

## Revolutionary Soldier Henry Hall: A man for all seasons

by Jack Duggan

*“.....nothing happened of particular note except the famous battle of Bennington.”*

An excerpt from the pension file of Private Henry Hall of the East Precinct of “Old Yarmouth”

Divining Henry Hall’s life story is not a series of straight lines leading from Point A to Point B and so on. It is more like navigating unfamiliar roads leading into the past with twists, bends and more than a few dead ends. But enough reliable details and tidbits have surfaced that a portrait of the boy and the man has emerged that I believe many of Henry’s contemporaries would recognize.

Henry’s adventuresome spirit must have come to him early in life. Soldiering, seafaring, whaling, business enterprises and agricultural pursuits all still lay ahead when he ventured from Yarmouth as a young teenager. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Henry probably was a dreamer too, possessed of both imagination and practical Cape Cod thriftiness.

### Henry joins the Worcester County militia.....

Sometime in the mid-1770s, Hall (1761 - 1850) left home for Holden, a town in central Massachusetts where his oldest brother had moved and started a family.<sup>1</sup> It was in Holden in May 1777 that fifteen-year old Henry volunteered to join a militia company and stepped off to Rhode Island where his Worcester County regiment reinforced Rhode Island troops acting as a deterrent to the British garrison occupying Newport.<sup>2</sup> It was here that young Henry probably began to understand that the life of a soldier involved a lot of marching and standing around.

- Henry’s company left Holden for Providence, Wickford and then down the western shore of Narragansett Bay to Point Judith where the unit apparently stayed awhile. In his pension deposition Hall declared *“that he was in no battle but guarded the coast and was within sight of British Seventy Fours<sup>3</sup> and could sometimes hear them speak on board.”* Although an uneventful enlistment, it must have been a memorable learning experience for a young boy.

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<sup>1</sup> It is possible that Henry had moved to Holden as early as 1773 based on a town census for that year showing a listing for Edmund Hall and a family of four (Edmund, his wife & infant daughter and possibly Henry). Damon, Samuel. The History of Holden Massachusetts 1667 - 1841. Wallace and Ripley Printers Worcester MA. 1841

<sup>2</sup> Henry Hall’s fourteen page Revolutionary War pension application file (S18855) is available at the online FOLD3 database. The file contains source material for Henry’s multiple militia enlistments in Worcester and Barnstable Counties. It is also the source for the various quotes from Henry used in this article.

<sup>3</sup> A “Seventy-Four” was the Royal Navy’s standard large ship of the line during the Revolutionary War. They were impressive vessels with two decks, a crew of about 600 men and, of course, bristling with 74 cannons.

## **The Battle of Bennington.....**

When Hall returned from Rhode Island he did not tarry in Holden for long before he enlisted again for four months of militia service beginning on June 30th, 1777. Henry, who was still a few months shy of his sixteenth birthday, soon found himself as part of a large militia force led by General John Stark of New Hampshire. As chance would have it, his latest volunteerism would bring young Henry to one of the turning point encounters of the Revolutionary War, the Battle of Bennington on August 16th, 1777<sup>4</sup>. On that day Stark's New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts militiamen along with a Continental Army regiment led by Colonel Seth Warner<sup>5</sup> confronted a formidable detachment of German & British troops, loyalist New York militia and their Native American allies which were part of General John Burgoyne's army invading down the Hudson Valley from Canada.



Detail from a 19th century lithograph of General John Stark leading his troops at Bennington while captured Hessian soldiers are marched off the battlefield by New England militiamen.

## **Henry fought alongside the Green Mountain Boys.....**

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<sup>4</sup> The battle was actually fought a few miles west of Bennington along the Walloomsac River in New York.

<sup>5</sup> Warner's regiment was unofficially known as the "Green Mountain Boys" because so many of that group had gravitated to the Continental Army by this point in the war and because the unit commander, Colonel Seth Warner, had been one of Ethan Allen's deputies. Warner and General Stark were close colleagues, reportedly working together to devise the American battle plan to stop Burgoyne's detachment out foraging for food and military supplies the British general believed were stored at Bennington.

On the last day of June 1777, Hall said that his Worcester militia company marched "*from Holden to Bennington in Vermont, tarried there for about two months and then marched to Albany New York*" before going back to Bennington. Henry added that he served under the overall leadership of "*General Stark and others called Green Mountain Boys of the regular troops;*<sup>6</sup> *Stark commanded in the battle of Bennington.....where the enemy surrendered.*"

On the day of the battle Stark committed most of his force to a three pronged attack on the hastily constructed German redoubt and two other outposts. Colonel Warner's Green Mountain Boys, however, were held in reserve along with a number of Massachusetts militia companies; a prudent tactical decision as matters turned out.

