

The Eighteenth-Century Records  
of the Boston  
Overseers of the Poor



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## Appendices



### Appendix 6

#### **The Lists of Elected Overseers, 1690/91–1800.**

*The earliest recorded appearance of the Boston Overseers of the Poor as an official branch of the town administration is in the Boston Town Records, 7:206, for March 9, 1690/91. This was the first election of Overseers by the Town Meeting and included a petition to the General Court that led to the formal legislation that actually created the office. That legislation of 1692 was not specific to Boston but Boston was the only town for nearly a century to use Overseers as a separate town office. In all the other Massachusetts towns the local Selectmen administered poor relief (see Appendix 1). The election of Overseers was recorded annually in the town records along with all the civic administration lists. Before 1707 the Overseers appear to have been chosen by the Selectmen, but thereafter it seems that the Town Meeting did the appointing indicating a separate if collaborative status for the Overseers and the Selectmen. The earliest extant citation from the Overseers' own records is 1742. The list that follows is drawn from Boston Town Records, volumes 7, 8, and 12, and from Robert F. Seybolt's invaluable *The Town Officials of Colonial Boston, 1630–1775* (Cambridge, Mass., 1939) for the years before 1742 and thereafter from the Overseers' records themselves. Seybolt's compilation is exhaustive, and while it is derived mostly from the published Boston Town Records and the manuscript volumes of the Boston Town papers (at the Boston Public Library), it does use a very broad range of contemporaneous sources including newspapers. Seybolt is especially useful in cross reference and in establishing consistent spellings for the Overseers' names, and in the use of titles such as "Esquire," "Captain," "Honorable," "Mister," and so on. Seybolt is also useful for comparing the Town Papers with the transcriptions in the Boston Records, and in clarifying the idiosyncracies and omissions of the various recording and transcriptions clerks. Town officials were chosen annually at the March Town Meeting, usually held during the first half of the month. Until 1752 the official Anglo-American year ended on March 25. Thus the use of 1690/91, and 1691/92 and so on, in the records. The Overseers' own lists from 1742 to 1752 do not use the split year form but refer to March 8, 1741/42, for example, as March 8, 1742. This list does not include the few men who were appointed and "refused" the appointment and did not serve for even one year as Overseers.*

## *Appendices*

Overseer	Title	First Appointment	Years of Service
Abbott, Samuel	Mr.	1771	4
Alford, John	Colonel	1719/20	1
Allen, Jeremiah	Mr.	1712/13	2
Austin, Jonathon	Mr. (Esquire in 1789)	1784	18
Avery, John	Esquire	1765	1
Ballantine, John Jr.	Captain	1709/10	1
Banister, Thomas	Mr.	1706/07	1
Barrett, John	Mr. (Esquire in 1761)	1748	26
Barrett, Samuel	Mr. (Esquire in 1782)	1776	8
Bedgood, Jeffery [Jeffry]	Mr. (Captain in 1732)	1725/26	16
Bliss, A.	?	1704/05	1
Bolt [Boult], John	Mr.	1706/07	3
Borland, John	Mr.	1703/04	3
Bourn, Nathaniel	Esquire	1758	9
Bowes, Nicholas	Mr	1778	6
Bradford, John	Captain	1768	1
Brattle, Thomas	Esquire	1703/04	2
Brewster, Oliver	Mr. (Esquire in 1797)	1796	8
Bromfield [Brumfield], Edward	Esquire	1701/02	4
Bromfield, Edward	Mr.	1734/35	21
Bromfield, Henry	Mr.	1761	3
Brown, Edward	Mr.	1691/92	1
Byfield, Nathaniel	Esquire (Captain in 1701)	1700/01	2
Calef, Robert	Mr.	1701/02	2
Chauncy, Charles	Mr.	1709/10	3
Checkley [Chickley], Samuel[l]	Lieutenant (Captain in 1701)	1691/92	3
Cheever, Joshua	Captain	1734/35	8
Clark, Francis	?	1704/05	2
Clark, Timothy	Captain (Esquire in 1717/18)	1714/15	16
Clark, William	Mr.	1703/04	3
Codman, John Jr.	Mr.	1787	9
Coleman, William	Mr.	1690/91	1
Davis, Benjamin	Captain	1700/01	1
Deering [Dereing;Dering], Henry	Mr.	1697/98	5
Deering, Henry	Captain (Esquire in 1731/32)	1721/22	8
Dexter, Samuel	Mr.	1760	3
Dolbeare, Benjamin	Mr.	1757	20
Down [Downe;Donne], William	Captain	1736/37	14
Draper, Richard	?	1697/98	1
Drummer, Jeremiah	Esquire	1701/02	2

