

Record
of the
Proceedings
of the
Overscers of the Poor
for the
Town of Beverly
begun
March 1804

Beverly Monday March 12th 1804

At a meeting of the free holders & other inhabitants of the town of Beverly, following persons were chosen as overseers of the poor & the work house for the ensuing year viz

Thomas Davis — John Dyson
Eleanor Wallis — Joseph Wood
& Robert Rantoul

Wednesday March 21st 1804

At a meeting of the overseers of the poor at the town hall present Thomas Davis, John Dyson, Eleanor Wallis, Joseph Wood & Robert Rantoul —

Voted that Robert Rantoul be clerk to the Board of overseers —

That Joseph Wood & John Dyson be a committee to make inquiry respecting the rules & management of the work houses in the neighbouring towns —

That the Clerk post up notifications requesting those persons who are desirous of engaging as master of the work house to give in their names to one of the overseers on or before the 29th of March instant —

That the Clerk write to the overseers of the poor of the town of Roxbury requesting him to send a copy of the rules & regulations of the work house in said town —

That the Clerk purchase a suitable book for the use of the overseers & present his bill for allowance —

Agreed to meet on Saturday the 31st Instant at the town hall at 2 o'clock in the afternoon —

hereunto respectively set our hands this
fourth day of April 1804

Thomas Davis
John Dyson
Eleanor Wallis
Robert Rantoul
Joseph Wood
Charles Davis

Agreed to meet at the work house the second
Monday in every month at 3 o'clock in the
afternoon next meeting to be on Monday the
9th Instant

Monday April 9th 1804

At a meeting of the overseers of the poor held
at the work house present Thomas Davis
John Dyson, Eleanor Wallis, Joseph Wood &
Robert Rantoul

Agreed to the following rules & regulations
for the management of the Work House &
that the same should be lay'd before the town ^{at their}
Rule 1st That there shall be a general meeting
of the overseers at the house, the second Monday
of every month at three o'clock in the afternoon
to inspect all accounts & to examine into the
behaviour of the people committed to the house &
of their own officers & servants, & to redress all
difficulties that occur to the master, & to hear &
consider all complaints made by the poor & to
consent & advise about such further rules & meth-
ods as may be for the advantage of said house.

2^d That one of the overseers take the more immedi-
ate inspection of the house for one month & that
they go to the house every Monday between
sun rise & sun set for inspecting the manage-
ment & behaviour of the persons therein for the
week past & for advising & assisting the Master
in the affairs thereof - but in emergent &
important cases they shall call the whole of
the overseers together

9 That the master shall keep one book to contain an Inventory of all the furniture, linen and woollen cloathing, utensils &c. belonging to said house and which shall from time to time be brought into said house designating in such book what articles belong to persons committed to said house — with an account how they are disposed of. — in another book he shall keep an account of provisions of every description received into said house including fuel & of the expenditure of the same — noting how much of every description is deliver'd out to poor persons who are not maintained on the house and how much is consumed in the house — and in a third book he shall keep an account of the stock and materials received for carrying on the work of the house — an account of the disposal of the manufactures of said house and an account of what persons may earn by working out of the house, which he shall collect. —

^{the} 10 — That the master shall observe such further rules and orders as shall be thought necessary to be made by the overseers from time to time relating to the affairs of the house. —

^{the} 11 — That upon the admission of any person they shall be examined whether they be free from lice, the itch and other foul distempers & such as shall not be found clean shall be put into some particular room till they be perfectly cleansed —

^{the} 12 — That the several persons in the house shall be called up every morning, such persons as are able shall repair to the several places appointed for them to do their work in and shall be kept diligently to work from such hours in the morning, to such hours in the evening as the overseers from time to time shall direct, excepting such times as shall be allowed for meals & religious worship. —

^{the} 13 — That when any children shall be received into the house, there shall be some suitable women appointed to attend them and the master shall see that they be washed, combed and drest every morning and be taught to read and instructed in the holy scriptures, and assembly catechism at such times as shall be appointed by the overseers — and that the rest of their time be employed in such work as shall be assigned them excepting that they be allowed some time for recreation in the open air. — and when they shall arrive at a suitable age, they shall be bound out, to good families as the law direct

