

The Asa Dunham Family of Norway and Paris, Maine

By Eric Stoltz, September 2016

There were 13 Dunham households in Maine recorded in the first United States Federal Census in 1790. One of these households must have been the family of James Dunham Jr. (~1788-1863) of Orland, Hancock County, Maine, my third great-grandfather. This post is one of a series to understand each of these Dunham families.

The family of Asa Dunham is recorded in the 1790 United States Census as having five members, including Asa and his wife Lydia. At the time they were living in Number 4 Plantation in Cumberland County; in 1790 the community had a population of 344. This area had first been settled in 1779, and would be incorporated as Paris only three years after the census. In 1805 it was transferred to Oxford County and would become the county seat. Paris is only 4.8 miles from Norway, which was incorporated from Number 4 Plantation in 1793, and much of the history of the two towns is intertwined. Another adjacent town that figures in the story of this family, Woodstock, was once part of Paris.

Asa was a veteran of the Revolutionary War,¹ having served under Captain Jesse Harlow on the Hudson River in 1778.² Later he met an early death in service during the War of 1812. “He enlisted in the company of Captain Bailey Bodwell, and was in the War of 1812, on the frontier, and was killed, or died of disease while in the service. Afterward the family became residents of this town and Woodstock.”³ He was buried in Burlington, Vermont.⁴

Asa was the brother of Eleazer Dunham, who died in Paris 8 Jan 1864, age 93 years,⁵ Eleazer’s wife Jane died in Paris in September of 1850, age 76.⁶ A local history states: “She was a Bryant of Plympton, a niece of Solomon Bryant, our early settler.”⁷ According to the same history,

¹ Secretary of the Commonwealth, *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War* (Boston: Wright & Potter Printing, 1896-1908), v. 5, p. 38.

² Whitman, Charles F., *A history of Norway, Maine from the earliest settlement to the close of the year 1922* (Norway, Maine: 1924), p. 84.

³ Wm. B. Lapham and Silas P. Maxim, *History of Paris, Maine, from its settlement to 1880 with a history of the grants of 1736 & 1771 together with personal sketches, a copious genealogical register and an appendix* (Paris, Maine: 1884), p. 587.

⁴ Whitman, p. 84.

⁵ Lapham and Maxim, p. 188: “Eleazer Dunham died January 6, aged 93 years. He was a native of Carver, Mass., but had lived here 66 years.”

⁶ Lapham and Maxim, p. 174.

⁷ Ibid.

Eleazer and Jane came to Paris about 1799.⁸ While Eleazer and Jane came to Paris from Massachusetts well after the birth date of Joseph Dunham Jr., it should also be noted for clarity that none of their sons were named James.

Asa and Eleazer were both sons of Deacon Sylvanus and Rebecca (Crocker) Dunham, born in Plympton, Plymouth, Massachusetts.⁹ Deacon Sylvanus is a descendant of the Pilgrim progenitor Deacon John Dunham of Plymouth (*Deacon Sylvanus*⁵, *Israel*⁴, *Eleazer*³, *Joseph*², *Deacon John*¹).

Table 1: Family of Asa Dunham of Number 4 Plantation in the 1790 Census

Census Classification	Number	Name	Age	Born
Males 16 and over	1	Asa	abt 31	1759
Males under 16	1	Asa Jr.	<1	abt 1790
Females	3	Lydia	abt 25	abt 1765
		Lydia	abt 6	1784
		Susan	abt 4	1786

First Generation

1. Asa Dunham. Born on 25 Jan 1759 in Plympton, Plymouth, Massachusetts.¹⁰ Asa died in Burlington, Chittenden, Vermont, on 13 Oct 1813; he was 54.¹¹

On 18 Mar 1784 when Asa was 25, he married **Lydia Cobb** in Plympton, Plymouth, Massachusetts.¹² Born abt 1765 in Massachusetts.¹³ Lydia died in Maine on 15 Jan 1859; she was 94.¹⁴

⁸ Lapham and Maxim, p. 585.

⁹ *Massachusetts Town and Vital Records, 1620-1988*, Plympton, Town Records, with Births, Marriages, and Deaths, Ancestry.com, image 391.

