

## MORE ON PURITAN PARSON

### *Gratia's Up-Date*

Though temporarily living in Russia, Gratia Mahony is still in touch with her Dunham cousins & still working hard to develop more information regarding Rev. Thomas Denham, Puritan parson & possible progenitor of a large branch of the Dunham family who are now readers of DD. In the Sept. '96 issue we ran the first of Gratia's articles; now we can present her summary of the TAG article which discusses Thomas & his family.

#### MR. THOMAS DENHAM, PURITAN PARSON

From an article published in TAG (The American Genealogist) issue of October, 1960 (Vol. 36:229-242) by George E. McCracken, Ph.D., F.A.S.G. the following is excerpted:

"Mr. Thomas Denham, a Puritan clergyman who died at Bedford, New York, probably in 1689, has suffered much at the hands of the few who have paid him any attention. . .

Contemporary records spell the name as Denham except for one occurrence of Denholme, one of Dunnun, and four of Dunham, but three of the Dunhams are in a single hand which also spelled the name thrice as Denham, . . .

As will appear, our Thomas lived in places in the present states of Maine and New York but then in Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut colonies. . . .

When Mr. Denham made his will on 2 May 1688, he devised among other items part of his estate at 'Sheep's Gutt' to his son and Daughter, Simon and Rebecca Hinckson, both of whom are sufficiently attested in Maine records, so that it is reasonable to identify this place with Sheepscoot, Maine, then in York, now in Lincoln County. Thus it is quite disappointing to find not the slightest trace of Thomas Denham or any of his family in David Quimby Cushman's History of Ancient Sheepscoot and Newcastle (Bath 1882), but this area was ravaged more than once by Indian Massacres, and its earliest records are now lost.

Help is found, however, in York Deeds, 15:613 f., which have a conveyance dated 11 Feb. 1662/3 whereby two Indians, Daniel Sagamore, and Dick Swash Sagamore, the latter acknowledging on 4 June 1664, sold land in the Sheepscoot region to William Dier, recorded 24 May 1666. The witnesses to this important deed were Thomas Denham and Walter Phillips, the latter a prominent land owner at Sheepscoot. That Thomas Denham signed first suggests the prestige of a clergyman in that period, and we can therefore be sure that it was, indeed, our Mr. Thomas Denham who so signed.

Nearly as well proved is his presence at Saco, Maine in 1659, this time surely as a minister. . . . [Province and Court Records of Maine, Portland 1931, 2:85] 'We present Robert Booth for disturbing the people and for endeavoring to disturb the Minister Mr. Dunnun In tyme of his publique exercise.' . . .

No other Maine records have been found which mention Mr. Denham but since, as we shall see, William Davie, first husband of Mr. Denham's eldest daughter Rebecca, was in the Sheepscoot area until the outbreak of King Philip's War, it is at least possible that the father-in-law remained there until the pressure of that conflict forced him to seek shelter elsewhere. . . .



PURITAN PARSON (cont'd from page 1)

The next item is supplied by the Acts of the United Commissioners 1653-1679, 2:393, where we read among the accounts reported to said Commissioners by Connecticut in 1677: 'granted Mr. Thomas Denham 10 pounds.' If Mr. Denham had some sort of claim against Connecticut, it must have been a matter of interest to other colonies as well, or it would not have been so reported. The date also makes it seem probable that the claim was for indemnity for losses suffered in King Philip's War, and our next item confirms this. Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut, 2:321, has under date of October 1677 the following: 'This Court being informed that Mr. Thomas Denham is likely to settle at Rye as minister there, who is declared to be a suitable person for that work by the ministers at Fayrefield and Standford, for his incouragement to settle there, and in regard to his late loss by the war, this Court haue granted him the sume of ten pownds to be payd out of that towne's rate this year.'

For what happened next we are chiefly indebted to Baird who seems to have examined the Rye Town Records with some care. On 15 June 1677 [Town Records, B-62] a house lot was provided for the new minister, perhaps before it was even known that Mr. Denham would settle at Rye, and this lot was later sold in 1696 by Isaac Denham, the eldest son, and his first wife Mary. This shows that the lot was not for an ordinary parsonage but an outright grant designed to attract a candidate, and Mr. Denham did accept and was admitted an inhabitant of Rye on 22 Nov. 1677. . . .

