

Prepared for the
Bourne Historical
Commission

November 2022

A HISTORY OF THE PERRY-ELLIS-KEENE HOUSE

9 SANDWICH ROAD, BOURNE, MA

The Perry-Ellis-Keene House
9 Sandwich Road, Bourne, MA
Formerly called Centre Street/Main Street/and County Road



Figure 1: Perry-Ellis-Keene House (built circa 1690) photographed in 2022 (courtesy of Bourne Enterprise)

The First Family: THE PERRY'S
THOMAS BURGESS

The house's history begins about sixty years before the house was built when the family patriarch Thomas Burge (now written as "Burgess") (known as "the Pilgrim") migrated to America from England with his wife Dorothy Waynes and their son. They crossed the Atlantic aboard the ship "Goodcheer" arriving in The New World in the early 1630's, probably as part of the Great Puritan Migration. In about 1637, Burgess relocated to what was then Sandwich. He received a grant of land in the colony being established in the area (now Sagamore).

Thomas Burgess soon became a very prominent and wealthy figure, earning the name "Goodman Burgess." He was representative to the general court (1642), fought in the Narragansett War (1645) and was described as "one of the chief men of the town." On March 3, 1652, through Captain Miles Standish, Burgess received a grant of land in Manomet, the area later called Monument, lying to the northwest of the Sandwich settlement. Miles Standish originally obtained the land from Josias, a Nauset Sachem (or Algonquian chief). At least a section of this land would be transferred to Thomas's son-in-law, Ezra Perry, see below.

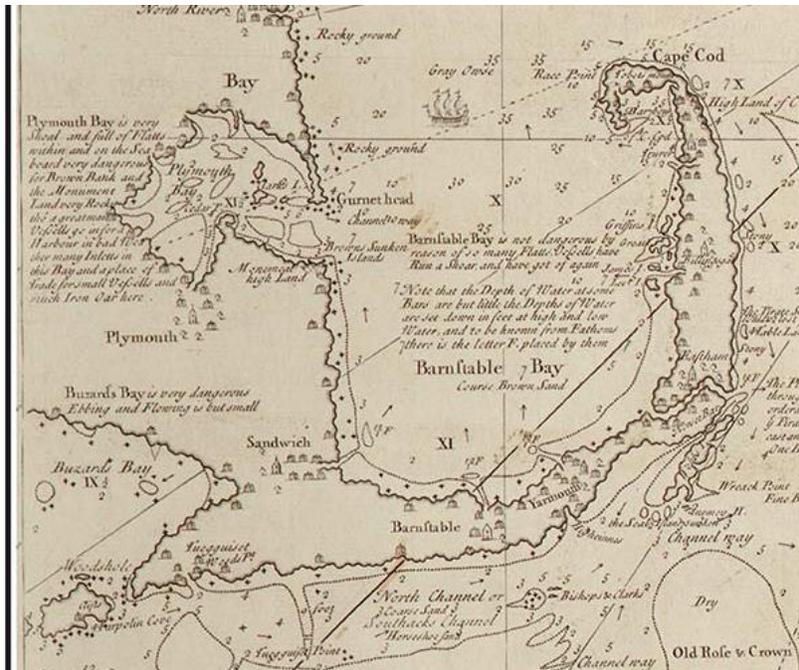


Figure 2: 1734 Map of Cape Cod showing Sandwich

To this day, Goodman Burgess’s gravestone, which was originally imported from England, is, according to well-known historian Amos Otis, “the only monument set up for any pilgrim of first generation.” The original broken stone, which is located in Old Town Cemetery in Sandwich, was replaced with a slate stone in 1917.

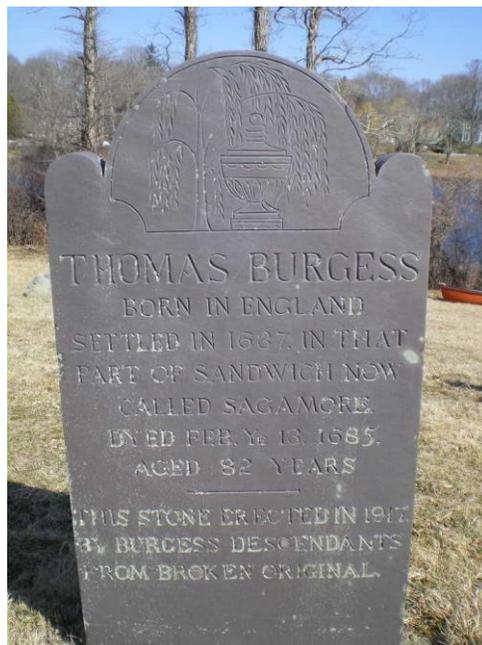


Figure 3: Thomas Burgess Headstone, Old Town Cemetery, Sandwich

Thomas Burgess had at least five children, one of whom is important to our story: his only daughter, Elizabeth Burgess. Although not much is known about Elizabeth Burgess, more is known about her husband, Ezra, whom she married on February 12, 1651: a pivotal event in our Perry story.

EZRA PERRY

Ezra Perry was born in 1625, in Bideford, Devonshire, England. In 1632, Ezra, his brother Edward, and their father John Perry, came from England to Boston aboard the ship *Lyon*. Soon after their arrival, they settled in Roxbury, where John Perry was made a freeman (which was an important improvement in status) in 1633.

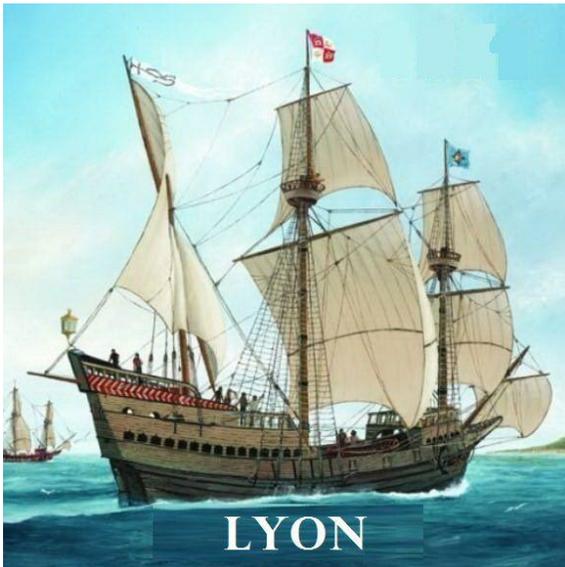


Figure 4: The Immigrant Ship: The Lyon

Between 1640-1644, Ezra Perry moved to Sandwich and settled at Scusset, one of the “West Side” villages of the town. The Perrys were one of the town’s most prominent families. The first record of Ezra in Sandwich is at a meeting on June 7, 1644, when he was nineteen years old: we learn that “divers persons engaged freely to pay in goods and merchantable corn” toward the repair of their Meeting House. Ezra Perry pledged an amount of nine shillings toward this project.

