



# *The Milkmaid and Reaper*

*A Refutation of Kimball and Swan*

By  
David M. McIntire



## **Foreword**

My presentation, *The Milkmaid and Reaper*, is a refutation of the erroneous credit given to John and Simeon Skillin of Boston as the sculptors of the original figures that were placed on the roof of the Derby Summer House. The two people responsible for crediting these figures to the Skillin brothers are Mable Swan and Fiske Kimball. Even though it was Ms. Swan who was first to steal from Samuel McIntire the credit for craving these figures, I feel the blame belongs more to Mr. Kimball. If Mr. Kimball had properly researched Ms. Swan's claim, he surely would have questioned her conclusion instead of validating her. I am confident that this presentation will adequately refute the assumptions made by Fiske Kimball and Mabel Swan and restore the credit back to Samuel McIntire as the sculptor of the Milkmaid and Reaper.

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**David M. McIntire**

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## The Milkmaid and Reaper *A Refutation of Kimball and Swan*

by David M. McIntire

The Milkmaid and Reaper are two wooden statues that stood on the roof of the Derby Summer House. The figures that are presently on the roof of the summer house are reproductions. The Peabody Essex Museum has the original Milkmaid in storage and the original Reaper is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the mansion at Glen Magna Farm. The summer house was designed by Samuel McIntire for Elias Hasket Derby and was built in 1794 on the Derby Farm at the corner of Andover Street and Buttonwood Lane in South Danvers, Massachusetts (now Peabody). In 1901 Ellen Peabody Endicott purchased the summer house. Mrs. Endicott had the summer house moved 3.5 miles to her Glen Magna Farm. Glen Magna Farm is now owned by the Danvers Historical Society.

The Milkmaid and Reaper have always troubled me as they are also called the Shepherdess and Gardener. I found this odd as my mind's image of a milkmaid is distinctly different from that of a shepherdess and that a reaper, a person who cuts and takes, would be labeled a gardener, a person who plants and cultivates, is also peculiar. My first thought was that the Milkmaid and Reaper may be replacements for the Shepherdess and Gardener. I decided to research why these two figures are also called the Shepherdess and Gardener.

I started my research with Fiske Kimball's book *Mr. Samuel McIntire, Carver, The Architect of Salem (1940)*. On page 73 Mr. Kimball references a bill from an article written by Mabel Swan and published in *Antiques, XX*. This bill is from John and Simeon Skillin of Boston to Elias Hasket Derby and is for 4 figures, Hermit, Shepherdess, Plenty and Gardener. In the following



Derby Summer House

issue of *The Magazine Antiques, XXI (Jan 1932)* is an article by Fiske Kimball in which he acknowledges that the Skillin brothers' bill published in Mabel Swan's article is for the figures on the Derby Summer House and on page 74 of his book he states that the Gardener and Shepherdess would later be known as the Reaper and Milkmaid.

Closing the Derby Summer House section in Kimball's book he references (pg76) an article published in *Old Time New England, XVI (1925), 54-64*. This article was written by Mrs. George Underwood. Mrs. Underwood was born Grace Batchelder in 1871, the

daughter of William and Julia Batchelder. Grace's grand-mother was Sally (Osborn) Batchelder born in 1825, the daughter of Kendall Osborn. Kendall Osborn bought the Derby Farm in 1848 and the Derby Summer House remained in the Osborn family until 1901.

In the article Grace Underwood states that she would attend annual family picnics at the farm and would visit Hannah Whittemore. Hannah Whittemore was born in 1801 and was the daughter of Daniel and Persis Whittemore. In 1792 Daniel Whittemore bought the property adjoining the Derby Farm, on south side of Buttonwood Lane, and lived there when the summer house was built in 1794. Samuel McIntire's grandmother was Mehitable Whittemore. Samuel was Daniel Whittemore 3<sup>rd</sup> cousin; their great grandfathers were brothers. I can easily imagine Daniel making conversation with Samuel while observing the construction of the summer house. Daniel's daughter, Hannah, lived her whole life on the property adjoining the farm; she died in 1888. Grace Underwood learned the history of the farm from her family

connection with the Osborn family and her personal relationship with Hannah Whittemore, a woman she called Aunt Hannah.

From Mrs. Underwood's article (pg59) I learned that the Milkmaid was removed from the summer house and placed on top of the Sutton Mills in North Andover; she would remain there until 1923. Also, on the same page is the text from an article, supposedly published in the *Danvers Wizard*. The quoted text provided much information but from my personal knowledge I knew there must be an error in the article. The quoted text states that the Derby Farm is now owned by Amos King. I happened to know that Amos King sold the farm to Kendall Osborn in 1848 and that the *Danvers Wizard* did not exist at this time. The story had to have been published in the *Danvers Courier* if it was correct in stating that Amos King was the present owner. If the article was published in the *Danvers Wizard* the owner of the farm would have been Kendall Osborn, not Amos King. I knew I had to find the original article to put a date to when the Milkmaid went missing.

