest daily, weekly, monthly quantity of water pumped. Arr. chron. by day. No index. Hdw. 600 pp. 14 x 9 x 2. Supt. off., Ayer Water Works.

262. (Daily) RECORD (of Labor Performed at) PUMPING STATION PARK, 1933--. 1 vol.
Name of laborer, type of work performed, amount of pay, number of hours worked, date of work. Arr. chron. by day. No index. Hdw. 100 pp. $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 7 x $\frac{1}{4}$. Supt. off., Ayer Water Works.

263. (RECORD OF PULPIT ROCK WELLS), June 1936. 2 sheets.
Number, depth of wells; quality, flow of water; condition of pipe; time, date of vacuum gauge reading. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 11 x $8\frac{1}{2}$. Supt. off., Ayer Water Works.

Receipts and Expenditures

264. CASH, 1908--. 5 vols.
Record of departmental receipts and expenditures: Name of payer, payee; account number; dates of water assessments, interest charges, abatements; amount, date, classification of receipt or payment. Includes amounts paid to treasurer and dates thereof. Arr. chron. by date of transaction. No index. Hdw. 1908-17; hdw. on ptd. form 1918--. 100 to 396 pp. 14 x 9 x 1 to $16\frac{1}{2}$ x 14 x 2. Gen. va., T.H.

Board of Water Commissioners -
Receipts and Expenditures

265. RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES, WATER DEPT , TOWN OF AYER, 1908--.
3 vols. Title varies: Total Payments to Treasurer by
Registrar, 1919-36, 1 vol
Contains classification of receipts and expenditures and ledger record of
sinking fund as posted from Cash, entry 264:
- i. Receipts, 1908-35: Amounts received from water rates, appropria-
tions for construction work, date received.
 - ii. Expenditures, 1908--: Name of creditor; amount of maintenance,
construction, repair, miscellaneous expenses, interest payments,
rebates, payment on notes, dates of payments.
 - iii. Water department sinking fund, 1908-35: Amount of cash on hand,
deposits in banks; amount of interest payments, total amount
on hand; amount, date of receipt, payment.
- Arr. by name of account and chron. thereunder by date of entry. No index
Hdw. on ptd. form. 200 to 1000 pp. $16\frac{1}{2}$ x 9 x 1 to 10 x 5 x 4. 2 vols ,
1908-35, gen. va. , T H ; 1 vol , 1935-- , water comms. rm.
266. LEDGER, 1903-12. 1 vol
Summary of accounts as posted from Cash, entry 264: Name, number
of account; amount, date of debit, credit posting. Arr. by name of account
and chron. thereunder by date of entry. Indexed alph. by name of account.
Hdw. 230 pp. $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 7 x $3\frac{3}{4}$. Gen. va. , T H
267. WATER COLLECTOR'S CASH (Receipt) BOOKS, 1924--. 3 vols.
Record of money received from customers for meters, fixtures, water rates,
miscellaneous charges: Name, address, account number of customer; page
and line reference to Commitment of Water Charges, entry 272; type of fix-
ture, meter; amount, date of payment by consumer; amount, date of transfer
of funds to treasurer. Arr. chron. by date of transfer to treasurer. No
index. Hdw. 200 pp. 16 x $12\frac{1}{2}$ x 1 . 2 vols. , 1924-33, gen. va. , T.H.; 1
vol. , 1934-- , Hill's Drug Store.
268. REGISTRAR'S RECEIPTS, 1923--. 5 vols. , 7 bdls. Prior records
destroyed.
Acknowledgment by town treasurer of receipt from water registrar of con-
sumers' payments: Amount, date of receipt; signature of treasurer. Arr.
chron. by date of receipt. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. Vols. , 125 pp.
 $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 x 1; bdls. , 3 x 6 x $\frac{1}{2}$. 4 vols. , 1923-28, gen. va. , T H ; 7 bdls. ,
1929-35, water comms. rm ; 1 vol. , 1936-- , Hill's Drug Store.
- Vouchers and Bills
(See also entry 290)
269. WATER REGISTRAR - VOUCHERS, 1923--. 3 f.b. , 6 bdls. (3 f.b. ,
1923-27, 1929-32, dated; 6 bdls. , 1926-28, 1933-- , unlabeled).
Prior records destroyed.
Expense vouchers covering operating, maintenance, pay roll, and miscel-
laneous items: Name, account number of payee; number, amount, date of
voucher; signatures of commissioners. Arr. chron. by date of voucher. No
index. Hdw. on ptd. form. F.b. , 14 x $10\frac{1}{2}$ x $4\frac{1}{2}$; bdls. , 9 x $4\frac{1}{2}$ x $2\frac{1}{4}$. 3
f.b. , 1923-27, 1929-32, 2 bdls. , 1926-28, gen. va. , T.H.; 3 bdls. , 1933-35,
water comms. rm.; 1 bdl. , 1936-- , Hill's Drug Store.

Board of Water Commissioners -
Vouchers and Bills

270. (STUBS OF CUSTOMERS' BILLS), 1931--. 1 f.d., 1 bdl. Prior records destroyed.

Stubs of bills paid by customers to registrar: Name, address of customer; amount, date of bill. Arr. chron. by date of bill. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. F.d., 11 x 13 x 22; bdl., 3 x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$. 1 f.d., 1931-35, water comms. rm.; 1 bdl., 1936--., Hill's Drug Store.

271. (Copies of) SUNDRY BILLS, 1929--. 1 bdl.

Name, address of creditor; amount, purpose, date of bill; date of payment. Arr. chron. by date of bill. No index. Hdw. 11 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1. Supt. off., Ayer Water Works.

Commitments and Abatements

272. COMMITMENT OF WATER CHARGES, 1918--. 2 vols.

Name, account number of consumer; charges for fixtures, meter, water consumption, miscellaneous items; total charges; credits for cash payments, amount of abatement; date of commitment, payment; remarks. Arr. alph. by name of consumer. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 600 pp. 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$. Gen. va., T.H.

273. WATER DEPARTMENT WARRANTS, 1924-25, 1934--. 1 env., 1 bdl.

Copies of orders to collector for collection of overdue water accounts: Name, address of debtor; amount due from each, total amount due, date of warrant. Arr. chron. by date of warrant. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. Env., 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$; bdl., 9 x 7 x 1/8. 1 env., 1924-25, gen. va., T.H.; 1 bdl., 1934--., Hill's Drug Store.

274. (LIST OF ABATEMENTS), 1924-25. 2 envs.

List of abatements authorized by water commissioners: Name of consumer; amount, date of abatement; signatures of commissioners. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 9 x 1 and 10 x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$. Gen. va., T.H.

Checks and Bank Accounts

275. (Canceled Checks) FIRST NATIONAL BANK, 1925-27, 1931--. 1 cardboard box.

Name of payee; amount, number, purpose of check; signature of treasurer.. Arr. chron. by date of check. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 8 x 3 x 2. Gen. va., T.H.

276. (STUBS OF CHECKS DRAWN ON FIRST NATIONAL BANK), Feb. 26, 1936 - Sept. 29, 1936. 1 vol.

Name of payee; amount, number, purpose, date of check. Arr. num. by check no. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 50 pp. 8 x 7 x $\frac{1}{2}$. Hill's Drug Store.

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Board of Water Commissioners -
Checks and Bank Accounts

277. (MONTHLY BANK STATEMENTS), Jan.-Sept. 1936. 1 env.
Name of account; amount, date of deposit, withdrawal; balance on hand at beginning and end of month. Arr. chron. by month. No index. Typed on ptd. form. $10\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$. Gen. va., T.H.

278. (ACKNOWLEDGMENTS BY FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF INTEREST PAID ON DEPARTMENT NOTES), 1929-32. 7 sheets in 1 env.
Name of payer, reason for payment; amount, date of receipt; signature of bank official. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $3\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$. Filing cabinet.

