



MERRY CHRISTMAS

A Most Mysterious Disappearance

The Dunham genealogy is literally peppered with notations that many of our early kinsmen were lost at sea. In seafaring communities like Edgartown & Chilmark, MA, this is probably not un-usual. However, we've just recently come across information about a Dunham who was presumably lost at sea under very un usual circumstances.

The source is Ivan Sanderson's 1970 *Invisible Residents*, & the story concerns Capt. John Dunham whose ship was the *Seabird*. We have no knowledge about which of the many John Dunhams this was, but the year was 1850 & the place Rhode Island. It was there that residents of Easton's Beach noted a large sailing vessel approaching the channel reefs & headed for disaster. Those who were close to the shore set up a warming hullabaloo, waving their arms & shouting in hope that the ship's crew would take heed & make a change of course. Despite all these frantic signals, they fully expected to hear a thundering crash within moments.

But the vessel did swing around, maneuvered past the reefs, & headed straight for the shore, where she came gently to rest, completely undamaged. Miraculous!

All the Rhode Island viewers of this incredible show of seamanship rushed on board to congratulate the captain, but there was no one to congratulate--no one on board. The only living presence on the *Seabird* was a dog, who sat quietly on deck.

A breakfast had been laid out for the crew. Coffee was boiling on the galley's stove. But no one was there to eat the food or drink the coffee. No one.

While the name of the ship would have been readily ascertainable, the mystified people of Easton's Beach must have consulted the ship's log to learn that the captain was John Dunham & that the ship had just come from Honduras, carrying a carload of hardwoods, pitch-pine, dye-woods & coffee, & was scheduled to arrive that very next day at Newport, her home port. Some believed that the crew, frightened by their near brush with the reefs, had jumped overboard & been drowned--but no bodies were later washed up.

The cargo was transported by wagons to Newport, but the *Seabird* remained in situ until several months later, when it disappeared as mysteriously as it had arrived. A storm had struck the coastal spot one night, & the townspeople had expected to find that the ship had (to p. 2)

DISAPPEARANCE (from p. 1) been pounded to pieces. It wasn't; it was just gone. The beach was bare.

So what happened to Capt. John Dunham? Did he pilot his ship past the reefs posthumously? Or did the dog do it?

A great deal of interest has been generated by the article on "Puzzling Persis" in the October 1998 issue of DD. Now comes a lot more information about Persis Dunham Pratt Shaw (b. 1635) (2)(Deacon John 1) from Gratia Mahony:

MORE ABOUT PERSIS

The October issue of DUNHAM DISPATCH contained an article about "Puzzling Persis", the daughter of Deacon John Dunham. The research that I am doing in preparation for my book on the Dunham Family indicates that Persis was quite an interesting lady. Persis and her second husband Jonathan Shaw were early residents of "Lakenham", the area which is now included in the Plymouth County towns of Plimpton and Carver. Other Dunham family members lived in "Lakenham" as well for Joseph Dunham (brother of Persis) resided in that area of land between the Winnetuxet River and Colchester Brook, known as Dunham's Neck. Joseph was a witness to the prenuptial agreement of his sister Persis and her second husband Jonathan Shaw in August 1683.

The Prenuptial Agreement of Deacon Jonathan Shaw and his second wife Persis Pratt, dated August 1683 is quite interesting. In part it reads "An agreement made between Jonathan Shaw Senr., Inhabitant of Lakenham in the Township of New Plymouth and Persis Pratt, Inhabitant of the same Place. . .intending of marriage. . .the aforesd Jonathan doth take her two youngest children namely Joseph and Daniel Pratt even as his owne children to bring them up & doo for them in all Respects both soul and body as if they were his owne Naturall Children. . ." Later in the Prenuptial Agreement are the lines "whatsoever household goods that sd Jonathan had of his own when they came together what of it doth Remaine at their decease shall be disposed of to his children & what doth Remaine of hers namely Percis that she brought with her shall be disposed of to her children. . ." [Reference: Plymouth County Probate, 2:18, also on FHL microfilm 0550748]

Further information about the Shaw family can be found in the following citation: "John Shaw of Plymouth Colony, Purchaser and Canal Builder" by Jonathan A. Shaw; published in The New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Volume 151 (July 1997) p 259-285, and continued in the (October 1997) issue pages 417-437.

