

## FIRST GENERATION

1. **ROBERT<sup>1</sup> DUNBAR** was probably born about 1630-34 in Scotland. He died at Hingham, Massachusetts 19 September 1693 (George Lincoln, *The History of Hingham Massachusetts* [Hingham:1900], hereafter *Lincoln* 1:195).

Robert resided in Hingham with his wife **ROSE**. It is not known where they were married or who were her parents. Rose died at Hingham 10 November 1700 (*ibid.*).

According to family tradition he was a native of Morayshire. No proof of his parentage has been ascertained. Among the papers of the Suffolk County Superior Court is a case heard in 1659 between the administrator of Mr. Joshua Foote's estate and Ferdinando Thayer. Within these papers is the following deposition:

*Robert Dunbar aged about 25 years testifieth and saith that being a servant unto Mr. Joshua Foote when he lived at Boston I was sent by him unto Minotoquid [Braintree] River to work and when I came there I was ordered what work I should do by Ferdinando Thayer who wrought with me in the work for Mr. Foote. Further I do testify that Ferdinando Thayer did order not only my self but an other Scotchman who wrought with us at the same place and I looked at him as in the roome of our master and obeyed him accordingly Further I do testify that Ferdinando Thayer did not ~~xxxx~~ [strike out] only work with us but carried the bolts unto the water side to the loading place the time being so long since that I cannot remember how much work hee did nor what quality of bolts he caried downe but he also shewed us our work and appointed us the timber wee should work upon in the woods and further saith not.*

*Taken upon oath this 11th 9th 1659 before Thomas Savage,  
Commission*

(Suffolk County Court Files, Volume 3, Case #347, FHL microfilm #911115).

Charles Franklin Dunbar (1830-1900), a descendant in the fifth generation and an active member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, spent much time both in this country and Scotland attempting to find Robert's parents. Others, including myself, have done the same. Charles W. Eliot's Tribute to Charles Franklin Dunbar, which appeared in the February 1900 issue of the *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, pages 428-442, states that: "By a series of careful investigations Charles Franklin Dunbar established the strong probability that this Robert Dunbar who was held to the service of Joshua Foote for a term of years as early as 1655, and possibly as early as 1652, was one of

Cromwell's Scottish prisoners taken at the Battle of Dunbar in 1650, or at the Battle of Worcester in 1651."

The Saugus Iron Works, now a National Monument, displays a plaque upon which are the words:

*"In Commemoration of the 300th Anniversary of the Settlement of the Scottish War Prisoners at the Lynn and Braintree Plants of the Company of Undertakers in New England. A Tribute to the group of Scots prisoners taken by Cromwell's armies at the Battle of Dunbar (September 3, 1650); consigned to John Bex and Joshua Foote, two of the Undertakers; carried in the ship Unity to Boston whence they were sent, some to the ironworks, others to wherever men stood ready to buy their services; and quickly assimilated into the Puritan community to which they had come as tragic victims of war and in which they remained to aid in the building of a new country and to raise up a large and worthy progeny."*

A List of Scots at the Lynn Ironworks in 1651, taken from the George S. Stewart manuscript collection at the New England Historic Genealogical Society, comprises 43 names, among which is that of Robert Dunbar.

According to a Parliamentary History of England, pages 341-342, referenced in Mr. Stewart's manuscript, five thousand prisoners were sent down to Durham and Newcastle by way of Berwick and entrusted to the care of Sir Arthur Hesilrigge. The Council at London was considering what to do with these prisoners of war who could not be safely released. As the Colonists, especially as laborers, were greatly needed in New England, Virginia and the West Indies, the decision was quickly made. There was an order in Council, September 19, 1650, only sixteen days after the battle. "to write Sir Arthur Hesilrigge to deliver to Samuel Clarke, for transportation to Virginia, 900 Scotch prisoners, and 150 more for New England, to be sent there by Joshua Foot and John Bex, but they are to be such as are well and sound and free from wounds; letters to be prepared to Sir Arthur Hesilrigge according to such desires as shall be made by any who will carry them to plantations not in enmity with the Commonwealth" (Mary Anne Everett Greene, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1650* [London:1876] 346). A subsequent Order in Council of October 23, 1650 stated "The Admiralty Committee to examine whether the Scotch prisoners now come and coming into the river [Thames] are carried to places where they may be made of use against the commonwealth, and stay to be made of all, until assurance be given of their not being carried where they may be dangerous; the proportion for New England to be shipped forthwith as they ship is ready and the place is without danger" (*ibid.* 397). Here we have mention of a shipload of prisoners about to be sent to New England. Nothing definite has been learned about this company, though the number of Scotsmen

