

STORIES OF DUNHAM'S ISLAND

THE DUNHAMS AND DUNHAM'S ISLAND

Descendants of the pioneer Dunham family in Upstate New York can point with pride at the island in Oneida Lake, off Upper South Bay, that remains as a monument to their ancestors. The island, lying near Frenchmen's Island, contains 18 8/10ths acres. In 1930, the discovery of a grave on the island, gave it a touch of romantic mystery that was quickly dispelled. Unfortunately for the folklorist there seems to have been nothing unusual in the early settlement of the island. As far as known there was no run-away French couple living in a Garden of Eden as there was on Frenchmen's Island.

On April 20, 1815, the State granted lands to Peter Smith, the father of Gerrit Smith, and founder of Peterboro, in Oneida County that included "also all that certain island being the eastern most of two islands lying in the western part of Oneida Lake, containing 18 8/10 acres." This is believed the first conveyance of the island to an individual.

On November 9, 1838, Hazael Dunham of Hutton, and later, a hotel proprietor in Utica, purchased the island. Hazael, who is known as the "founder" of the family, was born in Colchester, Conn. The name of his beloved birthplace was also given to a tiny settlement near Hamilton in Madison County. He and his wife, Abigail resided on the old Harry Thompson farm, some one and a half miles north of Hamilton Center.

The couple had several children, Abigail, Larman, better known as "Lar," Warren, Valentine, Alpha and Betsey.

The late Frank Sherman of Hamilton Center kept a brief biographical record of the Dunham family. His papers give the following facts on the Dunham children: "Betsey, who married Leonard Hoadley, was burned to death in 1885. Lar was the cornet player at Earlville. Alpha Dunham of Hamilton Center had 14 children. Abigail married a Conger, judge of Utica."

Valentine Dunham, one of the sons, who was born in 1816, in the Town of Hamilton, married Ambrosia Williams. She died about 94 years ago and was buried on Dunham's Island, where she and her husband resided. Valentine later married Louisa Dolesbach on April 15, 1858.

An adopted daughter of Leonard Hoadley, husband of Betsey Dunham, also died, but she was buried on nearby Frenchmen's Island, when the Hoadley's had possession of that island between 1836 and 1854. When Hoadley moved to the mainland at South Bay, the body of the child was disinterred and removed from the island.

It was undoubtedly these two deaths that caused the confusion that grew into the mystery of the grave on Dunham's Island.

As a young man, Valentine Dunham sailed in ships both on the ocean as well as the inland waters, and earned the title of "captain." After

he settled at South Bay, he started the business of furnishing boats for fishermen and excursions in 1855. On January 1, 1859, he became owner of Dunham's Island. Its title was transferred several times from its ownership by his father Hazael Dunham.

Captain Dunham leased the island to William Teal on May 15, 1862, for a term of six years, with the right to purchase it during that time. Teal apparently lost interest in the island, for on May 1, 1868, Dunham sold his island to James M. Cutler of Cambridgeport, Massachusetts for \$625.

In later years both Dunham and Frenchmen's Islands became the property of the Syracuse and South Bay Electric Railroad Co. and in deeds filed on Sept. 2, 1925, were conveyed to the H. T. Hughes Co., Inc. of Rochester, for \$22,500. It might be noted that in 1836, Frenchmen's Island sold for \$1,000, and Dunham's Island was bought for \$181.84 in 1838 by Hazael Dunham.

Capt. Valentine Dunham died in 1898, and his son, William Dunham, inherited the South Bay property and the boat business until 1903. He died in 1918.

Lar Dunham had a son, Hazael Dunham, named after his grandfather, and two daughters, the late Mrs. Francis D. VanSlyke and Mrs. Jane A. Baker, both of Syracuse. The younger Hazael Dunham was born on Frenchmen's Island, in 1852 died in 1879. He was the father of William H. Dunham, who became a noted press photographer in Syracuse.

The story of the younger Hazael's birth on Frenchmen's Island, was long a favorite topic of his sisters. On the day of Hazael's birth, his father crossed on the ice to the mainland with a sled to pick up a trunk belonging to a woman who had come to the island to care for his wife. That night the ice broke up and it piled high among the trees on the island. For almost a week there was no way of reaching the mainland for supplies, and Lar could not reach his family.

