

The
Descendants
of
**Thomas and Grace
Dennis**
of
Ipswich, Massachusetts

Based on the findings of

Demorris Boyd Williams
J. D. Ordway
Mary Dennis Pugh
Leora Wilson Drake
Mildred Cull Kimmel

Edited and arranged by
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INTRODUCTION

This account of the history of the Descendants of Thomas Dennis of Ipswich, Mass. was compiled by Mildred Cull Kimmel (Oct. 5, 1904–Sept. 16, 1985) from information collected by herself and several other Dennis descendants. Her primary sources were the notes of (1) Demorris Boyd Williams and (2) Leora Wilson Drake. (See the lineages of these three women below.) These notes and others are referred to in the footnotes, but are not included in this version, as they are not as well organized as the Kimmel manuscript, and some contain many handwritten notes.

To permit internet access, the manuscript was retyped. The data are included in the website www.DennisFamilyOnLine.com (a site listing all of the known Dennis descendants of Thomas and Grace Dennis, together with the children of Dennis women). No names were added to this document, but the website lists many more descendants, as well as information regarding their lives. A few corrections have been made where errors were obvious, but most of the information remains as originally written. Some of the tables were modified by listing more information on parents in the main heading, rather than vertically on the side of the page, and a name index was added to the manuscript to help the reader find persons of interest.

We hope that this information will be of use to those seeking information on this family.

Frank G. Dennis, Jr.
E. Lansing, Michigan
May 2009

Mildred Cull Kimmel⁹ (1904-1985) – Isadore Whitbeck Cull⁸ (1873-1960) – Louisa Dennis Whitbeck⁷ (1840-1924) – Robert Densmore Dennis⁶ (1814-1889) – Moses Dennis⁵ (1779- ?) – Arthur Dennis⁴ (1745-1825) - Rev. John Dennis³ (1708-1787) – John Dennis² (1673-1756/7) – Thomas Dennis¹ (1638-1706).

Demorris Boyd Williams⁹ (1892-1969) – Caroline Estelle Reynolds⁸ (1862-1939) – Philinda Elizabeth Watson⁷ (1834-1915) – Caroline Frances Dennis⁶ (1811-1872) – Samuel Dennis^{2nd5} (1776-1855) – Arthur Dennis⁴ (1745-1825) – (see Mildred Cull Kimmel lineage).

Leora Wilson Drake⁹ (1900-1982) – Ora F. Whittemore Wilson⁸ (1881-) – Marshall J. Whittemore⁷ (1857-) – Samuel J. Whittemore⁶ (1824-1860) – Parmelia Dennis Whittemore⁵ (1795-1858) – Moses Dennis⁴ (1750-1845) – Rev. John Dennis³ (1708-1787) – (see Mildred Cull Kimmel lineage).

“Leora was born May 7, 1900 in south Cameron, resided in Canisteo and vicinity her entire life, and although a busy housewife found time to become first Historian of Canisteo Village and Township for 32 years. She also did over three hundred genealogies, compiled cemetery records in the Canisteo area, was Registrar for DAR for twenty years, and collected Historic Accounts of the past.” [in Forward from *Col. Bill’s Tales*, by Leora Wilson Drake, 1984. Published by the Hartsville (N.Y.) Historical Society. “These stories first appeared in the Canisteo Times in 1949 & 1950 and were very popular at that time.”]

FOREWORD

This Dennis family record came about as a result of the efforts of many people over a period of a half a century or more. A word of explanation and appreciation is therefore in order.

First, the idea of a family record grew out of the interest which my mother, Isadore Whitbeck Cull -- a daughter of Louisa Dennis Whitbeck -- had in her own family. From early childhood I can recall hearing her tell with great affection about her "Grandpa" and "Grandma Dennis" whom she admired so very much. Visits to the homes of her aunts, uncles, and cousins afforded her some of her most enjoyable hours. While we children were growing up, at least once a year the whole family drove on a Sunday afternoon to Wallington for a visit with Aunt Rhoda (Dennis) Reynolds. If Mother's cousin, Grace, was not there, we made a trip to Sodus where she and her husband, John Riggs, lived. Years earlier "in the horse and buggy days" there was also a trip to Sodus Center to see Aunt Izzy (Isadore) Brower and poor, unfortunate, Taylor Brower. Once or twice we ventured as far as Oswego to spend the day with another cousin, Florence Dennis Hewitt, always a prime favorite.

These visits invariably led to reminiscences about members of the family, both living and dead. I heard about "Aunt Jewel"; "Pop Carl", the matchmaker; Uncle Spence and his ox team; and Aunt Lib Dennis, whose sleepless nights were spent baking and canning with a roaring fire in the kitchen even on the hottest day of summer to the annoyance of the rest of her household. Also, there were the tricks that Uncle Will Reynolds played on the girls, and the tricks that Mother and Florence played on him in return -- like putting red pepper in his chewing tobacco.

After my sisters married (they never did enjoy these visits as much as I did), and after my father died, it fell to me to continue these summer pilgrimages. Always a high point of a summer jaunt for my mother were the drives we took over the roads she had traveled as a girl, past the old homes of her friends and family -- past Grandpa Dennis' house which he had built (with its lead lined room for peppermint oil) -- where she had spent many happy childhood years. The house burned several years before my mother passed away, but she still was eager to drive past the place so full of memories. Usually there would be a stop at the Zurich or Brick Church Cemetery in Sodus Center, filled with many long-departed Dennises.

I came to look forward to these visits with my mother's relatives and plied both her and them with questions galore. In time I began to write down what I heard -- and thus this record had its beginning. My mother never really approved of putting anything in writing lest some offense be committed, unwittingly, or some unpleasantness be perpetuated. She was very reluctant to pass on any tale that in any way reflected on the good name of the person or the family. Better left untold was her philosophy.

But, this family history would never have come about had it not been for the generosity of a distant cousin in the Dennis family -- Demorris Boyd Williams, of Martinsburg, West Virginia. I had met Demorris many years ago at Florence Hewitt's when she was attending Oswego Normal School, and I was a gawky kid of ten or twelve. We had absolutely nothing in common then. But through Grace Wrates, I had known that she went on to teach school, married Samuel Williams, and had become intensely interested in genealogy.

In the 1940s we chanced to meet in Sodus at Grace Wrate's and the conversation turned to our mutual family history. At the time, I was endeavoring to locate a Revolutionary War record in my father's family -- the Penoyar line -- and she offered to be of what assistance she could. Then she told me that we had a Revolutionary ancestor on the Dennis line which was a complete surprise to both my mother and to me. She sent me Arthur Dennis' records which she had used in the D.A.R., and which I later used when I joined that organization. My mother expressed great surprise that she had never heard her grandfather (Robert D. Dennis) mention anything about his grandfather being in the Revolution. Since he was involved only eleven days during the Lexington-Concord fight, Arthur Dennis probably did not feel any special claim to fame. He had done his duty as any other man would have done, and did so, under the circumstances, then returned home to his wife and five children.

Over the years, Demorris and I have corresponded and during the 1950s she sent me a complete copy of all of her Dennis records, which make up the major portion of this history. All that I have done has been to use her notes and recast them in narrative form for the biographical sketches, and reorganize them according to the plan of my record. (See her complete notes in the Appendix.)

Living in Martinsburg, so close to Washington, D.C., she made frequent trips to the libraries and archives there where she did research in all branches of her own family. In fact, she eventually came to do research for others, professionally. In pursuit of information about the Dennis family, she and her husband made several trips into Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine where she spent weeks and traveled miles searching census records, deeds and vital records in the court houses and libraries wherever members of the family had lived. It was from her research that we first learned of the early ancestors of the Dennis family. Demorris had gathered the data on Thomas and Grace Dennis, and their descendants which is found in this record -- all of whom had lived in Ipswich, Massachusetts. Imagine my feelings when I learned that on a trip through New England several years earlier my mother and two nieces had spent the night in a motel in Ipswich, without realizing that we were scarcely a stones throw from the graves of Thomas and Grace Dennis and their home on County Road. (Thomas and Grace Dennis are the very earliest known ancestors of mine in any branch of my family -- they were among the earliest settlers in the country, as a matter of fact.)

Not only did Mrs. Williams fill in our Dennis background, but she also made available pages of her research in other lines into which members of the Dennis family had married -- the Fowlers, Spragues, Goodhues, The Barnes and Bartletts and others. Some of these lines extend back into England to the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066 A.D.

In 1957 my husband, Leroy F. Kimmel, and I took a trip into New England and spent some time in Ipswich. We came upon the old North Burial Yard, parked our car on High Street, and set off to see if we could locate some old family graves. Before we had reached the cemetery gate, we were greeted by the friendly voice of Bernie Spencer who lived on High Street across from the cemetery. He spotted us as tourists and offered his help -- as he had many others who, like ourselves, had Ipswich backgrounds. He proved to be most helpful in locating the graves of Grace and Thomas Dennis and their son, Thomas -- all of whose stones are in an excellent state of preservation. Grace Dennis was buried there in 1686 -- nearly three hundred years ago. One of the stones was lying on the ground and a swarm of yellow jackets had made their nest underneath it. When we attempted to raise the stone to take a picture, they resented the intrusion violently. "That will teach you to let your ancestors lie", was my husband's smug observation. (The stone was reset on our next trip to Ipswich.) Bernie Spencer has been a valuable source of information ever since -- sending the picture of the Thomas Dennis house on County Road (see

the article on T. Dennis) and the newspaper accounts of 17th Century Day activities in 1958 which featured the craftsmanship of Thomas Dennis. (See T. Dennis)

Another person who has contributed in a major way to a third section of this family record is Mr. J. D. Ordway of Jasper, who, as a boy had lived with and worked for Franklin and Frye Dennis near that small Steuben County village. I never knew Mr. Ordway, and learned of his Dennis family record long after he had died. When I came to teach in Hornell, I became aware that there were many Dennis families here, not only in the city, but also in Canisteo, Jasper, Cameron and the surrounding small hamlets. There is a Dennis Avenue in Hornell. In looking up the Steuben County History, I became aware that at one time there had been many prominent people in the city of that name -- Rodney Dennis, attorney on Main Street; Frank Dennis, proprietor of a saw mill and lumber dealer; Eugene Dennis, carpenter; and others. My curiosity became aroused -- could these people in some way be connected with our Dennis line? Numerous inquiries to find knowledgeable persons in the family led me to Mrs. Ida Dennis, widow of Truman Dennis who lived in the city. She had a copy of Mr. Ordway's family record and was willing to loan it to be copied. Imagine my surprise when I learned that the progenitor of the Steuben County family was none other than Moses Dennis of New Hampshire, a brother of our Arthur -- and that we had the same Ipswich beginnings. As a matter of fact, the little settlement north of the village of Jasper was known as Hampshire.

During the 1960s I made the acquaintance of a descendant of the Jasper Dennis family -- Mrs. Leora Wilson Drake, the historian for the village of Canisteo. We have visited at length about our common ancestry, and exchanged notes. Her notes contain some information about the early Dennis family in Ipswich that is not found in Mrs. William's notes. This I have incorporated into my account. She had received considerable material from a cousin -- Mrs. Mary Dennis Pugh of Buffalo. Some of Mrs. Pugh's material was the result of her own research, and some was the work of a paid genealogist. Unfortunately, neither gives the sources of their information so that their work cannot be verified.

One final word to all who are interested in the Dennis family. My niece, Joyce Carpenter Judson, and her family spent several summers in Brunswick, Maine during the 1960s, while her husband attended summer school at Bowdoin College. While there, Joyce and her daughters visited the Bowdoin Museum on the campus and to their amazement came upon a chair which once belonged to the Dennis family of Ipswich. According to the Museum's bulletin the chair is "reputed to have been carved in England in 1630 and brought to America about 1635 by ancestors of the Dennis family of Ipswich, Massachusetts. Mr. Luke V. Lockwood, however, believes that it is American, and the finest oak chair of its type in the country. Because of the association with Ipswich of President McKeen, the first head of the College, the chair has been used for many years by the President of the College in presiding over the commencement exercises." The "President's Chair", as it is known, was given in 1872 by Mr. E. Wilder Farley of Newcastle, Maine.

In 1968, my husband and I made a trip to Maine for the express purpose of seeing and taking pictures of this famous chair. We found that the Museum has on loan two carved chests which were made by Thomas Dennis, and an ornately carved tape loom. We were able to take pictures of the chair and the chests, but the loom was in a glass case, lying flat down, (the only article in the case), in such a position that a picture was impossible. An experience such as this is one of the thrills and rewards that come but once in a great while to those who do genealogical research.

The charts and the hand made maps are mine, and the organization of the material as well as the narrative is mine. The factual material is pretty much the work of others, to whom I am most grateful. The plan which I have followed in brief has been to cover as thoroughly as possible the first four generations of the descendants of Thomas Dennis in Section I. Beyond that point, only two lines have been traced to the present time -- namely the descendants of Arthur Dennis and those of his brother, Moses Dennis. These two men (or at least their families) came into New York State about the same time -- after the Revolution -- to seek new homes and fortunes -- pioneers in another American frontier.

Mildred Cull Kimmel

August 1968

HOW TO USE THIS GENEALOGY

This genealogy is arranged in sections and chapters by generations – 1st generation in Chapter I, and 2nd generation in Chapter II. Thus all of the sons and daughters of an individual are treated in one chapter, followed by the children of his (her) brothers and sisters, since they all belong to the same generation. The chapters are grouped into sections based upon geographic location of branches of the family – i.e., Ipswich, Massachusetts, Maine, Wayne County, N. Y., etc.

Preceding each name in the family record are two numbers separated by a hyphen (i.e., 5-25). The first number indicates the generation to which the individual belongs, beginning with Thomas Dennis, who as the oldest known person in the family is 1-1, the “pater familiae”, so to speak. His children belong to the second generation, and are to be found in Chapter II. The oldest child in the second generation hence is 2-1, and the youngest child is 2-3, since Thomas and Grace Dennis had but three children. In the third generation, the oldest child of the oldest son (or daughter) becomes 3-1, and the second grandchild becomes 3-2, etc. Brothers and sisters follow one another in the order of their birth, followed later by their cousins, etc.

These numbers are the means of individual identification and are found wherever mention of an individual is made – preceding his name in his biographic sketch, on the upper-right corner of each page of such biographic sketch, in the index and on all charts. To trace a person in this record, locate his name on one of the several charts. By means of his generation and individual number, you will be able to find him in the narrative. Here also you will learn his father’s (or mother’s) generation number, as well as the identification numbers of his children. Thus Arthur Dennis, 4-5 is the son of Rev. John Dennis, 3-5, and the father of Moses Dennis, 5-6, and others.

An “X” placed in front of a number indicates that nothing further is known about this person beyond the entry so marked, and his/her line is dropped henceforth. Biographic sketches can be found for all numbers not so marked. Refer often to the charts.

“My beloved son,
in whom I find the best of all who have gone before.
May this ancestral history be of interest
As a record of the lives that have gone into the
making of your life, afford you
fuller understanding of the traits of mind
and heart which are your inheritance,
and inspire you to greater heights.
With dearest love and fondest hopes,
Mother”

To Lyndon B. Johnson from his mother, Christmas, 1954.

SECTION I

IPSWICH, ESSEX COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS HOME OF THE EARLY DENNIS FAMILY

No other town in the New England area, in fact in all of colonial America, was so closely associated for so many years with the Dennis family as was Ipswich, Massachusetts. Here Thomas Dennis settled in 1667 and here he lived, worked and died. For three generations his descendants continued to call it home, intermarried with some of the leading families of the area (Willcombs, Kinsmans, Goodhues, Fowlers and many others). From Ipswich the younger generations fanned out into regions to the north and west -- to Maine, New Hampshire and eventually to New York State. Although none of the family are among the great names of the early days of our history, they were good solid citizens of the town, intimately associated with the momentous events which took place in this most significant section of our country.

Ipswich, Massachusetts lies about thirty miles north of Boston, approximately midway between Salem and Gloucester. The following account taken from the brochure prepared for Seventeenth Century Day in 1956 tells of its early history.

“Ipswich was one of the earliest towns in the Bay Colony; it was settled in 1633, only three years after Boston. To avoid the deep forests, the journey here was probably made in a shallop skirting the coast. The first houses were “wigwams, huts and hovels” built against the hillside near what is now the town wharf.

“Agowamme (as the Indians called their village here) is nine miles to the north of Salem, which is one of the most spacious places for a plantation being near the sea, it aboundeth with fish, and flesh of fowls and beasts, great Meads and Marshes and plaine plowing grounds, many good rivers, and harbours and no rattle snakes.” (from the New England Prospect. A true, lively and experimental description of that part of America, commonly called New England by William Wood, London, 1634.) Indians who roamed the Eastern seacoast prior to the coming of white men knew Agawam as a favorable situation for their way of life. Great mounds of shells overlaid with soil and vegetation tell us they came here to enjoy the seafood.

“To this outpost came the most extraordinary of pioneer groups. Before 1633, transient fishermen and trappers had come here to live, but they were considered squatters and their claims disallowed by the Massachusetts Bay Colony. ‘The peopling of this town is by men of good ranke and quality, many of them having the yearly revenue of large lands in England before they came to the wilderness.’ In March 1633, John Winthrop, Jr. came by shallop up the river with twelve men to start the permanent settlement. In August 1634, the town was incorporated and given the name Ipswich.

“Shortly there was a meeting house and the rocky slope several minutes walk up from the river became known as Meeting House Hill. There was undoubtedly a stockade enclosing the meeting house and the watch house. The present edifice of the First Church, built in 1846, is the fifth structure erected on or near the original site. The curfew which sounds each night from the bell tower has been rung for more than three hundred years.

“At the foot of another slope one-half mile to the northeast of the Meeting House, land was set off for a burying ground. Here lie buried, some marked and many unmarked, the founders of the town and many instrumental in shaping the destiny of New England. (Among the graves are those of Thomas and Grace Dennis -- 1686 and 1706, respectively.) The stones

themselves are excellent examples of early folk art in terms of stone-carving. One especially, that of the Rev. Nathaniel Rogers, constitutes one of the few early examples of American sculpture, in that it is a portrait stone.

“Many of the nearly forty buildings now standing in Ipswich which are the first period of American architecture (built before 1725) can now be seen along these venerable streets. (High and East Street) Sturdy and functional, they were not the homes of a leisured class. Most of them originally had but two rooms, at the most four. Sharp-pitched roofs and broad chimneys are outward evidences of antiquity which additions and renovations throughout three hundred years of unbroken occupancy do not conceal. The additions were often lean-tos, and so developed the ‘salt-box’ look. ‘Their houses are many of them very faire built with pleasant Gardens and Orchards.’ (Edward Johnson, 1654.)

“Small and simple, built with the materials and skills at hand, these are frontier houses. Yet within their range, they are not only sturdy but varied and lovely. The gunstock posts and overhang, suggestive of medieval houses; the fabulously wide boards, suggestive of the virgin forests which stood nearby; the blending of form and function, austerity and beauty, strength and solidity, suggestive of the Puritan mind, all combine to give a startling impression of the world of the builders. And, oddly enough, these old houses are more adapted to modern living than many later and more elegant mansions. Designed for housewives with little except family assistance, centering on a warm family hearth, battened against the cold north and turning toward the southern sun, they are, with reasonable adaptations, still valid, economically, socially and architecturally, in our own world.

“Many of the houses open today were the first permanent homes of the settlers. There are many others in Ipswich dating in part at least to the seventeenth century -- more than in any other American town. Standing under huge elms, they reveal their age in sharp pitch of roof, in unexpected breadth of chimney.

“Today on High Street you will find several important sites marked. One marker tells something of lace-making in Ipswich. First it was made on pillows with pins and bobbins. Later a fine net was made by machinery and a design worked or ‘darned’ in by hand. The Ipswich Historical Society has prepared an exhibit of Ipswich lace and related materials which may be seen in the Whipple house. Another marker calls attention to the site of the home of Anne Bradstreet, the first American poetess. Anne’s husband, Simon Bradstreet, served the people of the Bay Colony for sixty two years as a Magistrate. Her father, Thomas Dudley, was Governor of the Colony in 1635, 1640, 1645 and 1650. The site of the home in which he lived in 1635 to 1639 is also indicated by a marker. While Ipswich has lost venerable houses to the Metropolitan Museum, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and the Concord Antiquarian Society, there still remains within the limits of the town more of the 17th Century than in the entire state of Connecticut. In 1828 Mary Lyon came to Ipswich to teach in the Ipswich Female Seminary, a famous and successful school for girls which stood on the site now occupied by the Christian Science Church near the Meeting House Hill on the right. Here she developed the plan for the higher education for women which later bore fruit in Mt. Holyoke College of which she was the founder.

“Most brilliant of Ipswich’s scholars was Nathaniel Ward, lawgiver, wit, preacher and poet, who drew up the Body of Liberties, our first code of fundamental laws, foreshadowing the Declaration of Independence.”

An episode in the Ipswich history, “The Great Ipswich Fright” by John Greenleaf Whittier, which may be found among Whittier’s historical writings, begins with the sentence: ‘The Memorable part of the story is this description of Ipswich. About midway between Salem and the ancient town of Newburyport, the traveler on the Eastern Railroad sees on the right, between him and the sea, a tall church spire, rising above a semicircle of brown roofs and venerable elms; to which a long scalloping range of hills, sweeping off to the seaside, forms a green background. This is Ipswich, the ancient Agawam; one of those steady, conservative villages, of which a few are still left in New England, wherein a contemporary of Cotton Mather and Governor Endicott, were he permitted to revisit the scenes of his painful probation, would scarcely feel himself a stranger.

Law and Gospel, embodied in an orthodox steeple and a court house, occupy the steep, rocky eminence in its midst; below runs the small river under its picturesque stone bridge; and beyond is the famous female seminary where Andover theological students are wont to take unto themselves wives of the daughters of the Puritans.

An air of comfort and quiet broods over the whole town. Yellow moss clings to the seaward sides of the roofs; one’s eyes are not endangered by the intense glare of painted shingles and clapboards. The smoke of hospitable kitchens curls up through the overshadowing elms from huge-throated chimneys, whose hearth-stones have been worn by the feet of many generations.’ (From Ipswich Chronicle, August 7, 1958.)

“Eugene Field sensed something of the stories the old town could tell when he wrote the following (From “Historic Ipswich”, published by the Ipswich Chamber of Commerce.):

‘In Ipswich nights are cool and fair
And the voice that comes from the yonder sea
Sings to the quaint old mansions there
Of the time, the time that used to be.’

Chart 1. FIVE GENERATIONS OF THE DESCENDANTS OF THOMAS DENNIS AND GRACE SEARLES OF IPSWICH, MASSACHUSETTS

2-1 Thomas 1670	x3-1 Thomas 1701	x4-1 Thomas 1733	x5-1 John (d. young) 1774
		x4-2 Martha 1735	5-2 Salome 1775
		x4-3 Lydia 1737	5-3 John 1780
		x4-4 Sarah 1739	x5-4 Martha 1782
	x3-2 Lydia 1701	4-5 John 1741 mar. S. Hodgkins	x5-5 John & Martha ? x5-6 Martha ? 5-7 Elizabeth 1785 5-8 Thomas 1787 x5-9 Lydia 1794
	x3-3 Elisabeth 1704		
	3-4 Thomas 1706 mar. M. Kinsman	4-6 Joseph 1743 mar. H. Rogers	x5-10 Joseph 1768 x5-11 Hannah 1771 x5-12 Martha 1775
		x4-7 Nathaniel 1744	x5-13 Abigail 1764
		x4-8 Nathaniel 1747	x5-14 William 1768
		x4-9 Sarah 1749	x5-15 Thankful 1768
		x4-10 David 1751	x5-16 Martha 1775
		x4-11 John 1737	x5-17 Hannah 1773
2-2 JOHN* 1672/3 m. Lydia White		x4-12 Martha 1738	x5-18 Henry 1777
		x4-13 Lucy 1740	x5-19 Elizabeth 1780
		x4-14 William 1741/44	5-20 Arthur 1768
			5-21 Mary 1769
			5-22 John 1771
			5-23 Sarah 1773
			5-24 Samuel 1775
	3-5 REV. JOHN * 1708, m. M. Willcomb	4-15 ARTHUR * 1745 m. M. Goodhue	5-25 Samuel 1776
			5-26 MOSES * 1779
			5-27 Lucy 1781
			5-28 Patty 1783
			5-29 Frances 1784
			5-30 William 1787
			5-31 Joseph 1789
			5-32 Rodney Gove 1750
		x4-16 Elizabeth 1748	5-33 Moses 1782
			5-34 Salley 1784
			5-35 Patty 1786
	x3-6 William 1710	4-17 MOSES 1750 m. S. Frye	5-36 Samuel 1788
			5-37 Betsey 1790
x2-3 Elizabeth 1675 m. E. Hovey		x4-18 Rebecca	5-38 William 1792
			x5-39 John 1793
			x5-40 Parmelia 1795

NOTE: Names preceded by an "x" are discontinued after this generation. No more is known about them. Beyond the fifth generation only three lines are followed in this family record – the descendants of John Dennis (4-5), Sect. II; the descendants of Arthur Dennis (4-15), Sect. III; and the descendants of Moses Dennis (4-17), Sect. IV. * Asterisks indicate author's direct line of descent.

CHAPTER I

THOMAS DENNIS, of IPSWICH, MASS.

1-1 THOMAS DENNIS

Son of unknown parents

- b. ca 1638 Portsmouth, New Hampshire (1), (2)
- d. May 23, 1706 Ipswich, Massachusetts (1)
- bur. Old North Burial Yard, Ipswich, Massachusetts (3)

1st Married: Grace Searles (widow) on October 26, 1668, Ipswich (1)

- b. ca. 1636 (2)
- d. October 26, 1686 (1) Ipswich, Mass.
- bur. Old North Burial Yard, Ipswich, Mass. (1)

2nd Married: Sarah _____ ? _____ (1)

- b.
- d.
- bur.

Children of Thomas and Grace Searles Dennis: (1), (2)

- | | | | |
|-----|------------------|---------------------|---------|
| 2-1 | Thomas Dennis | b. Nov. 30, 1669/70 | Ipswich |
| 2-2 | John Dennis | b. Sept. 22, 1672/3 | Ipswich |
| 2-3 | Elizabeth Dennis | b. 1675 | Ipswich |

Thomas Dennis of Ipswich, Massachusetts is the earliest known ancestor of the branches of the Dennis family with which this record deals. Early records of the town of Ipswich state that he was born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire about 1638. (1) However, his great-grandson settled in Litchfield, Maine and the History of Litchfield in its accounts of the family states that Thomas Dennis was born in Portsmouth in 1630. (2) In light of the settlements made in the area north of Boston, the later date -- 1638 -- seems the more likely one. A quick look at the history of the Massachusetts Bay Colony tells of several unsuccessful attempts to establish fishing stations north shore. Then in 1628 a group of persons in England, mostly puritans, obtained a grant of land extending from the Merrimack River to the Charles River. -- About forty men were sent over who settled in Salem. (Some accounts claim that Salem was settled as early as 1626.) --- Religious persecutions, heavy taxes, together with the harsh rule of Charles I led - in August 1629 to an agreement by a dozen persons to go to New England with their families and belongings. --- In 1630 seventeen vessels, carrying more than a thousand colonists landed in Boston. --- During the troubled period of the 1630's in England, ships carrying twenty thousand more colonists came to the Massachusetts Bay." (4) Thus, although we know nothing of the parents of Thomas Dennis, it is obvious that they were among the early arrivals in the area. If we accept the 1630 birthdate, which may well be founded upon the fond recollection of his great-grandson, rather than upon fact, the family were indeed among the early settlers on these shores. Even the 1638 date, in New Hampshire, places them and their infant son among the first residents of what was then frontier America, where life was rough and full of danger from unfriendly Indians.

(1) History of Ipswich, Massachusetts, see Appendix for the records of D. B. Williams
 (2) History of Litchfield, Maine. See Appendix for the records of L. W. Drake
 (3) Record on the Tombstone in Old North Burial Yard – clearly legible. (4)
 Our Country 's History, by Davis S. Muzzey.

Thomas Dennis spent his childhood and youth in Portsmouth, N.H. It was not until he was about thirty years old -- and unmarried -- that he went to Ipswich to live in 1667-8.(1) Several years before he made his home there, he began buying land in Ipswich. The earliest mention of him found in the town records is that on September 28, 1663, he bought land and a house from Mr. William Searles. (2) Again in 1664, he bought more land in Ipswich. "On April 26, 1664, Thomas Dennis of Portsmouth, N. H. sold to Richard Cutt and Elinore, his wife, land lying 'neere Strawberry Bankfield'" (3). After moving to Ipswich, he continued to buy land. In 1668, he bought land on Strawberry Bank and in 1671, Robert Dutch sold Thomas Dennis part of his house and lot. (4) Then, on June 20, he bought a half acre of land on Brook Street. (5) This property remained in the family for several years after his death. His son John Dennis owned it in 1708, and an Ensign Dennis owned it in 1739. (4) "On September 4, 1685, Thomas Dennis sold land and a house in Portsmouth, N.H. to John Shipway" (1). This may have been property belonging to his father which he had inherited. That same year, he bought a house and land on the corner of County and Summer Streets in Ipswich (6). The County Road property, as we shall see later, is most closely associated with Thomas Dennis in the minds of the people of Ipswich. The house, which is still in existence, has been cared for by the Ipswich Historical Society and is regarded as one of their rare 17th century treasures.

Thomas Dennis did not marry until after he moved to Ipswich. He was thirty years old, or thereabouts, when he married Grace, the widow of William Searles on October 26, 1668 (1). Mr. Searles had died on August 16, 1667 and Thomas Dennis was made the administrator of his estate (1). This seems to indicate that the two had been good friends. In 1664, William Searles owned a share of Plum Island, and upon his death deeded all of his property to his wife, Grace (4). They had one son, William Searles, Jr., born November 22, 1665. (He was a carpenter and worked on the meeting house in 1683.) Grace Searles was born about 1636, but her maiden name, the names of her parents, and the place of her birth are not known (4). Thomas and Grace Dennis were the parents of three children, all born in Ipswich: (1) Thomas, born in 1669/70; John, born in 1672/3; and Elizabeth, born in 1675. These children seem to have lived in Ipswich all, or most of, their lives.

Thomas Dennis served the communities in which he lived in both a civil and a military capacity, first in New Hampshire, and later in Ipswich, Mass. The records state that he signed the Portsmouth Petition on October 9, 1665 (4). He was constable of Portsmouth, N.H. on October 20th, 1665 when Mr. Abraham Corbitt was summoned to appear because he tried to stir up the

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- (1) History of Ipswich, Mass. See Appendix for D. B. Williams notes.
 - (2) Ipswich Town Records. See Appendix for notes of D.B.W. and L. W. Drake
 - (3) Concord Historical Library, vol. 3 – p. 15b (D.B.W.)
 - (4) Records of Leora W. Drake in the Appendix
 - (5) Ipswich Deeds – 4-123 (L.W.D.)
 - (6) Ipswich Deeds – 5-133 (L.W.D.)

people against George (1). He was a petit juror at the court of Dover (New Hampshire) on June 25, 1667 (2). After moving to Ipswich he served there also as constable and collector for seven years (1685-1692) (3). "A list of persons who have the right of cummage according to law and order of the town" on February 13, 1678 included the name of Thomas Dennis. He was not a voter in town affairs, however. (4) His interest in the religious life of the community can be seen from the fact that on "June 17, 1680 Thomas Dennis with others has the liberty to raise the hindmost seat on the north west side of the meeting house two feet higher than it is now for their wives to sit in, having the approbation of the Deacons." (5)

Thomas Dennis saw service in King Philips terrible war (6). It appears that he served two hitches of short duration - probably at times when the Indians were an imminent threat to the Ipswich settlers. He was with the Marlboro Garrison on June 24, 1676; and on August 24th of that year with the Garrison of Ipswich. The record states that he accepted , L1-5s- 6d for his services (4).

Thomas Dennis was a Joiner by trade as the plaque at No. 10 Colony Street proclaims. "The Builder's Dictionary describes carpentry as 'the Art of cutting, framing, and joining large Pieces of Wood for the Uses of Building -- The Rules and Practices in Carpentry, are much the same with those of Joinery -- and so also are the Tools or Instruments used by them, and likewise the Stuff or Materials. All the Difference between the two Arts consists in this, that Carpentry is used in the larger, stronger and coarser work and Joinery in the small and more curious.'" (7) The article goes on to say that "an outstanding master of the 'curious' branch of art was Thomas Dennis of Ipswich, who calls himself 'joiner'. We know too little about this craftsman of whom in 1679 one Grace Stout bought a carved box with a drawer in it and to whom only a few pieces can be attributed on absolutely safe grounds. The years during which he worked, however, coincide with a period of unusually rich embellishment in the finish detail of Ipswich houses, and it is tempting to believe that this joiner may have been responsible for the work." (7) The author attempts to point out that Samuel McIntire was beyond a doubt greatly influenced by men in his craft in the neighboring towns, for example, Thomas Dennis.

As in all other crafts, a certain occupation would carry from one generation to the next in a single family, as the expression descended of a family of carpenters." The family of Thomas Dennis was no exception. "In the Essex Institute of Salem, Mass. is an oak chair of the time of Queen Elizabeth, one of a set of four belonging to the Farley Family of Ipswich, brought to this country in 1635 by the first emigrants of the Dennis family and presented to the Essex Historical

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- (1) Provincial papers of New Hampshire, vol. I 1623-86, p 280 (D.B.W.)
This could hardly have been King George I who did not come to the throne until 1714.
 - (2) Concord Historical Library, Vol. II, p. 128b. (D.B.W.)
 - (3) History of Litchfield, Maine. See Appendix – D.B.W. notes
 - (4) Records of the town of Ipswich See Appendix – L.W.D. notes
 - (5) History of Ipswich, Mass. See Appendix – L.W.D. notes
 - (6) "We are eligible for the society of Colonial Wars and The Daughters of American Colonists on the record of Thomas Dennis." D.B.W. NOTES
 - (7) Quoted from the North Shore Town Crier, August 31, 1966 – an article by Abbott Lowell Cummings, "Samuel McIntire and His Sources", p. 13.

Society to be used by Dr. E. A. Holyoke, the president.” (1) Also, in the Bowdoin Museum in Brunswick, Maine is an elaborately carved chair which belonged to Thomas Dennis of Ipswich. A plaque tells that the Dennis family brought it from England. There are other items in the collection of Dennis articles at Bowdoin, among them a hand loom. (2)

Although Thomas Dennis lived more than 300 years ago, examples of his skill and artistry are to be found, not only in museums, but also in private collections throughout New England. On 17th Century Day in Ipswich in 1958, a number of articles were loaned for display to the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. The following notes from the Ipswich Chronicle are of interest in this connection: (3)

“At the Preston-Foster House, also owned by the society (SPNEA), a rare exhibition of oak furniture made by Thomas Dennis, an early Ipswich joiner, the pieces lent by neighboring historical societies, private owners among others, will be on exhibition.”

“Included in the exhibit to be shown at the Emerson House on Turkey Street will be a carved Desk Box (sometimes called a writing or reading box) owned by the Rowley Historical Society will be on loan for the day. According to an article that appeared in the Antiques Magazine of February 1938 entitled ‘The Oak Furniture of Ipswich, Mass.’ by Irving Lyon, M.D., together with a photograph, this Desk Box is attributed to Thomas Dennis. The carving on the box is of letter-S shape. The article further relates ‘it is of Oak, pine bottom, with Till across the back, pine bottom. Lid a clumsy restoration, with marks on the back of the original staple hinges.’

“It was bought about 1906 from the Old Payson homestead in Rowley. Inside the box was found a copybook, dated 1827, of Thomas E. Payson, sixth in line from Reverend Edward Payson of Rowley, who married, 1683, Elizabeth, daughter of the Reverend Samuel Phillips of Rowley, and granddaughter of Samuel Appleton of Ipswich.

“It is of record that Rowley had other specimens of Thomas Dennis’ work. The Essex Institute also owns a Box front found in an old home in Rowley many years ago by Miss F.E.M. Dole.

“Also a ‘hope chest’ with the initials ‘M.P.’ on the brackets, now owned by the Essex Institute has a Rowley pedigree. This chest was inherited, together with a typical florid carved box from Benjamin Stickney and Mary Palmer, who were married in 1701 in Rowley. The record reveals that the chest bears the initials, before marriage, of Mary Palmer (born 1674) and the hall mark of Thomas Dennis. According to the Stickney family genealogy published in 1869, both pieces descended in the Stickney family to a

- (1) Notes of L.W.D. in Appendix
- (2) Notes of Joyce Carpenter, a Dennis, who was in Bowdoin for Summer School.
- (3) Ipswich Chronicle, August 7, 1958, special 17th Century Day edition. Parts of these articles are clipped and appended to this account.

great-great-grandson, Matthew Adams Stickney (1) and from him to his daughter, Lucy Adams Stickney, who left them by will to the Essex Institute.”