Stark, who had gained fame for his leadership at Bunker Hill, Trenton and Princeton, reportedly rallied his troops at the onset of the fight with this call to battle; "*My men, yonder are the Hessians. They were bought for seven pounds and ten pence a man. Are you worth more? Prove it! Tonight the American flag floats from yonder hill, or Molly Stark sleeps a widow.*"<sup>7</sup>

- Burgoyne's foraging party, led by Lieutenant Colonel Friedrich Baum, collapsed in the sharp fighting that followed, suffering 200 dead and wounded with 700 soldiers taken captive or missing. American casualties were about 70. The battle-tested Stark later claimed the fight was "*the hottest engagement I have ever witnessed, resembling a continual clap of thunder.*" The Bennington losses put Burgoyne's main army under considerable duress contributing to his surrender two months later at Saratoga, a strategic turning point in the war that convinced France to come in on the American side.

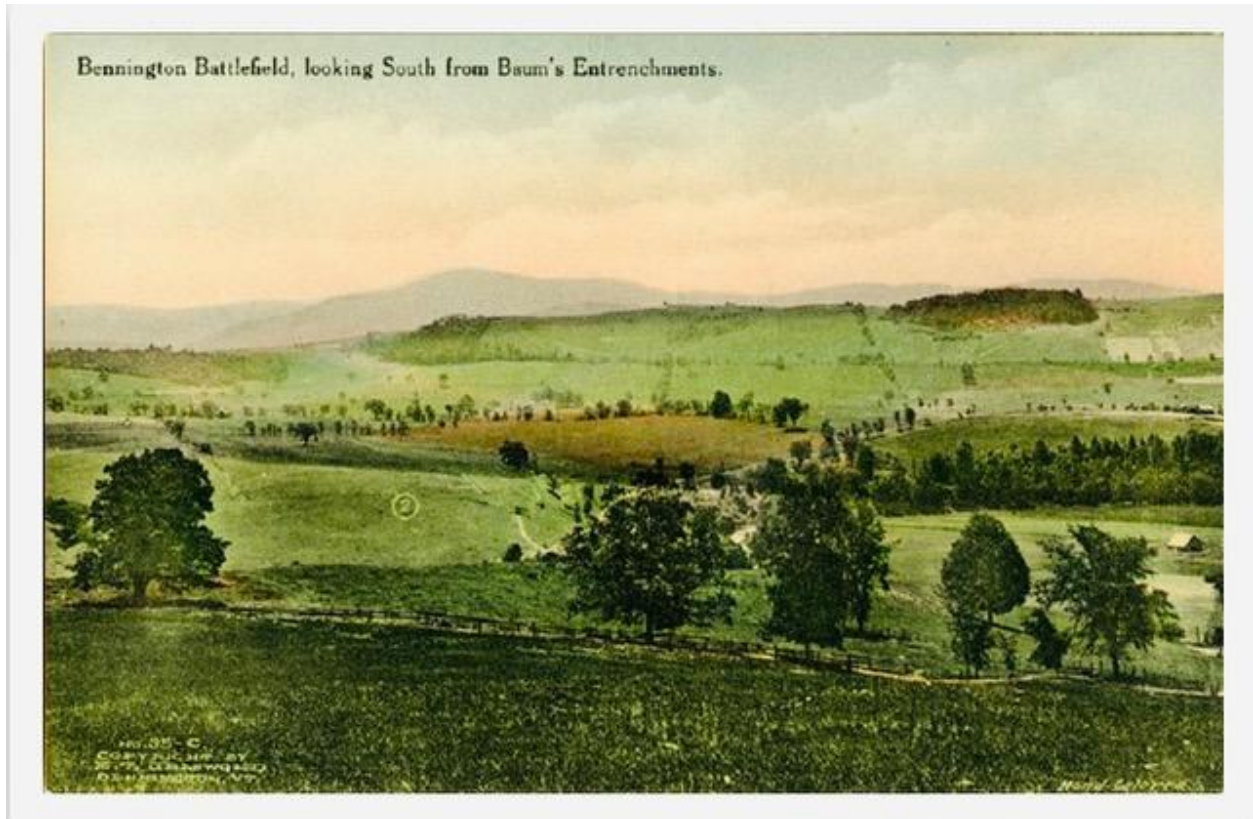
- Late in the afternoon of the 16th as the exhausted American militia who had overrun Baum's redoubt were beginning to celebrate their victory and divide the battlefield plunder, a large German relief column appeared on the scene launching an initially successful attack against Stark's weary troops. It was at this point that the Green Mountain Boys and the Massachusetts militia reserve sprang into action with a vigorous counterattack that rallied their compatriots. Hot fighting ensued until the German reinforcements wavered and, as darkness descended on the battlefield, began a disorderly retreat. Victory was complete.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The phrase "regular troops" is a reference to Colonel Warner's regiment and would have been used commonly by militiamen to describe the more well trained soldiers of the Continental Army.

<sup>7</sup> Weddle, Kevin J. *The Compleat Victory; Saratoga and the American Revolution*. Oxford University Press. 2021, Page 246

<sup>8</sup> See pages 236 - 257 in Kevin J. Weddle's *The Compleat Victory; Saratoga and the American Revolution* for a concise, well-sourced history of the Bennington battle.