The Dunham family were living at that time in the hotel on Frenchmen's Island that Larman Dunham and his brother-in-law, Leonard Hoadley had erected. The men put all their money in the hotel, but it never was a success, and they lost it.

Larman Dunham married Harriet Muir in 1843, the daughter or granddaughter of John Muir, one of the first settlers of the Town of Hamilton. Frank Sherman's papers reveal they had several children, James, Hazael, Francis and Jennie.

This interesting clipping comes to DD from P. C. Alger, Derry, NH who got it from the files of Olive Boylan, historian of Munnsville, NY. Unfortunately, there is no date on the clipping, which originally appeared in a column called "Chips & Shavings" by George W. Walter. The name of the newspaper isn't shown. We note that Hazael Dunham (1776-1859) is called "the founder of the family." Perhaps he was in regard to his specific area, but he was actually a member of the 7th generation in America, his ancestry being John 1, John 2 Samuel 3, William 4, William 5, Jonathan 6.

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DUNHAM ISLAND (from p. 1)

"Lar was known far and near as one of the best cornet players in the county," Sherman wrote. "At the time he gave up playing, he was at a hop picking dance at East Hamilton. My brother-in-law, Norvie Reed, was a boy and beginning to play the cornet, and used to stand around the music platform and watch him play. Lar talked to the boy and told him when he played the last dance that season it would be the end of his playing the cornet, and that the boy would take his place. That night came and Norvie was there on the platform as usual. When he played the last dance, Lar Dunham looked at the boy, took a farewell look at the cornet, and then handed the instrument over, saying, 'Here is your

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Phyllis S. Kitson

Reader response to DUNHAM DISPATCH has been so great that I feel there is enough material to make this family newsletter a monthly publication -- very good news here &, it is hoped, for you as well. It is not possible of course to forecast how long this situation will continue, but as long as the interesting written accounts & the photographs keep coming in at the same rate, I should be able to publish on a monthly schedule. (Don't forget that pictures of contemporary family members are also of interest.) Also appreciated are the kind contributions to help with postage. Thanks much. I've always felt that that there must be, somewhere, a good-sized group of

"That was the end of Lar Dunham's musical career."

Sherman said Lar Dunham died in 1901. In summing up all the family, he wrote, "They were a long lived race."

Dunham descendants who would have an interest in preserving such a long, illustrious, & varied family history. Naturally it is nice to have been proven right, & it is very rewarding to have "found" all of you. So -- see you again soon.

 AZARIAH DUNHAM (cont'd from March) Azariah's son Henry entered Upper Iowa University at Fayette, where he read medicine & afterward studied under Dr. Baker of Fayette, then attended lectures in St. Louis, MO, & was graduated from the Hahnemann Medical College of Chicago. He is a bright young man, a close student, & is now practicing in Marshfield, OR. Martin Dunham was a member of the Christian Church from 1843 until his death, & lived a faithful & consistent life. He was a Democrat in political sentiment & voted for Douglas, but the cause of the Union won his sympathies, & he would have voted for Lincoln had he lived to do so. He was no office seeker, giving his attention to the development of the farm. During the settlement of this county his home was the headquarters for all land seekers, & he aided many in the selection of their farms. He was one of nature's noblemen & the best type of the honored pioneer. We now take up the history of Azariah Dunham, whose name heads this sketch. In the subscription schools of his native state he acquired a meagre education which he has largely supplemented by subsequent reading & observation, in this way becoming a well-informed man. He was 19 years of age when he accompanied his father to Iowa. He had worked at some blacksmithing, but his life occupation has been farming. Under the parental roof he remained until 22 years of age, when he purchased 80 acres of land from his father that now constitutes a part of his present farm, & began life for himself. He completed his preparation for a home by his marriage Nov. 6, 1856, which secured as its mistress Miss Caroline Ballard. She died in 1873, leaving 3 children: Emma, who died at the age of 12; Frank, now a merchant of Randalia; & Mary, the wife of William Harvey, who is in partnership with her brother. They all received good educational advantages, having been students in the Upper Iowa University at Fayette. In 1875 Mr. Dunham wedded Mary Cowles, a native of Illinois. The 2nd union has been blessed with 3 daughters: Essie, born in 1879; Alta, 1885; & Lena, 1889. Mr. Dunham now owns & operates 250 acres of land & successfully carries on general farming. He was one of the stockholders of the Creamery Association of Randalia, (cont'd p. 3)