The house at No. 10 County Street bears a plaque which states that “Thomas Dennis, Joiner, lived here 1663-1706”. That Thomas Dennis owned property on County Street at the corner of Summer Street is clearly stated in the Ipswich deeds, (2) but the plaque is misleading in giving the impression that the present house at No. 10 was once the home where Thomas Dennis lived from 1663-1706. As noted earlier, Thomas Dennis did not settle in Ipswich until 1667, although he did begin to buy property there as early as 1663. The County Street property, which was not purchased until 1685, was not among his early possessions. Where he lived in Ipswich up until then is not clear - it may have been on Strawberry Bank, but more likely it was on Brook Street since this property remained in the family for three generations. (3)

In 1965, No. 10 County Street belonged to the Ipswich Heritage Trust, which was formed “to protect and preserve its old houses.” Ipswich claims to have more 17th and 18th century houses than any other community in America. In October, the Trust sponsored an Old House Fair in which eighteen early American (pre-Revolutionary) houses were open to the public -- many for the first time. Fifteen of them were for sale -- the Dennis house being one of them. Some of the houses were to be sold only if the buyer agreed to preserve unusual architectural features. According to the Trust, the Dennis house was built in the 1750's, but many original features are still intact today. In preparation for the sale some renovation work was done which revealed “the exquisite woodwork in the house, and the original brick in the fireplace. Upstairs where volunteers removed a tattered linoleum, they found traces of a hand painted rug, a geometric design with the original paint. --- Bands of green and red which simulated a carpet on the wide boards could still be seen. An expert in 17th century houses said that it was “one of the few such examples in existence, and that he had never before seen one like it.” (4)

The Heritage Trust refers to the house as the Col. Thomas Dennis house. Col. Dennis, who was the grandson of Thomas and Grace Dennis, was born in 1706 and lived in Ipswich until his death in 1771. He was married to Martha Kinsman, one of the old established families in Ipswich (see Thomas Dennis - 3-4 in this family record). The 1750 date on the house coincides with his sojourn in Ipswich, and he may very well have been the builder.

Grace Searles Dennis died in Ipswich on October 26, 1686 at the age of fifty. She is buried in the Old North Burial Yard on High Street, and was probably among the first to be buried there. Her grave is in the center of the cemetery on the right side of the path, below the first terrace.

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- (1) Matthew Adams Stickney is also the author of “The Descendants of Philip and Mary Fowler of Ipswich”, whose family is related to the Dennis family through the marriages of Sarah Fowler to Capt. Francis Goodhue; and of Mary Goodhue to Arthur Dennis.
 - (2) Ipswich Deeds, 5-133
 - (3) See p. 2 of this account of Thomas Dennis
 - (4) Ipswich Chronicle, October 28, 1965

The original stone bears the following inscription, which can be easily read even today: (1)

“Here lys the body of Mrs. Grace Dennis (wife of Mr. Thomas Dennis)

Who died October 24, 1686 Aged 50 years
Reader consider and thy
Redeemer seek
For in this bed a friend of
Christ doth sleep”

Thomas Dennis remarried. His second wife’s name was Sarah, but that is all that is known about her, except that she survived him, and on December 7, 1706 she married Capt. John How of Topsfield. (2)

Thomas Dennis lived to be sixty eight years old, or thereabouts, (assuming that he was born in 1638), and outlived his first wife by twenty years. He may have spent some of this time in Rowley, since he did at one time own property there. It may account for the fact that Rowley has so many examples of his work. He died in Ipswich on May 23, 1706, and is buried beside his wife, Grace Dennis and their son Thomas, in the old North Burial Yard. His stone reads: (3)

“Here lys buried the body of Thomas Dennis, aged about 68 years. Departed this life May 23rd, 1706.”

His stone, which was tipped over in 1956-7, but since righted, is also clearly legible. (4) Among the tour attractions in 1958 on 17th Century Day was the grave of Thomas Dennis. (see back of the map of Ipswich.)

- (1) Ipswich Vital Records, and History of Town of Litchfield, Maine. (D.B.W.) Tombstone Inscriptions North Burial Yard, Ipswich, Mass. p. 65F-6. Also the gravestone itself.
- (2) Ipswich Vital Records.
- (3) Vital Records of Ipswich, and History of Litchfield, Maine. (D.B.W.) “Tombstone Inscriptions, North Burial Yard, Ipswich, Mass. “ p. F, 7
- (4) Tombstone Record, North Burial Yard. When my husband and I visited this old burial Ground, we attempted to lift up the stone in order to get a picture of the inscription. A swarm of yellow jackets who had made their home beneath in the soft earth rose up in a mighty protest and we promptly forgot about the picture. A number of years later, we returned and found the stone had been reset, for which we were grateful.

Chapter II

The Second Generation – Children of Thomas and Grace Dennis

2-1 Thomas Dennis of Ipswich, Mass.

Son of Thomas Dennis (1-1) and Grace Searles Dennis

b. Nov. 30, 1670 Ipswich, Mass. (1)

b. Jan 23, 1702/3 (2) Ipswich, Mass. (2)

bur. Old North Burial Grounds Ipswich, Mass. (1)

Married: Elizabeth Green (2)

b. no data

Children of Thomas and Elizabeth Green Dennis (3)

x3-1 Thomas Dennis b. 1701

Thomas Dennis was the oldest child of Thomas Dennis (1-1) and Grace Searles Dennis. Since he is buried on the plot with his father and mother, we can assume that he lived in Ipswich, although his marriage and death are not recorded there. He died in 1702/3 when he was but thirty three years old, leaving his wife and son who was but a year old. His sister, Elizabeth, was made the administratrix of his estate, which was brought to probate in 1702 in Ipswich. A short inventory of his possessions is to be found in the Essex County Court records: a silver whistle, marsh walking staff, horse and man (?), gold rings, cotton and wool cloth were among the items. One third of his estate went to his wife. The rest, presumably went to the support of his infant son, who went “Down East with Elizabeth” – probably his aunt. (3) He was a joiner.

His stone in the Old North Burial Yard reads:

“Here lys ye Body of Thomas (son of Mr. Thomas and Grace Dennis) who died January ye 23, 1703 in ye 33 yeare of his age.”

2-2 John Dennis of Ipswich, Mass.

Son of Thomas Dennis (1-1) and Grace S. Dennis

b. Sept. 23, 1673 Ipswich, Mass. (3) (1)

d. May 13, 1756/7 (1)

bur. ?

1st Married: Lydia White on Aug. 31, 1699 (1)

b. Jan. 5, 1672 Ipswich, Mass. (2)

d. June 10, 1712 Ipswich, Mass.

bur. Old North Burial Yard, Ipswich, Mass. (1)

(1) See appendix – notes of Demorris B. Williams

(2) Ipswich Court Records

(3) Notes of L. W. Drake in appendix

An identification preceded by “x” means that the name will not appear again in the record – no information available.

2-2 John Dennis, cont.

2nd Married: Sarah Tuttle Ward June 21, 1713/6 (1), (2)
b. ?
c. 1756 (1)

Children of John and Lydia Dennis (2), (3)

x3-2	Lydia Dennis	b. Dec. 12, 1701	Ipswich, Mass.
x3-3	Elizabeth Dennis	b. Aug. 27, 1704	Ipswich, Mass.
3-4	Thomas Dennis	b. , 1706	Ipswich, Mass.
3-5	John Dennis	b. Nov. 3, 1708	Ipswich, Mass.
x3-6	William Dennis	b. , 1710	d. 1711

John Dennis was the second son of the three children born to Thomas and Grace S. Dennis. He was born and lived his entire life in Ipswich where he evidently followed his father's trade – a joiner or carpenter (1). One reference states that as early as 1697 – before he was married – he kept a good many horses on the commons (probably on Burch Island where he owned some common rights) (1).

John Dennis married twice – his first wife being Lydia White, the daughter of George and Lydia Lamson (Samson ?) White (4). John and Lydia Dennis had five children – two girls and three boys – all born in Ipswich: Lydia, Elizabeth, Thomas, John, and William who died in infancy. His stone in the Old North Burial Yard reads:

“Here lys ye Body of William, son of Mr. John and Lydia Dennis, who died Nov. ye 11, 1711 – aged 14 mo. and 11 da.”

Their daughter, Elizabeth, married Nathaniel Day on June 7, 1728 (1). No further mention is made of her, or of her sister, Lydia. The two boys married into prominent Ipswich families: Thomas married Martha Kinsman, the daughter of Lt. Joseph Kinsman (1); and John, who became a clergyman, married Martha Willcomb, an old, and distinguished Ipswich family (2).

The records contain a few scraps of information about John Dennis. In 1702 he owned a seat in church, and in 1708 he bought the half acre Brook Street property that belonged to his father, and which he retained until 1739 (1). In 1723, he received a commission as Ensign in the Ipswich Foot Company on the north side of the river (2), and held the rank of Captain at the time of his death in 1757 (1).

Lydia White Dennis died in 1712 and is buried in the Old North Burial Yard, beside her little son, William, who had died the preceding November.

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- (1) Notes of L.W. Drake in the Appendix
 - (2) Notes of D. B. Williams in the Appendix
 - (3) Maine Historical and Genealogical Recorder p. 309 (D.B.W.)
 - (4) George White married Lydia Lamson on April 5, 1671. He died in 1709, his wife died on Feb. 25, 1722/3 in Rowley, Mass. (Drake notes). They had a son, Nathaniel White, born on Feb 3, 1673.

Her stone bears the following touching inscription:

Here Lys the body of Mrs. Lydia Dennis who died June the 10, 1712 and in the 40th yeare of her age.

A tender mother
A prudent wife
At God's command
Resigned her life
And at her flight
Let this word fall
Submit my friends
Now God doth call."

His second wife was Sarah Tuttle, the daughter of Simon Tuttle, and the widow of Samuel Ward, whom she had married in November 3, 1699 (1). John and Sarah Dennis were involved in a number of property transactions according to the records in Ipswich and Essex County, beginning about 1727. He sold the last of his common rights on Burch Island in 1749 (vol. 87, p. 251). In 1733, he and his wife Sarah, Job Harris Shoremen and his wife Remember, Thomas and his wife Martha all deeded to Mark Haskell (whose wife was also a Tuttle girl) a considerable amount of land that had been willed by Simon Tuttle (to his daughters, apparently) (1). In 1739, John Dennis and wife Sarah divided land with a Mr. John Goodhue, who was in some way connected with the family. His son, John, and John Rollins were witnesses (1).

John Dennis died on May 13, 1756 (2), and his estate was settled on Jan. 5, 1757 (1). Although his wife, Lydia, and son, William, are buried in the Old North Burial Yard, there is no record that he was buried there. He may have been buried with his wife, Sarah's family. Sarah Tuttle Ward Dennis died the following December – 1756 (1).

2-3 Elizabeth Dennis Hovey

Daughter of Thomas (1-1) and Grace Searles Dennis

b. 1675

Ipswich, Mass. (4)

d. ?

bur. ?

Married: Ebenezer Hovey

Intentions – July 23, 1704 (3)

Children: none known

Very little has come down to us concerning Elizabeth Dennis. An old record stated that in 1702 Elizabeth Dennis of Ipswich owned a seat in church. This would have been two years

(1) See notes of Leora Drake in the Appendix

(2) See notes of Demorris B. Williams

(3) History of Litchfield, Maine. (Drake)

(4) Town of Ipswich Records

Note: As mentioned earlier some of L.W. Drake's notes are from Mary Dennis Pugh. Unfortunately, Mrs. Pugh did not leave any record of her sources of information.

2-3 Elizabeth Dennis Hovey, concluded

2-3

before her marriage. Also, before her marriage, she was appointed administratrix of the estate of her brother, Thomas (2-1) Dennis in 1702/3. As was reported earlier, she may have had the responsibility for the care of his son (1).

(1) See notes of Leora Drake in the Appendix.

THE THIRD GENERATION IN IPSWICH – GRANDCHILDREN OF THOMAS DENNIS
AND GRACE SEARLES DENNIS

3-4 Thomas Dennis (Thomas 3, John 2, Thomas 1)

Son of John Dennis (2-2) and Lydia White Dennis

b. June 19, 1706 Ipswich, Mass. (1)
d. April 22, 1771
bur. ?

Married: Martha Kinsman

May 11, 1732 (1)

b. July 13, 1712
d. April 21, 1761
bur. ?

Children of Thomas and Martha Dennis (1)

x4-1	Thomas Dennis	bpt. Nov. 25, 1733
x4-2	Martha Dennis	b. Aug. 27, 1735; bpt. Aug. 31
x4-3	Lydia Dennis	bpt. April 24, 1737
x4-4	Sarah Dennis	bpt. April 24, 1739; d. infancy
4-5	John Dennis	bpt. May 3, 1741
4-6	Joseph Dennis	bpt. May 22, 1743
x4-7	Nathaniel Dennis	bpt. Jan. 27, 1744; d. young
x4-8	Nathaniel Dennis	bpt. May 24, 1747
x4-9	Sarah Dennis	bpt. Sept. 17, 1749
x4-10	David Dennis	bpt. June 23, 1751

Thomas Dennis was the third child, and the oldest of three sons, born to John and Lydia White Dennis, in Ipswich, Mass. It appears from the records that he spent his life in Ipswich, where he married Martha Kinsman, a member of an old and respected family in that New England village. Martha Kinsman was the daughter of Lt. Joseph Kinsman and his wife, Susanna. Since there is a Susanna Tuttle, daughter of Simon Tuttle, whose dates exactly match those of the wife of Joseph Kinsman, it is more than likely that she was the mother of Martha Kinsman (2).

There are a few facts about Thomas Dennis (3-4) in the records of Ipswich and Essex County. In 1735, Col. Dennis signed a petition for the town of Ipswich. Thomas Dennis joined with his wife, Martha, in deeding land, together with Job Harris and his wife, Remember, and some others to Mark Haskell and his wife, Martha. (See John 2-2) (3).

(1) Data on Thomas Dennis and Martha Kinsman was researched by Mary Dennis Pugh and Leora Drake, of Canisteo, N.Y. and is to be found in their notes in the Appendix. Unfortunately, they do not give their sources.

(2) Leora Drake notes in Appendix.

(3) Ipswich Deed Book 46, p. 270

NOTE: An X before the identification number, as in the list of children above, indicates that this is the last mention to be made of that person in this record.

Col. Thomas Dennis lived at No. 10 County Street in Ipswich, according to the Heritage Trust. In 1963, the Trust acquired certain old properties in the town for the purpose of restoring them and preserving them as historical landmarks. A plaque on the house states that Thomas Dennis, joiner, lived here – 1663-1706. These dates cover the years that Thomas' grandfather was in the village, but the Heritage Trust states that the house was built in 1757 or thereabouts. They refer to Col. Thomas Dennis as the owner. His grandfather did own property on County Street and quite likely this house stands on the site of the earlier one. It may have been built by Col. Dennis. Certain unique architectural features of the house were noted by the Trust when it was included among the homes in the Old House Fair in 1965. Although they offered it for sale at that time, it was with the understanding that the new owners would preserve its unusual architectural features. [see pictures in Chapt. I under Thomas Dennis, (1-1)]

Thomas and Martha K. Dennises's children married into some of the old, established families of Ipswich: (1)

- x4-1 Thomas mar. Mary Leatherland on April 16, 1759
- x4-2 Martha mar. Benjamin Lamson on Mar. 14, 1765
She died in Concord, N.H. on Nov. 1, 1824
- x4-3 Lydia mar. Nathaniel Heard
- 4-5 John mar. Salome Hodgkin on May 13, 1773
- 4-6 Joseph mar. Hannah Rogers on June 26, 1769
- x4-9 Sarah mar. John Farley (3)

Two of their children died in infancy, and in that case it was not uncommon to give the next child the name of one they had lost earlier. The descendants of but two of the children are known, John and Joseph, and these for but one more generation.

Thomas and Martha Dennis apparently lived their entire life in Ipswich. She died in 1761, and he ten years later, in 1771. It seems strange that their graves are not known, and marked. Possibly they were not buried in Old North Yard, but in some other cemetery. His will is on file in the Essex Probate Court where his estate is given as 1395 L – 12S – 8 d. (2)

- (1) Notes of Leora Drake – see appendix
- (2) Probate Court Records Book 46, p. 270 Ipswich, Essex County, Mass.
- (3) The Farley family – years later – presented certain valuable Dennis family mementoes to the Essex Institute, among them the carved oak chair. See Thomas Dennis (1-1)

Son of John Dennis (2-2) and Lydia White Dennis

b. Nov. 3, 1706 Ipswich, Mass. (1)
 d. Sept. 2, 1773 Ipswich, Mass. (1)
 bur. ?

1st Married: Martha Willcomb on Dec. 12, 1736 (1)

b. March 12, 1715 Ipswich, Mass. (2)
 d. July 1 (or 11), 1754 Ipswich, Mass. (2)
 bur. ?

2nd Married: Ruth Bacon (2)

b. ?
 d. Oct. 2, 1804 (2)
 bur. ?

Children of Rev. John Dennis and Martha Willcomb Dennis: (1)

x4-11 John Dennis	bpt. July 11, 1737
x4-12 Martha Dennis	b. March 8, 1738; bpt. Oct. 8, 1738
x4-13 Lucy Dennis	b. March 27, 1740
4-14 William Dennis	bpt. Oct. 21 (14), 1741
4-15 Arthur Dennis	b. Dec. 25, 1745
x4-16 Elizabeth Dennis	bpt. Feb 28, 1747/8
4-17 Moses Dennis	b. May 25, 1750; bpt. May 27, 1750
x4-18 Rebecca (2)	b.

John Dennis (henceforth designated as Rev. John Dennis to distinguish him from the numerous other John Dennises) was the fourth child (next to the youngest), and the second son of John and Lydia White Dennis. He was born in Ipswich as were his brothers and sisters, and his parents before him. He spent only part of his life in Ipswich, however, with absences occurring during his education, his military, and ministerial assignments. He returned to Ipswich in 1761 where he spent the last twelve years of his life.

He apparently received his early education in the grammar school in Ipswich, which was a not too common experience for young men of that day since a fee was charged for attendance. Although the grammar school had been founded in 1636, the old records show no public support being provided for the maintenance (see clipping from the Ipswich Chronicle entitled "Feoffies in Old Ipswich" in Chapter III of this family record, dated Aug. 7, 1958). In 1730, John Dennis, at the age of twenty two, was among those who were graduated from Harvard University. He became a minister and was employed to preach in the several parishes of Ipswich. (1)

In 1736, he married Martha Willcomb of Ipswich. She was the daughter

- (1) Notes of Demorris Boyd Williams – see Appendix
 (2) Notes of Leora Drake – see Appendix

of Richard Willcomb and Elizabeth Hodgkins Willcomb (1). Eight Children were born to the Rev. John and Martha Willcomb Dennis – four girls and four boys – most of whom were born in Ipswich. Their oldest son, John, was born and baptized in Ipswich in July of 1737. Martha, the oldest girl was born before her father entered military service and was also born in Ipswich it may be assumed. She married Abraham Safford on Nov. 26, 1757, and lived in Salem, N.H. Elizabeth, who was baptized in 1747, married Benjamin Griffin (or Griffiths). Nothing more is known of these two girls; nor of their sister, Rebecca, except for an old record that states that she was a widow in 1777 (2). Whom she married and where she lived is not known. The three youngest boys, all born in Ipswich, married and left descendants (see Sect. II and Sect. III). William married Abigail Smith in 1763, Arthur married Mary Goodhue in 1766, and Moses married Sarah Frye in 1781 – all well known families in Ipswich. As we shall see later, Arthur and Moses left Ipswich and made their homes in New Hampshire. They were the forebears of a long line of descendants – in fact, they are the only two lines that have been traced beyond the Revolution in this record.

Rev. John Dennis served in the army almost continually for ten years from 1737 to 1749 in the capacity of chaplain, surgeon and physician. The Society of Colonial Wars states that he served during Queen Anne's War (3), which seems improbable, since the Queen's reign ended in 1714, and John Dennis would have been but six years old when she died. The History of Charleston, New Hampshire states that he also served from 1749 to 1756. According to the Massachusetts Archives, he was stationed first at Fort George, Maine; than at Fort Frederick (Boston); and finally a short time at Pemaquid in Maine. According to the army muster rolls, John Dennis is credited with the following military service: (2)

On the Fort George Muster Roll:

1738, May 21 – 1739, May 20 Chaplain under Capt. John Guyles
1739, May 21 – 1740, May 20 Chaplain under Capt. John Guyles
(52 weeks and 2 days) vol. 91, p. 317

- (1) Richard Willcomb was the youngest of three children orphaned early in 1700 by the death of their father, Zacheus Willcomb, an inn keeper on the Isle of shoals. Upon the arrival of the children in Ipswich, they were placed under the guardianship of Mr. Henry Spiller, the school teacher. The descendants of these three children continued in line in Ipswich for generations, and the Public Library, in its Ipswich Room, has a copy of the Willcomb genealogy. William Willcomb, the oldest, lived in Summer Street – the house is still standing. His son, Joseph, sold this house, and bought or built the house on High Street which is now known as the Willcomb Homestead. (see article from the Ipswich Chronicle)
- (2) Notes of Mrs. Leora Drake, in Appendix
- (3) Notes of Mrs. D.B. Williams in Appendix from "Society of Colonial Wars" 1st supplement of Index of Ancestors 1940, p. 76.

1741, Oct. 28 – Nov. 20 Truckmaster (1) under Capt. John Guyles
(3 weeks, 3 days) vol. 91, p. 356

1741, Nov. 21 – 1742, Mar. 14 Truckmaster, under Capt. J. Guyles
(10 weeks, 2 days) vol. 92, p. 2

On the Boston Muster Rolls: Fort Frederick

1742, May 18 – 1742, Nov. 16 Truck Master vol. 92, p. 15

1743, Feb. 16 – under Capt. Andrew Robinson for 35 weeks
(does not say where he was stationed)

1746, Nov. 30 – Jan 11, 1747 Chaplain under Capt. Joshua Moody
vol. 92, p. 78

1747, April 1 – 1747, Sept. 14 Chaplain under Capt. Joshua Moody
(23 weeks, and 6 days) vol. 92, p. 95

1748, Jan 2 - Chaplain under Capt. Joshua Moody

1748, Feb. 1 – March 31, 1748 Chaplain under Capt. Joshua Moody
(He was there only 8 weeks in the spring and pay ran on to June) vol. 92, p. 94
“a note on p. 94, vol. 92 states that Dennis was absent from his post by
reason of sickness in his family. His wages were allowed for 37 weeks
and 3 days from Sept. 18, 1747 to June 2, 1748. Three certificates
follow:

Ipswich, April 9, 1748, signed by Joseph Manry, physician states that
‘said Dennis hath been visited in his family with such sickness the past
winter.’

Ipswich, May 2, 1748, signed by John Clef, physician stating that John
Dennis family hath been visited with long and dangerous illness for some
months together.’

Ipswich, May 19, 1748, signed by Thomas Berry, physician stating that
‘the family of John Dennis hath been visited with sickness the greater
part of the time from September last to spring of the present year and that
the family was attended by me, Thomas Berry.’ (2)

1748, June 3 – 1749, Feb. 20 vol. 92, p. 196

1748, Feb. 20 Chaplain, Capt. Samuel Moody
(37 weeks, and 4 days)

1749, Feb. 21 – Aug. 20, 1749 Chaplain, Capt. Sam. Moody
(27 weeks in Pemaquid, Maine) vol. 93, p. 43

For his military services he was granted 400 acres of land east of the Saco River in Maine, which is away up north in what was then surely primeval wilderness. Descendants of the Rev. John Dennis are eligible for the Society of Colonial Wars on his military record. The following is taken from their publication, entitled, “Society of Colonial Wars” 1st supplement to Index of Ancestors, 1940, p. 76:

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- (1) “The clerk in the Archives room said a “truckmaster” drew pay but was in charge of the trading post of the port or fort for which the garrison was held to defend. St. George, a trading port, had to have a manager to see about supplies.” Drake notes in Appendix.
 - (2) Rev. John Dennis and Martha Dennis had six children at the time, the sixth being born on Feb. 28th, 1748. See Drake notes.

“Dennis, Rev. John³, 1708-1773, Ipswich, Mass. In Queen Anne’s War, Chaplain acting as surgeon and physician in Colonial Army, 1737-49; at Ft. George, Me. 1738; at Ft. Frederick 1746-7; also in service in 1748-9 at Pemaquid.” (1)

During 1753 and 1754 Rev. John Dennis taught the grammar school (in Ipswich?) which had been established by Ezekiel Cheever, for the school rents. The school was partly endowed and paid a certain income. (2)

“In 1754 the Rev. John Dennis, the son of John and Lydia Dennis, is recommended by the First Church (Ipswich?) to the church about to be gathered at Charlestown, New Hampshire, where he was settled as a minister until 1756.” (3) According to the History of Charlestown, N.H. by Sanderson, the town voted to send Mr. Dennis L 8 to help him move his family from where he then lived. Accounts of previous meetings of the calling and ordaining are given. He wrote that the sum raised for salary was not quite enough to support the family and they added what he suggested and gave him a minister’s lot. On account of an Indian scare, they did not dare call the assembly required to ordain in Charlestown so the ordination was at Northfield, Mass. The church was organized on December 4, 1754. Rev. John Dennis was ordained and installed the same day. It was established that his salary should be L 50 lawful money to be equal to silver at 6s, 8d per ounce. Afterwards 3L, 6s, 8d was added. (2)

Martha Willcomb Dennis died in July 1754 before her husband went to Charlestown to preach. She had recently passed her thirty ninth birthday, and left a large family of children – several of whom were very young. It is possible that her death occurred at the time of the birth of the eighth child, Rebecca, whose birth is not recorded in some of the old records. She probably died in Ipswich, but if she is buried there, her grave is not marked.

Rev. John Dennis’ career in Charleston was not altogether happy. On March 31, 1756, he was dismissed by an ecclesiastical court assembled at Deerfield, Mass. Historians say “Imprudence led to his dismissal. People were dissatisfied so he left. The council of clergymen who ordained him was called and decided that it was a special providence that he was willing to resign. They censured him for whatever his fault was.” While in Charlestown, he remarried. His second wife was Ruth Bacon (2). Perhaps there was something about this courtship and second marriage that offended the strict Puritanical sensibilities of his parishioners. It may be that Rebecca was a child of this marriage.

The account states that he went to Harwick, Mass. where he served a church. He stayed until 1760, but resigned because he could not get his salary regularly. He sued them and the

(1) See Williams notes in Appendix

(2) Taken from the notes of Leora Drake – see Appendix

(3) Demorris Boyd Williams notes, quoting from “Ipswich, Essex and Hamilton, Mass.” p. 80, 88, 93

precinct was chastised by the General Court for not paying the bills. Harwick was a South Parish of Old Barnstable. (1)

The Rev. Dennis returned to Ipswich where he lived out his remaining years – this was in 1761. On Feb. 11, 1771, the residents of the town “voted that Mr. Dennis should be the reading and writing master north of the river.” – his salary was to be \$10.00 per month. (2)

Rev. John Dennis died on September 2, 1773 in Ipswich. Where he is buried has not been ascertained. (Not in the Old North Burial Yard) What became of Ruth Bacon Dennis likewise is not known. She must have been many years younger than her husband, as she outlived him by thirty years, her death occurring in 1804. (1)

According to an old record (3) John Dennis, son of the Rev. John Dennis, of Harwick, Barnstable County was appointed by the court to settle the estate of his father. Ebenezer Stanwood of Ipswich, attorney, was to pay or receive money, etc. and to settle the estate of the Rev. Dennis (October 1, 1757). Apparently Rev. Dennis had never claimed the land which had been granted to him for his services in the army on the Saco River in Maine. In 1777, his heirs petitioned the legislature for this land (1). Whether any of his heirs ever received his claim, and lived there has not been ascertained.

(1) from the notes of Leora Drake – see Appendix

(2) Demorris Boyd Williams notes, quoting from “Ipswich, Essex and Hamilton, Mass.” p. 80, 88, 93

(3) Mrs. Drakes’s notes give a reference from a book, the title of which is not mentioned. Presumably it refers, as does the military record, to the Massachusetts Archives. The vol number is 106, p. 111.

CHAPTER IV

THE FAMILY SCATTERED AFTER THE REVOLUTION

4-5 John Dennis (Thomas 3-4, John 2-2, Thomas 1-1) to Litchfield, Maine

Son of Col. Thomas Dennis and Martha Kinsman Dennis:

bpt. May 10, 1741 Ipswich, Mass. (1)
d. April 30, 1816 Litchfield, Maine
bur.

Married: Salome Hodgkins on May 13, 1773 probably Ipswich

b.
d.
bur.

Children of John and Salome Hodgkins Dennis:

x5-1 John Dennis	b. Oct. 5, 1774	d. Nov. 5, 1774
5-2 Salome Dennis	b. Dec. 8, 1775	
5-3 John Dennis, Jr.	b. May 30, 1780	
x5-4 Martha	b. Feb. 16, 1782; d. Sept. 16, 1795	
x5-5 Twins	?	
x5-6 Martha Dennis	?	
5-7 Elizabeth	b. Feb. 26, 1785	d. Dec. 13, 1820
5-8 Thomas	b. Nov. 28, 1787	d. Jan 12, 1831
x5-9 Lydia	b. April 13, 1794	d. Nov. 24, 1850

According to the History of Litchfield, Maine, John Dennis, the son of Col. Thomas and Martha Kinsman Dennis, was a mariner, and during the Revolutionary War was appointed prize master. After the war, it appears that he became disappointed with life at sea and decided to strike out on his own in the newly developing state of Maine. This was a big step, for John Dennis was not a young man. He and Salome had been married sixteen years and had five living children. Nevertheless, the family left Ipswich on October 25, 1789 and “sailed on board the schooner, Polly, arriving at the Cobbossee stream, landing near what is now the New Mills. With his family he paddled up the Cobbossee stream, landing near what is now called Horseshoe Pond bridge. From there they went through the woods to what is now known as the Dennis farm.” (1)

It’s hard to imagine the hardships of that journey. Think of packing two adults and five children, with such earthly possessions as they could carry, into a canoe and paddling upstream a distance of twenty to thirty miles. (Litchfield is southwest of Augusta, which is fifty five miles from Portland.) One wonders what attracted him to go to Maine – at this time, it was frontier country, covered with dense virgin forest, with no roads – the only access to the interior was up the streams – with bitter cold winters and deep snow. Imagine hiking through the woods for goodness knows how far to their destination – in November ! One also wonders what kind of

(1) History of Litchfield, Maine 1795-1895 p. 99ff

Note: An “x” before a name in this record indicates this is the only reference to that person.

a dwelling awaited them. It must have been crude – and winter coming on with its snow and cold. How could they have transported enough supplies to keep them during the long winter until they could raise the first crop? Of course, game was plentiful, but in order to farm the land had first to be cleared. The oldest boy, John, Jr., was a lad of nine years, and although boys were called upon to do the work of men, he was still much too young to be a great help to his father in doing the heavy work of clearing the land.

But they certainly possessed the hardihood of the pioneer and made good. In fact, for at least three generations this branch of the Dennis family continued to live in and near Litchfield, Maine, and played an active part in the life of that community. (See Section II for their descendants.)

Both John Dennis and his wife, Salome Hodgkins Dennis, died in Litchfield and are presumably buried there (1).

4-6 Joseph Dennis (Thomas 3-4, John 2-2, Thomas 1-1) to Eustis, Maine

Son of Col. Thomas and Martha Kinsman Dennis
bpt. May 22, 1743 Ipswich, Mass.
d.
bur.

Married: Hannah Rogers (2) Intentions, June 26, 1769
b.
d.
bur.

Children of Joseph and Hannah Rogers Dennis (3):
x5-10 Joseph Dennis b. June 23, 1769
x5-11 Hannah Dennis b. Dec. 2, 1771
x5-12 Martha Dennis b. Feb. 12, 1775

There are no records on Joseph Dennis other than the data given above. A glance at the map of Maine shows Eustis in the northwest corner of the state, not far from the Canadian border. It must have been wild country, covered with dense, virgin forests. Think of the difficulties that must have been encountered in making the trip up there, hewing out a farm, building a house, and gaining a livelihood so far from civilization and friends. It took courage and fortitude to launch out on such a venture on the part of the men, but imagine the life of these frontier women ! (3)

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- (1) History of Litchfield, Maine is the source for all the material on John Dennis and his family. Mrs. Drake quotes from the same source – see her notes in the Appendix.
 - (2) Mrs. Hannah Rogers was a widow when she married Joseph Dennis.
 - (3) Material on Joseph Dennis is taken from the notes of Mrs. Leora Drake – see the Appendix.

4-14 William Dennis (Rev. John 3-5, John 2-2, Thomas 1-1)

4-14,4-15

Son of Rev. John and Martha Willcomb Dennis

b. Oct. 12, 1741 (or Oct. 14, 21 ?)

Ipswich, Mass. (1) (2)

d. Aug. 23, 1819 (1) (Probate record)

Married: Abigail Smith (1)

b.

d.

bur.

Children of William and Abigail Smith Dennis (1):

x5-13 Abigail Dennis bpt. Sept. 16, 1764

x5-14 William Dennis b. Aug. 4, 1766

x5-15 Thankful Dennis b. Dec. 11, 1768

x5-16 Martha Dennis bpt. Mar. 24, 1771 (church record)

x5-17 Hannah Dennis bpt. Mar. 7, 1773 (church record)

x5-18 Henry bpt. Aug. 31, 1777

x5-19 Elizabeth Dennis bpt. Feb. 12, 1780

Nothing is known of William Dennis beyond the facts shown above. In the church records of the baptism of Martha and Hannah, William's name is given as the father of the girls, but there is no mention of his wife. Presumably these are Ipswich church records, although the source is not given (1).

4-15 Arthur Dennis (Rev. John 3-5, John 2-2, Thomas 1-1)

New Hampshire

Son of Rev. John Dennis and Martha Willcomb Dennis

b. Dec. 25, 1745 Ipswich, Mass. (3)

d. April 24, 1825 Phelps, New York (2)

bur.

Married: Mary Goodhue of Ipswich on Dec. 11, 1766 (2)

b. Jan. 18, 1749 Ipswich, Mass. (2)

d. Feb. 15, 1819 Mt. Vernon, Hillsborough Co., N.H. (2)

bur. Mt. Vernon ? [no stone (4)]

Children of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis (3):

5-20 Arthur Dennis b. May 29, 1768 Ipswich

5-21 Mary Dennis b. Dec. 9, 1769 Westford, Mass. (5)

5-22 John Dennis b. Oct. 1, 1771 Westford, Mass.

5-23 Sarah Dennis b. June 9, 1773 Westford, Mass.

x5-24 Samuel Dennis b. Aug. 29, 1775 - d. Nov. 17, 1775

(cont. next page)

(1) Notes of Leora Drake – see Appendix

(2) Notes of Demorris B. Williams – see Appendix

(3) Dennis Family Bible, now in possession of the author, M.C.K. ('68)

(4) I went all through the little cemetery in Mt. Vernon looking for her tombstone without success. (M.C.K.)

(5) Westford's Records, p. 30 – see Williams' Notes.

5-25	Samuel Dennis	b. Oct. 17, 1776 – New Hampshire
5-26	Moses Dennis	b. June 16, 1779 New Hampshire
5-27	Lucy Dennis	b. Mar 27, 1781 Bedford, N.H.
x5-28	Patty Dennis	b. Jan. 1, 1783 Bedford, N.H.
5-29	Frances Dennis	b. Dec. 20, 1784 Bedford, N.H.
5-30	William Dennis	b. Jan 25, 1787 Bedford, N.H.
5-31	Joseph Dennis	b. Mar. 8, 1789 New Boston, N.H.
5-32	Rodney Dennis	b. April 17, 1791 New Boston, N.H.

Arthur Dennis was the third son and the fifth child of the Rev. John and Martha Willcomb Dennis. He had two older brothers, John and William; and two older sisters, Martha and Lucy. Two sisters, Elizabeth and Rebecca, and a brother, Moses, were younger than Arthur. What with all of the moving about during his father's military service and his ministerial career, it still appears from the records that Arthur was born in Ipswich in 1745 on Christmas day. His father had been at Fort Frederick in Boston, serving as truckmaster in the army, during 1742 and 43, but he was not reported again on the muster rolls there until in November 1746. It may be assumed that during these military assignments, the family of the Rev. John Dennis remained in Ipswich. (See Drake notes in the Appendix; also account of Rev. Dennis, 3-5)

An interesting note from the military record states that during the fall and winter of 1747-48, "the John Dennis family hath been visited with long and dangerous illness for some months together." (See Rev. John Dennis, 3-5) Arthur would have been two years old at the time, and probably suffered with the others from what ever affliction they had. At any rate, he survived.

