

Dunham Singletary

FAMILY CONNECTIONS

Issue 1

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President's Letter

I hope you all had a wonderful holiday spending time with family and loved ones. My best wishes to all of you and your families.

As we enter the new year, we need to focus on maintaining, and growing, our membership. At last check, we had just over 40 members who had renewed their membership. We need to have 60-70 to be "healthy". Please take the time to renew your membership. The benefits include the DNA testing program, the newsletter and access to our professional genealogist Gratia Dunham Mahony.

You can renew your membership on our website here:

http://www.dunham-singletary.org/mw/index.php/Membership_Renewal

If you have already renewed, my deepest thanks. And if there is someone in your family circle who might be interested in our family history, please encourage them to join us.

New members can join us here:

http://www.dunham-singletary.org/mw/index.php/Membership_Application

We continue as an organization due to the support and dedication of each individual member of Dunham-Singletary Family Connections. My thanks to you all.

Jeffrey M. Dunham, President

Editor's Corner

Please enjoy the three articles in this first issue of 2017. The first is the result of a newspaper clipping sent to me by a DSFC member. Next is an article about George Comley Dunham of St. John's, New Brunswick, Canada. And lastly, is an intriguing place that I have wanted to visit ever since we moved to Huntsville, Alabama six years ago. The site is Belle Meade Plantation in Nashville, Tennessee. I finally got there last fall and took a photo of the "Dunham" Dog-trot cabin.

Gratia Dunham Mahony, Editor

A Fiddler in the Family

By Gratia Dunham Mahony

A house fire destroyed the prize fiddles belonging to “Grandpa Mellie” Dunham. Grandpa Mellie and his wife escaped from their burning farmhouse together with their three grand children in the early morning hours of March 21, 1930. As he left the blazing structure Grandpa Mellie picked up a cherished letter sent to him by Henry Ford, and a gold key given him by the city of Boston. The fire consumed his century-old farmhouse on Crockett’s Ridge in Norway Maine including all of Grandpa Mellie’s prized “fiddles” and other cherished possessions.

Alanson Mellen⁹ Dunham, Jr. was born in Norway, Oxford County, Maine on 27 July 1853 and died in Lewiston, Androscoggin, Maine 27 September 1931. He was the son of Alanson Mellen⁸ and Christiana (Bent) Dunham. Alanson Mellen Dunham, Jr., called “Mellie”, married Emma Frances Richardson in 1876. They had one daughter, Ethna Pearl Dunham (1878-1918). The grandparents of “Mellie” Dunham were Eleazer⁷ and Jane (Bryant) Dunham who had moved from Plympton, Massachusetts to Paris, Maine about 1800. The three brothers, Benjamin⁷, Eleazer⁷ and Joseph⁷ had walked from Carver to South Leeds, Maine, and all had settled in the area near the Androscoggin River.

Eleazer⁷ Dunham (Israel⁶ Silvanus⁵ Israel⁴ Eleazer³ Joseph² John¹) born about 1772,^[1] died in Snow’s Falls, Paris Township, Oxford County Maine age 88 years (so he died after 15 June 1860 when he appeared on the census living with his son Asa T. Dunham). He married (intent) 30 June 1792 **Jane Bryant** of Middleboro. She was daughter of Joseph and Zilpha (Sampson) Bryant of Plympton.

Invited to Play the Fiddle by Henry Ford

Mellie Dunham was a farmer and also a snowshoe maker. He made the snowshoes that were used on the 1908-1909 Admiral Peary Arctic expedition.



Mellie Dunham of Norway is shown in his shop making his famous snowshoes. Explorer Robert Peary used Dunham snowshoes on his arctic explorations. *Photo courtesy of the Maine Historical Society.*

In 1925, shortly after Mellie and Gram celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary, Mellie Dunham was encouraged to enter a fiddling contest. The event, the Pageant of Progress, was held Oct. 13, 1925 at the Lewiston Armory. Audience applause determined the winner and Mellie Dunham was easily the favorite.