Mr. Denham's . . . ministry at Bedford began with a call dated 28 Jan. 1687/8, . . . Mr. Denham did not long serve at Bedford, for he made his will there on 2 May 1688 and the inventory was taken on 5 Aug. 1689."

It can be seen from the Will of Mr. Thomas Denham, that the surname was spelled in two different ways, thus:

- "In the first place I do give unto my sone Isaac Denham. . .
- 2ly I do give unto my sonn Nathaniell Dunham. . .
- 3ly I doe giue unto my sone Josiah Dunham. . .
- 4ly . . . to my Sonne & Daughter Simon & Rebecca Hinckson. . . in sheeps gutt. . .
- 5ly I doe give to my Daughter Sarah Palmer. . .
- 6ly I doe give to my Daughter Hannah Dunham. . .

The above cited TAG article then goes on to give information on the six children of Mr. Thomas Denham. Particularly pertinent to the purpose of this article is a line taken from the will of Isaac Denham (dated 22 Feb. 1723/4), eldest son of Mr. Thomas Denham, thus "To loving brother Nathaniel Denham £90 of Connecticut money; . . ."

The above is supplied as background information to my article WAS MR. THOMAS DENHAM, PURITAN PARSON the FATHER OF NATHANIEL DUNHAM OF WRENTHAM AND HEBRON?

QUERY

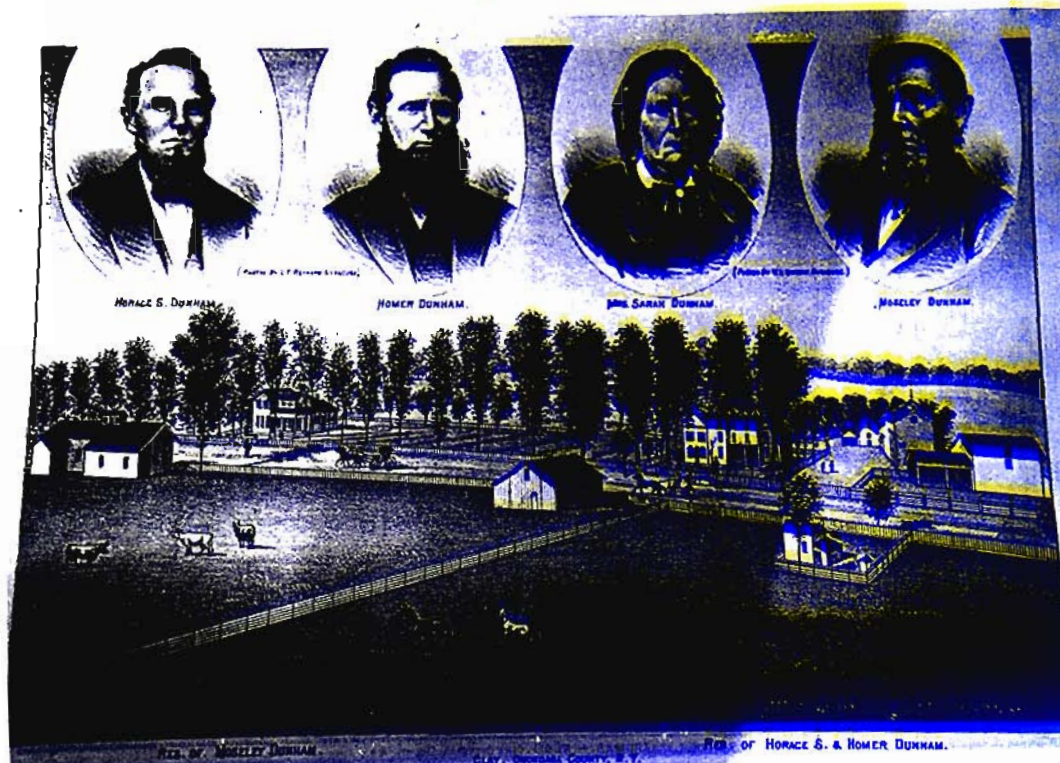
Gratia D. Mahony, c/o Jane Howington, 1344 Dana Dr., Oxford Ohio - 45056: Does anyone have information on Tim<sup>o</sup> (Timothy) Dunham listed on p. 135 of the 1790 census in Hebron, Tolland Co. Ct.? He is listed with a family of 5-1-5. Does anyone know who his children were? I believe him to be of the line of Nathaniel Dunham of Wrentham and Hebron. Further knowledge could help to place other members of that family. Also, could someone check the microfilm copy of the 1790 census to be sure that it says "Tim<sup>o</sup>" and not "Simeon".