I contacted the Danvers Archivist, Richard Trask, hoping to make an appointment to search the newspapers. To my surprise Mr. Trask got back to me the same day; but not to set my appointment. He emailed a scan of the original article referenced by Mrs. Underwood.

Mr. Trask found the article on page 2 of the May 23, 1846 issue of the *Danvers Courier*. The article describes the Milkmaid and Reaper stating "she had remained there under every change of proprietorship", "They have always, from their earliest connection been together" and "the farm now owned by Amos King". Amos King was born in Danvers on April 6, 1781 and was 13 years old when the summer house was built. Amos would have acquired ample knowledge of the Derby Farm as he lived his whole life in Danvers. The author of the article is not stated. Amos King probably wrote the first 2 paragraphs with Fitch Poole finishing the article starting at the last sentence of the second paragraph. The article also gives a clue to the Milkmaid's whereabouts disclosing there's reason to believe she went to a factory in the northern part of the county.

Mr. Trask sent me a second article from the following week's issue of the *Danvers Courier*, May 30, 1846. This article reports the open house at Eben Sutton's

Danvers Courier, May 23, 1846, pg. 2

### Woman Missing!

A very singular case of mysterious disappearance happened recently in this place, which has given rise to various surmises as to its cause. A woman about 40 years of age, who has always resided on the Derby farm and has been so much attached to the place that she has remained there under every change of proprietorship, suddenly disappeared within a short period, leaving her husband without the least intimation of her intention to depart. The case is the more surprising, as this couple have lived together for many years, have been known to be very peaceable, quiet people and most unexceptionable neighbors. They have always, from their earliest connection been together on the same estate as a part of the domestic establishment, the woman having formerly been employed as milkmaid, until she threw aside her milking pail for a higher position. We will not attempt to describe the feelings of her anxious partner at the melancholy separation, but all attempts at consolation have been wholly unavailing. The unhappy man has appeared wholly unconscious since the sad event and remains in a fixed position as if incapable of motion.

The woman had on when she went away a gypsy straw hat, a short loose gown, a white apron and light under dress and high heeled walking shoes. She is a little above the common height and a graceful figure. There are some reasons for believing that she intended to go to the northern part of the county, and she may possibly be connected with some one of the factories in that region. Any information concerning her will be thankfully received by communicating it at this office.

Since receiving the above information we have visited the farm house (now owned by Mr Amos King) and seen the "disconsolate partner" whom we found on the top of a building, standing in a fixed position, apparently in the act of whetting his scythe. It seems that his lady who had always been near him, eloped while his back was turned and the astonished husband has not changed a feature or moved a limb since; which may probably be accounted for from the fact that he is a wooden man. The heartless conduct of his faithless spouse, we suppose, may also be attributed to a similar cause.

new factory in North Andover. As the Milkmaid was known to be on top of Sutton Mills in 1923, the logical conclusion is Amos King gave the Milkmaid to Eben Sutton to be placed upon his new factory. I thought it odd that Amos would give Eben the Milkmaid so I searched for a family connection between Amos King and Eben Sutton. I was not able to find any connection between the two families. My supposition is that Amos King wanted to immortalize his daughter, Sarah; she died at the age of 22 years on April 30, 1844. At the time of Sarah's death, the construction of Eben Sutton's new factory would have already started. Sarah probably expressed a desire to work at Eben's new factory and from 1846 to 1923 she stood, as the Milkmaid, on top of Sutton Mills holding a spindle, not a bucket, in her hand.

I was now satisfied that the Milkmaid and Reaper were the original figures placed on the Derby Summer House when it was built and not replacements for the Shepherdess and Gardener.

I decided to contact Dean Lahikainen, Curator of American Decorative Arts at the Peabody Essex Museum and author of *Samuel McIntire, Carving an American Style*. Mr. Lahikainen told me the Milkmaid was at the PEM but she was in storage. He said the PEM also has Skillin's Figure of Plenty and she was also in storage. He then offered to take the two figures out of storage so that I could view them. I also arranged to view the original Reaper on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Glen Magna Farm mansion. At the viewings I took several photographs of the Reaper, Milkmaid and Plenty. I also measured the figures from the bottom of their shoes to the top of their hats. The Reaper is 69"; the Milkmaid is 69"; Plenty is 56".

While viewing the Milkmaid Mr. Lahikainen informed me that Brooks Potter gave the Milkmaid to the PEM in 1962. I wanted to be sure that I could connect the PEM's Milkmaid to the Derby Summer House, so, I researched Brooks Potter. Brooks Potter married Gertrude Sutton Russell, the daughter of Richard Spofford Russell and Mary Gertrude Sutton. Mary Gertrude Sutton was the daughter of William Sutton, president of Sutton Mills. In 1923, Mary Gertrude (Sutton) Russell was the only living child of William Sutton and her mother was also deceased. Mary would be the "estate of William Sutton" referenced on page 59 in the October 1925 issue of *Old Time New*

*England*. I was now satisfied that I had traced the life of the Milkmaid, from her creation to a PEM storage facility where she now sleeps; a few miles from the Reaper whom she was separated from in 1846.