AZARIAH DUNHAM (from p. 2) aided in its organization, & is now its president. He & his wife are members of the Christian Church & in the social world hold a high position. He also helped to organize the 'farmers' Alliance of Randalia, of which he is now president, & in the work of which he is greatly interested. The educational work finds in him a good friend, he has served acceptably as president of the School Board, & is now serving his 5th term as Justice of the Peace. He cast his 1st presidential vote for Stephen A. Douglas. Four years previous he would have supported Fremont, but a change in the precinct caused him to lose his vote. He supported Lincoln at the 2nd election, & in succeeding elections has voted for Grant, Greeley, Hayes, Weaver & Butler. He is a warm advocate of the principles of the Greenback party & prominent in its local circles. With the history of the county he has been identified since the spring of 1851, has aided in its development, has witnessed its progress & growth, & has borne his part in its upbuilding. He also shared in the hardships & privations of pioneer life, such as having to haul his grain to McGregor, but now such difficulties are done away with, & he has a market within 2 1/2 miles of his home. He stands high in the esteem of his fellow-men as a good neighbor, respected friend & honored pioneer.

YOU ALL KNOW what springtime means: In addition to flowers & budding trees, it means RERUNS! While this is invariably true of television programming, you might not expect it from a newsletter. In Jan. we published a reunion photo that came from Ann Eldred, one taken ca. 1895-1905, in which none of the group was identified. Now here is a smaller version of the same picture, repeated because a couple of readers made a careful enough study of it to come up with some identifications.

Helen Hoyt has found her grandparents, Lyman & Eliza Dunham (Eliza in the back row, standing behind Lyman, their pictures marked). Unfortunately we can't find Lyman among our accumulated records. Helen also says that she may be able to name more people when she gets back home from Florida.

James M. Dunham, Phoenix, AZ, spotted some familiar faces, too. He thinks his grandmother, Harriet Cornelia (Tuttle) Dunham (1851-1931) is either the one in white to the right of the man in the derby, or else the 8th from left in the 2nd row from back (marked with X's). The man who is standing to this 2nd woman's left is his father, Oscar Dunham, he believes. And the couple 2nd & 3rd to her

right are probably James' Uncle Leroy & Aunt Emma. Another possibility is that the tall man at the back (3rd from right) could be Oscar Dunham. It is fine to have these identifications -- thanks to these sharp-eyed readers. Now, are there any more guesses? A new reunion picture will be featured next month.



QUERY: DUNHAM migrations into MI (Cass & Oceana Co) from Delaware Co, OH. We have their ancestry to share, but need correspondence. **Daniel⁶ DUNHAM was an early pioneer of Delaware Co, OH.** He came to MI after the 1850 Census, perhaps separating/divorcing his 3rd wife, Olive (HARRIS) who was the widow of 1) - MOREY & 2) William HODGDEN.

He had, by his 1w) Lydia PIERCE, who d. Dec 1834: Orange DUNHAM (1826-aft 1863); Orteus (c 1830-aft 1863) & (Joel ? 1821-1855).

He m2) Polly (STILL), widow TRIPLET in 1834, she d. 1846; no known issue.

He m3) Olive (HARRIS), see above; she had, by previous marriages: Phebe MOREY (b. in PA, c 1833); Cinderilla MOREY (b. in Pa c 1836); Alonzo HODGDEN (b. in OH ca 1842); Lorenzo HODGDEN (b. in OH c 1847). Daniel & Olive had one child, a son:

Sylvestry DUNHAM (b. in OH c 1848).

Correspondence indicates that Olive died in 1879 & is buried with her father, James Harris (d. 1866), son Alonzo HODGDEN (d. 1870) & a (previously unknown) daughter, Sara E. DUNHAM (d. 1872, age 19 yrs) in the Massillon (OH ?) Cemetery. Lorenzo HODGDEN & Sylvestry DUNHAM have not been found.

Although not proven, the pattern is emerging that Daniel provided land to (some) of his children, and any of the other Delaware Co, OH kin-folk who cared to make the move.