## ONONDAGA COUNTY, NY, DUNHAMS



From Ann Eldred, Vernona, NY, come these fine pictures which evidently appeared in a history of Onondaga Co., NY. We tried to find such a book at the local library, without success. However, the library did provide a book called **ONONDAGA CENTENNIAL**, by Bruce (1896), which gave us a handle on Mosely Dunham. He was **SAMUEL** Mosely Dunham (b. 1805)(7)(Deacon John 1, Jonathan 2, Daniel 3, Daniel 4, Daniel 5, Samuel 6). Included were paragraphs about Mosely & his twin sons, shown above left. "Deacon Daniel Dunham, from Windham, CT, migrated westward in 1795 & established a clothier's trade at the old mill at Manlius. He also bought 130 acres 3 miles SE of Pompey Hill. His son, Capt. Samuel Dunham, when 17 years old was sent by his father to clear this lot of land. After working 2 years he built a log house, to which his 2 sisters came & lived with him 5 years longer. He married & left a large family, among whom was Samuel Mosely Dunham, born Sept. 17, 1805. He married at 25 years of age & during the next 5 yrs lived in the farm where "Grace Greenwood" was born, from which he then moved to the town of Clay." "DUNHAM, Horace S. & Homer, Clay, twin brothers, were born in the town of Pompey June 24, 1833. Their father (to p. 4)





ONONDAGA CO. DUNHAMS (from p. 3) was Mosely & their mother was Sarah Dunham, the former born in Pompey Sep. 17, 1805, & the latter in Hoosick, Rensselaer Co., Mar. 28, 1802. The grandfather was S. H. Dunham, who came from Vermont to Pompey & cleared a farm of 150 acres, where he settled in a log cabin. He was the father of 5 children, of whom only one survives. The family settled in the town of Clay in 1836, where our subjects now reside. The Messrs Dunham have both married twice. Horace first married Jane, daughter of William Weller, an old & respected resident of Clay, now living at the age of 93. His children by her are Walter M., Spencer M., & Albert H. He married 2nd Mary Weller, a cousin of his 1st wife & a daughter of Thomas Weller, by whom he had one daughter, Emma J. Homer married 1st Harriet Crain, & 2nd Sarah —pman, of Granby, Oswego Co. He has one daughter, Cora E., wife of M. W. Newcomb. Both families are active in church work."

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**ABOUT PAGE 5:** Don Berkebile, Mercersburg, PA, is the one who sent the interesting drawing shown here, which appeared in the Fall '94 issue of *MILITARY COLLECTOR & HISTORIAN*. (Don even went to the trouble of getting their permission for DD to use it. Wonderful!) We can't identify Capt. George Dunham in the drawing, though he is undoubtedly represented. As to identifying him in the family, our luck is no better. Our Dunham Index lists 106 George Dunhams, & the one who is recorded as being a captain was a man who belonged to a South Carolina family. Knowing the name of his wife or mother could help. Barring that information, we'll have to leave it to others to figure out who he was. Here's what the accompanying article said about Capt. George

### Captain George Dunham's Company, 2nd Massachusetts (Bailey's) Regiment, 1777-1781

OUR SCENE portrays Dunham's men marching into line to accept the surrender of the British troops on 17 October 1777.<sup>1</sup> On this "cool and clear" day," said one participant, the forests of the northern Hudson Valley had reached "the height of their autumnal splendor."<sup>2</sup> Describing their captors, one of Burgoyne's men noted that