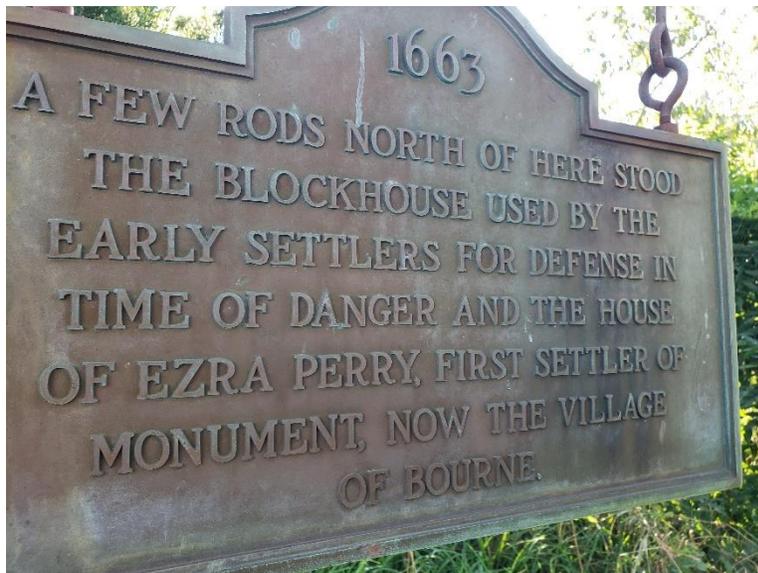
The next record of him is his marriage to Elizabeth Burgess in 1651. As her dowry, she brought Ezra one half tract of land lying on both sides of Monument River, which had been granted to her father Thomas Burgess, and would become the location of the Perry-Ellis-Keene House. Ezra and Elizabeth first settled at Herring River village.



Figure 5: 1753 Map of Herring River area

In 1663, Ezra increased his holdings by buying the western portion of his father-in-law's 1652 grant from Myles Standish, consisting of land lying mostly south of the Monument River, including the whole of what is now Monument Neck and the Keene Street/Sandwich Road area.

Ezra was the first settler to construct a house in Manamet (or Monument). The site of this dwelling was near the northern base of a hill situated some 30 yards north of the present day Bourne Post Office.



Like his father-in-law Thomas Burgess, Ezra was an accomplished man. In 1657, he listed as a lieutenant in the militia. In 1671, he served on a committee to view damage done by Indians to horses and hogs belonging to the English. In 1674 and 1677, he served on the Grand Inquest juries, and in 1679, he was appointed constable. Between 1666 and 1684, he also acquired additional large land holdings in Manamet, including woodlands and salt meadows.

Figure 6: Site of the Ezra Perry Homestead at Keene Street & Sandwich Road

Ezra and Elizabeth had seven children. The births of their first three children are recorded in Sandwich: Ezra, in 1653; Deborah, in 1654; and John, in 1657. A hiatus in the records then occurs until the births of their son Samuel, in 1667; Benjamin, in 1670; and Remembrance, in 1676. By his will, we know that Ezra and Elizabeth had at least another daughter, Sarah Perry, born about 1659.

In the 1680's, Ezra's family began to spread out by settling what would later be the village of Bourne. Around 1690, Ezra's four sons (Ezra Jr., John, Samuel, and Benjamin) constructed homes all within 1/2 mile of their father and each other, as a result of land given to them by their father.¹

As was the custom, Ezra most likely conveyed portions of his land to his sons as they reached the age of majority. Upon their marriage, each was also given a portion of livestock and furniture. The four Perry boys worked their land, traded at Herring River and erected a blockhouse, built for mutual protection, where they sheltered in times of danger.

¹ Much of this information about the Perrys comes from Betsey Hamblen Keene's book History of Bourne, which will be discussed later.

Legend has it that to drive out any hostile Native Americans, the boys would hide behind a large rock near the blockhouse and fire three to four bullets through the front door. Today, the rock can still be seen on land owned by Ellis Mendel Swift across the street from 60 Keene Street (previously called Bridge Street) next to the historic marker.

As time went on, the four sons built individual houses, only one of which – **the Perry-Ellis-Keene House** - has survived. The four houses built by the four sons were as follows:

Ezra's first son, **Ezra 2nd**, born in 1653, built his house “on the brink of the hill near his father's house” (located near the current Bourne Post Office). As late as 1850, two twelve-foot cellars on opposite sides of what was then a narrow road were plainly visible and both were “known to have belonged to **Ezra Perry 2nd's** house.” This house was torn down by Samuel Perry, grandson of Ezra 2nd. **Ezra 2nd** died in January 1729.



alamy stock photo Figure 7: Representative Block House

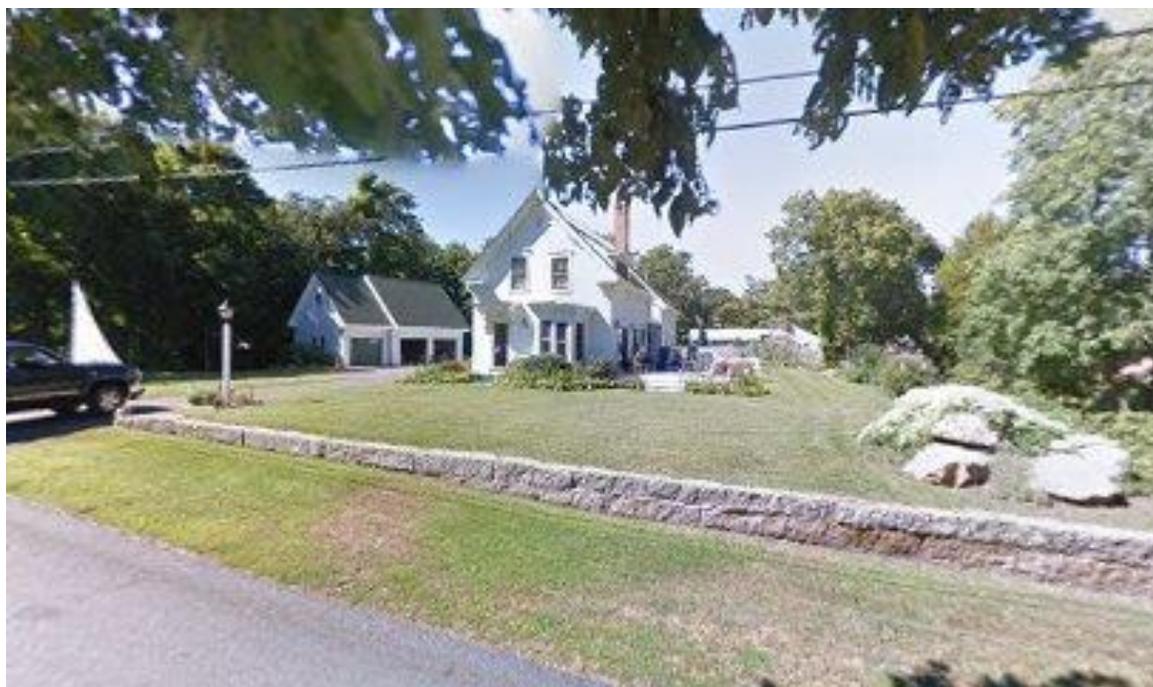


Figure 8: 60 Keene Street approximate site of the Ezra 2nd Homestead

The second son, **John**, born in 1657, built his home “on the northerly side of the road leading to Monument Neck,” which stood nearly opposite the 1937 home of Herbert C. Eldridge. The house was described as “two story with the back roof extending nearly to the ground” (i.e., a saltbox). After being owned and occupied by descendants of **John** for three generations, this home burned down in 1794.

Samuel, born in 1667, built his house “in the field near the Middle Monument burying ground (Old Bourne Cemetery) on the opposite side of the road and some distance from it.” It was described as “a public house or tavern.” This house was taken down by **Samuel**’s grandson, Seth Perry, but its two cellars and the nearby cart road were visible up until the 1970’s.



Figure 9: Old Bourne Cemetery, also known as Middle Monument Burying Ground, on County Road

Benjamin, the youngest of the four brothers, built his house in the proximity of what is now the Briggs McDermott House at 22 Sandwich Road. About 1735, the house was purchased by Gideon Ellis, and moved across the road in 1767. Afterwards, it was owned by Gideon’s grandson, Thomas Ellis, until his death in 1865. Since then, and for over 270 years, this house has been the property of various descendants of Gideon Ellis and is



Figure 10: Benjamin Perry House, 9 Sandwich Road

known as the Perry-Ellis-Keene house. The building is believed to be one of the oldest – if not THE OLDEST – surviving house in Bourne.