A watercolor sketch showing the lay of the land where the Bennington Battle was fought on August 16, 1777

### Interpreting the Bennington records.....

So how do we know that Henry Hall fought at Bennington? For starters, he declared in his pension application papers that he was there *“when the enemy surrendered.”* And he concluded his sworn deposition by stating that he *“is quite sure and so declares that he served in the various campaigns mentioned fifteen months and nothing happened of particular note except for the famous battle of Bennington.”* Differing accounts that place Hall in two separate Worcester militia units for the month of August 1777 somewhat muddy the particulars of his service. Henry himself said he was part of Captain Edmund Hodges’s company, but the *“Soldiers & Sailors”* records says Hall’s enlistment was with Captain Jesse Stone’s company.

- Absent his own testimony, it is impossible to place Henry at a specific spot on the battlefield that afternoon, but we know that units from Worcester were present and led that day by Major John Rand. And we have a pretty good idea that the Worcester companies figured in the fight as part of Warner’s reserve force of Continentals and Massachusetts militia troops who arrived just in time to turn the tide against the advancing German relief column. Two eye witness accounts even tell of Major Rand having his horse shot out from under him. This second phase of the Bennington fight

against the fresh German grenadiers and light infantry troops firing grapeshot from their cannons was reportedly the fiercest and longest part of the day's combat.<sup>9</sup>

The inconsistencies in Henry's pension application are not surprising. By the advanced age many veterans became eligible for benefits, they were probably challenged to remember the names of their officers or specific enlistment dates for matters so far in the past. This could well have been the case with Henry when he described events that had occurred over fifty years from the day he applied for his pension at the Barnstable County Court.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, many veterans applying for pensions had lost their discharge papers, if they were ever issued in the first place.

Although Henry's pension file contains differing company enlistment records for Bennington (Captains Hodges and Stone), the relevant piece of evidence is that the Soldiers & Sailors service data for Hodges and Stone reflect the same dates as Hall's stated Bennington service. It is also quite possible that Henry served in both companies during the month of August given the fluidity of militia organizational practices.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, it is easy to imagine that Henry might have volunteered to stay on for more weeks of service after the battle was over and the Germans and other prisoners had been marched off to secure locations.<sup>12</sup>

Although Henry said that his enlistment ran to the end of October, he made no claim to be present at the two consequential Saratoga battles in September and October. Nor did he say he was present when Burgoyne surrendered his army on October 17th. Henry did, however, relate a story that apparently occurred sometime that fall about a supply train being sent to the American garrison at Albany.

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<sup>9</sup> Gabriel, Michael P. *The Battle of Bennington: Soldiers and Civilians*. The History Press. 2012. and Gabriel,, Michael P. William Boutelle's Diary of the Bennington Expedition in the Walloomsack Review Volume 17, Spring 2016, <https://benningtonmuseum.org/library/walloomsack/volume-17/a-revolutionary-relicbennington-battle-soldiers-diary.pdf> (The Walloomsack Review is a publication of the Bennington Museum.)

<sup>10</sup> Hall's deposition on August 16, 1832 contained interesting details about all his enlistments, but for the year 1777 he had flipped the names of his Worcester County militia captains for his service in the Rhode Island expedition in the first half of the year with his later service that summer and fall in Vermont and New York. This circumstance probably would have been off-putting to Pension Office clerks but would not have been disqualifying by itself because other records put Henry at those two locales. Supporting information for Henry's service in 1777 with Holden militia companies in the form of depositions from fellow soldiers were absent because he resided there only briefly. That was not the case with Henry's Cape Cod militia enlistments where three fellow Yarmouth veterans stepped forward to give depositions in support of his service.

<sup>11</sup> Establishing firm numbers of participants, or even units, on the American side is almost impossible: men arrived individually, in groups, or in units established ad hoc at their point of departure up to the moment the battle began; some joined even while the battle was in progress. "The total number of soldiers at Bennington remains conjectural and somewhat disputed," writes Michael P. Gabriel, the most knowledgeable historian of the Battle of Bennington.....According to Gabriel, "*Massachusetts militia from Berkshire and Worcester Counties fought at the battle, but many of their muster rolls are nearly illegible.*" **Source:** "Cultural Resources Survey of the Bennington Battlefield, Walloomsac New York". New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. October 2017. Page 78 (<https://parks.ny.gov/documents/historic-sites/BenningtonBattlefieldPublicReportPart1.pdf>)

<sup>12</sup> Henry was given credit for the four month enlistment he declared he served in Vermont and New York from the last day of June to the last day of October 1777.

- “..... a number of men were despatched to carry a large number of cattle through the forest to Albany. We soon followed and found that the escort had been captured & destroyed by Indians and we found some of them dead.”

We will probably never know precisely what Henry experienced at the battle unless more definitive information than we have now emerges. Perhaps a Hall family descendent will stumble across a document from those days or recall a “fireside tale” that has come down over the years. Henry may well have shared Bennington stories with family members, fellow Revolutionary veterans and other friends, but since he did not leave behind letters, journals or diaries local historians are left to assemble random pieces of a blurry jigsaw puzzle about what this “Old Yarmouth” soldier encountered on that warm summer day over 200 miles from the town where he was born and died.<sup>13</sup>

### **More militia service, more mishmash records.....**

Henry returned to Yarmouth after Bennington but he soon joined yet another militia company. And, as was the case earlier, his pension application does not match seamlessly with available military records. In his pension declaration, Henry stated he served four months from September 1, 1778 to January 1, 1779 under Captain Joseph Griffith in Colonel John Jacobs’s Massachusetts State Militia Regiment marching “*from Yarmouth to Fall River and from there to a mile or two near the ferry landing to Rhode Island*” (most likely Howland’s Ferry between Tiverton and Aquidneck Island). He appears to have stayed in the vicinity of Tiverton for the term of his enlistment. Henry said he was in no battles and received no formal discharge papers. Three fellow soldiers from Yarmouth filed sworn depositions that they witnessed Henry serving in Rhode Island and at Fall River.