Plans

279. (MISCELLANEOUS ORIGINAL AND DUPLICATE PLANS), 1880-1928.
43 original, 20 duplicate plans.
Engineering plans of wells, pipe lines, streets and roads, railroad crossings, reservoir lot, source of proposed additional water supply, waterworks building, poppet valve, pumping station, water supply system. Various authors, publishers, places of publication. Black-and-white, blueprint, pts. Scales vary. $8 \times 9\frac{1}{2}$ to 25×35 . 16 original and 20 duplicate plans, 1880-1928, gen. va., T.H.; 13 plans, 1887-1927, water comms. rm.; 14 plans, 1887-1928, supt. off., Ayer Water Works.

280. MISCELLANEOUS PLANS AND PHOTOGRAPHS, 1887-1933. 1 compartment.
Engineering plans and profiles of suction mains, proposed park, Sandy Pond road extension, pumping station park, pipe crossings over Grove Pond.. Authors, publishers, places of publication unknown. Blueprints and photographs. Scales vary. $30 \times 50 \times 6$. Under counter.

281. (PLAN OF PUMP), Apr. 20, 1932. 1 plan.
Plan of Nash Hytor motor-driven priming pump. Drawn by Nash Engineering Co., South Norwalk, Connecticut. Blueprint. No scale. 10×15 .

Land Takings and Rights-of-Way

282. DEEDS AND LAND TAKINGS FOR RIGHT OF WAY ON SOUTHERLY SIDE OF TANNERY POND, Sept. 27, 1906; Mar. 8, 1908; Apr. 12, 1912.
3 deeds in 1 env. (12).
Deeds to land taken for additional wells and protection of water: Name, address of grantor, grantee; location, description, valuation of property; amount of consideration, date of deed, signatures of grantor and witnesses. No arr. No index. Typed, typed on ptd. form. $10\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2} \times 4$. Safe.

283. DEEDS (to Land for) RESERVOIR, 1887. 1 env. (6).
Quitclaim and warranty deeds from Charles F. Stone to Ayer for land for reservoir: Name, address of grantor, grantee; location, description, valuation of property; warranty covenant or quitclaim clause, amount of consideration, date of deed; volume and page reference to deed recorded in county registry of deeds, signatures of grantor and witnesses. Includes acknowledgment of notary public showing attestation, date of act; signature, seal of notary public. No obvious arr. No index. Original taking, hdw.; copy of taking, typed; deeds, hdw. on ptd. form. $10\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2} \times 1$. Safe.

Board of Water Commissioners -
Land Takings and Rights-of-Way

[284-289]

284. (WARRANTY DEED), Nov. 1890. 1 env. (5).
Deed to land by Long Pond from Sarah P. and Grace Lawrence to town of Ayer:
For description, see entry 283. Typed. $10\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{4}$. Safe.

285. (ORIGINAL RIGHTS-OF-WAY GRANTED TO TOWN OF AYER), July 19, 1893;
Sept. 1, 1894; Sept. 18, 1906; Dec. 19, 1914. 4 documents in
1 env. (14).
Conveyances to town of Ayer of right to lay water pipes on grantors' lands:
Names, addresses of parties, amount of consideration, location of drain,
description of rights granted, date of instrument, volume and page reference
to instrument recorded in county registry of deeds, signatures of parties.
Includes acknowledgment of justice of the peace showing attestation, date
of act; signature, seal of justice of the peace. No obvious arr. No index.
Hdw. or typed on ptd. form. $10\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2} \times 3/4$. Safe.

Bids and Contracts

286. (WATER PIPE LINE EXTENSION AGREEMENTS), 1904, 1908-15. 6 agree-
ments in 1 env. (9).
Names of parties; purpose, conditions, date of agreement; cost of extension,
signatures of parties. Arr. chron. by date of agreement. No index.
1 agreement, 1904, typed; 5 agreements, 1908-15, hdw. $10\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2} \times 1$. Safe.

287. AYER WATER WORKS, 1906-11. 15 vols.
Contracts and specifications for laying water pipes and construction of
driven wells, cast-iron water pipes, standpipes: Names of contracting
parties, amount of accepted bid, estimated amount of materials needed;
terms, date of contract; guarantee of payment by town; signatures of con-
tractor and water commissioners. Includes contractors surety bond. No
obvious arr. No index. Hdw. 40 pp. $9 \times 6\frac{1}{2} \times 1/8$. Gen. va., T.H.

288. (Original and Copy of) CONTRACT FOR LOW-TENSION ELECTRIC CURRENT,
Apr. 17, 1917. 4 sheets in 1 env. (15).
Contract between Ayer Electric Light Company and water commissioners to
furnish current at pumping station: Names of contracting parties; terms,
period of contract, signatures of contracting parties. No obvious arr.
No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $10\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{4}$. Safe.

289. (BIDS ON PIPE LINE FROM HOSPITAL TO CENTRAL AVENUE), 1928.
1 env.
Bids by contractors giving cost of labor for excavating, laying of pipe
lines, and quoting prices on pipe lines, gate valves, hydrants, increasers,
reducers, sleeves; estimate of total cost, date of bid. Arr. chron. by
date of bid. No index. Hdw., typed. $4 \times 9\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{4}$.

Miscellaneous

290. CORRESPONDENCE, 1887-1911, 1920--. 1 vol., 7 bdl., 1 f.d. Correspondence regarding bids, proposals, inquiries for material and equipment, water rates, payments, meters. Also contains:

- i. Bills payable, 1920--: Name, address of creditor; description, cost of items; total amount, terms, date of bill.
 - ii. Petitions for extension of water line along Park Street.
- Arr. chron. by date of record. No index. Hdw., typed. Vol. 400 pp. 11 x 9 x 1; bdl., 11 x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 3; f.d., 9 x 4 x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$. 1 vol., 1887-1911, 1 bdl., 1898, 1 f.d., 1920-36, gen. va., T.H.; 6 bdl., 1920--, water comms. rm.

291. RECEIPT BOOKS - RAILWAY EXPRESS AGENCY, 1935--. 1 vol. Prior records destroyed. Receiving slips for shipment of samples of water sent to the state department of public health for analysis and for shipment of meters for repairs: Description, quantity of article shipped; date of shipment, signature of receiving agent. Arr. chron. by date of receipt. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 50 pp. 5 x 9 x $\frac{1}{2}$. Supt. off., Ayer Water Works.

292. (INSURANCE POLICIES), 1938--. 1 f.d. Prior records destroyed. Liability, fire, and theft insurance policies on Ford trucks, including excess and extraterritorial coverage. No obvious arr. No index. Typed on ptd. form. 2 x 11 x 13.

293. (PAID WATER LOAN COUPONS), 1912-34. 2 envs. (1 env., 1912-18, marked 1-20; 1 env., 1913-34, marked 1-5). Name of bank; amount, number of coupon; date of payment, cancelation stamp. Arr. chron. by date of payment. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 5 x 1/8. Safe.

294. COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, TOWN OF AYER, WATER LOAN, July 1, 1911. 20 bonds in 1 env. Paid bonds placed with Old Colony Trust Company, Boston: Name of payee; method, date, place of payment; amount, purpose, terms, number, rate of interest of bond; date of issue, maturity; signatures of town treasurer and water commissioners. Arr. num. by bond no. No index. Ptd. 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 5 x 1 $\frac{1}{4}$. Filing cabinet.

XXIII. PARK COMMISSIONERS¹

At the annual town meeting in 1900 it was voted to establish a board

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

of park commissioners, and three persons were elected to serve until the succeeding meeting.¹ Previous to this time, however, a "park or commons committee" had been mentioned in the town records from 1872 to 1874; it had three members, one elected for one year, one for two years and one for three years.²

The commissioners did not appear on the ballot with other town officers until 1903, when an article in the warrant for the annual meeting asked that they be added.³ The system of electing one commissioner for three years at each annual meeting is still followed.⁴ The commission has supervision over the town's four park sites.⁵

The commissioners keep no records.