Emboldened by this success, Dunham wrote to Henry Ford who was putting a great deal of energy and interest into reviving the traditional music and dance of his youth. On November 11, Ford wrote back, inviting Mellie and Gram Dunham to perform in Dearborn, Michigan, for Ford's Early American Dance Theater.



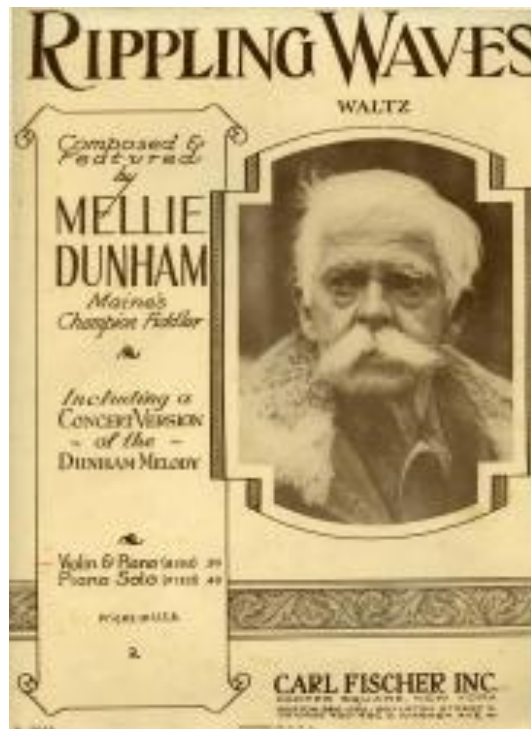
Mellie Dunham and Henry Ford, Dearborn, Michigan, 1925

(photo courtesy of Norway Historical Society)

Back in Norway, Freeland Howe had contacted Harry Jordan, manager of Keith's Theatre in Philadelphia, who was originally from South Paris. The Keith-Albee organization was an enormous theatrical empire with control over 450 theaters and booking control over 775 theaters. Keith's signed the Dunhams for a tour and agreed to develop, manage, and present an act that would open in Boston on December 21. From Boston, they went to the Hippodrome in New York City, and on to 19 cities in 10 states over the next four months ending in Portland on May 17.

Mellie Dunham composed a waltz, "Rippling Waves," that became his most famous tune.

An image of Dunham, labeled "Maine's Champion Fiddler," is on the cover of the sheet music.



'Rippling Waves Waltz' by Mellie Dunham, 1926

(photo courtesy Norway Historical Society
and Maine Memory Network)

After World War I, when the cities and industry were expanding, bringing economic and social change, there was an interest in trying to balance change and traditional elements.

The Dunhams were popular everywhere they traveled as they represented the charm and appeal of old values and the rural way of life.

George Comley Dunham of St. John's, New Brunswick, Canada

By Gratia Dunham Mahony

A Grand Army of the Republic Business Card was recently offered for sale on the *JustaJoy.com Family Heirloom Exchange* web site. www.justajoy.com is the web address of a subscription-based online family heirloom exchange that matches antique dealers with members interested in recovering their family's items. The exchange is maintained by Joy Shivar. I have located Dunham items on this site before and enjoy trying to connect the item with the family to which it belonged.



This business card belonged to George C. Dunham who lived in Cincinnati, Ohio. George was a member of the George H. Thomas Post No. 13. During the Civil War George served in Co. I of the 61st Mass. He was listed as a 23 year old carriage maker at the time of his enlistment on 20 January, 1865.

Civil War Draft Registration Records, 1863-1865 give his residence at enlistment as Fall River, Massachusetts, but his place of birth is shown as New Brunswick, Canada. The 1870 census for Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio shows him as a single man living with others probably in a boarding house. Find-a-Grave web site shows George C. Dunham, b. Oct. 17, 1841 in Canada; d. 31 January, 1918 in Cincinnati. He is buried in Spring Grove Cemetery, which is a lovely, and very large, garden cemetery with good interment records. Burial records give his parents as William and Ann Dunham. His wife was Mary E. (Jackson) Dunham (1861-1923), and she is also buried at Spring Grove Cemetery. They share the same headstone. Their son, James Dunham (1883-1940) is also buried in Spring Grove.

