

*Joseph Bridgham*

Joseph Bridgham Jr. (1701 - 1753)



Dr. Joseph **Bridgham** Jr.

Born **16 Apr 1701** in **Boston, Suffolk, Massachusetts Bay Colony** Son of [Joseph Bridgham](#) and [Mercy \(Wensley\) Cushing](#)

ANCESTORS

Brother of [Henry Bridgham](#) [half], [Elizabeth \(Bridgham\) Holyoke](#), [Mercy Bridgham](#), [John Bridgham](#), [James Bridgham](#) and [Mercy \(Bridgham\) Smith](#)Husband of [Abigail \(Willard\) Bridgham](#) — married 18 Oct 1722 in Boston, Suffolk, Massachusetts Bay Colony Father of [Joseph Bridgham III](#), [Abigail \(Bridgham\) Gerrish](#), [Mercy \(Bridgham\) Thomas](#), [Elizabeth \(Bridgham\) Russell](#), [Sarah Bridgham](#), [John Bridgham](#), [Hannah \(Bridgham\) Goldthwaite](#), [Sarah Bridgham](#) and [Katherine \(Bridgham\) Crocker](#)

DESCENDANTS

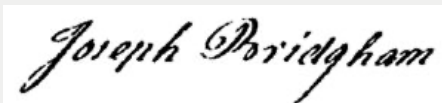
Died **25 Sep 1753** at age 52 in **Plymouth, Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay Colony** Profile manager: [Joel Bridgham](#) [\[send private message\]](#)

PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS

Profile last modified 5 Feb 2024 | Created 7 Jul 2011

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Biography



Joseph Bridgham's signature.

Joseph Bridgham was born in Boston on April 16, 1701, the second of seven children. "New England Families, Genealogical and Memorial," provides a nice biography.

Dr. Joseph Bridgham, son of Joseph Bridgham, born April 16, 1701, baptized four days later, was graduated from Harvard University in 1719. He then studied medicine, and removed to the town of Plympton, Massachusetts, where he was an apothecary and physician. By the death of his uncle, Dr. John Bridgham, of Ipswich, in 1721, he came into possession of some property besides what he inherited from his father, and also the 'new house' built by Henry Bridgham in 1670, which he sold to Francis Borland in 1734-35. He always lived in the town of Plympton where he practiced his profession. His grave is located in an ancient buryingground at North Carver, a village near Plympton, his heath having occurred September 25, 1753. His will was dated September 12, 1751, and is on file in the probate office at Plympton. His widow paid out of his estate for the erection of a head and foot stone. He took a prominent part in the affairs of the town of Plympton, the town records there showing that he was chosen town clerk in 1739; that he was appointed to provide a school master and report to the town in 1744, and that he was selectman in 1745. Dr. Bridgham was married at Boston, October 18, 1722, to Abigail Willard, the ceremony being performed by the Rev. Peter Thacher. ... According to the Boston records, the children of Joseph and Abigail Bridgham were: Abigail, born November 21, 1724; Mercy, December 27, 1725; John, August 27, 1729; Hannah, August 2, 1730; Joseph. The records in the North Church, Boston, give Hannah, baptized August 9, 1730; Sarah, baptized July 9, 1734; Katherine, baptized May 30, 1736. No record can so far be

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Joseph

Bridgham

SEARCH RECORDS

DNA Connections

It may be possible to confirm family relationships. It is likely that these autosomal DNA test-takers will share [some percentage](#) of DNA with Joseph:

[au](#) ~0.78% [Calvin Bridgham](#) : [AncestryDNA](#)

[au](#) ~0.78% [Deborah \(Nash\) Angelosanto](#) : [AncestryDNA](#)

[au](#) ~0.39% [Tanya Peterson](#) : [AncestryDNA](#), GEDmatch [AV5657793](#) [\[compare\]](#), Ancestry member Tanya_Ibarra + [Family Tree DNA Family Finder](#), FTDNA kit #306095 + [MyHeritage DNA](#), GEDmatch [H904137](#) [\[compare\]](#), FTDNA kit #306095

