

Clues in the 1725 Estate File of Nathaniel Ball of Concord, Massachusetts

Susan Goss Johnston

It is not enough to read an estate file looking for names and relationships. To get the most information possible from these files, one should also study the cryptic annotations and calculations – and one should never neglect the laws that governed the file's creation.

On 4 March 1725, Nathaniel Ball, yeoman, of Concord, Massachusetts, died, leaving a widow, nine children – and no will.¹ His 1688 marriage to Mary Brooks/Brookes and the births of all his children are recorded in Concord vital records, so many a researcher might feel that reading twenty-four images of loose estate administration papers of varying sizes and legibility was not worth the effort.² Information about Nathaniel's life, and those of his family, is not complete, however. Only the marriage records of his three oldest children have been found; very little of the family land is described in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, records; and the lives of these early Massachusetts colonists are imperfectly understood.

Provincial law granted administration of an intestate's property to "the widow or next of kin to the intestate, or both."³ In the case of Nathaniel Ball's estate, administration was granted to his widow, Mary, and his second son and namesake, Nathaniel. The eldest son, Caleb, acted as surety.⁴ The law mandated that, after the estate's charges were paid and the value of the advancements to the heirs were determined, one-third of the personal estate would go to the widow absolutely, as well as a one-third life interest in Nathaniel's real estate. The remainder would go to his children, with a double share to the eldest son. The heirs could agree, in writing, to what they determined was an equitable division of the estate. If not, a five-man committee would be appointed to determine the value of all advancements received by any heirs, to determine the extent of the deceased's real estate, set aside specific lands for the widow's use, and divide the remaining real estate among the children, "provided, nevertheless, that where any estate in houses and lands cannot be divided among all the children, without great prejudice to or

¹ George Tolman, *Concord, Massachusetts Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850* (Boston: Beacon Press, n.d.), 110, Nathaniel Ball death (1724/5); database and digital images, New England Historic Genealogical Society, *American Ancestors* (<http://www.americanancestors.org/> : accessed 18 March 2014); citing Concord Registers, II: 38; also, Old Hill Burying Ground (Concord, Middlesex County, Massachusetts), Mr. Nathaniel Ball grave marker; photographed by Susan Goss Johnston, 14 July 2014; "in y^c 62^d year of His Age."

² Middlesex County, Massachusetts, Probate case files, no. 915, Nathaniel Ball (1725); Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Archives, Boston; digital images, "Middlesex County, MA: Probate File Papers, 1648-1871," New England Historic Genealogical Society, *AmericanAncestors* (<http://www.americanancestors.org/> : accessed 1 September 2014).

³ Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *The Acts and Resolves, Public and Private, of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay*, 21 vols. (Boston: Wright & Potter, 1874), 1: 43-45, Chap. 14, § 1, "An act for the settling and distribution of the estates of intestates" [passed 1 November 1692]; digital images, *Internet Archive* (https://archive.org/details/actsresolvespubl_d01mass : accessed 1 October 2014); this act was amended four times between its 1692 passing and the date administration began on Nathaniel Ball's estate, but none of these amendments affected the administration of this estate.

⁴ Middlesex Co., Mass., probate case files, no. 915, Nathaniel Ball (1725), Mary Ball, administration bond, 6 April 1725.

spoyling of the whole being so represented and made to appear unto the said judge, the judge may order the whole unto the eldest son, if he accept it, or to any other of the sons successively, upon his refusal; he paying unto the other children of the deceased their equal and proportionable parts or shares of the true value of such houses and lands”⁵ Nathaniel Ball’s heirs requested the services of that five-man committee.⁶

THE LANDS

The committee was instructed to, “Rate each Parcel by it self with the Quantity of Acres, Common Names, Butts & Bounds all in words at length.”⁷ The committee’s inventory of Nathaniel Ball’s 1725 land holding is the most complete record of his lands available. Comparing this detailed committee inventory with the earlier inventory of the estate itself shows minor differences in acreage, and the latter omits abutters.⁸ It would be impossible to place Nathaniel Ball’s parcels based on the inventory alone. The committee’s inventory, like most Concord land descriptions of the time, omits line directions and lengths, making it difficult, if not impossible, to draw a diagram of the parcel or create an exact neighborhood plat. However, this later inventory does name abutters, and that information allows one to begin painting a picture of life in Nathaniel Ball’s colonial Concord neighborhood.