Turning to the Ancestry.com web site I found an entry for George Comley Dunham, b. 17 October 1841 at St. John's, New Brunswick, Canada. George married Mary Ellen "Minnie" Jackson 30 June, 1880 in Montgomery, Ohio. She was daughter of William and Anne B. Jackson.

A number of years ago I did work on the United Empire Loyalist Dunham family who left New Jersey after the Revolutionary War and went to St. John's, New Brunswick, Canada. So, I did a search of that line and actually found a George Comley Dunham living in St. John's. BUT this man was born in 1820; died in 1876 and had a wife named Phoebe Thomson McClellan who he married 11 November 1846. This man had an older brother named William Dunham who was born about 1815, and married Ann Harding.

Piecing together what I had found so far, I believe that the William Dunham and Ann (Harding) were the parents of the George Comley Dunham born 17 October 1841, and probably named in honor of William's younger brother also named George Comley Dunham.

Dunham Line in St. John's

Several articles have been written in this newsletter about the Woodbridge, New Jersey Dunham family who went to St. John's in 1784 following the Revolutionary War.

David Alston⁶ **Dunham** (Daniel⁵, Joseph⁴ David³ Dunham, Jonathan² Singletary/alias Dunham, Richard¹ Singletary) born in Woodbridge, Middlesex County New Jersey say 1762; died in St. John, New Brunswick, Canada 13 March 1845. He married in 1795 **Mary Ann Cathline**, daughter of Philip Cathline. She was born say 1775 in Pennsylvania. She died 3 October 1851 in (Carleton) St. John, New Brunswick Canada. (at the home of her son George C. Dunham. Info from the New Brunswick Courier issue 4 October 1851). Both are buried in the Church of England Cemetery. Philip Keithland/Cathline (c.1747-1820) arrived

with the Loyalists at the mouth of the St. John River in 1783, (now St. John, N.B.) along with his wife, son, daughter and 2 children under 10 years old.

The children of David Alston ⁶ and Mary Ann (Cathline) Dunham were:

- i. **Joseph O. Dunham** b. 1796, Lancaster, (St. John) NB.
- ii. **Samuel H. Dunham** b. 5 Sept. 1798.
- iii. **Catharine Dunham** b. 16 June 1800.
- iv. **Ann Dunham** b. 1804, St. John, NB.
- v. **Eliza Dunham** b. 1806, St. John, NB, CAN
- vi. **John Dunham** b. 1807.
- vii. **Elizabeth Dunham** b. 1808, St. John, NB, CAN
- viii. **David Dunham** b. 1812, St. John, NB, CAN
- ix. **William C. Dunham** b. 1815, St. John, NB, CAN
- x. **George Comley Dunham** b. 12 Jan. 1820, St. John, NB

Daniel ⁵ **Dunham** (Joseph ⁴ David ³ Dunham, Jonathan ² Singletary/alias Dunham, Richard ¹ Singletary) born in Woodbridge, Middlesex County New Jersey in 1730, died in St. John, New Brunswick, Canada before 1821, and possibly as early as 1804. He married **Catherine Campbell**, daughter of Joseph and Martha (--) Campbell. She was born 17 December 1734.

Daniel was a Tory (United Empire Loyalist) and went to Canada in 1784. From the book "Early Loyalist St. John" by D. G. Bell, he lists the families as on arrival; family as of May 1784; and family as of June 1784. Daniel, "*Neptune*", 1 adult male, 1 adult female, 3 children over 10 yrs. 2 children under 10 yrs.

The known sons of Daniel who came to Canada (Seth, Lewis, John, and **David Alston**) are listed separately by D. G. Bell in "Early Loyalist Saint John".