So, what about the Shepherdess? I was well aware of the two Samuel McIntire's summer house drawings on page 122 of Dean Lahikainen's book. Amazingly both of these drawings show a figure on the roof which can be best described as a shepherdess. These drawings are at the PEM's Philips Library. MSS 264, Plan 23 is the drawing of the two-story Derby Summer House and Plan 140 is the drawing of the one-story summer house.

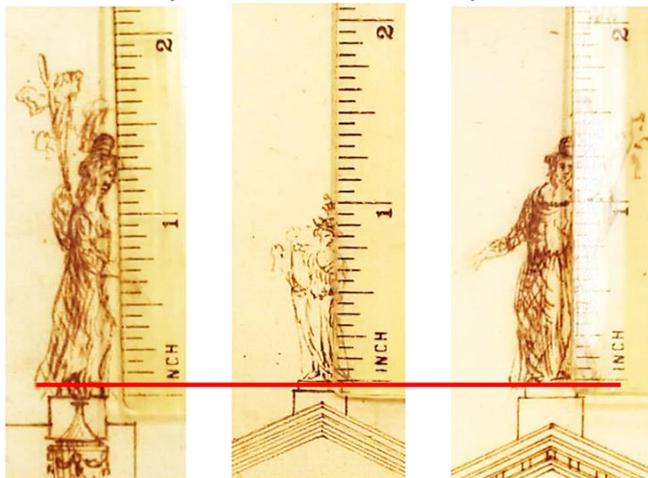
Mr. Lahikainen informed me that Paul Norton did a study of the paper used for Samuel McIntire's drawings. Mr. Norton found that the watermark on the paper used for Plan 23 was of a bunch of grapes and it was the same watermark as on the paper used for Plan 58, a 1793 Lyman House plan. Mr. Norton stated that the watermark on Plan 140 was circles that may be a bunch of grapes.

I examined the summer house drawings at the Phillips Library Reading Room. Plan 23, the elevation drawings of the Derby Summer, is now pasted to a piece of card stock making it impossible to view the watermark. Mr. Norton stated that the Plan 23 watermark was the same as the Plan 58 watermark. I examined Plan 58; the watermark is a stem with a bunch of grapes. The paper is cut on the watermark and only the top 2/3 of the bunch of grapes is on the plan. Plan 140, the plan for a one-story summer house, is also cut through the watermark and has the bottom 1/3 of a bunch of grapes. I took several measurements and made several comparisons. The bottom row of grapes on Plan 58 is the same as the top row of grapes on Plan 140. The cut edges of the 2 plans are not through the same watermark as both plans have the same row of grapes. There has never been a date put to Plan 140. Plans 23 and 58 were drawn in 1793 and, with Plan 140 having the same watermark, it is likely that Plan 140 was also drawn in 1793.

McIntire's bill for the summer house drawings and the building of the summer house can be found in MSS 264, Box 1, Folder 7. On this bill Samuel also billed for 56 days at the Derby Farm building a hot house from Sept to Dec 1793. The Skillin brothers billed Derby for the figures at the farm (Gardener, Shepherdess, Plenty and

Hermit) on September 25, 1793. Samuel's drawings of the summer house are billed on December 4, 1793. Samuel definitely saw the Skillin's Shepherdess as he just spent 56 days at the farm. Plan 140 is for a one-story summer house with a small shepherdess and Plan 23 is for a two-story summer house with a larger shepherdess. The two shepherdesses are not only different in size, they are also drawn with different clothing.

#### Size Comparison of Samuel's Shepherdesses



**Plan 23**

$\frac{1}{4}'' = 12''$

$1 \frac{3}{8}'' = 66''$

**Plan 140**

$\frac{1}{4}'' = 12''$

$1 \frac{1}{16}'' = 51''$

**Plan 23**

$\frac{1}{4}'' = 12''$

$1 \frac{3}{8}'' = 66''$

Plans 23 and 140 were probably drawn at the same time to provide Derby a selection. Plan 140 has the number "1" written in the upper left corner and this drawing possibly reflects Derby's desire to use the Skillin's Shepherdess on the roof. Plans 23 is for a more costly two-story summer house and, using the same paper as Plan 140, Samuel drew a larger shepherdess; he probably felt the Skillin's Shepherdess was too small for the two-story summer house.

In July 1794 the two-story summer house was built and required a larger figure. Derby already had a small shepherdess and he chose the Milkmaid for the larger figure.

As Fiske Kimball and Mable Swan claimed the Gardener and Shepherdess are the figures on the summer house, I felt that it was time to research John and Simeon Skillin. I started with referencing Sylvia Leistyna Lahvis' doctorate dissertation titled *The Skillin Workshop: The Emblematic Image In Federal Boston*.

