

# The Joseph Dunham Family of Biddeford, Maine

By Eric Stoltz, June 2016

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

The first family in our exploration of the Dunham households of 1790 Maine is that of Joseph Dunham of Biddeford in York County. Joseph appears to have been originally from Wells, York County, and moved to Biddeford after the death of his first wife. I have not been able to document his parents, but they could very well be Jeremiah Dunham and Anna Frost, both of Wells, who entered their intent to marry in Wells 4 February 1749.<sup>1</sup>

Biddeford had a population of 1,018 in 1790, according to the first federal census of the United States as required by the 1789 Constitution. The town was incorporated in 1728, but its twin city Saco, originally named Pepperellborough, is one of the oldest European settlements in Maine; the first Europeans landed in the area in 1616 and it was settled by 1631.

There being no other Dunham household in Biddeford in 1790, we can reconstruct Joseph's family according to various records. Thus we can identify the family members corresponding to the census numbers (documentation provided in the register section below).

*Table 1: Family of Joseph Dunham of Biddeford in the 1790 Census*

<b>Census Classification</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Born</b>
Males 16 and over	1	Joseph	at least 35*	bef 1756
Males under 16	3	Joseph	abt 13	1777
		Jeremiah	abt 12	1778
		John	abt 8	1782
Females	4	Miriam	say 34*	say 1756
		Hephzibah	abt 10	1780
		Mary	abt 6	abt 1784
		Nancy	abt 4	abt 1786

*\* The estimated ages/birthdates of Joseph and Miriam are based on the age groupings of their 1800 census records.*

<sup>1</sup> *Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Town of Wells, Maine, 1695-1826*, FamilySearch, FHL microfilm 007596955, image 26.

Those unfamiliar with pre-1850 U. S. censuses may be surprised to learn that only the names of the heads of households — virtually always men — were recorded. Women, children and slaves were merely numbers. Maine residents were not slaveholders, so I have omitted the slave tally because it was in all cases empty.

The compiled family register follows.

## First Generation

### 1. Joseph Dunham<sup>2</sup>.

Born before 1756.<sup>3</sup> On 2 Dec 1775 Joseph first married **Hephzibah Whitney**, daughter of Dr. John Whitney & Hephzibah Adams, in Wells, York, Maine.<sup>4</sup> Born in York, York, Maine on 30 Jan 1755.<sup>5</sup>

They had the following children:

- i. Joseph. Born on 31 Jan 1777 in York, York, Maine.<sup>6</sup> Joseph died in Salem, Franklin, Maine, on 8 Oct 1796; he was 19.<sup>7</sup>
- ii. Jeremiah. Born on 29 Jun 1778 in York, York, Maine.<sup>8</sup>  
On 9 Jan 1802 when Jeremiah was 23, he married **Elsa (Alice?) Goodale** in Biddeford, York, Maine.<sup>9</sup>
- 2** iii. Hephzibah (24 Jul 1780-?)
- 3** iv. John (21 Oct 1782-23 Dec 1845)

On 23 Apr 1785 Joseph second married **Miriam Berry** in Biddeford, York, Maine.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> 1790 United States Census, Biddeford, York, Maine: Joseph Dunham, 3 males under 16, 1 male 16 or older, 4 females.

<sup>3</sup> 1800 United States Census, Biddeford, York, Maine: Joseph Dunham, age 45 or over.

<sup>4</sup> *Maine Marriages, 1771-1907*, FamilySearch, FHL microfilm 12622.

<sup>5</sup> Lester MacKenzie Bragdon and John E. Frost, *Vital Records of York, Maine, prior to 1892* (Rockport, Maine: Picton Press, 1992) p. 75.

<sup>6</sup> Lester MacKenzie Bragdon, A.B., LL.B., "Vital Records of York, Maine," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, vol. 112, October 1958, p. 307.

