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## Flint and Lawrence Family Papers

1642-1798

2 boxes (1 linear ft.)

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Long time residents of Lincoln, Massachusetts. Contains records of several town and church meetings, town petitions, and receipts documenting the construction of the meeting house. Personal papers include records of business (lands sales, indenture papers, contracts) and legal (wills, estate inventories and settlements) transactions. Also contains personal letters of Dr. Joseph Adams, a Loyalist who fled to England in approximately 1777.

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## Background on Creator:

Thomas Flint arrived in Massachusetts Bay, from Matlock, Derbyshire, England, in approximately 1636. He was a Puritan. Soon after his arrival he was appointed to Governor Winthrop's Council. At an unknown date he moved to the town of Concord, where he owned approximately 275 acres. Unlike most men, who generally began with a cooperative type of agricultural system, Flint was able to maintain a more independent farmstead. Flint also owned a farm within the boundaries of the future Lincoln. During Flint's lifetime this property, which appears to have been the first functional farmstead in this area, was occupied by a member of the Wheeler family of Concord.<sup>1</sup> In 1646, Flint helped draw up a code of conduct for Indians, with a list of penalties for each infraction. Thomas Flint was undoubtedly a prominent figure in Concord. In 1654, a year after his death, a committee was established to make a second town division on newly cleared lands, and it was decided that in recognition of Flint's services to Concord, his heirs should receive the area known today as Lincoln centre. Under the terms of Flint's will, which was the first recorded by the Middlesex County Records in Cambridge, his property was not divided among the Flint family for many years.

Edward Flint was born in 1685, and was the grandson of Thomas Flint. In his mid-twenties he acquired some family farmland, and began operating a sawmill. After inheriting and purchasing more land from family members, he sold the mill, and some of his own holdings, and established a farmstead of approximately 110 acres.<sup>2</sup> Edward Flint played a significant role in establishing Lincoln first as a precinct, (the first precinct meeting was held at his house in May 1746,) and then as an independent town, in 1754. He donated an acre of land, on the area now known as Lincoln Hill, for the site of the meeting-house. Two black servants worked for him, at various times. At an unknown date Flint married Love Adams, a widow who had two children, John and Love, from her first marriage to John Adams. At various times servants and two slaves worked for the Flint household. Flint died in 1754.

Ephraim Flint was born in 1714. He was the nephew of Edward Flint. His Harvard education, (B.A. 1733; M.A. 1736,) provided him with a rare qualification among Lincoln farmers. His 257 acre farm was one of the largest in Lincoln. Not surprisingly he became one of the town's early political leaders. He was both the first Precinct Clerk and first Treasurer, as well as being one of the first Selectmen.<sup>3</sup> He donated one acre of land to the town to be used as a burial-site. In return for his generosity the town built him a pew in the meeting-house at public expense.

William Lawrence was born in 1723. His father was a prosperous farmer, and an experienced blacksmith in Groton, Massachusetts. In his youth, William attended Concord's Grammar School. He entered Harvard College in 1739, and graduated in 1743. During 1743-1744, he was a school teacher in Waltham, Mass. He also spent part of 1744 teaching in the grammar school in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. He spent 1745 teaching at Groton grammar school. He also preached in Groton during this year. Later that year he returned to chamber to study for his Master's degree, and he remained at the college under a Hopkins fellowship. During this time he preached at various locations. In 1748 he accepted the invitation of Lincoln precinct to preach there, and on December 7, 1748, he was ordained as minister. In the context of the revivalism of the 1740's, the congregation at Lincoln aligned itself with the "Old Lights" rather than the "New Lights." Rev. Lawrence's own style of preaching did not embrace the style and spontaneity of the revivalists, being instead quite formal.<sup>4</sup> On February 7, 1751, he married Love Adams, step-daughter of Edward Flint. Between 1752 and 1771, the Lawrence's had nine children. At the time of his death in 1780, Rev. Lawrence owned approximately 75 acres.

Dr. Joseph Adams. In 1774 he married Lovey, eldest daughter of Rev. William and Love Lawrence. Soon after their marriage they moved to Townsend, Massachusetts. Adams was a Loyalist, and he fled to Cornwall, England, in approximately 1777. In 1784 he was joined by his wife, many months after his lands had been confiscated and actions had been taken forbidding his return home. In England he was appointed a Master Surgeon of His Majesty's Royal Navy. It would appear that later, together with Lovey's younger brother Abel, he established a practice which was both extensive and lucrative.

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>MacLean, John C., *A Rich Harvest*, Lincoln Historical Society, 1987.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, 86.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*, 132-33.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*, 96.