**Plan 140, enlarged**



**McIntire's illustration of the Skillin Shepherdess?**

Mrs. Lahvis conducted a thorough investigation of the Skillin brothers' work and she provides a wealth of reference information. The Reaper, Milkmaid and Plenty are included in her dissertation. Mrs. Lahvis describes the figures in great detail on pages 111 – 120 and 237 – 240 of her dissertation. She references the same Skillin's bill that Mabel Swan and Kimball Fiske used to connect the Gardener and Shepherdess to the Reaper and Milkmaid but Mrs. Lahvis observed that, from the cost of the figures, the Shepherdess would have been the smallest figure and the Gardener and Plenty would have been approximately the same size. Unfortunately, Mrs. Lahvis made a couple of erroneous conclusions. In a most confusing attempt to document the Reaper and Milkmaid with the Skillin's bill she has the figure of Plenty as the Milkmaid on the roof of the summer house and has the Shepherdess as Pomona. I now feel that I have to explain the obvious. A shepherdess is typically depicted as a woman holding a staff or a lamb. Pomona is the goddess of fruit and the figure of Plenty is holding a basket of fruit. The Milkmaid is a figure of a woman holding a bucket; she has no staff, lamb or fruit. A gardener is distinguished by a shovel or a hoe and the Reaper carries a scythe.

The Skillin's bill is for 4 figures, Hermit, Shepherdess, Plenty and Gardener. Three of the figures were priced at 7 pounds 10 shillings but the Shepherdess was priced at 6 pounds, 80% of the value of the other three. This indicates that the Shepherdess was smaller than the other three figures. The PEM's Plenty measures 56". This bill indicates that the Gardener would have been approximately the same size as Plenty, 56", and the Shepherdess would have been smaller. The Reaper and Milkmaid are substantially larger at 69". The shepherdess shown on Samuel McIntire's Plan 140 scales at 51" to the top of the feather in her hat or approximately 45" to the top of her head.

By combining the following facts it is clear that the Gardener and Shepherdess figures in this bill are NOT the Reaper and Milkmaid:

1. The Shepherdess would be smaller than Plenty, smaller than 56".
2. The Gardener would be approximately the same size as Plenty, 56".
3. The Reaper and Milkmaid measure 69".
4. A gardener and a reaper bring two distinctly different images to one's mine.
5. A shepherdess and a milkmaid bring two distinctly different images to one's mine.

There is absolutely no factual basis in Swan and Kimball stating the Milkmaid and Reaper are just different names for the Skillin's Shepherdess and Gardener.

The question still remains, Who carved the Milkmaid and Reaper? Comparing the styles of Skillin and McIntire you would be inclined to say that McIntire carved the Reaper and Milkmaid but from page 241 of Mrs. Lahvis' dissertation I learned of another payment made to the Skillin brothers for 2 figures.

Mrs. Lahvis dissertation referenced 3 payments by Benjamin Pickman to the Skillin brothers. The first 2 payments, 14 Oct 1793 and 24 Dec 1793 were for the Hermit, Shepherdess, Plenty and Gardener. The 3<sup>rd</sup> payment on June 25, 1794 was for 2 unknown figures at a cost of 19 pounds. This is a cost of 9 pounds 10 shillings for each figure, assuming that the figures were of equal size. These figures were most likely larger than the figure of Plenty as they cost 2 pounds more than her.

Hoping that I might find more information I went to Benjamin Pickman's records at the Phillips Library. Benjamin Pickman was Elias Derby's son-in-law and the person in charge of the Boston branch of Derby's empire.

I found the entries illustrated below in MSS 5 vol 3. MSS 5 vol 3 is a day book. These payments are also recorded in Pickman's Journal, MSS 5 vol 2, and Ledger Book, MSS 5 vol 9.

I closely examined the 25 June 1794 entry. When you

<i>E H Derby's</i>	<i>Dr To Office of discount</i>		
<i>Gave Mess<sup>rs</sup> Skillin an order on dt towards the</i>			
<i>payment of sundry figures made for him -</i>		<i>18</i>	<i>11</i>

MSS 5, vol 3, 14 Oct 1793

<i>Elias H Derby</i>	<i>Dr To Cash</i>		
<i>pd Mess<sup>rs</sup> Skillin in full on his acct</i>		<i>11</i>	<i>5</i>

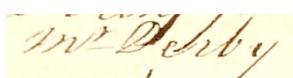
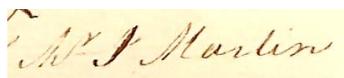
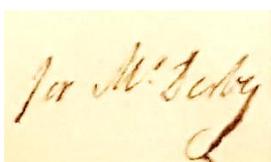
MSS 5, vol 3, 24 Dec 1793

<i>Elias H Derby's</i>	<i>Dr To Cash</i>		
<i>paid Mess<sup>rs</sup> Skillin in full for 2 Figures made for M<sup>rs</sup> Derby</i>		<i>19</i>	<i>10</i>

MSS 5, vol 3, 25 Jun 1794

look at this entry by itself you would read it as "...2 Figures made for Mr. Derby" but when you compare this entry with other entries in MSS 5, vol 3 you will see a distinct difference in the manner in which *Mr.* is written.