Arthur Dennis was nine years old at the time his mother died in 1754. In that same year, his father accepted the appointment to preach in the newly organized parish at Charlestown, New Hampshire where he moved with the family. During the Charlestown residence his father remarried, and Ruth Bacon became the step mother of this large family of children. Some unpleasantness in the church resulted in his father's dismissal in 1756, and he accepted an appointment to preach in Harwick, Mass. Here the family remained until 1760, when they returned to Ipswich.

Arthur was a lad of fifteen when his father came back to Ipswich to live. What schooling he had is not known, but it seems likely that his father, who was a Harvard graduate, would have seen to it that his children received some educational advantages. His father apparently never was a farmer, so that his sons would not necessarily have been inclined in that direction. There is no evidence that the Rev. John Dennis or his sons showed any inclination to follow the crafts of the earlier members of the Dennis family – that of joiner and carpenter. Many years later in one of the old deeds (dated 1789) Arthur is called a cordwainer (shoemaker) (1). When he learned the trade or how seriously he worked at [it] is still a mystery. All homholders in these times were compelled by necessity to make most of their own implements and wearing apparel – shoes being but one of the necessities. So it can't be said with any degree of certainty that it was a trade at

(1) Book of Deeds 23, p. 526, Hillsboro County C. H., Nashua, N.H.

which he earned his living. In most of the old deeds, he is spoken of simply as a yeoman. (1)

Arthur Dennis married Mary Goodhue, the daughter of Capt. Francis Goodhue (2) and Sarah Fowler Goodhue on December 11, 1766 in the South Church in Ipswich (3). Arthur was almost twenty one years old, and his bride not quite eighteen. Mary Goodhue came from old and highly respected lines of ancestors who had resided in the vicinity of Ipswich since the early days of that settlement. Her mother, (4) Sarah Fowler, came not only from a long Fowler line, but was

(1) See D. B. Williams' notes in Appendix

(2) Capt. Francis Goodhue was descended from Deacon William Goodhue of Assington, in Suffolk, England, who came to America with a small religious group in 1636-37. William Goodhue's son and grandson (William² and Joseph) were active in the religious and political life of Ipswich in the days under British rule. William² is described as being "a prominent man in the community in which he lived, highly respected, eminently useful, and greatly beloved." He was imprisoned and fined by Gov. Andros for protesting against illegal taxation of the colony. Capt. Francis Goodhue, a 4th generation descendant of Deacon William¹, signed the Association Test which entitles his descendants to D.A.R. privileges.

One genealogist states that, "It is quite possible that Deacon William Goodhue, who came to America in 1635 (?), and settled in Ipswich, was a descendant of Wils Godhewen of Kent, England, whose name first appears in 1280 during the reign of Edward I. The name is believed to be Saxon in origin.

(See a fairly lengthy list of references on the Goodhue family in the notes of Demorris B. Williams in the Appendix.) (It will be recalled that Grace Coolidge, wife of Pres. Calvin Coolidge, was Grace Goodhue before her marriage.)

(3) South Church Records, Ipswich, Mass. See Arthur Dennis notes from Leora Drake in the Appendix.

(4) Sarah Fowler Goodhue was the daughter of Joseph Fowler² and Sarah Bartlett. Sarah Fowler was a 5th generation descendant of Philip Fowler, who was born in Marlborough, Wiltshire, England about 1590. He married Mary Winsley (or Winslow). Philip and Mary Fowler came to America and settled in Ipswich, Mass. where they spent the rest of their lives, died and [were] buried. Their son, Joseph Fowler, who was born in England about 1629, married Martha Kimball. They also lived in Ipswich. Joseph was killed by the Indians on May 19, 1676 on his return from the Falls fight. Joseph and Martha Kimball Fowler had a son, Philip², born in Ipswich, who married Elizabeth Herrick of Salem, Mass. (For details see Notes in the Appendix.)

A very comprehensive genealogy, entitled "The Fowler Family: the Descendants of Philip and Mary Fowler – 10 Generations – 1590-1882" by Matthew Adams Stickney gives a detailed account of the history of this family. (See notes from the above reference in the Appendix). Mr. Stickney states that the family is of Norman descent, the name derived from an office, probably. The first mention (by Burke's "Peerage") is Richard Fowler of Foxley in County of Bucks, who went with Richard the Lion-Hearted to the Holy Land on the Third Crusade. He took part in the Battle of Acre and was knighted by the king on the field. His crest (pictured in Stickney's book) was changed from a hand and lure for "The vigilant owl" in 1191 A.D. Richard Fowler was the progenitor of a family which flourished in Buckinghamshire and elsewhere in England for over 500 years. He had Welch possessions at "Abbey Gum Hir" in Radnor County. (see details in Appendix).

Footnote continued on next page.

also related to the Bartletts (1), the Kimballs (2), and the Herricks (3), some of whose lines extended as far back in English History as the Norman Conquest in 1066 A.D.

Arthur and Mary Dennis were the parents of thirteen children, over a period of twenty three years, all but one of whom lived to grow up. Demorris Williams says, "I do not know where their oldest, son, Arthur, Jr., was born (1768), but in all probability it was in or near Ipswich." From the records it seems that Arthur and Mary did not remain for very many years in Ipswich, Mass. At any rate, they were in Westford, Mass. by the end of 1769 when their second child – Mary Dennis – was born. (Vital Records of Westford) Two other children were born while they were living in Westford. (John and Sarah Dennis) The other eight children were born after their parents had moved to New Hampshire – in or near Bedford. The two youngest, Joseph and Rodney Gove Dennis were born in New Boston, New Hampshire. (4)

Arthur Dennis was living in Westford in April 1775, at the time of the alarm at Lexington and Concord, and was one of the "minute-men" who answered the call of Paul Revere when he rode "through every Middlesex village and town." The "History of Westford, Mass." gives the

Footnote – continued from the preceding page:

Christine Fowler, in the introduction to her book entitled "History of the Fowler's", pub. In 1950, says, "I have not found a (Fowler) line that did not claim descent from the hero, Sir Richard Fowler of the Third Crusade."

(1) Sarah Bartlett Fowler was May Goodhue's grandmother. Her family, like the Fowlers, came from Wiltshire, England. In 1635, Richard Bartlett left England and settled in Newberry, Mass. where he worked at his shoemaker trade. Sarah was a 4th generation descendant of Richard.

The family claims descent from Barttelott, an esquire to Brain, a knight who fought at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 A.D. under William, the Conqueror. This is established by the fact that William granted him large lands in Sussex. He is buried at Stophan (1100 A.D.), as were the next four generations of his kin.

(2), (3) The Kimballs and the Herricks of Salem, Mass. also came from long and honorable lines. Martha Kimball married Joseph Fowler, son of Philip and Mary Fowler. Arthur's mother was Ursula Scott, daughter of the Hon. John Scott, and her grandmother was Martha Wortup, the daughter of Sir John Wortup.

Elizabeth Herrick, wife of Philip Fowler², was descended from Sir William Herrick of Beau Manor, Leicester, England. (See notes in Appendix.)

(4) Arthur Dennis Bible Record.

following information about his military service: (1)

“Arthur Dennis was a ‘minute-man’. He was a sergeant in Capt. Asa Lawrence’s Company, Col. William Prescott of Groton, Mass, who marched to the alarm to headquarters at Cambridge, Mass. on April 19, 1774. He served 12 days.

Rank	Travel out and home, miles	Days
d.0	70	12

Marched from Groton to headquarters at Cambridge on ye 19 April, 1775 on ye alarm “B”[?] “c” (that is as it is printed, meaning unknown) as a company of minutemen under command of Capt. Asa Lawrence.”

“In the books you have read
How the British regulars fired and fled-
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farmyard wall,
Chasing the redcoats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again,
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.”

Finally the British were routed and for Arthur Dennis and hundreds of others the Revolutionary War moved far off. They returned to their homes and families, and went about their business. Arthur was twenty nine years old at the time and the father of four children, with a fifth born the following August.

As previously noted, Arthur Dennis moved around a great deal in an effort to find a location which suited him. From Old Ipswich he had moved to Westford, Mass. (1769-1772). In October 1775, he was in or near Groton, Mass. where the fifth child was baptized. Whether Arthur owned property in Old Ipswich or in Westford has never been researched. He may possibly have inherited some property in Ipswich from his father, Rev. John Dennis, who died in 1773. Leaving Westford or Groton, he moved across the border into New Hampshire, and may have been in Amherst, N.H. as early as October, 1776 when the “second” Samuel was born. Apparently Amherst was not to his liking, because in June, 1778, he bought his first property in New Boston, which is a village about fifteen miles west of Manchester, N. H. In this deed, he is described as a yeoman residing in Amherst, but there is no record that he ever owned land there. During the next twenty years, he bought and sold property extensively in the New Boston area and in all of these deeds, he is described as being “of New Boston.”

(1) The quotation from “The History of Westford, Mass.”, which contains a Dennis genealogy, is the basis for D.A.R. membership used by Mrs. Williams, and through her kindness, by the author of this record.

About all that can be learned of Arthur Dennis’s middle and later years is to be found from a search of the deeds and property transactions in the Hillsboro County Court House in Nashua, N.H. The first property that he purchased in New Boston in June, 1778 was a fifty acre farm, described as being Lot No. 7, in the 2nd Division of Lots, for which he paid 120 pounds (1). He was thirty three years old at the time. Nine years later (1787), he bought one hundred and fifty additional acres in Lot No. 25, of the 2nd Division, for which he paid forty pounds. Mrs. Williams says, “It was [a] densely wooded section at that time and even as I write in 1950, after a visit of several weeks gathering data, it is still a ‘sawmill section’.” (2) This property must have been without buildings and improvements, considering the price he paid for it. (3)

In June, 1789, Arthur Dennis sold his original fifty acre farm in New Boston being the “whole of my homestead farm lying in Lot No. 7, 2nd Division of Lots, with all buildings and improvements” for one hundred fifty pounds, thereby making a profit of thirty pounds in the transaction. (4) He had lived there for eleven years, and one wonders why he sold it. Less than a month later (July 17, 1789), he sold the one hundred and fifty acres in Lot 25, 2nd Division, which he had purchased in 1787, to Matthew Fairfield and Henry Campbell for forty six pounds, making a profit of six pounds on the sale. (5) But the deal did not stick, because in August of that same year, he bought back the one hundred and fifty acres from Fairfield and Campbell, paying them on pound less than they had paid him for it. (5)

The records show that during the 1790s Arthur Dennis continued to live in the New Boston area. He entered into a number of transactions – buying and selling land. In August, 1793 he sold six acres of his holdings in Lot 25 to David Henderson of New Boston. (6) Then, in March, 1794, he sold land to Samuel Boyd, Jr., also of New Boston. (7) In September, 1795, Arthur bought ninety six acres in New Boston which was a part of Lot 25 in the 2nd Division of Lots for which he paid six pounds and eighteen shillings. This property also must have been without improvements. (8)

By 1800, many changes had taken place in the family of Arthur and Mary Dennis. The older children had married and left home. Following in the footsteps of their father, and possessing some of his adventurous spirit, they scattered over the New England area, into New York State, and even to Michigan and Wisconsin. Five of the boys went north into Maine when that state was being developed after the Revolution – (Arthur, Jr., John, William, Samuel, and Joseph – although the latter two did not remain long in Maine.)

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- (1) Deed in the Hillsboro County records in Nashua, N.H. Bk. 5, p. 387. See brief of deed in D. B. Williams notes in the Appendix.
 - (2) Mrs. Williams Notes in Appendix Deed Book 18, p. 340
 - (3) Also heavily wooded in 1968 when my husband and I visited the area –M.V.C.K.
 - (4) Deed Book 22, p. 481
 - (5) Hillsboro County Court House, Nashua, N.H. – Deed Book 23, p. 526
 - (6) Ibid. Deed Book 34, p. 136
 - (7) Ibid. Deed Book 35, p. 543
 - (8) Ibid. Deed Book not given by Mrs. W.

NOTE: The above deeds are abbreviated by Mrs. Williams – see Appendix

Six of the children eventually made the big move into New York State – (Sarah, Samuel, Moses, Frances, Lucy, and Joseph). Two of the others made their way as far west as Michigan and Wisconsin at a time when to do so meant travel by ox team, horseback, or on foot. Rodney Gove Dennis, the youngest, remained in the New England area throughout his life. He was graduated from Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, and entered the ministry, preaching in a number of places in Massachusetts and Connecticut. From such a large family, some of whom also had large families of their own, the descendants of Arthur and Mary Dennis were indeed a numerous clan, spread out over a wide area. None of them made a great name for himself in the refined skills of carpentry like the early members of the family, but the majority took up the rougher tasks of lumbering and clearing land in country that had not yet been put to the plow.

In 1791, Arthur Dennis, Jr. married Lucy Burnham and with their two sons (born in 1793 and 1795) moved first to Anson and later to East New Portland, Maine, which is in Somerset County, north of Augusta. John Dennis, the second son, also married while in New Boston, and early in the 1800's, was joined by his brother, Arthur, Jr. in E. New Portland. He and his wife, Eunice Fling, had at least one son, born in 1799. William Dennis married Suzanna Harvel (or Harvey - according to Mrs. Drake), of Amherst, N.H. before leaving for Maine. They settled in Madison, which is also in Somerset County, just across the river from Anson. William and Suzanna eventually left Maine and lived in Illinois or Wisconsin. (1) Samuel Dennis married Sarah Dix about 1796 while still in New Hampshire. They had two sons born in Weare, N.H. before they joined his brothers in E. New Portland about 1800. However, Samuel did not stay long in Maine, but returned to New Hampshire for a few years before he and his family followed the others into New York State. Joseph, next the youngest child, must have gone to Maine with one of his older brothers. There he married Hannah York of East New Portland. This young couple, likewise, did not remain long in Maine. They eventually joined Joseph's brothers and sisters in Wayne County, New York.

Mary Dennis, the oldest daughter, married John Henderson and finally settled in Eaton County, Michigan. What a trip that must have been in the early 1800's ! Sarah Dennis married Theophilus Page and with him went to Schenectady, N.Y. (1). Two of the other girls also married and settled in New York State. Lucy, who married Moody Cummings, lived in Phelps, N.Y.; and Frances, who married Ziba Lane, lived in the Zurich-Lyons area in Wayne County, N.Y. There they were joined eventually by their brother, Joseph, and his wife, Hanna York. Patty Dennis, according to the records, located in Vermont where she died in April, 1830. Whether she married has not been ascertained. (1) (2)

Moses Dennis, who was one of the younger boys in the family, never did go to Maine. He married Rhoda Sprague of Bedford, N.H. in November, 1801, and for a time lived near his parents in New Boston. Mrs. Williams' notes give some interesting details of an arrangement which Arthur and his son, Moses, attempted to work out prior to Moses' marriage. On August

(1) See notes of Mrs. Leora Drake in the Appendix.

(2) For details about the children of Arthur and Mary Dennis turn to Section III.

22, 1801, Moses bought his father's farm (144 acres) in Lot 25 for which he paid \$ 1000.00. From the deed it appears that Moses planned to live in half of the house and operate a saw mill on the property. Moses was given the deed which reads thus: (1)

“Arthur Dennis, Grantor – Moses Dennis of New Boston, blacksmith, Grantee Consideration \$1000 --- that certain tract of land situated in New Boston being the whole Lot No. 25 in said New Boston except what I sold to David Henderson (2) --- together with one half of the house and barn situated on the farm, but I reserve the use and improvements of the whole of the land and buildings during my natural life and the life of Mary my wife if she should continue my widow. --- I hereby convey unto the said Moses the privilege of erecting a sawmill on the stream of water near the house and raising a dam sufficiently high for the purpose and one acre of land for a mill-yard where most convenient. Witness whereof I set my hand and seal this 22 day of August 1801.

On the same day that the deed was delivered to Moses, his father took a mortgage on the property in connection with which he added the following stipulations:

“Moses Dennis of New Boston, blacksmith, Grantor --- Arthur Dennis of New Boston, yeoman, Grantee: Consideration \$1000 paid by Arthur Dennis -----do hereby give, grant, etc. to said Arthur ½ quantity and quality of tract situated in New Boston, being the whole of Lot 25, etc, etc. --- together with a certain sawmill privilege and millyard as expressed in a deed this day given to me by said Arthur --- provided, nevertheless, this deed is given on the following conditions that if the said Moses his heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns do well and truly pay unto said Arthur \$150 at or within one year from date hereof with the lawful interest; also build and finish off completely for business a sawmill on the above mentioned premises at or within two years from the date hereof with annul return to said Arthur of ½ the boards and other lumber the said sawmill shall cut during the natural life of the said Arthur and his wife Mary if she should continue his widow, said mill to be properly tended and kept in repair by said Moses and the ½ of the lumber as afsd [aforesaid] to be delivered yearly. Also at or within 4 years from date hereof finish off the house and barn in a decent proper and faithful manner, the rooms in the house to be plaistered, etc. Also cut and hall (sic) to the door of said Arthur sufficient firewood yearly during the life of said Arthur and his wife Mary if she should continue his widow and cut the same fit for the fire, then, the foregoing deed is to be null and void but

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- (1) Deed Book 53, p. 246, Hillsboro County Court House, Nashua, N.H.
 - (2) Note that Arthur's daughter, Mary, was married to John Henderson. Many of these families were neighbors, and their children intermarried.

therewith to remain in full force and virtue.

Signed, Moses Dennis (Seal) Aug. 22, 1801”

However, a year later (Sept. 14, 1802) Moses Dennis apparently backed out of the deal with his father and returned his holdings in Lot No. 25 to his father. The deed shows that: (1)

“Arthur Dennis, grantee – Moses Dennis, grantor – Consideration \$ 1000 paid by Arthur Dennis of New Boston, yeoman, -- Quitclaim unto Arthur Dennis – that certain tract of land – being the whole of Lot No. 25 – together with the house and barn – being all the lands and privileges thereto belonging which I heretofore bought of said Arthur (deed dated Aug. 22, 1801) together with all effects, rights, title, interest, use, property claim and demand whatsoever of said premises which I now have or at any time heretofore had, of, in, and to the aforementioned premises with the appurtenances, or to any part thereof etc.

Witness hand and seal Sept. 14, 1802

Signed, Moses Dennis (Seal)”

In 1805, Arthur Dennis, then sixty years old, made what appears to be the final disposition of his property when he sold two hundred and fifty seven acres to Frederick French of Dunstable for \$2,212.00. (2) Mrs. Williams says “I do not know how much longer he remained in New Boston, N.H. – however I think it is of importance to note the following deed given by Moses Dennis et al. in 1806: (3)

“Ebenezer French of Bedford, Grantee – Moses Dennis, Benjamin Sprague, and David Sprague all of Bedford, N.H., Grantors – Consideration \$1300 --- being part of the farm (120 acres) in New Boston on which Arthur Dennis and Samuel Dennis now live, and part of same farm sold by Arthur to Frederick French by deed dated Oct. 13, 1805.” (4)

Signed by above grantors, with right of dower given by Hannah Sprague, wife of Benjamin Sprague; Patty Sprague, wife of David Sprague; and Rhoda Sprague, wife of Moses Dennis. (5)

Again quoting Mrs. Williams, “Where Arthur Dennis went after Moses sold the above land, and what he did I probably shall never know. (4) It is possible that the town records of New Boston might disclose it.” It appears that Moses Dennis was more closely drawn to his wife’s family

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- (1) Book 56, p. 90 Deeds in Hillsboro County Court House, Nashua, N.H.
 - (2) Book of Deeds 67, p. 321 Hillsboro County Court House, Nashua, N.H.
 - (3) Book of Deeds 76, p. 532 Hillsboro County Court House, Nashua, N.H.
 - (4) Bk. 79, p. 527 Moses did not sell the last nine acres of this farm until Sept. 9, 1807.
 - (5) Benjamin and Hannah Sprague were the parents of Rhoda Sprague Dennis, and David Sprague was her uncle. Moses must have moved to Bedford, N.H.

after his marriage, and away from his own parents. “It seems that Moses Dennis was not interested in providing a home for his father and brother any longer.” (1)

At any rate, by 1808, Arthur Dennis was living in New Ipswich, N.H. and as far as the records show, did not return to New Boston again to stay. One wonders what attraction New Ipswich had for Arthur and Mary Dennis. Could it be there were old friends from long ago who had settled in this little town which bore the name of their birthplace? There must have been some reason that they chose to move so great a distance when they gave up farming. In 1808, Arthur Dennis paid taxes in New Ipswich for school, town, minister and county, but apparently not on land. He must have rented a place where he could keep a cow or two and tend a garden. He continued to pay taxes in New Ipswich during 1809, 1810, 1811, and 1812. (2) The records show that “Arthur Dennis was one of the signers dissenting against the place for the new meeting house on land near Mr. Samuel Duttons, because it was so far out of the center of town.” (3)

In 1812-1813, Arthur Dennis moved again – this time back to Amherst, N.H., where he and Mary had lived when they first settled in New Hampshire in 1778. Here he paid a poll tax and a tax on cows in 1814. They lived in Amherst for three or four years and paid taxes there – in 1815 and 1816 on cows, only. (2)

Arthur and Mary Dennis made one final move sometime before 1819, because they were living in Mt. Vernon, N.H., which is a small village six or eight miles south of New Boston, when Mary Dennis died on February 15, 1819. She was seventy years old (VR) and Arthur was seventy four. Presumably, Mary Goodhue Dennis is buried in Mt. Vernon, but, if so, her grave is unmarked. (4) The straightened circumstances of their last years are plainly set forth in a letter written by their youngest son, Rodney Gove Dennis, to his older brother, Samuel Dennis, then living in Zurich in Ontario County (now Wayne County), New York. Although Arthur had realized \$2,212.00 from the sale of his farm in 1805, that had been used up little by little over the years.

Letter of Rodney Gove Dennis to his brother, Samuel Dennis, after their mother’s death:
(5)

Mont Vernon, (N.H.), May 1st, 1819

My very Dear Brother.

“Your letter of March 21st is now before me. The intelligence which it contains is of the most gratifying nature. --- You cannot tell with what pleasure I read that part of your letter which expresses your desire and the desire of my other brothers that my father may come and live with you. I have been very anxious for him. He is all alone and is very poor. There is no one of his children here, with whom he can conveniently live. It is utterly out of my power to do anything

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- (1) See Appendix for Mrs. Williams’ comments.
 - (2) Town Records of New Ipswich – quoted by D.B.W.
 - (3) Town Records of New Ipswich – vol. 5, p. 6
 - (4) In 1958, my husband and I visited in New Hampshire. While there, I went to Mt. Vernon and tramped all over the little old cemetery in an attempt to locate Mary Dennis’ grave, but in vain.
 - (5) Demorris Williams has the original letter written by Rodney Dennis to Samuel Dennis, who was her great, great grandfather.

for him at present. I am obliged to turn every way to get along with my education and were it not that Christian people are very good to me in giving me, and loaning me money, I could not support myself. I shall not finish my studies before the last of next September, and then it will be a year and a half or two years perhaps before I settle. Indeed I do not wish to settle immediately after I go forth into the world because the work of the ministry is a great work, and if I should engage in it as a settled pastor with all my strength at first, it would quicker wear me out. So you see, dear brother, that nothing can be expected from me at present. I feel for father, and were it in my power, I would make him comfortable. Had I a house he should be welcome to a home. I rejoice that you are moved with pity towards him. If he stays here a great while longer, he must fall on the town. This I know you are unwilling should be the case, I should be extremely grieved were it to happen. I did what I could for my mother before she died, and I have done what I could for my father. This is the third time I have left my studies and visited him and mother within five months. I was with mother about a fortnight during her sickness. But I have done nothing compared with what it is my duty to do, were I able. If ever my circumstances will permit I shall be willing to do what in your judgment you all shall think right. You desire that either I would convey father to you, or he would get himself conveyed. Neither of these is possible. If I could spare the time, I could not conveniently obtain money to bear the expenses, and father I am persuaded could not raise enough to hire anyone to bring him to you. I see no other way but that you must come or send for him; and this I beg you would do as soon as you can possibly make it convenient. He can have the liberty to tarry in the house where he is – the middle of Mont Vernon – a while longer, I have no doubt from what the owner told me yesterday, till you would have proper time to come or send. Father will have no baggage except a chest of clothes. Of the rest of his goods Mr. Hills of New Ipswich has a bill of sale and when father has done with them they fall to him. However, by selling his provisions and some things which he says he can dispose of, he will have a little money. He wishes me to tell you, he intends to get himself conveyed as far as cousin Goodhues in ---[torn out]--- the borough as soon as he can leave this place. He wants to have you come or send that way; possibly he will be there, if not you will find him here. He says he is not afraid of being stopped by any debt which he owes. His health is very good, and if he comes and lives with you and God smiles upon him in regard to his health he will be very useful in taking care of your gardens, etc. Do not dear brother fail to send, and if you are good to father as I know you will be, God will certainly reward you. I only came up to stay a day or two and return to Andover on Monday morning next. I think of nothing more. I hope my father will have a prosperous journey and that God will greatly bless both you and him; and if we never all meet in this world, may we all meet with one another and all our dear friends in heaven, where we shall enjoy our God and Savior forever. Give my love to all my dear nephews and nieces. Write to me often.

Your very dear Brother,
Rodney G. Dennis”

There is no way of knowing how Arthur Dennis finally reached the Lyons-Phelps area in New York State, but reach it he did. He made the journey before the Erie Canal had been built, and long before the coming of the railroads. It is likely that he joined up with some of the folks from “down east” who had staked out claims in the central part of the state and once a year or so made the long trip back to the old home in New Hampshire. Nor is it known with which of his five children he made his home in New York – three daughters, and two sons. He spent the last

years of his life with his daughter and her husband, Lucy and Moody Cummings, in Phelps, and died there on April 24, 1825. (1) According to one record (2) he outlived his daughter, who died in February of that year. This may account in part for the fact that his grave is unmarked, or at least has never been located by any of the family who have searched for it. His old family Bible went to Lucy Cummings' daughter who eventually passed it on to a descendant of Moses Dennis. It contains the oldest known family record, and is quoted in this account. Arthur Dennis was seventy six years old when he died.

4-17 Moses Dennis (Rev. John 3-5, John 2-2, Thomas 1-1)

New Hampshire

Son of Rev. John and Martha Willcomb Dennis (3)

b. May 27, 1750/1

Ipswich, Mass.

d. Dec. 18, 1845

Hancock, N. Hampshire

bur.

Hancock, N. Hampshire ?

Married: Sarah Frye

May 27, 1781 (3)

b. May 27, 1758

Andover, Mass.

d. Oct. 12, 1851

Hancock, N. Hampshire

bur.

Hancock, N. Hampshire ?

Children of Moses Dennis and Sarah Frye Dennis: (4) (5)

5-33 Moses Dennis

b. Oct. 7, 1782

Ipswich, Mass.

5-34 Sally Dennis

b. Nov. 25, 1784

Hancock, N.H.

5-35 Martha Dennis

b. Nov. 29, 1786

Hancock, N.H.

5-36 Samuel Dennis

b. Jan 26, 1788

Hancock, N.H.

5-37 Betsy Dennis

b. June 3, 1790

Hancock, N.H.

5-38 John Dennis

b. Mar. 1, 1793

Hancock, N.H.

5-39 Parmelia Dennis

b. Nov. 3, 1795

Hancock, N.H.

5-40 William Dennis

b. Dec. 24, 1797

Hancock, N.H.

Moses Dennis, the seventh child and the youngest son (he may have been the youngest child) of the Rev. John Dennis and his wife, Martha Willcomb Dennis, was born in Ipswich,

(1) Family Bible Record

(2) Mrs. Leora Drake has a more complete list of vital statistics than Demorris and I have. She has the date of Lucy Dennis Cummings death, and many other items – but gives no source of her information, unfortunately.

(3) Notes of Demorris B. Williams in Appendix

(4) Notes of Leora W. Drake

(5) Town Records of Hancock, N.H. – vol. I, p. 472-3

Mass. on May 27, 1750. (1) His father had completed a stint as chaplain at Pemaquid, Maine and had returned to live in the home of his ancestors in Ipswich, where he accepted a position as teacher in the grammar school there. Moses was but four years old when his mother died (July 1754), and he was left in the care of his three older sisters and several brothers.

The following December, his father accepted the invitation of the people of Charlestown, New Hampshire to become the minister “to the church about to be gathered there.” Charlestown, which is on the Vermont-New Hampshire border, well north of the Massachusetts line, must have been primitive country. Because of an Indian scare, they did not dare to call the assembly required for the ordination service in Chalestown, and it was held in Northfield., Mass. instead. From this, one can picture the life that surrounded the new minister and his young family. While in Charlestown, the Rev. John Dennis remarried, and his second wife, Ruth Bacon of Charlestown, apparently, took over the task of caring for his children. The family stayed but two years in Charlestown (1754-1756). Some unpleasantness developed with the congregation and the Rev. John Dennis resigned. (see Rev. John Dennis 3-5)

From Charlestown, he moved to Harwick, Mass. where he served the church in that community. In 1760, he resigned and returned to Ipswich with his family. There he returned to teaching and was appointed Reading and Writing master north of the river. Moses was a boy of ten when his father returned to Ipswich.

Moses Dennis spent his youth in Ipswich. Its proximity to the sea must have aroused his interest in the ships that came and went, and in the far places to which they sailed. He became a sailor, and a ship’s cooper. (2) “He took cargoes of staves, hoops, heading of all kinds and sizes, and packed them into a ship bound for the West Indies, and there they would set up the casks of all kinds and descriptions and finish them off and sell them at a big profit.”

“During the Revolutionary War, he enlisted in the infantry on the American side, and served in Boston, Trenton, and Princeton. Pension was allowed for one Year’s actual service as a private in the Mass. Continental Line.” (3) “He was taken prisoner by the British and kept on the old prison ships – old hulks anchored in New York harbor. Here he was kept without much food and clothing and then they would offer the prisoners plenty of both food and clothing, if they would desert. Some were overcome by hunger and cold and did desert, and received an abundance of food. The British would bring such and compare them with the starved prisoners, they being plump, while those who remained were skeletons. But Dennis despised food clothing (sic) on such conditions. Then they offered him large sums of money; but none of these things moved him. He would rather die than disgrace his country. Many did die, but he was strong and held out until exchanged. At another time he had the care of the medicine chest, and assisted the doctors in their work. He told of being parolled as prisoner of war; was being taken on a vessel from New York to Boston for exchange and on the route they were taken from their vessel and examined thirteen times and as many times returned. At the Declaration of Independence he was at Castle Garden; he assisted in making the mock King out of lead and placing him on the horse made of the same material and hurrahd for Lord North, the King and the Devil. Afterward

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- (1) Mr. J. D. Ordway gives 1751 as the date of Moses Dennis’ birth – the others both give 1750 – the later being more apt to be authentic in my judgement.
 - (2) From J. D. Ordway’s account of the Dennis Family of Jasper, N.Y.
 - (3) From notes of Demorris Williams

they tore the statue down and cast it into bullets.” (1)

“In 1778 (or 1781 according to D.A.R. records) he married Sarah Frye of Andover, Mass. (2) In 1780 he, with several others, migrated to New Hampshire. He bought in the town of Hancock a lot called Blanchard’s Mile Square, containing 640 acres. He sold two farms from his lot, reserving about 360 acres. This lot, one of the best in town, is situated in the southeast part of the town, bounded on the east by the Contoocock River. For three years Mr. Dennis spent only his summers in Hancock, returning to Ipswich in the winter. He built a hut near the river, in which he lived, doing his own work, living alone. He made a wooden plate from which he ate his food. During the third summer of his stay he built a log house a short distance from his hut. The following spring, 1784, he took his wife with him. Mrs. Dennis rode from Andover, Mass. on horseback, carrying her child, a year and a half old, in her arms, a distance of fifty miles, with a window for her house strapped on behind. This window had six small panes of glass, and for several years was the only glass window in town. She was considered very proud with her extensive outfit of a glass window, half a dozen plates, cups and saucers, and as many silver spoons, a tea-kettle and spider. They lived in their log house a few years, then built a frame house, in which they lived the remainder of their lives, excepting a few years that they lived with William, their son.”

Eight children were born to Moses and Sarah Frye Dennis (and apparently none died in infancy). The oldest son, Moses, Jr. was born before his father moved to New Hampshire, thus it may be assumed that he was born in Andover, Mass. where his mother lived during the years that the New Hampshire home was being built and made ready. (3) As noted earlier, Sarah Dennis carried her infant son on horseback fifty miles to Hancock in 1784. The other children were all born in Hancock, N.H. All of them married (some several times) and raised large families of their own. Moses, Jr. married first Lois Eaton, and, after her death, married Jane Graves. He moved his family to the Jasper area in Steuben County, New York, where he died. The oldest daughter, Sally, married Charles Symonds (Simons), a farmer in Hancock, N.H. Martha Dennis married Dr. John Baker of Princeton, Mass. and with him settled in Marlboro, Mass. Samuel Dennis (known as Squire) married four times (pioneer life was hard on the women) – Elizabeth Frye of Andover, Mass., Lucy Witcomb, Alice Whiting, and her sister, Olive Whiting Boardman. Samuel also came to Jasper and located near his brother, Moses. Here they joined their sister, Parmelia. The area came to be known locally as “Hampshire” because so many families from that state settled there.

(1) From J. D. Ordway’s account of the Dennis Family of Jasper, N.Y.

(2) Sarah Frye was born on May 27, 1758, the daughter of Samuel Frye and Elizabeth Frye.

(3) Moses Dennis, Jr.’s birthplace is in disagreement with the D.A.R. records of Mrs. Alta Dennis Bonsit of Scarsdale, N.Y. She claims that he was born in New Hampshire. Her papers are No. 167,783.

Their daughter, Betsy married Simeon Lakin (Lain?) of Hancock, N.H., and, so far as is known, continued to live there. John Dennis married Nancy Hunt of Hancock and, for a number of years, lived at Old Homestead. In 1870, he sold and moved to Quincy, Illinois. Permelia Dennis married twice – Archelaus Fuller Whittemore of Hancock was her first husband, and with him came to Steuben County where her two brothers were located. After Mr. Whittemore’s death, she married William H. Prentice, and they continued to live in the Jasper area. Only William Dennis remained on the old home in Hancock. He had married Nancy White, but they were unfortunate in not having children. William provided a home for his parents, Moses and Sarah Frye Dennis, as long as they lived. (1)

“Moses Dennis was a man of great physical strength, lots of grit, and applied himself steadily to his work. They country was poor, The government was hardly established. No money but continental money which was depreciated in value much worse than our greenbacks in time of the Civil War. When Dennis first started he had to pay \$ 100 of his money for a barrel of pork, and fifty dollars for a spider to cook it in; and seventy-five dollars for a small cow. Being in the army did not help him financially.” (2)

“Mr. Dennis was a good family man where he had kind words and thoughts for his family. He had some town offices given him, but his own affairs engrossed the most of his attention. He ordered his merchant not to let his account get above \$5.00. It is said that he made most of his money by keeping cattle and Merino sheep. His wife, Sally Frye, was a relative of the Fryes of Revolutionary times, also of Senator Frye of the present day.” (1890) (1)

Both Moses Dennis and Sarah, his wife, died in Hancock, N.H. probably on the farm which he had carved out of the wilderness – Blanchard’s Mile Square. They are buried in the Hancock Cemetery, beyond a shadow of a doubt.

(1) Details about the children of Moses and Sarah F. Dennis will be found in the Section IV of this record.

(2) Quoted exactly from the account of Mr. J. D. Ordway of Jasper, who spent many years with the family of Moses Dennis’ in Jasper, and was a great admirer of the family. See Appendix.