^{the} 14 — That the common work of the house be picking of oakum, unless for such tradesmen whose business may be well accommodated in the house and it shall be

evening at such hours as may be most convenient and read
some portion of the holy Scriptures to them and pray with them.

th 19 — That no person presume to smoke Tobacco in their house
on penalty of being denied smoking for one week and that
if any person be convicted a second time, he or she shall be
punished as for other misdemeanors.

th 20 — That all immoralities and disobedience to the govern-
ment of the house and other misbehaviour be by the
master noted in a book and laid before the overseers, that
by their authority and admonition such rudeness and immor-
ality may be restrained and peace and good order maint-
ained and all obstinate perverse and unruly persons pun-
ished according to their crimes.

th 21 — That such as shall duly observe the foregoing orders
and faithfully perform their several tasks shall be entitled
to one Cent out of every ten Cents they earn to be disposed
of by the overseers for their greater comfort.

rd 22 — That whereas some slothful persons may pretend
sickness or lameness to excuse themselves from labour.
It is order'd that such persons shall pass examination
by the Physician and if it should appear upon his
report and other concurring circumstances that those
persons made false excuses, they shall be punished by
addition of labour to their daily stint or some other way
as the overseers shall determine.

rd 23 — That no person presume to beg money or other thing
directly or indirectly from any person that shall come to
visit the house on penalty of being denied their next meal.

th 24 — That no person go out of the house without liberty and
that everyone who obtains leave shall return in good order
at the time appointed, on penalty of being denied going out
for one month, for the first offence and for three months for
every offence afterwards.

Copy of Letter to Robert Sandley
Newbury April 9th 1804

M^r Robert Sandley

Sir Complaint has been made that the children of Peter Sandley your son are suffering for want of fuel & necessaries & application has been made to us for their relief - but as the law requires that Grand Parents shall provide for their grand children when of sufficient ability - we have given you this notice & if you do not give them relief within forty eight hours & give notice thereof to some one of the overseers - we shall proceed to relieve them & charge the same to you & proceed with you for the recovery of the same as the law directs

We are

Sir your Humble Servants
Thomas Davis
John Lyson
Eleanor Wallis
Joseph Wood
Robert Rantoul

overseers
of the
poor
of
Newbury

Offered to Joshua one seventeen dollars to take Nabby Raymond as a servant to be indentured to him till she is eighteen - he is to keep her free of cost till he gives his answer.

April 10th 1804 James Meyer Captain of the brig John arrived at this port has reported to the overseers according to law that he has brought Joanna Blackman a Scotch woman of twenty three years of age & wife of Edgar Blackman an American seaman employed on board said brig - as a passenger

Copy of Letter to Robert Sandley
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Bill of Fare agreed upon by the overseen at their meeting the 14th April 1804

— Sunday —

Beans or Peas — baked or stewed — with or without a Pudding —

— Monday —

Hasty-pudding & Molasses —

— Tuesday —

Fresh Fish if it can be obtained — or in its stead — stewed meat — or boiled meat & broth thickened with barley meal

Potatoes & other sauce with this dinner

Wednesday

Boiled Indian bag pudding — with or without suet — when made without suet a sauce of vinegar & molasses may be allowed

Thursday

Salt Fish & Potatoes with dip —

Friday

Soup or hasty pudding & molasses

Saturday —

Bullocks heads — Shins — or other meat with Potatoes

Pork & green sauce may be substituted for any of the above dinners when the sauce can be obtained out of the garden

Milk Porridge or water porridge for breakfast & Supper —

The master of the house when the foregoing arrangement is inconvenient may vary from circumstances may require —

Saturday March 31st 1804

At a meeting of the overseers present Thomas Davis, John Dyson, Eleazer Wallis, Joseph Wood & Robert Rantoul.

Several persons having made application to be appointed master of the work house it was agreed that application should be made to Samuel Ober, Charles Dennis, & Jonathan Larcom, in the order in which they are here written - offering them as follows viz, the use of rooms in the work house (the overseers to meet in one of them when necessary) a privilege in the Cellar & Garret - the privilege of cooking victuals for his family at the kitchen fire - some part of the Garden & one hundred dollars per year for the man & his wife's services. - that Thomas Davis should make the above proposals to Samuel Ober & if he refuses to accept to the others in course. -

Agreed to meet on Wednesday the 4th of April next at the town hall at two o'clock in the afternoon -

Wednesday April 4th 1804

At a meeting of the overseers present Thomas Davis, Eleazer Wallis, Joseph Wood, & Robert Rantoul.