The following 4 images are all from the page dated 25 June 1794. The first image is from the entry for the 2 unknown figures and the *M* is clearly written. In the next 2 images the *M* is scribbled and looks more like a *W*. In the last image the *M* is rounded and resembles the lower-case *m* that is written several times on the page.



I searched volume 3 for *Mr.* written similar to the first image. The volume starts in 1790 and the *M* in *Mr.* is written similar to the first image at the beginning of the volume but the *r* in *Mr.* always resembles the letter *v*. There is no *v* in the first image. By the end of May 1792 Benjamin Pickman was scribbling *Mr.* with the *M* looking like a *W* and the *r* like a *v*. After May 1792 the scribbled *Mr.* was almost always used, occasionally the rounded *M* was used. After the end of May 1792, the *M* in the first image was no longer used when Pickman wrote *Mr.* but he did keep using this *M* when writing *Messrs.* and *Mrs.*

More important is Pickman's grammar; I observed that when Pickman made an entry into a person's account he would only use a pronoun to refer to the person. The volume is full of entries reading "received of him", "paid him", "sold him", "due from him", "paid his", "paid them", "gave them", "received of them", etc. The 2 entries recording the payments to Skillin for the Derby Farm figures (on previous page) are typical of all the entries throughout the volume. The only times that Pickman would use a surname in the entry was when a 3<sup>rd</sup> person was involved. There are entries with a 3<sup>rd</sup> person paying towards another person's account and there are entries where items or money are charged to an account but went to a 3<sup>rd</sup> person. There

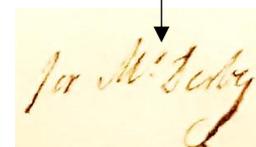
are several entries for items charged to Elias Derby's account that are noted for Mrs. Derby.

Pickman was not consistent in writing the letter *s*; there are many times where an *s* is written as a straight line.



MSS 5, vol 3, 27 Nov 1793

Note the similarity with the letter *s*.



By contrast, Pickman was very consistent writing the letter *r* in *Mr.*; the *r* always looked like a *v*. After analyzing volume 3, I read the entry recording the payment for the 2 unknown figures as "...2 Figures for Ms. Derby"; Ms. being an abbreviation for Miss. Miss Derby was, most likely, Elias Derby's daughter, Martha. Martha Derby's thirtieth birthday was December 28, 1793 and, noting that many bills were not settled for several months, the 2 unknown figures may have been a birthday gift for her.

I then went to MSS 37 and searched Derby's meticulous records for the above payments in Derby's Journals. I found the 1<sup>st</sup> payment entered on Oct 31, 1793, vol 6, pg 553. The record shows the payment charged to the Danvers Farm's account, vol 9, pg 380. On pg 380 Benjamin Pickman is reimbursed for paying the Skillin brothers. The 2<sup>nd</sup> payment is entered on April 1, 1794, vol 6, pg 573. This record also shows the payment charged to the Danvers Farm's account, vol 9, pg 380, and on pg 380 Benjamin Pickman is reimbursed for paying the Skillin brothers. The third payment, for 2 unknown figures, was a lot more difficult to trace but I was successful. This payment is entered on page 1 of a statement found in MSS 37, box 24(OS), folder 2. This statement is dated 20 June 1795 and contains all debits and credits made by Benjamin Pickman for Elias H. Derby from 1 April 1794 to 20 June 1795. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> page of the statement Pickman made an entry at Salem on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June 1795. This is the very same day that Derby paid McIntire for the summer house and the next day Derby settled with Pickman. On page 612 of volume 6 Derby recorded the charges in the appropriate accounts in his ledger books. The cost of

the 2 unknown figures was combined with other charges and was charge to either Expenses, vol 9, pg 330, or Cash, vol 9, pg 409; it is impossible to determine which account. The interesting fact is that Derby did not charge these 2 figures to the Danvers Farm. It would be extremely egregious to presume the Skillin's two unknown figures are the Milkmaid and Reaper without Derby entering the cost to the Danvers Farm's account as:

1. Vol 6, pg553, 31 Oct 1793, Derby recorded Pickman's expenses entering charges into various accounts and charged a payment for Skillin's first 4 figures to the Danvers Farm.
2. Vol 6, pg573, 1 Apr 1794, Derby recorded Pickman's expenses entering charges into various accounts and charged the final payment for Skillin's first 4 figures to the Danvers Farm.
3. Vol 6, pg609, 19 Jun 1795, Derby recorded McIntire's bill into various accounts and charged the summer house to the Danvers Farm.
4. Pickman was in Salem the same day that Derby paid McIntire for the summer house and the next day Pickman's payment for the 2 unknown figures was settled.
5. Vol 6, pg612, 31 July 1795 - Derby did not charge Skillin's 2 unknown figures to the farm. It would have been impossible for Derby to overlook this expense as the month "July" is mis-written directly above June 25<sup>th</sup> on Pickman's statement. Your eyes are immediately drawn to this error and it is impossible not to notice the charge for the 2 unknown figures.
6. While reviewing Derby's records I was astonished by many trivial entries; he charged accounts down to a 1/5 of a pence. It is hard to imagine the 2 unknown figures going to the farm and Derby not entering the £19 cost to the Danvers Farm account.
7. The MSS 5, vol 3, 25 June 1794 entry reads "...for Ms. Derby" when comparing Pickman's handwriting and grammar.