At his death, Nathaniel Ball owned 108.25 acres comprising thirteen separately described parcels, the largest 20 acres. These parcels included his house and barn lots, 18.5 acres of meadow land, 9.25 acres of plowland, 22 acres of pasture, 27 acres of land probably used for its wood, and 15.5 acres described as “swamp, meadow, and upland,” and 7 acres of “poor land” at Goose Pond. His house lot was in Concord’s East Quarter, immediately west of that of William Hartwell, and it occupied the north side of what is now Lexington Road in Concord. His barn lot was immediately across the road and ran to the Mill Brook.⁹ The west side of the lot is now occupied by “The Wayside,” a home which was begun by Nathaniel or his son Caleb, circa 1700.¹⁰ The east side of the lot now holds “Grapevine Cottage.” Though much altered, this was the home of Nathaniel Ball’s son, Thomas, first occupied by him in 1716.¹¹

These small lots and scattered holdings were typical for Concord settlers, and provided every family with the means to practice mixed husbandry. Each settler had land to plow for crops, meadow to mow for hay to feed his animals through the winter months, pasture land for those animals in the growing season, and those animals in turn provided labor – and fertilizer – for the plowed land. Small orchards were grown on the home lot, and wood for building and fire was

⁵ Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *The Acts and Resolves ... of the Massachusetts Bay*, 1: 44, Chap. 14, § 1.

⁶ Middlesex Co., Mass., probate case files, no. 915, Nathaniel Ball (1725), request of heirs for committee, 7 March 1725/6; the five commissioners were Capt. John Flint, Lt. Benjamin Whittemore, Samuel Chandler, John Fox, and Samuel Stratton.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Jon^a. Remington, Judge of Probate, to the committee members, 14 March 1725 [*as is*].

⁸ *Ibid.*, inventory, 1 April 1725; appraisers were Daniel Brooks, John Fox, and Samuel Heywood.

⁹ Alfred Sereno Hudson, *The History of Concord, Massachusetts* (Concord: The Erudite Press, 1904), 165; digital images, *Internet Archive* (<https://archive.org/details/historyofconcord00huds> : accessed 5 October 2014); also, Brian Donahue, *The Great Meadow: Farmers and the Land in Colonial Concord* (New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 2004), plate 2, “William Hartwell Landholdings.”

¹⁰ “The Wayside,” digital documents, drawings, and photos in “Historic American Buildings Survey, Engineering Record, Landscapes Survey,” *Library of Congress* (<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ma0275/> : accessed 12 February 2014).

¹¹ “Grapevine Cottage Scrapbook, 1880-1958,” *Concord Free Public Library* (http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Fin_Aids/gvc.html : accessed 15 August 2014.)

collected from the wood lot.¹² There was a limit to how much these small lots could be divided, however. Nathaniel had nine children, seven sons. In accord with the law, the committee set aside one third of the real estate to the widow for the term of her life. As to the remaining two-thirds, the committee determined, “As for any further Divisions we think it will be very prejudicial unto & much InComode the Estate.”¹³

THE ADVANCEMENTS

Although not universally observed, there was a common pattern in the distribution of a family’s wealth. As children reached adulthood, the father frequently gave each an advancement on his or her inheritance.¹⁴ The older sons received a portion of the father’s outlying lands, leaving home to settle on and improve those lands. A daughter might receive personal property to aid her new husband in improving his estate. This pattern was recognized in the law governing the distribution of intestate estates.

