

Scheffey Conservation Areas: Appendix A

Chart of Deeds

Deeds of Neighbors (in separate pdf files)

1224, 35	Cowls to A+A Scheffey	1968	land just to south, now part of FLT CR
5443, 109	<i>Liz Scheffey et al CR to FLT</i>	2007	<i>land just to south, CR with building and envelopes long not printed out or on the web</i>
3058, 167	Allen C. Smith	1995	neighbor across (David M. Smith's brother) original deed 1972, 1320, 184
5808, 252	Richard Ferro et al.	2010	neighbor across just west of town line, (had been tax taking earlier)
1639, 59	Lashway to Raymonds	1980	most of present Raymond land, to west of RGT
1639, 60	A+A Scheffey to Raymonds	1980	western edge of Fitts lot to neighbors to west
1236, 190-2	Cowls to A+A Scheffey	1972	Tract 1 is Fitts 2.5, Turner 11 acres, See Scheffey to Raymond

List of Deeds of Historic Interest (Fitts and Turner families)

The Scheffey Boundary Line Story

Deeds of Historic Interest (Fitts and Turner families) in separate pdf files

159, 295	Graves to Fitts 28 acres includes more than present RGT lands <i>(not available online)</i>	1850
256, 280	Fitts to Turner 11 acres, eastern side of Fitts land = Turner lot.	1865
268, 308	L.Fitts to R.Turner sold 1 acre lot in East Village area to Turner	1867
9exec, 291	Fitts against Turner Turner to jail for debt, lands taken <i>(not available online)</i>	1868
261, 397	Turner to L.Fitts 8 acres on western section of Turner lot, 482,34 this is a mortgage	1868
482, 33-34	after Turners death to heirs of William Stetson describes land bought from Fitts, but land still mortgaged to L.Fitts	1903
497, 250	L.Fitts son acting for her to heirs of William Stetson describes mortgaged land with brother paying taxes on the land. Lucy "insane person" and brother give up rights.	1903

What I have learned about the RGT Scheffey property lines.
Mary Alice Wilson, early November 2009

Note to anyone interested in following up on this or other historic deeds: most early deeds can be found on line under “unindexed tab” (if you already know the book and page number.) Very early ones not yet in that system. It is then necessary to use the Grantor/Grantee index in the deeds office. All plan books are indexed.

1. Early stuff.

James Fitts was a collier (I assume in this case a charcoal-maker) who spent most of his waking hours buying and selling land. Most of it in Leverett’s East Village (section of Roaring Brook where it crosses Cushman Road along with a series of mills up Roaring Brook parallel to Shutesbury Road.) The reference to “collier” is in Book 76, p. 95 – hard to read page number

Full RGT piece: from Shutesbury line west.

In addition to his mill activities, James Fitts also owned land further upstream on/near Roaring Brook near the Leverett/Shutesbury line. I did not find any reference to dams or water rights in the deeds in this area. The 1850 deed (Book 159, p. 295) describes land that borders the Shutesbury town line on the east, “the center of the brook” on the north, and has a zig-zag border on the south, including the mention of the Broad land which shows on a 1902 map (Plan Book 6, second of the numerous page 6’s.) The south line in deed and plan do not match, but then the plan shows only a total of 17 acres. (The present line is not to the brook but to the road. But there is a “Fitts lot” between the road and the stream that is the south part of the Allen Smith property.)

The west section, known as the Turner lot will be discussed below.

The Fitts lot appears, at some point, to have been 6 acres on the eastern edge of the property (see the 1902 map). It is likely that it attained its present status in 1980 in a deed from Andrew and Alice Scheffey to Bertrand and Barbara Raymond (house to the west along the road. (Book 01639, p. 60) It seems to add a small portion of land to the land they had purchased that day from Ruby Lashway (Book 1639, p. 59) forming the new eastern boundary of the Raymond’s land: In conversation on Nov 1, 2009, Mr. Raymond suggested that Andy let him have the land because there were already buildings/barn on it. That deed (01369, 6) reads:

“thence easterly to a point along the westerly side of said old woods road to a point where the road makes a right angle turn to the east; then continuing in the same direction as before to an iron pin located in the southerly line of the East Leverett-Shutesbury Road. . . . Granting also the right to pass and repass, with or without vehicles over that portion of said old woods road which abuts thereinbefore described parcel of land for all purposes for which said ways are generally used.”

Some of these land are described in a plan described on p. 19 of the FLT CR deed as:

Being a portion of the premises as shown on a plan of land entitled ‘January Hills Tract, North Portion, Shutesbury and Leverett, Massachusetts, W.D. Cowls, Inc. Surveyed by William G Cove.