SECTION II

Litchfield, Maine Branch of the Dennis Family

Descendants of John Dennis (4-5) and Salome Hodgkins Dennis

Chapter V. Fifth Generation Descendants

5-2	Salome Dennis Lord	1776-1854
5-3	John Dennis	1780-1860
5-7	Elizabeth Dennis Ring	1785-1820
5-8	Thomas Dennis	1787-1831

Chapter VI Sixth Generation of Descendants of John Dennis (5-3)

6-59	Nathaniel Dennis	1810-1882
6-60	Samuel William Dennis	1812-1836
6-61	Dr. John Dennis	1816-
6-63	David Dennis	1836-

Chapter VII Seventh Generation Descendants of Nathaniel Dennis (6-59)

7-2	Dr. Samuel William Dennis	1836-
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Litchfield, Maine Branch of the Dennis Family

Chart 2. The Descendants of John Dennis (1741-1816) and Salome Hodgkins Dennis

x5-1 John Dennis 1774-74		<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 15%; border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 5px;">x6-49</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">John D. Lord</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1797</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 5px;">x6-50</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">Ephriam “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1799</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 5px;">x6-51</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">Martha D. “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1801</td></tr> </table>	x6-49	John D. Lord	1797	x6-50	Ephriam “	1799	x6-51	Martha D. “	1801																
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5-2 Salome Dennis 1776 m. Ephriam Lord ---<		<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 15%; padding-right: 5px;">x6-52</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">Joseph . “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1802</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding-right: 5px;">x6-53</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">James F. “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1804</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding-right: 5px;">x6-54</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">Joseph D. “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1807</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding-right: 5px;">x6-55</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">Eliz. B. “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1810</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding-right: 5px;">x6-56</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">George W. “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1812</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding-right: 5px;">x6-57</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">Sarah M. “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1814</td></tr> </table>	x6-52	Joseph . “	1802	x6-53	James F. “	1804	x6-54	Joseph D. “	1807	x6-55	Eliz. B. “	1810	x6-56	George W. “	1812	x6-57	Sarah M. “	1814							
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5-3 John Dennis 1780 1 st m. E. Walker ----< 2 nd m. H. Sawyer		<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 15%; padding-right: 5px;">x6-58</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">Lemuel Dennis</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1809</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding-right: 5px;">6-59</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">Nathaniel “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1810</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding-right: 5px;">x6-60</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">Samuel W. “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1812</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding-right: 5px;">x6-61</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">John, Jr. “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1816</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding-right: 5px;">x6-62</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">Thomas “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1822</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding-right: 5px;">x6-63</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">David “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1836</td></tr> </table>	x6-58	Lemuel Dennis	1809	6-59	Nathaniel “	1810	x6-60	Samuel W. “	1812	x6-61	John, Jr. “	1816	x6-62	Thomas “	1822	x6-63	David “	1836	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 15%; border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 5px;"></td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">x7-1 Eliz.</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1834</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 5px;"></td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">x7-2 Sam.Wm.</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1836</td></tr> </table>		x7-1 Eliz.	1834		x7-2 Sam.Wm.	1836
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x5-4 Martha ?																											
x5-5 Twins ?																											
x5-6 Martha 1782-95																											
x5-7 Elizabeth D. 1785 m. ----- Ring																											
5-8 Thomas Dennis 1787 1 st m. H. Walker ---< 2 nd m. A. Davenport		<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 15%; padding-right: 5px;">x6-64</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">Hannah Dennis</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1814</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding-right: 5px;">x6-65</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">Emmeline “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1818</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding-right: 5px;">x6-66</td><td style="padding-left: 5px;">Wm. Eugene “</td><td style="padding-left: 20px;">1824</td></tr> </table>	x6-64	Hannah Dennis	1814	x6-65	Emmeline “	1818	x6-66	Wm. Eugene “	1824																
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x6-66	Wm. Eugene “	1824																									
x5-9 Lydia Dennis 1794-1850 (?)																											

Information taken from: History of Litchfield, Me. pub. 1895

CHAPTER V

Fifth Generation – The Descendants of John Dennis of Litchfield, Maine

5-2 Salome Dennis Lord (John, 4-5; Thomas, 3-4; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1)

Daughter of John and Salome Hodgkins Dennis

b. Dec. 8, 1776 (1) probably in Ipswich, Mass.
d. Oct. 20, 1854 (1) Hallowell, Maine
bur. probably in Hallowell

Marrried: Ephriam Lord (1)

b. Aug. 1, 1771
d.
bur.

Children of Salome Dennis and Ephriam Lord: (1)

x6-49 John Dennis	b. July 15, 1797
x6-50 Ephriam Brown Lord	b. Feb. 4, 1799
x6-51 Martha Dennis Lord	b. Mar. 11, 1801
x6-52 Joseph Lord	b. Nov.25,1802, d. Oct 10, 1805
x6-53 James Fuller Lord	b. July 15, 1804
x6-54 Joseph Dennis Lord	b. Mar. 7, 1807
x6-55 Elizabeth Brown Lord	b. Oct. 17, 1810
x6-56 Geo. Washington Lord	b. July 28, 1812
x6-57 Sarah Mary Lord	b. June 21, 1814

Salome was the oldest daughter, and the second child, born to her parents, John and Salome Hodgkins Dennis. Her brother, John, had died before she was born, when he was but a month old. There were seven children in her family, and there may, in fact, have been two more. The records are not clear. Salome was a girl of thirteen when her father and mother left Massachusetts to go to live in Maine. Her father, who had been a mariner, transported his family by ship as far as Portland – they sailed on the schooner, “Polly”. “Arriving at the Cobbossee, he paddled upstream landing at a place called Horseshoe Pond Bridge. From there, they went through the woods to what is now known as the Dennis Farm” (1) near Litchfield, Maine. (See John D. 4-5)

In Maine, Salome Dennis met and married Ephriam Lord, who was the son of James and Elizabeth Lord. Ephriam Lord lived in Hallowell, Maine, which is a small town a few miles south of Augusta on the Kennebec River, and here, he and Salome probably lived most of their married life. They were parents of nine children, all but one of whom lived to grow up. Some of their children must have been lured, as were dozens – hundreds – of others, to try their luck in the far west. Their son, Joseph Dennis Lord was in Sacramento, Cal. in 1883, where he died on October 10th. Nothing more is known of this branch of the Dennis family.

(1) Maine Historical Society Series II, vol. VI, p. 98
History of Litchfield, Maine 1795-1895 contains a brief genealogy of this branch of the Dennis family, which has been used extensively in writing up these notes.

Son of John Dennis and Salome Hodgkins Dennis

b. May 30, 1780 Ipswich, Mass. (1)
 d. Feb. 4, 1866 probably in Litchfield, Maine
 bur.

1st Married: Elizabeth Walker

Nov. 26, 1807 (1)

b.
 d. Mar. 27, 1833 probably in Litchfield, Maine
 bur.

2nd Married: Harriet Sawyer (daughter of Joseph Sawyer) (1)

b. no data on this wife

Children of John and Elizabeth Walker Dennis (1)

x6-58	Lemuel Dennis	b. Feb. 1, 1809;	d. Dec. 19, 1827
6-59	Nathaniel Dennis	b. Sept. 29, 1810	d. May 19, 1882
6-60	Samuel William Dennis	b. Mar. 1, 1812	d. Feb. 2, 1836
			- Miss.
6-61	John Dennis, Jr.	b. Aug. 1, 1816	
x6-62	Thomas Dennis	b. Sept. 13, 1822	d. Sept. 24, 1822

Children of John and Harriet Sawyer Dennis (1)

6-63 David Dennis b. June 7, 1836

John Dennis, Jr. was born in Ipswich, Mass. on May 30, 1780. When he was nine years old, his father moved the family to Maine. They sailed on the schooner, Polly, and arrived at the Cobbossee stream on November 2nd, 1789, and took a canoe, paddling upstream, landing near what is now called Horseshoe Pond Bridge. From there, they went through the woods to what is known in the area as the Dennis farm. John Dennis, Jr. grew up here in the vicinity of Litchfield, Maine, and spent the rest of his long life there.

John Dennis, Jr. served as a lieutenant in the Company of David C. Burr and was a Captain during the War of 1812, stationed most of the time near St. Albans, Vermont. He served as Town Treasurer for thirty years and held a number of other town offices.

John and Elizabeth Walker Dennis were the parents of five children, all boys. After Elizabeth's death in 1833, John married Harriet Sawyer. John and Harriet had one son, David, bringing the number in the family to six boys. One son, Thomas, died when but ten days old, in 1822.

Two of the sons remained in the Litchfield area where they were outstanding citizens, a credit to the family and the community. (6-59, Nathaniel; and David, 6-63). John, Jr. and Samuel William both attended, and were graduated from colleges in Maine. John, Jr. became a physician. Both of these boys suffered from bad health, and moved south because of it. (see John Dennis, Jr., 6-61; and Samuel Dennis, 6-60)

 (1) History of Litchfield, Maine 1795-1895, p. 99

5-7 Elizabeth Dennis Ring (John, 4-5; Thomas, 3-4; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1)

5-7. 5-8

Daughter of John and Salome Hodgkins Dennis (1)
b. Feb. 26, 1785 probably in Ipswich, Mass.
d. Dec. 13, 1820
bur.

Marriage: ____?____ Ring (Ringe)
No data

Children of Elizabeth and _____ Ring
No data

Elizabeth Dennis was undoubtedly born in Ipswich, Mass. where her parents lived before they left for Maine. She was about four and a half years old when her father moved the family to Litchfield, Maine. Here she grew up and eventually married. Nothing further is known of this family.

5-8 Thomas Dennis (John, 4-5; Thomas, 3-4; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1) (2)

Son of John and Salome Hodgkins Dennis (1)
b. Nov. 28, 1787 Ipswich, Mass.
d. Jan. 12, 1831
bur.

1st Married: Hannah Walker of Kennebunk, Maine
b.
d. Aug. 22, 1825
bur.

2nd Married: Abigail Davenport on May 13, 1828
b. No data

Children of Thomas and Hannah Walker Dennis:
x6-64 Hannah Dennis b. Sept. 12, 1814
x6-65 Emmeline Dennis b. May 31, 1818
x6-66 William Eugene Dennis b. July , 1824

Children of Thomas and Abigail Dennis:
x6-67 Julia Caroline Dennis b. April 16, 1829

Thomas Dennis was but two years old when his father, John Dennis (4-5), moved to Litchfield, Maine. Here Thomas grew to manhood and married. His first wife, Hannah Walker, who was the daughter of Lemuel and Hannah Walker of Kennebunk, Maine, died in 1825. Three years later Thomas married Abigail Davenport. Thomas was the father of five children – four girls and one son. [Only 4 listed here.] Thomas died in 1831, when he was but forty four years old.

(1) History of Litchfield, Mass.

(2) Maine Historical Society Series II, vol. VI, p. 199-200

Sixth Generation Descendants of John Dennis of Litchfield, Maine.6-59 Nathaniel Dennis (John, 5-3; John, 4-5; Thomas, 3-4; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1)

Son of John and Elizabeth Walker Dennis

b. Sept. 29, 1810	Litchfield, Maine (1)
d. May 19, 1882	Litchfield, Maine
bur.	Litchfield, Maine (beyond doubt)

Married: Clarissa Hall on May 19, 1833 Litchfield, Maine (1)

b.
d.
bur.

Children of Nathaniel and Clarissa Hall Dennis: (1)

x7-1 Elizabeth Dennis	b. Mar. 13, 1834; d. July 1, 1848
7-2 Samuel William Dennis	b. Oct. 16, 1836, Litchfield

Nathaniel Dennis was born in Litchfield, probably on the farm where his grandfather, John Dennis (4-5), had settled in 1789. He was the second of five sons born to his parents. His older brother, Lemuel, died in 1827, when Nathaniel was seventeen years old, thus making him the oldest son, and the one his father counted on to carry on the family farm. In 1833 – March – his mother died when Nathaniel was twenty three. The following May, 1833, he married Clarissa Hall, presumably from Litchfield. They undoubtedly settled on his father's farm, thus maintaining the home for him. Thus, Nathaniel became the third generation to live on the farm of his grandfather, John Dennis. (4-5)

Nathaniel and Clarissa were the parents of two children – a girl and a boy. Their daughter, named for her grandmother, died in 1848 when she was fourteen years old. Only Samuel William reached adulthood, and achieved fame in his chosen profession of dentistry. He eventually rose to the presidency of the American Dental Association (see 7-2).

Nathaniel Dennis was prominent in community affairs in Litchfield for many years, as his father had been before him. (see John Dennis, 5-3) He served as Town Treasurer for years.

Nathaniel Dennis died in 1882 at the age of seventy one. There was no one left of this branch of the family in Maine to carry on the family farm on which their grandfather had settled in 1789. After three generations, it passed out of the family.

(1) History of Litchfield, Maine,

6-60 Samuel William Dennis (John, 5-3; John, 4-5; Thomas, 3-4; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1)

Son of John and Elizabeth Walker Dennis (1)
 b. Mar. 1, 1812 Litchfield, Maine
 d. Feb. 2, 1836 Washington, Mississippi
 bur. Mississippi

Married: ?

Children: ?

Samuel William Dennis (not to be confused with his nephew of the same name) was the third of five sons born to John and Elizabeth Walker Dennis. He was almost certainly born and grew up on his grandfather, John Dennis' farm in Litchfield, which was then known as the "Dennis Farm". His early education must have been considerably better than that of the average young man of the time, for he went to college in Brunswick, Maine. There he was graduated from Bowdoin College in 1833, and taught school for two years in Philadelphia, Pa. However, his health was not good, and he left for warmer climates. He died in Washington, Mississippi in 1836. There is no record that he ever married or had a family.

6-61 Dr. John Dennis (John, 5-3; John, 4-5; Thomas, 3-4; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1)

Son of John and Elizabeth Walker Dennis
 b. Aug. 1, 1816 Litchfield, Maine
 d.
 bur.

Married: No information

Children: No information

John Dennis was the fourth of five sons born to his parents – John and Elizabeth Walker Dennis. He, too, like his older brothers, grew up on the Dennis farm near Litchfield on which his grandfather had settled in 1789. Like his older brother, Samuel William, John received an education in his early youth which prepared him for college. He attended Colby University in Waterville, Maine for three years, but left at the beginning of his senior year because of poor health. The Maine winters may have been too severe for this family – three of whom died prematurely (a brother, Lemuel in 1827, their mother in 1833, and Samuel William in 1836). John Dennis studied medicine in medical college in Worcester (Mass. ?), then known as Thomasonian. He practiced medicine in Augusta, Georgia and was there in 1895 (when the History of Litchfield was written).

Whether he married and raised a family is not known. He was, however, a major influence in the life of his nephew, Samuel William Dennis (see 7-2), the son of Dr. John's brother, Nathaniel Dennis.

 (1) History of Litchfield in which there is a brief Dennis genealogy from which most of the information on this branch was gleaned.

Son of John and Harriet Sawyer Dennis (1)

b. June 7, 1836

Litchfield, Maine

d.

bur.

Married: ?

Children: ?

David Dennis was the only son of John Dennis (5-3) and his second wife, Harriet Sawyer Dennis. Born in 1836, he was twenty years younger than his youngest half brother, Dr. John Dennis. Like his two older brothers, he received a better education than the average, which prepared him to teach school in his early life.

However, he did not stay in the teaching profession, but went into business in Gardiner, Maine, a small town south of Augusta. He became one of the best known business men in Maine, becoming President of the Merchant's National Bank of Gardiner, a trustee of the Gardiner Savings Institute, and holding other positions of public trust.

There are no records of his marriage, or of his children, nor in fact of his death.

(1) Information about David Dennis is from the History of Litchfield, Maine. A search of the deed books and vital records might yield more information.

Chart 3. Descendants of 4-15 Arthur Dennis (1745-1825) and Mary Goodhue (1749-1819)

5-20 <u>Arthur</u> 1768 -----<	m. L. Burnham	x6-1 John Dennis	1793	
		x6-2 Joseph Dennis	1795	
		seven others		
5-21 <u>Mary</u> 1769 -----<	m. Henderson	x6-3 Mary Henderson	1800	
		x6-4 David Henderson	1802	
		x6-5 Arthur Henderson	1809	
		x6-6 Naor Henderson	1812	
5-22 <u>John</u> 1771 -----<	m. E. Fling	6-7 John Dennis	1799	m. Nancy Halvern
		x6-8 Elijah Dennis		
		x6-9 Joseph Dennis		
5-23 <u>Sarah</u> 1773	m. T. Page	6-10 James Dennis	1797	m. Sally Carll
		6-11 Joseph Dennis	1799	m. Love Carll
5-24 <u>Samuel</u> 1775	d. young	6-12 Edith Adams Dennis	18__	d. 1822
		6-13 Mary Dennis	1803	m. Robt. York
		6-14 Lucy Dennis		m. Gilman Dennis
5-25 <u>Samuel</u> 1776 -----<	m. Sarah Dix	6-15 Frederick A. Dennis	1809	m. Lydia Riggs
---		6-16 Sally Dennis	1810	m. Thomas York
		6-17 Caroline Dennis	1811	m. Lewis Watson
		6-18 Eunice Dennis	18__	m. Lilly Gifford
		6-19 Gilman Dennis	1802	m. Lucy Dennis
		6-20 Rhoda Dennis	1803	m. Lemuel Jenny
		6-21 Benjamin Dennis	1806	m. Zillah J. Roby
5-26 <u>Moses</u> 1779 -----<	m. R. Sprague	x6-22 Rodney Dennis	1808	- d. 1817
		x6-23 Ephriam Dennis	1810	- d. 1816
		x6-24 Ursula Dennis	1812	- d. 1817
		6-25 <u>Robert D. Dennis</u>	1814	m. <u>Elizabeth Roy</u>
		6-26 Fanny Dennis	1816	m. Benjamin Leighton
		6-27 Moses Dennis	1818	m. Pama Fellers
5-27 <u>Lucy</u> 1781 -----<	m. M. Cummings	6-28 Lucy Cummings	1811	m. ___ Catlin [?]
5-28 <u>Patty</u> 1783		6-29 Levi Lane	1806	m. Sally Burnett
		6-30 Luther Lane	1808	m. Emily Watson
		6-31 Lorenzo Lane	1809	m. Maria Larne
5-29 <u>Frances</u> 1784 -----<	m. Z. Lane	6-32 Lydia Lane	1812	m. Renselar Merchant
		6-33 Lavina Lane	1814	m. J. Riggs/Newkirk
		6-34 Loren Lane	1816	m. T. VanMarter
5-30 <u>William</u> 1787		6-35 Francis Lane	1818	m. Martha Spears
		6-36 John Lane	1821	unmarried
5-31 <u>Joseph</u> 1789	m. H. York	6-37 Fanny Lane	1825	m.C. Horton/D.Watson
		6-38 Nancy Lane	1831	m. John Nichols

Continued next page à

	x6-39	Mary Dennis	1821	m. Holland Batchellor
	x6-40	Theodosia Dennis	1823	m. T. Little/H. Finch
	x6-41	Jane Abigail Dennis	1824	m. Benj. Heywood [?]
	x6-42	Jesse Appleton Dennis	1824	
5-32 <u>Rev. Rodney</u> 1793 ---<	x6-43	Rodney Dennis	1828	d. 1899
m. M. Parker	x6-44	Joseph Dennis	1829	
	x6-45	Edward P. Dennis	1829	
	x6-46	Isabelle H. Dennis	1833	
	x6-47	Frances L. Dennis	1834	
	x6-48	Henriette P. Dennis	1838	

NOTE:

This chart gives the known descendants of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis. Preceding each name are two numbers. The first represents the generation to which the person belongs (Thomas Dennis is the 1st generation, Arthur Dennis is the 4th generation of his descendants.) Where an x precedes a name it indicates that all that is known of that person is found in this generation and the line will not be continued.

Seventh Generation Descendants of John Dennis of Litchfield, Maine.

7-2 Dr. Samuel William Dennis (Nathaniel, 6-59; John, 5-3; John, 4-5; Thomas, 3-4;
John 2-2; Thomas 1-1)

Son of Nathaniel and Clarissa Hall Dennis (1)

b. Oct. 16, 1836	Litchfield, Maine
d.	California – Probably
Bur.	California – Probably

Married: wife's name not known

Children: Four children, three living in 1895 (1)

Samuel William Dennis was born in Litchfield, Maine, the only son, and the second child of his parents, Nathaniel and Clarissa Dennis. Nathaniel named his infant son for his own younger brother, Samuel William, who had died in February, 1836, just prior to the birth of the baby. The first Samuel William Dennis was a young man of great promise. A graduate of Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, he had been forced because of this health to live in the South, but died at the age of twenty four in Mississippi. (see 6-60) Samuel and his sister, Elizabeth, were the fourth generation of Dennis children to live and grow up on their grandfather's family farm to which their great-grandfather came in 1789. However, his sister, Elizabeth, who was two and half years older than Samuel, died in 1848 when she was fourteen years old, thus leaving Samuel the only child in the family from the time that he was twelve years old.

Since he was the only boy in the family, it was no doubt the hope of his father that Samuel would become interested, and carry on the family farm in the fourth generation. But Samuel did not lean toward the life of a Maine farmer. Possibly the fact that so many in the family had found Maine climate too severe for their health, led him to explore other prospects. At any rate, in 1854-5, he visited his father's brother, Dr. John Dennis (6-61), in Augusta, Georgia, which – as he said later – marked the turning point in his life. He returned to Maine and entered the newly organized Maine State Seminary, which he attended for but two terms, thus ending his education in early life.

Samuel William Dennis “inherited the push and enterprise, characteristic of the Dennis family” (1). Thus, in November, 1858, he told his father that he wanted to strike out for himself, and in December, he embarked from Boston on the ship, “Golden Rocket” for California. He arrived in San Francisco on May 18, 1859 after a sea voyage of 161 days. What he found to do in San Francisco during the next five years there is no record.

However, by 1863 he must have acquired sufficient funds, and knowledge to enable him to open a dental office in San Francisco, and began a dental practice which was to lay the

(1) Information on Samuel William Dennis is taken from the History of Litchfield, Maine, a town which was justifiably proud of one of its sons who had gone out into the world and gained fame and fortune.

“foundation for what reputation in a professional rank worthy of any aspiration.” (1) He went on to become not only one of the leading dental scientists in the state of California, but also won national and world recognition. He was one of the founders of the San Francisco Dental Association, and became its president. He helped to organize the California State Dental Association and was one of the first vice presidents of that organization. He was chosen a delegate to the American Dental Association meeting in Nashville, Tennessee and was elected vice president of that body, also. He was eventually chosen to fill the highest position in that national body, serving twice as President of the American Dental Association – in 1871 and again in 1878.

Realizing the inadequacy of his own preparation in the profession, he entered the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, and earned his degree from that institution in March, 1875. Returning to San Francisco, he served as Dean of the Dental College there for several years.

Honors were heaped upon him over the years. In 1873, he was made an honorary member of the Ohio State Dental Society, and was an associate member of the New York State Orthodontist Society. He was also a prominent member of the San Francisco Microscopical Society.

Throughout his life, he worked for the advancement of dentistry. In 1884-5, he promoted a bill in the California legislature to regulate the practice of dentistry. He was appointed one of the Board of Examiners by the governor of California, and served on the board for two years. He was also elected, and served two terms, as the president of that body.

Samuel William Dennis was married, and had four children – three of whom were living in 1895, (1) but there is no information about his family, neither the names or the dates; nor, in fact, the date of his death.

(1) All information about Samuel William Dennis is from the History of Litchfield, Maine.

Chapter VIII

The Fifth Generation: The Thirteen Children of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis5-20 Arthur Dennis (Arthur, 4-15; Rev. John, 3-5; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1)

Son of Arthur Dennis (4-15) and Mary Goodhue (1)

b. May 29, 1768 – bpt. Aug. 28, 1768, probably Ipswich, Mass.

d. - Maine ?, possibly Erie, Pa. (2)

bur. - Maine ?, possibly Erie, Pa. (2)

Married: Lucy Burnham on April 21, 1791 (3)

b.

d. Maine, possibly Erie, Pa. (2)

bur. Maine, possibly Erie, Pa. (2)

Children of Arthur and Lucy Burnham Dennis:

x6-0 Lucy Dennis b. Mar. 10, 1792 (C.R.)

x6-1 John Dennis bpt. Oct. 27, 1793 (2) (3)

x6-2 Joseph Dennis b. Aug. 27, 1795 (2)

Others (9 children are given in 1810 census) (4)

Arthur Dennis, Jr., the oldest of the thirteen children of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis, was born in Massachusetts – probably in or near Ipswich (3), where his parents lived during the early years of their marriage. Both parents were descended from old Ipswich families (see Arthur Dennis 4-15 in Section I). As we have previously noted, Arthur, Sr. moved about a great deal in an attempt to find a suitable home, so that in 1769 the family was living in Westford, Mass. when their second child was born. (5) Arthur, Jr. was a lad of six or seven years old at the time of the excitement at Lexington and Concord when the Revolution broke out. Being the oldest in the family he was no doubt impressed with the responsibilities thrust upon his young shoulders when his father answered the summons of Paul Revere in April '75 (Westford is in Middlesex County) (see Arthur Dennis 4-15). In October, 1775, the family was living in Groton, Mass. when their fifth child was born. (1)

The following year (1776), Arthur Dennis, Sr. made a big move into New Hampshire. For a time, the family lived in Amherst, N.H., but in June, 1778, Arthur Dennis, Sr. bought a farm in New Boston about fifteen miles west of Manchester, N.H. It must have been quite an adventure to move a family of eight (six children) the distance from Groton to Amherst, N.H. on horse back or by oxcart into the undeveloped, heavily wooded area of southern New Hampshire. Here, in New Boston, young Arthur spent his youth and early manhood. Being the oldest of twelve children he must have had to assume the duties of an adult very early. This was real

(1) Arthur Dennis Family Bible Record

(2) Leora Drake notes

(3) Notes of D. B. Williams in the Appendix – V. R. of Ipswich

(4) 1810 Census, Anson, Maine

(5) Westford, Mass. Record, p. 30 (D.B. Williams)

pioneer living for the life these people lived was frontier life in its most primitive. There was no land cleared or houses built. There were most certainly wild animals in the heavily wooded areas, and even unfriendly Indians. (The British repeatedly stirred up the Indians against the settlers before the Revolution.) It is hard to imagine the hardships these early settlers endured. Arthur Dennis' uncle, Moses, went to New Hampshire in 1780, and from J. D. Ordway's account of that branch of the family it is possible to catch a glimpse of conditions at the time. Mr. Ordway wrote that "Moses' wife rode on horseback a distance of fifty miles carrying her year old son. Strapped on behind was a window for her house. She was considered very proud with her extensive outfit of a glass window (only one in town), a half dozen plates, cups, and saucers, and as many silver spoons, teakettle and spider. They lived in a log house for a few years until they built the frame house." (see Moses Dennis 4-17 in Sect. I)

Arthur Dennis, Jr. married Lucy Burnham on April 21, 1791, when he was almost twenty three years old. Presumably they were married in New Hampshire, although nothing is known of Lucy's family and background. Like his father, Arthur Dennis was caught up in the pioneering enthusiasm of the times, and early in the 1800's, he and Lucy B. Dennis went to Maine. Over and over again it happened when some new part of the country was opened up and became known that groups of neighbors and friends would strike out together to stake claims in some even more primitive surroundings than those they left behind them. According to the census of 1810, Arthur Dennis, Jr. was living in Anson, Maine, which is forty to fifty miles north of Augusta on the Kennebec River. This represented a really tremendous trek from New Hampshire by horseback and ox team, in spite of the fact that a good bit of the trip into Maine was probably by boat. One year later (1811), Arthur Dennis pushed back from the river, up a small stream to East New Portland in Somerset County. (1)

Arthur and Lucy Dennis were the parents of nine children – at least three of whom were born before they moved to Maine. According to the 1810 Census, the family is given thus: (Anson, Maine) 1 male 16-26; 1 male 26-45; 4 females under 10; 3 females 10-16; 1 female 16-26; 1 female 26-45 (2). All track of this branch of the Dennis family has been lost over the years, with but one possible item of interest. According to the East New Portland Town Records, a "Miss Lucy Dennis of East New Portland and Mr. William Colby of Emden were married, or applied for marriage, on December 10, 1812." Mrs. Williams says, "I am inclined to think Lucy was the daughter of Arthur and Lucy Burnham Dennis."

Arthur Dennis engaged in a number of land transactions which afford the only real sources of information about him. He sold one hundred acres of land in East New Portland to Dinsmore and Stewart of Anson, Maine for one hundred dollars.

(1) see records of D. B. Williams in Appendix

(2) U.S. Census – 1810, Anson, Maine, quoted in D. B. Williams notes.

The deed is dated January 30, 1812, and recorded February 10, 1812. (1) “There is no record of it in Skowhegan unless it was recorded years later and I did not look for it in the late records.” (2) On June 7, 1813, he sold one hundred and seven acres in Lot No. 13 in Hancock County, which he owned in conjunction with William Church, to Stephen and Sam Jewett of Gardiner and Pittstown, Maine, respectively. Arthur Dennis of New Portland, Somerset Co. gave a quit claim deed which was recorded on June 13, 1813. (3)

“I do not know where Arthur Dennis died, but I believe it is quite safe to say that is was in Maine, but perhaps he moved from East Newportland after he disposed of his land there. I did not find him in the Town Records of that town except with the ‘mark’ – Crop of the right ear and Two slits under the left ear.” (4) Mrs. Drake’s notes state that Arthur Dennis died in Erie, Pennsylvania on April 24, 1825, but as mentioned before, she gives no source.

5-21 Mary Dennis Henderson (Arthur, 4-15; John, 3-5; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1)

Daughter of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis

b. Dec. 9, 1769 (5) Westford, Mass. (6)
d. Eaton County, Michigan (7)
bur. ?

Married: John Henderson (?)

b.
d.
bur.

-
- (1) Scowhegan County Court House, Skowhegan, Maine. Book 3, p. 204. The fact that this deed was recorded in the third book of deeds in the county shows clearly the early arrival of the Dennis’s in this part of the country. The deed was witnessed by Jas. Collins and Samuel Walton. It is interesting to follow these families. Samuel Walton was the husband of Edith Dix, whose sister, Sarah Dix, married Samuel Dennis, a brother of Arthur Dennis, Jr. The name Dinsmore (Densmore) appears in the family on at least one occasion.
 - (2) Mrs. Williams continues: “Very often in those early days deeds were not recorded for years, and sometimes not at all. I looked for it in A[u]gusta, County Seat of Kennebec County, because Somerset Co. was formerly Kennebec County, but again I could find no record. Kennebec was once in Lincoln County, and I even looked there, with no results.”
 - (3) Deed recorded in Skowhegan County Court House, Book 16, p. 204
 - (4) Mrs. William’s notes. See her records in the Appendix.
 - (5) Arthur Dennis, Sr. Family Bible. My grandmother, Louisa Dennis Whitbeck also had a copy naming the Henderson children as Arthur’s grandchildren.
 - (6) Arthur Dennis Bible. Place – Westford, Mass. Record, p. 3 – Quoted by D.B.W.
 - (7) Mrs. Drake’s notes.

- Children of Mary Dennis and John Henderson: (1)
 x6-3 Mary Henderson b. Mar. 2, 1800
 x6-4 David Henderson b. June 5, 1802
 x6-5 Arthur Henderson b. April 6, 1809
 x6-6 Naor Henderson b. Nov. 5, 1812

Mrs. Williams says, "I know nothing about her." However in her notes Mrs. Drake tells of her marriage to John Henderson, but gives no sources of her information. The Arthur Dennis, Sr. Family Bible, lists the four children under a heading "The Grand Children of Arthur Dennis", which corroborates with Mrs. Drake's findings. Since the bible gives only a partial list of the grandchildren – (none of those who were in New England) – it seems as though Mary and John Henderson may also have lived in Wayne County, even in the Zurich area. A search in the records in the Wayne County Clerk's Office in Lyons might reveal land deeds.

5-22 John Dennis (Arthur, 4-15; John, 3-5; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1)

- Son of Arthur Dennis and Mary Goodhue Dennis
 b. Oct. 1, 1771 (2) (3)
 d. Aug. 29, 1848 East Newportland, Maine, aged 77 yrs.
 bur. East Newportland, Somerset Co., Maine (4)

- Married: Eunice Fling (5)
 b. June 30, 1780 (3) Maine
 d. March 8, 1861 East Newportland, Me. aged 80 yrs, 8 mo.
 bur. East New Portland, Maine (4)

- Children of John and Eunice Fling Dennis:
 6-7 John Dennis, Jr. b. Dec. 5, 1799 E. Newportland, Me
 x6-8 Elijah Dennis (7)
 x6-9 Joseph Dennis (7)
 possibly others

John Dennis (5-22) was the third child and the second son of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis. He was undoubtedly born while his parents were living in or near Westford, Mass. His sister, Mary's, birth is recorded in the Vital Records of Westford, Mass., and his father served as a "minute man" at Lexington in April, 1775 from Westford in Middlesex County. John Dennis was one of a large family of thirteen children.

- (1) Arthur Dennis, Sr. Family Bible. My grandmother, Louisa Dennis Whitbeck, also had a copy naming the Henderson children as Arthur's grandchildren.
 (2) Arthur Dennis Family Bible.
 (3) Town Records of East Newportland, p. 171
 (4) Gravestone Records, E. Newportland, Me.
 (5) Both Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Drake agree that John Dennis's wife was named Eunice, but only Mrs. Drake's unsubstantiated notes supplies the surname.
 (6) Vital Records of E. Newportland, Maine
 (7) These two children are mentioned in deeds in Skowhegan Co. C. H. See later ref.
-

After the Revolution, when John was a lad of five to seven years old, his parents left Massachusetts to make their home in New Hampshire. They lived for a time in Amherst, N.H., but in 1778 his father bought a farm in New Boston. Here John grew up and lived as a young man.

Practically the only information about John Dennis is to be found in land and census records. On September 10, 1794, when he was twenty three, John bought 150 acres (for which he agreed to pay \$ 300.00) in New Boston from Thomas Nichols, Jr. of Weare in Hillsboro County, N.H. (1) On the same day, Thomas Nichols took a mortgage on the property, which was witnessed by Jonathan Gove (2) and by his father, Arthur Dennis. However, "I feel that John Dennis was unable to pay for this land, because, about a year later (Sept. 2, 1795) Thomas Nichols of Weare and John Dennis of New Boston sold these 150 acres." (3)

About this time, John Dennis went to Maine, the second son of Arthur Dennis to do so. Perhaps he was the first to go, because the 1800 census from East Newportland, Kennebec Co. (now Somerset Co.) says that John Dennis came from New Hampshire in 1797. It appears from the records that he went first to Anson, Maine in Lincoln County, where, on January 9, 1799, he bought land on the west side of the Kennebec River, being the "south east corner of Lot No. 11, containing ten acres of land for which he paid \$53.00, on which Morris Fling lately dwelt, reserving to the heirs of said Morris Fling all buildings, which are now on the land – with privilege of said heirs moving the buildings off the land at their pleasure." (4) John Dennis is referred to as a blacksmith in this deed. John's brother, Arthur Dennis, Jr., and his wife, Lucy Burnham Dennis, had followed him and were living in Anson when the 1810 census was taken.

John Dennis married about the time that he went to Maine – Mrs. Williams thinks it was not until after he had settled there. His wife was Eunice Fling, who may have been the daughter of Morris Fling mentioned earlier. (5) They had one son, according to the 1800 census, John., Jr. the family in listed as 1 male to ten years; 1 male to 45; 1 female to 45. Two other children – Joseph and Elijah – are mentioned in land transactions involving their parents. Their children all remained in the E. Newportland area. The oldest, John, became a minister of the gospel. (See 6-7)

- (1) Book of deeds, Hillsboro Co., Nashua, N.H., Book 34, p. 374
 - (2) Jonathan Gove was apparently a close family friend. John's youngest brother was named Rodney Gove Dennis. Mortgage recorded in Bk. 36, p. 290.
 - (3) Quote from Mrs. D. B. Williams. Recorded on March 13, 1797.
 - (4) Book 2, p. 482, Kennebec Co. C. H., Augusta, Maine. Recorded on Feb. 29, 1811. Note how early in the history of Maine this deed was written – 2nd book. Morris Fling may have been Eunice's father, and the farm the one on which she grew up.
 - (5) Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Drake are both in agreement that her name was Eunice, but only Mrs. D. gives the surname, Fling. The deeds suggest it may be true.
-

Shortly after 1800, John and Eunice Dennis moved from Anson to New Portland in Sommerset Co., Maine, which is southwest of Anson. Here on March 6, 1805, he bought from Reuben Hill land described as being in lot No. 16, for which he paid \$ 100.00. (1) The family apparently lived on this farm home for the next twenty years. On July 16, 1828, John sold 100 acres "being Lot No. 16 in Newportland" to Elijah Dennis, his son. Then, on April 12, 1833, Elijah Dennis and his wife, Aseneth Dennis, of Newportland sold to John Dennis of Newportland for \$ 100.00 land, being the same land John Dennis deeded to Elijah Dennis on 16 July, 1828. The transaction was witnessed by Joseph M. Dennis, who was also a son of John and Eunice. (2) One wonders what prompted Elijah to dispose of his property. Could he have decided to join some group seeking their fortunes in some new part of the country ? In December of that same year, John and Eunice Dennis took a \$1500.00 mortgage on land which they had sold to their son, Joseph Dennis and Hiram Haskell, both of Newportland. (3)

John Dennis died in East Newportland, Maine on August 29, 1848, at the age of seventy seven. Eunice outlived him by thirteen years. She died there on March 8, 1861 at the age of eighty years and eight months. Mrs. Williams says that she has visited the cemetery where they are buried. "It is well kept and they have nice headstones with very legible inscriptions. I took pictures of them." Eunice Dennis kept in touch with her husband's family through the years, and Mrs. Williams has a letter written by Eunice to Samuel Dennis, John's brother in Lyons, New York (Samuel Dennis was Mrs. William's great, great grandfather). She wrote telling of a funeral sermon preached in East Newportland in memory of their brother, Joseph Dennis. Mrs. Williams concludes by saying, "I wish I had copied more information from the Town Records of East Newportland about the various members of the families of John and Eunice Dennis, and of their son, Rev. John Dennis" (6-3).