Persis² Dunham (Deacon John¹ Dunham and his second wife Abigail Ballou) was born in 1628-9 and she died after 1701. She married first in Plymouth 29 November 1655 Benajah Pratt, son of Joshua Pratt and Bathsheba (--). He died 17 March 1682/3. Persis married second in August 1683 Jonathan Shaw, son of John Shaw. Jonathan Shaw's first wife was Phebe Watson by whom he had eight children.

The third child of Jonathan Shaw and his first wife Phebe Watson was named Jonathan Shaw, born ca. 1663. This was the Jonathan who married Mehitabel Pratt, the daughter of Persis Dunham and her first husband Benajah Pratt.

MORE ON PERSIS (from page 2)

The children of Persis² and her first husband Benajah Pratt were:

- i. Joshua,³ Pratt, b. 1656
- ii. Abigail, b. 21 November 1657
- iii. John, b. 1659
- iv. Benajah, b. 1663
- v. Joseph, b. 1664/65 (prob. d.y.)
- vi. Mehitabel, b. 1667
married 29 December 1687 (Lt.) Jonathan Shaw [Plymouth VR p. 86]
- vii. Hannah, b. 1670
- viii. Eleazer, b. 1672
- ix. Joseph, b. 1676
- x. Daniel, b. say 1680/1

Mehitabel³ Pratt (Persis² Dunham and Benajah Pratt, Deacon John¹ Dunham) was born in Plymouth in 1667 and she died in Plympton 19 October 1712 in her 45th year. She married (Lt.) Jonathan Shaw 29 December 1687. After Mehitabel³ died Jonathan Shaw married second 16 November 1715 Mary (Richards) Darling, and had one child (Rebecca, b. 25 June 1718) by her.

The children of Mehitabel³ (Pratt) Shaw and (Lt.) Jonathan Shaw were: [Ref. Plymouth VR:32]

- i. Jonathan⁴ b. 1 April 1689
- ii. Phebe, b. 10 May 1690
- iii. Persis, b. 10 March 1691/92
- iv. Mehitabel, b. 12 January 1693/94 [Plymouth Vital Records p. 32]
This was the Mehitabel who married Zachariah Weston as referred to in the October query by Allen Curtis.
- v. James, b. 3 March 1695/96
- vi. Hannah, b. 27 May 1699
- vii. Elizabeth, b. 5 May 1701
- viii. Priscilla, b. 18 August 1702
- ix. Abigail, b. 14 August 1705
- x. Samuel, b. 11 January 1706/07

From Research done by Gratia Dunham Mahony in preparation for a forthcoming Dunham Genealogy.

Many thanks to Gratia for this clarification!

NOTICE

In addition to being back to our monthly publication schedule, we can announce that readers are now **RELEASED** from their sworn oaths **NOT** to publicize **DD** to any additional Dunhams & Dunham descendants who might be interested in receiving it & **WHO WOULD BE WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE MATERIALS FOR ITS PAGES**. Recent measures have cut our **DD** mailing list down to a manageable size, so we can again invite new cousins to join in our walks through Dunham history.

Undesirable for Church Membership

From JoAnn Gwinn, Beaverton, OR, DD has some interesting data from the Westfield, NJ, Presbyterian Church records of the early 1820's. It seems that Mrs. Enoch (Sarah) Dunham was accepted for membership in this church on May 27, 1820. Then in January, 1821 it was recorded that the church elders had received some "unfavourable reports" of the Christian character of Mrs. Enoch Dunham & another member, Widow Polly Crane. Two members, Mr. Fraser & Mrs. John Dunham, were appointed to visit them & discuss the matters. This committee fulfilled its obligation in May, & in July of 1822 Mrs. Enoch Dunham appeared before the Session, & they prayed earnestly that she would become aware of her error. They agreed to defer decision on the 2 cases until the next session. Then in October, both women failed to show up. Neither did they attend the session in November, so evidently both women were removed from the membership roster.