From Myers, Patty Barthell Ancestors and Descendants of Lewis Ross Freeman with related families, pub. 1995, p. 566; "On 21 Dec. 1821 the city lot Parrtown 687 of "Daniel Dunham, deceased" was sold by his "heirs at law" – John Dunham and his wife Elizabeth, David Alston Dunham and his wife Mary, and Jonathan Dunham and his wife Elizabeth, to James Hendricks."

Children of Daniel ⁵ and Catherine (Campbell) Dunham: born in Woodbridge NJ

(All children except Campbell ⁶ were U. E. Loyalists and went to New Brunswick Canada)

- i. **Seth ⁶ Dunham** b. say 1751
- ii. **Lewis ⁶ Dunham** b. say 1754, baptized in 1758
- iii **John ⁶ Dunham** christened 2 September 1759, St. John Episcopal Church
Elizabeth, Union Co. NJ
- iv. **Sarah ⁶ Dunham** b. say 1757, baptized 1758
- v. **Campbell ⁶ Dunham** b. say 1759 (remained in NJ)
- vi. **David Alston ⁶ Dunham** b. say 1762
- vii. **Jonathan ⁶ Dunham** christened 18 September 1768, St. John Episcopal Church Elizabeth, Union Co. NJ

The father of Daniel ⁵ was probably Joseph ⁴ Dunham, son of David ³ and Mary (Ilsley) Dunham.

Joseph ⁴ Dunham (David ³ Dunham, Jonathan ² Singletary/alias Dunham, Richard ¹ Singletary) born in Woodbridge, Middlesex County New Jersey 7 October 1700, died in Woodbridge New Jersey December 1771. His will was dated 30 October 1750, and proved 27 December 1771 [NJ Arch. 34:147].

“1759, Oct. 20. Donham, Joseph, of Woodbridge, Middlesex Co.; will of. Wife to have the use of land. **Son, Daniel, 1/6 of my lands**, joining the ½ acre where he lives. Rest of estate to be sold. Daughter, Sarah, a prayer book. Youngest daughters, Abigail and Phebe, £25. Youngest sons, James, Joseph, Elisha, Moses and Jonathan, rest of my money. Wife to bring up my young children. Executors--friend, Ebenezer Foster, and sons, Joseph and Elisha. Witnesses--Jonathan Cambell, Amos Donham, Nathaniel Fitz Randolph. (Note, witness Amos Donham was Joseph’s nephew, son of his brother David and Mary (Freeman) Dunham, Jr.)

David ³ Dunham (Jonathan ² Singletary/alias Dunham, Richard ¹ Singletary) born in Woodbridge Middlesex County New Jersey 10 March 1673/4, ^[1] died in Woodbridge New Jersey in 1750-1757.^[2] David married in New York City 16 or 18 August 1699 **Mary Ilslee/Ilsley**, ^[3] daughter of John ² Ilsley (William ¹ Ilsley). She was born in Woodbridge New Jersey 13 April 1680.

Please see web site www.Dunham-Singletary.org for information on the earlier generations of this family.

The “Dog Trot” Cabin at Dunham’s Station, Tennessee

by Gratia Dunham Mahony

A long time ago I did some research on the Dunham family who were members of the Donelson party that went to Fort Nashborough/Nashville, Tennessee. There were two men named John Dunham who signed the Cumberland Compact on May 13, 1780. This document was a self-governing agreement signed by the settlers when they arrived at Fort Nashborough. The two Dunham men were probably father and son, and thus they were John ² and his son John ³ Dunham. The first Dunham of this line was Joseph ¹ Dunham born about 1705, and who was in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia in 1729.

Children of Joseph ¹ Dunham:

2. i. JOSEPH ² DUNHAM, b. say 1725-27
3. ii. JOHN ² DUNHAM, b. say 1732
4. iii. DANIEL ² DUNHAM, b. say 1735

3. JOHN ² DUNHAM (Joseph ¹ Dunham) born say 1732; died near present day Nashville, Tennessee 20 January 1789. He was killed by Creek Indians while in his cornfield near Richland Creek. He married a woman known only as **JANE or JENNY**.