This is not a registered deed. Cowls did not know where their copy was, but Steve Schmidt found a copy in the assessor’s office and said it focused on the January Hills area and only included the southernmost section of the Scheffey property. So no help with the RGT land.

Rodolphus Turner first shows up in 1865 and by that time deeds did not list occupations. In that year, James Fitts and wife Mary sold him an 11-acre piece that matches at least the measurements of the eastern line of the original Fitts property. (How his 4-line box became the almost-triangular shape it is today and kept the same acreage I cannot figure out. Since the N-S line is greater now than then (432 ft vs 337 ft) it may be that some trading/re-drawing lines of land to the south happened at some point.

In April 1867, Lucy had sold Turner some land in the Still Corner (East Leverett) area for \$750 (268, 308). In November 1868 James Fitts (I don’t know how James and Lucy were related*) took Rodolphus Turner to court for failure to pay \$156.97. The execution notice orders that he be sent to jail and a committee established to appraise his lands which were to be taken by force (9exc, pp. 201-202). In December 1868, Turner mortgaged the western part of his land to Lucy Fitts with the agreement that she would be paid \$225 by July 1869 (Book 261, p. 397). Presumably she never was because in 1903, when both the Turner and Lucy Fitts rights to the land were given to the heirs of William Stetson, the mortgage is mentioned in the Turner deed (482, 33-34) and in the Fitts deed (497, 205) including reference to Lucy’s brother who had been paying the taxes on the land. (The deed was done by Lucy’s son since she is now an “insane person.”) The line between these two parts of the Turner lot is still on the assessor’s map. (The Fitts lot line has wandered off.)

2. Present status of RGT property lines

Land to the east is owned by Bertrand and Barbara Raymond. They have deeds from

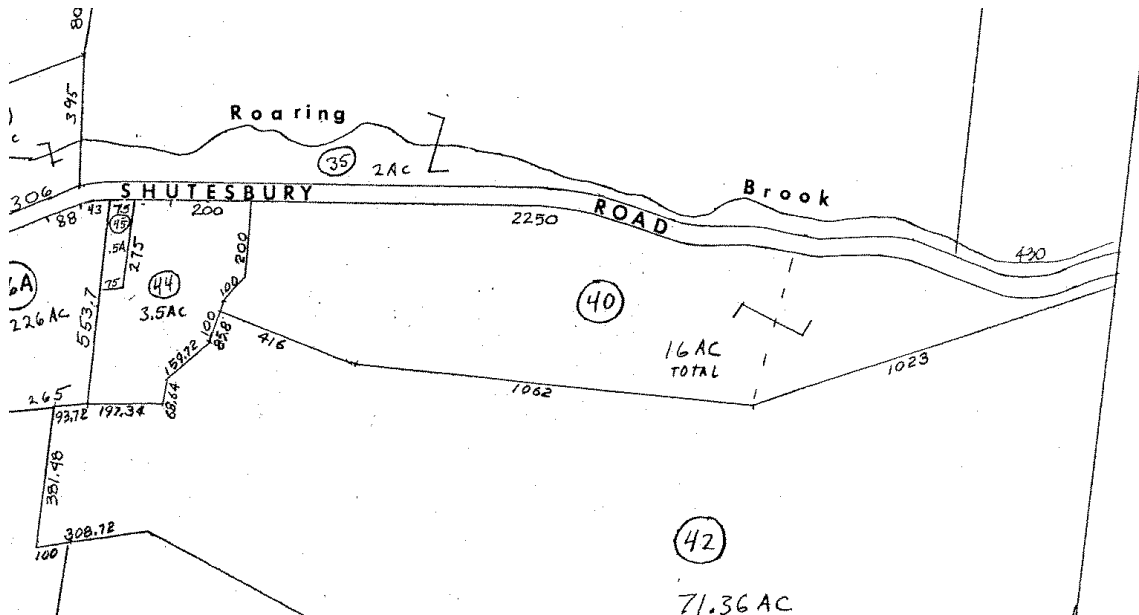
Lashway, Book 1639, p. 59 for the major piece;

Scheffey, Book 1639, p. 59 for the line next to RGT which follows the west side of the woods road north and then, when the road turns east, it continues north to the Shutesbury Rd (where in theory there is an iron pin – but there is a wooden stake which Mr. Raymond says is the corner). All “to a point” and no distances.

Land across the way is owned by Allen C. Smith, who happens to be the brother of David M. Smith (RGT CR – actually 2 CRs although the second one is to his daughters Nancy and Ellen). That land has a James Fitts 2-acre lot at the front – along Roaring Brook (surely part of the original deed which went to the brook before the road was put in), and a larger lot behind – total 63 acres.

