

A. Worksheet For Dr. Joseph Fiske's Household

Clue 1: Family Genealogy (some information not available from your document has been provided in brackets)

Head of Household (use entry 12-36)

Father's Name _____ Born _____ Died _____

Mother's Name _____ Born _____ Died _____

Date of their Marriage _____

How old was this couple and how long had they been married in the spring of 1775? _____

In addition to farming, what other trade or occupation did this family carry on? _____

Grandparents (Use entry 5-12)

Paternal Grandfather _____ Died [1753]

Paternal Grandmother _____ Died [1757]

Were Joseph and Hepsibah sharing their household with his parents in 1775? _____ Had Joseph received his inheritance? _____

Children

1. _____ Born _____ Died _____ Date of Marriage _____

[For Joseph Jr's. date of marriage, see entry 36-55]

2. _____ Born _____ Died [unknown] Date of Marriage _____

3. _____ Born _____ Died [unknown] Date of Marriage [unknown]

Now consider: Which of these children were likely living at home in the spring of 1775? _____

Note: This is a very small family for the time. Most important, there is only ONE surviving son, so the family does not have the financial pressure of finding farms for younger brothers. However, they lack a valuable resource: labor. Given this, who else might possibly have been living in the household in 1775? _____

Clue 2: Warning Out and Poor Records

Given the examples in this clue, what other people may have been living in the household in 1775? _____

Clue 3: Tax Assessment

In what wealth decile is Dr. Joseph Fiske? How then, does he compare to his townsmen? (remember: 1=high, 10=low) _____

Now, put it all together. Who were likely members of the Fiske Household in the Spring of 1775?

1. _____ Age _____ Position _____

2. _____ Age _____ Position _____

3. _____ Age _____ Position _____

4. _____ Age _____ Position _____

5. _____ Age _____ Position _____

Other *possible* members of the household: _____

What was the household's general financial/social position? _____

Imagine this group of people sharing their lives, work, and physical space in the spring of 1775.

B. Worksheet for Dr. Joseph Fiske's House and Household Goods

Clue 1: Inventory of Dr. Robt. Fiske: Dr. Joseph Fiske inherited his house from his father, Robert Fiske, who died in 1753. At that time, the contents of the house were inventoried.

Room type, arrangement, and use.

Go through the 1753 inventory as if you were the appraiser, walking from room to room and writing down each item as he had seen it. (Ignore the numbers; these are values of articles in pounds, shillings, and pence).

Separate the main furniture of the house into the rooms and imagine the arrangement and use of each space.

1. West Room: [bolster and counterpane are bed fittings and bed curtains]. What were the main furnishings? How do you think this space was used?

2. East Room: [the "wheels" mentioned are types of spinning wheels] What were the main furnishings? How do you think this space might have been used? What types of work were done in this room?

3. Kitchen [andirons, trammels, steelyard are fireplace fittings; a pidgen is a wooden measuring scoop; pincers and hammers were used for breaking pieces off a sugar cone; warping bars were part of a loom] What activities and household production took place in the kitchen?

4. East Chamber [a powdering tub was used for salting meat]. What appear to have been the uses of this room? What evidence is there for types of work done in the household?

5. West Chamber [bed = mattress; bedding = linens; bedstead = bedframe; cord = rope cord to bedframe] How was this room used?

6. Little Bedroom

To what use do you think this little room just off the kitchen may have been put?

7. Barn and Barnyard- Here you will find evidence of Fiske's livestock and farming tools.

a. From the livestock and tools listed here, would you say that Dr. Fiske spent the majority of his time practicing medicine or farming? _____

(continued)

b. List the livestock & compare its value to that of the household furnishings. What does that suggest?

8. Now, consider: How many rooms does this house have? How are they arranged and used? What sorts of activities are carried here? *Imagine this space and its uses in 1775.*

Clue 2: Comparison of Tableware of Robert Fiske and his son Joseph Fiske

Dr. Joseph Fiske's inventory in 1804 allows us to compare his material possessions at the time of his death with that of his father a half century earlier. What does this comparison suggest about Joseph Fiske's possible material aspirations in the spring of 1775?