XXIV. SUPERINTENDENT OF STREETS⁶

Supervision over the highways, streets, sidewalks and bridges of Ayer has been handled in various ways since 1871, sometimes by highway commissioners, some years by superintendents of highways or streets and in some years directly by the selectmen. They were three surveyors of highways in 1871, who may have been the selectmen.⁷ The following year the selectmen were authorized to petition the county commissioners for the building of a road;⁸ in 1887⁹ and 1889¹⁰ the selectmen are mentioned as being the surveyors.

A superintendent signed the highway and sidewalk reports in 1890¹¹ and in 1894 he is shown to be one of the selectmen.¹² In 1904 the board of selectmen announced a "new policy" under which the superintendent of streets was not a selectmen.¹³ An effort to secure the election of highway surveyors was again made in 1906, but the question was tabled.¹⁴

The superintendent is appointed by the selectmen and at the present time is not a member of that board.¹⁵

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1. Town Records, I, p. 716, see entry 35.
 2. Ibid., pp. 15 to 163 passim.
 3. Annual Reports, 1903, p. 66, see entry 2.
 4. Ibid., 1939, p. 6.
 5. Ibid., 1929, p. 98.
 6. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.
 7. Town Records, I, 8 et seq., see entry 35.
 8. Ibid., I, 96.
 9. Annual Reports, 1887, pp. 34-38, see entry 2.
 10. Ibid., 1889, p. 19.
 11. Ibid., 1890, pp. 19, 20.
 12. Ibid., 1894, p. 2.
 13. Ibid., 1904, p. 34.
 14. Ibid., 1906, p. 87.
 15. Ibid., 1939, pp. 3, 64.

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Superintendent of Streets

In addition to the following record, see entries 12, 13 for petitions for highways and reports thereon 1854-1924.

295. (RECORD OF TIME AND PAY ROLL), 1932--. 9 vols.
Name of employee, location of work, number of hours of labor daily, rate of pay, amount of pay received, date of pay roll. Arr. alph. by name of employee. No index. Hdw. 30 pp. 7 x 4 x 1/8. Sel. rm., T.H.

XXV. TREE WARDEN¹

The General Court provided in 1899 that every town at its annual election should elect a tree warden to serve for one year and should determine the compensation to be paid to the officer.² In accordance with this act the 1900 annual meeting in Ayer elected a tree warden from the floor.³

A report of the tree warden was included with other departmental reports in 1904, at which time the warden told of work done in eliminating the elm beetle.⁴ The following year he reported that "we are apparently free from gypsy moths", a pest that was causing considerable trouble in other parts of the state.⁵ A law concerning the gypsy and brown-tail moths was passed by the General Court in 1905,⁶ and in 1906 the tree warden reported the destruction of several hundred nests.⁷ The following year the tree warden signed his report as tree warden and moth superintendent.⁸ He retained the duties of moth control until 1910;⁹ in 1911 an office for moth work was filled by a separate superintendent,¹⁰ and the two offices have remained distinct to the present time.¹¹ The tree warden is elected annually.¹²

296. (RECORD OF WORK DONE), 1933--. 1 vol.
Name, address of property owner having work done on trees, shrubbery; location, amount of other work by department; amount of yearly appropriation, date of work. Arr. chron. by date of work. No index. Hdw. 100 pp. 8 1/2 x 7 x 1/4. Cabinet, sel. rm., T.H.

1. For statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Acts, 1899, ch. 330.

3. Town Records, I, 710, see entry 35.

4. Annual Reports, 1904, p. 70, see entry 2.

5. Ibid., 1905, p. 47.

6. Acts, 1905, ch. 381.

7. Annual Reports, 1906, p. 49, see entry 2.

8. Ibid., 1907, p. 52.

9. Ibid., 1910, p. 39.

10. Ibid., 1911, p. 5.

11. Ibid., 1939, p. 5.

12. Ibid., p. 6.

XXVI. LOCAL SUPERINTENDENT OF MOTH WORK¹

A local superintendent of moth work was appointed by the selectmen for the first time in 1911.² Previous to this time the work connected with control of the gypsy and brown-tail moths had been a part of the duties of the tree warden, who made several reports on moth work between 1900 and 1910.³ In the latter year the General Court passed an act making the moth work a separate function; the act specified that the state forester should have charge of the work, and under his direction local superintendents of moth work would serve in the towns.⁴ The local superintendent appears on the list with other Ayer town officers in 1911⁵ and thereafter to the present time.⁶

The commissioners keep no records..

XXVII. CONSTABLES¹

One or more constables have been elected at each annual town meeting from 1871 to the present time.⁷ While the annual report for the year ending 1872 did not show the appointments of any of the town officers, it listed an expense item for posting and returning warrants for the meetings (one man) and similar duties later definitely given to the constables.⁸ A similar entry is found for 1873;⁹ in 1889, after the town had accepted the Australian ballot system, the constables are found on the ballot with other officers to be elected.¹⁰

During the earlier years the constables are shown also as the town's truant officers.¹¹ They are not shown as the officers in charge of enforcing the truancy laws after 1883.¹² They appear on the list of town officers for the first time in the annual report for 1886; there were two

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1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.
 2. Annual Reports, 1911, p. 4, see entry 2.
 3. Town Records, I, 470, see entry 35; Annual Reports, 1904, p. 47; 1905, p. 47; 1906, p. 49; 1910, p. 39, see entry 2.
 4. Acts, 1910, ch. 150.
 5. Annual Reports, 1911, p. 5, see entry 2.
 6. Ibid., 1939, p. 5.
 7. Annual Reports, 1872 (unfolioed); 1939, p. 5, see entry 2.
 8. Ibid., 1872 (unfolioed).
 9. Ibid., 1873 (unfolioed).
 10. Ibid., 1890, p. 45.
 11. Ibid., 1874 (unfolioed).
 12. Ibid., 1883, p. 19.

constables that year.¹ The number increased to four in 1890,² five in 1913³ and varied between four and five, elected to serve for one year, to the present.⁴

The constables keep no records, but see entry 31 for selectmen's warrants to constables 1873-91.

XXVIII. POLICE DEPARTMENT⁵

Since 1871 Ayer has had some form of police protection, provided at first by the selectmen's appointment of regular and special police officers, later by a chief of police and a police department. In 1871 there were two policemen and one special officer.⁶ The selectmen appointed a chief in 1879;⁷ the number of regular and special officers varied after this year, with the chief sometimes signing their reports.⁸

Police duty was part-time work during the earlier years; the appropriations were small⁹ and in 1886 the warrant for the annual town meeting had asked if the town would vote to employ a night watchman.¹⁰ During some years the police officer served also as truant officer and lighter of the street lamps.¹¹ The latter duty was separated from the police functions in 1890.¹²

In 1896 no police officers' names appeared among the town officials; there was simply an expense entry for "Enforcement of the law, \$108.00."¹³ By 1900, however, the department appears to have taken concrete form; that year there was a chief, a special police officer and night policeman.¹⁴ The night policeman was hired after a series of burglaries in the town; he worked from midnight to 6 A.M.¹⁵ Two years later his job was

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1. Ibid., 1890, p. 45.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ibid., 1913, p. 5.
 4. Ibid., 1939, p. 5.
 5. For statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.
 6. Town Records, I, 38, 39, see entry 35.
 7. Selectmen's Records, I (unfolioed), see entry 1.
 8. Annual Reports, 1887, p. 33; 1888, p. 49; 1893, p. 16; 1912, p. 25; 1917, p. 137, see entry 2.
 9. Ibid., 1887, p. 14; 1893, p. 16.
 10. Ibid., 1886, p. 28.
 11. Ibid., 1887, p. 14.
 12. Ibid., 1890, p. 23.
 13. Ibid., 1896, p. 13.
 14. Ibid., 1900, p. 4.
 15. Ibid., 1900, pp. 4, 30.

combined with that of janitor of the town hall.¹

When Camp Devens opened during the World War the work of the police department was greatly increased. The regular appropriation for the force had to be doubled and in addition three State Patrolmen helped enforce order in the town.² In 1917 the department consisted of a chief, 7 policemen and 30 special officers.³ By 1939, however, the department had returned to three officers, one of them the chief.⁴ The department still enforces the truancy laws, certain of the town bylaws, and special duties have been given to the chief regarding taxicabs.⁵ Since 1938, when the town accepted the provisions of the General Laws, the chief has been under civil service regulations.⁶

All records are in the police chief's office, Town Hall. In addition to the following records, see entry 8 for copy of license to carry pistol or revolver, 1922--; entry 9 for copies of permits to sell firearms, 1924--.