John ² Dunham was elected Ensign at Freeland’s Station. John ² Dunham is listed in the North Carolina Preemption Act of 1784 as one of the settlers on the Cumberland River in 1780 who stayed and defended the settlements. For this service he was entitled to 640 acres of land. From Davidson County, Tennessee Land Grant No. 77, dated 17 April 1786, is written: “granted unto John Dunham six hundred and forty acres land in Davidson county...near the East fork of Richland Creek...”

4. DANIEL ² DUNHAM (Joseph ¹ Dunham) born say 1735; killed by Indians near Nashville before 3 July 1787. He married **SARAH** (unknown). She married second before 14 April 1794 Joseph Hopkins. On 14 April 1794 Joseph Hopkins was named guardian of Polly, Daniel and Rebecca, orphan heirs of Daniel Dunham deceased.

On 8 May 1784 Daniel ² Dunham was issued a land grant by the state of North Carolina for a square mile of land on the waters of Richland Creek, the tract being bordered by James Thompson, Isaac Johnson, William Fletcher and Samuel Martin. On his preemption Daniel Dunham built a log fort. Known as *Dunham's Station*, it was located west of Johnson and Joslin's Fort and is on the present site of Belle Meade Mansion. [This is located on Rt. 70S south west of Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee just north of Richland Creek]

From Hoobler, James A., *A Guide to Historic Nashville Tennessee*, p. 20, in reference to the Dunham Cabin at 5015 Harding Pike; "The Dunham and Harding Cabin at Belle Meade Mansion is a double crib log cabin. Half of it might date to around 1784. One of the last Indian raids in the settlements took place here in 1792. Daniel and John Dunham had settled on the banks of Richland Creek in 1784, and built a log fortification known as Dunham's Station. Daniel and two of his sons were killed in an Indian raid in 1787 on Richland Creek. John Dunham was killed in 1790. . .The Dunhams lived in their cabin until 1807, when they sold it to John Harding. A second log cabin was built near the Dunham cabin, and the two were joined by a common roof. This is known as a dogtrot cabin. The common open area between the two cabins was a cool place to work from in warm weather, (and of course dogs would find it to be a comfortable place to sleep as well.)"



In November 2016 I visited Belle Meade Plantation near Nashville, Tennessee and took a photo of the Dunham-Harding log cabin. It has been restored to the period when John Harding lived here.

Research done in April 2015 indicates that the current structure may have been built on the site of the original Dunham cabin. From "Site Documentation and History for Harding Cabin-Belle Meade Plantation, Nashville Tennessee – April 2015":

"Daniel Dunham received a 640 acre preemption grant from the state of North Carolina in 1786, and this grant included the site of the cabin. Dunham first arrived in Davidson County in 1780 as part of John Donelson's settlement party. Once he received the property on Richland Creek, Dunham built a small station, possibly where the cabin is now located. American Indians allegedly killed Dunham on his property in 1789, and later burned the cabin, known as Dunham's Station, in 1792. Daniel Dunham's son, Daniel A. Dunham, rebuilt a cabin in 1792. Historians for years believed that the Harding cabin was very possibly the cabin Dunham built in 1792. Herschel Gower stated, "This is the double log cabin, with its connecting dog-trot, which presently stands at the edge of the Belle Meade lawn and symbolizes the early era of the hardpressed but valiant Dunhams." However, dendrochronological testing conducted in 2014 indicates that the cabin was built as two separate pens, from logs cut in the spring/summer of 1807, and joined together at a later date. Between 1795 and 1800, Dunham's Station was operated by Colonel Benjamin Joslin. Archaeological research at the site in 1982 gave a beginning occupation date for the site as 1789, suggesting that Harding built his cabin at the same site as the cabin built by the Dunham family. It is not clear what happened to the 1792 Dunham cabin."