An uneventful stint, right? It was indeed, but how Henry found himself in this situation is a whole different story. It seems that Enoch Hall, one of Henry’s brothers, signed up in May 1778 for an eight month enlistment with Captain Griffith’s company, but he could not complete the term so Henry took his place.<sup>14</sup> Although no specific reason for the substitution was provided, additional research produced a separate militia record showing that on September 1, 1778 Enoch was in a military hospital near Fall River listed under a “wounded” category. It is within the realm of possibility that Enoch was injured in late August when British and Hessian troops clashed with a Continental Army and militia force in the Battle of Rhode Island.

Hall claimed one last militia tour in 1779 but the pension office found no specific record for this particular service. Henry said he enlisted from August through November of that year serving in the Falmouth area “*guarding and protecting these places on the Vineyard Sound against incursions of the enemy*” in a company commanded by Captain Lot Crowell of Yarmouth. This

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<sup>13</sup> See **Appendix A** for first person accounts by other American soldiers who fought on the front lines of Bennington.

<sup>14</sup> A Barnstable County Court affidavit in Henry’s pension file stated that he had “undoubtedly” served as a substitute for the remaining four month’s of his brother Enoch’s enlistment with Captain Griffith’s company. Griffith was a Yarmouth resident with considerable military service in 1775 - 1778.



could be another case of Henry mis-remembering the names of his officers or confusing the time frame for a particular enlistment,<sup>15</sup> but it is noteworthy that no local veterans came forward to offer depositions for this service as was common in cases involving town militia enrollments.

### **A post-war life in the East Precinct and at sea.....**

Henry Hall was born on December 1, 1761, the youngest son of Edmund and Zipporah Hall. His father died two years after Henry's birth and his mother, with six young children to raise, soon remarried to a local man named Seth Tobey.

Henry and his four older brothers must have been caught up in the Cape's enthusiasm for the patriot cause since all of them served for varying periods of time in the militia.<sup>16</sup> Although there are no documents to ascribe motivation, oldest brother Edmund's role as a Holden Minuteman on the alarm at Lexington & Concord in April 1775 might well have inspired his younger siblings.

- Edmund's Minuteman company was ready to go when word arrived of the fighting. Worcester County militia records show that units on the march that day quickly changed course for Boston when additional express riders alerted them to the news of the fighting along "battle road" as British troops retreated to the city. Edmund's ten days of service on that alarm placed him at the beginning of the Siege of Boston as several thousand hastily assembled Massachusetts militiamen converged on the city in what had to be a chaotic but memorable experience for any young man. And it must have been the source of many a Hall family fireside tale when Edmund got back to Holden and when the word reached his brothers back in Yarmouth.

We don't know anything about Henry's formal education but he probably had access to books and he must have had some schooling as a boy. Judging by the arc of his life as far as we can discern, it would be fair to speculate that in addition to the personal courage required in battle and a seafaring life, he must have possessed an inquiring mind as well as business acumen.

Henry wedded Data Baker of Yarmouth in 1783 and they raised several children. Soon after Data died in April 1811, Henry remarried to Temperance Hall of Brewster.

Sometime after the war ended Hall acquired the title "*Captain*" which appears on his gravestone in the Dennis Village Cemetery.<sup>17</sup> We know from anecdotal reporting that Henry went a whaling

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<sup>15</sup> The Soldiers & Sailors records, for instance, gave Henry credit for thirteen days of service on an alarm at Dartmouth and Falmouth in the fall of 1778 with Yarmouth militia Captain Micah Chapman's company but Henry did not claim this in his pension application. It also appears that a memory cited by Henry of seeing African-African soldiers in the Continental Army's First Rhode Island Regiment in the spring of 1777 before the regiment's creation was probably more likely to have occurred when Henry served in the fall of 1778 immediately after the Battle of Rhode Island where the regiment served with distinction.

<sup>16</sup> See **Appendix B** for a summary of the service records of all five Hall brothers.

<sup>17</sup> It is possible that Henry's first command occurred in 1789 with the *Viana*, a 34 ton, 69 foot schooner most likely used for fishing, but more research is required to make a firm connection to Henry as the vessel's master. The *Viana* was owned by Yarmouth resident Atherton Hall. (**Source:** Barnstable Patriot, May 8, 1888)

at some point, but what his total maritime life entailed remains a mystery.<sup>18</sup> It is probable that like others from the Cape, he began as an ordinary seaman working his way up to mate and ship master, perhaps in the coastal trade or on blue water voyages across the Atlantic. It also seems fair to speculate that a young Henry might have gone on a profitable privateering cruise or two in the war years immediately after his militia enlistments.