Whereas estates in these plantations do consist chiefly of lands which have been subdued and brought to improvement by the industry and labour of the proprietors, with the assistance of their children, the younger children generally having been longest and most serviceable unto their parents in that behalf, who have not personal estates to give out unto them in portions or otherwise to recompence their labour,

Be it therefore enacted ... That every person lawfully seized of any lands, tenements, or hereditaments within this province, in his own proper right in fee simple, shall have power to give and dispose, and devise, as well by his last will and testament in writing, [as] [or] otherwise by any act executed in his life, all such lands, tenements and hereditaments to an among his children or others, as he shall think fit at his pleasure¹⁵

A three-man committee, nominated by the heirs-at-law, was “appointed and desired to Consider of value what and how much Each Child has already received out of the Estate of the said Nathaniel Ball.”¹⁶ This committee determined that Nathaniel Ball’s six oldest children had received an advancement on their inheritance, but one of those children, Thomas, objected “as to what the Persons within named have done upon his Estate.” It’s possible that his objection was based on the fact that he had worked so much longer on his father’s estate than his two older brothers, since the evidence for his objection includes the approximate time period when Caleb and Nathaniel had received their lands.¹⁷ The committee’s report was returned to Jonathan Remington, Judge of Probate, whose annotations reduced Thomas’s advancement by £20 and reduced his sister Susana’s advancement to an even £20.

The family had agreed that all the residual real estate would go to Nathaniel, the second son, who in turn would pay each sibling, over time and with 5% interest per year, what each was

¹² Donahue, *The Great Meadow*, 54-73.

¹³ Middlesex Co., Mass., probate case files, no. 915, Nathaniel Ball (1725), return of the committee, 13 April 1726.

¹⁴ Donahue, *The Great Meadow*, 136.

¹⁵ Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *The Acts and Resolves ... of the Massachusetts Bay*, 1: 43, Chap. 14, preamble and § 1.

¹⁶ Middlesex Co., Mass., probate case files, no. 915, Nathaniel Ball (1725), image 915: 10, appointment (6 April 1726) and return (10 May 1726) of committee; members were John Flint, John Fox, and Samuel Stratton.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, reverse, 20 May 1726 [but incorrectly dated 20 May 1725].

due.¹⁸ Three pages covered with cryptic calculations are scattered throughout this estate file, showing at least some of the attempts to determine exactly what Nathaniel would owe each sibling. Although the final amount due each heir is not stated unambiguously anywhere in these files, studying these calculations suggests that this was the final settlement.¹⁹

- Caleb, the eldest son, had received an advancement in lands and other estates totaling £175.19, a sum that equaled or exceeded his double share in his father's estate.
- Nathaniel, the second son, had received an advancement in lands and other estates totaling £126.17.10, a sum that equaled or exceeded his share in his father's estate.
- Thomas, the third son, had received an advancement in lands and other estates totaling £93.10, also equal or exceeding his share.

These three oldest sons, having already received their due, were excluded from the calculations determining the equitable division of the residue of their father's estate. Each of the remaining six children were to receive a total £71.15.6-3/4, less the amount of any advancement.

- Samuel, the fourth son, was due £56.05.06-3/4.
- Jeremiah, the fifth son, was due £14.15.06-3/4.
- Benjamin, the sixth son, was due the full £71.15.6-3/4.
- Ebenezer, the seventh son, was also due the full £71.15.6-3/4.
- Susana Yours, the eldest daughter, was due £51.15.6-3/4/
- Mary, singlewoman and the youngest daughter, was due the full £71.15.6-3/4.

After many calculations and corrections, Nathaniel Ball's heirs-at-law had reached an agreement. Nathaniel Ball's estate was declared officially settled on 20 June 1726.²⁰

CLUES AND INFERENCES

As each annotation and margin note was examined, more details about this family came to light and several inferences could be made.