But we are jumping ahead. Returning for a moment to Ezra Perry, Ezra died on October 16, 1689, at the age of 64 years. Ezra’s will, made on his deathbed, provided that his body “be buried at ye ordinary place of burying,” i.e., the Old Town Cemetery in Sandwich, MA. He left the bulk of his possessions to Elizabeth, his “truly and well-beloved wife.”

Ezra’s gravestone is among the oldest surviving stones at the Old Town Cemetery in Sandwich and is engraved with a small winged skull, symbolic of a soul fleeing mortality.



Figure 11: Ezra Perry Headstone, Old Town Cemetery, Sandwich, MA

Elizabeth Burgess Perry, died September 26, 1717, at age 88 and is buried next to her husband.



Figure 12: Elizabeth Perry Headstone, Old Towne Cemetery, Sandwich, MA

Following Ezra Perry’s death, his four sons held joint ownership of the estate. In 1727, however, as the population of Bourne Village began to grow, the four sons divided and sold the large tract of land that their parents had accumulated. Purchasers of the land included members of the Swift, Bourne, Blackwell, and Ellis families, nearly all of whom have direct ties to the Perry-Ellis-Keene house.

Benjamin Perry

On January 15, 1670, Elizabeth Burgess gave birth to her youngest son, Benjamin Perry, when she was 39. Benjamin was one of seven children. For purposes of perspective, Benjamin was born one hundred years before the events that gave rise to the American Revolution. The colonies were still called The New World and much of the area was unexplored and inhabited by Native Americans.



Figure 13: The Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth Colonies in 1677

When Benjamin was 19, his father Ezra died, leaving “his well beloved son,” “two cows, two steeres [sic], one bed and its furniture, one gune [sic] and sword.” As Ezra bequeathed no real property, it is surmised that he disposed of his land before his death, as described above.

At age 24, Benjamin married Dinah (or Dina) from the prominent Swift family. A word about the Swifts of Sandwich . . .

Dinah Swift

Like the Perrys, William Swift (or Swyft), the patriarch founder of the Swifts of Sandwich, came to The New World with the great flood of immigrants who left England in 1630-34. Before immigrating, he was a leather seller in London. Around 1634, he landed in Boston, with his second wife, Joan Dimpleby (a widow) and their children, and settled in Watertown. In 1637, William sold his property in Watertown and moved to Plymouth Colony, settling in Sandwich in 1638 where he spent the remainder of his life. The farm he bought in Sandwich was the largest in town and remained in the Swift family for generations.



Figure 14: *The Swift House in what was then Sandwich*

William and his second wife, Joan, had at least three children: William, Esther, and Sarah, who were born in England and crossed the Atlantic with their parents, settling in Sandwich when their father removed there. It is possible that the family were Quakers or at least attended Quaker meetings. William died about 1641; his widow Joan later remarried to Daniel Wing. She died on January 31, 1664.

William Swift, Jr., son of William and Joan, was born in England around 1627 and came to Sandwich with his parents. He was very active in town affairs and in 1654-55, subscribed 15 shillings (a sizeable contribution) towards building a new meeting house. William Swift, Jr., represented the town in the General Court in 1673, 1674, 1677, and 1678. He married Ruth and they had at least nine children:

- William III
- Ephraim
- Mary
- Samuel
- Josiah
- Jireh
- Temperance
- Ester
- Dinah (various spellings)

William Swift, Jr. died in the latter part of 1705 (sometime between December 15th and January 29, 1706), naming his wife Ruth, his sons William, Ephraim, Samuel, Josiah, and Jireh, and his daughters Mary, Temperance, Ester and Dianah in his will. Dina, Dinah, or Dianah (all variations of the spelling) would marry Benjamin Perry on January 17, 1694. It is very likely that, as was the custom, Benjamin built the house at 9 Sandwich Road for Dina, his new bride.

And why do we care about Dina Swift? Because Dina was part of the Swift family, specifically William Swift (born September 20, 1795), who became a pioneer in the dressed beef business; buying his cattle in the Brighton Market and driving them to West Sandwich, where he slaughtered them and sold the dressed meat to Cape butchers.



Figure 15: The Swift Slaughter House and Meat Cart (circled) in Sandwich, MA

It was this William Swift, and his son Gustavus Franklin Swift (1839-1903), who laid the foundation of the dressed meat business and made the Swift name known world-wide. While Mr. Swift made his home in Sagamore, and spent his whole life there, his son, Gustavus (by second wife Sally Sears Crowell), moved to Chicago and founded a meat-packing empire there during the late 1800's. Gustavus invented the "reefer" car or refrigerated car that revolutionized the way dressed meat – as opposed to live cattle – was moved all over the country.

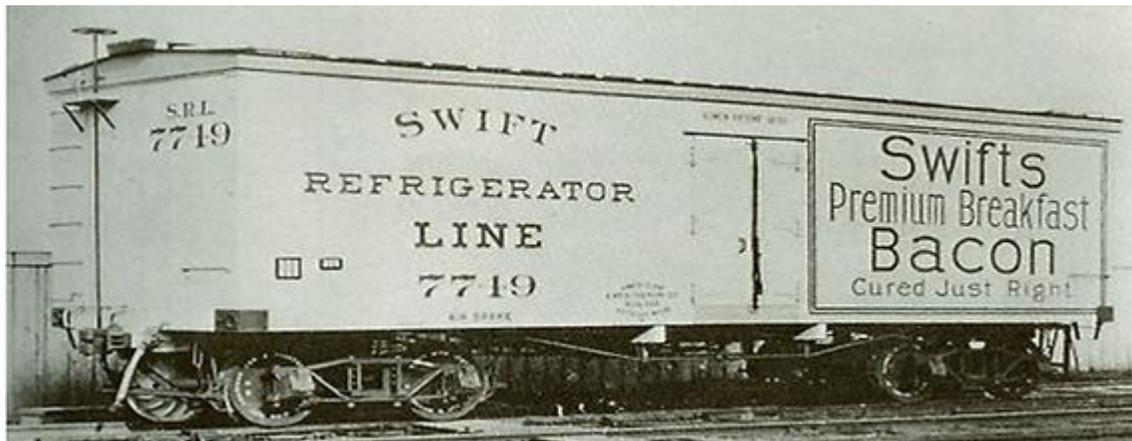


Figure 16: Swift Reefer Car

In addition to creating "cheap beef," Gustavus also pioneered the use of animal by-products for the manufacture of soap, glue, fertilizer, and even medical products. He also was a great philanthropist; donating large sums of money to institutions such as the University of Chicago, the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the YMCA. When Gustavus died in 1903, his company was valued at \$135 million.

Back to Benjamin Perry and Dina Swift Perry

As mentioned, Benjamin and Dina married in 1694 and settled into the Perry-Ellis-Keene house as newlyweds. Benjamin built the house across the street from its present location

(on land that was formerly owned by W. Waldo Trowbridge) (approximately, adjacent to the Briggs McDermott House). In March 1730, Benjamin and his sons appear on a list of Sandwich householders. It is believed that Benjamin was a weaver or tailor by trade,

Over the course of their marriage, Dina gave birth to nine children – presumably in the Perry-Ellis-Keene house:

Meribah (1695-1774)
Rememberance (1697-1789)
Benjamin (1699-1753) (twin)
Seth (1699-1723) (twin)
Susannah (1700-1771)
Abner (1703-1758)
Josiah (1709-1784)
Nathaniel (1713-1756)
Eliakim (1716-1793)

Her kitchen, the main room of the house, was still intact in 1930 (below), and it was by this great hearth that Dina raised all nine children and ran the household.