<sup>7</sup> James L. Hansen, FASG, "Probate and Miscellaneous Notices from the Eastern Herald and Gazette of Maine of Portland September 1796-December 1797," *The Maine Genealogist*, (August 2005), p. 108: "Died last Wednesday in Salem of small pox, Mr. Joseph Dunham, age 20, son of Mr. Joseph Dunham of Biddeford." (8 Oct 1796).

<sup>8</sup> Bragdon, p. 307.

<sup>9</sup> John D. Beatty, ed., *Vital Records of Biddeford, Maine Prior to 1856*, (Camden, Maine: Picton Press, 1998), p. 144.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

They had the following children:

- i. Mary. Born abt. 1784 in Maine.<sup>11</sup>  
On 21 Nov 1805 Mary married **Humphrey Pike**, son of Israel Pike (26 Aug 1743-8 Nov 1815) & Sarah \_\_\_\_\_, in Biddeford, Maine.<sup>12</sup> Born on 12 Sep 1780 in Saco, York, Maine.<sup>13</sup> Humphrey died in Saco, York, Maine, on 28 Apr 1808; he was 27.<sup>14</sup>
- ii. Nancy. Born abt 1786. Nancy died in Biddeford, York, Maine, on 17 Aug 1802; she was 16.<sup>15</sup>

## Second Generation

2. **Hephzibah Dunham** (*Joseph<sup>l</sup>*). Born on 24 Jul 1780 in York, York, Maine.<sup>16</sup>

On 19 Aug 1798 when Hephzibah was 18, she married **Israel Pike**, son of Israel Pike (26 Aug 1743-8 Nov 1815) & Sarah \_\_\_\_\_, in Biddeford, York, Maine.<sup>17</sup> Born on 8 Jun 1773 in Saco, York, Maine.<sup>18</sup>

They had the following children:

- i. Humphrey. Born on 27 Aug 1800 in Biddeford, York, Maine.<sup>19</sup>
- ii. Israel French. Born on 29 Mar 1809 in Biddeford, York, Maine.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> 1850 United States Census, Westbrook, Cumberland, Maine: Mary Pike, age 66.

<sup>12</sup> *Maine Marriages, 1771-1907*, FamilySearch, FHL film 10601, p. 334a.

<sup>13</sup> City of Saco, *First Book of Records of the Town of Pepperrellborough Now The City of Saco* (Saco, Maine: 1895), p. 140.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 215.

<sup>15</sup> *Falmouth Gazette*, Falmouth, Cumberland, Maine, 23 Aug 1802: "16 years, daughter of Joseph Dunham of Biddeford, of yellow fever," cited in David C. Young and Elizabeth Keene Young, *Vital Records from Maine Newspapers, 1785-1820* (Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, 1993).

<sup>16</sup> Bragdon, p. 307.

<sup>17</sup> Beatty, p. 141.

<sup>18</sup> City of Saco, p. 140.

<sup>19</sup> Beatty, p. 172.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

**3. John Dunham** (*Joseph<sup>1</sup>*). Born on 21 Oct 1782 in York, York, Maine.<sup>21</sup> John died on 23 Dec 1845; he was 63.<sup>22</sup> According to the death record of his son Rufus, John was a ship builder.

On 5 Oct 1809 when John was 26, he married **Hannah Emery** in Biddeford, York, Maine.<sup>23</sup> Born in 1785.<sup>24</sup> Hannah died in 1872; she was 87.<sup>25</sup>

They had the following children:

- i. Jack. Born on 11 Feb 1810 in Biddeford, York, Maine.<sup>26</sup> Jack died in Biddeford, York, Maine, on 11 Sep 1810; he was <1.<sup>27</sup>
- ii. Israel Pike. Born on 29 Mar 1813 in Biddeford, York, Maine.<sup>28</sup>
- iii. Nancy. Born on 18 Nov 1813 in Biddeford, York, Maine.<sup>29</sup> Nancy died in Biddeford, York, Maine, on 21 Dec 1813; she was <1.<sup>30</sup>
- 4** iv. Rufus (30 May 1815-20 Sep 1893)
- v. Jeremiah. Born on 18 Jul 1817 in Biddeford, York, Maine.<sup>31</sup>
- 5** vi. John (18 May 1819-?)