The deceased Nathaniel Ball, then Nathaniel Jr., had received much of his land from his own father, then called Nathaniel Sr. Unlike the gifts he made to his own children, his father's deed of gift, dated 16 April 1688, was recorded. This deed lists six parcels, omitting abutters, all of which appear to be among the parcels described in Nathaniel's own inventory.²¹ This appears to be a gift related to Nathaniel Jr.'s marriage to Mary Brooks, since it was executed only three days before that event.²² Thomas Ball's evidence as to why he disagreed with the value of his advancement suggests that his father had continued this practice, giving gifts of land to a son on his marriage. His objection states, "Only the Lands of Caleb considered[?] – between 13 and 14

¹⁸ Ibid., "Memo Relating to settlement of Real Est.," 20 June 1726.

¹⁹ Middlesex Co., Mass., probate case files, no. 915, Nathaniel Ball (1725), images 915:7 (request for appointment of commission, reverse), image 915.11 (appointment of committee to ascertain what each child has received, reverse), 915: 22 ("Memo Relating to settlement of Real Est.," reverse); the last contains the amounts stated here.

²⁰ Ibid., "Memo Relating to settlement of Real Est.," image 915: 23.

²¹ Middlesex County, Massachusetts, Record books of the registry of deeds, 1639-1900, 10: 510 (image 561), Nathaniel Ball Sr. to Nathaniel Ball Jr., deed, 16 April 1688; Registry of Deeds (Southern District), Cambridge; digital images, "Massachusetts, Land Records, 1620-1986," *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/> : accessed 18 January 2014); browse: Middlesex > Record Type, Year Range, and Volume; imaged from FHL microfilm 554,003.

²² Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, 27; citing Middlesex County Register, 164.

years ago” and “Nath^{ll}. all Lands excepting 10^{lb} his Lands given 15 years ago.”²³ Caleb Ball’s marriage to Experience Flagg occurred in 1713, thirteen years earlier.²⁴ Nathaniel’s marriage to Sarah Baker occurred in 1711, fifteen years earlier.²⁵ Thomas’s own marriage is unrecorded, and unfortunately, the amount of time since he received land from his father is not given. Extant Concord tax records do show, however, that Thomas owned no land in 1717, but did own land in 1719, suggesting that his marriage occurred between these years.²⁶ The fact that these three were the only recipients of land from their father, suggests that none of the other sons were married when their father died in March 1724/5 – or Nathaniel had run out of land he felt comfortable giving.

The administrators’ first yearly account was submitted on 20 May 1726.²⁷ Some of the charges provide insight on family rituals and interactions. For example, £16 was paid “her son Jeremy Ball for his assistance in managing the farm this last year.” A listing of articles used in the family included the fact that the family had eaten one sheep, one pig, and one cow. The funeral charges included payments to M^r. Stephen Hall (£14.2.10), Richard Sutton (£3.18.6), M^r. John Whiting [*minister*] (£1.4), “Two vails, sugar & expences per Tho^s Ball” (£2.9.4), “A pair of Gloves” (5 shillings), “diging the Grave” (5 shillings), coffin (4 shillings 3 pence), and “Gravestones” (12 shillings). Thomas, whose home lot adjoined that of his father, probably paid for some of his mother’s and sister’s mourning apparel, as well as some of the expenses for the wake. The plural gravestones, suggests that the widow’s stone may have been ordered with that of her husband – and she died the following year, 22 August 1726.²⁸

The signature of every male heir, including that of thirteen-year-old Ebenezer, but excepting that of Benjamin, is found at least once in these pages. On the other hand, all the female heirs, including the widow, sign with a mark. Nathaniel’s inventory includes an entry, “To all the Books fifteen Shillings,” which suggests that at least some members of the family could read, as well as write.²⁹ An inability to write did not necessarily indicate an inability to read, but the disparity shown here in that ability to write suggests the standards for male education were higher than that for females, at least in this family.

²³ Middlesex Co., Mass., probate case files, no. 915, Nathaniel Ball (1725), image 915: 11, appointment and return of committee (reverse).