found in New England soon after indicates that other Scot prisoners may have been sent to Boston besides those who came in the ship *Unity* and a year later in the ship *John and Sara*. If the ship ready for New England on the twenty-third of October shortly sailed, then we have three shiploads of Scot prisoners to account for (George S. Stewart mss., *op. cit.*). This third unidentified shipload may well explain why Robert Dunbar's name does not appear on the list of prisoners who came to this country aboard the ship *Unity* or aboard the *John and Sara*.

Reverend Peter Hobart wrote in his diary:

*"Robert Dunbarr settled in Hingham in 1655. He was a Scotsman and lived on Scotland Street. The opinion generally prevailed in Hingham that Mr. Dunbar brought money enough with him to begin life without embarrassment, as for years there were but two men in the place who paid a higher tax."*

As no record of Rose (\_\_\_\_) Dunbar seems to appear in Massachusetts Bay Colony records, other than her death at Hingham, could it be possible that they were married in Scotland and that Robert "sent home to Scotland" for her and requested her to bring their funds when she came?

Roberts' Will, dated 13 September 1693 and signed in the presence of Enoch Witon, Thomas Witon and Thomas Garner names his wife Rose and sons John, Joseph, Peter and Joshua. Also named is "the son of my son James, deceased", as well as three daughters, Mary, Sarah, and Hannah (Suffolk Co. Probate #2079).

*In the Name of God Amen. In the yeare of our Lord, one Thousand, six hundred Ninety and three, this Thirteenth day of September Anno Regni Guilielmier Maria Regis et Regina Anglia, Scotia, Francie et Hibernia Quinto The Last Will and Testament of Robert Dunbarr Yeoman of Hingham in the County of Suffolk in the Province of Massachusetts in New England. I the s<sup>d</sup> Robert Dunbarr being of perfect memory praised be God. DO hereby make and declare this my last Will and Testament in manner and forme following. FIRST and principally I commit my Soul into the hands of Almighty God and my body to be decently buried by my Executors here after named, hoping for Salvation both of Soul and body by the mercies of God in the merits of Jesus Christ. Concerning the disposing of my temporal Estate, My Mind and Will is That my just Debts be paid out of my moveable Estate in the first place, and my Funeral Charges, and probation of this my Will. ITEM I give and bequeath unto Rose my Wife her living in my now Dwelling House in s<sup>d</sup> Hingham, and the use and improvement of all the Land that I do in this my Will bequeath and give to my two sons Joseph and Jushua the whole Terme of her*