Agreed with Charles Dennis to serve as master of the work house on the following terms viz that he shall have the use of two rooms in the house (the overseers to meet in one of them when necessary) a privilege in the Cellar & Garret, some part of the garden, two cords of wood per year & one hundred dollars per year - the rooms to be the lower room & chamber in the South Eastern corner & some of the back land not exceeding fifteen poles & that the said sum of money shall be paid quarterly - & the said Charles Dennis agrees to serve in the said office one year from the 9th day of April 1804 when his salary is to commence. - In witness of our consent to the above agreement we the overseers of the poor & the said Charles Dennis have

2.
Saturday March 31st 1804

At a meeting of the overseers present Thomas Davis, John Tyson, Eleazer Wallis, Joseph Wood & Robert Rantoul.

Several persons having made application to be appointed master of the work house it was agreed that application should be made to Samuel Ober, Charles Dennis, & Jonathan Larcorn, in the order in which they are here written - offering them as follows viz, the use of rooms in the work house (the overseers to meet in one of them when necessary) a privilege in the Cellar & Garret - the privilege of cooking victuals for his family at the kitchen fire - some part of the Garden & one hundred dollars per year for the man & his wife's services - that Thomas Davis should make the above proposals to Samuel Ober & if he refuses to accept to the others in course. -

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4th That the master shall be a person of approved integrity & ability & if found guilty of any immoral, or irregular behaviour, the overseers shall dismiss him & appoint another in his place.

4th That the master shall keep a register of the names, ages, occupations & places of nativity & of their last place of abode of all the persons that shall be admitted into the house as well as an account of the time of their entry & of their deaths & dismissions from the house.

5th That the master keep the gates at all times well secured & if any be desirous, to see or speak with any person committed to the house he shall first obtain leave of the master & if any person is suspected of bringing in any strong liquors, or carrying out any thing belonging to the house or any person therein, they may be stopped, that due enquiry & search may be made for the same & the guilty punished.

6th That the master buy such part of the materials & provisions as the overseers shall from time to time direct.

7th That the master at the hour appointed for going to bed which in the summer season shall be ten o'clock & in the winter season at 9 o'clock shall see that all the fires & lights are extinguished, excepting what shall be absolutely necessary, & that, they be left under proper care.

8th That the Master take care that the victuals be well and seasonably dressed, that the house, yard and dependencies be kept neat and clean, that the rooms be swept and beds made every day, that the windows be frequently opened for airing the house, that the house be washed as often as shall be judged necessary & that the table linen, dishes &c be clean & that the people be kept clean & neat in their apparel, that they wash themselves every morning & have clean linen to shift themselves once every week, & the beds shifted once a month.

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judged more profitable to employ them in their proper trades such as Taylors, Shoemakers, Mopmakers &c. and such of the women as are capable of being employed in Carding and Spinning Wool, Flax and Cotton, in knitting, sewing &c. but that these things be determined and regulated by the overseers.

^{the} 15 ——— That whereas the ruin and poverty of many families is often owing to the Idleness and vicious courses of one of the heads of it, more particularly of the masters who may have been bred to some good trade, that by industry would comfortably support the rest of the family, being industrious and in a Capacity of earning something considerable towards their own support, so that it may be judged proper to order said persons to the house to employ them there — in that case an account shall be kept of their earnings, and after a reasonable deduction for their maintainance in the House the overplus shall be applied to the support of their families in such way and manner as the overseers shall direct.

^{the} 16 ——— That the overseers shall from time to time as often as they shall judge Necessary agree upon the diet of the house to be continued till their further order, which agreement they shall deliver in writing to the master for his direction.

^{the} 17 ——— That the hour of dining be twelve o'clock at which time the people of the house shall be called together and dine in one room (if it will contain them) having their table covered with suitable Cloths, Dishes, knives spoons &c. and the commons of the day (as directed by the overseers) that none be allowed to dine in their separate rooms, unless in the case of indisposition, but that their breakfast and supper may be delivered to them out of the kitchen at the hours which the overseers may from time to time appoint.