²⁴ Historical Society, *Watertown Records comprising the Third Book of Town Proceedings and the Second Book of Births Marriages and Deaths to the end of 1737* (Watertown, Mass.: Press of Fred G. Barker, 1900), 2: 49, Caleb Ball - Experience Flegg marriage (1713), citing Births, Marriages and Deaths, 40; database and digital images, New England Historic Genealogical Society, *American Ancestors* (<http://www.americanancestors.org/> : accessed 25 August 2014).

²⁵ George W. Sanderson, Herbert J. Harwood and Edward Frost, committee, *Records of Littleton, Massachusetts, from the earliest records in the Town Books begun in 1715* (Concord, Mass.: Patriot Press, 1900), 520, Sarah Baker–Nathaniel Ball marriage (1711); database and digital images, New England Historic Genealogical Society, *American Ancestors* (<http://www.americanancestors.org/> : accessed 4 February 2014).

²⁶ Thomas Ball entries, 1717 assessment, 8th page, line 14, East Quarter list, and 1719 assessment, 8th page, line 18, East Quarter list; Early [Concord] Massachusetts Record, Assessors/Records, 1712-1746, micropublication roll 1, Concord Free Public Library, Concord, Massachusetts; there was no 1718 assessment found.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, administration account, 20 May 1726, images 915: 12-15.

²⁸ Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, 110, Mary Ball death (1726); citing Concord Registers, II: 38.

²⁹ Middlesex Co., Mass., probate case files, no. 915, Nathaniel Ball (1725), image 915: 5, inventory, taken 1 April 1725.

The inventory of Nathaniel's estate paints a picture of his house.³⁰ The four named rooms suggest that his house matches what the Library of Congress calls, "a typical two story post and girt wood frame house with gable roof and central fireplace."³¹

- "To one Bed and bedsted and furniture in the east loar Roome"
- "To one bed and bedsteed and furniture in the west loar room"
- "To one bed and bedsteed in y^e East end chamber"
- "To the two beds in the west chamber and their furniture"

Several annotations pointed to the need to consult other records.

- Jeremiah Ball received the advancement on his inheritance in money in the year 1722.³² He was born 1 May 1701, so this date suggests an additional gifting pattern adopted by his father. Perhaps Nathaniel gave his sons a sum of money on their twenty-first birthday, reserving land as a gift when each one married. If so, this pattern did not apply to his daughters. Despite the fact that Mary, born in 1699, was also of age, she had not received an advance on her inheritance. Unlike her sister, Mary was still single, so perhaps a gift to a daughter was contingent on her marriage.³³
- "The Case of Benjamin of weak understanding is to be Considered," perhaps explains why Benjamin was the only male heir who did not sign his name.³⁴ In fact, a commission "directed by your Honer [*Jonathan Remington, Judge of Probate*] to give our oppinion wheather Benj^a Ball is non-compos ^or^ is not Capable of Maniging his Estate without a Guardin or no : we are of oppinion that he is not capable of maniging without a Gurdin [*spelling retained*]."³⁵ The judge appointed John Flint as Benjamin's guardian. Benjamin was "in his Twenty fifth year of age."³⁶
- "Jeremiah Ball living at a distance"³⁷ This document is dated 20 June 1726, but when Jeremiah was appointed guardian to his brother on 14 March 1725[/6], he is called "Jeremiah Ball husbandman . . . of Concord."³⁸ This suggests that if he had indeed left the Concord area, that move occurred during this narrow timespan.
- Susanna is identified on the reverse of the 16 May 1726 as "Susanna (~~wife of Henry Yours~~) ^widow^".³⁹ A search of Middlesex County probate case files confirmed that she was newly widowed. Her husband, Henry Yours, had died in Honduras Bay, sometime between the 21 October 1725 date of his will, when he states he was "afflicted with

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ "The Wayside," description and floor plan, "Historic American Buildings Survey, Engineering Record, Landscapes Survey," *Library of Congress*.