## Scope of collection

This collection contains a wide variety of personal papers belonging to members of the Flint and Lawrence families, long time residents of the area known today as Lincoln, Massachusetts. The papers are dated between 1642 and 1798. The collection also includes the records of several town and church meetings, town petitions, and a large number of receipts documenting the construction of the meeting-house between 1746 and 1750.

Lincoln was not established as an independent township until 23 April, 1754. As early as 1734, inhabitants of south east Concord, and adjacent areas of Lexington and Weston, began petitioning their local governments to allow them to establish their own precinct. The reasons cited included the inconvenience of living at such a great distance from the place of worship. The petitions in this collection show that not all inhabitants favored this motion, mainly due to the loss of taxes such a step would bring about. However in 1746 the Massachusetts House of Representatives established Lincoln as a precinct, and 8 years later Governor William Shirley signed the bill for its complete independence. Edward Flint, whose papers form a significant part of this collection, played an instrumental role in this struggle for independence.

The personal papers in this collection are predominantly the records of business and legal transactions. The former, dating from 1642-1798, include the records of land sales, indenture papers, and contracts. They provide insight into the general economic situation during this period. The latter, in particular the wills and estate inventories and settlements, are valuable for the information they contain about land and property holdings. The most extensive personal letters are those of Dr. Joseph Adams, a Loyalist who fled to England in approximately 1777. His letters to his brother-in-law provide insight into both the conditions in England at the end of the 1700's, and the legal and psychological problems faced by emigres. The Massachusetts House of Representatives' decision concerning the sale of Adams' property provides interesting information both about the distribution of emigres' estates, and the provision made by the state government for the maintenance of emigres' families. The only other mention of the Revolutionary War in this collection is provided by the records of a church meeting held to examine Rev. William Lawrence's supposed lack of a patriotic stand.

Finally, the accounts of the construction of the town's meeting-house, 1746-1750, provide some insight into the occupations of Lincoln's inhabitants, and their position in the town hierarchy, as well as into the cost of labor and materials during this period.

## Inventory

Thomas Flint (d. 1653)

Will (oversize-box)

1651

Box 2: 1

Ephraim Flint

Land inventory

1680

Box 1: 2

Edward Flint

Genealogy

1642-1723

Box 1: 3

Contract with Stephen Wesson

1724

Box 1: 3

Notice from Nathaniel Hapgood

1731

Box 1: 3

Power of attorney

1733

Box 1: 3

Receipts of payment for black slave

1735-1737

Box 1: 3

Receipt of payment to Samuel Douglass

1736

Box 1: 3

Receipt of payment to Thomas Paine

1737

Box 1: 3

Receipt of payment to David Myer

1748  
Box 1: 3  
Receipt of payment to Samuel Farrar  
1748  
Box 1: 3  
Indenture for nephew's study of medicine  
1749  
Box 1: 3  
Will (oversize-box)  
1752  
Box 2  
Receipt of payment to Zebediah Smith  
1751  
Box 1: 3  
Receipt for payment of nephew's education  
1753  
Box 1: 3  
Transaction with Nathaniel Menam  
1754  
Box 1: 3  
Edward Flint: Accounts of payments made according to his will

Abigail Hanbrook  
1755  
Box 1: 4  
Abigail Estabrook  
1755  
Box 1: 4  
Jane Flint  
1756  
Box 1: 4  
John Flint  
1756  
Box 1: 4  
William and Love Lawrence  
1756  
Box 1: 4  
Timothy Green  
1757  
Box 1: 4  
Thomas Green  
1757  
Box 1: 4  
John Green  
1757  
Box 1: 4  
Samuel Estabrook  
1757  
Box 1: 4  
Josiah Convers  
1758  
Box 1: 4  
Elizabeth Blanchard  
1759  
Box 1: 4  
Love Flint

George Adam's request for payment of account  
1755  
Box 1: 5  
Receipt of payment from Samuel Bond's estate  
1763  
Box 1: 5  
Will (oversize-box)  
1767  
Box 2  
Will (oversize-box)  
1770  
Box 2  
John Adam's receipt of inheritance  
1772  
Box 1: 5  
Lydia Gregory's receipt of inheritance  
1772  
Box 1: 5  
John Adams (first husband of Love Flint)

Settlement of estate (oversize-box)  
1726  
Box 2: 6  
Inventory of estate (oversize-box)  
1728  
Box 2: 6  
Ephraim Flint

Land sale to Elishah Child  
1749  
Box 1: 7  
Record of property  
1749  
Box 1: 7  
William Lawrence: Correspondence

Letter from (illegible)  
1740  
Box 1: 8  
Letter from William Shurtle  
1744  
Box 1: 8  
Letter of acceptance of Lincoln ministry  
1748  
Box 1: 8  
Letter declining ministry in Sandwich  
1748  
Box 1: 8  
Letter to Timothy Brown  
post 1748  
Box 1: 8  
Letter from Joseph Perry  
1766  
Box 1: 8  
Letter from Jonathon Bancroft  
1769

Box 1: 8  
Letter from Joseph Perry  
1772

Box 1: 8  
Letter from Joseph Perry  
1773

Box 1: 8  
Dinner invitation from Dr. Russell  
n.d.