^{the} 18 ——— That the master take special care that the Sabbath Day be duly observed — by precept and example encouraging the reading of the holy Scriptures, meditation and prayer. He shall call the people together once at least on every Sabbath Day — and spend a suitable portion of time in praying, singing of Psalms and reading some practical Discourse of Divinity that shall be appointed by the overseers that he shall assemble the people every morning and

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18 — That the master take special care that the Sabbath Day be duly observed — by precept and example encouraging the reading of the holy Scriptures, meditation and prayer. He shall call the people together once at least on every Sabbath Day — and spend a suitable portion of time in praying, singing of Psalms and reading some practical Discourse of Divinity that shall be appointed by the overseers — that he shall assemble the people every morning and

25 — That if any person shall neglect to repair to their proper places for work or being there shall refuse to work, loiter, or be idle, or shall not well perform the task of work set them or shall waste, and spoil any of the materials, or tools of the several manufactories, or shall deface the wall, or break the windows, or shall disturb the house by clamour, quarrelling fighting or abusive language, or shall bring any strong liquors into the house without leave or profane the Sabbath, or carry it disrespectfully to their governors, or shall be guilty of lying or wanton and lascivious behaviour or shall drink to excess, steal, or profanely curse and swear or in any respect act immorally, or irregularly, they shall be punished either by denying them a meal, or a whole days allowance or causing them to wear a collar round about their necks, with a wooden clog to it, or by ordering them into the Solby to be kept with bread & water, not exceeding forty eight hours or by an addition of labour, to their daily task according to the nature and circumstances of the crime, and in case of obstinacy and frequent repetitions in their crimes they shall be punished by order of a justice of the peace or of the proper court for trial of such offences as the law directs.

^{the} 26 — That the master of the house have power in the intervals between the meetings of the overseers to punish the breakers of the foregoing orders, according to the instructions he shall receive from the overseers from time to time and the rules of the house and that in case of difficulty arising which may need a speedy consideration — he shall give notice thereof to two or more of the overseers that he may have their advice and assistance.

^{the} 27 — That the overseers be further impowered to punish such persons, as shall be legally committed to the house and shall threaten or attempt to make their escape therefrom, & such as having escaped shall be recommitted, by fixing a wooden clog with an iron chain to one of the legs of such offender —

28 — That the foregoing rules and orders of the house be read publicly once a month. — that none may pretend ignorance and at such other times as the master shall think necessary.

Beverly Saturday April 14th 1804
 A meeting of the overseers of the poor at the
 work house present Thomas Davis, John Deyon,
 Eleazer Wallis, Robert Rantoul & Joseph
 Wood

Agreed to a plan of diet to be given to the
 master for his direction

Agreed that the house shall be inspected
 & superintended monthly, ^{by one of the overseers} in rotation accord-
 ing to the articles beginning with the chair-
 man & proceeding in the order in which they
 were chosen

Copy of the appointment of the
 Master of the Work House

To Mr Charles Dennis
 (Commonwealth
 Massachusetts)

We the undersigned overseers of the Poor
 of the work house for the town of Beverly,
 by virtue of the power vested in us by the
 laws of this Commonwealth do hereby
 constitute & appoint you the said Charles
 Dennis master of the work house in said
 Beverly — And in that office you are to
 conduct yourself with humanity towards
 those committed to your care & with a strict
 regard to the established rules of said house
 & such instructions as you may from time
 to time receive from the overseers thereof
 Given under our hands at Beverly
 this ninth day of April AD 1804

Signed Thomas Davis } overseers of the
 John Deyon } Poor of the
 Eleazer Wallis } work house
 Robert Rantoul } for the town
 Joseph Wood } of Beverly

Copy of a Letter to the Overseers of the Poor of the town of Danvers
Beverly April 19, 1804
To the Overseers of the Poor of the Town of Danvers

Gentlemen

Complaint has been made to us that Charles Porter Fowles a young child of Hotten Fowles of Danvers, in the care of Rowland Robinson of this Town, has been cruelly & improperly treated, by the Wife of said Robinson & from our own knowledge of Robinson & his Wife we are fully of opinion that they are very improper persons to have the care of said Child, they being very poor & intemperate — We therefore inform you that we shall be necessitated to make some provision for said child at the charge of the Town of Danvers unless he is speedily removed from the said Robinson's family