³² Middlesex Co., Mass., probate case files, no. 915, Nathaniel Ball (1725), image 915: 10, appointment and return of committee.

³³ Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, Jeremiah Ball birth (1701), 51, and Mary Ball birth (1699), 47.

³⁴ Middlesex Co., Mass., probate case files, no. 915, Nathaniel Ball (1725), "Memo Relating to settlement of Real Est." (reverse), image 915: 23.

³⁵ Middlesex Co., Mass., probate case files, no. 917, Benjamin Ball (1729), report of commission, 8 February 1728, image 917.3; the commission included John Fletcher, John Fox, and Eleazer Flagg.

³⁶ Ibid., guardian bond, 21 July 1729, image 917.4.

³⁷ Middlesex Co., Mass., probate case files, no. 915, Nathaniel Ball (1725), "Memo Relating to settlement of Real Est." (reverse), image 915: 23.

³⁸ Middlesex Co., Mass., probate case files, no. 916, Ebenezer Ball (1725), guardian bond, 14 March 1725[/6], image 916.3.

³⁹ Ibid., image 915: 11, appointment and return of committee (reverse).

Diseases in my Lung,” and the date of this document. She posted bond as administratrix of her husband’s estate on 9 September 1726.⁴⁰

Nathaniel Ball’s estate file shed light on more than his family structure. It provided insight on early eighteenth century intestate laws and procedures, on farming practices, on burial rituals, and on education. It provided clues to family traditions and interactions. For this short time period, 1725-1726, the Ball family came to life.

GENEALOGICAL SUMMARY

Generation Two

7. **NATHANIEL² BALL** (Nathaniel¹) was born 5 July 1663.⁴¹ He died 4 March 1724/25 in Concord, Middlesex Co., Massachusetts,⁴² and was buried in the Old Hill Burying Ground in Concord.⁴³ He married **MARY BROOKS**, daughter of Caleb and Susanna (Atkinson) Brooks, 19 April 1688 in Concord.⁴⁴ Mary was born circa 1664.⁴⁵ She died 22 August 1726 in Concord,⁴⁶ and was buried next to her husband in the Old Hill Burying Ground.⁴⁷

Children of Nathaniel² Ball and Mary Brookes, all born Concord, were as follows:

- i. **SUSANNAH³ BALL**, b. 24 Jan. 1688/89;⁴⁸ m. (1) **HENRY YOURS** 20 Feb. 1715/16 in Concord;⁴⁹ m. (2) **LUKE STURTENBURG** 5 Oct. 1727 in Boston, Mass.⁵⁰
- ii. **CALEB BALL**, b. 10 Aug. 1690;⁵¹ d. 3 Dec. 1734, probably in Concord; bur. in the Old Hill Burying Ground in Concord;⁵² m. **EXPERIENCE FLAGG** 26 Oct. 1713 in Watertown, Middlesex Co., Mass.⁵³ Experience, daughter of Benjamin and Experience Flagg/Flegg, b. 5 May 1692 in Watertown.⁵⁴

⁴⁰ Middlesex Co., Mass., probate case files, no. 7103, Henry Ewer, a.k.a. Years/Yours (1726), will (1725), images 7103: 2-4, and administration bond (1726), image 7103: 5.

⁴¹ Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, 110.

⁴² Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, 110.

⁴³ Old Hill Burying Ground (Concord, Middlesex County, Massachusetts), Mr. Nathaniel Ball grave marker; photographed by Susan Goss Johnston, 14 July 2014; gives date of death as 4 March 1725.

⁴⁴ Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, 27; Henry Bond M.D., *Genealogies of the Families and Descendants of the Early Settlers of Watertown, Massachusetts, including Waltham and Weston: to which is appended the early history of the town, with illustrations, maps and notes*, second edition (Boston: N. E. Historic-Genealogical Society, 1860), 721; digital images, *Internet Archive* (<https://archive.org/details/genealogiesoffam00bond> : accessed 25 July 2014)..