Tombstone Inscriptions:

John Dennis
Died
Aug. 29, 1848
ae 77

Eunice, wife of John Dennis
died
March 8, 1861
ae 80 years, 8 mo.
Grandmother

5-23 Sarah Dennis Page (Arthur, 4-15; John, 3-5; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1)

Daughter of Arthur (4-15) and Mary Goodhue Dennis.
b. June 19, 1773 bp. June 27, 1773, Westford, Mass. (4) (5)
d. probably in New York State
bur.

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- (1) Book No. 14, p. 343, Skowhegan Co. C. H., Somerset Co., Me. Recorded July 6, 1825
 - (2) Mrs. Williams does not give the Deed book, however it would be easy to verify.
 - (3) Book 34, p. 53, Skowhegan, C. H.
 - (4) Arthur Dennis Family Bible
 - (5) Church Record, and Westford, Mass. Town Records.

Married: Theophilus Page (1)

b.

d.

bur.

probably New York State

Children of Sarah Dennis and Theophilus Page:
unknown

Sarah Dennis, the fourth child and the second daughter of Arthur and Mary Dennis, was born while her parents were living in Westford, Mass. (2) She was under two years old when her father left with the other men from Westford to answer the call of Paul Revere on April, 1775 to go to Lexington to drive out the British. She was under five years old when her parents left Massachusetts to make their home in New Hampshire – first in Amherst, then on a farm near New Boston (1778). She grew up in their family of thirteen children, only one of whom died in infancy (Samuel b. in 1775, died 1775).

Sarah Dennis married Theophilus Page (1) and with him went to live in Schenectady, N.Y. Nothing further is known of them – not even the names of their children (if any).

5-25 Samuel Dennis (Arthur, 4-15; John, 3-5; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1) Maine; N. Hampshire; New York

Son of Arthur Dennis (4-15) and Mary Goodhue Dennis

b. Oct. 17, 1776

Southern N. Hampshire (perhaps Amherst) (3)

d. Dec. 11, 1855

Zurich, New York (4)

bur. Zurich Cemetery, Zurich, New York (4)

Married: Sarah Dix

1796 ? in New Hampshire

b. May 14, 1779 (3)

d. Oct. 16, 1850

Zurich, New York (4)

bur. Zurich Cemetery

Zurich, New York (4)

Children of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis: (5)

6-10 James Dennis

b. July 2, 1797

Weare, N.H.

6-11 Joseph Dennis

b. Mar. 6, 1799

Weare, N.H. (3)

x6-12 Edith Adams Dennis

E. Newportland, Me.

6-13 Mary Dennis

b. 1803

E. Newportland, Me

6-14 Lucy Dennis

(1) There is agreement by Mrs. Drake and Mrs. Williams that Sarah Dennis married Mr. Page, but Mrs. Drake alone gives his first name, Theophilus.

(2) Church Record, and Westford, Mass. Town Records

(3) Bible Records in possession of Seymour Richard's family, Newark, N.Y.

(4) Gravestone Record, Zurich, N.Y. Cemetery

(5) Records of D. B. Williams – Samuel Dennis was her great, great grandfather. Census Records 1820.

Children of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis, cont.:

- 6-15 Frederick Adams Dennis b. Mar. 12, 1809 N. H. or Maine
- 6-16 Sally Dennis b. 1810
- 6-17 Caroline Dennis b. May 11, 1811 E. Newportland, Me.
- 6-18 Eunice Dennis

Samuel Dennis, the sixth child and the 4th son of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis, was the first of their thirteen children to be born after they moved to New Hampshire. They left Groton, Mass. soon after October, 1775, where their fifth child had been baptized, and went to New Hampshire – first to Amherst, and then to New Boston. (1) He was the second of their children to be named Samuel. The first Samuel had died when he was but a few months old. (2) Samuel Dennis grew up in this big family of Arthur and Mary Dennis and experienced all of the hardships of rough frontier living in the heavily wooded sections of southern New Hampshire in the years during and immediately following the Revolutionary War.

Samuel Dennis married Sarah Dix, the daughter of Joseph Dix and Edith Adams of Dunstable, New Hampshire. The date of their marriage is not known, however it probably occurred in 1796. Where Samuel and Sarah Dennis lived after they were married is not clear (no land records), but their two oldest children – James P. and Joseph Dix Dennis – were born in Weare, N. H. according to an old Bible Record. (3) James P. Dennis was baptized on July 2, 1797 in Goffstown, N.H., at the same time as his parents. The certificate of baptism, which is in the possession of Mrs. Williams is interesting:

“This may certify to every Church of Christ that Mr. Samuel Dennis and Mrs. Sally his Wife have own [sic] the Covenant and he with his Infant have been baptised and in Consequence have a right and Title to the same gospel ordinances wherever God in his Providence shall cast their Lott.”

Attese [sic] Samuel Cotton Misⁿ of the Gospel

Goffstown 2nd July 1797

As noted previously, five of Arthur Dennis’ (4-15) sons went to Maine during the early settlement of that state following the Revolution. Samuel, with his wife, Sarah Dix, and their two small sons, were among them. An older brother, John Dennis (5-22) may have been the first to go, as early as 1797. He located near Anson, on the Kennebec River north of Augusta [sic]. According to the 1800 census, Samuel Dennis “emigrated from New Hampshire in 1800” with two males under ten; one male to twenty six; and one female to twenty-six. He located in East Newportland, in Kennebec County, which is a small settlement a few miles northwest of Anson on a tributary of the Kennebec River. (Several of the Dennis brothers eventually settled in this area.)

(1) Mrs. Williams suggests that Samuel may have been born in Weare, but gives no proof. There is nothing to indicate that he lived there until after he married.

(2) b. Aug. 19, 1775 – d. Nov. 17, 1775

(3) Bible Records in possession of Seymour Richard’s family, Newark, N.Y.

It appears that Samuel Dennis, unlike his brothers, did not buy land in Maine (at least not at this time). Mrs. Williams says, "In the summer of 1950 I visited Skowhegan, the county seat of Somerset County – I could not find where Samuel Dennis had purchased any land in the county – we searched the deeds at Augusta, Kennebec County, because Somerset was in Kennebec Co. until 1803, but he was not there." She also checked deeds in Lincoln County and in Franklin County because the county lines had shifted over the years. There were no records of any land deeded to Samuel Dennis. It is possible the deeds were never recorded. (See Mrs. Williams' notes, p. 16)

Samuel and Sarah Dennis, apparently, did not find Maine to their liking, because by May, 1806 they were back in New Hampshire according to a land record there. A deed, drawn on May 7, 1806 and recorded in the Nashua, N.H. Court house, between Moses Dennis (a brother of Samuel), Benjamin Sprague and David Sprague, all of Bedford, N.H. to Ebenezer French – mentions that 120 acres which they sold to E. French "is part of the farm on which Arthur Dennis (Sr.) and Samuel Dennis now live." (See Arthur Dennis 4-15, p.) Both Samuel and his father quite likely had to move after this sale, although Moses retained title to nine acres which was part of the Arthur Dennis farm until September 7, 1807. From the records, it looks as though Samuel went to Bedford, N.H. where his brother, Moses, was then living. Mrs. Williams says, "I found that in 1809 Samuel Dennis was taxed 12 cents by the County Treasurer, and in the same year he paid town, school, minister, and poll taxes, and \$1.50 for one cow." (1)

"Samuel Dennis seems to have been somewhat of a wanderer", Mrs. Williams concludes. The Bedford residence must have been short lived, because in 1810 he and his family were back in East New Portland, Maine, again. "I am very much puzzled about Samuel Dennis." Mrs. Williams continues "--- Now what happened? Did Samuel Dennis take Sarah Dix, his wife, and two little sons to East New Portland, Me. sometime after March 6, 1799, when his second son was born in Weare, N.H. and live there when the 1800 census was taken; then return to New Hampshire where he apparently was living on October 13, 1805; and then return to East New Portland? He very definitely was in the 1810 census from E. New Portland. (According to the census his family then consisted of: 1 male to 10 years; 1 male, 10-16; 1 male, 26-45; 4 females to 10 years; 1 female, 26-45.) Certainly moving from southern New Hampshire to the north woods of Maine was a difficult undertaking, and why Samuel Dennis would make two moves I cannot see, but I expect he must have been hoping to better himself." (D.B.W.)

During his second sojourn in Maine, Samuel Dennis was active in community affairs. He served on a committee of three, with Oliver Peabody and James Hutchins, to "examine the accounts against the town and allow them." (2) At the Town Meeting on April 8, 1812 Samuel Dennis, James Hutchins, and William Churchill "will be a committee to district the Town over". (2)

(1) Bedford, N.H. Town Records, vol. 4, p. 111

(2) East New Portland Town Records 1804-30 – p. 69

Also, at this time, he bought land in the Newportland area, although the deed was never recorded. On December 5, 1812, he sold 144 acres in Newportland to John Moore, "Being part of the two lots – No. 19 and No. 20 – on Seven Mile Brook, bounded on the south by Reuben Hills land, and on the east by Samuel Fling's land. (1) (2)

Where Samuel Dennis and his family went after he sold his land is not clear. That he remained in Maine during 1813 and 1814 is certain. A letter written in 1814 by his father-in-law, Joseph Dix, from Tyngsborough, Mass., was sent to him in East Newportland. (3) By this time, Samuel had several brothers living in the area. As noted previously, John was in Newportland (as early as 1805), and Arthur, Jr. was in East Newportland by 1810. A younger brother, Joseph Dennis, must have come to Maine with one of his older brothers. In 1811, he married Hannah York of Newportland, and lived in this part of the state until they left for New York State about four years later. (3) Still another brother, William Dennis, located in Madison, Maine, just across the Kennebec River from Anson as early as 1808. (4)

After the War of 1812, conditions in central-western New York State became more peaceful and began to attract settlers from the seaboard states. Prior to, and during the war, the British had sent raiding parties threatening the lives and property of the inhabitants along the shores of Lake Ontario. With peace restored, once again groups of families were caught up in a wave of enthusiasm to try their luck in still another new and undeveloped part of the country. It had happened in the migrations from eastern Mass. into southern New Hampshire; and then from New Hampshire into Maine. Now, it was being repeated in a movement of population from Maine and New Hampshire into central New York State.

According to the Wayne County, N.Y. Atlas, the Dennises and the Carlls came from Maine to the Sodus Section of New York State in 1815. Samuel Dennis (then thirty nine years old) was probably the first of five brothers and sisters to undertake this venture. He was followed by Joseph, Moses, Lucy who had married Moody Cummings, and Frances who was married to Ziba Lane. (see 5-27 and 5-29) Another sister, Sarah who had married Theophilus Page, came as far as Schenectady, N. Y. (5-23). A second letter, written by Samuel's father-in-law, Joseph Dix, in 1815 from Tyngsborough, Mass., was addressed to Samuel Dennis in Lyons, N.Y., in which he expressed surprise at learning that Samuel had moved to New York State. (D.B.W. Letter)

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- (1) Deed is in the Somerset County Court House, Skowhegan, Me. The names of the two witnesses – James Dinsmore and Samuel Walton – are of interest. These names appear again and again – they were apparently close friends and neighbors. (See Arthur D., 4-15) Their children intermarried (Walton), their babies were named for them (Dinsmore – Densmore).
 - (2) The names of R. Hill and S. Fling, as well as the Seven Mile Brook indicate that Samuel's property was close to that of his brother, John Dennis. John had bought land on Seven Mile Brook in Lot No. 11. The deed states: "it was property on which Morris Fling lately dwelt." It will be remembered that John Dennis (5-22) had married Eunice Fling. Also, in 1805, John had purchased land – lot No. 16 – from Reuben Hill, whose lands bounded Samuel Dennis' on the south.
 - (3) Notes and Letters are in the possession of Mrs. Demorris B. Williams.
 - (4) See William Dennis 5-30.

Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis settled with their family of nine children in Zurich, which was a neighborhood rather than a village, in the Town of Arcadia, south east of Sodus village and close to the Lyons Town line. Here they were joined by other members of the family, and by other families from “backeast”. Their two oldest boys were grown men (James P. Dennis was eighteen, and Joseph Dix Dennis was sixteen), able to do a man’s work in carving out a home in the wilderness of “West Woods”, as the Zurich area was called in the early days. The girls ranged in age from fifteen to four years, and there was a younger son, age six years.

Samuel Dennis must have found Wayne county to his liking because he and Sarah spent the remaining forty years of their lives there. Another factor may have been that he was older now and more settled. He is listed in the 1820, 1830, 1840, and 1850 census from Lyons, New York. (1) (2) Samuel did not buy land immediately upon arriving in Wayne County – in fact, he lived there sixteen years before he bought his first property. Thus, from 1815 to 1831, during the years that the children were growing up and marrying, there is no way to determine exactly where Samuel and Sarah Dennis lived. The first property he did purchase was a 26 acre tract in Township #13 in the Town of Lyons, which he bought on August 23, 1831 from Henry Hall Joy of London, England for which he paid \$218.50. (3) Seven years later (1838), he bought an additional “4 Acres Strict Measure” in the same Township from his nephew, Benjamin Dennis, and his wife, Zilla Jane Roby Dennis, (Benjamin was the son of Moses Dennis, a brother of Samuel), for which he paid \$77.50. (4) This farm probably was where they lived during the next few years.

By 1843, Samuel Dennis may have decided to give up farming - he was then sixty seven years old. At any rate, he sold the twenty six acres he owned in Towns’p #13 to his youngest son, Frederick Adams Dennis for \$ 400.00. (5) The transaction took place on February 28, 1843 and was recorded on March 3, 1843. However, one year later (May 2, 1844), for reasons that cannot be determined at this late date, Frederick returned the same twenty six acres to his father for \$1400.00. (6) (7)

- (1) Data from the 1840 Census: “Samuel Dennis – 1 male, 60-70; 2 females 5 under 10; 1 female 20 under 30; 1 female 60 under 70”. Caroline Dennis Watson and her two young daughters, Philemon and Nancy, were living with her parents. She was married to Lewis Watson who had left her with four children – 2 boys, and 2 girls.
- (2) From the 1850 Census: “Samuel Dennis, 73, farmer, born in Maine (error, but whoever gave the information did not know.) – Estate \$1000; Sarah D. – 71; Carolyn Dennis b. Maine, 39; Philemon Watson, 15; Nancy Watson, 17; Charles McDond, 36, Farmer. Note: Caroline did not take back her maiden name, according to Mrs. Williams, who is her great granddaughter. (see 6-17)
- (3) Wayne County Clerk’s Office, Lyons, N.Y. – Deed Bk No. 11, 534 page
- (4) Wayne County Clerk’s Office, Lyons, N.Y. – Deed Bk No. 24, p. 338
- (5) Wayne County Clerk’s Office, Lyons, N.Y. – Deed Bk No. 32, p. 281
- (6) Wayne County Deed Book No. 34, p. 220
- (7) “Since the transaction involved the very same land, I have wondered if they should not both be \$1400. I could have made an error in copying.” - D.B.W.

During the next ten years, this property in Township #13 went back and forth from father to son a number of times. Differences arose between them, which finally wound up in the courts and a sheriff's sale. To the end of his life Samuel must have been harrowed by unpleasant dealings with, what appears to have been, a very hard hearted son. The high lights of these transactions are only briefly sketched here. (1) In 1850, Samuel sold ½ acre in the aforementioned Township #13 to his son, Frederick, for \$ 50.00 (2); and a year later, on November 5, 1851, he sold him still more land in Township #13 for \$1000.00. (3) Then, on December 20, 1852, Frederick apparently gave his father a "quit claim" deed to the twenty six acres for \$ 1.00 (to bind the deal), reserving the ½ acre which his father had deeded to him on September 24, 1850. (4) But, on December 25, 1852 (Christmas Day), he brought suit against his father in county Supreme court, at which time the sheriff was instructed "that of the goods and chattles of said defendant (Samuel) he should cause to be made certain moneys --- and if sufficient goods and chattles could not be found then he should cause the amount so specified to be made of real estate which the said defendant had ---." The sheriff's sale took place on Feb. 12, 1853, and the first mentioned "premises were struck off to Frederick A. Dennis for the sum of \$80.00; -- and the second premises for the sum of \$ 1200.00 – he being the highest bidder." (5) A waiting period of fifteen months elapsed during which Samuel's creditors were given an opportunity to bring claims. There being none, the twenty six acres in Township #13 (except the ½ acre) were conveyed finally to Frederick Dennis. The deed was dated July 18, 1855, and recorded August 24, 1855. (5) Samuel Dennis died the following December. He must have been a very sad old man. (6) Mrs. Williams notes: "It does not look as if Samuel Dennis and his son, Frederick Dennis, had much love for each other."

Samuel and Sarah Dennis were the parents of nine children – 3 boys and 6 girls – all of whom lived to grow up. All were young and unmarried when their parents came to the Zurich area in Wayne County, N.Y. There they found wives and husbands among the families who had made the journey with them from Maine and New Hampshire, and with but one exception settled down and raised families of their own in the area. James P. Dennis married Sally Carll, who was descended from an old Maine family. Sometime before 1830, he was caught up in yet another wave of westward migration, and they went to live in Michigan. John [Joseph] Dix Dennis married Love Carll (probably the sister [cousin] of Sally Carll). The third son, Frederick, married Lydia Riggs, another old family in the Sodus-Lyons area. Two of the girls married Yorks – a well known family in the eastern part of the county – Mary married Thomas York, and Sally married Robert York. Lucy Dennis married her cousin, Gilman Dennis (6-19), who was the son of her father's brother, Moses Dennis; and Eunice married Lilly Gifford. Caroline married, when she was but fifteen years old, Lewis Watson, who was much older than she. It was not a happy

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- (1) See Mrs. William's notes for more complete details.
 - (2) Book 48, p. 538 – Wayne County Clerk's Office, Lyons, N.Y.
 - (3) Book 52, p. 39 – Wayne County Clerk's Office, Lyons, N.Y.
 - (4) Book 55, p. 327– Wayne County Clerk's Office, Lyons, N.Y.
 - (5) Book 64, p. 230 – Wayne County Clerk's Office, Lyons, N.Y.
 - (6) In discussing these deeds with her Uncle Cartie (Carlton N. Reynolds), Mrs. Williams recalled that Frederick Dennis was not friendly with the rest of the family and he felt that these deeds may disclose the reason.

marriage and Caroline came home with her children to live with her parents. (1) Edith died in 1822, probably the first of the children to go. Apparently she had never married.

Sarah Dix Dennis died on October 16, 1850. Samuel Dennis outlived her by five years, his death occurring on December 11, 1855. Both are buried in the Zurich Cemetery, and their graves are marked by substantial headstones. The tombstones read thus:

<p>Samuel Dennis (4) DIED Dec. 11, 1855 Aged 79 yrs. 1 mo. & 25 das. There's a beautiful region Above the skies And I long to reach its shore For I know I shall find my treasure there Of the one gone before.</p>	<p>Sarah W. (4) Wife of Samuel Dennis Died Oct. 16, 1850 Aged 71 yrs. 5 mo. & 2 ds.</p>
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Presumably Caroline and her children continued to make their home with her father after her mother died.

5-26 Moses Dennis (Arthur, 4-15; John, 3-5; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1)

Son of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis
b. June 12, 1779 (2)* New Boston, N.H. (2)
d. Probably in Zurich, but grave unknown
bur.

Married: Rhoda Sprague on November 4, 1801 (3)
b. Jan. 4, 1784 Bedford, N.H.
d. March 25, 1841 (4) Zurich, N.Y.
bur. Zurich Cemetery Zurich, N.Y.

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- (1) Caroline D. Watson was Mrs. Williams' great grandmother, her grandmother was Philemon (Philinda) Watson.
 - (2) Arthur Dennis Bible Records. (2)* Rhoda D. Reynolds' Records say June 16.
 - (3) Vital Records of Bedford, N.H. in the "History of Bedford", p. 701.
 - (4) D.B.W. notes – Gravestone Record in Zurich Cemetery.

NOTE: Mrs. Williams writes: "Samuel Dennis, son of Arthur and Mary Goodhue seems nearer to me, though he is my great great grandfather. It may be because I have visited his grave several times at Zurich, Wayne Co. N.Y. where he and his wife have substantial headstones. Then, too, I have several letters written to him and his wife Sarah Dix Dennis by her father Joseph Dix from 1813-1823. Also I have often heard my mother speak in endearing terms of her grandmother, Caroline Dennis Watson, who was their daughter. Perhaps it is because all or most of their descendants lived in Wayne County and more is known about the family."

Children of Moses and Rhoda Sprague Dennis (1) (2)

6-19	Gilman Dennis	b. June 21,1802	Bedford, N.H. (1) (3)
6-20	Rhoda Dennis	b. Dec. 3, 1803	Bedford, N.H. (1)
6-21	Benjamin S. Dennis	b. Mar 1, 1806	Bedford, N.H. (1)
x6-22	Rodney Dennis	b. Feb. 7, 1808	Bedford, N.H. (1)
x6-23	Ephriam W. Dennis	b. May 4, 1810	Bedford, N.H. (1)
x6-24	Ursula Dennis	b. May 25,1812	Weare, N.H. (1) (4)
6-25	Robert D. Dennis	b. Aug. 24,1814	Weare, N.H. (1)
6-26	Fanny Dennis	b. May 20,1816	Weare, N.H. (1)
6-27	Moses Dennis	b. July 27,1818	Weare, N.H. (1)

Moses Dennis, the seventh child and the fifth son of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis, was born in 1779, just one year after his father had bought farm land in New Boston, N.H., so it may be assumed that he was born there. Eventually there were six younger children in the family of thirteen – seven boys and five girls who lived to grow up. Moses grew up in the New Boston area and lived there until shortly after his marriage in 1801.

Moses Dennis was a blacksmith by trade according to early deeds in the Nashua Court House in Nashua, N.H., but apparently he also engaged in the lumbering business as well. The reason may have been that “Blacksmiths have been plenty in all parts of the town.” (2)

A few months before he married, he arranged to buy his father’s farm in New Boston for \$ 1000.00. Arthur Dennis, Jr. reserved ½ of the house and the barn as well as “the use and improvement of the whole of the land and buildings during my natural life, and the life of Mary my wife. --- I hereby convey unto the said Moses the privilege of erecting a sawmill on the stream of water near the house and raising a dam sufficiently high for the purpose; and one acre of land for a mill-yard.” (5)

His father took a mortgage on the above property on the same day (Aug. 22, 1801) in connection with which he made some additional stipulations, viz: (6)

First: “This deed is given on the following conditions that if the said Moses does well and truly pay unto said Arthur \$150 at or within one year from date hereof with the lawful interest –

Also build and finish off completely for business a sawmill on the above mentioned premises at or within two years from date hereof,

And an annual return to said Arthur of ½ the boards [sic] and other lumber the said sawmill shall cut during the natural life time of the said Arthur and his wife, Mary ----

And said mill to be properly tended and kept in repair by said Moses and ---

Also at or within four years from date hereof (Moses) shall finish off the house and barn in a decent proper and faithful manner, the room in the house to be plaistered [sic] :

- (1) Arthur Dennis Bible Records.
- (2) History of Weare, N.H. p. 545 (D.B.W.)
- (3) Vital Records of Bedford, N.H. in the “History of Bedford”, p. 701
- (4) Vital Records of Weare, N.H.
- (5) Book 53, p. 246, Hillsboro C.H., Nashua, N.H. Aug. 22, 1801
- (6) Book 53, p. 363, Hillsboro C.H., Nashua, N.H. Aug. 22, 1801

Also cut and hall (sic) to the door of said Arthur sufficient firewood yearly during the life of said Arthur and his wife, Mary, as long as she shall remain his widow. ----“

On November 4, 1801, Moses Dennis married Rhoda Sprague of Bedford, N.H. He was twenty two years old and Rhoda not quite eighteen. She was the daughter of Benjamin and Hannah Barnes Sprague of Bedford, and was one of ten children. (1) Moses and Rhoda Dennis probably went to house keeping on the farm in New Boston which he had bought from his father in August preceding their marriage, living in half of the house as arranged for in the deed. Here in 1802, their first child, a son – Gilman -, was born.

“Evidently Moses was not exactly pleased with the arrangement with his father regarding the sawmill and improvements on the house and barn, or Rhoda did not like it, or he felt he had a better proposition.” (2) At any rate, he turned his property back to his father on September 14, 1802, giving him a quit claim deed. (3) Just prior to this, on September 7, 1802, Moses Dennis had bought fifty one acres of land in Bedford, N.H. (Rhoda’s home town) from David Sprague (who may have been her uncle) for \$900.00 (4) It appears that Moses was being pulled away from his own family by his wife, whose family gave him help on more than one occasion in the years ahead.

Moses Dennis seems not to have been tempted to try his fortune in Maine as five of his brothers did (John, Joseph, Arthur, Jr., Samuel, and William). During the years from 1800-1810, when the boys were striking out to establish homes in Maine, Moses was in Bedford, closely associated with the Spragues, away from talk and excitement which tempted the others.

Moses Dennis’s life falls naturally into four periods: the New Boston years from 1779-1802; the Bedford period from 1802-1810; the years in Weare, N.H. from 1810-1818/19; and the years in New York from 1819-20/30. The town records show that he owned land and paid taxes in Bedford, which is a small town just south of Manchester, from 1803 through 1810. In 1804, he was chosen surveyor of highways in Bedford (5), and again on March 29, 1810, he was voted among others to be Surveyors of Highways. In all of the records and property deeds, he is referred to as a blacksmith. Four more children were born to them while in Bedford: Rhoda in 1803; Benjamin in 1806; Rodney in 1808; and Ephraim in 1810. Rhoda was given her mother’s name; Benjamin was named for his grandfather, Benjamin Sprague; and Rodney for Moses’

(1) Benjamin Sprague came to Bedford, N.H. from Billerica, Mass. where he was born on December 28, 1752. He married Hannah Barnes of Merrimack, N.H., the daughter of Thomas Barnes and Rachel Barrett. Benjamin and Hannah Sprague had eleven children, all born in Bedford. Hannah Barnes Sprague won the love and affection of the community in which she lived where she was known to all as “Aunt Sprague”. (See D.B.W. notes) Both Benjamin and Hannah Sprague died and are buried in Joppa Hill Cemetery in Bedford, N.H. Their son John’s grave was the first one opened in the cemetery there. According to the “History of Bedford, N.H.”, Benjamin Sprague was descended from Nicholas Sprake, a noted physician who came to Billerica from Hingham, Norfolk County, England in 1636.

(2) These are the conclusions of D.B. Williams after studying the deeds and other facts about Moses Dennis.

(3) Hillsboro Co. C.H., Nashua, N.H. Deed Bk. 56, p. 90 (D.B.W. Notes)

(4) Hillsboro Co. C.H., Nashua, N.H. Deed Bk. 53, p. 376 (D.B.W. Notes)

(5) Town Records of Bedford, N.H. Vol. 3, p. 535

youngest brother, Rodney G. Dennis (5-32). Rodney and Ephraim died in childhood. (1)

During the Bedford sojourn, Moses Dennis bought and sold considerable property. In addition to his first purchase of fifty one acres in 1802, he bought an additional acre “for blacksmithing” from his father-in-law, Benjamin Sprague (part of Lot No. 5) in June, 1804 (2) for \$ 50.00. Although his chief occupation seems to have been blacksmithing, “The History of Bedford” notes that “blacksmiths are plenty” in these parts – so it is possible that Moses turned to lumbering and milling to supplement his earnings. The area in southern New Hampshire around New Boston, Bedford and Weare must have been heavily wooded then, and it still is sawmill country at the present time (1950-1960). He may have bought wood lots, cut the lumber, and then sold them for crop lands. At any rate, on the same day that he bought the acre from Benjamin Sprague, he sold some land in Bedford for \$200.00 (it must have been part of the 51 acres). (3) (4)

Having lived in Bedford for almost five years, Moses Dennis made the final break with New Boston. In some manner which is not clear from the records at hand, Moses Dennis and the Spragues still owned land in New Boston as late as 1806-7. In May, 1806, Moses, Benjamin and David Sprague sold 120 acres in New Boston to Ebenezer French, being “part of the farm sold by Arthur Dennis to Frederick French on October 13, 1805”. A year later (September 1807), Moses and the Spragues sold nine more acres in New Boston to Joseph Willet. This deed states that “it was part of the farm lately owned by Arthur Dennis.” (5)

On January 5, 1808, Moses Dennis extended his holdings in Bedford by purchasing part of “lots 22 and 23 in the 4th range” from Nehemiah Kitterage for which he paid \$ 800.00. (6) Probably to obtain funds for this purchase he sold ten acres in Bedford to his father-in-law, Benjamin Sprague for \$500. “I, Rhoda Dennis, wife of Moses Dennis, hereby acquit my right of dower in said premises.” (7) At about this same time, Moses took out a mortgage on thirty acres for \$150.00 (8) and then on January 13, 1808, he sold thirty acres to Samuel Abbott for \$ 260.00. (9)

- (1) Moses Dennis was in the 1810 census from Bedford, Hillsboro County, N.H. with 4 males to age 10; 1 male to 26; 1 male to 45; 1 female to 10; 1 female to 45. (The male to age 26 must have been a hired man.)
- (2) Hillsboro Co. C.H. Book of Deeds No. not given,
- (3) Book of Deeds Hillsboro County, Nashua, N.H. Book 100, p. 359. Arthur and Mary Dennis moved to New Ipswich, N.H. after this property was sold, and Samuel Dennis went to Bedford, N.H. Mrs. Williams suggests that Moses was not interested in providing a home for his father and mother after this.
- (4) Mrs. Williams notes “I somehow feel that Moses Dennis was unable for some reason to keep his property, and it may be that the Spragues were the same way. It would look as if Arthur Dennis, Moses Father, was so inclined.”
- (5) Ibid Bk. 79, p. 527
- (6) Ibid Bk. 76, p. 560
- (7) Ibid Bk. 82, p. 46
- (8) Ibid Bk. 87, p. 127
- (9) Bk. not given in D.B.W. notes

But distant pastures must have looked greener to Moses Dennis, because in 1810, he pulled up stakes in Bedford and began buying land in Weare, N.H., a town about five miles north of New Boston. “We went over this territory in 1950 and it is still heavily wooded and dotted here and there with sawmills.” (1) His initial purchase was forty five acres which he bought in June from Ebenezer and Bridget Perry of Weare for which he paid \$1000.00. (2) On the very same day, he deeded forty five acres in Bedford to the Perrys, receiving \$ 1390.00 from the sale (3), thus making a small profit on the exchange. Again Rhoda relinquished her right of dower. In July, he sold ten more acres, which he still owned in New Boston, to Edward Fudger. (4) Sometime between July 3, 1810 and August 28, 1811, Moses Dennis must have moved from Bedford to Weare, N.H., because, on this later date, he bought additional land and is described as being “of Weare”.

The following is a record of Moses Dennis’ purchases in Weare, N.H.:

June 13, 1810 – 45 acres - \$1000.00 – from E. and B. Perry (5)
Aug. 28, 1811 – 4 acres - \$60.00 – from John Paige (6)
Oct. 21, 1812 – 28 acres – (Lots 98, 99) from John Paige (7)
Aug. 29, 1814 – mortgage - \$200.00 on Lot 98 from John Colby (8)
Oct. 19, 1814 –10 acres - \$100.00 – from Jonathan Paige, et al. (9)
Feb. 26, 1815 - - \$200.00 – from John Colby (10)

In the 1811 deed, Moses Dennis is referred to as a blacksmith, but in all of the later deeds he is simply called “gentleman”. The History of Weare states that he lived in Paige Hill, which is a part of Weare. It may be that in Weare he ceased to carry on his blacksmith trade and turned entirely to lumbering. In 1814, he was made surveyor of the highways for the town. (11) Sometime during his career, he was a “Captain” – possibly in the local militia – and he is referred to as “Capt. Moses Dennis.”

Four more children were born to Moses and Rhoda Dennis while they were living in Weare: a daughter, Ursula, born in 1812; Robert Densmore (12) in 1814; Fanny in 1816; and the youngest, Moses, Jr., in 1818. Ursula died at the age of five years on October 4th, 1817. Her older brother, Rodney, had died the year before on May 13, 1816 at the age of six. (13) Thus from a family of nine children, only six of them lived to adulthood, four boys and three girls. Because of

(1) Quote from Mrs. Williams

(2) Book 87, p. 463

(3) Book 87, p. 360

(4) Book 86, p. 545

(5) Book of Deeds No. 87, p. 463 – Hillsboro County, Nashua, N.H.

(6) Book of Deeds No. 91, p. 533 – Ibid.

(7) Book of Deeds No. 96, p. 33 – Ibid.

(8) Book of Deeds No. 104, p. 11 – Ibid.

(9) Book of Deeds No. 104, p. 13 – Ibid.

(10) Book of Deeds No. 105, p. 246 – Ibid.

(11) Town Records, Weare, N.H. vol. 2, p. 49

(12) Robert Densmore Dennis was the author’s great grandfather. The name Densmore (Dinsmore) figured prominently in the old deeds – a family friend ?

(13) Arthur Dennis Family Bible Records

the premature deaths of the three mentioned above, the family really fell in two groups – three older, and three younger. There was an age difference of sixteen years between Gilman, the oldest and Moses, the youngest. Rhoda was thirteen years older than her sister, Fanny.

Early in 1818, Moses Dennis made the third big move of his life. He disposed of all of his property in Weare and followed his brother, Samuel, and two of his sisters into central New York State (Lucy Dennis Cummings and Frances Dennis Lane). Mrs. Williams asks; “What happened? Has Samuel Dennis (5-25) of Zurich in Wayne County, New York written to his brother, Moses, about the fertile soil of the Lake region and the nice climate? Samuel had been in Zurich about three years when Moses sold his property in Weare, N.H.” Whatever may have been the reason, on April 27, 1818, Moses sold, for \$200.00, eighty acres with buildings; then five acres and finally ten acres to Aaron Hoit and Samuel Straw of Weare. (1) He must have moved to New York State with his family shortly thereafter. Moses Dennis was not living in Weare in March, 1819, (2) and is listed in Lyons, N.Y. (then part of Ontario county) in the 1820 census,.

“It is queer that Moses Dennis did not own property in either Ontario County, or in what is now Wayne County, N.Y. He left no will and there seems to be no administration of his estate. (3) Did he loose [sic] all of his property in New Hampshire?” He is listed in the 1820 census from Lyons, N.Y. Ontario county thus: 1 male to 16; 1 male 16-18; 1 male 16-26; 2 males to 10; 1 male to 45; 1 female to 10; 1 female to 26; 1 female to 45; 3 engaged in agriculture. “Did he work for someone else?” Mrs. Williams asks. Moses Dennis is not in the 1830 census from Lyons, so it can be assumed that he died sometime between 1820 and 1830. Mrs. Williams says, “I feel sure that he is buried in the Zurich Cemetery where all the Dennises are buried. If he had a tombstone, it has long since sunken into the earth, because it is not visible.” (4)

Rhoda Sprague Dennis died March 25, 1841. She outlived her husband by ten to fifteen years, although she was but fifty seven years old when she died. Where she lived after Moses Dennis died is not certain, but the fact that she is buried on her son, Benjamin’s lot in the Zurich Cemetery would seem to indicate that she made her home with him. Her grave is marked by a

- (1) Book of Deeds No. 118, p. 501. Hillsboro County, Nashua, N.H.
- (2) When Moses Dennis left Weare, he must have left behind a rather unfortunate memory in the minds of the citizens of the town as evidenced by the following item from the Town Records, vol. 2: “March 9, 1819 the legal voters proceeded and acted as follows, viz; voted that ten dollars paid by Samuel Eaton, Esq. to Moses Dennis for a summer school in District No. 2 which said Dennis converted to his own use --- be allowed as so much money paid by the said Eaton for the town use, although it is lost to the town.” In the margin, “allowance to S. Eaton, Esq.”
- (3) “I have checked in the Surrogates office and do not find any will or any administration proceeding on the estate of Moses Dennis.” from Helen K. Sullivan, Title Searcher, Ontario Co. C. H., Canandaigua, N.Y.
- (4) Mrs. William’s attempts to find a settlement of Moses Dennis’ estate wrote [sic] to the town clerk of New Boston. He replied that: “The old Town Records were lost in a fire in 1887.” Also the Hillsboro Probate Court has no record of any estate entered under the name of Moses Dennis.

tombstone. It is tragic to note that Benjamin had lost his wife, Zilla Jane, on February 9, 1841, just prior to his mother's death the later part of March of that same year.