¹⁰ *Massachusetts Town and Vital Records, 1620-1988*.

¹¹ Lapham and Maxim, p. 587.

¹² *Massachusetts Marriages, 1633-1850*, FamilySearch.org, FHL microfilm 874,028.

¹³ 1850 United States Census, Paris, Oxford, Maine: Lydia Dunham, age 85.

¹⁴ Lydia C. Dunham headstone in North Paris Cemetery, West Paris, Maine, findagrave.com: age 96 years 4 months. Note discrepancy in month: given as June by *J. Gary Nichols Cemetery Collection, ca. 1780-1999*, FamilySearch.

They had the following children:¹⁵

- 2** i. Lydia.
- 3** ii. Susan.
- 4** iii. Asa Jr.
- iv. Chloe. Born 1792.¹⁶ Chloe married **Antipas Durell** on 1 Jan 1822 in Woodstock, Oxford, Maine.¹⁷
- 5** v. Samuel.
- 6** vi. Sylvanus.
- vii. Polly. Born on 2 Nov 1799 in Oxford, Maine.¹⁸ On 25 Oct 1823, Polly married Elder **Gideon Perkins** in Woodstock, Oxford, Maine.¹⁹
- viii. Betsey (Patsy?). Born on 2 Nov 1799 in Oxford, Maine.²⁰ Betsey died in Woodstock, Oxford, Maine, on 5 Mar 1880;²¹ she was 80. On 25 Nov 1821 Betsey married **Lewis (Levi?) Fuller** in Woodstock, Oxford, Maine.²² Lewis died in Woodstock, Oxford, Maine, on 5 Mar 1857; he was 60.²³
- 7** ix. Daniel.
- x. Joseph. Born on 13 May 1805 in Oxford, Maine.²⁴ On 17 Mar 1832 Joseph married **Pamela Dow** in Woodstock, Oxford, Maine.²⁵ She was born abt. 1812.²⁶

¹⁵ For birthplaces, see Latham and Maxim, p. 403: "They had 7 ch 2 b in Norway and 5 in Paris."

¹⁶ 1850 United States Census, Woodstock, Oxford, Maine.

¹⁷ *Maine Marriages 1771-1907*, FamilySearch.org, FHL microfilm 864,977.

¹⁸ Lapham and Maxim, p. 587, also *Maine Births and Christenings, 1739-1900*, FamilySearch.org, FHL microfilm 864,977.

¹⁹ *Maine Marriages 1771-1907*.

²⁰ Lapham and Maxim, p. 587, also *Maine Births and Christenings, 1739-1900*.

²¹ Grave marker for Betsey Fuller in South Woodstock Cemetery, South Woodstock, Oxford, Maine, at findagrave.com, record 116521995.

²² *Maine Marriages 1771-1907*.

²³ Grave marker for Lewis Fuller in South Woodstock Cemetery, South Woodstock, Oxford, Maine, at findagrave.com, record 116522007.

²⁴ Lapham and Maxim, p. 587, also *Maine Births and Christenings, 1739-1900*.

²⁵ *Maine Marriages 1771-1907*.

²⁶ 1880 United States Census, Woodstock, Oxford, Maine: Pamela Dunham, age 66.

Second Generation

2. Lydia Dunham. Born 16 Aug 1784 in Oxford, Maine.²⁷ Lydia married Captain **Jesse Howe** on 30 Mar 1809.²⁸ She died 20 Dec 1841 in Sumner, Oxford, Maine.²⁹

They had the following children:

- i. Jacob Foster Howe. Born 30 Nov 1811.³⁰ On 6 Mar 1833 Jacob Foster married **Polly Benson Howe**.³¹ He died 31 May 1865.³²
- ii. William Howe. Born abt 1827 in Sumner, Oxford, Maine.³³ Died 7 Jul 1895 in South Paris, Oxford, Maine; he was 68.³⁴

3. Susan Dunham. Born 24 Aug 1786 in Oxford, Maine.³⁵ Susan married **Alexander Hill**.³⁶ Died 1830.³⁷ Susan died in 1856.³⁸

They had the following children:

- i. Kezia J. Born abt. 1813 in Paris, Oxford, Maine.³⁹ Kezia married **Henry Noble**.⁴⁰ She died 12 Jun 1907; she was 94.⁴¹

²⁷ Membership application of Abbott Howe Nile, *U. S. Sons of the American Revolution Membership Applications, 1889-1970*, Louisville, Kentucky: National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, Ancestry.com, p. 394.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., see also findagrave.com record for Polly Benson Fuller, interred in Pleasant Pond Cemetery, Sumner, Oxford, Maine, record 59683835.