keeping the name of Dunbarr, which is for her comfortable maintenance while She is a Widow and as above s<sup>d</sup> beare his name. And in case of necessity to sell or lett the s<sup>d</sup> Lands or part of it for her s<sup>d</sup> maintenance ITEM I give and bequeath unto his [sic] Son John Dunbarr all that his parcel of Home Land beginning at the Highway and so running with the Southernmost part of the Fence as it now stands, to the River, and so Northward to the middle of the Lot that was formerly Stephen Lincolns To have and enjoy as long as he liveth and after his decease My mind and Will is that John Durbarr the son of my deceased son John Dunbarr should have it and enjoy it if he lives otherwise his next brother to have it. And as for the Timber that is upon s<sup>d</sup> Land My Will is that my four Sons shall have equal benefit for their own Sole and proper use. ITEM I give and bequeath unto my son Joseph Dunbarr part of my Homeland that front against the Highway and from s<sup>d</sup> Highway runs to an apple Tree that stand single alone and from s<sup>d</sup> apple tree to a little oak Tree, and from s<sup>d</sup> oak Tree to a stake and so run to a white oak Tree that stands by the Meadows side, and so straight to the River. And the s<sup>d</sup> River to be the bounds to y<sup>e</sup> Highway above s<sup>d</sup> And also my Land that lieth in the Westward side of the Runn that cometh out of the Roultree Swamp. ITEM I give and bequeath to my Son Joshua Dunbarr all the rest of my Homeland that lieth between John Dunbarr and my son Joseph Dunbarr as far as to the River. And it is my mind and Will That my s<sup>d</sup> Sonn Joshua Dunbarr shall have and enjoy the s<sup>d</sup> Tract and parcell of Land to him, his heires and assignes for ever after my decease. He paying or causing to be paid Ten pounds in Country pay unto the son of my Son James Dunbarr deces<sup>d</sup> within three years Time after the s<sup>d</sup> Child and Son cometh to the age of Twenty & one yeares. AND It is my mind and Will That my s<sup>d</sup> Sons namely Joseph Dunbarr and Peter Dunbarr shall have and enjoy to them their heires and assignes for ever those parcele of Land hereby given in this my Will. I say to enjoy it to them their heires and assignes for ever. ITEM I have and bequeath unto my four sons namely John Dunbarr, Joseph Dunbarr, Joshua Dunbarr & Peter Dunbarr my four shares of the undivided Commons in Hingham, each of them one. AND It is my Will That my Son Joseph Dunbarr shall have part of the fruits of the orchard for the use of his Family for ye space and terme of seven yeares after my decease. Which s<sup>d</sup> orchard is herein given to my Son Joshua And if a seasonable year for Fruit my Son Joseph Shall have apples also to make two barrells of Cyder. ITEM I give and bequeath unto my three Daughters, namely Mary Dunbarr & Sarah Dunbarr & Hannah Dunbarr all my Land on the other side of y<sup>e</sup> River, all my Land that

lieth on that side of the River from the Runn that cometh out from the Roultree Swamp to the burnt Swamp. And also a Lot of Land by Prospect hill in the Third Division of Conahasset Upland, and all my moveable after my Wives decease equally To enjoy all y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> Lands & moveables to them their heires and assignes for ever. AND I do hereby nominate & appoint my two sons, namely Joseph Dunbarr & Joshua Dunbarr to be my sole Executors of this my last Will and Testament And I do hereby revoke renounce make null and make void all and every Testament and Testam<sup>t</sup> Will & Wills heretofore made and declared by word or writing And this only to be taken for my last Will and Testam<sup>t</sup> and none other. IN WITNESS whereof the s<sup>d</sup> Robert Dunbarr have hereunto set his hand and seal this day and yeare first above written. 1693. The mark of Robert Dunbar and a Seal.

Known children born at Hingham (*Lincoln* 1:196; baptismal dates from Peter Hobart's Journal, *Register* [1967] 121:107-282):

2.
  - i. JOHN<sup>2</sup>, b. 1 Dec 1657; bp. 13 Dec 1657; Rev. Hobart's Journal refers to him as "1st born son".
  - ii. MARY, b. 25 Oct 1660; bp. 9 Dec 1660; d. ca. 1707 (Nahum Mitchell, *History of the Early Settlement of Bridgewater* [Boston:1840, rpt. Baltimore:1975], hereafter *Mitchell* 176); m. at Hingham 28 June 1698 ISAAC HARRIS of Bridgewater (*Lincoln* 1:196), son of Arthur and Martha (Lake) Harris, his 2nd m. (*Mitchell* 176). Children, (surname HARRIS): 1. BENJAMIN. 2. MARTHA (*ibid.*).
3.
  - iii. JOSEPH, b. 13 Mar 1661/2; bp. 11 May 1662.
  - iv. JAMES, b. 5 June 1664; bp. 5 June 1664; d. at Bridgewater, MA 12 Dec 1690 (*Vital Records of Bridgewater, Massachusetts to the Year 1850* May 26, 1992 [Boston:1916], hereafter *BrVR* 2:459); m. ca. 1683 at Hingham JANE HARRIS, daughter of Isaac Harris by his first wife, Mercy Latham (*Mitchell* 176; *BrVR* 2:159). They had one son, ROBERT, born in 1689, died in 1706 and was called "the only surviving son of James Dunbar, who came from Hingham" (*ibid.*). Jane married (2) Pelatiah Smith (*BrVR* 2:117). James died intestate (Plymouth Co. Probate #6788).
  - v. ROBERT, b. 1 Nov 1666; bp. 24 Mar 1667; died soon.