The land across just west of the Shutesbury line with a house (for sale in November 2009) is listed as belonging to Peter Krause, but has just been taken by the town of Leverett for taxes. Presumably will be sold and taxes paid (15 acres).

Leverett Assessor’s map, excerpt from p8



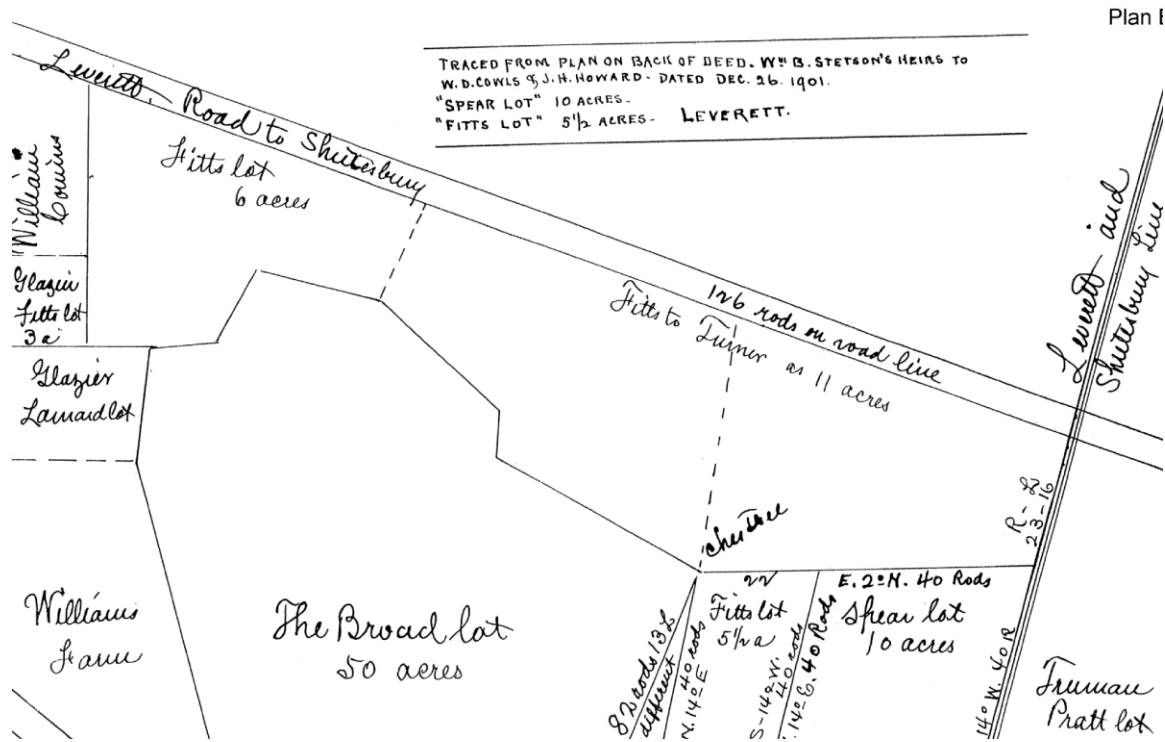
Plan Book 6, the 2nd of a number of page 6's

Plan Book 6, 2nd of a number of page 6's

Some notes: 126 rods along road match length of both parcels of Turner lot
 south line of western of two parcels (22+40 = 62 rods) matches present day measurement
 east line does not match AT ALL (much too long, assume only distance of brook)
 south line of eastern of two parcels does not match the Lucy/Turner deed description (is
 4-sided and east/west are parallel)

This map was traced from "plan on back of deed" to two lots to south (Fitts and Spear)
 i.e. not on a deed to any present RGT land.

As an aside, this is the first time I realized that Broad Hill Road referred to a owner's
 name (Parsons Broad, buried in East Leverett Cemetery) and not the shape of the
 hill.



*I confess to be fascinated by the relationship between the Fitts and Turner families. (I have gleaned some tidbits from the Leverett vital records (1862-1912)

1850, James and Mary Fitts were listed in the deed as husband and wife.

1865, Emily Fitts daughter of James and Sally died at 27 years of age (born 1838) of consumption while in Saratoga Springs (hot springs and sanatorium). Buried in Leverett. (either Sally was an earlier wife or there were two James Fitts).

1871, Ellen L. Fitts died at age 33 (born 1838). She was the daughter of Rodolphus and Sopha (I think I copied that name correctly) Turner. She is buried in Amherst.

1889, Orus B. Fitts, farmer, died age 55 (born 1834) son of James and Sally Fitts, buried in Leverett

That book did not seem to have death records of any of the James-Lucy-Rodolphus generation.