All of the children of Moses and Rhoda Sprague Dennis came with them into New York State, and in the course of time married and located in the Zurich area. Gilman Dennis married his cousin, Lucy Dennis, the youngest daughter of Samuel Dennis (Moses' brother). Benjamin Sprague married Zilla Jane Roby, whose father – Samuel Roby – had been an old acquaintance back in New Hampshire, and had apparently moved to New York, also. The other four married people from the area: Rhoda married Lemuel Janne (Jenny); Fanny married Benjamin Leighton; Robert Densmore married Elizabeth Roy; and Moses, Jr. married Pama Fellers, then Julia Way after his first wife's death. Rhoda Dennis Janne died in 1821, when she was but eighteen years old.

5-27 Lucy Dennis Cummings (Arthur, 4-15; John, 3-5; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1)

Daughter of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis
b. Mar. 27, 1781 (1) (2) (3) New Boston, N.H.
d. Feb. 28, 1825 (3) Phelps, N.Y.
bur. probably in Ontario Co., N.Y.

Married: Moody Cummings (1) (3) 1810 ?
b.
d.
bur. probably in Ontario Co., NY

Children of Lucy Dennis and Moody Cummings: (1)
6-28 Lucy Cummings b. 1811, New Hampshire
there may have others.

Lucy Dennis was the eighth child in the family of thirteen children of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis, and was their third daughter. Their oldest daughter, Mary, was twelve years old and Sarah was eight when Lucy was born. Lucy was followed two years later by another sister, Frances, which completed the roster of girls. Her next older brother was two years older. (Moses Dennis, 5-26), but there were three more boys (born after Frances) who rounded out the family circle. Lucy was born after her parents had moved from Amherst, N.H. to a farm in New Boston, (in 1778 – see Arthur Dennis, 4-15) which is a small town in the woods about fifteen miles west of Manchester, N.H. Here she grew up.

- (1) Records of D. B. Williams see Appendix p. 33
(2) Family Bible Records – Arthur Dennis Bible and Rhoda Dennis Reynolds Records
(3) Notes of Mrs. Leora Drake – based on research of Mary Dennis Pugh, who gave no sources.

Lucy Dennis married Moody Cummings about whom nothing is known. They were evidently married before they came to New York State, as their first child, Lucy Cummings, was born in New Hampshire in 1811. (1) They may have had other children about whom nothing is known.

The Wayne County History (Atlas) says, “ the Dennises, Lanes and the Carlls came to the Sodus section of New York State from Maine in 1815.” As noted previously, Lucy’s brothers, Samuel and Joseph Dennis, located near Zurich in Wayne County about this time, as well as her sister, Frances, who was married to Ziba Lane. We may, therefore, assume that Lucy and Moody Cummings were likewise attracted to the area, but chose to settle in Ontario County near Phelps, New York, where Moody Cummings undoubtedly engaged in farming. (2)

Lucy and Moody Cummings provided a home for her father in his declining years (see Arthur Dennis, 4-15). According to a letter from Lucy’s brother, Rodney Dennis, from Mt. Vernon, N.H., their mother had died in February 1819, leaving their father alone in rather pitiful circumstances. In the letter (3), Rodney pleaded with his brother and sisters in New York State to care for their father – then seventy years old, and “in good health”. Whether Arthur Dennis came immediately to live with the Cummings we have no way of knowing, but according to family tradition, he died in Phelps, N.Y. ten years later on April 24, 1825.

Lucy Dennis Cummings died young – she was only forty four years old, according to one report. (4) If this report can be accepted as true, she died before her father in February 1825 – his death not occurring until April of that year. Searches to date have yielded no information as to where she is buried, or her husband, Moody Cummings. Also, all efforts to locate the grave of Arthur Dennis have been fruitless.

Lucy Cummings, their only daughter, married a Mr. Catlin, who resided in the town of Sodus. (See Lucy C. Catlin, 6-28) The Catlins were a prominent family there during the 1800’s. Lucy Catlin came into the possession of her grandfather, Arthur Dennis’s Bible, which she later presented to my great grandfather, Robert Densmore Dennis. She felt that it should go to a family which carried on the DENNIS name. This seems to support the claim that Arthur Dennis died at the home of her parents in Phelps. (5)

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- (1) Records of D. B. Wiliams see Appendix p. 33
 - (2) A check of the deeds in Ontario County at Canandaigua might yield some information. No search has been made.
 - (3) See the letter in Arthur Dennis, 4-15 and Rodney Dennis, 5-32
 - (4) Notes of Leora Drake – from the research of Mary Dennis Pugh – no sources given.
 - (5) Upon his death, Robert D. Dennis’s Bible passed to his daughter, Louisa Dennis Whitbeck; from her to her daughter, Isadore W. Cull; and from her to the author of this genealogy. (1960)

Daughter of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis

b. Dec. 20, 1784 (1)	New Boston, New Hampshire
d. Jan. 11, 1868 (2)	Lyons, New York
bur. Rural Cemetery	Lyons, New York (2)

Married: Ziba Lane on January 9, 1806 in Amherst, N. H. (3)

b. Jan. 31, 1782	Billerica, Mass. (2)
d. Jan. 20, 1866	Lyons, New York (2) (4)
bur. Rural Cemetery	Lyons, New York (2)

Children of Frances and Ziba Lane (2)

6-29 Levi Lane	b. Nov.13, 1806	Amherst, N.H.
6-30 Luther Lane	b. Jan. 29, 1808	pro. Maine
6-31 Lorenzo Lane	b. Nov. 1, 1809	pro. Maine
6-32 Lydia Lane	b. Jan. 23, 1812	pro. Maine
6-33 Lavina Lane	b. Mar.13, 1814	pro. Maine
6-34 Loren Lane	b. Sept. 25, 1816	pro. N.Y.
6-35 Francis Bowman Lane	b. Dec. 25, 1818	in New York
6-36 John Lane	b. April 2, 1821	in New York
6-37 Fanny G. Lane	b. Dec. 31, 1825	in New York
6-38 Nancy Lane	b. June 30, 1831	in New York

Frances Gorden Dennis was the tenth child of Arthur and Mary Dennis. Her birth occurred while her parents were living in New Boston, N.H., so that is undoubtedly where she was born and grew up. She was the youngest of five girls in their family of thirteen children, and had four older and three younger brothers (one brother, Samuel, had died in infancy.).

Frances Dennis married Ziba Lane, Jr. (5) on January 9, 1806 in Amherst, N.H. when she was twenty years old. When their first child was a baby, they moved to Maine as so many other New Hampshire families did. The Lane Genealogy tells of a harrowing experience which the couple had when they reached the Kennebec River. The River was rising so rapidly, they were afraid to cross the log bridge with their goods. Frances, putting he baby in her skirt and holding [it] firmly in her teeth, gathered up as many of her treasures as she could carry and dashed across the bridge. Just as she reached safety, the log bridge was swept away. (2) According to the 1810 census, they were living in Madison, Maine.

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- (1) Arthur Dennis Family Bible Record
 - (2) From the notes of Edna Vanderbilt, whose mother, Harriet Lane Vanderbilt, helped in compiling a 3 vol. Genealogy of the Lane Family.
 - (3) Vital Records of Amherst, N.H. vol. 2, p. 868; also Town Records in The History of Bedford, N.H.
 - (4) Surrogate Court Records, Lyons, N.Y.
 - (5) From Mrs. William's notes: "Ziba Lane, Jr. was the son of Ziba Lane, who was born in Amherst, N.H. He married Lydia Danforth of Billerica, Mass. in 1778. Lydia D. Lane died on August 30, 1801 at the age of forty seven and her husband, Ziba Lane, Sr. died on August 25, 1807 at the age of fifty one. The Lanes came from England in 1620." She adds, "I am not certain where I got the material on Ziba Lane but I believe it was from "The History of Bedford, N.H."

However, like many of the others, they were not satisfied to remain in Maine and made the big move into New York State. The Wayne County History says that the Lanes, the Dennises, (the Carll's) and others came to Wayne County in 1815. (1) They settled in the Town of Lyons, north and east of the village. The early settlers in Wayne County were greeted by Indians who were none too friendly due to the influence of the British during the War of 1812. The story is told that on one occasion they paid a visit to the Lane family and seemed to be much intrigued at the sight of their little white baby (Lavina). Taking the child from her terrified parents, the Indians gathered around her in apparent curiosity; then finally returned her unharmed. (2)

Frances and Ziba Lane were the parents of ten children, all of whom lived to grow up – a rather remarkable record. Their oldest son, Levi, was born in Amherst, N.H. The next four children (born before 1815) must have been born in New York. All of the children were with their parents in New York, where they in turn married and raised families in the Lyons-Zurich-Sodus area. Levi (6-29) married Sally Burnett; Luther married Emily Watson; Lorenzo married Maria Larne; Lydia married Renselar Merchant; Lavina married John Riggs of Sodus (her second husband was Leonard Newkirk); Loren married Tamma Van Marter; Francis Bowman Lane married Martha Spears; Fanny married C. Horton (second husband was D. Watson); and Nancy married John Nichols. Only John Lane remained unmarried. (2)

Practically the only other information about Frances and Ziba Lane is found in census records, which tend to confirm as well as to assist in obtaining information about the family. As stated above, they were in Madison, Maine in 1810 according to that census record. Mrs. Williams says, "I am quite sure that I would find Ziba Lane, Jr. in the 1820 census from Lyons, Wayne Co., New York, but I have not looked." He is to be found there in the census records for 1830, 1840, 1850, and 1860. According to the 1840 census, his family consisted of: 1 male, 10 and under 15; 1 male, 15 and under 20; 1 male, 20 and under 30; 1 male, 50 and under 60; 1 female, 5 and under 10; 1 female, 10 and under 15; 1 female, 50 and under 60. (3)

When the 1850 census was taken all of the children, except Nancy, were married and had left home. There were, however, two others named who were not members of the immediate family, and there was an unaccounted for child, named Jane, aged 7, who may have been a grand child. That census reads: "Ziba Lane, 62 – born Maine; estate valued at \$4000; wife Frances, 60 – born Maine ("I am positive that Frances was not born in Maine", D.B.W.); Nancy, 19, born in N.Y.; Alford Gilkey, 19 – born in N.Y.; Margaret Snyder, 15, born N.Y; and Jane, aged 7 years."

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- (1) From the "History of Bedford, N.H." and "Vital Records of Amherst, N.H." (Town Records) vol. 2, p. 868 (D.B.W. notes)
- (2) From Edna Vanderbilt Ekert, who mother helped to compile a 3 vol. Lane Genealogy, which she now has.
- (3) There is some confusion here in the ages of the children, but as Mrs. Williams says "People did not always give their correct ages even in those days. Perhaps often older people were not certain of their ages."
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By 1860, the family situation had changed completely. All of the children were married, but their son, Bowman Lane, with his wife and children was living in the home of his parents. Likewise, Ziba Lane's estate had increased considerably – possibly Bowman had bought his father's farm. The census for 1860 reads thus: Ziba Lane, 75, born Maine, estate \$10,000; wife Frances, 74; Bowman, 35; Martha, 34 (Bowman's wife); Martha, 10; Charles, 8 (children of Bowman). The Lane genealogy says that Ziba Lane was a farmer and a tradesman.

Ziba Lane died on January 20, 1866 at the age of eighty four, and is buried in Lyons, N.Y. Frances Dennis Lane died two years later, almost to the day, on January 11, 1868. She was also eighty four years old, and like her husband is buried in Lyons, N.Y. Nine of their ten children were living in 1866 at the time of their father's death and are mentioned in his will. (1)

5-30 William Dennis (Arthur, 4-15; John, 3-5; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1)

Son of Arthur Dennis and Mary Goodhue Dennis

b. Jan 25, 1787 (2) probably in New Boston, N. H.

d.

bur. probably in Ill. or Wis. (3)

Married: Susanna Harvel (Harvey) (3) of Amherst, N.H. Dec. 29, 1808 (4)
no statistics

Children: ?

William Dennis was the eleventh child, and the eighth son of Arthur and Mary Dennis. His next older brother, Moses, was eight years old when William was born, but he had three small sisters immediately older – Lucy, Patty and Frances Dennis. His birth was followed two years later by a brother, Joseph, and four years later by Rodney, the youngest member of this big family of thirteen children. William was probably born and grew up in New Boston, N.H. as his parents had been living there since 1778. (see Arthur Dennis, 4-15).

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- (1) Wayne Co. Surrogate Court Records, Lyons, N.Y.
 - (2) Arthur Dennis Family Bible
 - (3) Source – notes of Leora Drake, from Mary Dennis Pugh whose research does not give sources of her information, unfortunately.
 - (4) Bedford Town Records, vol. 4, p. 606 – found in the Secy. of State's Office in the State house at Concord, N.H. by Mrs. D. B. Williams.
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William Dennis married Susanna Harvel (Harvey) of Amherst, N.H. on December 29th, 1808, when he was twenty one years old. Before his marriage, William was caught up in the “Maine fever” which was apparently sweeping southern New Hampshire. During the first decade of the 1800’s, four of William’s brothers, lured by tales of the advantages to be found there, pulled up their stakes and moved with their families to Maine. William and his next younger brother, Joseph, went to Maine before they married. According to the records, William bought land there in 1808, and then apparently returned to marry Susanna back in Amherst. (1) They must have moved to Maine soon afterwards, as they are in the 1810 census from Madison in Somerset County, Me.

All that is known of William Dennis has been gleaned from a study of the land records in Somerset County, in Skowhegan, Me. There we find that on Feb. 19, 1808 William Dennis, “laborer” bought eighty acres from William Harvell and his wife, Sarah, of Madison, Maine for \$480.00 (2) (3). Madison lies just across the Kennebec River from Anson, where some of William’s brothers had located. Ten years later, he purchased an additional “forty four acres and fifty seven rods, situated in the easterly part of Lot 22 – consideration \$ 120.00” from Seth Clark. (4) In 1829, he bought still more land from David Haynes (5), which was his final purchase on record. There is no record of any sales of property among the records at hand. The records shed no further light on William and Susanna Dennis. Nothing has come to light about their family, if indeed they had children.

In a letter, written in 1815, to William’s brother, Samuel Dennis in Wayne County, N.Y., Eunice Dennis (his brother John’s wife) wrote that William had paid them a visit in East New Portland, Me. – which is not too far from Madison. (see John Dennis, 5-22)

One bit of research, unsubstantiated by fact, unfortunately, states that William Dennis went to Illinois or Wisconsin. (6) This may be true, and if so, he probably died there and is buried there. Further check of the census records in Maine might reveal some information. This same source claims that William’s oldest brother, Arthur Dennis, Jr., died in Erie, Pa., and his sister, Mary Dennis Henderson, died in Eaton County, Michigan. Just prior to the Civil War, there was considerable interest in and migration to Michigan and the adjoining states.

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- (1) Bedford Town Records, vol. 4, p. 606 – found in the Secy. of State’s Office in the State House at Concord, N.H. by Mrs. D.B. Williams.
 - (2) Mrs. Wililams says, “I think that William Harvell was a relative of Susanna Harvel who married William Dennis – perhaps a brother, or maybe her father who had moved to Maine leaving his daughter in Amherst, N.H.
 - (3) Skowhegan Court House, Deed Book 15, p. 281; p. 356
 - (4) Skowhegan Court House, Deed Book 23, p. 243
 - (5) Skowhegan Court House, Deed Book 24, p. 79
 - (6) Records of Mary Dennis Pugh, whose notes were loaned by Leora Drake.
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Son of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis

b. Mar. 8, 1789 (1) New Boston, New Hampshire
 d. May 7, 1816 (2) Zurich, New York
 bur. Zurich Cemetery Zurich, New York

Married: Hannah York on December 5, 1811, New Portland, Me. (2)
 b. No statistics

Children: none known

Joseph Dennis was next to the youngest child in the large family of thirteen children, born to Arthur and Mary G. Dennis. Beyond any doubt he was born and grew up in New Boston, N.H. where his parents lived from 1778 until shortly after 1800. Joseph's older brothers were grown up at the time he was born – Arthur Dennis, Jr. married and left home at twenty one when Joseph was but two years old. Joseph had a brother, William, who was two years older, and there were three young sisters – Lucy, 8; Patty, 6; and Frances, 5. The older children ranged in age from ten to twenty – a full house. (see Arthur Dennis, 4-15)

While still single, Joseph Dennis went to Maine as four of his older brothers had done. His brother, John, was in Maine as early as 1797. (see John, 5-22). Sometime before 1810, his brothers, Samuel and Arthur, Jr., located, first in Anson, Maine, later moved to East Newportland; and his brother, William, bought land in Madison, Maine which is just across the Kennebec River from Anson. In Newportland, Joseph met and married Hannah York according to the East Newportland Town Records. (3)

“This is to certify that I, Elder Samuel Hutchins of New Portland on the 5th day of December 1811 joined together in bonds of matrimony Mr. Joseph Dennis and Miss Hannah York both of New Portland. Intentions November 15, 1811.
 Signed Samuel Hutchins”

For reasons that are not known, Joseph and Hannah York Dennis did not find Maine to their liking and when a group of friends and relatives left for New York State, they joined them. The Dennises, the Carlls, the Lanes, and the Yorks (4) all settled in the Zurich area in Wayne County sometime around 1815.

Joseph Dennis lived only a short time after he settled in New York State – it may have been less than a year. He died in 1816 – in May – at the age of twenty seven, and is buried, as are many of the Dennis family, in the Zurich Cemetery. His premature death must have been a tragic blow to his young wife, and a cause of great grief to his family and friends. The high regard in which Joseph Dennis was held, back in New Portland, Maine is attested to by the fact that it was

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- (1) Joseph's birth is recorded in the Arthur Dennis Bible
 - (2) Research of Mrs. D. B. Williams
 - (3) East Newportland Town Records 1808-1865 p. 10
 - (4) Wayne County Atlas – History

arranged for a funeral sermon to be preached there for him, according to a letter written from East Newporthland by his sister-in-law, Eunice Dennis (wife of John Dennis). (1)

What became of Hannah York Dennis after Joseph's death is not known. It is quite likely that she remarried. There is no record to show that Hannah and Joseph had any children

5-32 Rodney Gove Dennis (Arthur, 4-15; John, 3-5; John, 2-2; Thomas, 1-1)

Son of Arthur Dennis and Mary Goodhue Dennis

b. April 17, 1791 New Boston, (Goffstown), N. H. (2) (3)
d. Sept. 29, 1865 Grafton, Mass. (3)
bur. probably Grafton, Mass.

Married: Mary Parker on November 28, 1820 (3) Topsfield, Mass.

b. May 1, 1793 Billerica, Mass.
d.
bur.

Children of Rodney Gore Dennis and Mary Parker Dennis: (3) (4)

x6-39 Mary Dennis b. Nov. 30, 1821, Topsfield, Mass.
x6-40 Thedasia Dennis b. May 10, 1823
x6-41 Jane Abigail Dennis b. May 28, 1824 (twin)
x6-42 Jesse Appleton Dennis b. May 28, 1824 (twin)
x6-43 Rodney Dennis b. Jan. 14, 1826/8 d. 1899
x6-44 Joseph Dennis b. Feb. 14, 1829
x6-45 Edward Parker Dennis b. Dec. 1, 1829
x6-46 Isabelle Homes Dennis b. May 8, 1833 Somers, Conn.
x6-47 Frances Louise Dennis b. Aug. 25, 1834 Somers, Conn.
x6-48 Henriette Pease Dennis b. Oct. 16, 1838 Somers, Conn.

Rodney Gove Dennis, the youngest of thirteen children of Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis, was born in New Boston, N.H. and grew up there. At the time of his birth, his parents were no longer young – his father was forty-six, and his mother forty-two. He had six older brothers (one had died in infancy) and five sisters. However, the oldest ones soon married and left home. His brother, Arthur Dennis, Jr., was married just four days after Rodney was born (April 21, 1797), and his brother John Dennis (5-22) went to Maine in 1797, so that Rodney never really knew them as part of the family.

- (1) Mrs. Williams has the letter from Eunice Dennis, written to her great great grandfather, Samuel Dennis, who was living in Zurich, N.Y.
- (2) Arthur Dennis Family Bible. The History of New Ipswich states he was born in Goffstown, N.H. p. 214. Several of the family were baptized in Goffstown.
- (3) Leora Drake notes.
- (4) From Topsfield, Mass. Births, and Grafton, Mass. Marriages (from D.B.W.)

Having exhausted the usual and common names for their large family, Arthur and Mary Dennis must have cast about for a name for their youngest son. His middle name – Gove (1) – appears several times in connection with his parents. Jonathan Gove had signed his name as a witness on one or more of their property deeds. Also, Arthur Dennis, Sr. and Moses Dennis, with some others, in 1782 signed a “petition to do away with the sentence imposed upon Dr. Jonathan Gove of New Boston, N.H. – who was convicted of passing counterfeit money.” (2)

When Rodney was a lad in his early teens, his father sold his 250 acre farm in New Boston, yet the family continued to live there on land belonging to his brother, Moses, until 1807-08. (3) When Moses sold out in New Boston Rodney went with his parents to New Ipswich, N.H. There they lived until 1812-13. “The History of New Ipswich” states that “among the persons born in New Ipswich, or who spent their early life there and who received degrees at college was Rodney Dennis.” (4) It adds that “he was born in Goffstown, N.H.” which is not confirmed by the Bible record, but he may have been baptized there. In March, 1813, Rodney was a tax payer in the town of New Ipswich, being taxed for “school, minister, etc.” (5) He was then almost twenty two years old, and unmarried.

Rodney Dennis was the only one of this large family of children to acquire an education. He must have been a bright young man, and some one in New Ipswich may have urged him to go to college. At any rate, he attended Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, from which he was graduated in 1816. (4) Following graduation he studied theology at Andover (Mass. ?). A letter, which he wrote in May, 1819, gives some idea of the struggle he had to complete his preparation for the ministry. “I am obliged to turn every way to get along with my education and were it not that Christian people are very good to me in giving and loaning me money, I could not support myself. I shall not finish my studies before the last of next September, and then it will be a year and a half or two years perhaps before I settle. Indeed I do not wish to settle immediately after I go forth into the world because the work of the ministry is a great work and if I engage in it as a settled pastor with all my strength at first, it would quickly wear me out.” (6) Rodney, in his

- (1) Mrs. Drake quotes the following from a letter, written in Goffstown, Mass. on Mar. 8, 1858, to his daughter, Theodosia Little. In it he stated that, “the name Rodney Gove owes its original descent to Lord George Bridges Rodney, an eminent English Admiral, who for his moral virtues and heroic services which he performed in defense of his country and the promotion of her honors was raised to the peerage, and settled upon him a pension for life of 2000 lbs. yearly.” He continues, “Gove and its ancestral lines extends to myself.” Just how he figured this out is not at all clear – there were no marriages into the Gove family by any of his ancestors for four generations back. (M.C.K.)
- (2) “Provincial Papers of New Hampshire” 1723-1786 vol. I; “Town Papers of New Hampshire” by Hammond, and State Papers vol. 18, p. 722
- (3) See Arthur Dennis, 4-15
- (4) “History of New Ipswich, N.H. 1736-1852 p. 214
- (5) “New Ipswich Town Records” vol. 4, p. 321
- (6) from Rodney Dennis’ letter to his brother, Samuel Dennis, who was living in New York State. Rodney’s mother has just died and he wrote to the family in New York to care for their father. Mrs. Williams has the original of this letter. (See Arthur Dennis, 4-15)

chosen profession, was following in the footsteps of his grandfather, the Rev. John Dennis (3-5) of Old Ipswich, Mass. (1)

During his college years, Rodney's parents moved to Amherst, N. H. (1814-1815-1816), and eventually to Mt. Vernon, N. H. where his mother died on February 15, 1819. Being the youngest in the family and probably the only unmarried one, the responsibility for looking after his aging parents fell almost entirely upon Rodney. In the letter, which he wrote after his mother's death, to his brother, Samuel Dennis, who was then living in New York State, Rodney said: "I have been very anxious for him (his father, Arthur Dennis). He is all alone and is very poor. There is no one of his children here with whom he can conveniently live ----". Then Rodney wrote of his struggle to complete his education (quoted earlier), and added "So you see, my dear brother, that nothing can be expected from me at present. I feel for father and were it in my power, I would make him comfortable. Had I a house, he should be welcome to a home. I rejoice that you are moved with pity toward him ---- you cannot tell with what pleasure I read that part of your letter which expresses the desire of my other brothers that my father may come and live with you. --- I did what I could for my mother before she died, and have done what I could for my father. This is the third time I have left my studies and visited him and mother within five months. I was with mother about a fortnight during her illness. But I have done nothing compared with what it is my duty to do, were I able. If ever my circumstances will permit, I shall be willing to do what in your judgment you all shall think right." (2) His father did go to New York State where he spent his remaining years among his four children who were then living in Wayne County. Rodney never saw him afterwards.

The Rev. Rodney Dennis "settled in Topsfield, Mass. and Somers, Conn., and now (1852) resides in Grafton, Mass." (3) These were apparently preaching appointments. Judging from the dates of the children's births, he must have remained in Topsfield from 1819-20 until 1832-33; and sometime between 1838 and 1852 moved to Grafton, Mass. from Somers, Conn. His deep religious convictions and his dedication to his chosen profession can be seen in the opening paragraphs of the letter which he wrote in 1819, quoted above, to his brother Samuel. "If God has renewed your heart as I have reason to believe, He has done more for you than to make you the possessor of the whole world. If you are a child of God, what more can you greatly desire? You are made an heir to the inheritance incompatible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. But while you rejoice, and while we all rejoice let us rejoice with trembling. 'The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately withered.' (the word is dimmed and I'm not sure.) We have need to suspect our best feelings, and doubt our best hopes. Let us examine ourselves closely, and let us take care that our repentance be deep, and our trust in the Lord Jesus unreserved. If God has called you and made you a subject of his grace, you have a great warfare to fight. The world, the devil and your own heart are the enemies with which you will daily be obliged to contend. These are all powerful foes, but the most powerful you will find your own

- (1) See John Dennis, 3-5
- (2) This letter from Rodney G. Dennis in the possession of Mrs. Williams to whose great, great grandfather, Samuel Dennis, it was written.
- (3) History of New Ipswich, N.H. 1736-1852 p. 214

heart. You must be diligent, or one or all of them will gain the victory over you. Be constant in reading the scriptures, ‘pray without ceasing’, and rely on the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will come off more than conqueror. I hope your dear family and our brothers and sisters around you feel the importance of vital religion. It is all that is really worth living for in this world and it certainly is all that can render them happy in the world to come.

Dear brothers and sisters, together with our families, give not sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids, till you have made your peace with God. Our time on earth is short, Mother is gone. Joseph is gone. We must soon follow. O let us repent, and let us so live that our death may be that of the righteous and our last end like His.” (1)

Rev. Rodney Dennis married Mary Parker of Topsfield, Mass. on November 28, 1820. (2) Rodney did not quite carry out his stated intentions of waiting “a year and a half to two years before I settle”, as he had written to his brother, Samuel. He was, however, approaching thirty years of age. Mary Parker, who was two years younger than her husband, was born in Billerica, Mass. Nothing further is known of her family or her background. They must have met after Rodney went to preach at Topsfield. Rodney and Mary Dennis were the parents of ten children – all of whom apparently lived to grow up. Seven of the children were born while they were in Topsfield, and the three youngest after they moved to Somers, Conn. Mary, the oldest, was born a year (almost to the day) after her parents were married; and Henrietta, the youngest, was born seventeen years later.

Very little is known of this branch of the family. One source (3) says that Rodney’s oldest daughter, Mary, married Holland N. Batchellor of Millbury on April 29, 1846 at Grafton, Mass. (2) Theodosia, the second daughter, married twice; her first husband, Thomas Little of Redband, New Jersey died in 1852; her second husband was Rev. Harry Finch of Shrewsbury, New Jersey. Their son, Rodney Dennis, Jr., died in 1899. Nothing further is known of him, or any of the rest of the family.

The Rev. Rodney Dennis died in Grafton, Mass. on September 19, 1865 at the age of seventy four. (3) Presumably, he is buried in Grafton. How long his wife survived him is not known. There are undoubtedly descendants from this family, but no records exist beyond those given here. (4)

(1) this letter in its entirety is to be found in the account of Arthur Dennis, Sr. 4-15

(2) Mrs. Williams also gives this date, and information.

(3) Notes of Leora Drake contain the following items: Rodney Strong Dennis, died 1904;

Charlotte Wolcott Dennis, died 1906. Mar. Thomas Little of Hartford, Conn.

NOTE: The name Rodney Dennis cropped up among the descendants of Moses Dennis (4-17) in Steuben County, N.Y. He was a prominent attorney in Hornell in the late 1800’s. Others in that family were given the name, Rodney, also.

Sixth Generation: Descendants of John Dennis and Eunice Fling Dennis6-7 Rev. John Dennis (John, 5-22; Arthur, 4-15; see chart I)

Son of John and Eunice Fling Dennis

b. Dec. 5, 1798/9 East Newportland, Maine (1)

d. East Newportland, Maine

bur. East Newportland, Maine

1st Married: Nancy M. Halven (Holden ?) on Oct. 14, 1819 (1)

b. April 3, 1797 (1)

d. East Newportland, Maine

bur. East Newportland, Maine

2nd Married: Mrs. Mary Horner (Homer) of Smithfield, Maine on March 2, 1841

b.

d.

bur.

Children of Rev. John Dennis and Nancy Halven Dennis (1)

x7-3 Halven Dennis b. Jan. 6, 1820 E. Newportland, Me.

x7-4 Eunice Dennis b. Apr. 10, 1821 E. Newportland, Me.

x7-5 Nancy Loving Dennis b. Aug. 28, 1823 E. Newportland, Me.

x7-6 John Halven Dennis b. July 18, 1825 E. Newportland, Me.

x7-7 Sylvia Dennis b. Sept. 22, 1826 (Fri.) E. Newportland, Me.

x7-8 Ward Lock Dennis b. Jan. 16, 1828 (Wed.) E. Newportland, Me.

x7-9 Drew Dennis b. Aug. 25, 1829 (Tue.) E. Newportland, Me.

x7-10 Geo. Farnsworth Dennis b. Mar 10, 1831 (Thu.) E. Newportland, Me.

x7-11 Josiah Parker Dennis b. Sept. 17, 1832 (Fri.) E. Newportland, Me.

x7-12 Susan Esther Dennis b. May 13, 1834 E. Newportland, Me.

x7-13 Mary Elizabeth Dennis b. June 27, 1836 (Mon.) E. Newportland, Me.

x7-14 Mathilda Miles Dennis b. June 3, 1839 E. Newportland, Me.

x7-15 Ann Holden Dennis b. Nov. 11, 1840; d. April 4, 1841

(1) Town Records of East Newportland, Somerset County, Maine, p. 171

His father's records give the date of John, Jr.'s birth as 1799

John Dennis was one of the three (known) sons born to John and Eunice Fling Dennis. (There may have been other children in that family.) His father, John Dennis, 5-22, had moved to Maine and settled in the East Newportland area in 1797, according to the Maine census in 1800. Thus, John, Jr., was born, grew up and spent most of his life in this little village in Somerset County to which his father had come only about a year before he was born. From the records, it appears that his maternal grandfather, Morris Fling, also lived in the immediate area (see John, 5-22)

John Dennis must have received a better than average education in order to enter the ministry – which was his chosen profession – although the records shed no light on where he went to school.

In 1819, he married Nancy M. Halven (Holden), presumably from East Newportland, Maine – he was twenty and his wife, twenty two. They were the parents of thirteen children born over a period of twenty years. Apparently all but one child lived to grow up. Nancy Dennis died on November 26, 1840, fifteen days after the birth of their thirteenth child. She was forty three years old.

The following March – 1841 – Rev. John Dennis married for the second time – Mrs. Mary Horner (Homer). Mrs. Williams's notes: "I feel rather disgusted with him. Nancy bore him thirteen children, and a little more than three months after she died he remarried ---. It is sad to note that Nancy's last baby, Ann Holden, died only a month after he remarried, at the age of five months." (1) There were a number of very young children in the family and no doubt John felt they needed a mother to care for them. Yet, there were older sisters at home – the oldest, Eunice, was approaching twenty years of age.

The Rev. John Dennis and his wife, Nancy, are both buried in the East Newportland cemetery, as are his parents, John and Eunice Fling Dennis (see John Dennis, 5-22). At least one of their children remained in the East Newportland area. Their son, George Farnsworth Dennis, married Emma E. ___?___. They are buried in the East Newportland cemetery, also. George died at the age of eighty six years and ten months on January eighteenth, 1918. His wife predeceased him twenty years earlier – on August 7, 1896 at the age of sixty three years and eight months. Their daughter, Mathilda Miles Dennis, died at the age of forty two on March 29, 1883. (2)

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- (1) Mrs. Demorris Boyd Williams researched this branch of the family, and in 1950, she and her husband made an extended visit to the East Newportland area. Her information is chiefly derived from the Town Records of East Newportland, Maine. She notes, "I wish that I had copied more information from the East Newportland Town Records about various members of the families of John Dennis (5-22) and Rev. John Dennis, Jr. (6-7)"
 - (2) These may be gravestone records, copied by Mrs. Williams. If not, they are records from the above quoted sources.
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Chart 4. Three Generations of the Descendants of Samuel Dennis (1776-1855) (5-25)
and Sarah Dix Dennis (1779-1850)

6-10 James Dennis 1797 m. P. Beach m. Sally Carll	-----<	x7-16 Louisa		
		x7-17 James P.	1830	
		x7-18 Joseph Dix	1832	--<x8-1 Louisa Dennis
		x7-19 Benj. Carll	1834	
		x7-20 John Dix	1836	
6-11 Joseph Dennis 1799 m. Love Carll	-----<	7-21 Phoebe	1819	--<x8-2 Adam Minnis
		m. Wm. Minnis		
		7-22 Sarah Dix	1821	--<x8-3 Eliz. Burgess
		m. J. Burgess		
		x7-23 Mary	1823	
		7-24 Edith Dix	1825	--<x8-4 Minnie Roby
		m. Steph. Roby		
		7-25 Leonard	1827	--<x8-5 Wm. Edgar 1851
		m. Clara Horton		m. Hammond
		7-26 Joseph	1829	
		m. Emily Riggs		
x7-27 Benjamin	1831			
7-28 James	1833	--< 8-6 Wm.H.Dennis 1859		
m. Cynthia Brown				
7-29 Augusta	1835			
m. Harrison				
7-30 Martha	1838	--<8-7 Seymour Richards		
m. M. Richards		m. Rose Martin		
x7-31 William	1841			
6-12 Edith Adams Dennis 1801 - 1822 m. Thos. York		x7-32 Samuel York	1825	
		x7-33 Sarah	1827	
6-13 Mary Dennis 1803 m. Robt. York	-----<	x7-34 Mary	1829	
		x7-35 Hannah	1832	
		x7-36 Susan	1834	
		x7-37 Robert	1836	
6-14 Lucy Dennis m. Gilman Dennis		x7-38 Margaret	1836	---<x8-8 Eva Depew 1887
		m. W. Depew		
		x7-39 Sarah Jane	1838	
		m. M. Snyder		
6-15 Frederick Adams Dennis 1809 m. L. Riggs	----<	x7-40 Lydia	1840	
		m. Sober		
		x7-41 Lavina	1843	
		m. C. Burnett		
		x7-42 Emma	1845	---<x8-9 Margaret Sober
		m. Sober		
6-16 Sally Dennis 1808/10 m. Thos. York	---<	x7-43 Jane York	1826	
		x7-44 Thomas York	1830	
		x7-45 Sarah	1833	
		x7-46 Mary	1835	
		x7-47 Elizabeth	1838	
		x7-48 Catherine	1839	

Sixth Generation – Wayne County, New YorkDescendants of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis6-10 James P. Dennis (Samuel, 5-25; Arthur, 4-15; see Chart)

Son of Samuel Dennis and Sarah Dix Dennis

b. 1797 in Weare, N.H.; bpd. July 2, 1797, Goffstown, N.H. (1)
 d. Michigan
 bur. Michigan

1st Married: Phoebe Beach (2)

b. No data on Phoebe Beach

2nd Married: Sally Carll (2)

b. No data on Sally Carll
 d.

