

Articles of the 1811 "Social Library" and list of early subscribers.

[Transcribed by Susan Millinger, 8/8/2011, from a copy of a document provided by Karen Traub. Source: Town of Shutesbury Archives?]

Note: letters in bold type and underlined were inserted above the line by the scribe of the articles. Words in italics were words the transcriber wasn't sure of; comments in italics are those of the transcriber, as are all references to "sic" and to "abbrev" beside the presumed missing letters of the name. Particularly on page 2, the endings of some words are cut off in the transcriber's copy: the likely ending of the word is given in underlined text.

Shutesbury in the County of Hampshire and Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

We the Subscribers desirous [sic] to encourage the establishment of a Library in this Town by the name of the Social Library in the Town of Shutesbury and to have the privilege of Books thereto belonging do voluntarily [sic] agree to the Rules and Regulations and bind ourselves to a strict Proformance [sic] of them.

Art.1st That each Subscriber pay to the Treasurer one Dollar at the time of Subscribing as a purchase for the privilege of one Share in Said Library which Money Shall be laid out for the purchase of Books or otherwise for the benefit of the Library as the proprietors shall order or agree.

Art 2nd That those who subscribe two Dollars shall have two proprietors Shares and three Dollars three Shares etc.

Art 3rd That each Proprietor have the liberty of as many votes as he owns Proprietors Shares.

Art 4th That each Proprietor have liberty to take out which Book he pleases from the Library for his use at such times and under such regulations as shall be agreed on by the Proprietors at a legal meeting.

Art 5th That each Proprietor have liberty to dispose of his own right or share when and to whom he shall see fit only confining it to some person within the limits of this Town of which disposal he shall give notice to the Meeting by a Letter under his hand.

Art 6th That the following officers and Committees shall be chosen annually by the Proprietors at their meeting on the first monday in June and oftener if *omision* [?] shall require. Viz. Clerk Librarian Collector Treasurer a Committee of three to apprise [sic] all Books purchased or given for the benefit of the Library and a Committee of three to apprise the Damage that shall be done to any of the Books while in a Proprietors possession.

Art 7th That the Clerk keep a Record of all transactions ordered by the Proprietors to be entered on the Same. And at every Meeting of the Proprietors [page 2] after they have convened, he shall call them to order and preside for the purpose of choosing a Moderator to govern the Meeting

Art 8th It shall further be the duty of the Clerk to certify to the Collector all assessments upon the several Shares all fines that Shall be imposed and all Damages that shall be done to any of the Books while in the possession of a Proprietor.

Art 9th That the Librarian keep an account of all Books that shall be taken out of the Library to be laid before the Proprietors whenever they request it and in case of the absence or death of the Clerk it shall be his duty after the Proprietors have convened [sic] to preside for the purpose of choosing a Moderator to govern the Meeting.

Art 10th It shall be the duty of the Librarian to certify to the Clerk all fines that shall become due through the Nonfeasance or Misfeasance of any Proprietor or Proprietors within his knowledge and to hand all damaged Books over to the Committee chose [sic] to Settle the amount of Damage for there [sic] inspection.

Art 11th The Collector shall proceed with out delay to collect all sums of Money assessed on the several Shares, all fines that shall be imposed and all Sums for damages that shall be done to any of the Books after the same be certified to him be the Clerk.

Art 12th It shall be the duty of the Collector to make a settlement with the Treasurer at the end of every three months and pay out to him all the Money he has collected for the benefit of the Library.

Art 13th That the Treasurer be accountable to the Proprietors of said Library for all Moneys or whatever else shall be deposited in his possession for their use.

Art 14th That the Committee chose to apprise Books shall certify their doings to the Clerk who will file the certificates and add the name of the Book or Books with the sum it cost to the Catalogue of Books belonging to the Library.

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Art 15th That the Committee chosen to apprise the damage that shall be done to any Book or Books while in a Proprietor's possession shall certify the sum of damages to the Clerk, who will file the Certificate enter the amount on his Book and certify the same to the Collector.

Art 16th That after legal notice Proprietors holding one eighth of the Shares in Said Library Shall be a sufficiunt [sic] number to transmit business but a less number may adjourn.

Art 17th That none but Proprietors have liberty to take any Book out of the Library.

Art 18th That the first Meeting be held on Monday the third day of June Anno Domini **one thousand** eight hundred and eleven at the House of Josiah Beaman in Shutesbury at one of the clock P.M.

Art 19th That all other Meetings be warned as the Proprietors at a legal Meeting shall order.

Art 20th That these articles shall be read hereafter to the Proprietors after the opening of every annual Meeting and before they proceed [sic] to business.

Art 21st That no one be a Proprietor untill [sic] he has Signed the foregoing articles.

Shutesbury May 7th A.D. 1811.

[Signatures]

William Ward [or possibly Word; less likely Wood], two Proprietors Shares

Thomas Kibbey two Proprietors Shares

Andrew Hamelton [sic?] one Proprietors Share

Asa Powers, one Proprietors Share

Patrick Hamelton [sic?] one do [=ditto]

Eben[ezer [abbrev with the sign r/? caret mark or “?]] Roynald one do

Thomas Richardson, one do

Paul Macomber one do

Amos Hunting, one do

Samuel Fisk one do

Abner Smith one do

Benjamin Davis one do

Luther Conant one do

Josiah Beaman one do

Josiah Beaman jr one do

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[The names on page 3 all appear to be entered by the same hand that wrote the articles, but the names on page 4 appear to be written by different hands, presumably the names of those signing. It is possible, therefore, that pages 1-3 may be a copy of an original document, containing the names first to become proprietors, who may have signed at or before the first meeting, while the last page contains later additions.]

Oliver Hill one proprietors share

Luther Chapins one proprietors share

Luther Bruce one proprietors share

Charles H. Haskell one proprietor share

Elizabeth Pierce one proprietor share *[each word or phrase crossed out, the name with four lines, the rest with two.]*

Gardner Hunt one proprietor share

Amos Felton one proprietor share

John Ball one proprietor share

Jomah *[sic: probably Jonah?]* Ball one proprietor share

Marcus Meryfield one proprietor share *[this xed out, but left much more visible than Elizabeth Peirce's name!]*

Eben *[ezer, abbrev]* Felton, one proprietor share

William Chandler, one proprietor share

Capt Enos Mayo one proprietor share

John Conkey, one proprietor share

Jonas Winter, one proprietor share

Nathaniel Farrow one proprietor share

Emory Irving one proprietors share

Capt Increase Lock, one proprietors share *[barely legible note at end of line looks like it might be pound sign and numbers: did Lock pay in pounds not dollars?]*

Rev. John Taylor one proprietors share

James Paul one proprietors share

Ephraim Wheeler one proprietors share

Hugh Cunningham one proprietors share

Ezra Fish one do share

Joseph Richardson one do share

Benj. Ray one do share

Wm Reed one do share

Dea Lyscomb Brigham one do share

Richard Prouty

John Powers

[Transcriber's note: I have stayed as faithful as I could to the scribe's capitalization practice, but I'm not sure I have been entirely successful. It was particularly difficult to be sure which "s"s were lower case and which were not. Also: the scribe seems not to have used much punctuation beside periods at the end of sentences. SPM 8/8/2011]