Reports (See also entry 305)

297. (AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENTS), 1929--. 5 vols.

Police officers' reports on motor vehicle accidents copies sent to state registry of motor vehicles: Names, addresses, sex, ages, license numbers, driving experience of operators, names, addresses of car owners; names, addresses, sex, ages of passengers, pedestrians killed or injured; registration numbers, makes, types, operating conditions of vehicles; description, location, cause, date, time of accident; atmospheric, light, roadway conditions; officer's statement of other points of importance; date, number of report; signatures of witnesses and officer. Arr. chron. by date of accident. No index. Hdw. 100 pp. 10 x 8 x 2.

298. REPORT OF DOG OFFICER, 1935--. 1 folder.

Reports of unlicensed dogs seized by officers: Name, address of dog owner; breed, sex, description of dog; place, date caught, disposed, confined; period of and amount due for confinement, amount paid; date redeemed by owner or sold; name, address of new owner; number of tag secured; signature of officer. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 7 x 4 x 1/8.

1. Ibid., 1902, p. 28.

2. Ibid., 1916, p. 98.

3. Ibid., 1917, p. 137.

4. Ibid., 1939, p. 110.

5. Ibid., see also By-Laws, art. X, sec. 21, see entry 67.

6. Annual Reports, 1938, p. 12, see entry 2; General Laws, ch. 31, sec. 48.

299. (SUMMARY OF POLICE ACTIVITIES), 1935--. 1 folder. Annual statistical summaries of arrests, missing persons, houses looted, major crimes. Includes list of special officers. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. 12 x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{8}$.

Arrests (See also entry 299)

300. ARREST BOOKS, 1922--. 1 vol. Prior records destroyed. Record of arrests: Name, address, age, occupation, nationality of person arrested; name of arresting officer; nature, date of offense; disposition of case, remarks, date of record. Also contains record of:

- i. Raids: Place, date, time of raid; purpose of raid, summary of events occurring during raid; date of record.
- ii. Snow storms: Date, time storm began, ended.
- iii. Stolen and recovered property, entry 304.

Arr. chron. by date of record. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 400 pp. 11 x 12 x 1.

301. ARREST CARDS, 1935--. 1 f.b. System estab. 1935. Card record of arrests, used for ready reference: Name, aliases, address, date of birth, age, occupation, physical description of person arrested; nature, date of offense; disposition of case. Arr. alph. by name of person arrested. No index. Typed on ptd. form. 5 x 7 x 16.

302. (ARREST SLIPS), 1935--. 4 envs. System estab. 1935. Slips made out at time of arrest: Name, address, age, birthplace, occupation, place of employment, physical description, family history of person arrested; nature of offense, plea; place, time, date of arrest, name of arresting officer; number, date of investigation; date placed on probation, remarks. Arr. chron. by date of arrest. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 4 x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{4}$.

303. (RELEASES), 1935--. 2 envs. Prior records destroyed. Record of persons arrested and discharged after signing statement releasing police department from liability for arrest: Name of person arrested; text, date of release; signatures of arrested person and witnesses. Arr. chron. by date of release. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 4 x 9 x $\frac{1}{8}$.

Violations

304. (RECORD OF STOLEN AND RECOVERED PROPERTY), 1936--. 1 vol. 1922-35, also 1936-- in Arrest Books, entry 300-iii. Description, value of property; date stolen, recovered; name of suspect (if any); whether arrests made by police of neighboring towns, record number. Also contains record of vagrants lodged: Name, address, age, physical description of vagrant. Arr. num. by record no. No index. Hdw. 150 pp. 10 x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{8}$.

Police Department -
Violations

[305-311]

305. DAILY REPORT (of Motor Vehicle Violations), 1937--. 5 vols.

Prior records destroyed.

Reports compiled from (Policemen's Note Book), entry 307: Name, address, date of birth of driver; make, model, type, registration number of car; number, date of license; date, time, facts of violation; signature, recommendation of policeman. Arr. chron. by day. No index. Hdw. 100 pp. 9 x 6 x $\frac{1}{4}$.

306. (LICENSE-SUSPENSION NOTICES), 1937--. 1 folder.

Notices sent by state registry of motor vehicles to suspend licenses of motor vehicle operators for violation of law: Name, address, license number of licensee; reason for and date of suspension, signature of state registrar. No obvious arr. No index. Typed on ptd. form. 11 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1/8.

307. (POLICEMEN'S NOTE BOOK), 1933--. 7 vols. Prior records destroyed.

Notes on law infractions including motor vehicle violations, description of conditions at places suspected of selling liquor unlawfully; description of persons sought as fugitives from justice; date of note. Arr. chron. by date of note. No index. Hdw. 100 pp. 7 x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 3/8.

Summonses and Warrants

308. (OUT-OF-TOWN SUMMONSES), 1935--. 1 folder. Prior records destroyed.

Copies of summonses sent by outside police departments with request that they be served by Ayer police department on residents: Name, address of person summoned; name of town sending summons, summons number, signature of chief of police. Arr. num. by summons no. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 9 x 12 x 1.

309. (Selectmen's) WARRANTS TO KILL UNLICENSED DOGS, 1934--. 1 env.

Text, date of warrant; signatures of selectmen. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$.

For similar warrants to constable 1873-91, see entry 31.

Financial Records

310. RECORD OF MONEY RECEIVED BY CHIEF OF POLICE, 1928--. 2 vols.

Receipts from licenses issued and rental of Town Hall: Name, address of payer, type of license issued; amount, date of receipt; receipt number. Arr. chron. by date of receipt. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 50 to 400 pp. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$ to 17 x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$.

311. (TREASURER'S RECEIPTS), 1930-1935--. 2 envs.

Receipts given by treasurer acknowledging payment of fees collected by police department for various licenses and rental of Town Hall: Name of payer; amount, date of receipt; signature of treasurer. Arr. chron. by date of receipt. No index. Hdw. 4 x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x $\frac{1}{4}$.

312. (RECORD OF EXPENDITURES), 1931-34, Feb. 1935 - May 1935.

2 vols. System discontinued May 1935.

Expenditures for salaries of regular and special officers, travel, other sundry items: Name of payee; amount, date, purpose of expenditure. Arr. chron. by date of expenditure. No index. Hdw. 25 pp. $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 7 x $1\frac{1}{8}$ and 150 pp. 10 x 8 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

Miscellaneous

313. CRIMINAL RECORDS FROM STATE INSTITUTIONS, 1935--. 1 folder. System established 1935.

Case histories of persons arrested by department, information obtained from state penal institutions: Name, address of institution; name, aliases, sex, color, birthplace, fingerprints, date of birth, nationality, physical description of criminal; criminal specialty, prior criminal record; date of arrest, charge preferred, disposition of case, criminal classification number; signature of official taking fingerprint impressions, date of impression. Arr. alph. by name of criminal. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 9 x 12 x 1.