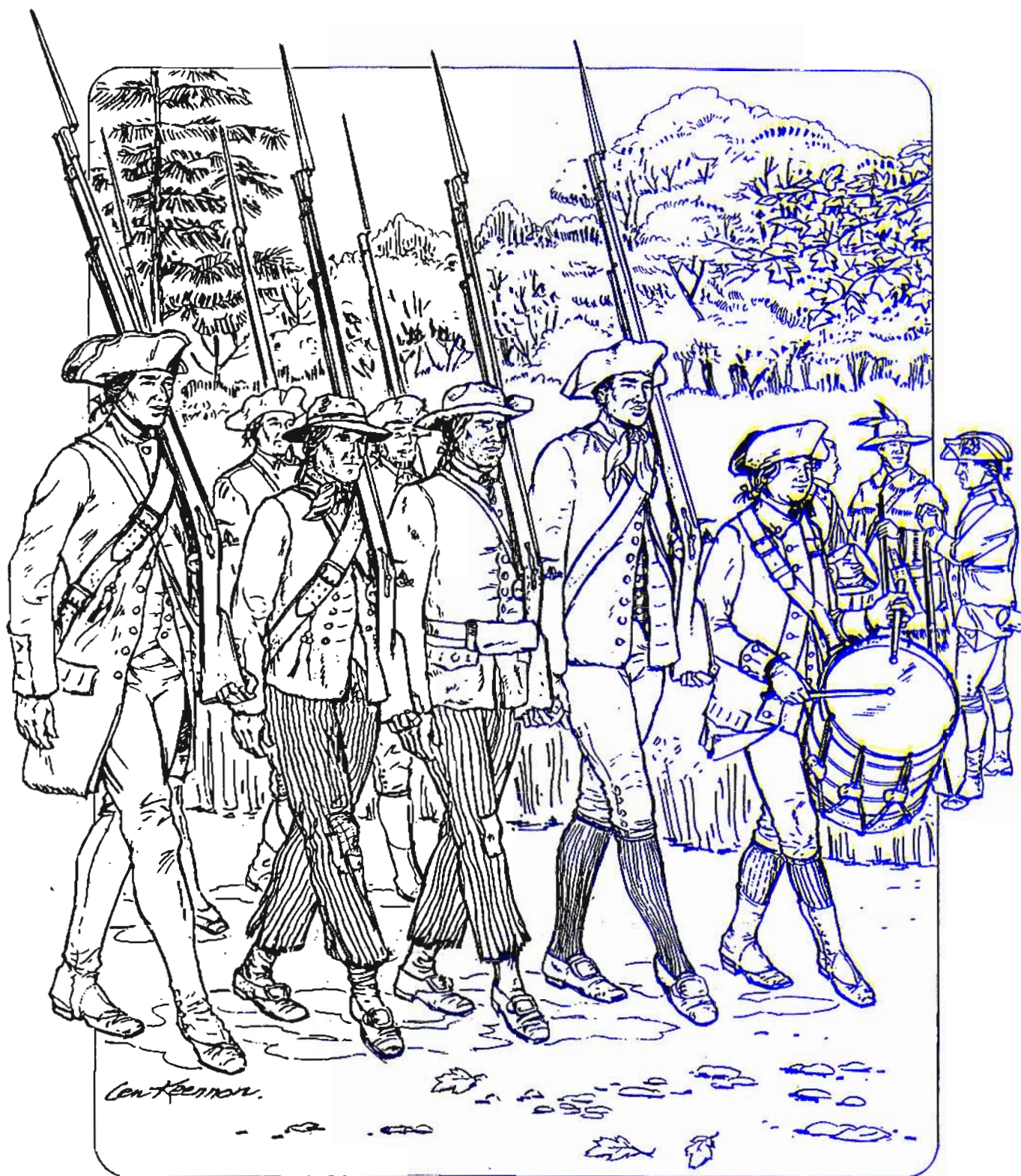
...not a man of them was regularly equipped. Each one had on the clothing he was accustomed to wear in the field, the tavern, the church and every day life. No fault could be found, however, with their military appearance, for they stood in an erect and soldierly attitude. All their muskets had bayonets attached, and their riflemen had rifles. They remained so perfectly quiet that we were utterly astonished. Not one of them made any attempt to speak to the man at his side, and all of the men who stood in the army before us were so slender, fine looking and sinewy that it was pleasant to look at them.<sup>3</sup>