Children of James Dennis and Phoebe Beach Dennis: (2)

x7-16 Louisa Dennis b. New York State, m. ? Otis

Children of James Dennis and Sally Carll : (2)

x7-17 James P. Dennis	b. May 18, 1830	in Michigan
x7-18 Joseph Dix Dennis	b. Sept. 3, 1832	in Michigan
x7-19 Benjamin C. Dennis	b. Aug. , 1834	in Michigan
x7-10 John Dix Dennis	b. June 30, 1836	in Michigan

James P. Dennis, the oldest of the nine children of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis, was born in Weare, New Hampshire. He was the "infant" baptized on July 2nd, 1797 in Goffstown, N.H. (1) His parents moved about considerably while he was growing up. When he was two or three years old, they went to Maine, and lived for a short time near Anson, on the Kennebec River. According to the 1800 census, his father "emigrated from New Hampshire in 1800". The family eventually located in East New Portland, Maine where at least one of his father's brothers was living (John and Eunice Fling Dennis). But, by 1806, Samuel Dennis returned to New Hampshire with his family and lived on a farm near New Boston belonging to his father, but later to his brother, Moses Dennis. When Moses sold the New Boston farm, James Dennis went with his parents to live for a short time in Bedford, N.H. (See Arthur Dennis, Sr., 4-15, and Samuel Dennis, 5-25) James was thirteen years old when, in 1810, his parents were back once more in East New Portland, Maine, according to the 1810 Census.

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- (1) See copy of this certificate in record of Samuel Dennis, 5-25. Mrs. Williams has the original.
 - (2) All of the information about James P. Dennis, in fact about all of the children of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis, is from the notes of Mrs. Williams. She is a great grand daughter of this couple.
-

When James was a young man of eighteen or nineteen years, his parents undertook one major, final venture – this time they moved into New York State. There was apparently a rather sizeable migration from Maine into New York State in 1815, or thereabouts, and the Dennises, Carlls, Lanes, Watsons, and other Maine families made the long and difficult journey into [the] central-western part of the state. They all located near the little settlement known as “West Woods” or Zurich in Wayne County, which lies between the villages of Lyons and Sodus. James was able to do a man’s work in hewing out a home in what was then most certainly a vast wilderness. (See Samuel Dennis, 5-25)

James P. Dennis married twice. His first wife was Phoebe Beach, about whom there is no information. They had one daughter, Louisa Dennis. Phoebe Dennis must have died very young, and for his second wife James P. Dennis married Sally Carll, the daughter of Enoch Carll, one of the old Maine families.

Early in the 1830s, or even before that, James Dennis moved with his new wife and small daughter, Louisa, to Michigan. Accustomed from his youth to moving about, he possessed the restlessness which characterized his father, and so many young people in the early years of our country. To the discontented of the 1830’s – 1860’s, Michigan had the appeal that New Hampshire and Maine had had for the people of the eastern seaboard after the Revolution. Just where James and his family settled the records at hand do not tell.

James and Sally Dennis had four children – all boys, all born in Michigan. The oldest son, James P. Dennis, Jr., named for his father, lived in Dansville, Ingham County, Michigan. The second son, Joseph Dix Dennis, (his grandmother was Sarah Dix) became a doctor in Grand Rapids, where he lived and died. Joseph had one daughter, Louisa, named for her father’s half sister, who lived in Grand Rapids, but in 1939 had been dead for several years. (1) The third son, Benjamin C. (probably Carll) lived in Dansville, also. John Dennis, the fourth son, was in Tuscola County, Michigan. Nothing further is known of this branch of the family.

Louisa Dennis, the only daughter of James P. Dennis and Phoebe Beach Dennis, married a man by the name of Otis. (surname). Louisa D. Otis was in Ingham County, Michigan at the time of her death. (1)

(1) Notes of Demorris Boyd Williams.

Son of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis

b. Mar. 6, 1799	Weare, New Hampshire (1)
d. Mar. 17, 1879	Zurich, N. Y.
bur. Zurich, N.Y.	(probably)

Married: Love Carll (1)

b. April 10, 1799	in 1817
d. May 3, 1873	Vienna, Maine
bur.	Zurich, N. Y.
	Probably in the Zurich Cemetery

Children of Joseph Dix Dennis and Love Carll (1)

x7-21 Phoebe Dennis	b. Nov. 5, 1819	
x7-22 Sarah Dix Dennis	b. Sept. 2, 1821	
x7-23 Mary Dennis	b. Aug. 2, 1823	d. Sept.13, 1824
7-24 Edith Dix Dennis	b. June 15, 1825	
7-25 Leonard Dennis	b. May 7, 1827	
x7-26 Joseph Dennis	b. June 10, 1829	
x7-27 Benjamin Dennis	b. June 15, 1831	d. Feb. 8, 1832
7-28 James Dennis	b. Feb. 4, 1833	
x7-29 Augusta Dennis	b. Nov. 30, 1835	
7-30 Martha Dennis	b. April 14, 1838	
x7-31 William Dennis	b. Oct. 18, 1841	d. June 19, 1843*

Joseph Dix Dennis, the second son of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis, was born in Weare, N. H. He was but a few months old when his parents went to Maine the first time in 1800. They lived first in Anson, but later located in East New Portland. When Joseph was a lad of six or seven, his parents returned to New Hampshire and lived on his grandfather, Arthur Dennis's farm in New Boston. When the farm was sold, Joseph's father moved his family to Bedford, N. H. for a few years, but, by 1810, they were again living in East New Portland, Maine. When Joseph was sixteen (in 1815), his father made one more big move – this time to Wayne County in New York State. Here in Zurich, the family settled down in close proximity to the other families who had come from Maine at about the same time. To clear the woods and start in farming must have been a real challenge to these hardy New Englanders – but it was not their first experience at this sort of thing. (2)

In 1817, Joseph Dix Dennis married Love Carll, who beyond doubt was the daughter of Enoch Carll, an old New England friend. [She was actually the daughter of Enoch's brother, Benjamin. (FGD)] They were both eighteen years old. (3) Love Carll was born in 1799 in Vienna, Maine, and was probably a sister [cousin (FGD)] of Sally Carll, who married James P. Dennis, Joseph's brother. Enoch Carll was living in Mt. Vernon, in Kennebec Co., Maine which is close to Vienna, when the 1810 census was taken.

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- (1) These records were copied from the family Bible of Joseph Dix Dennis in the possession of Seymour Richards, Newark, N.Y. by Mrs. D.B. Williams. Mr. Richards – now deceased – and his Bible is undoubtedly in the possession of some of his descendants.
 - (2) See Samuel Dennis, 5-25, for a more detailed account of these moves in New England and to New York State.

- Tombstone in Zurich Cemetery

Joseph Dennis must not have possessed the adventuresome spirit of his parents, and his brother, James P. Dennis. Joseph was a farmer, and he and Love lived all of their lives in the Zurich area, their residence in the U.S. census being given as the Township of Arcadia. In the 1870 census, his estate was valued at \$8000, which for the times was considerably above the average.

Joseph and Love Dennis were the parents of eleven children, all but three of whom lived to grow up. Their third child, Mary, died in 1824, when she was a year old. Benjamin died at eight months in 1832, and their youngest son, William, died in 1843. His tombstone in the Zurich Cemetery reads: "William, son of Joseph D. and Love Dennis, died June 10, 1841, aged 1 yr., 6 mo. 1 da." Mary is buried in the Van Marter Cemetery, north of Lyons. (1)

The other children married and located in the Zurich area. Not much is known at present concerning many of them. Such as is known is given here: (2)

- x7-21 Phoebe Dennis – married William Minnis. She had a son,
 - x8-2 Adam Minnis (Phoebe died April 18, 1889)
- x7-22 Sarah Dix Dennis – married John Burgess. Had a dau.
 - x8-3 Elizabeth Burgess (Sarah died Dec. 12, 1901)
- 7-24 Edith Dix Dennis – married Stephen Roby (see 7th generation)
- 7-25 Leonard Dennis – married Clara Horton (see 7th generation)
- x7-26 Joseph Dennis – married Emily Riggs (Joseph died Dec. 27, 1880)
- 7-28 James Dennis – married Cynthia Brown (see 7th generation)
- x7-29 Augusta Dennis – married _____ Harrison (Augusta died 6, 16, 1881)
- 7-30 Martha Dennis – married Melancton Richards (see 7th generation)

Joseph Dennis was in the 1850 census from the Town of Arcadia, Wayne Co., New York listed thus: Joseph D. Dennis – 51, born New Hampshire; Love Dennis – 51, born Maine; Leonard, 23, born N.Y.; Joseph, 21, born N.Y.; James, 17, born N.Y.; Martha, 12, born N.Y. In the 1860 census, Joseph Dix Dennis was listed thus: Joseph D. Dennis 55, born Maine; Love Dennis – 55, born Maine; James Dennis, 25, farmer, born N.Y.; Cynthia Dennis, 23, born N.Y.; William H. Dennis, 1, born N.Y. (What an error ! In ten years both Joseph and Love had gained only five years, and Joseph's birthplace was N.H, not Maine!) James Dennis and Cynthia were son and daughter-in-law of Joseph's, and William H. was their grandson. James must have been living at home, working his father's farm.

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- (1) From records in Wayne Co. Court House "Dennis, Mary, dau. of Jos. and Love – Died Sept. 13, 1824, ag. 1 yr., 2 da."
 - (2) Material in this record is from the Bible of Joseph D. Dennis, copied by Demorris Boyd Williams. Information not found in the Bible was given to Demorris by Miss Marjorie E. Follmer of Kalamazoo, Mich. Marjorie Follmer is the great granddaughter of Leonard Dennis who married Clara Horton. (Numbers marked with "X" are discontinued after this entry.)

In the 1870 census, Joseph D. Dennis was listed thus: Town of Arcadia, Joseph Dix Dennis – 71, born New Hampshire, farmer – estate \$8000; Love, 71, born Maine; Caroline Watson – 59, born N.Y.; Frances Youngs – 13, born California. Caroline Watson was a sister of Joseph D. Dennis, and Frances Youngs was her granddaughter. Caroline’s daughter, Nancy, had died young, and Caroline cared for her child. Caroline’s husband had left her with four children. As long as her father and mother lived (until 1855), Caroline had made her home with them, but after that her brother, Joseph Dennis, must have provided a home for her. (1)

6-12 Edith Adams Dennis (Samuel, 5-25; Arthur, 4-15; etc.)

Daughter of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis

b. in E. Newportland, Maine (2)
d. Dec. , 1822 New York State (3)
bur.

Married: no records of a marriage [m. Thomas York, see p. 72]

Edith Adams Dennis, the oldest daughter of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis, was born after her parents had left New Hampshire and moved to Maine. She may have been born while they lived in Anson, Maine, but more likely her birthplace was East Newportland. She was named for her maternal grandmother, Edith Adams Dix, the wife of Joseph Dix of Tyngsborough, Mass.

Edith A. Dennis died in her early 20’s. According to a letter from her grandfather, Joseph Dix, to her parents, she died about December 1822. (3) The records do not indicate that she was married. [m. Thomas York, see p. 90]

6-13 Mary Dennis York (Samuel, 5-15; Arthur, 4-15; etc.)

Daughter of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis.

b. , 1803 East Newportland, Maine (4)
d. Zurich, New York
bur. Van Marter Cemetery, Lyons Road, Lyons, N.Y. (3)

Married: Robert York

b. , 1796 , Maine (4)
d.
bur.

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- (1) For details about Caroline Dennis Watson and her family see 6-17 in this Chapter.
 - (2) In the Maine census of 1800, it states that Samuel Dennis came from Maine with 2 males under 10; 1 male to 26; one female to 26. Thus no girls.
 - (3) Notes of D. B. Williams. She has a letter to Samuel Dennis, which is the clue to the date of Edith’s death.
 - (4) From the 1850 Census from Lyons, N.Y.

Children of Mary Dennis and Robert York. (1)

x7-32	Samuel York	b.	1825, New York State
x7-33	Sarah York	b.	1827, New York State
x7-34	Mary York	b.	1829, New York State
x7-35	Hannah York	b.	1832, New York State
x7-36	Susan York	b.	1834, New York State
x7-37	Robert York	b.	1836, New York State

Mary Dennis was the second daughter, and the fourth child of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis. She was born after her parents had moved to East New Portland, Maine. By her third birthday, her parents had returned to New Hampshire where they lived for a short time on the farm in New Boston with her grandfather, Arthur Dennis, Sr. When the farm was sold, her father located in Bedford, N. H. for a few years, but by 1810 had returned to East New Portland, Maine, according to the census of that year. When Mary was twelve years old, her parents, along with other Maine families, moved into Wayne County, New York, and settled in the area known as Zurich.

Mary Dennis married Robert York who was also born in Maine. (2) He was six or seven years older than Mary, and they may have been friends, or their families no doubt were, back in Maine. Robert and Mary Dennis York lived in Wayne County, near Zurich, where her parents and the other Maine families had settled. They were the parents of six children – four girls, and two boys – all born in New York. In the 1850 census from Lyons is found the following data: Robert York, 54 – b. in Maine, estate, \$2000; Mary, 47 – b. in Maine; Samuel, 25; Sarah, 23; Mary, 21; Hannah, 18; Susan, 16; Robert, 14; all born in New York State. It is interesting to note how the family names were repeated generation after generation. It seems strange that none of the older children had married and left home. Hannah York was eighteen years old in 1850 and three of the others were over twenty.

Mary Dennis York is buried in the Van Marter Cemetery, north of Lyons, N.Y. Although there is a tombstone marking her grave, the date of her death has not been learned. The condition of the Van Marter Cemetery makes it impossible to obtain data from the stones. Nothing more is known of her family, although the name “York” was a well known and respected one during the latter part of the nineteenth century in eastern Wayne County.

(1) From the 1850 Census from Lyons, N.Y.

(2) 1850 Census Record from Lyons, N.Y.

Daughter of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis

b. probably in Maine
d.
bur.

Married: Gilman Dennis (6-19) In May, 1821 (1)

b. June 21, 1802 Bedford, N.H. (1)
d.
bur.

Children: none

The records at hand do not give the date of Lucy Dennis's birth. It appears, from a study of the births of her brothers and sisters, that she was the third daughter and the fifth child of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis. She was born during the years that her parents were moving back and forth from Maine to New Hampshire, which may account for the fact that her birth was not recorded. Her sister, Mary Dennis, was born in 1803 in Maine (2), and her brother, Frederick Adams Dennis, was born in 1809. Thus Lucy must have been born between these years. By 1806, her father had returned to New Boston, N.H., and in 1809, he was living in Bedford, N.H. This is about as close as it is possible to guess the place and date of her birth.

Lucy was a small child when her parents left New Hampshire and returned to Maine. They were living in East New Portland when the 1810 census was taken. Then five years later (1815), when she was still very young, her parents left New England for good and moved to New York State. Along with a number of other Maine families, they settled in the Zurich area in Wayne County. Sometime between 1818 and 1820, they were joined by Lucy's father's brother, Moses Dennis, and his family, from New Hampshire.

Thus, it was that Lucy met her first cousin, Gilman Dennis, who was the oldest son of Moses Dennis and Rhoda Sprague Dennis. The couple were married in May, 1821. (1) Gilman, born in 1802 in Bedford, N.H., (3) was nineteen, and Lucy was not more than sixteen or seventeen. They may have known each other as very young children, when Lucy's parents were in Bedford, N.H.

Lucy and Gilman Dennis located in the area around Zurich – south east of Sodus, and north of Lyons, N.Y. In 1835, after they had been married fourteen years, they bought a farm east of Zurich in Township 13, lot no. 13, in the 1st range of Townships. (4) Where they had lived before this, there is no way of knowing. But they did not keep this property for long, and on September 13, 1839, they sold their farm to Gilman's brother, Robert D. Dennis. (5) After this sale, they made no further purchases of land in Wayne County, and nothing more is known of them. Possibly, they joined some group of people who moved west. They apparently had no children. When they died and where they are buried is likewise not known.

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- (1) Records of Demorris Boyd Williams – from a Bible record.
 - (2) 1850 census Record from Lyons, N.Y.
 - (3) See Gilman Dennis (6-19)
 - (4) Book of Deeds No. 18, Wayne County Clerk's Office, Lyons, N.Y.
 - (5) Ibid – Book No. 26, p. 366. Recorded 1839

Son of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis

b. Mar. 12, 1809

Bedford, N.H., possibly Maine (1)

d. Jan. 27, 1881

Lyons, New York

Married: Lydia Riggs (1)

b. 1809

in New Hampshire, (or New York)

d.

bur.

Children of Frederick A. and Lydia Riggs Dennis: (1)

x7-38 Margaret Dennis b. 1836

x7-39 Sarah Jane Dennis b. 1838

x7-40 Lydia Dennis b. 1840

x7-41 Lavina Dennis b. 1843

x7-42 Emma (Sally) Dennis b. 1845

Frederick Adams Dennis was the sixth child and the third one of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis. "Adams" was his maternal grandmother's maiden name. She was Edith Adams Dix. Due to the moving about of his parents, some uncertainty exists over his birthplace, but it seems likely that he was born in Bedford, N.H. In 1809, his father paid taxes in Bedford, (2) and since Frederick was born early in that year, it can be assumed that he was born there. However, in the 1810 census, his father had returned to Maine and was living again in East New Portland. When Frederick was a lad of five or six (1815), his parents left Maine and moved to Zurich in Wayne County, N.Y. in the company of a half dozen or more Maine families. What a hard life it must have been, especially for the women, to move great distances like this with all of their earthly possessions, many with babes-in-arms, as well as other small children. If lucky, part of the journey might be made by boat, but otherwise it had to be made on horseback or on foot, or lumbering over rough roads (or no roads) in wagons drawn by oxen moving at a snails pace. It is difficult to imagine in this age of jet travel.

Frederick Adams Dennis grew up in the Zurich area. His two brothers were considerably older than he, but he had six sisters – three older and three who were younger. These facts may have had some bearing on his personality and his relationship with his family in later years. He married Lydia Riggs, who like himself was born in New Hampshire, and moved with her parents to Wayne County. The Dennises and the Riggs intermarried a number of times in the mid-1800's.

Frederick Dennis, like others of his family, was a farmer, but where he lived prior to 1843 is not known. In 1843, he bought twenty six acres of land in Township 13 in the Town of Lyons from his father, Samuel Dennis – then a man sixty seven years old. But for reasons that are not at all clear from the deeds, he returned this property to his father a year later. Then followed a succession of transactions between Frederick and his father, which became very unpleasant and involved, eventually ending up in the courts and a sheriffs sale of his father's possessions. (see Samuel Dennis, 5-25) What seems the unkindest blow of all was that

(1) Records of Demorris Boyd Williams – from a Bible record.

(2) Bedford, N.H. Town Records, vol. 4, p. 111

Frederick's suit against his father was filed on Christmas day in 1852. The sheriff's sale took place on February 12, 1853 and the "premises were struck off to Frederick A. Dennis – he being the highest bidder". The deed was dated July, 1855, and was recorded in August, 1855.

Frederick's father died the following December. Strained relations existed between Frederick Adams Dennis and the rest of the family ever after according to one member of the family. (1)

Frederick and Lydia Riggs Dennis were the parents of five children, all girls. What little is know of them is given here:

Margaret, the oldest daughter married Warren Depew. In the 1860 census, they were living with her parents. They had one daughter, Eva Depew, born in 1857.

Sarah Jane married Myron Snyder.

Lavina Dennis married Cody Burnett, and moved to Michigan.

Lydia and Emma married men by the name of Sober, who were probably brothers.

Frederick Adams Dennis was in the 1840, 1850, and 1860 census records in Lyons, New York. In 1840, the record reads thus: (2)

1 male ten under 15; 1 male 30 under 40; 2 females under 5; 1 female 15 under 20;

1 female 30 under 40. (3)

In the 1850 census, the record was as follows:

Frederick Dennis, 41, born New Hampshire; Lydia, born N. H. (or N.Y.);

Margaret, 14; Sarah, 12; Lydia, 10; Lavina, 7; Emily, 5. Also William Bailey, 12; and

Aaron Riggs, 26 (possibly Lydia's brother)

In the 1860 census:

Frederick Dennis, 55, born N.Y. (error); Hannah, 55 (who was she ? Was Lydia's name Hannah Lydia, or Lydia Hannah ? There is no record of a second marriage, and the 1870 census has it "Lydia") Emma, 15; Warren Depew, 32; Margaret, 28; Eva, 3, their daughter.

Frederick Adams Dennis died in 1881, at the age of seventy two. The date of Lydia's death is not known and neither is the place where they are buried. (4)

(1) Carlton Nehemiah Reynolds told this bit of family history to D. B. Williams. He was her uncle and a great nephew of Frederick A. Dennis, also was very knowledgeable about family history.

(2) 1840 Census, Lyons, N.Y., p. 56

(3) Who the male under 15 is, and the female over 15 is a mystery. The boy might be Frederick's sister, Caroline Watson's son. (see 6-17)

(4) The records on all of this branch of the Samuel Dennis family are those of Demorris B. Williams. See appendix for her notes.

Daughter of Samuel Dennis and Sarah Dix Dennis

b. 1808/10 (1) Maine (E. Newportland ?)
 d. New York State
 bur.

Married: Thomas York (2)

b.
 d. Jan. 1, 1840 Zurich area, N.Y. age 46 (3)
 bur. Van Marter Cemetery (3)

Children of Sally Dennis and Thomas York (2)

x7-43 Jane York	b. 1826 New York State
x7-44 Thomas York	b. 1830 New York State
x7-45 Sarah York	b. 1833 New York State
x7-46 Mary York	b. 1835 New York State
x7-47 Eliza York	b. 1838 New York State
x7-48 Catharine Walling York	b. 1839 New York State

Sally Dennis, the seventh child and the fourth daughter born to Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis, was born in Maine – probably in East Newportland. Her parents returned to Maine from New Hampshire either late in 1809 or early in 1810. They are in the 1810 Maine census. In 1815, or thereabouts, her parents left Maine and made their way across New Hampshire and Vermont, and then half way across New York State to the little settlement at Zurich, in Wayne County. They were accompanied on the journey by other Maine families – the Carlls, the Watsons, the Lanes, the Yorks, and others.

Sally Dennis grew up in the Zurich area where she met and married Thomas York, a brother of Robert York who had married her sister, Mary Dennis. She was married on or before 1823 according to an old letter from her grandfather, Joseph Dix. (4) In this case, she was a mere child of thirteen if her birthdate – 1810 – is correct. But according to the census in 1850, she was forty two years old which would indicate that the year of her birth was 1808; however, in the 1860 census, her age is given as fifty. Since Robert York was born in Maine (1840 census), we may assume that Thomas was also born there and came with his parents when they settled in Wayne County, N.Y.

 (1) U.S. Census for 1850 and 1860

(2) The records on all of this branch of the Samuel Dennis family are those of Demorris B. Williams. See appendix for her notes.

(3) Wayne County Court House records, Surrogate Court, probably. This is my record. There may have been a grave stone, but the cemetery is an impenetrable jungle, or was when I tried to go there.

(4) See Samuel Dennis, 5-25. Mrs. Williams has this letter in her possession. All data on the Yorks, and the census researches are the work of Mrs. Demorris Boyd Williams. It is quite probable that much more could be learned about this branch of the family if one cared to do the research.

Thomas and Sally York were the parents of six children – five girls and one boy, Thomas, named for his father. Their oldest daughter, Jane, was born in 1826 when Sally herself was only sixteen (or possibly eighteen) years old. According to the census, Jane is listed as an “idiot”. Their sixth child, Catherine W. was born in 1839, thirteen years later.

Thomas York died young – he was only forty six years old – on January 1, 1840, and is buried in the old Van Marter Cemetery north of Lyons. Sally apparently continued to live on the home farm. In the 1850 census, her estate is valued at \$3000. In 1860, her son, Thomas (29), is listed as head of the household, with his mother, Sarah, 50, born in Maine; and his sister, Jane, 30. There were others in the household, but what relationship they were to Sally is not clear: James York, 30, born in N.Y.; Sylvia, 30 – (Presumably James’ wife); and Mary, 20. If this was Sally’s daughter, Mary, she would have been 25, not 20.

When Sally Dennis York died, and where she is buried has not been learned at this point. Nothing has been researched about her family. The York name was a common name in the Eastern part of Wayne County in the late 1800’s, and there were some prominent people who carried it –notably Dr. George York of Newark, N.Y., who originally was from Rose, N.Y. (1)

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- (1) In my childhood, Dr. George York was our family doctor, in fact he brought all of us into the world. My strongest memory of Dr. York is his little pink pills, violently wintergreen flavored. To this day I hate wintergreen. He always jollied my mother who was extremely nervous about our childhood ailments. Whenever he made a home visit, he made a bee line to the kitchen cupboard to see if there was a cherry pie, and helped himself liberally. He thought the water in our well was the best in the area, and frequently stopped when out on a call to fill a jug to take home with him. I remember him as a short “Santa Claus” of a man. (M.C.K.)
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Daughter of Samuel (5-25) and Sarah Dix Dennis

b. May 11, 1811 in East Newportland, Maine (2)
 d. July 27, 1872 in Town of Lyons, N.Y. (2) (4) (age 61–2-16)
 bur. Zurich Cemetery, N.Y.

Married: Lewis Watson in 1826 in Zurich area (2)

b. July 3, 1806 in Mt. Vernon, Kennebec Co., Maine (1)
 d. in West Independence, Ohio (reportedly)
 b. Ohio

Children of Caroline Dennis and Lewis Watson: (2)

7-49 Sherburne Dudley Watson b. July 4, 1828
 7-50 Clarinda Watson b. Nov. 24, 1830
 7-51 Nancy Jane Watson b. Sept.13, 1832,in Zurich, N.Y.
 7-52 Philinda Watson b. Nov. 29, 1834

Caroline Frances, the fifth daughter and the eighth of nine children of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis, was born in East Newportland, Maine. When she was four years old, or thereabouts, her parents left Maine in the company of several other Maine families, to make their home in Wayne County, New York. They settled in the Zurich area and there Caroline and her brothers and sisters grew up.

In 1825, when she was but fifteen years old, Caroline Frances Dennis married Lewis Watson, also a former resident of Maine. Lewis was born in 1806 in Mt. Vernon, Kennebec County, Maine, the son of Dudley and Polly Sherburne Watson. Thus, he was about five years older than his wife, Caroline. He was a musician and taught vocal music. Caroline and Lewis Watson lived for a time in the Zurich-Lyons vicinity where in 1830 the census lists the family as: 1 male under 5; 1 male 20-30; 1 female 20-30 (Caroline was actually only 19).

Caroline Dennis and Lewis Watson were the parents of four children – one boy, Sherburne Dudley Watson, mentioned in the census; and three girls – Clarinda, Nancy Jane, and Philinda. “Lewis Watson did not prove to be a very good husband, and left Caroline with four small children (when he) went away, later finding another companion. He was alive in 1848 when his father, Dudley Watson died. It is a family tradition that he died in West Independence, Ohio, but I have been unable to confirm that,” Mrs. Williams says. (3)

Caroline D. Watson lived with her parents, Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis, after her husband left her according to the 1840 census. The census lists the family of Samuel Dennis thus: 1 male, 60-70; 2 females, 5 under 10; 1 female, 20 under 30; 1 female, 60-70. Caroline’s youngest child, Philinda, was born in 1834. Caroline was still with her parents in the 1850 census, and here the children’s names were given: Nancy Jane Watson, 17; Philemon Watson, 15. What became of the two older children is not mentioned. Caroline’s brother, Frederick

- (1) Vital Records
- (2) Notes of Demorris Boyd Williams
- (3) Lewis Watson was Mrs. William’s great grandfather. Her grandmother was Philinda Watson, the youngest child.
- (4) Zurich Cemetery Record – Lyons, Museum, Lyons, N.Y.

Adams Dennis, had an unaccounted for male in his household whose age bracket coincided with Sherburne Dudley Watson's in 1840. Possibly, Frederick took the boy. But, an unaccounted for girl, aged 15 to 20, in Frederick's family was too old to have been Caroline's daughter, Clarinda. Caroline's mother, Sarah D. Dennis, died in October 1850, and her father in December 1855. What became of her then is a question. In the 1870 census, however, she was living with her older brother, Joseph, and his wife Love Carll Dennis, (1) both of whom were seventy one years old, (Caroline was fifty nine). Living also in this family with Caroline Watson was her granddaughter, Frances Young, thirteen years old, whose mother, Nancy Jane Young had died in 1861.

Caroline Frances Dennis Watson died on July 27, 1872 at the home of her daughter, Philinda Watson Reynolds, in the Town of Lyons, when she was sixty one years old. Mrs. Williams writes of her great grandmother: "She was a lovely woman, I am told, and tried hard to bring up her little family, never marrying again. She is buried in the Zurich Cemetery, and her grave is marked by a large stone." (2)

6-18 Eunice Dennis Gifford (Samuel 5; Arthur 4; John 3; John 2; Thomas 1)

Daughter of Samuel Dennis (5-25) and Sarah Dix Dennis (3)

b. 1826 (4) in New York
d.
bur.

Married: Lilly H. Gifford (5)

b. 1820 (4) in Maine (4)
d. in Michigan (4)
bur.

Children of Eunice Dennis and Lilly H. Gifford:

x7-53 Emmaline Gifford b. 1841 in New York (4)

Eunice was the youngest of nine children and the sixth daughter born to Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis. She was born after her parents had left Maine (1815) and located in the Zurich area in Wayne County, N.Y. Here she spent her childhood.

-
- (1) Caroline Watson's daughter, Philinda (or Philemon Reynolds) named her own daughter, Sarah Love Reynolds (Fox), after her aunt, Love Carll Dennis with whom she had lived as a girl. (D.B.W.)
 - (2) Mrs. Williams treasures several mementoes of her great grandmother, Caroline Dennis Watson. She says, "I have a small bureau that Lewis Watson made for his wife before her first baby was born, to keep baby clothes in. She gave it to Caroline E. Boyd (my mother), who was named for her. --- I have also a rocking chair, and a spool stand which belonged to her, as well as some lovely fine night caps."
 - (3) Family Bible Records – D. B. Williams
 - (4) 1860 census record, Town of Arcadia, Wayne Co., N.Y.
 - (5) From notes of Roy M. Brower in the Wayne Co. Museum, Lyons, N.Y. "Eunice mar. Lilly Gifford on May 2, 1855 in St. Louis, Mo." I question this.

She met and married Lilly H. Gifford who, according to the 1860 census from the town of Arcadia, N.Y., was born in Maine in 1820. His family must have been another of those numerous Maine families who settled in the Zurich area, although if Lilly was born in Maine, the Giffords did not come with the first families who had arrived about 1815. (1) Lilly, who was six years older than Eunice, was a blacksmith with an estate estimated at \$5000 in the 1860 census. They had one daughter, Emmeline, born in 1841, according to the census.

Very little is known of the Gifford family. Mrs. Williams says that Emmeline married a man by the name of Snyder, but who he was or where they lived has never been determined. She also stated that Lilly Gifford died in Michigan, but whether Eunice accompanied him is not clear. "I believe he went blind." Mrs. Williams adds. Presumably both died in Michigan and are buried there.

The census of 1860 mentions a number of other persons in the Gifford household. It lists a Laura Gifford -16 - born in Ireland. She could not have been a second daughter of Eunice and Lilly Gifford, and been born in Ireland. Mrs. Williams says, "I doubt if she is a sister or a niece of Lilly H. Gifford. I think it is just an error. I have only been told of one daughter, Emmeline, but perhaps Laura Gifford was some kind of relative, born in Ireland." The others mentioned are so varied that it may be possible they kept roomers, Mrs. Williams speculates.

(1) Wayne County Atlas says "the Dennis' and Carll's came to Sodus Section in 1815 from Maine."

Chart 5. Three Generations of the Descendants of Moses Dennis (1779-) (5-26)
and Rhoda Sprague (1784-1841)

6-19 Gilman Dennis 1802 m. Lucy Dennis (see 6-14)			
6-20 Rhoda Dennis 1803 m. L. Janne			
6-21 Benjamin S. Dennis 1806 --<	x7-54 Louisa Dennis *		
m. Z. Roby	x7-55 Elizabeth R. 1835		
m. P. Ford [Carll]	7-56 Albert Dennis * 1845		
	x7-57 Edward Dennis * 1847		
x6-22 Rodney Dennis 1808-1817			
x6-23 Ephriam Dennis 1810-1816			
x6-24 Ursula Dennis 1812-1817			x8-28 Ella Whitbeck 1871; d. 1871
	7-58 Louisa Dennis 1840 -----<		8-29 Isadore Whitbeck 1873, m. A. Cull
	m. J. Whitbeck		8-30 Dennis Whitbeck 1876, unmarried
	7-59 Spencer Dennis 1842 unmarried		8-31 Florence D. 1870 m. E. Jewitt
	7-60 Geo. W. Dennis 1845 ----<		8-32 Spencer D. 1875 m. M. Roberts
	m. E. Whiting		8-33 Lenore D. 1879 m. H. Arnold
6-25 Robert D. Dennis 1814 --<			8-34 Roy M. Brower 1875
m. Elizabeth Roy	7-61 Isadore Dennis 1848 ----<		m. A. Carpenter
	m. A. Brower		8-35 Taylor D. Brower 1881, unmarr.
	x7-62 Roy D. Dennis 1855 d. 1856		
	x7-63 Sprague Dennis 1857 d. 1862		8-36 Grace Reynolds 1883
	7-64 Rhoda Dennis 1861 -----<		m. Riggs/Wrates
	m. W. Reynolds		8-37 Satie Reynolds 1886
			m. G. Parkhurst
6-26 Fanny Dennis 1816 -----<	7-65 Rhoda Leighton -----<		x8-38 Anor Shaw
m. B. Leighton	m. G. Shaw		x8-39 Andrew Shaw
			x8-40 Chloe Shaw
			x8-41 Fanny Shaw
6-27 Moses Dennis 1818 -----<	x7-66 Apama Ella 1850		
m. Pama Fullers	x7-67 Squire Alman		
m. Julia Way	x7-68 Carlton S. 1860		
	7-69 Flora Belle 1867 -----<	x8-42 Carlton Tague	
	m. L. Tague		

* Children of Polly Ford Carll

Chapter XI

Sixth Generation

The Children of Moses and Rhoda Sprague Dennis

6-19 Gilman Dennis (Moses 5, Arthur 4, John 3, John 2, Thomas 1)

Son of Moses Dennis (5-26) and Rhoda Sprague Dennis

b. June 21, 1802 Bedford, N.H. (1) (2)
d. Sept. 21, 1869 Cuyler, Cortland Co., N.Y. (3)
bur. Cuyler, Cortland Co. (3)

Married: Lucy C. Dennis (6-14) on May 13, 1821 (2)

b. Maine or New Hampshire
d. April 9, 1882 Cuyler, Cortland Co., N.Y. (3)
bur. Cuyler, Cortland Co.

Children: none

Gilman Dennis, the oldest of the nine children of Moses and Rhoda Sprague Dennis, was born in Bedford, N.H. according to both the old Bible record, and the Vital Records of the Town of Bedford. Moses and Rhoda Dennis lived in New Boston, N.H., sharing a house with his parents (Arthur and Mary Goodhue Dennis) which Moses bought from his father before he was married (see Moses Dennis). However, before the birth of their first child Rhoda must have gone home to Bedford to be with her mother, Hannah Barnes Sprague, who, as "Aunt Sprague" was well known throughout the country side for her ministrations to the sick. (4) What a comfort it must have been to Rhoda to place herself in the hands of her competent and understanding mother, and what a joy this grandchild must have been to Hannah Sprague who had helped the babies of so many other mothers into the world. Rhoda was Hannah's oldest daughter and Gilman quite possibly was the oldest grandchild in the Sprague family.

For reasons we do not know Moses and Rhoda decided to locate permanently in Bedford, and in the fall after Gilman was born, Moses turned his New Boston mill property back to his father, Arthur Dennis. Thus, Gilman spent the first eight years of his childhood in Bedford in close association with his mother's Sprague relatives. Here a sister and three brothers joined the family circle.

However, in 1810 Moses Dennis exchanged some of his Bedford holdings for property in Weare, N.H., a small hamlet in a wooded sawmill section about fifteen miles northwest of Bedford. Although by trade, his father was a blacksmith, by 1811 the likelihood is that in Weare he turned to lumbering and milling. No doubt that Gilman, being the oldest son, worked with his father in the woods and the mill.

- (1) Vital Records of Bedford, New Hampshire
- (2) Dennis Family Bible Records in the possession of the author.
- (3) Notes of Roy M. Brower in Wayne Co. Museum, Lyons, N.Y. These have not been confirmed, but he was a responsible researcher and very knowledgeable about family history.
- (4) A glowing tribute to "Aunt Sprague" is found in the History of Bedford, New Hampshire on p. 1082

In 1818, when Gilman was 16 years old, Moses Dennis sold his properties in Weare, where they had lived on Paige Hill, and joined his brother Samuel (5-25) and other members of his family and friends in Wayne County in New York State. Moses never bought any property in Wayne County, but it can be assumed that he located near the others in the Zurich area. (see 5-25 and 5-26) (1)

Here Gilman became acquainted with and married his cousin Lucy Dennis, the daughter of Samuel and Sarah Dix Dennis. These young people may have known each other slightly as children because Lucy's father had returned to New Boston from Maine and lived for a few years with the children's grandparents - Arthur and Mary Dennis. However, Samuel moved his family to New York State about 1815 so that both Gilman and Lucy were young. They were married in May 1821 - he was not quite nineteen and Lucy a year or two younger (see Lucy Dennis, 6-14). One wonders what obstacles may have been put in their path by their respective families because of their propinquity, but these objections were pushed aside. However, the couple never had any children.