Figure 17: The central fireplace and beehive oven at 9 Sandwich Road circa 1930

We believe that Dina died in 1733. For reasons that are unclear, but perhaps related to the death of his wife, Benjamin sold the house to Gideon Ellis and moved to Stoughton (in what was probably the town of Sharon) around 1735. Benjamin took his sons Josiah, Benjamin Jr., and Nathaniel with him. Four years later, in 1738, his youngest sons, Abner and Eliakim, followed him. At that time, this area was sparsely settled.

Several of Benjamin and Dina's sons were prominent participants in the French and Indian War and the War for Independence, discussed briefly as follows:

Eighth child, **Nathaniel Perry**, was born on July 2, 1713, (presumably in the Perry-Ellis-Keene House), married Mehitable Willis (a widow) in 1736, and soon thereafter moved to Easton, Massachusetts. He received a commission from Governor Shirley in the Massachusetts Militia in 1754, and served as a captain under Colonel John Winslow. Perry saw action during the French and Indian War and fought at the Battle of Fort Cumberland in 1755, much of which is chronicled in his Orderly Book.² Initially, Captain Perry raised a company of 46 men but by May 1755, he had raised a company of nearly 100 men to serve as part of the Second Battalion of Shirley's Regiment. Serving alongside their father in this company were Captain Perry's sons, Nathaniel and Samuel.

Following the surrender of the fort, Perry's unit remained in Nova Scotia. Surviving letters from Captain Perry to his wife indicate that he became ill while serving at the fort and desired to return home. This would not be the case, however, as he died of illness on June 15, 1756, at Fort Cumberland in Nova Scotia.



Figure 18: A sample page of Nathaniel Perry's 1755 Orderly Book (approximate value at auction \$10-15,000)

Ninth child, **Eliakim Perry** was born on May 8, 1716, (presumably in the Perry-Ellis-Keene House). He married twice and “broke up housekeeping” by “putting out” his four young children to be raised by relatives when his first wife died at the age of 28 (a relatively common practice at the time for those who lost a spouse and had young children they were unable to care for). With respect to his military service, in 1745, Eliakim Perry served at the taking of Louisburg, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, under General William Pepperell, as did his brother **Abner**. All seven of Eliakim's sons (two by his first wife, five by his second) served as soldiers in the Revolutionary War (including at such pivotal battles as Valley Forge).

² As tensions mounted between the British and the French over the Acadian territory north of New England, Fort Cumberland became a flash point for conflict. Built in 1751, the French stronghold was of significant strategic importance. Recruitment for an English attack on the fort was undertaken by Colonel William Shirley of Massachusetts who also served as Governor of the Province of Massachusetts Bay.



Figure 19: General William Pepperell at the Siege of Louisburg

Sixth son, **Abner Perry** was born on March 10, 1703 (presumably in the Perry-Ellis-Keene House). He fell at the attack of the Island Battery on May 26, 1745, while serving in the Pepperell Expedition, during the French and Indian War. On this fateful day, one hundred British troops turned the canons of the Royal Battery on the Island Battery (present day Louisburg, Nova Scotia) and bombarded the battery for days. The Island Battery was formidable and took the New Englanders six weeks to silence. On June 6, the British led 400 troops against the Island Battery and were repulsed by the French. As related by Abner's great-grand-daughter Rachel Perry Green, Abner "was killed by a cannon ball just as he stepped on shore."

An entire chapter, here, could be devoted to the military service and patriotism of the men who were born and raised in the house at 9 Sandwich Road. But, for the sake of time and brevity, let us return to the history of the house.

The Second Family: THE ELLISES

In 1735, Benjamin Perry sold the house to Gideon Ellis. The Ellis family, like the Perrys, were founding fathers and original settlers on Cape Cod, beginning with the first Ellis – John Ellis, Jr. – Gideon's grandfather.

John Ellis, Jr.

John Ellis's father (John Ellis, Sr.) born in England around 1569, was opposed to the established Church, joined the Separatist Movement (*i.e.* the Pilgrims), left England, and went to Holland. It is believed that he was married to Blandina Masterson and had a son, John Jr. In 1629, when he was the age of nine, John Jr. came to America on a ship named *The Mayflower* (although not THE Mayflower) under the care of his uncle, Richard Masterson, who died in an epidemic in 1633. John Jr. was apprenticed until age 21 and took the freeman oath in 1641 in Boston. He married pre-August 20, 1644, to Elizabeth Freeman³ and settled in Sandwich by 1643. They had a large family (perhaps as many as 13 children), descendants of which remain today in Sandwich and throughout the country.

Their marriage got off on a rocky start, however. On August 24, 1644, John Jr. and his wife, Elizabeth, were charged with fornication before marriage (because their first child was born shy of nine months). John Jr. was ordered to be whipped "5 lashes" at a public post, while Elizabeth was ordered to watch. At that time, no allowance was made for the possibility of premature births.

Apparently, John Ellis's reputation was not permanently damaged in Sandwich, as he became very active in town affairs, the militia, and various construction projects. On June 5, 1651, he served on the Grand Inquest. With others, he was also appointed by the Court to create a road: "to lay out the convenientest Way from Sandwich unto Plymouth." On December 13, 1653, he and Richard Chadwell and Thomas Dexter were given the right to any whales "cast up" or grounded within the limits and bounds of the town. In March 1654, John Ellis was building a mill with William Swift, William Allen and James Skeff, and helped finish a dock. He was licensed on May 3, 1659 "to keep an ordinary att Sandwich for the entertainment of strangers and traouvellers and he is to provide conveniencyes for that end, and may sell strong waters and wine for such purchases, but is prohibited to permitt towndwellers to stave drinking unnecessarily att his house."

His title as Lt. John Ellis derived from his military service for Sandwich and the Plymouth Colony. On June 6, 1660, he was engaged to train the military company of Sandwich. On February 28, 1675, a town meeting was held to consider what steps should be taken to protect the people against Indian attacks in connection with King Philip's War. It was ordered that Lt. John Ellis should make provision for the inhabitants to come to safety into the garrison on Town Neck in times of danger. It is believed that Lt. John Ellis and his son John fought in the King Philip's War battles and were killed or died from injuries sometime around 1676/77.

Amongst the many children of John and Elizabeth Ellis, one in particular, Freeman Ellis (1662-1686) is important to this story.

³ John Freeman came with his wife and four children to Plymouth in 1635 aboard the ship *The Abigail*. He was prominent, active, and influential in the affairs of the colony, and John Jr.'s marriage to his daughter Elizabeth Freeman would have been considered very advantageous.

Freeman Ellis and Mercy Mary Winslow

[Edmund] Freeman Ellis, Gideon Ellis's father, married Mercy Mary Winslow in 1686 at the age of 24. They had at least eight children. Gideon's mother, Mercy Mary Winslow, was also from a very distinguished lineage and deserves special mention.

Mercy Mary Winslow



Mercy Mary Winslow was Gideon Ellis's mother. Her grandfather (Gideon's great grandfather), Kenelm Winslow, came to America with his brother, Josias, in the ship *White Angell* which arrived in what is now Saco, Maine, July of 1631. Other brothers had come earlier: John who came in the *Fortune* in 1621, and Edward and Gilbert who came in the *Mayflower* in 1620. Both Edward and Gilbert were signers of the Mayflower Compact, and Edward was delegated to establish relations with the Native Americans in the vicinity of Plymouth. Notably, he succeeded in winning the friendship of their chief Massasoit; an alliance that would save the pilgrims from death by starvation and result in the first Harvest Home celebration (or Thanksgiving). He would later become three-times governor of Plymouth Colony.