During my research of Derby's records, I reconciled every entry that Derby charged to the Farm at Danvers. I came across a few records that I feel are likely connected to the construction of the summer house.

1. Box 17, folder 9, 14 Jul 1794, Nathaniel Ward was paid £29' 3' 2 for lumber; at least £14' 13' 3 of this lumber definitely went to the farm, another £3' 2' 11 may have.

2. Vol 6, pg584, 14 Aug 1794, Nathan Pierce was paid £3' 7' 10 from the Farm account for 1256' of plank.
3. Vol 6, pg591, 21 Oct 1794, Simeon Mudge, carpenter of Danvers, was paid £40' 17' 6 from the Farm account.

I decided to take a closer look at Samuel McIntire's bill for the summer house. Samuel billed a total of £128 for the summer house. From the dates of the above records, it is likely that at least £18' 1' 1 worth of lumber was for the construction of the summer house and £40' 17' 6 was for Simeon Mudge assisting in the construction of the summer house. This is a total of £186' 18' 7 but just Samuel's £128 is a significant amount. McIntire's records show that his prices were more reasonable than his contemporaries. There is a receipt dated 26 Feb 1791 where McIntire charges £3' 12' for carving a figurehead with additional joiner's work. On McIntire's bill for the summer house he charged £3' 12' for carving the 4 vases on the roof of the summer house. These vases are a work of art in themselves. By viewing the image of the Derby Summer House (pg1) and comparing the size of the vases to the size of the figures you will see that the vases are very large and are exact replicas of each other. Realizing the amount billed for these vases and the extent of work involved, it is not unreasonable to imagine McIntire's price for the Reaper and Milkmaid to be as low as £4 each. The Reaper and Milkmaid are not mentioned on McIntire's bill but neither are the carvings of the columns, capitals and swags. The only carvings charged to the summer house are the 4 vases on the roof. These vases were carved 3 months before the start of construction of the summer house. It is probable that Derby was still deciding between the one-story and the two-story summer houses and Samuel carved the 4 vases ahead of construction as both summer houses required 4 vases. Once the construction started, Samuel provided everything shown on the plan; including the cost for carving the columns, capitals, swags and figures with the cost of building the summer house. McIntire's design shows only one figure on the roof of the summer house but it was customary for Samuel to detail only one side on a drawing when the other side was the similar. The bill for "Building of the Summer House" is not itemized and, without the cost of the other carvings being listed, there is no reason to expect the cost of the figures to be listed.

It is possible that McIntire's £128 charge for the summer house is just the labor cost as Derby was a supplier of lumber, glass and plaster; there are many entries in Derby's and Pickman's ledgers of them supplying these materials to various people. McIntire's summer house bill also lists 56 days building a hot house @ 7 shillings per day. If the £128 charge is just the labor cost, it would equal almost 366 days of work at 7 shillings per day and Simon Mudge was paid £40' 17' 6 from the Farm account; this is almost 117 days at 7 shillings per day.



**Plenty - 1793**



**Milkmaid - 1794**

I stated previously that I feel the Reaper and Milkmaid have more in common with McIntire's work than the work of the Skillin brothers. The only sculptures documented as by the Skillin's workshop are Plenty, Mercury and the figurines on the Badlam chest. All of these figures have similarities. They all have flowing attire and their heads appear to be round and spherical giving them a cherubic and angelic aura.



**Badlam Chest Figurines - 1791**

The Milkmaid and Reaper have nothing in common with the documented Skillin's figures. The heads of the Milkmaid and Reaper are not spherical and their faces are not cherubic; they do not have flowing attire and they do not convey an angelic aura. The Reaper and Milkmaid depict a country couple at work on a farm and convey an aura of actual living people.



**Reaper - 1794**



**Mercury - 1792**

All of McIntire's work, but one, are reflections of living people. McIntire's America is a fictitious image and the only piece by McIntire that resembles Skillin's work. The figure is a goddess in a flowing dress but she is neither cherubic nor angelic.



**America by McIntire  
1806/9**



**America by Skillen  
1791**

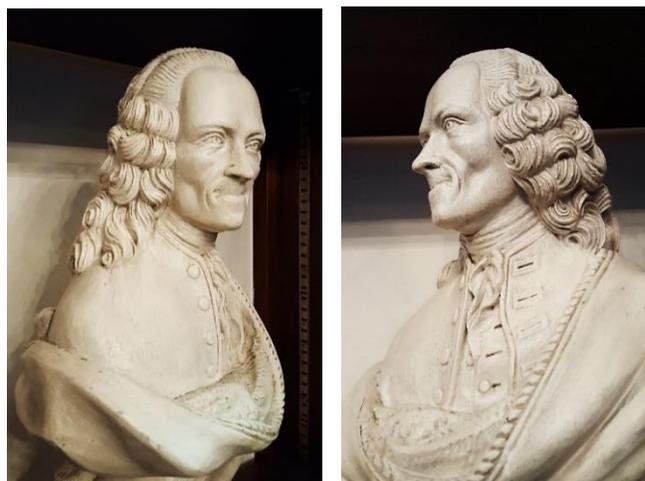
The difference in composition between McIntire and Skillin was noted by William Bentley when he entered in his diary on 8 Oct 1802, "As a Carver we place Mr.