⁴⁵ Old Hill Burying Ground (Concord, Mass.), Mrs. Mary Ball grave marker; died 22 August 1726 in the 63rd year of her age yields range of birth of 23 August 1663--22 August 1664.

⁴⁶ Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, 110.

⁴⁷ Old Hill Burying Ground (Concord, Mass.), Mrs. Mary Ball grave marker.

⁴⁸ Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, 33.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 89, Henry Yours - Susanna Ball marriage (1715/16).

⁵⁰ New England Historic Genealogical Society, "Boston, Massachusetts: Marriages, 1700-1809," database and digital images, *AmericanAncestors.org* (<http://www.americanancestors.org/> : accessed 9 August 2014), 164, Luke Sturtenburg - Susanna Yours marriage (1727); citing City Document no. 150.

⁵¹ Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, 33.

⁵² Old Hill Burying Ground (Concord, Mass.), Caleb Ball grave marker.

⁵³ Historical Society, *Watertown, Mass., Records to the end of 1737*, Caleb Ball - Experience Flegg marriage (1713), 2: 49; also, Middlesex County, Probate case files, Caleb Ball (1734), estate no. 882; wife is Experience.

⁵⁴ Historical Society, *Watertown, Mass., Records to the end of 1737*, Experience Flegg birth (1692), 1: 66.

- iii. NATHANIEL BALL, b. 1 April 1692;⁵⁵ d. 3 June 1749 in Concord, Middlesex Co., Massachusetts;⁵⁶ m. (1) SARAH BAKER, 31 May 1711 in Concord;⁵⁷ she d. 16 Feb. 1743 in Concord. Nathaniel m. (2) SARAH (DAVIS) MERIAM, 10 Sept. 1746 in Concord.⁵⁸ Sarah, daughter of Eleazer and Eunice (Potter) Davis, b. 23 March 1711/12 in Concord, d. 25 May 1799 in Groton, Grafton Co., N. H.;⁵⁹ m. (1) Isaac Meriam, son of Thomas and Mary (Harwood) Meriam, 1 Sept. 1736 in Bedford, Middlesex Co., Mass;⁶⁰ m. (3) Thomas Marston 4 Aug. 1761 in Concord.⁶¹
- iv. THOMAS BALL, b. 2 Feb. 1693/94;⁶² d. bet. 3 Sept. 1766 and 11 April 1768 (the date of his will and the date of the citation to appear for probate), probably in Bolton, Worcester Co., Mass.;⁶³ m. (1) ABIGAIL WHEELER, daughter of John and Sarah (Starns/Stearns) Wheeler, probably in Concord bet. 1717 and 1719;⁶⁴; b. 29 Dec. 1689 in Concord;⁶⁵ d. between 21 Oct. 1740 and 12 July 1749 (the date she acknowledges a deed and the date Thomas remarries), probably in Bolton, Worcester Co., Massachusetts.⁶⁶ He m. (2) EXPERIENCE (JOSLIN) SNOW 12 July 1749 in Marlborough, Middlesex Co., Mass.,⁶⁷ widow of Ebenezer Snow, whom she m. 11 Oct. 1727 in Marlborough.⁶⁸

⁵⁵ Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, 36.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 415.

⁵⁷ George W. Sanderson, Herbert J. Harwood and Edward Frost, committee, *Records of Littleton, Massachusetts, from the earliest records in the Town Books begun in 1715* (Concord, Mass.: Patriot Press, 1900), 520; database and digital images, New England Historic Genealogical Society, American Ancestors (<http://www.americanancestors.org/> : accessed 4 February 2014).

⁵⁸ Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, 165.

⁵⁹ Charles Henry Pope, compiler, *Merriam Genealogy in England and America* (Boston, Mass.: Charles H. Pope, 1906), 72; digital images, Internet Archive (<https://archive.org/details/merriamgenealogy00pope> : accessed 27 July 2014).

