

DENNISONs in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax for Pennsylvania

My source for the following abstracts, [images of the original 1798 Direct Tax documents at Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com), comprises a multiplicity of different kinds of partially overlapping lists. Since neither the intrinsic list titles, nor the archival organization of this material, provides much in the way of guidance as to the structure of this source, I've abandoned any attempt to supply specific citations for my abstracts, which are composites drawn, for each individual person, of whatever lists I found. The best I can do by way of characterizing the scope of the source documents I abstracted is to say that I searched on the surnames "Denison", "Dennison", "Deniston", and "Deniston", and drew on every item that came up for possible data.

The lists for Allegheny, Washington, and Greene counties are jumbled together into a single archived section, and the fact that there were five DENNISON households in the 1800 USCensuses for MercerCo (created in 1800 from AlleghenyCo), yet just one non-resident DENNISON in the AlleghenyCo direct tax lists, suggests that the large sparsely settled expanse of AlleghenyCo wasn't thoroughly canvassed in 1798.

The property subject to tax was land and buildings, and there are lists that cover each separately, including valuations, as well as together; however I have abstracted only Total \$Value including all land and buildings for each individual, and only where I found such totals.

Land is specified both in square acres, and for fractional acres, in square perches (1 perch = 1 pole = 1 rod = 16.5 feet);

There are separate columns for taxable owners of houses and occupants of houses (I've parenthesized the latter), but where land is also listed on the same form, it doesn't necessarily belong to the owner of the house—at least this seems to be the case for the land of John Denniston of WestmorelandCo, who, though he owns houses of his own, is listed as an occupant of a house owned by Samuel Emitt on 425a that are evidently (from other lists) owned by Denniston.

“H” or “C” suffixed to the “# of dwellings” in the original presumably stand for "house" or "cabin", respectively.

On some lists, the type of building construction is specified (logs, wood frame, stone), and also the buildings dimensions in feet, and its #stories, #windows, and #lights. Out buildings are also listed, often with dimensions, but I've abstracted only the dimensions of barns.

{“ in the first column, when it prefixes several successive entries, means that they are adjacent on the original lists, but virtually all lists have been partially alphabetized on first letter of surname, so adjacency has limited significance as an indicator of relationship or geographic propinquity.

Name of Owner (and other Occupants, if any)	--Land-- acres+ps	Buildings----- #dwlngs(dims) type	strs/wndws/lights	Other	Total \$Value	Neighbors
PENNSYLVANIA, ALLEGHENY County, PLUM Denniston, John (non-resident)....	300				\$675	
PENNSYLVANIA, BUCKS County, BUCKINGHAM Jno & Amos Brown (And[re]w Dennison)		1				
PENNSYLVANIA, DELAWARE County, BETHELL Ellis John (W[illia]m Dennison)...	38					
PENNSYLVANIA, FRANKLIN County, ANTRIM Dennison, Andrew.....	199	1 (20x30)	stone	1.5 4 42	\$2089.5	Wm Rule
PENNSYLVANIA, FRANKLIN County, MONTGOMERY Philip Davis (Richard Dennison)...	146	1 (18x15)		log barn	\$1958	John Steinefield

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PENNSYLVANIA, HUNTINGDON County, TYRONE, FRANKLIN, & WARRIOR'S MARK (the latter two townships are at the NW tip of the county; there's no record of a TyroneTwp in Huntingdon)						
Deniston, John.....		1 (24x26) logs	1 1	6 barn (26x60) shop		
McKnight, Robert (widow Deniston).		1H (14x15)				Andrew Porter, Esq
PENNSYLVANIA, LUZERNE County, KINGSTON						
Dennison, Nathan.....	560	1 (20x35) wood	2 4	24 still house 2nd str:8 20 barn (30x40) stable	\$1763	Aron Deane, Jno Tuttle

Nathan is grouped under an "Exeter [Twp]" heading in one of about 7 lists - probably a mistake.

PENNSYLVANIA, LUZERNE County, TUNKHANNOCK?

E. Tilghman (Thomas Denison)..... 439

Name of Owner (and other Occupants, if any)	--Land-- acres+ps	Buildings----- #dwlngs(dims) type	strs/wndws/lights	Other	Total \$Value	Neighbors
PENNSYLVANIA, LUZERNE County, WYALUSING						
Denison, Sidion.....	400					
PENNSYLVANIA, LYCOMING County, PINE CREEK						
{Dennis[t]on, John.....	899	(~180+170+239+309)			\$224.79	
{Dennis[t]on, Samuel.....	255				\$ 64.9	
{Dennis[t]on, William.....	220				\$ 55	

PENNSYLVANIA, PHILADELPHIA County, BRISTOL/ROXBOROUGH (this pair appears on both lists)

John Waggoner (James Denison)..... 2 (21x14) frame

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PENNSYLVANIA, WESTMORELAND County, DERRY						
Samuel Emitt (Arch[ibal]d Denniston)	10	1 (20x20)		bark house currying shop		Wm Hamilton
Samuel Emitt (John Denniston).....	425	1H (18x20)		barn (28x54) still house		Joshua Anderson
	4	1C (20x18)		grist mill saw mill		New Alexandria
Denniston, John.....	2	1 (30x32)	log+frm 2	2 15	spring house	
Denniston, John (Wm Denniston)....		1 (30x40)	log+frm 2	3 15	stable	New Alexandria
TOTALS for John Denniston	430	2			\$3838.50	

What's puzzling here is why John (as well as Archibald) Denniston was the occupant of a house owned by Samuel Emitt, when he (John) owned two much larger houses in his own name; be that as it may, it was apparently John who owned the 425a on which the house owned by Emitt stood.

Denniston, Wm (Christian Thompson)	250	1C (18x20)				Joshua Anderson
Denniston, Wm (Joseph Thom).....	50	1H (26x20)				Wm Latimer, John Denniston
Denniston, Wm (Adam Taylor).....	130	1C (16x18)				George Shingley

It would seem, from the above, that W[illia]m Denniston lived in a house owned by John Denniston, even though he (William) owned and rented out several properties (land with dwellings) to others. Note that at least one of these properties was adjacent to at least one of the properties owned by John Denniston.

PENNSYLVANIA, WESTMORELAND County, SALEM

Alex[ande]r Denniston (Adam Dinsmore) 600 1

PENNSYLVANIA, WESTMORELAND County, WHEATFIELD

Alex[ande]r Deniston..... 440 - John Barra Jr
 Alex[ande]r Deniston (Alex^r Dumarrs) 100 1

There's a note that at least some of Alexander's land was warranted on 5Dec1803. Alexander himself may not have been resident.

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PENNSYLVANIA, WASHINGTON County, SOMERSET						
Isaac Vance (Andrew Dennison).....	350	1			\$1790	
PENNSYLVANIA, YORK County, WARRINGTON						
Denniston, James.....	261	1 (26x22) wood	2 8	90 barn(20x50) barn(16x32) joiner shop old saw mill	\$1822	Henry Miller
Denniston, James (Michael Denniston)		1 (20x18) wood	1 3	20		