

For Immediate Release

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LANCASTER LIBRARY ANNOUNCES THE WAIT IS OVER TO ACCESS SOME OF ITS RAREST MATERIAL.

Earlier this year, THAYER MEMORIAL LIBRARY was awarded a federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant for \$30,000 from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). These funds were used to conserve and digitize more than 1400 pages of unique materials regarding the History of Lancaster.

Abijah Marvin is the author of *History of the Town of Lancaster, Massachusetts: From the First Settlement to the Present Time, 1643-1879*. There is nothing peculiar about this work and [digital copies](#) can be easily found online.

However, Thayer Memorial Library has a copy of Marvin's book interleaved, extra-illustrated, and annotated by [Henry Stedman Nourse](#). Nourse expanded Marvin's original single volume into three and added an additional supplemental volume. There is only one (1) annotated copy of this version of *History of the Town of Lancaster...* in four volumes. Together with other works annotated by Nourse, these archives form an authoritative basis the student of Lancaster history requires to piece together a historical narrative.

Nourse's expansion of Marvin's *History of the Town of Lancaster...* is unique and therefore irreplaceable. Now anyone can access this groundbreaking work via the Library's home [page](#) [thayermemoriallibrary.org/]

Thayer Memorial Library Director Joseph Mulé states, "We believe a project as big as this only happens with the help of committed stakeholders at every level of the process. The MBLC agreed with us at the Thayer Memorial Library that this was a unique opportunity to provide access to vital primary source material that can be examined and enjoyed by everyone, citizens and scholars alike".

"These grants are competitive and require serious planning, great idea development, and a strong commitment to meeting well-defined local needs," said Ruth Urell, Head of Library and Advisory at the MBLC. "The librarians are to be congratulated for their dedication to improving library services in their communities. The federal grants go a long way to opening new avenues for innovation and targeted services in Massachusetts libraries and the results are impressive and manifold."

The MBLC developed this direct grant program using federal funding to help libraries meet local community needs including financial and health literacy programs, STEM and STEAM projects, programs that help new Americans learn English and become citizens, programs that serve teen needs and projects that preserve valuable historical documents. The MBLC also offers grants to increase access to library services for people with disabilities.

In addition to the direct library grant program, the MBLC uses LSTA funds to support statewide programs and services including summer reading programs, research databases, the Commonwealth eBook program, the Commonwealth Catalog (the new virtual catalog) and mass.gov/libraries that has information and resources for residents. LSTA is administered on the federal level by the [Institute of Museum and Library Services](http://www.imls.gov) and in the Commonwealth by the MBLC. More information about LSTA can be found on Board's website at www.mass.gov/mblc.

About IMLS

[The Institute of Museum and Library Services](http://www.imls.gov) (IMLS) is celebrating its 20th Anniversary. The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the [primary source of federal support](http://www.imls.gov) for the nation's approximately 123,000 libraries and 35,000 museums. Our mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. Our grant making, policy development, and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive. To learn more, visit www.imls.gov and follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/imls), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/imls), and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/imls).

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