Box 1: 8  
William Lawrence: Miscellaneous

Sandwich town meeting vote on Lawrence  
1748

Box 1: 9  
Lincoln town meeting vote on Lawrence  
1748

Box 1: 9  
Nathaniel Appleton's testimony of Lawrence  
1748

Box 1: 9  
Lincoln Town's decision to appoint Lawrence  
1748

Box 1: 9  
Record of salary

Box 1: 9  
Sermon  
1751

Box 1: 9  
Account of property due to wife from her father's estate  
1755

Box 1: 9  
Autobiographical memo  
n.d.

Box 1: 9  
Account of property left to his wife and to her brother  
n.d.

Box 1: 9  
William Lawrence's Daybook

Box 1: 10  
Joseph Adams

Letter to Samuel Bass  
1784

Box 1: 11  
Letter to Samuel Bass  
1784

Box 1: 11  
Letter to Samuel Bass  
1786

Box 1: 11  
Letter to Samuel Bass  
1798

Box 1: 11  
Copy of letter to Samuel Bass  
1783 [5]  
Box 1: 11  
Copy of letter to Samuel Bass  
1784  
Box 1: 11  
Lovey Adams

Mass. legislature's decision on her receipt of her husband's estate  
1783  
Box 1: 12  
Meeting House Accounts  
1746-1750  
Box 1: 13  
Church Meeting  
1779  
Box 1  
Two records of church meetings held to discuss Lawrence's position toward the war  
1779  
Box 1: 14  
Note stating the title of these discussions  
n.d.  
Box 1: 14  
Petitions concerning the establishment of Lincoln

Concord petition (oversize-box)  
1734  
Box 2: 15  
Lexington petition (oversize-box)  
1735  
Box 2: 15  
Weston petition (oversize-box)  
1735  
Box 2: 15  
Concord petition (oversize-box)  
1735  
Box 2: 15  
Miscellaneous

Anonymous sermon  
n.d.  
Box 1: 16  
An anonymous account of notes of interest  
1770's  
Box 1: 16

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## Administrative information

### Provenance

### Additional Information

#### Access

The collection is open for research.

*Cite as:* Flint and Lawrence Family Papers (MS 273). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

## Provenance

Acquired from Cedric L. Robinson, 1989

## Processing Information

Processed by Jean Kemble, 2002.

## Language:

English

## Acknowledgments

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## Search terms

### Subjects

Adams, Joseph, 1749-1803--Correspondence.  
American loyalists--England--History--Sources.  
American loyalists--Massachusetts--History--Sources.  
Church buildings--Massachusetts--Lincoln (Town)--Costs.  
England--Emigration and immigration--History--18th century--Sources.  
Flint, Edward, 1685-1754.  
Flint, Ephraim, b. 1714.  
Flint, Love Adams, d. 1772.  
Flint, Thomas, d. 1653.  
Immigrants--England--History--17th century--Sources.  
Inventories of decedents' estates--Massachusetts--Lincoln.  
Land tenure--Massachusetts--Lincoln--History--Sources.  
Landowners--Massachusetts--Lincoln (Town)--History--Sources.  
Lawrence, William, 1723-1780.  
Lincoln (Mass. : Town)--Economic conditions--18th century--Sources.  
Lincoln (Mass. : Town)--Genealogy.  
Lincoln (Mass. : Town)--History--Sources.  
Lincoln (Mass. : Town)--Social conditions--18th century--Sources.  
Massachusetts--Emigration and immigration--History--18th century--Sources.  
Slaves--Prices--Massachusetts--Lincoln--History--Sources.

### Contributors

Flint Family [main entry]  
Flint, Thomas, d. 1653.  
Flint, Edward, 1685-1754.  
Flint, Love Adams, d. 1772.  
Lawrence, William, 1723-1780.  
Adams, Joseph, 1749-1803.  
Lawrence family.

### Genres and formats

Accounts.  
Genealogies.  
Indentures.  
Inventories.  
Wills.

### Link to similar SCUA collections

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