

# **The Gardener Book**

*“A Compendium of the History, Genealogy and Biography of the Town of Wales and its Principal Families and Individual Inhabitants”*  
By Absalom Gardner 1873

The historical document we refer to as “The Gardener Book” is a 650 page book compiled by Absalom Gardner about 1873 after consulting the historical records available to him, but primarily from interview with the Town’s oldest inhabitants at the time. Its primary feature is over 500 pages devoted to the genealogies of the families residing in Wales during its earliest days up to his present time. Along with the bare facts, he includes comments on the character of the people, their employment and the conditions under which they lived. There are also chapters devoted to the history of Wales, the various types of manufacturing that occurred in Wales, lists of the Town’s principal office-holders, and the church societies that existed, along with vignettes on the paupers and criminals of that time.

The original document was a leather bound book, with lined pages which he wrote by hand in beautiful copperplate penmanship. Each page measures 11” by 17”, the book itself is 12”by 18” by 3”. The book was photographed and reproduced on silver halide microfiche in 1983 by the Holbrook Research Institute, when Laura Foster was the Town Clerk. In 1993 the Wales Historical Commission arranged to have the Gardner Book treated, rebound and preserved by the Northeast Document Conservation Center. At that time, while the book was unbound, paper copies were made to use for reference purposes. Today those copies are available for study at the Wales Public Library and the Town Clerk’s office. In 2014 Town Clerk Leis Phinney arranged to the microfiche digitized. Now those digital files are available here for those who would like to browse the information. The documents can be purchased on USB thumb drives (at a fee of \$15.00) for those who want to do research or genealogy.