Our knowledge of Hall's days as a whaler came to light through an interview he gave to the *Yarmouth Register* in 1846 when he was 85 years old. The newspaper account, alas, is but a brief two paragraphs though it clearly connects Henry to Cape whaling. The *Register* article focused on his boyhood memories listening to the stories of old timers engaged in shore whaling. Hall also spoke about well known whalers Jacob Loper and Ichabod Paddock and the tales he heard about them and their exploits.<sup>19</sup>

- Hall shared a story about a near-death experience when he was on a whaling voyage with Captain Stephen Sears and his leg got caught up in a rope line with the whale dragging him deep underwater. He managed to free himself but not without suffering an injury that took a long time to heal.

#### **A rescue at sea.....**

Henry's life at sea also includes an anecdote about how he and two neighbors rescued the surviving three members of the brig *Three Sisters* which had wrecked in Cape Cod Bay in the mid-1790s. Both the rescued and the rescuers, as it turned out, shared the common bonds of Freemasonry. About a year after the event, the three rescuers received from "*Captain P. Delano, one of the rescued, a pitcher bearing on one side a number of Masonic emblems and mottoes, and on the other, in colors, a replica of the Three Sisters. One part bears the legend P. Delano, Lodge 125.*"<sup>20</sup>

- The Register account of the rescue, although related over a century after the event itself, has corroboration in a Lloyd's List published on December 29, 1797 noting the following shipwreck: "*The Three Sisters, Delano, from Liverpool to Boston, is on the shore at Cape Cod.*" The shipmaster who showed his gratitude to his rescuers is likely Peleg Delano who was captain of the *Three Sisters* from 1796 - 1797 and a member of

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<sup>18</sup> Hall's whaling days were probably oceanic voyages given that Cape Cod shore whaling had largely run its course by the mid-18th century.

<sup>19</sup> "This one I knew.....that one I heard the old men speak of when I was a boy." According to tradition, Paddock, who was from Yarmouth, was hired to teach Nantucket sailors about whaling. The Register article noted that Henry related many memories from this time, but the newspaper included few specifics from the anecdotes Henry shared that day. *Yarmouth Register*, October 22, 1846.

<sup>20</sup> The story of the shipwreck and the ancient pitcher, which was still in the possession of Henry's descendants, surfaced during a 1930s gathering in Dennis of Masonic notables from around the Cape and beyond. *Yarmouth Register*, June 30, 1934



the Masonic lodge in Sidney, Maine, according to the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History.<sup>21</sup>



One of as many as seven unique ceramic pitchers commemorating the occasion when Henry Hall and two of his NobsCUSset neighbors rescued the surviving crew of the brig Three Sisters which wrecked in Cape Cod Bay in 1797.

### **Maritime business ventures.....**

Whatever the still unknown particulars are of Henry's life at sea, it appears that by the early 1800s he had achieved enough financial success that he formed a partnership with several of his NobsCUSset neighbors to build a port facility on Cape Cod Bay at what is today's well known Corporation Beach in Dennis MA.<sup>22</sup> In 1814 the state granted the NobsCUSset Pier Corporation

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<sup>21</sup> Pitcher, "The Three Sisters" | National Museum of American History .....

[https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah\\_572546](https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_572546) . The Museum did not cite its source for connecting Captain Peleg Delano to the ship or his membership in a Maine Masonic lodge.

<sup>22</sup> Reid, Nancy Thacher. Dennis, Cape Cod: From First Comers to Newcomers 1639 - 1993. Dennis Historical Society. 1996. Pages 280 -281.

permission to build a six hundred foot stone and timber structure called Corporation Wharf. The partners and their investors now had a harbor facility to support their various seagoing enterprises and related onshore businesses.

The timing for building a wharf at Nobscusset Point was providential when the US ratified the Treaty of Ghent in February 1815 ending the War of 1812. Cape mariners were now able to safely resume commercial trading and fishing.



The remains of the 600-foot wharf at Nobscusset Point circa 1900. The 60-foot high coastal bluff to the west is long gone, its clay and rock deposits hauled away to use as construction fill for roadwork on the nearby state highway. In the 17th & 18th centuries the bluff's prominence was used as a lookout point for shore whaling.

- Henry, who apparently had added ship ownership to his maritime resume before the war began, hauled his vessel out of the water for the duration of the War rather than risk losing it to the British navy which actively patrolled the Atlantic sea lanes including sending warships into Cape waters.<sup>23</sup>

### **A fortuitous “cranberry yard” discovery.....**

In the early 1800s Hall seems to have taken up farming in the Nobscusset neighborhood of the new town of Dennis which had amicably separated from Yarmouth in 1793. It was here that

<sup>23</sup> Dennis Historical Society Newsletter, September 2012. No name was cited for Henry's ship. During the War, dry-docked vessels wore protective coverings ironically dubbed “Madison's Nightcaps” (i.e. a tar covered barrel placed on top of a mast to protect it from the weather).