## *Appendices*



Edes, Edward	Mister	1786	18
Eyre, John	Esquire	1700	1
Flucker, Thomas	Mr.	1756	5
Franklin, John	Mr.	1751	1
Frizzell, John	Mr.	1711/12	3
Gardner, Joseph	Esquire	1761	6
Gooch [Gouch], James	Mr.	1714/15	14
Gore, John	Esquire	1767	8
Gorham, Stephen	Esquire	1790	13
Greenleaf, William	Mr.	1766	10
Greenwood, Samuel	Mr. (Captain, 1732; Esquire, 1735)	1724/25	14
Greenwood, Nathaniel	Captain	1755	2
Hammett, Benjamin	Captain	1763	4
Harris, William	No title given.	1706/07	1
Heath, Eliza	Mr.	1703/04	1
Henchman, Daniel	Captain (Esquire in 1738)	1734/35	21
Hews, Samuel	Mr.	1777	4
Hill, John	Mr. (Captain, 1734; Major, 1738)	1731/32	25
Hill [Hull], Henry	Mr.	1787	24
Hirst, Grove	Mr.	1707/08	7
Holyoke, Elizur	1702/03	1702/03	3
Hubbard, Thomas	Mr. (Esquire in 1737/38)	1733/34	22
Hunt, John	Mr. (Esquire in 1734/35)	1730/31	6
Hunt, Samuel	Mr.	1738/39	5
Hutchinson, Elisha	Esquire (Colonel in 1701)	1700/01	2
Hutchinson, William	Mr. (Colonel; Esquire)	1714/15	5
Inches, Henderson	Mr.	1763	4
Jackson, Jonathan	Mr.	1725/26	8
Keeling [Keeler], Samuel	Captain	1706/07	2
Legg, John	Mr.	1714/15	8
Leverett, John	Esquire	1767	9
Lewis [Lewise] Ezekiel	Mr.	1706/7	2
Lindall, Timothy	Mr.	1711/12	2
Lynde [Lind; Lynd], Samuel	Mr. (Esquire in 1702/3)	1691/2	8
Marshall, J.	No title given.	1704/05	1
Martin [Martyn], Edward	Captain	1714/15	1
Mason, Jonathan	Mr.	1760	28
Minot, Stephen	Mr.	1703/04	2
Oliver, Andrew	Esquire	1739/40	19

## *Appendices*

Oliver, Daniel	Mr. (Esquire in 1717/18)	1714/15	16
Oliver, Nathaniel	No title given.	1700/01	1
Pain, Edward	Mr.	1776	3
Palmer, Thomas	Esquire	1703/04	8
Parkman, Samuel	Mr. (Esquire in 1791)	1785	11
Partridge, Samuel	Captain	1767	18
Pemberton, Benjamin	Mr.	1706/07	2
Perkins, Thomas	Esquire	1796	26
Phillips, John	Deacon (Captain, 1743; Esquire, 1748)	1742	21
Phillips, William	Mr. (Esquire, 1772; Honorable, 1785)	1756	22
Phillips, William, Jr	Mr. (Esquire, 1797; Honorable, 1817)	1788	34
Pitts, James	Captain	1713/14	1
Pitts, James	Esquire	1757	3
Pitts, John	Mr.	1705/06	2
Powell, William	Esquire	1776	12
Prentice [Prentis; Prentiss], Henry	Mr.	1784	3
Proctor [Procter], Edward	Mr. (Major, 1776; Colonel, 1778; Esquire, 1787)	1775	35
Prout, Timothy	Mr.	1718/19	6
Robie [Robe], William	Mr.	1691/92	1
Rogers, George	Mr.	1743	5
Ruck, John	Mr. (Esquire, 1722/23)	1706/07	28
Savage, Ephraim	Captain	1704/05	1
Savage, Habijah	Captain	1709/10	5
Sewall [Sewell], Samuel	Esquire	1700/01	3
Sheepreeve, William	No title given.	1704/05	1
Sherburne, Joseph	Mr.	1751	5
Smith, Isaac	Mr. (Esquire in 1776)	1757	21
Smith, John	No title given.	1704/05	1
Smith, Thomas	Mr. (Captain in 1713/14)	1712/13	6
Smith, William,	Mr.	1788	29
Stoddard, Anthony	Mr.	1710/11	1
Stoddard, Simeon [Symeon; Simion]	Mr.	1690/91	6
Storer, Ebenezer	Mr. (Esquire in 1755)	1744	21
Sweetsers, John	Mr. (Esquire in 1785)	1776	26
Thatcher, Oxenbridge	Mr.	1724/25	1
Thrasher, Francis	Mr.	1701/02	2
Townsend, Penn	Colonel	1713/14	1
Tudor, John	Mr.	1751	9

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Tyler, Royall	Mr. (Esquire, 1760; Honorable, 1765)	1755	17
Tyler, Thomas	Esquire	1768	4
Tyler, William	Esquire	1732/33	18
Wadsworth, Joseph	Captain	1719/20	1
Waldo, Daniel	Mr.	1771	5
Waldo [Woldo], Jonathan	Mr.	1720/21	3
Waldo, Joseph	Mr.	1767	4
Walker, Benjamin	Mr.	1690/91	3
Walker, Isaac	No title given	1742	20
Walker, Thomas	Mr.	1700/01	1
Webb, Joseph	Mr.	1781	5
Webster, Redford	Mr. (Esquire, 1797)	1796	28
Welles, Arnold, Jr.	Mr. (Esquire, 1797)	1796	6
Welsteed [Wellsteed], William	Mr.	1703/04	9
Wendell, [Wendall], Jacob	Esquire (Honorable, 1735/36)	1728/29	26
White, Isaac	Mr.	1738/39	3
White, John	Mr.	1714/15	1
White, William	Esquire	1767	8
Whitwell, Samuel	Mr.	1769	21
Whitwell, William	Mr.	1762	14
Williams, Jonathan	Mr.	1722/23	3
Williams, Jonathan	Esquire	1767	1
Williams, Nathaniel	Mr.	1690/91	1
Winslow, Edward	Mr.	1708/09	3