Daniel DUNHAM sold property (40 ac) to Mary SEATON in Oceana Co. on 3 April 1863, but deed not filed until 6 Feb 1883.

Daniel DUNHAM, received Pension for service in War of 1812, Oceana Co, on 30 May 1871. He resided in Hart MI at the time & was granted land (160 ac) in MI on 3 Sep 1860 for above service.

Albert DUNHAM & wife, Huldah E. (SEATON); bur. South Hart Cem., Hart Twp. Oceana Co. along with their children Dudley A (d. 1882), & Daniel (d. 1883).

Hulda E. (SEATON) DUNHAM proved her claim to estate of (mother) Mary SEATON Oceana Co. 1888.

Huldah E. DUNHAM sold property to Louisa M DUNHAM (\$1 & affection) 1898

Louisa M. (DUNHAM ?) THURSTON establishes legal claim to Estates of Hulda DUNHAM & Albert DUNHAM in 1899.

Orteus DUNHAM deeded property from Daniel (his father) 1859 although Orteus is still in 1860 Census, Delaware Co. OH.

Eliza Jane DUNHAM deeded property from Daniel DUNHAM (she was prob. the wife of his son, Orteus [see above], or the widow of his (?deceased) nephew, Spencer DUNHAM) 1859.

E. R. HARDER widower of Rebecca (DUNHAM) HARDER who moved his family to Hart, MI soon after her death in 1863.

Emiline Alice m. Orson FULLER; son, Edson FULLER; grandson, Earl FULLER.

Irena Othilia m. Thomas Homer DUNHAM (also desc. of Delaware Co. group); They moved to IA with the Delaware Co, OH descendants of Harlock DUNHAM. Extensive data within Rothbone mss on file.

Lydia Vincena m. James HUBBARD; no issue.

Elijah & Nancy (BERRY) DUNHAM. Unknown where Elijah died, but aft. 1880 Census. Nancy d. 24 Mar 1869, & (their son?), Dudley died 1862. The Oceana Co. records state he was age 17, but he isn't with family in 1860 Delaware Co. Census.

WALEs, Miller & wife Angeline (DUNHAM). Appear in Oceana Co. Census 1880. Elijah DUNHAM, age 68 is living with them. He is Angeline's father.

These are the ones culled, so far, from various sources. Using previously published data, I am trying to compile a history of the 6 DUNHAM brothers who came to Delaware Co, OH in the early 1800's from MA. Progress on their ancestry is moving along, but I need input on their descendants. About 1860, some of the brothers left OH; Harlock went to IA, Daniel to MI, Jonathan (my line) had died, Walter is an unknown after the 1860 OH Census - he was blind, which would have made relocating difficult, Silas had died, Thomas, the youngest brother remained in OH. Can anyone help me out?

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RIGHT Oscar W. Dunham (1882-1958)(8)
(Deacon John 1, Joseph 2, Nathaniel 3,
Isaac 4, Calvin 5, Ezekiel 6, Orlando 7)
married Elizabeth Crippen on Feb. 20,
1907. We thank their son, James M.
Dunham for it, as well as for the iden-
tifications he made regarding the old
reunion picture. They serve to bring
the date of that picture forward a bit,
as Oscar must have been at least 20
when that reunion was held.



LOWER LEFT The Alpheus Dunham (6)
(Deacon John 1, Joseph 2, Nathaniel
3, Isaac 4, Calvin 5) branch of the
family always holds their reunions on
the 2nd Sunday in August at the West
Monroe (NY) Community Park. This shot
of the 1992 gathering comes to DD from
Bill Wood, Stephens City, VA, who says
that about half of those in attendance
had already left before this picture
was taken, so you can see that this
annual event is a popular one. It would
clearly be difficult to identify all the
people in a photo such as this, & Bill
does not attempt the task, especially
since he doesn't yet have the list of
all those who were there.

LOWER RIGHT Julia Dunham (b. 1842)(9)(Deacon John 1, John 2, John 3,
Elisha 4, Ebenezer 5, Bangs 6, Abel 7, Justice Austin 8) became the
wife of Charles Peavey. The photo was taken in Harvard, IL & comes to
DD from Allen A. Dutton, Phoenix, AZ. Julia was Allen's grandmother's
sister.