³² Ibid.

³³ *Maine Vital Records, 1670-1907*, FamilySearch.org, Vital records 1892-1907, image 03903; State Board of Health, Augusta, Death record for William Howe: age 68 years, 2 months, 22 days.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Whitman, p. 403.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ *Maine Vital Records, 1670-1907*, image 03028: 1907 death record for Kezia Noble: Age 94 years, 4 months.

⁴⁰ Lapham and Maxim, p. 587.

⁴¹ *Maine Vital Records, 1670-1907*.

4. Asa Dunham Jr. Born abt 1790 in Oxford, Maine.⁴² Asa married **Polly Cleaves**.⁴³ Polly was born abt. 1788 and died 13 Dec 1858 in Paris.⁴⁴ Asa died 24 Feb 1875 in Paris.⁴⁵

They had the following children:⁴⁶

- i. Henry G. Born 25 Nov 1811. Henry G. married **Catherine Cleaves**.
- ii. Parazina. Born 18 Oct 1813. Parazina married **Errol P. Sturtevant**.
- iii. Lodoiska C. Born 28 Jun 1815. Lodoiska married **David Young**.
- iv. Cyrus C. Born 12 Mar 1818. Cyrus died 1 June 1819.
- v. Mary Jane. Born 12 Jun 1820. Mary Jane married **William B. Swan**.
- vi. Asa W. Born abt. 1822. Asa married **Sophia Elkins**, born abt. 1831.
- vii. Albion K. P. Born 28 Feb 1824. Albion K. P. married **Catherine P. Stone**.
- viii. Lydia G. Born 12 Dec 1826. Lydia G. died 3 Dec 1858.⁴⁷
- ix. Lucy Ann. Born 25 Oct. 1828. Lucy Ann married **Jonathan R. Ryerson**.
- x. Arvailla. Born 13 Nov. 1832. Arvilla died July 1833.

5. Samuel Dunham. Born on 20 Oct 1794 in Oxford, Maine.⁴⁸ Samuel married **Maria Conant** on 24 Nov 1820 in Woodstock.⁴⁹

They had the following children:

- i. Pamela W. Born abt. 1825 in Woodstock, Oxford, Maine.⁵⁰ On 30 Jan 1845 Pamela married **Jonathan Andrews**.⁵¹ She died 18 Sep 1895 in South Paris, Oxford, Maine; she was 71.⁵²

⁴² Lapham and Maxim, p. 587.

⁴³ Whitman, p. 403.

⁴⁴ *Maine, J. Gary Nichols Cemetery Collection, ca. 1780-1999*, FamilySearch, image 207; Maine State Library, Augusta: Death record for Polly Dunham.

⁴⁵ Lapham and Maxim, p. 197: "1875: Feb 24. died Asa Dunham, aged 85 years."

⁴⁶ All children: Lapham and Maxim p. 587.

⁴⁷ *Maine, J. Gary Nichols Cemetery Collection, ca. 1780-1999*, FamilySearch, image 207; Maine State Library, Augusta.

⁴⁸ *Maine Births and Christenings, 1739-1900*.

⁴⁹ *Maine Marriages, 1771-1907*.

⁵⁰ *Maine Vital Records, 1670-1907*, image 02584: Age 71 years, 2 months, 5 days, also 1850 United States Census, Woodstock, Oxford, Maine: Pamela W. Andrews, age 25.

⁵¹ *Maine Marriages, 1771-1907*.

⁵² *Maine Vital Records, 1670-1907*.