Macintire with Skillings of Boston. In some works he has succeeded well. He cuts smoother than Skillings but he has not his genius." Skillin's genius was his ability to convey both an elegant sweetness and a heavenly atmosphere in his sculptures while McIntire's work reflects earthly qualities.

It is obvious that the Milkmaid and Reaper are drastically different from the documented Skillin's figures. The Skillin's figures have an elegance indicating a more experienced carver. Plenty, Mercury and the Badlam Chest figurines were all carved before the Milkmaid and Reaper; it is illogical that the later figures would lack the quality of the earlier figures if by the same person.

McIntire was carving large 3-dimensional figures as early as February 1791; this is documented by his bill to Captains Waters and Sinclair for a figurehead. McIntire's ability to carve the Milkmaid and Reaper in 1794 is clearly apparent when viewing the quality and expertise of his later work.

The bust of Governor Winthrop has always suffered severe criticism. I find the bust to be a miraculous achievement when you consider the image McIntire had to work from. Bentley gave McIntire a small medallion measuring  $1 \frac{11}{16}$ " X  $1 \frac{5}{16}$ " and ask him to make a bust from the image on the medallion. The bust certainly compliments the medallion while maintaining its features and proportions.



**McIntire's Voltaire - 1802**



**McIntire's Governor Winthrop - 1798**

Several pieces have been attributed to the Skillin workshop based upon the Milkmaid and Reaper being erroneously credited to them. One figure that I feel deserves more investigation is the bust of Apollo at the Cotting-Smith Assembly House in Salem. The Assembly House was extensively remodeled in 1796 by McIntire and the bust of Apollo was placed in the broken pediment of a new doorway leading to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Mrs. Lahvis saw similarities in Apollo and the Reaper but I see Apollo's face having features similar to the Milkmaid and McIntire's optical machine plaque at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.



**William Bentley's  
Gov. Winthrop Medallion  
Shown actual size  
 $1 \frac{11}{16}$ " X  $1 \frac{5}{16}$ "**



**Milkmaid - 1794**



**Apollo - 1797**



**Optical Machine Plaque  
by McIntire – 1795**



**Apollo – 1797**

The Reaper and Milkmaid share similarities with portraits of Elias Derby and his wife, Elizabeth. Elias and the Reaper share a rectangular face, thin lips and a large nose.



**Reaper**



**Elias Derby**

Elizabeth Derby and the Milkmaid share a plain face, a similar chin and smile. Perhaps McIntire was striving to portray Elias and Elizabeth as a country couple at work on the farm.



**Elizabeth Derby**



**Milkmaid**

Note: The Milkmaid's smile is more apparent in the image on the previous page.

The Derby Summer House was built in a very prominent location; all through the 19<sup>th</sup> century, everyone living within miles of the summer house would have known of it. The summer house was built in 1794 and many members of the McIntire, Derby, Crowninshield and Pickman families knew who carved the Milkmaid and Reaper. Many of these people lived through the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Just one example is Samuel McIntire's nephew, Joseph. He was almost 16 years old when the summer house was built and could have possibly assisted in its construction. In his adult years, Joseph was also a carver; he died in 1852. With many family members living through the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the identity of the Milkmaid's and Reaper's sculptor would have been well known in the area when Frank Cousins was born, 1851. There were many 1<sup>st</sup> generation descendants of these people alive during Frank Cousins' adult years. Cousins would have been 37 years old when Hannah Whittemore died. During Cousins' life he would have had contact with many people with intimate knowledge of the summer house.

In 1916 Frank Cousins expressed the conviction of previous generations in *The Wood-Carver of Salem* when he credits the Reaper to McIntire. Without any proof to the contrary, it would be unethical to question Cousins' work.

The evidence that I have presented verifies that the Milkmaid and Reaper are the original figures placed on the roof of the Derby Summer House and that these figures are not the Skillin brothers' Shepherdess and Gardener. There is no document that connects the Milkmaid and Reaper to the Skillin brothers. The payment to McIntire for the building of the summer house is the only payment that Derby charged to his farm that can account for the Milkmaid and Reaper.

For 138 years these figures were credited to Samuel McIntire. Even Fiske Kimball had credited the Reaper and Milkmaid to McIntire on page 194 of the August 1923 issue of *The Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*. Up until Mabel Swan made her appalling error, proclaiming the Shepherdess and Gardener are the summer house figures, the Milkmaid and Reaper were always credited to McIntire.