Figure 20: Edward Winslow

Edward's younger brother (Mercy's grandfather; Gideon Ellis's great grandfather), Kenelm Winslow, was a joiner, a cabinet maker, and the official coffin maker of the colony. He had apprenticed in Leyden, the Netherlands, for four years before coming to America. He was the second carpenter in Plymouth, but soon proved his worth, and his furniture has become greatly valued. Several pieces attributed to him are owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.



Figure 21: Chest attributed to Kenelm Winslow on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC

Kenelm and his wife had eight children, including a son, Kenelm II, who was Gideon Ellis's grandfather. Although Kenelm made a decent living and provided for his family, he never obtained the same wealth as his brothers Edward and John. So again, why does he matter? Because Kenelm was instrumental in settling Marshfield where he was a constable and a deputy. And more importantly, for purposes of Cape Cod, because Kenelm's son, Kenelm II, was one of the original settlers of Yarmouth in the 1640's. And Kenelm's family married into the Crocker family, who were instrumental in settling West Barnstable. Many of these Kenelm descendants are buried in the Winslow burying ground in Dennis at what is now known as Worden Cemetery.



Figure 22: Headstone of Kenelm Winslow II, Mercy's father, Gideon's grandfather

Gideon Ellis

Gideon Ellis, the seventh (or so) child of Freeman Ellis and Mercy Winslow, was born on February 5, 1700 (or 1701). The first record of Gideon Ellis, who was a cordwainer (leather shoemaker), is his intention to marry Anna Clarke on February 11, 1719, in Plymouth. Both of his parents – Freeman and Mercy – died in 1728, and Gideon, along with his three brothers, inherited his father's land holdings.

Although Gideon was firmly established in Plymouth, on March 18, 1731 or 32, he sold his entire homestead farm and dwelling house for 350 pounds in anticipation of an impending move to Sandwich which happened sometime around this period.

In 1735, Gideon purchased the Perry-Ellis-Keene house and surrounding farmland from Benjamin Perry. The house became Gideon and Anna's homestead (as noted by Betsey D. Keene in her History of Bourne (1937)). We can surmise that Anna Clarke died there,

on June 13, 1738, eight days after the birth of her tenth child. One year later, on May 15, 1739, Gideon married Jemima Wood from Middleborough. He would sire another eight children with Jemima. Gideon died at the age of 59 years on December 10, 1760.

Abiel Ellis

Abiel Ellis was born October 6, 1743 - presumably in the Perry-Ellis-Keene House - one of his father's nineteen (or more) children. Abiel's mother was Gideon's second wife, Jemima. When his father died in 1760, Abiel, at age 17, received 1/12 of his estate.

For unknown reasons, in 1767, Abiel and his brother Elnathan Ellis moved the family homestead across the street to its present location (9 Sandwich Road).



Figure 23: 1930's perspective of the Perry-Ellis-Keene House

At age 46, Abiel married a woman from Martha's Vineyard: Hannah Hatch. It appears that Hannah, who was 31 at the time of her marriage, and Abiel had four sons – well into Hannah's late 30's.

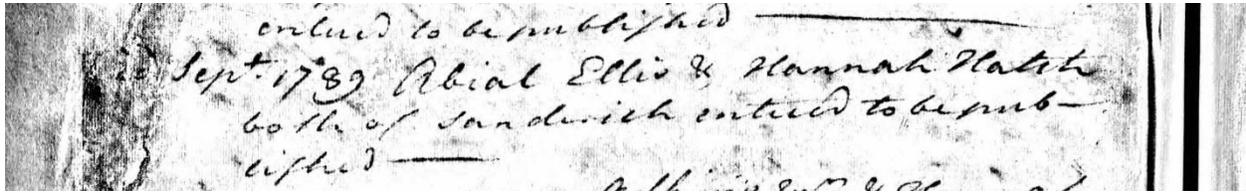


Figure 24: Marriage Bans Abiel and Hannah (Sept 1789)

Abiel and Hannah raised their four sons presumably at the Perry-Ellis-Keene House. The 1790 Federal Census reflects Abiel (or Abial) as head of household with one female (Hannah) and two males under the age of 16 (children James and Thomas). And so on and so forth:

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|----|----|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Abiel Chandler | 1 | 1 | 2 | | | | | | |
| Abial Ellis | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | | | | |
| Samuel Ellis | 1 | 1 | 4 | | | | | | |
| | 62 | 68 | 126 | | | | | | |

Total number of Inhabitants in the Town of Sandwich is 1998 - Jm Thomas Assistant Marshal

Figure 25: 1790 Federal Census: Abiel Ellis and three others

By 1800, the census reflects the entire seven-member family household consisting of: Abiel, Hannah, their four sons - James, Thomas, William and Ebenezer - and one additional female (a servant? a relative?).

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Luce Blackwell | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Abiel Ellis | 2 | 2 | | | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | |
| Stephen Swift | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 2 | | 1 | |

Figure 26: 1800 Federal Census: Abiel Ellis and six others

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|
| Abiel Ellis | | 1 | 3 | | 1 | | | | 1 | |
| Leah Ellis | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | |

Figure 27: 1810 Federal Census: Abiel Ellis and five others

Abiel died intestate on December 17, 1814, at the age of 70. Hannah died ten years later, on February 9, 1825, at the age of 66. They are both buried at the Old Bourne Cemetery.



Figure 28: Headstones of Abiel Ellis and Hannah Hatch Ellis, Old Bourne Cemetery

Thomas Ellis

Born on June 9, 1791, Thomas was the second son born to his parents (Abiel and Hannah Ellis). Presumably, he was born and raised in the house at 9 Sandwich Road with his three siblings: James, the eldest, and younger brothers William and Ebenezer. By 1825, Thomas’s father, mother, and eldest brother had died. Following his mother’s death, Thomas married Hannah Blackwell, on December 10, 1825, at the age of 31. Hannah was also an Ellis through her mother’s line. Based upon census records, and given the deaths of his parents and older brother, we can assume that Thomas and Hannah lived in the Perry-Ellis-Keene House. Thomas worked as a farmer.

| | | | | |
|-----|--------------|----|---|--------|
| 132 | Thomas Ellis | 64 | M | Farmer |
| | Hannah Ellis | 59 | F | Farmer |
| | Phebe Kelly | 64 | F | |

Figure 29: 1855 State Census (Thomas and Hannah Ellis)(occupation farmer)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|-----|---------------|----|----|---------|------|-----|-----|
| 34 | 695 | 690 | Thomas Ellis. | 69 | m. | Farmer. | 1200 | 100 | do. |
| 35 | | | Hannah Ellis. | 64 | f | | | | do. |

Figure 30: 1860 Federal Census (Thomas and Hannah Ellis) (occupation farmer)

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|-----|-----|--------|-------|----|-----|--|---|---|--------|--|--|---|---|
| 29 | 873 | 748 | 748 | Thomas | Ellis | 73 | ill | | " | " | Parker | | | 1 | 1 |
| 30 | | | | Hannah | " | 69 | t | | " | " | | | | | |

Figure 31: 1865 State Census (Thomas and Hannah Ellis)

When Thomas died from heart disease on July 13, 1865, the house was sold to Captain John Parker. Both Thomas and his wife, Hannah, are buried side-by-side in the Old Bourne Cemetery.