Henry made a breakthrough in cranberry growing that earned him a page in the history books of American agriculture. In 1816, as the traditional tale goes, Henry discovered that a cranberry bog on his farm yielded more fruit after a layer of sand had accidentally blown on to the plants. To his surprise, the following season the bog yielded a larger crop of berries. Henry then set out experimenting with sand layers to increase production with the technique catching on with his neighbors.

- At the time of Henry's discovery Cape Codders harvested wild grown berries for home use from boggy areas on their property referred to as "*cranberry yards*." Cultivating cranberries commercially would come later but Henry's discovery was a precursor in the success of the local farming enterprises that emerged later in the 19th century.<sup>24</sup>

Hall's accomplishment is commemorated with a bronze plaque on a boulder at the southwest corner of Whig and Nobscusset streets in Dennis MA, erected in Henry's honor by the Cranberry Growers of Cape Cod in 1993. The house Henry built for his family near his "cranberry yard" still stands in the Nobscusset neighborhood of Dennis but in a different location having been dismantled and moved probably sometime in the late 19th century.



Henry Hall's accidental discovery in 1816 that adding a layer of sand to his "cranberry yard" produced a more bountiful crop was an important step in establishing commercial cranberry farming on Cape Cod later in the 19th century.

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<sup>24</sup> Reid, Pages 297 - 300

## A man on a mill.....

Many millers were retired seamen possessing the agility and skills that transferred to the tasks of setting a mill's sails in the morning, adjusting them during the day and taking them down at night.

No good Cape Cod story should be without a fanciful tale involving its principal actor.

And Henry's life does not disappoint with this gem about a windmill related by noted Cape historian and mariner Captain Thomas Prince Howes (1817 - 1894).<sup>25</sup>

*• "Mr Henry Hall, also an old shipmate of mine for one season, was for several years in attendance at the mill (in the East Precinct). On one occasion he passed through a dangerous experience. He had stopped his mill to shorten sail; but had neglected to hook the chain to the spindle of the mill's arm. A sudden flaw [sic] of wind came, and he felt the arm on which he was standing on, moving around. He was too high to jump off, and with singular activity for a man of seventy years, slid down when the arm was in the right position, to the shaft, and kept astride of that by shifting his position as it turned over, until some one came to his assistance and stopped the mill."*



Henry's final resting place in the historic Dennis Village Cemetery. The ancient burying ground was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2005.

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<sup>25</sup> Yarmouth Register, 31 January 1925, "Old Cape Cod Windmills; An Old Yarmouth Mill" by Daniel Wing. The article focuses on the long history of the mill built in 1747 in the East Precinct "near the schoolhouse". Wing's principal source was Captain Howes.



## **An appeal for help with Revolutionary research.....**

The history of the War for Independence that most of us learned in school featured Washington, Greene, Lafayette, Glover, Hale, Arnold, Revere and other notables but a clear record shows that ordinary Yarmouth soldiers and sailors were present at key junctures throughout the Revolution, contributing each in their own way to the cause of independence. Unfortunately, these veterans did not leave behind much in terms of personal memories in the form of letters, diaries and journals. Oral history tales are also hard to come by. So we take our snippets of Revolutionary history where we find them and keep on researching in hopes of filling the gaps in our knowledge about the young men who did the actual fighting on land and at sea.

Readers who have information or stories about Yarmouth family members who were veterans of the War would be doing the Dennis-Yarmouth Revolutionary War Recognition Committee a considerable favor by sharing documents and “fireside” tales with our group which is working to commemorate local military and civilian contributions to the war effort on the 250th anniversary of the beginning of the War in 2025. And, as Henry Hall’s story shows, we are also interested in documenting the lives of Old Yarmouth’s veterans after they returned home.

### *Post Script:*

I am grateful for the assistance of Diane Rochelle, Chair of the Dennis Historical Commission and my colleague on the Dennis-Yarmouth Revolutionary War Recognition Committee, for providing background on Henry’s postwar life in the East Precinct of “Old Yarmouth” and the town of Dennis. In 1793, citizens from both precincts voted overwhelmingly to let the East Precinct become its own town, which was named in honor of the precinct’s first minister, the Reverend Josiah Dennis.

## **Appendix A**

### **Bottom Up History of the Battle of Bennington**

Readers interested in more granular reporting of the battle can visit “Primary Sources, Battle of Bennington” —

<https://parks.ny.gov/documents/historic-sites/BenningtonBattlefieldAmericanSources4of5.pdf>.

- The battle has been well described in top-down history books about generals and their strategic & tactical genius or blunders, but in-depth research in pension records and military archives has produced a body of first person accounts from young soldiers who captured details of the mundane and violent events of that day.

See below for a sample written by a young man, who, like Henry Hall, wandered from home and made a fateful choice to volunteer to serve in a militia company far from his Wallingford, Connecticut hometown only to find himself at one of the turning point battles of the Revolutionary War.