There should be no doubt that Samuel McIntire carved the Milkmaid and Reaper.

There is nothing to the contrary.

## Acknowledgements

### Front Cover

*Milkmaid* – Figure of a Milkmaid, 1794; attributed to Samuel McIntire (1757–1811); Wood, paint; Gift of Brooks Potter, 1962; Courtesy of the Peabody Essex Museum, M11428; photo obtained from Dr. Wayne Craven.

*Reaper* – Figure of a Reaper, 1794; attributed to Samuel McIntire (1757–1811); Wood, paint; Courtesy of Danvers Historical Society; photograph © Joanne Pearson/Fairhaven Photographs.

Pg 1 – *Derby Summer House* – Courtesy of Danvers Historical Society; photograph by Daderot. [Link to photo](#)

Pg 2 – *Danvers Courier “Woman Missing”* – Courtesy of Danvers Archival Center; image provided by Richard Trask.

Pg 4 – *Details of MSS 264, Plans 23 & 140* – Courtesy of Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Rowley, MA.

Pg 5 – *Details of MSS 5, volume 3* – Courtesy of Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Rowley, MA.

Pg 6 – *Details of MSS 5, volume 3* – Courtesy of Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Rowley, MA.

Pg 8 – *Plenty* – Figure of Plenty, 1793; Simeon Skillin Jr.(American, 1756–1806); Wood, paint; Gift of Anne Valliant Dort in memory of Amy Johnson Brigham, 1952; M7308 © Peabody Essex Museum; Photo by Jeffrey R. Dykes.

*Milkmaid* – Figure of a Milkmaid, 1794; attributed to Samuel McIntire (1757–1811); Wood, paint; Gift of Brooks Potter, 1962; Courtesy of the Peabody Essex Museum, M11428; photo obtained from Dr. Wayne Craven.

*Reaper* – Figure of a Reaper, 1794; attributed to Samuel McIntire (1757–1811); Wood, paint; Courtesy of Danvers Historical Society; photograph © Joanne Pearson/Fairhaven Photographs.

*Mercury* – Mercury, 1792; John & Simeon Skillin; Pine & gold paint; Courtesy of The Bostonian Society.

*Badlam Chest Figurines* – Courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery; Mabel Brady Garvan Collection.

*America by McIntire* – Courtesy of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts; The M&M Karolik Collection of 18<sup>th</sup> Century American Arts.

*America by Skillin* – Courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery; Mabel Brady Garvan Collection.

Pg 9 – *Governor Winthrop* – Courtesy of American Antiquarian Society; photograph by David McIntire. [Link to bust](#)

*Gov. Winthrop Medallion* – Courtesy of American Antiquarian Society. [Link to medallion](#)

*Voltaire* – Courtesy of American Antiquarian Society; photograph by David McIntire. [Link to bust](#)

*Milkmaid* – Figure of a Milkmaid, 1794; attributed to Samuel McIntire (1757–1811); Wood, paint; Gift of Brooks Potter, 1962; Courtesy of the Peabody Essex Museum, M11428; photograph by David McIntire.

*Apollo* – Detail from photo [Decorative molding above door on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor landing, Assembly House], Salem Streets, 138 Federal Street, Folder 89; Courtesy of Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Rowley, MA.

Pg 10 – *Optical Machine Plaque* – Courtesy of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts, Gift of S. Richard Fuller and Dudley Leavitt Pickman, Harriet Otis Cruft Fund and Charles Hitchcock Tyler Residuary Fund.

*Apollo* – Detail from photo [Decorative molding above door on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor landing, Assembly House], Salem Streets, 138 Federal Street, Folder 89; Courtesy of Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Rowley, MA.

*Reaper* – Figure of a Reaper, 1794; attributed to Samuel McIntire (1757–1811); Wood, paint; Courtesy of Danvers Historical Society; photograph © Joanne Pearson/Fairhaven Photographs.

*Elias Derby* –Portrait of Elias Hasket Derby, 1800–25; Oil on canvas; James Frothingham (1786–1864, USA); Gift of the Derby Family, 1824; Courtesy of Peabody Essex Museum, M353; Detail from photo by Mark Sexton and Jeffrey R. Dykes.

*Elizabeth Derby* – Portrait of Elizabeth Crowninshield Derby; unknown artist; Watercolor on ivory; Museum purchase, 1940; Courtesy of the Peabody Essex Museum, 124254; Detail from photo obtained from PEM.

*Milkmaid* – Figure of a Milkmaid, 1794; attributed to Samuel McIntire (1757–1811); Wood, paint; Gift of Brooks Potter, 1962; Courtesy of the Peabody Essex Museum, M11428; Detail from photo obtained from Dr. Wayne Craven.



Portrait of Samuel McIntire, about 1782; attributed to Samuel Blyth, 1744–1795; Pastel on paper; Gift of the Estate of Mr. George W. Low, 1938; Courtesy of Peabody Essex Museum, 123420; Photography by Jeffrey R. Dykes.