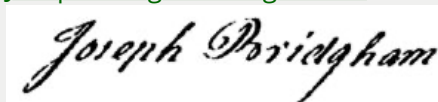
[au](#) ~0.39% [Jerry Doble](#) : [Family Tree DNA Family Finder](#), GEDmatch [T072418](#) [\[compare\]](#), FTDNA kit #N61429 + [MyHeritage DNA](#)

[au](#) ~0.39% [Judy \(Pettengill\) Wiles](#) : [MyHeritage DNA](#)

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Images: 2

[Joseph Bridgham's signature.](#)



[Joseph Bridgham's will.](#)

found either in Boston or Plympton of the birth or baptism of the 'Elizabeth' mentioned in the will of Dr. Joseph Bridgham.^[1]

Joseph Bridgham and Abigail Willard were married in Boston on Oct. 18, 1722. She was born January 19, 1703 in Boston. Joseph is the only son who gave his parents grandchildren. And of his nine children, only two were boys. So for the first few generations, the Bridgham line was rather tenuous. Yet those two sons were the ancestors of nearly all the Bridghams currently living in America. They have over 9400 known descendants. Their son Joseph started the "Rhode Island Bridghams" and son John produced the "Maine Bridghams." Their two marriages produced 17 children.

All nine of their children were born between 1723 and 1736. Eight of their children lived to adulthood, which was a pretty good percentage for those times.

The following account concerns Othniel Campbell, a contemporary of Joseph Bridgham. Campbell's first wife was Catharine Willard, sister of Joseph's wife, Abigail Willard. It shows what an influential person Joseph was in the early church. The "Great Awakening" was a period of "rapid and dramatic religious revival in Anglo-American religious history." "Old Light" preachers tended to favor "reasoned, rational arguments in their sermons," while "New Light" preachers gave emotional sermons.

As a clergyman, Campbell showed a certain amount of liberalism and independence, but the Great Awakening found him at odds with the Old-Light faction in his church led by Joseph Bridgham (A.B. 1719 [Harvard]), who was his brother-in-law by his first wife, and the town physician. The first break came when the parish meeting of March 1, 1742/3, tabled his annual salary vote. Undaunted by this warning, on July 7, 1743, he signed the general testimony of the clergy in support of the revival. At its next meeting the parish voted £40 to hire substitute preaching. The Bridgham faction called two successive church councils the second of which, famous as 'the council of five churches,' on November 2, 1743, ruled that if the minister could not give satisfaction and make peace within a month, he ought to resign. The Campbell faction called a council of ten churches which met at Plympton on November 30 and found itself excluded from the meetinghouse by the Old-Light faction which maintained that it knew nothing of a church vote calling such a council. The body met, however, and listened to hair-splitting testimony about the minister's doctrines and his having permitted Eliab Byram (A.B. 1740) to use his pulpit. The council mildly censured the people for touchiness and upheld the minister's doctrine, while admitting that his method of statement was not accurate.

Campbell issued a call for a church meeting for December 5, 1743, to consider the advice of the council of ten churches. However, that was training day, and Captain Barnabas Shurtleff, an Old-Light, kept the soldiers 'untill Near Day light Disappearing.' To be on the safe side, the Old-Lights also kept the meetinghouse locked. So the minister adjourned the meeting to his house that evening.

Doctor Bridgham with many of the agreived brethren came to the meeting, and with a great deal of noise an heat forbade the pastor from proceeding upon the business of said meeting. Mr. Campbell read the result of 10 churches and desired the church would calmly debate upon the result, but Dr. Bridgham, with others of the dissatisfied made a great Clamour and noise. Mr. Campbell required sillence but diverse . . . said who made you a moderator . . . Mr. Campble ask his Church (not the congregation) to goe up in the Study or Chamber and all seem'd to bee going up who was in the Room, when Mr. Campble saw that he came back and said he was sorry he had been in such a Passion and ask'd Silence upon which they were all silent and then read a Result and call'd this Vote -- If it be your mind Brethren to accept this Result please to manifest by holding up your hands and . . . there was about a Dozen hands lifted up than some of the Brethren ask'd him for a Negative Vote which he did not call but adjoun'd the Meeting . . . until . . . the 9th . . . December . . . att His own House. Doctor Bridgham Then Called upon the Church and Required them to meet the Next Day . . . att the meeting House. In order as he Said To Put in Execution the Late Result of 5