314. (RECORD OF RENTALS OF TOWN HALL), 1931--. 1 vol. Name of renter; amount, date, purpose of rental. Arr. chron. by date of rental. No index. Hdw. Writing illegible. 188 pp. 10 x 8 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

315. (Stubs of) POLICE DEPARTMENT PERMIT(s) TO DO NECESSARY WORK ON THE LORD'S DAY, 1931--. 4 vols. Prior records destroyed. Name, address of person or organization receiving permit; place, reason, date of work; signature of police chief. Arr. chron. by date of permit, with permits numbered consecutively. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 75 pp. $4\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

316. (Notice of) INTENDED SALE OR TRANSFER OF MOTOR VEHICLES, 1935--. 1 f.d. Names, addresses of new owner and prior owner(s); type, make, model, year, motor and registration numbers of vehicle; statement of any alteration in motor or maker's number, date of notice, signature of new owner. Includes on reverse side: Name, address of owner; signature of state registry official authorizing sale, date thereof. Arr. chron. by date of notice. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 5 x 15 x 30.

317. (CORRESPONDENCE), 1935--. 1 f.b. Prior records destroyed. General correspondence with town and state officials relative to criminals wanted, records of stolen property, complaints, liquor-act rulings. No obvious arr. No index. Hdw., typed. 12 x 12 x $9\frac{3}{4}$.

318. BLACK LIST LETTERS, 1935--. 2 envs. Letters to chief of police to stop sale of liquor to certain husbands or sons of Ayer families. Arr. chron. by date of letter. No index. Hdw., typed. $9\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

Police Department -
Miscellaneous

[319-320]

319. (NOTICES OF POLICE APPOINTMENTS), 1936--. 1 env.
Notices by selectmen to police chief: Name, address, title of appointee; date of appointment, notice; signatures of selectmen. Arr. chron. by date of notice. No index. Typed. $10\frac{1}{2} \times 4 \times \frac{1}{4}$.

For record of appointments 1870-1935, see entry 27.

320. (RULES AND REGULATIONS OF POLICE DEPARTMENT), 1935. 1 folder.
Copies of general laws and supreme-court decisions applicable to police administration. No obvious arr. No index. Typed. $9\frac{1}{2} \times 2 \times 1/8$.

XXIX. BOARD OF FIRE ENGINEERS¹

Since the incorporation of the town the Ayer selectmen have appointed varying numbers of men to protect the community against fire. From 1871 to 1874 there were two firewards, two stewards and a number of volunteer firemen;² in 1875 three engineers were appointed to serve an indefinite term.³ One of them was chief and the remaining two described as "assistants."⁴

The firewards were authorized to act with the selectmen in considering the erection of reservoirs in 1872;⁵ two years later they reported that reservoirs had been placed at four points in the town.⁶ An expense entry for an engine company is found in the annual report for the year 1871,⁷ a hook-and-ladder company in 1876⁸ and "Hose Co. #1" in 1882.⁹ The latter year the personnel of the department included 45 in the engine company, 20 in the hook-and-ladder company and three engineers.¹⁰ The engineers were also the forest fire wards in 1887.¹¹

The fire department reported a reorganization in 1889, the first of several. The old Colonel Needham Engine Company retired after 18 years of service, and the Alert Hook and Ladder Company, the Alfred Page Hose No. 1, and the B. H. Hartwell Hose Company No. 2 were formed. There were fifteen men in each of the latter two companies,¹² the

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City in Massachusetts.

2. Annual Reports, 1876, pp. 16, 17, see entry 2.

3. Town Records, I, 161. see entry 35.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., I, 90-95.

6. Annual Reports, 1874 (unfolioed), see entry 2.

7. Ibid., 1873 (unfolioed).

8. Ibid., 1876, p. 16.

9. Ibid., 1882, p. 15.

10. Ibid., p. 28.

11. Ibid., 1877, p. 33.

12. Ibid., 1889, p. 35.

following year a total of 55 men and three engineers was reported.¹ In a second reorganization in 1895 the number of men was reduced to 45,² and in 1898 there was a chief, an assistant chief, and a clerk.³ The Alert Company changed its name to the George J. Burns Company in 1899.⁴

The major reorganization of the department came in 1905, when a set of bylaws was adopted which set up three engineers, one forest fire ward, six special fire police, all to be appointed annually by the selectmen.⁵ The two hose companies were allotted 10 regular men and three call men each and the hook-and-ladder company fifteen regular and three call men, the appointment of the call men in all cases to be subject to the approval of the board of fire engineers. Each company was given its own captain, first and second lieutenants, clerk, treasurer, and standing committee of three.⁶ The same year the hose house was moved to new quarters.⁷

The engineers reported that they had obtained motor trucks for the department in 1915;⁸ a second truck purchase was made in 1919, and the first full-time truck driver employed.⁹

Since 1901 separate reports have been made concerning work on forest fires, signed at first by a forest fire ward,¹⁰ but later by a forest warden who was not a member of the board of engineers.¹¹ An inspector of petroleum was listed with other town officers in 1909¹² and again in 1931,¹³ but his duties were later given to the fire department.¹⁴

The present board of fire engineers still has three members, one of them the chief, and a fourth member who is assistant chief.¹⁵ Since 1938 the chief has been a civil service appointee.¹⁶

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1. Ibid., 1890, p. 36.
 2. Ibid., 1895, p. 32.
 3. Ibid., 1898, p. 45.
 4. Ibid., 1899, p. 49.
 5. Ibid., 1906, p. 52.
 6. Ibid.
 7. Ibid., p. 21.
 8. Ibid., Dec. 1915, p. 127.
 9. Ibid., 1919, pp. 26, 138.
 10. Ibid., 1901, p. 3.
 11. Ibid., 1923, p. 125.
 12. Ibid., 1909, p. 3.
 13. Ibid., 1931, p. 138.
 14. Acts, 1934, ch. 182, sec. 2.
 15. Annual Reports, 1939, p. 100, see entry 2.
 16. Ibid., 1938, p. 12. See also General Laws, ch. 31, sec. 48.

All records are in the engineers' room, Fire Station. In addition to the following records, see entry 70-iii for annual reports of fire engineers 1855-82.

321. FIRE RECORD AND REPORT, 1905-15, 1917-18, 1920-24, 1928--.
7 vols. Prior records destroyed.

Permanent record of fires compiled from and showing same information as in entry 322. Arr. chron. by date of fire. No index. Hdw., typed. 150 to 500 pp. $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 7 x 1 to 13 x 10 x 4.

322. FIRE REPORTS, 1936--. 1 bdl.

Original reports of fires from which permanent record (entry 321) is compiled: Names of owner and occupants of building; place, time, date of alarm; fire-alarm box number; location, cause, date of fire; amount of damages, insurance carried, fire apparatus used, distance traveled. Arr. chron. by date of fire. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 6 x 4 x $\frac{1}{2}$.

323. EXPENSE ACCOUNT, 1936--. 2 sheets. Prior records destroyed.

Record of monthly expenditures for salaries, equipment, and miscellaneous items: Name of payee; amount, date, purpose of expenditure; monthly totals. Arr. chron. by date of expenditure. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. $8\frac{1}{2}$ x $16\frac{1}{2}$.

324. AYER FIRE DEPARTMENT, Aug. 31, 1935. 1 sheet.

Records of Combination Company #1: Names, number of members; number of firemen or probationers, manner of appointment, procedure on alarms; duties of officers, probationers, regular members; penalties for failure to obey fire department rules; date of annual meeting. Ptd. 19 x 11.

XXX. FOREST WARDEN¹

The first report on the work of controlling fires in the forests in the vicinity of Ayer were made by the fire engineers in 1884.² The three fire engineers signed themselves forest firewards in 1887³ and 1889;⁴ a separate forest fireward is shown in the annual reports for the first time in 1901.⁵

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Annual Reports, 1884, p. 23, see entry 2.