• **Pension Application of Chauncey Rice S 15616** *“Applicant further says that in the spring of the year 1777 he went to Lanesborough in the State of Massachusetts to work for an acquaintance of his that soon after he volunteered to go with a number of the militia of that place to watch the movements of the enemy [...] soon after he returned he volunteered again to go in a company commanded Capt Barnes and Lieutenant Friske and proceeded to Bennington that there he saw General Stark that they arrived on the ground and joined the army the day that Colonel Baum was killed and the British surrendered that on that day applicant fired his gun as he thinks nearly twenty times that his gun got so hot he was obliged to stop firing awhile that on that day applicant was wounded twice once on the side of the neck and the scar is to be seen to this day once on the right side the ball passing through his clothes and glancing off that the Lieutenant was killed and buried at the foot of a tree the term of service which he performed during this time was about four months that part of the prisoners were conveyed down to Lanesborough and applicant assisted to guard them to that place.”*

## **Appendix B**

### **The Revolutionary War Service of the Hall Brothers**

The service summaries in this appendix are drawn exclusively from Volume 7 of the Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War: A Compilation from the Archives. These records are starting point for readers interested in pursuing additional research about the Hall brothers of the East Precinct of “Old Yarmouth.” As Henry’s story illustrates, the summaries tell only part of the story of local veterans.

- The Soldiers & Sailors listings are compiled from a comprehensive collection of original documents such as muster rolls, payrolls, uniform & equipment distribution accounts, enlistment bounty payments, etc.

Edmund Hall (1725 - 1763) and Zipporah Hall (1754 - 1835) had six children, five sons and one daughter. All five sons were Revolutionary War veterans. Thomas Hedge (1753 - 1795), the husband of their sister Dinah (1754 - 1835), was also a veteran serving as a private in Yarmouth’s Minuteman Company and as a sergeant in one of the town’s regular militia companies.

**The Hall brothers are listed in chronological order, oldest to the youngest.**

**EDMUND HALL (1750 - 1792)**

**Hall, Edmund, Holden.** Private, Capt. James Davis's co. of Minute-men, Col. Doolittle's regt., which marched on the alarm of April 19, 1775; service, 10 days; also, Capt. Samuel Hubbard's co.. Col. Job Cushing's regt. ; enlisted Sept. 5, 1777; discharged Nov. 29 (also given Dec. 6), 1777; service, 3 mos. 2 days, in Northern department, including 7 days (140 miles) travel home.

#### **ISAIAH HALL (1752 - 1817)**

**Hall, Isaiah. Private,** Capt. Thomas Hamilton's co. ; enlisted July 17, 1775; service to Dec. 31, 1775, 6 mos.; company stationed in Barnstable Co. for defence of seacoast.

**Hall, Isaiah. Private,** Capt. Lemuel Trescott's co., Col. Asa Whitcomb's regt.; muster roll dated Camp at Ticonderoga, Nov. 27, 1776; enlisted Jan. 11, 1776; reported promoted to Corporal Oct. 8, 1776.

**Hall, Isaiah. Private,** Capt. Elisha Hedge's co., Col. Freeman's regt. ; marched Sept. 13, 1779; discharged Sept. 18, 1779; service, 5 days; company detached from militia for service at Falmouth on an alarm. Roll sworn to in Barnstable Co.

#### **EZRA HALL (1756 - ????)**

**Hall, Ezra. Private,** Capt. Abijah Bangs's co.. Col. Dike's regt. ; abstract for gun and blanket money, dated Boston, Feb. 24, 1777 ; also, same co. and regt. ; muster roll for Dec, 1776-Feb., 1777 ; enlisted Dec. 13, 1776 ; credited to town of Yarmouth; regiment raised to serve until March 1, 1777; also, Capt. Micah Hamlen's CO., Col. Jonathan Reed's (1st) regt. of guards; marched April 2, 1778; service to July 6, 1778, 3 mos. 4 days, at Cambridge; 4 days (80 miles) travel home also allowed ; enlistment, 3 months from April 2, 1778 ; roll sworn to in Barnstable Co.

#### **ENOCH HALL (1758 - 1833)**

**Hall, Enoch, Yarmouth. Private,** Capt. Micah Hamlen's co., Col. Thomas Marshal's regt.; return for advance pay, mileage, etc., dated Boston, June 15, 1776; also, same co. and regt. ; enlisted June 6, 1776; service to Aug. 1, 1776, 1 mo. 26 days; roll dated Castle Island; also, same co. and regt.; service from Aug. 1, 1776, to Nov. 1, 1776, 3 mos. ; also, same co. and regt. ; pay roll for wages for Nov., 1776 ; mileage from camp (80 miles) allowed; also, Capt. Abijah Bangs's co.. Col. Dike's regt.; pay abstract for gun and blanket money, dated Boston, Feb. 24, 1777; also, same co. and regt.; muster roll for Dec, 1776-Feb., 1777; enlisted Dec. 13, 1776; regiment raised to serve until March 1, 1777; also, Capt. Elisha Hedge's co., Col. Nathaniel Freeman's regt. ; marched from home Sept. 27, 1777; service, 1 mo. 4 days, on a secret expedition to Rhode Island ; also, Capt. Joseph Griffith's co., Col. John Jacobs's regt. ; enlisted June 7, 1778; service, 6 mos. 27 days ; enlistment to expire Jan. 1, 1779.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> The Soldiers & Sailors entry for Enoch's service with Captain Griffith does not reflect 26 the corrected record of Henry serving half of his older brother's enlistment commitment.