In the name of God Amen: I Joseph Bridgham of Plympton in the County of Blunruth, New England Physician, Labouring under many Infirmities which make my Disturbance soe make and within this my last will and Testament: I that is to say: principally and first of all, I becommend my Soul to God and my body to the Earth to be Buried in the Buriall at the Direction of my Executors; and Touching such worldly Estate as I do here bequeath me with, my will is expressed; That my Debt and Several Charge be paid as soon as possible after my Decease - Item; I Give to Each of my Children namely; Abigail Mary, Elizabeth, John, Hannah, Joseph, Sarah & Katherine five shillings; Item; I Give to my wife Abigail Bridgham all the Remainder of my debts Real and personal, whatsoever and what soever in possession and Actual Possession her Widowhood; and when that Cometh my will is that she have on which I live with all the purchase Contained in my former Share Deed, be Divided between my two sons Equally; John and Joseph their heir and Assigns and the Remainder Real and personal between my two Sons Equally; I have her when and after the married m? Joseph and their heir

Court Records

4 Sources

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Churches. But a great part of the Church with one Voice forbid it Saying we are Not Ripe for Such a Church meeting.

[The text continues with more descriptions of bickering between the two factions.]

An Old-Light church meeting chose Bridgham and Shurtleff to carry their case to the next session of the county court.^[2]

In May, 1728, Joseph Bridgham, a Boston "apothecary" brought a law suit again Joshua Morse, a Rochester physician. He was awarded £11.3s.8d when the defendant defaulted. Joseph, now a Plymton physician, sued the same man again in August, 1738, and was awarded £8.8s.2d when the defendant defaulted.

In 1730, Joseph Bridgham, and apothecary, was part owner of the sloop "John and Elizabeth." On July 8, they were sued by Samuel Walker and Benjamin Atkinson who had chartered the boat for an outing to "Cape Fare" ("Cape Fear"?). The "owners to make sure the ship was fitted out properly." Nothing else is mentioned.

The "History of Carver" mentions members of the Joseph Bridgham (1701-1753) family a number of times. But it is difficult to differentiate between the senior Joseph and the younger Joseph (1723-1760).

Joseph Bridgham Precinct clerk 1741-1745

Joseph Bridgham Precinct Treasurer 1745

Joseph Bridgham, Esq. " Standing committee 1749

Joseph Bridgham, Dr. " " " 1738-1740

Joseph Bridgham Precinct Assessor 1741, 42, 46

Given that Joseph Jr. would only have been 17 in 1741, it was most likely his father who served in the various precinct positions. Also, other historians credit Joseph Sr. with holding these positions.

A 1743 newspaper printed this interesting tidbit,

We hear from Plymton that the Wife of Dr. Joseph Bridgham, late of this Place, was deliver'd of Twins, a few Days ago, which is the fourth Time successively Mrs.

Bridgham has had Twins, so that she has had eight Children in about three Years.^[3]

However, there are no other records to support the claim of 4 pairs of twins in any Joseph Bridgham family, or of any children born to Abigail Willard Bridgham after 1736. I suspect that the first newspaper got the story wrong, and that it was Dr. Bridgham who delivered 4 sets of twins (either to 4 different women or possibly even the same woman) in a three-year period. Other papers picked up the story and repeated it. This story was followed by another paragraph reporting that a woman gave birth to twins several days apart. Perhaps the Boston Gazette was the National Inquirer of its day.

On December 27, 1743, Joseph Bridgham and two other selectmen issued a warrant against "Jesse Griffin and his mother and the rest of his family ... to depart town."

In May, 1744, Dr. Joseph Bridgham of "Plymton" was one of about forty men "appointed as informers of violations of" an act to prevent neighbouring governments from issuing bills of "Publick Credit."^[4]

Dr. Joseph Bridgham, a retailer in "Plimton," was issued a license to sell liquor for one year in Sept. 1746. It was re-issued in Oct. 1747.