Figure 32: Headstones of Thomas and Hannah Ellis

**The Second Family:
THE PARKERS
(But still Ellis)**

Captain John Parker

John Hines Parker came from a seafaring family including two brothers (Charles and Calvin) and a sister (Lucy). At age 21, he married Eliza W. Ellis, who was a direct descendant of

Elnathan Ellis (brother of Abiel and the same one who helped move 9 Sandwich Road across the street). Like his brother Charles, John sailed out of New Bedford and in 1859, at the age of 29, he chartered a schooner to take 15-20 men to Ossabaw, Georgia in order to cut timber during the winter. In 1863, at the age of 31, he was drafted to fight in the Civil War. At this time, he and his wife were living next door (or in close vicinity) to John's brother, Charles, and his wife Arabella Trask Ellis Parker, who was also a direct descendant of Elnathan Ellis, and therefore, a cousin to Eliza Ellis Parker.

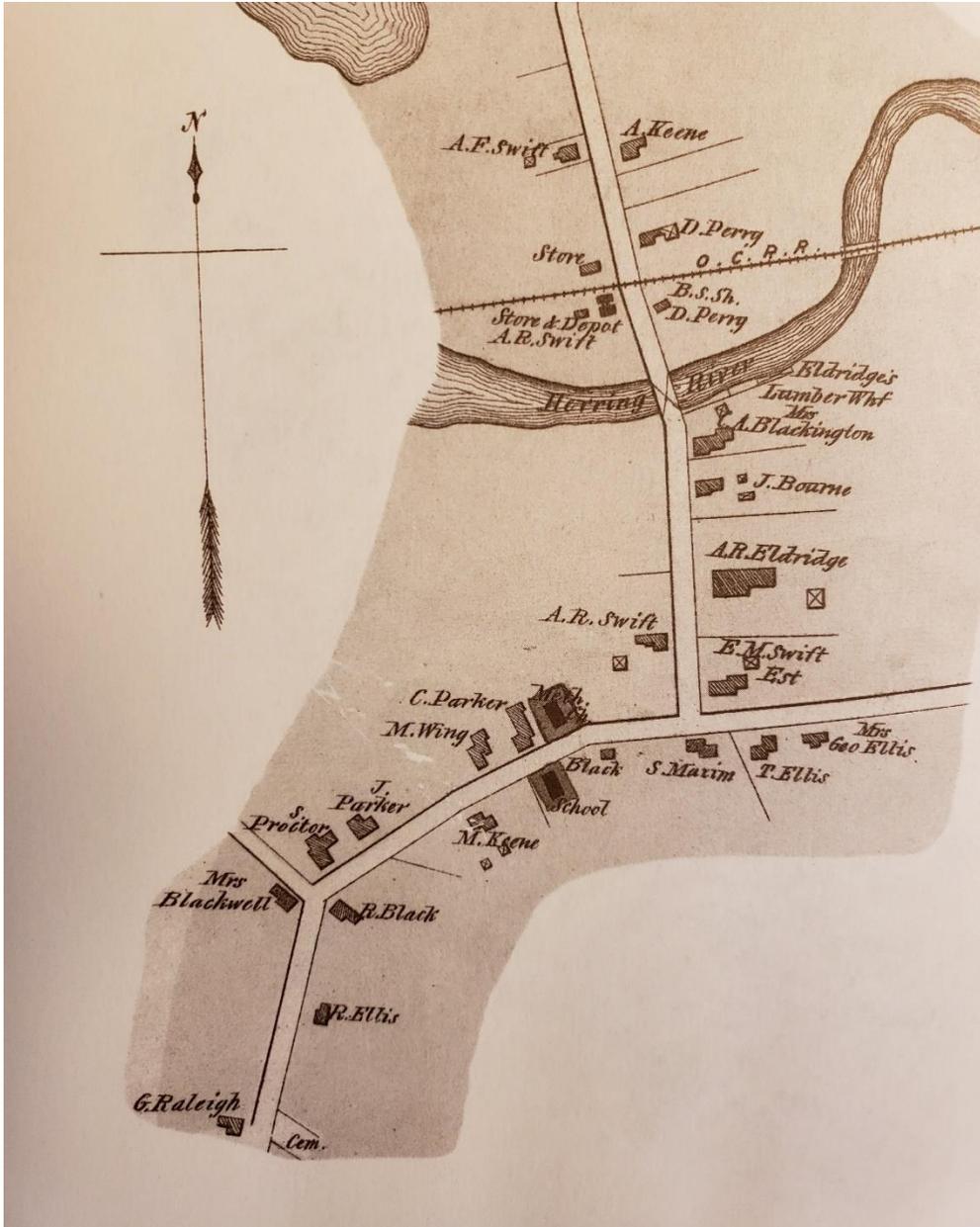


Figure 33: 1868 Map: John Parker house opposite Keene House (Briggs McDermott)

In 1865, and coinciding with the death of Thomas Ellis (his wife's cousin), John and Eliza moved into 9 Sandwich Road.

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|-------------|----|---|---------------|-----|--|
| 21 | | Lydia | 31 | W | Keefing house | | |
| 22 | 697 | Parker John | 43 | M | Mariner | 610 | |
| 23 | | Eliza W | 36 | F | Keefing house | | |
| 24 | 611 | Geo. Ellis | 45 | M | Keefing house | 650 | |

Figure 34: 1870 Federal Census: Capt. John Parker, mariner, and Eliza W. Parker at 9 Sandwich Road

On December 4, 1876, Eliza died. She was only 43 years old. She had no children.



Figure 35: Headstone of Eliza Ellis Parker, Old Bourne Cemetery

Captain Parker remarried a neighbor, Hannah Ellis Blackwell, on September 20, 1878. Prior to her marriage, Hannah boarded with Seth and Joanna Maxim, who were stonecutters.⁴ [See Map Figure 33: note location of Parker household juxtaposed to Maxim Household]. The wedding took place at 9 Sandwich Road.

At the time of his second marriage, John was 48 and his new bride was 42. They would have no children.

In 1889, tragedy struck. John's brother, Charles, was drowned in a tragic accident occasioned by the collision of a steamship and the schooner *Nelson Harvey* off of Providence, Rhode Island. Captain Charles owned and captained the schooner, which was carrying a cargo of bricks. "Not a soul survived the accident" leaving Charles's widow, Arabella, and their five children, to grieve. Also

lost was Seth Maxim's dog, Dandy, who was on the *Nelson Harvey* that fateful night.

Charles's widow (John's sister-in-law) Arabella brought suit against the steamship company. Testimony at trial established a case of "carelessness and negligence" given that the *Nelson Harvey's* lights were burning brightly and there was no explanation for the collision. The captain of the steamship had indeed been dismissed for incompetence. The jury awarded Widow Parker, who had previously received a \$5,000 "gift" from the company, an additional \$7,500 and costs. In 1893, for reasons that are not evident, the Rhode Island Supreme Court set aside the verdict and ordered a new trial. Ultimately, after many years of litigation, Arabella recovered nothing as the courts found that she had

⁴ "Uncle Seth" and "Aunt Joan" were well known figures in the community. Seth Maxim is credited with pioneering the cranberry industry in Monument. The cranberry business soon took off. He also was a fur trapper of some fame.

agreed to final settlement when she accepted the \$5,000 gift from the owners of the steamship.

This case was a sensational news story on the Cape and it certainly affected the mood at 9 Sandwich Road (given that the litigation dragged on for years and Charles's body was never recovered). Nonetheless, John and Hannah weathered the storms and carried on with their lives. At the turn of the century, John's unwed brother Calvin and Seth Maxim joined them in the 9 Sandwich Road household.