The men represented here are described in the months just before Saratoga by Charles Lefferts in his classic study.<sup>4</sup> According to the sources quoted by Lefferts, one wore a "red coat and waistcoat." This is too brief a description to base a drawing upon, since it could be anything from a civilian coat to one of many British or Provincial regimentals. We have chosen to illustrate it as a typical farmer's coat from the period. A second had on a "blue short jacket, light colored waistcoat, striped flannel drawers, [and] silver shoebuckles." A third was dressed in a "brown kersey jacket, striped flannel drawers [and] brass shoebuckles," while a fourth wore a "short blue jacket, plaid waistcoat, wash-leather breeches [and] large silver shoebuckles." One of the figures in the background represents an officer of the company; a second represents a member of Morgan's Riflemen, who camped near Bailey's Regiment.

George Dunham, a "noisy, bragging, fighting character," (pension application of George Dunham, National Archives Microfilm Series #M804), but also a member of an old and respected Plymouth family, (William T. Davis, *A Genealogical Register of Plymouth Families*, Boston: 1975.) had been active in the local militia and minuteman organizations before the war and had marched off in response to the Lexington Alarm, rarely returning home until his discharge. He had been made a sergeant in Col. Theophilus Cotton's 4th Massachusetts in late 1775, during the siege of Boston. In 1776 he became a 2nd Lieutenant in Col. Jonathan Ward's 21st Continentals and took part in the Battles of Long Island and White Plains, as well as the retreat through New Jersey. Dunham and his men of 1776 crossed the Delaware River on that cold December night, helped capture the Hessians at Trenton, and fought at Princeton in January 1777 before disbanding. Most of the enlistments in 1776 had been for one year only, ending in early 1777. Gen. George Washington had successfully persuaded Congress that the army from then on had to have men with commitments longer than one year (Robert K. Wright, *The Continental Army*, Washington: 1983; Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army During the War of the Revolution, April 1775 to December 1783*, Washington: 1914.)

In the winter of 1777 Dunham raised over 100 men for Bailey's Regiment in Plymouth and the surrounding towns. Most of the men were already veterans, having served in various militia and minuteman companies, the siege of Boston, and the battles of 1776. (This is based on an examination of all entries in: Massachusetts Secretary of Commonwealth, *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War*, Boston: 1896.) Of the original enlistees, 17 had been killed, wounded or captured by the time the company left Valley Forge in June 1778. ("A List of Dead, Deserted [sic] & Prisoners in the 1st [sic] Battalion from the Massachusetts state commanded by Colonel John Bailey taken to the 1st of June 1778," National Archives Microfilm Roll M246, *Revolutionary War Rolls*, Section 40, and "A Return of Capt. George Dunham's company in the 2d Battalion of troops of the Massachusetts Bay State Commanded by John Bailey, Esq.," in the collection of the author. The latter was written between 28 December 1777 and 1 March 1778.) No statistics are available for the rest of the war, although at least one was killed and probably two wounded at Monmouth. They ranged in age from 15 to 46, with one third being 20 years old or younger, one half 22 or younger, and two thirds 24 or younger in 1777. In height they ranged from 5' 2" to 5' 10". Of the original 90, at least five were African-Americans. (This is based on an examination of all entries in *Soldiers and Sailors*, as well as National Archives Microfilm Series M881, *Compiled Service Records of Soldiers Who Served in the American Army During the Revolutionary War*, Rolls 417-420, and National Archives Microfilm Series M804, *Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files*.)





Captain George Dunham's Company  
2nd Massachusetts (Bailey's) Regiment, 1777-1781