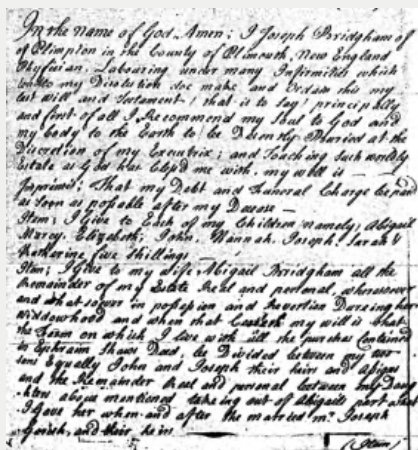
A 1746 newspaper hints that Joseph Bridgham may have authored a volume of books,

To be Sold by Daniel Gookin, over against the old-South Meeting House,
The four last Vols. of Pool's Synopsis Criticorum. The Works of the learned Joseph

Bridgham, M. A. 2 Vol. Folio. ...[and 5 or 6 other works]^[5]

First, it is not known if these are the works of this Joseph Bridgham, or of his father. Second, this is the only reference I have seen about any written works by a Joseph Bridgham from this time period. Third, the reference might simply mean that Joseph was the owner of "The Works."

Joseph Bridgham was a Justice of the General Session in March, May and Oct, 1748, Sep., and Oct. 1750, Sept. 1751, March and Sept., 1752.



Joseph Bridgham's will.

Joseph Bridgham died in New Carver or Plympton, Massachusetts on September 25, 1753, at the age of 52, and is buried at the Lakenham Cemetery in Carver.

Probate

His will reads, in part, "Item: I Give to Each of my Children (namely) Abigail, Marcy, Elizebeth, John, Hannah, Joseph, Sarah & Katherine five shillings. Item: I Give to my wife Abigail Bridgham all the Remainder of my Estate Real and personal, wheresoever and whatsoever in proffesion and ___ Dureing her Widdowhood and when that Ceaseth my will is that the Farm on which I live with all the purchas Contained in Ephraim Shaws Deed, be Divided between my two sons Equally John and Joseph their heirs and Assigns and the Remainder Real and personal between my Daughters above mentioned taking out of Abigails part what I Gave her when and after She married Mr. Joseph Garish, and their heirs."

His inventory was taken on 11 September 1759 in Plympton.^[6]

In 1761, a list of creditors was recorded. The estate was represented as insolvent. An account of his estate by his widow Abigail was also recorded which included proceeds from the sales of real estate, funeral costs, gravestones, doctors' bills, necessaries to the widow, and administration fees. The remainder of the estate was paid to his creditors.^[7]

Facts

TITLE

Dr.

NAME

Joseph Bridgham ^[8] ^[9] ^[10]

SEX

Male

BIRTH

16 APR 1701; [Boston, Suffolk, Massachusetts Bay Colony, British Colonies](#) ^[11] ^[12] ^[13] ^[14] ^[15] ^[16] ^[17] ^[18] ^[19] ^[20] ^[21]

BAPTISM

20 APR 1701 ^[18]

DEATH

25 SEP 1753; [New Carver or Plympton, Massachusetts, United States](#) ^[11] ^[13] ^[15] ^[16] ^[18] ^[19] ^[22] ^[23]

25 SEP 1753 ^[10]

1759 ^[24]

BURIAL

[North Carver](#) ^[25]

[Lakenham Cemetery, Carver, Plymouth, Massachusetts, United States](#) ^[9]

[Lakenham Cemetery, Carver, Plymouth, Massachusetts, United States](#) ^[26]

GRADUATION

1719; [Harvard, Cambridge, Middlesex, Massachusetts Bay Colony, British Colonies](#) ^[11] ^[18] ^[25] ^[24] ^[27] ^[28]

OCCUPATION

Physician and apothecary ^[18] ^[25]

Apothecary ^[29]

Physician, Boston and Plympton, Massachusetts ^[20] ^[24]

1739; Town Clerk (Plympton) ^[18] ^[25]

1745; Selectman (Plympton) ^[25] ^[30]

FAMILY**Husband**

Joseph Bridgham

Wife

Abigail Willard

Marriage

18 OCT 1722; [Boston, Suffolk, Massachusetts, United States](#) ^[8] ^[13] ^[16] ^[18] ^[19] ^[24] ^[31] ^[32] ^[33] ^[34] ^[35]

Minister

Mr. Peter Thatcher ^[18] ^[31]

Research Notes

Elmer Bridgham writes:

"Joseph Junior graduated at Harvard College in 1719 and studied medicine (perhaps with his Uncle John) and settled in Boston where he was a physician and apothecary. By the death of his uncle, Dr. John Bridgham of Ipswich, he came into some property besides that which he inherited from his father. On October 18, 1722, he married Abigail Willard, the granddaughter of the President of Harvard College. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Peter Tatcher.