- ii. Eliza L. Born abt. 1828 in Woodstock, Oxford, Maine.⁵³ Eliza married _____ **Merrill**.⁵⁴ He died before 1894. She died 20 Jul 1894 in Paris, Maine she was 66.⁵⁵
- iii. Benjamin W. Born abt. 1830 in Woodstock, Oxford, Maine.⁵⁶ Benjamin died 22 Jul 1894 in South Paris, Oxford, Maine he was 64.⁵⁷

6. Sylvanus Dunham. Born on 8 Jul 1797 in Oxford, Maine.⁵⁸ Sylvanus died 4 May 1879.⁵⁹

On 30 Jul 1820 Sylvanus married **Esther Benson** in Woodstock, Oxford, Maine.⁶⁰ Born 18 Nov 1801 in Maine.⁶¹

They had the following children:⁶²

- i. Lydia. Lydia died in childhood.
- ii. Polly. Polly died in childhood.
- iii. Laura. Laura married **John Reed**.
- iv. Samuel W. Born 8 Feb 1828. Samuel W. married **Rachel E. Andrews**.
- v. Joseph H. Born 9 Mar 1830.
- vi. William. William died in childhood.
- vii. Jackson. Jackson died in childhood.
- viii. Emily. Born 9 Apr 1838. Emily married **Horatio Chandler**.
- ix. Augusta Julia. Born 20 Jul 1840. Augusta Julia died 21 Aug 1864.
- x. Wellington W. Born 12 Feb 1843. Wellington W. married **Columbia Bradford**.
- xi. Anna R. Born 11 Feb 1845. Anna R. married **James M. Rowell**.⁶³

⁵³ Ibid., image 01207: death record for Eliza Merrill, age 66 years, 7 months, 22 days, died a widow.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., image 03800: death record for Benjamin Dunham, age 64 years, 1 month, 2 days.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Lapham and Maxim, p. 587, also *Maine Births and Christenings, 1739-1900*.

⁵⁹ *Maine, J. Gary Nichols Cemetery Collection, ca. 1780-1999*, death record for Sylvanus Dunham, age 81 years, 9 months, 25 days.

⁶⁰ *Maine Marriages 1771-1907*.

⁶¹ Lapham and Maxim, p. 541.

⁶² All children: Lapham and Maxim, pp. 587-588

⁶³ Lapham and Maxim, p. 588 and 1850 United States Census, Paris, Oxford, Maine, Rebanna (?), age 5.

7. Daniel Dunham. Born on 19 Sep 1803 in Oxford, Maine.⁶⁴ On 1 Jan 1825 Daniel married **Mary Durell** in Woodstock, Oxford, Maine.⁶⁵

They had the following children:⁶⁶

- i. Flavel. Born abt. 1825.
- ii. Francis. Born abt. 1827.
- iii. Isaac. Born abt. 1830.
- iv. Melvin W. Born abt. 1835.
- v. Lydia. Born abt. 1837.
- vi. Mary. Born abt. 1842.
- vii. Daniel. Born abt. 1845.
- viii. Harriet E. Born abt. 1850.

Table 2: Family of Asa Dunham of Norway in the 1800 Census

Census Classification	Number	Name	Age	Born
Males under 10	2	Sylvanus Samuel	abt 3 abt 6	1797 1794
Males 10-15	1	Asa Jr.	abt 10	abt 1790
Males 16-25	0			
Males 26-44	1	Asa	abt 41	1759
Males 45 and over	0			
Females under 10	3	Polly Betsey Chloe	abt 1 abt 1 abt 4	1799 1799 1796
Females 10-15	1	Susan	abt 14	1786
Females 16-25	1	Lydia	abt 16	1784
Females 26-44	1	Lydia	abt 35	abt 1765
Females 45 and over	0			

⁶⁴ Lapham and Maxim, p. 587 and *Maine Births and Christenings, 1739-1900*.

⁶⁵ *Maine Marriages, 1771-1907*.

⁶⁶ All children: 1850 United States Census, Woodstock, Oxford, Maine.

Consideration regarding James Dunham Jr. of Orland

All of the family members of Asa Dunham of Norway and Paris are accounted for and there are no gaps. There are no descendants of Asa named James in the first two generations. Therefore, it does not appear that James Dunham Jr. of Orland could be a member of this family, although he is a cousin due to the common ancestor Eleazer³ Dunham of Plymouth.

* * *

I want to thank Gratia Dunham Mahony, who graciously shared with me her notes on this family, making this installment in my series much easier.