⁶⁰ *Vital Records of Bedford, Massachusetts, to year 1850* (Boston, Mass.: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1903), Isaac Meriam - Sarah Davis marriage (1736), 72; database and digital images, New England Historic Genealogical Society, American Ancestors (<http://www.americanancestors.org/> : accessed 14 January 2014).

⁶¹ New England Historic Genealogical Society, "Boston, Mass., Marriages, 1700-1809", Thomas Marston - Sarah Ball marriage (1761).

⁶² Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, 38.

⁶³ Worcester Co., Mass., Probate files, Thomas Ball, Bolton (1768), Series A, case no. 3153 (images 239-249), Thomas Ball will (1766) and citation (1768).

⁶⁴ Middlesex County, Probate case files, John Wheeler (1737), estate no. 24291.

⁶⁵ Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, Abigail Wheeler birth (1689), 32.

⁶⁶ Massachusetts, Land Records, Record books of the registry of deeds, 1639-1900, 41: 249 (image 136), Thomas Ball to Thomas Munroe, deed, 1737; Abigail acknowledges this deed 21 October 1740 before Joseph Wilder, Justice of the Peace, in Worcester County, implying that she was still living when Thomas removed to Bolton.

⁶⁷ Systematic History Fund, *Vital Records of Marlborough, Massachusetts, To the end of the year 1849* (Worcester, Mass.: Franklin P. Rice, 1908), Thomas Ball - Experience Snow marriage (1749), 215; database and digital images, New England Historic Genealogical Society, *American Ancestors* (<http://www.americanancestors.org/> : accessed 24 August 2014); also, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Probate files, Thomas Ball, Bolton (1768), Series A, case no. 3153 (images 240-241), Thomas Ball, will, 3 September 1766; Registry of Probate, Worcester; digital images, "Massachusetts, Worcester County, Probate Files, 1731-1881," FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/> : accessed 24 August 2014); browse: Worcester > Case File Number and Year Range; imaged from FHL digital folder 7439284 ; married before the date of this will, which names wife Experience. Digital images currently (2014) end at file no. 35921, Stephen Corbin. The original files are "located at the Suffolk County Courthouse in Boston," and this collection appears to be a direct scan from the original files.

⁶⁸ Systematic History Fund, *Vital Records of Marlborough, Mass., to the end of the year 1849*, Ebenezer Snow - Experience Joslin marriage (1727), 309.

- v. SAMUEL BALL, b. 24 March 1696/97.⁶⁹
- vi. MARY BALL, b. 11 May 1699.⁷⁰
- vii. JEREMIAH BALL, b. 1 May 1701.⁷¹
- viii. BENJAMIN BALL, b. 19 June 1704;⁷² d. 5 March 1738/39 probably in Concord; bur. there in the Old Hill Burying Ground.⁷³
- ix. EBENEZER BALL, b. 30 May 1712;⁷⁴ d. 26 or 27 Oct. 1726 in Concord;⁷⁵ a bur. in the Old Hill Burying Ground in Concord.⁷⁶

⁶⁹ Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, 44.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 61.

⁷³ Old Hill Burying Ground (Concord, Mass.), Mr. Benjamin Ball grave marker.

⁷⁴ Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, Ebenezer Ball birth (1712), 79; also, Old Hill Burying Ground (Concord, Mass.), Ebenezer Ball grave marker; died 27 October 1726 in the 15th year of his age yields birth range of 28 October 1711-27 October 1712; also, Middlesex Co., Mass., probate papers, no. guardian file no. 916, Ebenezer Ball (1726), appointment of guardian, 14 March 1725; in his thirteenth year (14 March 1725), yields birth range of 15 March 1712--14 March 1713.

⁷⁵ Old Hill Burying Ground (Concord, Mass.), Ebenezer Ball grave marker, died 27 October; Tolman, *Concord, Mass. Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850*, Ebenezer Ball death (1726), 110; died 26 October.

⁷⁶ Old Hill Burying Ground (Concord, Mass.), Ebenezer Ball grave marker.