3. Ibid., 1887, p. 34.

4. Ibid., 1889, p. 45.

5. Ibid., 1901, p. 3.

The officer signed himself 'forest warden' in 1912¹ and 'forest fire warden' some years thereafter.² He reports on the number of fires fought by his department and the number of permits he issues for fires of certain kinds.³

The warden keeps no records.

XXXI. SEALER OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES⁴

A sealer of weights and measures has been appointed annually by the selectmen since the first town meeting in 1871.⁵ A set of standard weights was purchased for the sealer during the first year,⁶ and additional equipment for the department has been purchased from time to time.⁷ The sealer delivers an annual report to the board of selectmen.⁸

325. (OFFICE RECORD OF DEVICES TESTED), 1911--. 5 vols.
Name, address of owner; nature of business, type of device tested, amount of fee received, date of test, date of record. Arr. chron. by date of record. No index. Hdw. 60 pp. 10 x 14 x $\frac{1}{2}$. Sealer's desk, town cl. rm., T.H.

326. (Field) INSPECTION RECORD, undated. 1 vol.
Name, address of owner of device; type, condition, number of device tested; date of inspection. Arr. chron. by date of inspection. Indexed alph. by name of owner. Hdw. on ptd. form. 50 pp. 14 x 8 x $\frac{1}{2}$. Gen. va., T.H.

327. (RECEIPTS), 1920-25, 1927-29, 1932--. 9 vols.
Copies of receipts acknowledging payment of inspection fees: Name, address of owner of device; nature of business, type of device tested, amount of fee, date of receipt, signature of sealer. Arr. chron. by date of receipt. No index. Hdw. on ptd. form. 200 pp. 6 x 12 x $\frac{3}{4}$. Sealer's desk, town cl. rm., T.H.

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1. Ibid., 1912, p. 59.
 2. Ibid., 1923, p. 125; 1936, p. 129.
 3. Ibid., 1936, p. 129; 1939, pp. 119, 120.
 4. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.
 5. Town Records, I, 8, see entry 35; Annual Reports, 1880, p. 11; 1892, p. 34; 1902, p. 44; 1939, p. 119, see entry 2.
 6. Ibid., 1872 (unfolioed).
 7. Ibid., 1880, p. 11; 1908, p. 66.
 8. Ibid., 1939, p. 119.

XXXII. WEIGHERS OF COAL¹

Since 1888 varying numbers of public weighers have appeared in the annual reports. In the earlier years these officers were termed public weighers,² and more recently they have appeared as weighers of coal.³ From two to four weighers were appointed by the selectmen from 1888 to 1910;⁴ from the latter year to the present the weighers have been called weighers of coal.⁵ There were six weighers in 1939.⁶

The weighers keep no records.

XXXIII. MODERATOR¹

Until 1933 a moderator was generally elected to preside over each town meeting. Election of the officer was by vote, often cast by the town clerk before other elections were begun.⁷ A change in the method of electing the moderator was made in 1933, after the town had accepted provisions of the General Laws making the term of office one year.⁸ This method is still used.⁹

The moderator keeps no records.

XXXIV. TOWN COUNSEL¹

An appointed or elected town counsel is not shown with the other town officers of Ayer in any of the annual reports until very recent years; from the first of these reports, 1872,¹⁰ to the present,¹¹ however, there have been numerous references to legal services performed for the town, and occasional mention in reports of the selectmen or the chief of police of a 'town counsel'.

In 1878 an expense item is listed for "F.A. Worcester advice . . .";¹² the next year three lawyers assisted the town in the transaction of its

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1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.
 2. Annual Reports, 1888, p. 49; 1908, p. 4, see entry 2.
 3. Ibid., 1910, p. 4; 1939, p. 5.
 4. Ibid., 1888, p. 49; 1908, p. 4.
 5. Ibid., 1910, p. 4; 1939, p. 5.
 6. Ibid., 1939, p. 5.
 7. Town Records, I, 322, see entry 35; Annual Reports, 1888, p. 50; 1907, pp. 54, 63; 1914, p. 13; 1933, p. 18, see entry 2.
 8. Ibid., 1933, p. 18; General Laws, ch. 39, sec. 14.
 9. Annual Reports, 1939, p. 6, see entry 3.
 10. Annual Reports, 1872 (unfolioed), see entry 2.
 11. Ibid., 1939, p. 5..
 12. Ibid., 1878, p. 18.

legal affairs.¹ Reference is made in 1883 to a 'town counsel' for the first time.² The selectmen, in their report, refer to the town counsel again in 1908;³ before this time one of the selectmen had been paid for legal services to the town in one year⁴ and in another a lawyer was paid for handling various criminal prosecutions.⁵ The chief of police refers to a town counsel in 1921 (when the counsel was one of the selectmen)⁶ and again in 1934.⁷ In 1938 and 1939 the counsel is listed with other officers.⁸

The bylaws of the town give the selectmen the authority to employ the counsel and to have charge of the town's law library.⁹

The counsel keeps no records.

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1. Ibid., 1879, pp. 12, 13.
 2. Ibid., 1883, p. 19.
 3. Ibid., 1908, p. 23.
 4. Ibid., 1904, p. 25.
 5. Ibid., 1908, p. 20.
 6. Ibid., 1921, pp. 56, 90.
 7. Ibid., 1934, p. 129.
 8. Ibid., 1938, p. 4; 1939, p. 5.
 9. By-Laws, art. III, sec. 1, see entry 67.

PART C. DEFUNCT OFFICES

XXXV. SURVEYORS OF LUMBER, WOOD, AND BARK¹

The number of surveyors of lumber, wood, and bark has varied from as few as two to as many as eight since the first town meeting, at which the office was established.² The title has undergone some slight changes; in 1872 there were five surveyors of lumber and two measurers of wood and bark;³ in 1887 there were five surveyors of wood and lumber and two surveyors of bark.⁴ Eight were elected in 1888 as surveyors of wood, lumber and bark,⁵ the title which was retained until 1924.⁶ It was voted in 1890 that in the future four would appear on the ballot⁷ but the number varied from two to seven after that year.⁸

By 1923 the office had ceased to be one of the important ones to be filled at each election; the vote cast that year was 11, 7, 5, and 3 votes respectively for the four surveyors.⁹ The office appears for the last time in the annual report for 1924 when three were elected.¹⁰

No records were found for this office.

XXXVI. POUND KEEPER¹

A pound keeper was among the officers set up at the first town meeting.¹¹ Occasional mention of the election of the officer is found through 1890, when it was voted that the pound keeper would be one of the offices filled by written ballot each year thereafter.¹²

One incumbent was annually elected to the position until 1919, the last time it is shown in the annual reports.¹³ No records were found for this office.

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1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.
 2. Town Records, I, 8 et seq., see entry 35.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Annual Reports, 1887, p. 33, see entry 2.
 5. Ibid., 1888, p. 49.
 6. Ibid., 1924, p. 3.
 7. Town Records, I, 455, see entry 35.
 8. Annual Reports, 1891, p. 38; 1900, p. 2; 1911, p. 4; 1915, p. 5, see entry 2.
 9. Ibid., 1923, p. 16.
 10. Ibid., 1924, p. 3.
 11. Town Records, I, p. 8 et seq., see entry 35.
 12. Annual Reports, 1887, p. 34, see entry 2.
 13. Ibid., 1902, pp. 61, 62; 1919, p. 6.

XXXVII. LIQUOR AGENT¹

A liquor agent, appointed by the town of Groton, had a separate office in the section known as South Groton, later Groton Junction, more than a dozen years before the incorporation of the latter town.² He made his reports to the selectmen of Groton.³

The officer appears to have begun his duties in the new town at the time of its incorporation. In 1875 he reported the amount of liquor sales handled by him, and an expense entry is found for his salary.⁴ The same type of report was made through 1880.⁵

No records were found for this office.