Where Lucy and Gilman lived during the early years of their married life cannot be determined, since they owned no property prior to 1835. Probably Gilman worked as a farmer or with some local lumbering operation as the area around Zurich was also wooded in those days. In 1835 Gilman and Lucy bought a farm west of Zurich (Township 13, lot 13). This property they kept only four years, then sold it to Gilman's brother Robert D. Dennis who lived on it for a number of years. (2), (3) (see Robert D. Dennis 6-25)

Lucy and Gilman Dennis eventually located in Cuyler, in Cortland County, New York. Here Gilman died in 1869 and is buried in Cuyler. Lucy outlived him by twelve years, and she too is buried in Cuyler, N.Y. (4)

6-20 Rhoda Dennis Janne (Jenny) (Moses 5, Arthur 4, John 3, John 2, Thomas 1)

Daughter of Moses (5-26) and Rhoda Sprague Dennis

b. December 3, 1803 Bedford, N.H. (5) (6)

d. August 26, 1822 New York (7)

bur.

Married: Lemuel Janne (Jenny) on November 5, 1820 (5)

b.

d.

bur.

No children

(1) Moses Dennis was not in Weare in 1819, and is listed in the 1820 census in Lyons, New York.

(2) Book of Deeds No. 18, p. Wayne County Court House, Lyons, N.Y.

(3) Book of Deeds No. 26, p. 366 Wayne County Court House, Lyons, N.Y. sale to R. D. Dennis

(4) Records of Roy M. Brower in Wayne County Museum, Lyons, N.Y.

(5) Dennis Family Bible Record, Louise Dennis Whitbeck's, now the author's.

(6) Vital Records of Bedford, N.H

(7) Rhoda Reynolds' Bible (the author's great, great aunt) gives the date as Aug. 28, 1822 - D.B. W. has Aug. 26, 1822

Rhoda Dennis, the second child, and the oldest daughter of Moses and Rhoda S. Dennis, was born while her family lived in Bedford, N.H. Like her older brother, Gilman, she spent her early childhood in Bedford, where her Sprague grandparents lived, and was no doubt a great favorite of her grandmother, who was known to all as "Aunt Sprague". While in Bedford three more brothers were born, and Rhoda was old enough to have had some share in the care of these little fellows.

In 1810 when she was seven years old, her father moved to Weare, N.H. where the family lived about eight years. Then in 1818, Moses Dennis moved his family to Wayne County, New York where she found many cousins and family friends of earlier days. Rhoda was about fifteen years old at the time.

In Wayne County, probably in the Zurich area, Rhoda Dennis met and married Lemuel Jenne (Jenny) on November 5, 1820 (1) when she was not quite seventeen. Rhoda's and Lemuel's life together was short-lived for Rhoda died in August, 1822, three months before her nineteenth birthday, and less than two years after her marriage. The couple had no children and she may have died in child birth as so often happened. Where she was buried, in fact, where she and her husband lived is not known. Her death must have been especially hard for her parents who had lost three younger children a few years earlier – (Ephriam in 1816; Rodney in March, 1817; and Ursula in October, 1817). "Sic transit gloria mundi".

6-21 Benjamin Sprague Dennis (Moses 5, Arthur 4, John 3, John 2, Thomas 1)

Son of Moses Dennis (5-26) and Rhoda Sprague

b. March 1, 1806 Bedford, N.H. (1), (2)
 d. May 23, 1848 Zurich, New York (3) age 42 years, 2 mo., 23 das.
 bur. Zurich Cemetery, Wayne Co., N.Y. (3)

1st Married: Zillah Jane Roby (2)

b. February 11/12, 1812 (3)
 d. February 9, 1841 (3) (age 28 yrs., 11 mo., 28 das.)
 bur. Zurich Cemetery

2nd Married: Polly M. Ford on March 2, 1842 (4)

b. 1820 in Connecticut (5)
 d. (killed by lightning) (6)

Children of Benjamin Dennis and Zillah Jane Roby

x7-55 Elizabeth R. Dennis b. July 13, 1835 (7)

-
- (1) Dennis Family Bible Record, Louisa Dennis Whitbeck's, now the author's.
 - (2) Vital Records of Bedford, N.H.
 - (3) Zurich Cemetery Gravestone record
 - (4) Notes of Roy M. Brower in Wayne County Museum, Lyons, New York
 - (5) Wayne County census record for 1860.
 - (6) My mother, Isadore Whitbeck Cull, repeated this tale as told by her mother.
 - (7) Guardianship Papers in Surrogate Court, Lyons, N.Y. The "R" probably was "Roby".

Children of Benjamin S. Dennis and Polly M. Dennis (1)

- | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| x7-54 | Louisa E. Dennis | b. May, 1843; d. Nov. 2, 1843 |
| | | age 6 mo. (2) |
| 7-56 | Albert Ford Dennis | b. 1845 Wayne County |
| x7-57 | Edwin (Edward) Dennis | b. 1847; d. young |

Moses and Rhoda Sprague Dennis named their third child Benjamin Sprague after her father. He was born in Bedford, N.H. where the family had been living since 1802. Bedford was Rhoda's home and during the years from 1802 to 1810, the two families were closely associated in business transactions. (see Moses Dennis, 5-26) No doubt little Benjamin received more than his share of his grandmother Sprague's affection – she who as “Aunt Sprague” was known to the country side around for her love and care of the newborn, the sick and the dying. (3)

In 1810, when Benjamin was four years old, his father moved the family to Weare, N.H. where he worked for a time at his blacksmith trade. In 1814, they lived in a section of Weare known locally as Paige Hill. (see Moses Dennis, 5-25) However, things must not have gone well for Moses Dennis, and reports from his brother and sisters in New York State must have induced him to sell his property in Weare – which he did in 1818 – and move to Wayne County, N.Y. Benjamin was twelve years old at the time. Where Moses Dennis settled in Wayne County we do not know since he bought no property there, but it seems likely that he settled among his relatives and friends in the Zurich area, north of Lyons. Moses Dennis was living in the Lyons area when the 1820 census was taken.

Benjamin S. Dennis married Zilla Jane Roby, the daughter of Samuel Roby, who very likely was the same Samuel Roby whose property adjoined that of Moses Dennis back in Bedford, N.H. (4) Many families from New Hampshire and other parts of New England came to Western New York State after the War of 1812, when it became safe to settle there – the Dennises, Lanes, Carlls, the Robys, and others.

Benjamin and Zillah lived in the Zurich area, where they bought and sold considerable property between 1838 and 1840. They had one daughter, Elizabeth R. Dennis, born on July 13, 1835 (5). But their married life was cut short by the untimely death of Zillah on February 9, 1841, when she was only “28 years 11 months and 28 days” old. (6) She is buried in the Zurich cemetery, and her grave is marked by a stone erected by her brother, Stephen B. Roby (7), so it says. One wonders if her husband was unable to afford a marker, or if strained relations existed between Benjamin and his brother-in-law which explains why the stone should be so plainly marked.

- (1) Records of D. B. Williams. Source was her family, probably.
- (2) Zurich Cemetery Record in the Wayne County Museum, Lyons, N.Y.
- (3) “Hist. of Bedford, N.H.” has an article on “Aunt Sprague” on p. 1082
- (4) see Moses Dennis 5-26, deed in Nashua Co., Book 76, p. 560
- (5) Guardianship Papers in Surrogate Court, Lyons, N.Y. The “R” probably was “Roby”
- (6) Gravestone Record, Zurich Cemetery, Wayne County, N.Y.
- (7) Stephen B. Roby, the son of Samuel and Mary Roby, was born in 1817 in New York State. Stephen Roby married Edith Dennis, the daughter of Joseph Dix Dennis and Love Carll Dennis (see 6-11, 7-24)

Benjamin's mother, Rhoda Sprague Dennis died less than two months after Zillah's death (March 1841), and is buried on the same lot in the Zurich cemetery. It raises all sorts of questions; did the two women die from some disease which they both had? Had Rhoda made her home with Benjamin ever since her husband, Moses Dennis, died which was sometime between 1820 and 1830? Or had Zillah been sick and Benjamin's mother come to take care of her and her family? (He was her oldest son).

Benjamin Dennis remarried – his second wife was Polly M. Ford. They had three children: Louisa E. Dennis, born in May, 1843, but died on November 2nd, 1843 when only six months and ten days old; Albert F. Dennis, born in 1845; and Edwin Dennis, born in 1847, who also died as a young boy. Thus, they raised but one of their children – Albert F. Benjamin continued to live in the Zurich - South Sodus area. He, in fact, sold land to his younger brother, Robert D. Dennis in 1844. (1)

Benjamin Sprague Dennis died at the age of forty two (2 mo. and 23 days) on May 23, 1848, and is buried on the lot with his first wife, his mother, and his daughter Louisa E. in the Zurich Cemetery, where the graves are marked with substantial stones. His widow, Polly M. Dennis, and a number of close relatives were made the guardians of Benjamin's daughter, Elizabeth R. Dennis, who was left an orphan at the age of twelve by her father's death. "The said Polly M. Dennis, Samuel Roby, Robert D. Dennis and Moses Dennis reside in Lyons afsd. and Armanda Sprague in Arcadia, and are the only male relatives residing in said county, except your petitioner (Stephen B. Roby) who is her maternal uncle. Dated June 2, 1848" (2)

Polly Ford Dennis later married Enoch Carll, a neighbor, whose first wife Ann had died in 1852. In the 1860 census: "Enoch Carll, 51 – born Maine; Polly, 40 – born Connecticut; Lydia, 5; Clarence J., 2." This would indicate that Enoch and Polly M. Carll had at least two children. (3) Clarence J. Carll died November 2, 1861 at the age of 4 years and is buried in the Zurich Cemetery. (4) Nothing more than what is given above is known of Elizabeth R. Dennis.

- (1) Book of Deeds No. 43, p. 423, Wayne County Co. House, Lyons, N.Y.
- (2) Guardianship papers in Surrogate Court, Lyons, N.Y.
- (3) The author's grandparents were well acquainted with Enoch and Polly (Pop) Carll, in fact family tradition has it that "Pop" Carll was the means by which John Whitbeck and Louisa Dennis met (see 7-58). John Whitbeck had worked in the sawmill for a neighbor of the Carlls – Mr. Catlin. Pop Carll was, of course an aunt by marriage to Louisa Dennis, she being the daughter of Robert D. Dennis, who was a brother of Polly's first husband, Benjamin Dennis.
- (4) Zurich Cemetery Records, Wayne Co. Museum, Lyons, N.Y.

Son of Moses (5-26) and Rhoda Sprague Dennis

b. August 24, 1814 Weare, New Hampshire (1)
 d. December 21, 1889 S. Sodus, New York (1)
 bur. Zurich Cemetery (2)

Married: Elizabeth Roy on January 1, 1839 (1)

b. January 11, 1820 Town of Galen, Wayne Co., N.Y.
 d. April 26, 1900 Wallington, N.Y. (1)
 bur. Zurich Cemetery (2)

Children of Robert D. Dennis and Elizabeth Roy (1)

7-58 Louisa Dennis	b. Nov.10,1840, Roy Home in Galen (1)
7-59 Spencer Dennis	b. Nov. 27,1842, Twsp. of Lyons
7-60 Geo. Washington Dennis	b. February 22, 1845
7-61 Urania Isadore Dennis	b. June 10, 1848
x7-62 Roy D. Dennis	b. April 23, 1855 - d. Mar. 10, 1856
x7-63 Sprague A. Dennis	b. April 26, 1857 - d. Mar. 27, 1862
7-64 Rhoda Belle Dennis	b. December 12, 1861

Robert Densmore Dennis, the seventh child and the 4th son of Moses and Rhoda Sprague Dennis, was born in Weare, N.H. where his parents had moved in 1810. There they lived on Paige Hill where his father may have carried on his blacksmith trade, but since the area was heavily wooded, he more than likely engaged in lumbering and sawmilling. (3)

Babies were no novelty in the Moses Dennis family, one having arrived regularly at two year intervals from 1802 to 1818. Robert's birth was followed in two years by the birth of a sister, Fanny, and four years later by Moses Dennis, Jr. – the last of the flock. The middle name – Densmore – probably that of a family friend, is found on many old family deeds and documents (4). While in Weare, Moses and Rhoda lost three children – Ephriam died in May 1816 – age six years; Rodney died in March 1817 at the age of nine; and Ursula died in October, 1817 at the age of five and one half years. (1) Since these children were next older than Robert, it left a gap of eight years between Robert and Gilman. Thus, Robert, Fanny and Moses were almost like a second family.

The death of their children may have been part of the reason Moses and Rhoda Dennis decided to leave Weare. At any rate, when Robert was about four years old, his father sold his property there (1818), and joined his brother and sisters in Wayne County, N.Y. (5) It must have been a long, hard journey by ox team and wagon from southern New Hampshire to central New York State, with a four year old, a two year old and a baby expected in July. Of course, their daughter, Rhoda was a young lady of fifteen and a great help to her mother, no doubt. Where Moses and Rhoda settled is not clear since he never bought property in New York State, but it is quite certain they located north of Lyons in the Zurich area where all of the children are to be found a few years later.

- (1) Dennis Family Bible
- (2) Cemetery Gravestone Record
- (3) Weare was still a sawmill area in 1950's – from Demorris B. Williams' notes
- (4) The name is sometimes spelled "Dinsmore" on the old deeds.
- (5) These were: Samuel Dennis 5-24, Fanny Dennis Lane 5-29, Mary Dennis Henderson 5-21 – all lived near Lyons, N.Y.; Lucy Dennis Cummings 5-27 lived near Phelps, N.Y.

What formal education Robert Dennis received must certainly have been in a one room country school in the neighborhood. He was a bright young man, and increased his knowledge by reading. (1) He wrote in a clear and practical hand. However, opportunities were extremely limited in those early days for a farm boy with little or no money. Robert's father had died sometime before 1830 (he is not in that census), and the boy who was then sixteen most certainly had to go out to work – for some farmer, probably.

Robert D. Dennis was working for a farmer named Burnett (2) near Craiger's Bridge south east of Lyons when he became acquainted with Elizabeth Roy, the daughter of James and Delilah Davis Roy, (3) who also lived in the vicinity. They were married on New Years Day in 1839. (4) (5). Robert was twenty-four and Elizabeth not quite nineteen. She was the oldest

- (1) Robert's granddaughter, Isadore W. Cull (the author's mother), always had the greatest admiration for him. She often spoke of his skill in mathematics, and his knowledge of many subjects, especially history.
- (2) As related by their granddaughter, Isadore Whitbeck Cull
- (3) James Roy was born in Scotland, and in the late 1700's, when he was 12 years old, came to America with his parents and two brothers. What part of Scotland they came from is not known. They settled first in Maryland where James may have met and married Delilah Davis (born in 1794 according to the 1850 census). Nothing is known of her background except that she was half Irish and half Scotch. James and Delilah Davis moved to N.Y. State and bought a farm south east of Lyons near Craiger's Bridge. The Davises and the Roys both came to Wayne County and perhaps James and Delilah met and were married after they settled in New York State. A letter from Delilah's sister Deborah Davis, written years later tells that she also had lived as a child in the Lyons-South Sodus area. James Roy built a house (which is still standing and occupied) and a barn on his farm. Here their eleven children were born: Charles Roy, b. 1814 (the old cradle was used for him by Delilah Roy), James Roy, John Roy, Elizabeth Roy (wife of Robert Dennis), - all born in the old house; Margaret Roy, Harriet Roy, Sarah Roy, David Roy, Sophia Roy and William Roy – born in the new house. Many of the Roy children located in the west, in Indiana and Illinois. James and Delilah eventually joined their son Charles in La Grange, Ind., where James died in 1848. Delilah Davis was with her son David Roy in Clear Springs, Ind. in 1848, according to an old letter from him. In 1850 (census from Lyons), Delilah and her daughter, Sophia, were back east living with her daughter Elizabeth Dennis. Sarah Roy married Robert Stoddard of Sterling, Ill. Harriet Roy married John Phillips on Sept. 7, 1848, according to the letter from David Roy mentioned earlier. William Roy was in the Civil War, and after it ended lived for a while in Louisiana, but eventually settled in Colorado. There are pictures of William in uniform and of some of his children. Sophia died at 19 from T.B. I have a white cashmere shawl, fringed on the ends, that belonged to her. I wonder if she could have died at her sister's home (1853)? (M.C.K.)
- (4) I have a swatch of material from Elizabeth Roy's wedding dress – a brownwoven mixture, almost like a tweed. (M.C.K., her great granddaughter.)
- (5) I also treasure a blue and white counterpane which Elizabeth Roy had made before she was married. In the corners are woven the date – 1839 – and her name – Elizabeth Roy. Her youngest daughter, Rhoda, had it until her death, then it remained with Rhoda's daughter, Grace Wrates, who gave it to me. "Betsy" Roy Dennis had used it during her last sickness, but it is still a beautiful counterpane in spite of some wear. (M.C. K.)

daughter in a family of eleven children (the 4th child). There is no way to determine where Robert and Elizabeth lived immediately after they were married. Robert's father had died before 1830, and it is unlikely that his mother had continued to maintain a home which the young couple could share. Certainly with such a large family it is hard to believe they found room in the Roy household.

The first home that Robert D. Dennis owned, he bought from his brother, Gilman Dennis in September, 1839. In the deed Robert is described as being "of Wolcott", where he may have worked during the summer after he was married, and where they may have occupied a tenant house. The farm he bought is described as being "twelve acres, seventy-two rods situate in Township 13, in the first range of townships, and part of lot No. 13 in said township", (1) which Gilman had purchased from Elisha Thornton for \$125.00 in December, 1835. Robert paid his brother \$500.00 for the property, and one wonders if Gilman had improved it by building a house. Family tradition has it that Robert and Elizabeth lived at first in a log house located to the north of the more permanent "plaster house". (2) The farm is located on the west side of the road beyond the Zurich Cemetery on the way to Lyons. (3)

Robert Dennis kept this property not quite four years, and then swapped it (4) with Christopher Decker for 80 acres of land in Hillsdale County, Michigan on June 12, 1843. (5) (The value of each property was given as \$500.00, so there was no money exchanged.) That Robert ever seriously entertained the idea of going to Michigan is doubtful. No one in the family ever remembers hearing it discussed. However, all around in the Zurich area, families were pulling up stakes and moving west – to Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Minnesota and Wisconsin. As noted in an earlier footnote, practically all of Elizabeth Roy's family had gone to the middle west. Robert's uncle Armanda Sprague eventually settled in Minnesota, and the Carll family settled there, also. (6) So Robert and Elizabeth may have been tempted, but letters from relatives were not encouraging – nearly everyone suffered from fever and ague (malaria). It left them so weak that sometimes it was impossible to put in a crop, or to harvest one when it was ready. (7) The property transaction did not last long for on October 1, 1845, Robert Dennis bought back the plaster house – 12 acres and 72 rods – for \$300.00 from Christopher Decker who took a mortgage on it for the full amount. (8)

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- (1) Book of Deeds No. 36, p. 366, Wayne Co. Court House, Lyons, N.Y.
 - (2) As related by Rhoda Dennis Reynolds, their youngest daughter, and told to me by her daughter Grace Reynolds Wrates.
 - (3) In the 1840 census from Lyons, N.Y., Robert D. Dennis is listed as 1 male 20 and under 30; one female 20 and under 30.
 - (4) Wayne Co. Deeds Bk. 32, p. 526
 - (5) The deed to the Hillsdale property was recorded on March 20, 1847 in Williams Co., Ohio, Book 8, p. 450-451. This seems strange to me, but I have the deed in my possession, and have checked and rechecked it.
 - (6) From old letters – one from Armanda Sprague, to R. D. Dennis; the other to me from a Carll descendant, written in 1971.
 - (7) From a letter to R. D. Dennis from David Roy in Clear Springs, Ind. David Roy was Elizabeth's brother. (I have that letter)
 - (8) Book of Deeds, No. 36, p. 483 – mortgage discharged Jan. 19, 1848.

Meanwhile Robert Dennis was buying more property in the Sodus-Lyons area, in Wayne County, N.Y., viz.:

	Mar. 24, 1842	- 50	acres -	\$100.00 from	Benjamin Leighton, bro.-in-law	(1)
	Jan. 8, 1844	- 4	" -	\$100.00 "	Benjamin Dennis, brother	(2)
	June 7, 1845	- 23	" -	\$300.00 "	James Hopkins	(3)
	Dec. 13, 1845	- 51	" -	\$1500.00 "	Vandebogart	(4)
	Dec. 13, 1852	- 5	" -	\$100.00 "	Stephen Davis	(5)
Sold	Sept. 4, 1854	- 51+5	" -	\$2500.00 to	George Brinke	(6)
	Dec. 8, 1854	- 51+15	" -	\$3000.00 from	Margaret Pfaat	(7)
Mort.	Mar. 1, 1856	- 54.90	" -	\$1500.00 by	John Munn	(8)

The property which he bought from Margaret Pfaat included two and one quarter acres of cedar swamp. The deed stipulated that the seller reserved "400 trees contracted to Frederick Adams Dennis (see 6-15), a few cut logs and two dozen cedar posts. The wheat on the ground is also conveyed to said Dennis."

Among the old deeds and papers of Robert Dennis is a deed granted by the Commonwealth of Virginia, "by virtue of a Land Office Treasury Warrant" on March 5, 1846 to eighty acres of land in Jackson County, (now part of West Virginia) lying on "Peter's Run, a branch of Turkey Fork of Big Sandy Creek." The records do not show that he paid any money for the property, but "Robert D. Dennis hath title to the within granted land", signed by Parker, Registrar of the Land Office. (9) The story behind this will probably never be known, but Robert must have applied for such a grant. What became of the property is not known.

Robert and Elizabeth Dennis were the parents of seven children. Their oldest child, Louisa, was born on November 10, 1840 in the Town of Galen. (10) Elizabeth apparently went home to be with her mother for the birth of their first baby. The family lived at the time in the

NOTE: All of the following deeds are in the Wayne County Court House, Lyons, N.Y. I also have copies of all deeds of Robert Dennis. M.C.K. 1971

- (1) Bk. 32, p. 525 in Twmsp. 13, Lot No. 12, adjoining lands of Ziba Lane (5-29)
- (2) Bk. 43, p. 423 " " 13, Lot No. 12, along road to line of Armanda Sprague
- (3) Bk. 36, p. 217 " " 13, Lot No. 3
- (4) Bk. 52, p. 106, Twmsp. Sodus, Lot 11, 2nd /Range, Colts Allot. in the Gore.
- (5) Bk. 55, p. 299, " " " " " " " " " " "
- (6) Bk 61, p. 405, " " " " " " " " " " "
- (7) Bk. 62, p. 371, Twmsp. 13, 1st Range of Twmsp; S. W. corner of Lot No. 3
- (8) Mort. Bk. 39, p. 23 - Discharged Mar. 30, 1860 to property in Lot 19 - 3rd Range in Colts Allotment in the Gore

Colts Allotment in the Gore: The Gore is a long narrow triangular tract of land across Central New York State, resulting from two early surveys of land. The western boundaries showed a slight discrepancy, thus creating the lines. The distance between the two is the Gore - narrow at the north in Sodus, and wider at the Pennsylvania line. The Premption Road follows one of these lines.

- (9) Bk of Deeds 98, p. 240 - probably in Richmond, Virginia where it was issued.
- (10) Dates of these children's births are from the Family Bible Records of Louisa Dennis Whitbeck.

“plaster house” east of Zurich. Two years later their first son, Spencer, was born on Nov. 27, 1842, and on Washington’s birthday in 1845, the second son was born. He was named appropriately, George Washington Dennis. Urania Isadore was born in June of 1848. Then after a lapse of seven years, two more boys were added to the family – born two years apart: Roy D. in 1855, and Sprague A., in 1857. Each was given the maiden name of one of his grandmothers. Unfortunately, these two little boys did not live to grow up. Roy died just under a year old on March 10, 1856; and “Spragie” when he was not quite five years old, on March 29, 1862. Their last child – a daughter, Rhoda, named for Robert’s mother – was born in December 1861. She was about three months old when Sprague died.

Although their family was not large for the times, their children were spread over a considerable number of years – Louisa was twenty one years older than her youngest sister, Rhoda. All of the children, except Spencer, married and settled in the surrounding area: Louisa married John Whitbeck and lived east of Fairville, in Arcadia; Isadore married Aldice Brower and lived in Sodus Center; Rhoda married William Reynolds, a distant cousin, (8-21) and lived in Wallington; George W. Dennis married Elizabeth Whiting, who for a time, lived in the vicinity of Wallington, but eventually moved his family to San de Fuca, in the state of Washington, where his descendants may be found today. (see G. W. Dennis, 7-60); Spencer Dennis never married and remained at home with his parents throughout his life, taking over the operation of the farm after his father’s death. (1), (2), (3)

In 1875, Robert D. Dennis erected a fine new house on his farm south east of Sodus. (4) It was a large two story square wooden structure with a cupola on the roof and a wing on the southside of the house, (see picture) costing in the neighborhood of \$ 3000.00. (5) One of the unusual features of the building was a lead lined oil room for the storage of peppermint oil. Many farmers in the late 1800’s around Lyons grew peppermint which they took the Hotchkiss

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- (1) In the 1850 U.S. Census from Lyons, N.Y., Robert D. Dennis is listed as follows: farmer, 35, born N.H., value of estate \$ 1200; wife Elizabeth, 30, born N.Y.; Children: Louisa 11, Spencer 7, George W. 5, Urina 2, Dellila Roy, 56, Sophia Roy, 16, born N.Y. It appears that Elizabeth Dennis’s mother, Delilah Roy, and her sister, Sophia, had returned to New York State from LaGrange, Indiana where her husband had died in 1848. Sophia Roy died at the age of nineteen from tuberculosis three years later, and may possibly have died at her sister’s home. Delilah, too, may have died at her daughter’s, although family tradition has it that she died in LaGrange, Ind. at the home of her son, Charles Roy. I have a white fringed cashmere shawl that belonged to Sophia Roy. It was a treasured possession first, of Elizabeth Roy Dennis, then of her daughter, Louisa, and her granddaughter, Isadore W. Cull. (M.C.K.)
 - (2) In the 1860 Census from Sodus: Robert D. Dennis, 45, farmer, born N.H.; Elizabeth, 40, born N.Y.; Louisa 19; Spencer 16, George W. 15; Isadore 12; Sprague A. 3. Post Office South Sodus, N.Y.
 - (3) The 1870 Census lists Robert D. Dennis, 55, born N.H., estate \$1000-1750; Elizabeth, 50, born N.Y; Spencer 27; Rhoda 8. The elder children except Spencer were married and living elsewhere.
 - (4) My mother, Isadore Whitbeck Cull, told that she was born in 1873 in her grandfather Dennis’ old house, and her cousin, Grace Reynolds was born in 1883 in Grandpa D.’s new house. Grace Wrates remembers that her mother was 14 years old when Robert D. Dennis built the new house – thus 1875.
 - (5) Recollection of my mother. Unfortunately the house burned in the 1930’s after it had been sold to Clark Reed.
-

mill in Lyons to be extracted, and then stored the oil in glass demijohns until it was marketed. (1)

Robert Densmore Dennis died on December 21, 1889 at the age of seventy-five from pneumonia following a cold. Elizabeth, his wife, always a frail person in delicate health, had been ill for sometime and was being cared for by their daughter, Isadore Brower, in Sodus Center. (2) Meanwhile their youngest daughter, Rhoda Reynolds, and her family were living on the farm and keeping house for Robert and his son, Spencer Dennis. Isadore also became ill and Robert had walked to Sodus Center to see them both, catching cold as a result. He is buried in the Zurich Cemetery as are other members of his family. (3)

After her husband's death, Elizabeth R. Dennis returned to the farm, and remained there until after the death of her son Spencer on March 15, 1894. In bed much of the time, various ones of her children lived in the home and cared for her. After Spencer's death (at the age of 51 years), the farm was sold and she went to live with her daughter Rhoda and William Reynolds in Wallington, N.Y. Here she died on April 26, 1900 at the age of 80. She is buried in the Zurich Cemetery beside her husband and Spencer. (4)

6-26 Fanny Dennis Leighton (Moses 5, Arthur 4, John 3, John 2, Thomas 1)

Daughter of Moses (5-26) and Rhoda Sprague Dennis

b. May 20, 1816 Weare, New Hampshire (5)
d. May 1, 1845 (6) age 25 yrs, 9 mo., 10 da.
bur. Zurich Cemetery, N. Y. (6)

Married: Benjamin Leighton, Jr. Mar. 1845, Zurich, N.Y. (7)

b.
d. January 4, 1882 age 75 years, 8 mo. 24 da. (6)
bur. Zurich Cemetery, N.Y. (6)

Children of Fanny Dennis and Benjamin Leighton:

7-65 Rhoda Leighton (7)

Fanny Dennis was next to the youngest of the nine children of Moses and Rhoda Sprague Dennis. She was born in Weare, N.H. and was about two years old when her father sold his property in Weare and moved to Wayne Co., N.Y., where a number of his brothers and sisters

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- (1) The H.G. Hotchkiss International Prize Medal Essential Oil Company of Lyons was founded in 1839 and marked its 125th anniversary in 1964. The company has exported Essential Oil of Peppermint throughout the world, and is believed to be oldest oil house in America dealing in peppermint oil. Three of my grandparents raised mint for the company.
 - (2) My sister Murial's recollection is that she was in bed for eight years. I recall hearing my mother kept house for her Grandmother during the entire summer when she was sixteen – 1889.
 - (3) His mother, Rhoda Sprague Dennis, his brothers, Benjamin S. Dennis and Moses Dennis, and a sister, Fanny D. Leighton, together with their families.
 - (4) I have been sitting in Robert Densmore Dennis' Captain's chair while writing most of this genealogy.
 - (5) Family Bible Record of Louisa Dennis
 - (6) Zurich Cemetery Gravestone Record
 - (7) Notes of Roy M. Brower, in Wayne Co. Museum, Lyons, N.Y.
-

had settled earlier. She had a brother, Robert Densmore, who was two years older, and she was two years older than her brother, Moses, the last of the children. Gilman, Rhoda, and Benjamin were all much older because two young brothers and a sister between them had died in infancy in Weare, N.H. (see Moses Dennis 5-26) Fanny would have been too young at the time to have any memory of Rodney, Ephriam and Ursula. (see Robert D. Dennis 6-25)

Fanny Dennis (nowhere is her name given as Frances) married Benjamin Leighton, Jr. They lived in the Zurich area where he owned a farm. (1) They had one daughter, who was named Rhoda, after her grandmother, Rhoda Sprague Dennis, and her sister Rhoda Dennis.

Fanny Dennis Leighton died on May 1, 1845 at the age of twenty eight (28 years, 9 months, and 10 days according to the tombstone) and is buried in the Zurich Cemetery. None of the circumstances are known. Her sister, Rhoda Dennis Janne, had also died very young, when she was nineteen. Life was hard on women in these early years and many died in childbirth.

Rhoda Leighton married Gibson Shaw. They had three children: Chloe Shaw, Fanny Shaw and Anor Shaw.

6-27 Moses Dennis (Moses 5, Arthur 4, John 3, John 2, Thomas 1)

Son of Moses (5-26) and Rhoda Sprague Dennis

b. July 27, 1818 In Wayne County, N.Y. (?) (2), (3)
 d. July 30, 1871 (4)
 bur. Zurich Cemetery, N.Y.

1st Married: Pama Fellers of Sodus July 22, 1847 (5)

b. 1819 (5)
 d.
 bur.

2nd Married: Julia Way (6)

b. Sept. 18, 1828 (6)
 d. 1913
 bur. Evergreen Cemetery, N. Huron, N.Y. on old Rt. 104 (6)

(1) His farm was located one mile north of the Zurich four corners. Benjamin Leighton sold land to Fanny's brother, Robert D. Dennis – see Dead Book 32, p. 525, in Lyons Court House Records.

(2) Family Bible Record

(3) 1850 Census Records

(4) Zurich Cemetery and Gravestone Records, in Lyons Museum

(5) "Early Settlers of New York" by Foley

(6) Cemetery Record, Wayne County Museum, Lyons, N.Y.

Children of Moses Dennis and Julia Dennis (1)

x7-66	Apama Ella Dennis	b. 1850	(2)
x7-67	Squire Alman Dennis	b.	
x7-68	Carlton Samuel Dennis	b. Oct. 6, 1860	
7-69	Flora Belle Dennis	b.	1867

Moses Dennis, Jr. was the youngest of the nine children of Moses and Rhoda Sprague Dennis. There is some question about his birthplace – whether he was born in New Hampshire before his family left for New York, or not until they had settled in New York. His father sold his property in Weare, N.H. in April, 1818 (3) and Moses, Jr. was born the following July 27th. The census of 1850 lists him as being born in New York, and if this is true it likely would have been in the Zurich area in the Town of Lyons, in Wayne Co. Later census records (1860 and 1870) state that Moses, Jr. was born in New Hampshire. As stated earlier, his father never bought property in New York so it is impossible to determine where the family lived. (3) Since all of the children eventually located in either the town of Sodus or Lyons we may assume they lived there among relatives and friends from back in New England. Moses Dennis, Sr. was dead when the 1830 census was taken. Where Moses, Jr., who was still a young lad, and his mother Rhoda S. Dennis made their home, we do not know, but it may have been with one of his older brothers – Gilman or Benjamin S. Dennis. (4)

Moses Dennis, Jr. married first Pama Fellers of Sodus on July 22, 1847, when he was not quite twenty nine years old and Pama was twenty eight. (5) “No one in the family seems to know about this first marriage” according to Mrs. Williams. However, the Fellers family was well known in the Sodus area in the 1850’s – 1950’s. Pama Fellers Dennis must have died soon after her marriage because in the 1850 census from Sodus, Moses Dennis’ wife is given as Julia. His age was given as 31; Julia, his wife, 22, born in New York. Moses is classed as a common laborer worth \$ 400.00. When Moses and Julia Way were married is not known. Their first child, Apama, was born in 1850, but not until after the census was taken it would seem, since no mention is made of children. In the 1860 census, Moses is called a surveyor, age 42, residing in the Town of Huron in Wayne Co. with a North Huron Post Office address. His place of birth is here given as New Hampshire as it is also in the 1870 census,. “So where was he born”, queries Mrs. Williams, “or didn’t he know?”

Moses and Julia W. Dennis had four children: Apama Ella, Squire Alman, Carlton Samuel, and Flora Belle. The 1867-8 Wayne County Directory gives the following information about Moses Dennis of Wayne Center: “general merchant. Postmaster, Civil engineer and farmer

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- (1) Notes of D. B. Williams, also memory of her contemporaries.
 - (2) Notes of D. B. Williams, Roy Brower’s notes say that Ella married a MacMillan. Could Apama have been a daughter of the first wife? Only if she was born early in the year, and her mother had died at that time; and then her father remarried before the ’50 census was taken. But then, why was the baby not in the census?
 - (3) see Moses Dennis, Sr., p. 65
 - (4) Rhoda Sprague Dennis is buried on a lot in Zurich Cemetery belonging to her son Benjamin, suggesting that he looked after his widowed mother, and may also have cared for his young brother, Moses.
 - (5) “Early Settlers of New York” by Foley

(17 acres)” (1) In the 1870 census from the Town of Rose in Wayne County, Moses Dennis is listed as a grocer with an estate between \$1700 and \$2000, Julia 40 (2), Ellen 19, Squire 14 in school, Samuel Carlton 9 in school, Flora 3.

Moses Dennis, Jr. died July 30, 1871 at the age of fifty three years and three days according to his tombstone in the Zurich Cemetery. He probably died in the Town of Rose where he had his grocery business. He made his will on April 21st of that year, which would seem to indicate that his health had been declining. His wife, Julia (“Aunt Jewel” as she was known in the family) outlived him many years. (3) She died in 1913 and is buried in the North Huron Cemetery.

- (1) Roy M. Brower’s notes state that Moses Dennis lived east of Wayne Center, N.Y.
- (2) Mrs. Williams calls attention to an error here in the census. “Julia would have been 42 years old in 1870”.
- (3) The author recalls meeting Aunt Jewel on one occasion when a small child at Sodus Center where she was visiting her niece by marriage, Isadore Dennis Brower, the daughter of Robert D. Dennis. My memory of her is that “Jewel” very well suited her – a very dainty old lady.

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