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|------------------------|------|---|---------------|---------------|-------|-------|
| 48 | 54 | Parker John M. WM 57 | | 1 | Yelan | Massachusetts | Mass. | Mass. |
| | | Hannah E. W.F. 43 | Wife | 1 | Boysing House | Massachusetts | Mass. | Mass. |
| 49 | 35 | Parker Kara A. W.F. 37 | | 1 | Boysing House | Massachusetts | Mass. | Mass. |

Figure 36: 1880 Federal Census: John and Hannah at 9 Sandwich Road

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|-------------------|---------|------|----|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|---|-----|-----|-----|---|---|
| 18 | 20 | Parker John M. 57 | Head | 1833 | 67 | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | Mariner | 4 | yes | yes | yes | 0 | 4 |
| | | Hannah E. | Wife | 1836 | 63 | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | | | | | | | |
| | | Calvin M. | Brother | 1829 | 28 | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | Carpenter | 3 | yes | yes | yes | | |
| | | Seth Maxim | Brother | 1827 | 36 | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | Wood Dealer | 1 | yes | yes | yes | | |
| | | Calvin M. | Brother | 1829 | 28 | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | Carpenter | 3 | yes | yes | yes | | |

Figure 37: 1900 Federal Census: John, Hannah, brother Calvin, and Seth Maxim at 9 Sandwich Road

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|----------------|---------|------|----|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------|---------|-----------|---|-----|-----|-----|----|---|
| 101 | 105 | Parker John H. | Head | 1830 | 81 | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | English | Retired | Mariner | W | yes | yes | yes | 0 | 4 |
| | | Hannah E. | Wife | 1836 | 74 | Massachusetts | Canada (ing) | Massachusetts | English | none | | W | yes | yes | yes | | |
| 102 | 107 | Calvin M. | Head | 1829 | 71 | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | Massachusetts | English | none | | W | yes | yes | yes | | |
| | | William D. | Brother | 1836 | 64 | Massachusetts | New York | Massachusetts | English | Shopper | Shoemaker | W | yes | yes | yes | 11 | 4 |

Figure 38: 1910 Census John and Hannah at 9 Sandwich Road

By 1911, John was 81 years of age and Hannah was in her seventies. By deed dated February 16, 1911, Hannah and John sold the northeasterly half of the house to Betsey D. Keene and maintained a life estate in the remainder. [Barnstable County Record of Deeds Book 306/Page 494]. Four years later, Captain John Parker died on October 13, 1915, from arterial sclerosis followed by general loss of strength. Hannah would live another five years at the Perry-Ellis-Keene house until she died, in 1920, at the age of 83.



Figure 39: Headstone of Captain John Parker

The Third Family: THE KEENES (but still Ellis)

In 1911, Warren Keene and family moved to the residence of Captain John Parker. Both Warren and his wife, Betsey D. Hamblen Keene, were Ellises. Betsey was a direct descendant of Almira Crocker Ellis (her mother) and David Smith Ellis (her grandfather). David Smith Ellis was also the father of Eliza W. Ellis: the first wife of Captain John Parker, documented earlier. Accordingly, Betsey was a direct descendant of Elnathan Ellis, brother of Abiel Ellis, who moved the house across the street to its current location at 9 Sandwich Road.



Figure 40: Betsey D. Hamblen

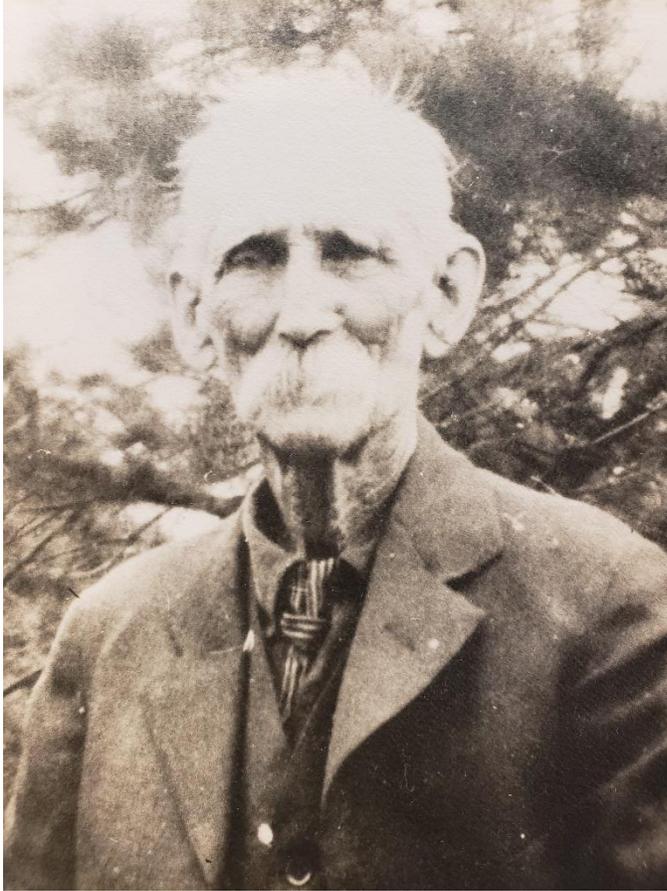


Figure 41: Warren Keene

Betsey and Warren had three daughters: (Shirley, Myra, and Thelma) and one son (Kenneth). Much has been written about Betsey Keene, so our discussion here will be brief(er).



Figure 42: Betsey with her children

In her early life, Betsey taught school. She was later associated with her husband in a dry goods business under the firm name of Eldridge Keene & Co., until the store was destroyed by a fire. Thereafter, both Warren and Betsey ran a wet wash laundry business in a building located west of the Keene House at 9 Sandwich Road.

| Year | Name | Relationship | Age | Sex | Color | Height | Weight | Marital Status | Occupation | Address | City | State | Zip |
|------|---------------|--------------|-----|-----|-------|--------|--------|----------------|------------|---------------|--------|-------|-------|
| 1920 | Warren Keene | Head | 47 | M | W | 5'8" | 176 | M | Laundry | 9 Sandwich Rd | Bourne | Mass | 01930 |
| 1920 | Betsey Keene | Wife | 47 | F | W | 5'7" | 120 | M | Laundry | 9 Sandwich Rd | Bourne | Mass | 01930 |
| 1920 | Shirley Keene | Daughter | 7 | F | W | 4'4" | 45 | S | None | 9 Sandwich Rd | Bourne | Mass | 01930 |
| 1920 | Myra Keene | Daughter | 7 | F | W | 4'4" | 45 | S | None | 9 Sandwich Rd | Bourne | Mass | 01930 |
| 1920 | Kenneth Keene | Son | 7 | M | W | 4'4" | 45 | S | None | 9 Sandwich Rd | Bourne | Mass | 01930 |

Figure 43: 1920 Federal Census: Main Street: Warren, Betsey and children (occupation Laundry)

About 1920, Betsey organized the Ladies Concert Band of Bourne, a 22-piece band, in which she played the trombone. The band travelled Massachusetts and was active for about ten years.