XXXVIII. FENCE VIEWERS¹

From 1871 until 1918, the last time that the warrant for the annual town meeting calls for their election, two or more fence viewers were elected each year.⁶

The election was affected by the Australian Ballot system after 1890,⁷ and two were elected annually until the office was discontinued.

No records were found for this office.

XXXIX. FIELD DRIVERS¹

The number of field drivers elected at each annual town meeting has varied from two to as many as four or more between 1871,⁸ when the office was created, and 1918, the last time the office is listed in the annual report with other town departments.⁹

1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

2. Groton Reports, 1859, p. 13; 1860, p. 12.

3. Ibid.

4. Annual Reports, 1875 (unfolioed), see entry 2.

5. Ibid., 1880, p. 15.

6. Town Records, I, p. 8 et seq., see entry 35; Annual Reports, 1887, p. 33; 1918, p. 20, see entry 2.

7. Town Records, I, 455, see entry 35; Annual Reports, 1918, p. 20, see entry 2.

8. Town Records, I, p. 8 et seq., see entry 35.

9. Annual Reports, 1918, p. 20, see entry 2.

Field Drivers

After 1890 the field drivers were elected on a single ballot with other officers. Two were elected each year thereafter.¹

No records were found for this office.

XL. SEXTON²

While mention of a sexton does not appear in the annual reports until 1884, there are several expense entries connected with deaths and burials since the incorporation of the town. In 1871 there is an item for grading at the hearse-house, repairs, and making returns of deaths.³ Several sums are listed as having been to the same individual for reporting deaths and repairing the hearse in 1877;⁴ this may have been one of the constables, however, since he was also paid for posting warrants.⁵ In 1884 the overseers paid "\$5.00 for services as sexton to Thomas Mann" and \$2.00 for the same services to another;⁶ during the next twenty years one individual was paid several times for burials, returning death notices, and similar functions.⁷

After 1904 the expenditures for a burial agent are found in the soldiers' relief department.⁸

No records were found for this office.

XLI. FISH COMMISSIONERS²

In 1884 a fish commission was established with three members. These members were elected one for one year, one for two years and the third for three years, subsequent members to serve three years each. The commission was an unpaid body; it was authorized to take leases on any natural or artificial ponds in or partly in Ayer, make rules for the protection and propagation of fish, and prosecute violators of the rules.⁹

1. Town Records, I, p. 455, see entry 35; Annual Reports, 1892, p. 33; 1902, pp. 61, 62, see entry 2.

2. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.

3. Annual Reports, 1872, (unfolioed), see entry 2.

4. Ibid., 1877, pp. 17-20.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., 1884, p. 7.

7. Ibid., 1887, pp. 7, 8; 1893, p. 3; 1902, p. 27.

8. Ibid., 1904, p. 22; 1939, p. 44.

9. Town Records, I, pp. 304, 305, see entry 35.

The three-member board appears in the annual reports most years until 1919; that year two commissioners are found.¹ One is listed with the town officers in 1924,² and after 1925 the office is no longer found in the warrants of the annual town meetings.³

No records were found for this office.

XLII. COMMISSIONERS OF THE SINKING FUND⁴

The annual town meeting voted in 1888 that a sinking fund be established for the retirements of town debts.⁵ The following year three were listed with the other officers; one elected to serve for one year, one for two years and one for three years, one succeeding incumbent to be elected for a three-year term at each annual town meeting.⁶ The election is shown in most of the annual reports until 1923,⁷ in at least one year the selectmen were made sinking fund commissioners.⁸

The number of commissioners was usually three; in 1914⁹ and again in 1917¹⁰ only two served in the office. There was a provision for the election of a commissioner in the warrant for the 1918 annual town meeting, but the vote was so small that no election was declared.¹¹ This was also the case in 1921¹² and 1922.¹³ An idea of the relative lack of interest in the office by the voters may be gained from the election in 1923, when one commissioner was elected on two votes; 12 scattering votes were cast and there were 619 blanks.¹⁴ The office does not appear in the reports after 1923.

No records were found for this office.

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1. Annual Reports, 1889, p. 46; 1919, p. 5, see entry 2.
 2. Ibid., 1924, p. 3.
 3. Ibid., 1925, pp. 2, 4; 1939, pp. 3-5.
 4. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.
 5. Town Records, I, 390, see entry 35.
 6. Ibid., p. 419.
 7. Annual Reports, 1892, pp. 32, 33; 1913, p. 5; 1923, p. 17, see entry 2.
 8. Ibid., 1889, p. 45.
 9. Ibid., 1914, p. 5.
 10. Ibid., 1917, p. 5.
 11. Ibid., 1918, p. 20.
 12. Ibid., 1921, pp. 3, 16.
 13. Ibid., 1922, p. 16.
 14. Ibid., 1923, p. 17.

XLIII. INSPECTOR OF PLUMBING¹

The appointment of an inspector of plumbing is shown in the report of the board of health for 1896;² previous to this time, in 1894, the board had reported that it had licensed several plumbers as provided by an act of the General Court.³

An attempt to establish the inspection of plumbing as a permanent town function was made in 1906, when it was proposed that chapter 103 of the Revised Laws, relating to plumbing inspectors, be accepted. The motion was tabled, however,⁴ and the inspector does not appear in the reports after that year.

No records were found for this office.

XLIV. INSPECTOR OF PETROLEUM¹

An inspector of petroleum appears in the list of town officers in the annual report for 1909;⁵ this office is not shown again until 1931, however, after the General Court had enacted uniform fire regulation laws, one of which called for the annual appointment of an inspector of petroleum by the selectmen.⁶ In a later act in 1934, however, the duties of inspection were given to the fire department,⁷ and a petroleum inspector is no longer found with the officers.⁸

No records were found for this office.

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1. For the statutory origin and development of this office, see Town and City Government in Massachusetts.
 2. Annual Reports, 1896, board of health report, p. 4, see entry 2.
 3. Ibid., 1894, board of health report, p. 4; Acts, 1894, ch. 455.
 4. Annual Reports, 1906, p. 87, see entry 2.
 5. Ibid., 1909, p. 3, see entry 2.
 6. Ibid., 1931, p. 134; Acts, 1930, ch. 399.
 7. Ibid., 1934, ch. 182, sec. 2.
 8. Annual Reports, 1936, pp. 3, 5; 1939, pp. 3-5, see entry 2.

I. APPENDIX

State Archives Pertaining to Ayer

All records are in a folder titled Acts of 1871, Chapter 23, in the Massachusetts State Archives, room 438, State House, Boston.

1. (PETITION BY HARVEY A. WOODS AND OTHERS FOR A SEPARATE TOWNSHIP), Nov. 10, 1870. 1 sheet.

Petition of Harvey A. Woods and sixty-nine others, legal voters of Groton, Shirley, and Littleton represent that they with other inhabitants of the territory feel that the public exigency requires that they be incorporated into a town by the name of Groton Junction comprising a part of each of the towns named and to be bounded and described as follows:-
"Beginning at the northwesterly corner of the said territory at the mouth of James Brook so called in said Groton and running thence southerly by the Nashua River till it comes to the town line of Harvard, thence easterly by said Harvard town line till it comes to Littleton town line, thence northeasterly in a straight line to a stake and stones at a point where the southerly side of the county road leading from said Groton by the Ridge Hill Tavern, so called, to Littleton Old Common, so called, intersects the northeasterly town line of said Littleton, thence westerly in a straight line to the point of beginning", and "your Petitioners respectfully request that the said town of Groton Junction be incorporated by law with the territory above described". In House of Representatives, Jan. 11, 1871, referred to committee on towns. In Senate, Jan. 12, 1871, concurred. Hdw. 2 pp. 8 x 96.

2. (REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON TOWNS), Feb. 1, 1871. 1 sheet.