They noted the reason for Mrs. Crane's expulsion: fornication. And what was Sarah Dunham's crime? She had "adopted the heresy of Universal Salvation."

It is difficult to place Enoch & Sarah Dunham in the larger Dunham picture, first because there is an Enoch Dunham (1814-1848) who appears to be a descendant of Thomas Dunham (1626-1688), now believed NOT to have been connected to Deacon John. Of course, this particular Enoch would have been too young to have been the husband of heretic Sarah. Enoch's mother's name was Sarah Barker Dunham (1787-1852), but his father's name is given as MOSES. However, they did live in Westfield, NJ, so perhaps there is some undiscovered but close relationship.

Thanks to Selma Blackmon, Norcross, GA, DD has this June 30, 1998 obit from *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. There is no clue as to which branch of the Dunham family it should belong.

Jean Dunham, *waitress 40 years*

By Kayce T. Atalyero
STAFF WRITER

Jean A. Dunham was "discovered" in a restaurant.

While eating at Babinelli's Pizzeria in Tucker 17 years ago with her husband, Walter, the newly transplanted New Yorker happened upon the job of her dreams.

Only it wasn't in the movies, it was at the restaurant.

"I heard the owner say that she was looking for a waitress, and I jumped up and said, 'Over here, the best waitress in the world is over here,'" her husband said.

Mrs. Dunham was a waitress for more than 40 years at restaurants including Babinelli's and the Snack-N-Shop Delicatessen in



Dunham

Atlanta, where she met celebrities like Jesse Jackson before it closed last year. She was rated one of Atlanta's best waitresses by Knife and Fork magazine.

Mrs. Dunham, 56, died in her sleep at her home on Henderson Road in Tucker on Saturday. A funeral Mass will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Atlanta, with burial in Floral Hills Memory Gardens in Tucker. Visitation will be from 6 to 9 p.m. today and Wednesday at Bill Head Funeral Home in Tucker.

Walter Dunham said his wife loved waitressing because she liked taking care of people.

"She was a no-nonsense waitress who was fast enough to wait

on 12 tables at a time, but cared enough to learn something about everyone at every table," he said. "It went beyond her waiting on them; she got to know them. She became their friend."

That attention resulted in friendships and financial rewards.

"She would get \$10 or \$20 tips all the time from people who had only ordered coffee and toast," he said.

Mrs. Dunham was also a doll collector, flower arranger, seamstress and avid gardener. Her home, with its doll-lined walls, bouquets, manicured lawn and handmade curtains, is a testament to her talents, her husband said.

"She could do everything. She was the best cook, the best waitress, the best wife," he said.

In addition to her husband, Mrs. Dunham is survived by three children, Kenneth Dunham and Kathleen Aderhold of Lawrenceville and Deborah Dunham of Chicago; two brothers, Charles Maxwell of Long Island, N.Y., and Billy Maxwell of Orlando; and four grandchildren.

EARLY MICHIGAN LAND RECORDS (Cont'd from Oct. '98 DD)