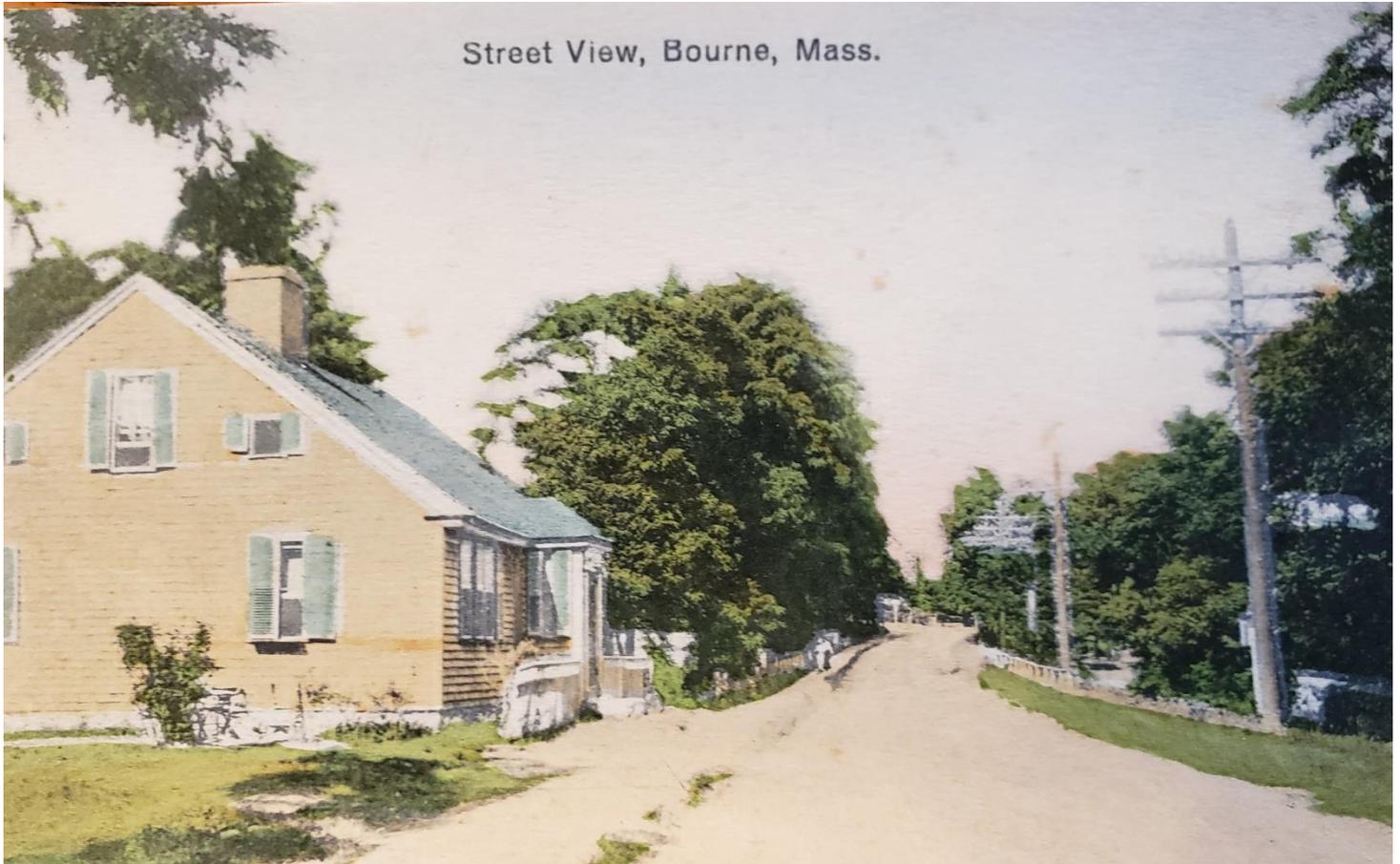


Figure 46: Vintage Postcard of Sandwich Road

Following her husband's death, Betsey Keene wrote and published her seminal book History of Bourne in 1937. To this day, it continues to be a tremendous resource for Bourne historians (indeed it was heavily relied upon to write this overview) and adds to the house's significance as the place where the book was researched and written.

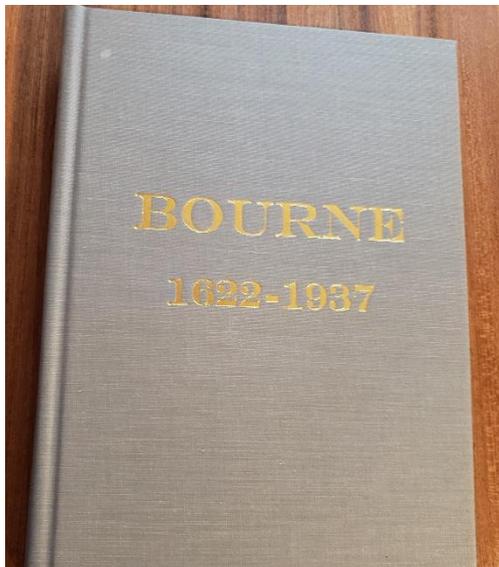


Figure 47: History of Bourne by Betsey Keene

Betsey continued to live the remainder of her life at 9 Sandwich Road with her daughters Myra and Thelma and her sister, Eliza P. Eldredge. Myra and Thelma both worked as telephone operators. Both daughters were very artistic, like their mother: talented musicians and photographers.

Betsey Hamblen Keene died on February 1, 1946 at the age of 83. Upon her death, her children inherited the house. Following a lengthy illness, daughter Myra died in 1960, survived by her siblings: Thelma (now DeCosta), Shirley (now Tucker) and Kenneth. Kenneth sold his one third interest to his sister

Thelma prior to his death on April 1, 1969. When Thelma died in 1985, her 2/3's interest was inherited by her nieces: Shirley's daughter (Julia Tucker) and Kenneth's daughter (Patricia McAliece). On August 27, 1969, Shirley sold her one third ownership to her daughter Julia [Barnstable County Record of Deeds, Book 1448/Page 433]. Julia Tucker now controlled a 2/3's interest in the house. Shirley would die in 1986.



Figure 48: Keene Headstone Old Bourne Cemetery

On January 15, 1987, Julia Tucker sold her 2/3's interest in the Perry-Ellis-Keene house to Patricia and Frederick J. McAliece of Tenafly, New Jersey for \$50,000. [Barnstable County Record of Deeds Book 5541/Page 306]. Patricia was the daughter of Kenneth; the granddaughter of Betsey Keene. Patricia and Frederick lived in the house until his death on January 20, 1996. Four years later, on November 2, 2000, Patricia sold the Perry-Ellis-Keene house to her three daughters Linda R. Davis, Nancy McAliece (who lived there until 2012) and Grace McAliece for “nominal consideration.” [Barnstable County Record of Deeds Book 13148/Page 312]. Patricia maintained a life estate in the property until her death on December 6, 2006. In 2013, the house was sold out of the Ellis family.

At the time of Patricia McAliece's death in 2006, Ellises had lived in the house for over 270 years. Today, in 2022, the Perry-Ellis-Keene house is one of the few surviving homes of such antiquity and by all accounts, the oldest existing house in Bourne. It is the only Perry house, built by Ezra Perry's four sons, still standing. Its foundation was laid and its ancient timber beams were raised by men who are considered the original European settlers of the Sandwich/Bourne/Monument area and can trace their lineage back to *The Mayflower* (and earlier). Those men married women, whose families were original settlers of other parts of the Cape: Yarmouth and Barnstable, in particular. Children born and raised in the house were heroes and patriots: fighting for freedom as far back as the Revolutionary War through the Civil War and both World Wars. Descendants of those children moved and settled throughout the country and include such well known figures as Franklin Delano Roosevelt and General Douglas MacArthur, both Ezra Perry descendants. Closer to home, the names Perry, Ellis, Swift, and Hamblen – families all directly linked to the house – still resonate as some of the most prominent and influential on Cape Cod. Now, this historic house stands on the brink of being demolished.



Figures 49 & 50: The Perry-Ellis-Keene House, 9 Sandwich Road, circa 1950