C. Worksheet for Dr. Joseph Fiske's Farm

Joseph Fiske, Sr. 1771 Valuation Land Holdings

<u>Joseph Fiske, Sr.</u>		<u>Average Lexington Farmer</u>	
Tillage	_____	Tillage	5.1
Pasture	_____	Pasture	12.5
Meadow	_____	Meadow	14.7
Upland	_____	Upland	5.2
Fresh	_____	Fresh	9.5
Total Acres "Improved"*	_____	Total Acres "Improved"	32.3
Total Acres Woodlot**	_____	Woodlot	32.3
TOTAL FARM ACREAGE	_____	TOTAL FARM ACREAGE	64.6

*Improved acres are those that have been cleared of trees and turned to productive farm use.

** Woodlot was not considered "improved" land and so was not taxed. However, as a general rule of thumb, we can assume that Lexington's colonial farmers held about as much "unimproved" woodlot as the total of their other acres. (Thus, the average farmer had 32 improved acres, and likely 32 unimproved or woodlot acres).

Livestock Holdings

<u>Joseph Fiske, Sr.</u>		<u>Average Lexington Farmer</u>	
Horses	_____		1.1
Oxen	_____		1.4
Cows	_____		5.1
Goats/Sheep	_____		3
Swine	_____		2.2
Cider (barrels)	_____		2 barrels/person/yr.

How did Dr. Joseph Fiske's farm compare with the average farm in Lexington in 1771? What do you think he did to make ends meet?

Imagine this farm. How do you think it shaped daily life for the Fiske family in 1775?

D. Worksheet for Fiske Family Activity on April 19th, 1775

Clue 1: Map

1. Was the Fiske house and farm on the route that the Regulars took to Concord on April 19th? How do you think shaped the family's experience of the day's event, both for the morning battle and the afternoon return rampage of the Regulars?
2. At 1 am on April 19th, Capt. Parker sent his men to houses around the common, or to their own homes if they lived nearby, to await the beat of the drum (call to arms). What choice do you think Joseph Fiske Sr. & Jr. made, given the location of their house?
3. What do you think the Fiske family was able to hear, see, smell of the confrontation from their home?

Clue 2: Roster of Lexington's Company in Morning Engagement at the Common

According to the roster, neither Dr. Fiske, nor his 23-year-old son, participated in the battle, though the younger Fiske was a member of Capt. Parker's company and trained throughout previous fall. Why do you think they were not present at the morning battle?

Clue 3: Reports on Medical Kits

Both Joseph Fiske Sr. and Jr. were trained physicians on April 19th. What materials did they likely have on hand to treat injuries after the morning and afternoon battles?

- a. Were any of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress's medical kits available in Lexington?
- b. Given the supplies specified for those kits, what do you think the two Fiske doctors were most in need of on April 19th?
- c. Given the supplies in a typical doctor's medical chest, what supplies do you think the Fiske doctors had on hand from their own resources?
- d. What wounds did they most likely have to treat?
- e. How do you think they felt in this situation?

Clue 4: Dr. Joseph Fiske's Bill – This bill provides documentary evidence that Dr. Joseph Fiske was called upon to treat wounded British soldiers abandoned in Lexington when the rest of their company retreated to Boston.

(Continued)

D. Worksheet for Fiske Family Activity on April 19th, 1775

- a. Where and by whom were the wounded British housed? How do you think the people of Lexington felt about this responsibility?
- b. How do you imagine Dr. Fiske felt about his obligation to heal his “enemy”?
- c. Dr. Fiske traveled considerable distances outside of Lexington in course of the next few weeks to treat wounded British soldiers. Why might this have been so?

Finally, imagine the Fiske's experience on April 19th. Close enough to witness and experience the morning battle and the afternoon destruction, they were spared actual combat, and their home was not damaged by rampaging Regulars. Yet they were called into essential action as healers – both for their townsmen and their foes – in the wake of battle. How did they experience and make sense of the day? What were their challenges and struggles?