SNDX	NAME	ACRES	SIGN. DATE	LAND OFFICE	ACCESS
#	IMAGE #	AUTH COD	-ACT/TREATY	STATUTORY REF	-ENTRY CLASSIFICATION
>D550	DUNHAM, LEVI H	160.00	Dec 30 1878	REED CITY	
MI3040	.406 00001179	251101	May 20 1862	12 Stat. 392	Homestead Entry Orig.
>D550	DUNHAM, LEWIS C	156.66	Nov 01 1869	TRAVERSE CITY	
MI2470	.156 00016183	251101	May 20 1862	12 Stat. 392	Homestead Entry Orig.
>D550	DUNHAM, LORENZO A	80.00	Dec 01 1835	BRONSON	
MI0580	.431 00003081	272002	Apr 24 1820	3 Stat. 566	Sale-Cash Entries
>D550	DUNHAM, LUTHER S	160.00	Apr 05 1878	TRAVERSE CITY	
MI2520	.459 00021359	251101	May 20 1862	12 Stat. 392	Homestead Entry Orig.
>D550	DUNHAM, MARY J	160.00	May 10 1884	REED CITY	
MI3080	.246 00002370	251101	May 20 1862	12 Stat. 392	Homestead Entry Orig.
>D550	DUNHAM, MOSELY	80.00	Mar 20 1837	MONROE	
MI0490	.065 00016316	272002	Apr 24 1820	3 Stat. 566	Sale-Cash Entries
>D550	DUNHAM, N	40.00	Jun 01 1866	EAST SAGINAW	
MI1840	.420 00006708	272002	Apr 24 1820	3 Stat. 566	Sale-Cash Entries
>D550	DUNHAM, N	40.00	Jan 10 1868	EAST SAGINAW	
MI1850	.221 00007439	272002	Apr 24 1820	3 Stat. 566	Sale-Cash Entries
>D550	DUNHAM, NATHANIEL	40.00	Oct 01 1860	EAST SAGINAW	
MI1820	.338 00004158	272002	Apr 24 1820	3 Stat. 566	Sale-Cash Entries
>D550	DUNHAM, NATHANIEL	40.00	Jun 01 1866	EAST SAGINAW	
MI1840	.449 00006696	272002	Apr 24 1820	3 Stat. 566	Sale-Cash Entries
>D550	DUNHAM, NATHANIEL	40.28	Sep 21 1868	EAST SAGINAW	
MI1850	.333 00007470	272002	Apr 24 1820	3 Stat. 566	Sale-Cash Entries
>D550	DUNHAM, NELSON H	160.00	Nov 01 1869	TRAVERSE CITY	
MI2470	.309 00016675	251101	May 20 1862	12 Stat. 392	Homestead Entry Orig.
>D550	DUNHAM, ORSON D	40.00	Oct 10 1839	IONIA	
MI2620	.036 00000909	272002	Apr 24 1820	3 Stat. 566	Sale-Cash Entries
>D550	DUNHAM, OSCAR	160.00	Nov 20 1880	REED CITY	
MI3060	.154 00002664	251101	May 20 1862	12 Stat. 392	Homestead Entry Orig.
>D550	DUNHAM, PHILEMON	160.00	Oct 20 1875	TRAVERSE CITY	
MI2510	.207 00018488	251101	May 20 1862	12 Stat. 392	Homestead Entry Orig.
>D550	DUNHAM, RUFUS	39.39	Dec 01 1851	SAULT STE. MARIE	
MI1960	.404 00013060	272002	Apr 24 1820	3 Stat. 566	Sale-Cash Entries
>D550	DUNHAM, SALATHIEL R	80.00	Apr 05 1878	TRAVERSE CITY	
MI2520	.447 00021370	251101	May 20 1862	12 Stat. 392	Homestead Entry Orig.
>D550	DUNHAM, SALMON	80.00	Jan 05 1876	IONIA	
MI3030	.108 00000165	251101	May 20 1862	12 Stat. 392	Homestead Entry Orig.
>D550	DUNHAM, SAMUEL	40.00	Apr 10 1837	DETROIT	
MI0310	.291 00007637	272002	Apr 24 1820	3 Stat. 566	Sale-Cash Entries
>D550	DUNHAM, SARAH	53.50	May 01 1837	DETROIT	
MI0640	.470 00005120	272002	Apr 24 1820	3 Stat. 566	Sale-Cash Entries

(To be continued)