"About 1732 he moved with his family to Plympton, Massachusetts. That part of Plympton is now Carver. He took an active part in the affairs of the town. He was town

clerk in 1739 and a selectman in 1745. He died September 25, 1753. He lies buried in an ancient burying ground in North Carver. Mrs. Bridgham lived with her son, Dr. Joseph 3rd in Seekonk. She died in 1776 and lies buried on Seekonk Common. Joseph Junior's will, September 12, 1751, is on file in the Probate Office in Plympton."

From "Genealogical and Family History of the State of Maine," by George Thomas Little, p. 1589,

"Joseph, son of Joseph and Mercy (Wensley) Bridgham, was born April 16, 1701, and died in 1754, at Plympton, Massachusetts. He graduated from Harvard College in 1719, and became a physician and apothecary in Boston, but about 1737 moved to Plympton, where he was selectman in 1743 and 1746. He married Abigail, daughter of Simeon and Elizabeth (Alden) Willard, a descendant of John Alden. Captain John, son of John and Priscilla (Mullins) Alden, married Elizabeth, daughter of Lieutenant William Phillips, and widow of Abiel Everill; John and Elizabeth (Phillips-Everill) Alden had a daughter Elizabeth, who married Samuel Willard, who officiated as vice-president of Harvard College from September 6, 1701, to his death, September 12, 1707. Alden has been used as a christian name by some of the Bridgham family. The children of Joseph and Abigail (Willard) Bridgham were : Joseph, born November 22, 1723; Abigail, November 21, 1724; Mercy, December 27, 1725; John, August 27, 1729; Hannah, August 2, 1730, married, February 28, 1754, Mr. Plympton."

From "Mayflower Deeds & Probates," p. 18,

"Joseph Bridgham of Plimpton to William Boardman, of Boston. <Suffolk Co.Deeds 75:233> 22 Nov. 1748. . . Joseph Bridgham, Physician and wife Abigail, sell to William Boardman, feltmaker, all that wooden tenement. . .with the land thereto. . .in Conduit St. near the head of the Town Dock in said Boston.

"William Boardman of Boston to Joseph Bridgham of Plimpton. <Suffolk Co. Deeds 78:69,70> . . .22 Nov. 1748. . .Indenture between William Boardman, feltmaker and Joseph Bridgham, Physician. . .Whereras the said William Boardman stands justly indebted unto the said Joseph Bridgham in the sum of 250 Pounds. . .as a colateral and further security. . .hath sold unto the said Joseph Bridgham all that wooden tenement or dwelling house with the land. . .in Conduit St. near the head of the Town Dock in said Boston, bounded as follows: southerly upon Conduit St.: westerly partly on the brick tenement and land of the heirs of Simon Willard dec'd and partly on land of heirs of Mr. Thompson, dec'd; northerly upon land of said Thompson's heirs; easterly on housing and land of heirs of Thomas Gross, dec'd. Also, half part of parcel of land behind Conduit St. bounded as follows: easterly, on land of Samuel Walker's heirs and partly by land formerly in possession of Thomas Savage & partly by land of the heirs of Thomas Gross, dec'd; westerly partly by land of said Thompson dec'd and partly by land of heirs of Nathaniel Williams; northerly by land of heirs of Joseph Peirce, dec'd. Ack. 22 Nov. 1748, Plymouth County. Rec. 17 Apr. 1750"

In May, 1728, Joseph Bridgham, a Boston "apothecary" brought a law suit again Joshua Morse, a Rochester physician. He was awarded P11.3s.8d when the defendent defaulted. ("Plymouth Court Records 1686-1859" Vol. 5, p. 223, www.americanancestors.org.)