We are

Gentlemen

Your Humble Servants
John Tyson
Robert Rantoul
Eleazer Wallis
} Overseers
of the
poor of the
Town of
Beverly

Copy of a Letter from the Overseers of the Poor of Danvers —

Danvers April 23rd 1804

Respected Friends

We received your fav^r of the 19th instant informing of the situation of a child of Hotten Fowles and the necessity of his being removed — The said child was taken out of our Almshouse the 22nd of last Oct^r by Rowland Robinson the grand father who became obligated to take proper care of & support him, untill he was fourteen years of age — And the infamation of the wife of Benjamin Fowl, who is also a subject of our Almshouse, and grandmother of s^d child. We considered Robinson to be a steady man, and by no means, given to intemperance, on being since informed by the grandmother that Robinson's wife was

Copy of a Letter to the Overseers of the Poor of the town of Danvers
 Beverly April 19, 1804

To the Overseers of the Poor of the Town of Danvers

Gentlemen

Complaint has been made to us that Charles Porter Fowler a young child of Hotten Fowler of Danvers, in the care of Rowland Robinson of this Town, has been cruelly & improperly treated, by the Wife of said Robinson & from our own knowledge of Robinson & his Wife we are fully of opinion that they are very improper persons to have the care of said Child, they being very poor & intemperate — We therefore inform you that we shall be necessitated to make some provision for said child at the charge of the Town of Danvers unless he is speedily removed from the said Robinson's family

We are

Gentlemen

Your Humble Servants

John Dyson

Robert Rantoul

Eleazer Wallis

} Overseers
 of the
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Copy of a letter to the overseers of Wenham

Beverly May 10th 1804

To the overseers of the Poor of the Town of Wenham

Gentlemen

The subscribers overseers of the Poor of the town of Beverly hereby give you notice that Samuel Webber a person who has his lawful settlement in the Town of Wenham has actually become chargeable to the Town of Beverly & is now in the Work House we therefore request you to remove him & his family from this town as soon as may be. And we further inform you that we shall charge the Town of Wenham two dollars per week for said Webber's board while he shall continue in the Work-House & shall likewise charge such assistance as we may deem necessary to be afforded to his family

Thomas Davis } Overseers
John Byson } of the Poor
Robert Rantoul } of Beverly.

Beverly May 14th 1804

At a meeting of the overseers of the Poor at the Work House present Thomas Davis, John Byson, Ebenezer Wallis, & Robert Rantoul - ordered the master of the House to deliver John Clarke one bushel of meal & three Quarts of Molasses

ordered the Town Treasurer to pay Morris Nash five dollars - States Poor

to pay Daniel Herrick twenty four Dollars for 16bl Pork

to pay Charles Dennis thirteen Dollars & sixteen Cents for Meal &c

Agreed to supply to John Clarke half a bushel of meal & three Quarts of Molasses

To John Poland one Peck meal, two quarts molasses, three pound of Pork & one bottle of Wine

Copy of a Letter to the overseers of Wenham

Beverly May 10th 1804

To the overseers of the Poor of the Town of Wenham

Gentlemen

The subscribers overseers of the Poor of the town of Beverly hereby give you notice that Samuel Webber a person who has his lawful settlement in the Town of Wenham has actually become chargeable to the Town of Beverly & is now in the Work House we therefore request you to remove him & his family from this town as soon as may be. And we further inform you that we shall charge the Town of Wenham two dollars per week for said Webbers board while he shall continue in the Work-House & shall likewise charge such assistance as we may deem necessary to be afforded to his family

Thomas Davis } Overseers
John Byson } of the Poor
Robert Rantoul } of Beverly.

Beverly May 11th 1804

At a meeting of the overseers of the Poor at the Work House present Thomas Davis, John Byson, Cleaver Wallis, & Robert Rantoul - ordered the master of the House to deliver John Clarke one bushel of Meal & three Quarts of Molasses

ordered the Town Treasurer to pay Morris Nash five dollars - States Poor

to pay Daniel Merrick twenty four Dollars for 16 lb Pork
to pay Charles Dennis thirteen 16 Dollars & sixteen cents for Meal &c

Agreed to supply to John Clarke half a bushel of meal & three Quarts of Molasses

To John Poland one Duck meat, two quarts Molasses, three pound of Pork & one bottle of Wine