**Hall, Enoch. Private**, Capt. Micah Chapman's co., Col. Freeman's regt. ; service, 2 days, probably in Nov., 1778, guarding prisoners belonging to the [British] ship "Somerset" cast ashore on the Cape. Roll sworn to Jan. 12, 1779.

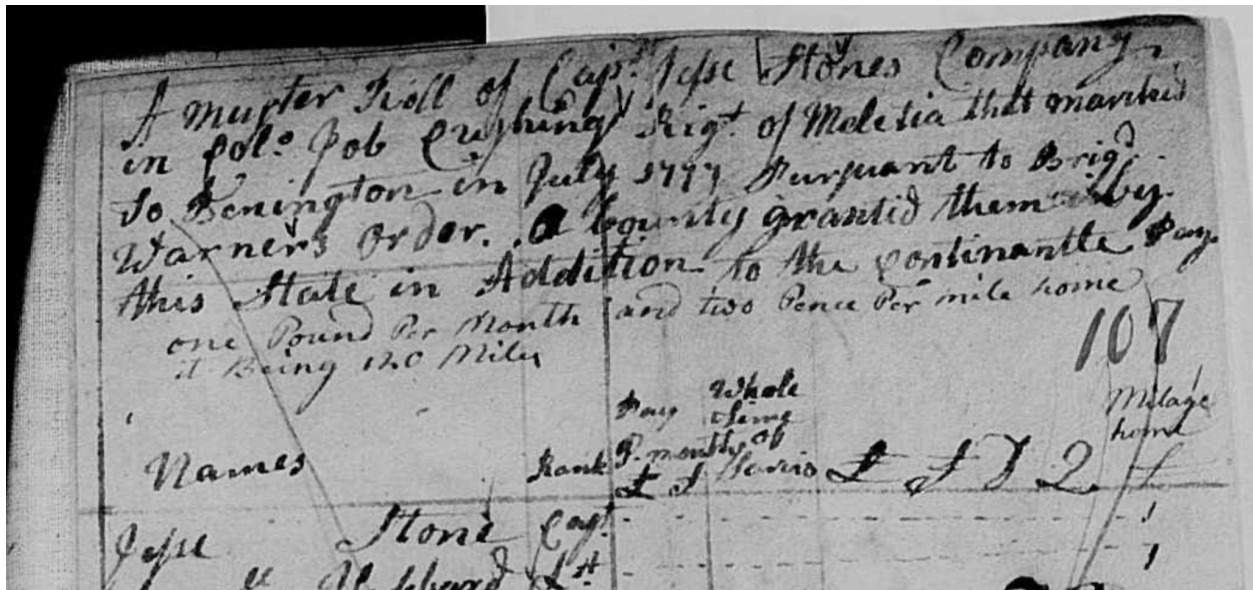
**Hall, Enoch. Private**, Capt. Elisha Hedge's co., Col. Freeman's regt. ; marched Sept. 13, 1779; discharged Sept. 18, 1779; service, 5 days; company detached from militia for service at Falmouth on an alarm. Roll sworn to in Barnstable Co.

**HENRY HALL (1761 - 1850)**


**Hall, Henry, Holden. Private**, Capt. Edmund Hodges's co.. Col. Josiah Whitney's regt. ; enlisted May 5, 1777 ; discharged July 6, 1777 ; service, 2 mos. 5 days, travel included, at Rhode Island.

**Hall, Henry. Private**, Capt. Jesse Stone's co., Col. Job Cushing's regt. ; marched July 27, 1777 ; discharged Aug. 29, 1777 ; service, 1 mo. 9 days, including 6 days (120 miles) travel home ; company marched to Bennington by order of Brig. Gen. Warner. Roll dated Oxford.

**Hall, Henry. Private**, Capt. Micah Chapman's co.. Col. Freeman's regt. ; service, 13 days, on an alarm at Dartmouth and Falmouth Sept. 6, 1778.



Detail from a militia muster roll and pay account for Henry Hall's service at Bennington. ( A Muster Roll of Cap'n Jesse Stone's Company in Col. Job Cushing's Regt of Militia that marched to Bennington in July 1777. Pursuant to Brig Warner's Order. A bounty granted them by this state in Addition to the Continantle Pay one Pound Per Month and two Pence Per Mile home it being 120 miles )



Simon Gates	do	do	do	1:6:0:0	1
Noah Gale	do	do	do	1:6:0:0	1
Dud Heywood	do	do	do	1:6:0:0	1
Peter Hubbard	do	do	do	1:6:0:0	1
Henry Hall	do	do	do	1:6:0:0	1
Noah Jones	do	do	do	1:6:0:0	1
Valentine Harris	do	do	do	1:6:0:0	1
Simon Mary	do	do	do	1:6:0:0	1
Shad Moor	do	do	do	1:6:0:0	1
Jonas Nichols	do	do	do	1:6:0:0	1
David Nichols	do	do	23rd	15:4:0	1
Bely Noys	do	do	do	1:6:0:0	1

Detail from Captain Stone's militia company roster highlighting Henry's name.