Report to the General Court of the bill for the incorporation of a new town, submitted by the committee to which was referred petition of legal voters of Groton, Shirley, and Littleton for a new town. Hdw. 2 pp. 8 x 10.

3. (PETITION BY LEVI SHERWIN AND OTHERS TO GENERAL COURT IN OPPOSITION TO NAME OF AYER), Feb. 6, 1871. 2 sheets.

Levi Sherwin and twelve others, five of whom were not petitioners, represent that "we petitioned for new town to be set off from Groton and Shirley and that in said petition the name of the new town was Groton Junction and that in a hasty and quick movement made by some of our citizens they got the name altered to Ayer against the feelings of your Petitioners"; therefore said petitioners pray that "Ayer be stricken out and Groton Junction inserted". Laid upon the table. Hdw. 2 pp. 8 x 12.

Appendix

4. (PETITION IN OPPOSITION TO NAME OF AYER), Feb. 6, 1871. 1 sheet. Petition to the General Court by a few of the signers of the petition for a new town to be set off from Groton and Shirley, asking that the name of Ayer be stricken from bill and the name of Groton Junction be inserted. Hdw. 1 p. 8 x 12.

5. (AN ACT TO INCORPORATE TOWN OF AYER), Feb. 14, 1871. 2 sheets. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled and by authority of same as follows:- SEC. 1. All territory now within the towns of Groton and Shirley in county of Middlesex, comprised within the following limits, etc., is hereby incorporated into a town by the name of Ayer to be invested with all the powers, privileges, rights and immunities and subject to all the duties and requisitions to which other towns are entitled and subjected. SEC. 2. Inhabitants of said town of Ayer shall be holden to pay all arrears of taxes, assessed upon them by said towns of Groton and Shirley; all taxes assessed and not collected shall be collected and paid to the treasurers of said towns of Groton and Shirley and also their proportion of all county and state taxes, etc. SEC. 3. Said towns of Groton, Shirley, and Ayer shall be respectively liable for the support of all persons who now do or shall hereafter stand in need of relief as paupers. SEC. 4. Corporate property belonging to the towns of Groton and Shirley at the date of the passage of this act and public debt of said towns shall be divided between the towns of Groton, Shirley, and Ayer according to valuation of property within their respective limits, etc. SEC. 5. In case said towns are not in agreement in regard to property, debts, town paupers, and taxes, superior court of county of Middlesex shall upon petition of either of said towns appoint three competent disinterested persons to hear parties and award thereon which shall be final, etc. SEC. 6. Town of Ayer, for purpose of electing representatives to the General Court until the next decennial census or until another apportionment be made, shall remain a part of the said towns of Groton and Shirley, and vote therefor at such places as said towns of Groton and Shirley shall vote, and selectmen of Ayer shall make a true list of all persons within their town qualified to vote, etc. SEC. 7. Any justice of the peace within or for county of Middlesex may issue his warrant to any inhabitant of the town of Ayer requiring him to notify and warn the inhabitants thereof to meet at time and place appointed for purpose of choosing all such town officers as towns are by law authorized and required to choose at their annual meetings, etc. SEC. 8. This act shall take effect on its passage. In House of Representatives, Feb. 8, 1871, passed to be engrossed, in Senate, Feb. 10, 1871, passed to be engrossed; approved Feb. 14, 1871. Hdw. 4 pp. 8 x 12¹/₂.

For printed version of this act see Mass. Special Laws, 13, 1871-1875, ch. 23, pp. 9, 11.

II. APPENDIX

Settlement of Dispute Between the Towns of Groton and Ayer

FIRST: The town farm with its stock and fixtures, the town house with its land and appurtenances, the fire engine with its appurtenances, the two hearses with their appliances, the High School House, and all the eleven other school houses, together with their lot of land, and appurtenances, the town safe, the papers and books of records owned by the town of Groton in its municipal capacity, one road scraper together with two thirds of the town library including two thirds of the maps, charts, public documents, of all kinds shall remain and be corporate property of said town of Groton.

SECOND: The engine house with its lot and appurtenances, the three school houses with their lots of land and appurtenances, the lockup with its lot of land and appurtenances, all now within the limits of said town of Ayer, with the fire engine and the fixtures, also the hearse and its fixtures, usually kept in said Ayer shall all and singularly remain, and be the corporate property of the said town of Ayer, together with one third part of the Groton town property, including one third part of all maps, charts and public documents, of whatever name and kind that belonged to said Groton up to the date of the incorporate of said town of Ayer and whatever real or personal estate not heretofore otherwise lawfully disposed of lying and having and being within the limits, of said town of Ayer, at the date of its incorporation, shall remain, and forever be the corporate property of said town of Ayer.

THIRD: The said town of Ayer shall assume, as its own debts and shall pay and save the said town of Groton harmless from the sum of twenty one thousand five hundred nine and one third dollars, of the debt, of said Groton, existing on the fourteenth day of February 1871 A.D. with interest on said sum, from the said fourteenth day of February when said sum shall be in full satisfaction of its proportionate part, of said town of Groton shall pay, and save the said town of Ayer harmfully forever of and from, all the balance and remainder of the debt, of said town of Groton, existing on said fourteenth day of February 1871 A.D. in pursuance of said act of incorporation.

FOURTH: That the said town of Ayer shall pay one third and the said town of Groton shall pay two thirds of all state and county taxes that may be assessed upon them previously to the taking of the next state valuation.

FIFTH: That all the paupers shall be supported as provided in said act of incorporation.

SIXTH: That the said town of Ayer shall receive from said town of Groton a proportionate of whatever amount may hereafter be refunded, to said town of Groton from the state, or United States, to reimburse said town of Groton for bounties, to soldiers or states aid paid to soldiers' families, agreeable to said act of incorporation.

Signed by committees representing Ayer and Groton.

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Vol. I Ashfield, (ii, 108 pp., mim., 1940).

Vol. II Bernardston, (iii, 90 pp., mim., 1941).

Vol. III Buckland, (ii, 74 pp., mim., 1940).

List of Publications

Inventory of the Town and City Archives of Massachusetts, (Cont'd)

No. 7 Hampden County

Vol. V Chicopee, (xi, 296 pp., mult. dupl., and mim.,
October, 1939).

No. 10 Middlesex County

Vol. V Ayer, (iii, 150 pp., mult. dupl., 1941).

Vol. XXIX Maynard, (iii, 149 pp., mult. dupl., 1941).

No. 11 Norfolk County

Vol. I Avon, (ii, 83 pp. mult. dupl., May, 1939).

Vol. II Bellingham, (ii, 76 pp., mult. dupl., August, 1939).

Vol. IV Brookline, (v, 348 pp., mult. dupl., 1940).

Vol. XI Holbrook, (iii, 179 pp. mult. dupl., 1941).

No. 13 Suffolk County

Vol. I, Part 5 Boston, (v, 356 pp., mult. dupl., 1940).

No. 14 Worcester County

Vol. II Athol, (iii, 232 pp., mult. dupl., 1941).

Vol. III Auburn, (iii, 89 pp., mim. February, 1940).

Vol. IV Barre, (iii, 132 pp., mim. 1940).

Vol. V Berlin (iii, 108 pp., mim. 1941).

Note: The following are reprints of the sketches of history and government for use in the respective public schools of the town concerned. Since they duplicate material already included in the respective city or town inventories, these reprints are not distributed separately to official depositories of Historical Records Survey publications.

Sketch of History and Government (reprints for use of public schools)

No. 6 Franklin County

Vol. I Ashfield, (iii, 48 pp., mim., 1941).

Vol. III Buckland, (ii, 36 pp., mim., 1940).

No. 11 Norfolk County

Vol. IV Brookline, (ii, 74 pp., mult. dupl., 1940).

Vol. XI Holbrook, (iii, 54 pp., mult. dupl., 1941).

No. 14 Worcester County

Vol. IV Barre, (ii, 45 pp., mim., 1940).