In 1730, Joseph Bridgham, and apothecary, was part owner of the sloop "John and Elizabeth." On July 8, they were sued by Samuel Walker and Benjamin Atkinson who had chartered the boat for an outing to "Cape Fare" ("Cape Fear"?). The "owners to make sure the ship was fitted out properly." Nothing else is mentioned. (New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Vol. 157, p. 358-359.)

In Aug., 1738, Joseph Bridgham, a Plymton physician, brought a suit against Jushua Morss, a Rochester Physician, and was awarded P8.8s.2d when the defendent defaulted. ("Plymouth Court Records 1686-1859" Vol. 6, p. 103, www.americanancestors.org.)

The "History of Carver" mentions members of the Joseph Bridgham (1701-1753) family a number of times. But it is difficult to differentiate between the senior Joseph and the younger Joseph (1723-1760):

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" " Precinct Treasurer 1745

" ", Esq. " Standing committee 1749

" ", Dr. " " " 1738-1740

" " Precinct Assessor 1741, 42, 46

Given that Joseph Jr. would only have been 17 in 1741, it was most likely his father who served in the various precinct positions. Also, other historians credit Joseph Sr. with holding these positions.

On Dec. 27. 1743, Joseph Bridgham and two other selectmen issued a warrant against "Jesse Griffin and his mother and the rest of his family ... to depart town." ("Plymouth Court Records 1686-1859", Vol. 2, p. 175, www.americanancestors.org)

In May, 1744, Dr. Joseph Bridgham of "Plymton" was one of about forty men "appointed as informers of violations of" an act to prevent neighbouring governments from issuing bills of "Publick Credit." ("Plymouth Court Records 1686-1859", Vol. 2, p. 171, www.americanancestors.org)

Dr. Joseph Bridgham, a retailer in "Plimton," was issued a license to sell liquor for one year in Sept. 1746. ("Plymouth Court Records 1686-1859", Vol. 2, p. 186, www.americanancestors.org) It was re-issued in Oct. 1747 (ibid, Vol. 2, p. 193)

He was a Justice of the General Session in March, May and Oct, 1748 ("Plymouth Court Records 1686-1859", Vol. 2, pp. 196, 199, 202, www.americanancestors.org)

He was a Justice of the General Session in Sep., Oct. 1750, Sept. 1751, March, Sept., 1752 ("Plymouth Court Records 1686-1859", Vol. 3, pp. 15, 16, 18, 19, 21-22, www.americanancestors.org)

From the "Boston Post Boy," June 15, 1747,

"Boston,

"At a General Council held at the Council Chamber on Friday last His Excellency was pleased to nominate the following Gentlemen to the respective Offices hereafter mentioned, viz.

"...

"Joseph Bridgham, Gamaliel Bradford and Daniel Lewis, jun. Esqrs to be Justices of the Peace for the County of Plymouth."

[This could be the same Joseph Bridgham, or possibly his son.]

From "Vital Records of Carver, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850," by Carver (Mass.), 2008, p. 148,

"Carver Deaths

"Bridgham, Joseph Esq., Sept. 25, 1753, in 53th y. G.R.I."

Joseph is buried at the Lakenham Cemetery, Carver, Plymouth, Massachusetts.

Sources

1. [↑](#) New England Families, Genealogical and Memorial, Vol 2, p. 605-606.

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3. ↑ Sibley's Harvard Graduates, VIII, 1726-1730, p. 371.
4. ↑ Plymouth Court Records 1686-1859, Vol. 2, p. 171, www.americanancestors.org
5. ↑ Boston Evening Post, Boston, Massachusetts, Dec. 22, 1746.
6. ↑ "Massachusetts, Plymouth County, Probate Records, 1633-1967," images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G97D-69V1> : 20 May 2014), Probate records 1758-1764 vol 15-16 > image 184 of 623; State Archives, Boston.
7. ↑ "Massachusetts, Plymouth County, Probate Records, 1633-1967," images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-L97D-6RL> : 20 May 2014), Probate records 1758-1764 vol 15-16 > image 402-403 of 623; State Archives, Boston.
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