## Third Generation

**4. Rufus Dunham** (*John<sup>2</sup>, Joseph<sup>1</sup>*). Born on 30 May 1815 in Biddeford, York, Maine.<sup>32</sup> Rufus died in Deering, Cumberland, Maine, on 20 Sep 1893; he was 78.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Bragdon, p. 307.

<sup>22</sup> Grave marker for John Dunham, Pine Grove Cemetery, Lot 60, Portland, Cumberland, Maine, found on findagrave.com

<sup>23</sup> Beatty, p. 172.

<sup>24</sup> Grave marker for Hannah Emery, Pine Grove Cemetery, Lot 60, Portland, Cumberland, Maine, found on findagrave.com

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Beatty, p. 172.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 240.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 157.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 240.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 240.

<sup>33</sup> *Maine Vital Records 1670-1907*, Division of Vital Statistics, Maine State Board of Health, Augusta, Maine, FamilySearch: Death Record of Rufus Dunham.

Rufus first married **Emeline S.** Born abt 1811.<sup>34</sup> Emeline died on 28 Dec 1840; she was 29.<sup>35</sup>

They had the following children:<sup>36</sup>

- i. Emmaline C. Born abt 1840. Emmaline C. died on 17 Sep 1841; she was 1.
- ii. Lyman F. Born abt 1838. Lyman F. died on 22 Dec 1845; he was 7.

On 25 Aug 1845 when Rufus was 30, he second married **Emma B. Sargent** in Portland, Cumberland, Maine.<sup>37</sup> Born in 1826.<sup>38</sup> Emma died in 1910; she was 84.<sup>39</sup>

They had the following children:<sup>40</sup>

- i. Lyman F. Born abt 1847. Lyman F. died on 29 Aug 1850; he was 3.
- ii. Rufus W. Born abt 1848. Rufus W. died on 30 Aug 1850; he was 2.
- iii. Arthur. Born in 1856. Arthur died on 8 Jan 1857; he was 1.
- iv. Emeline Grace. Born abt 1857. Emeline Grace died on 30 Aug 1859; she was 2.

**5. John Dunham** (*John*<sup>2</sup>, *Joseph*<sup>1</sup>). Born on 18 May 1819 in Biddeford, York, Maine.<sup>41</sup>

John married **Frances E.** Born abt 1821.<sup>42</sup>

They had the following children:<sup>43</sup>

- i. Julia F. Born abt 1843.
- ii. Olivia. Born abt 1846.
- iii. Charles S. Born abt 1848.

## Some considerations concerning James Dunham Jr.

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<sup>34</sup> *Nathan Hale Cemetery Collection, ca. 1780-1980*, Image 8, Maine State Library, Augusta, FamilySearch.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> All from the *Nathan Hale Cemetery Collection*.

<sup>37</sup> *Maine Vital Records 1670-1907*, Division of Vital Statistics, Maine State Board of Health, Augusta, Maine, FamilySearch: Marriage Record of Rufus Dunham and Emma B. Sargent,

<sup>38</sup> *Nathan Hale Cemetery Collection, ca. 1780-1980*.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> All from the *Nathan Hale Cemetery Collection*.

<sup>41</sup> Beatty, p. 240.

<sup>42</sup> 1850 United States Census, Westbrook, Cumberland, Maine.

<sup>43</sup> All from the 1850 Census.

Could James Dunham Jr. have been a member of this family? It's unlikely.

First of all, we can presume that the 1790 census record for this family would be accurate because Humphrey Pike, whose nephews Humphrey and Israel would marry Joseph's daughters Mary and Hephzibah, was a census marshall for York County.<sup>44</sup> So it does appear these families were close. Humphrey Pike would probably have noticed if any detail about the Dunhams was omitted. That would have included missing a young son named James.

If there were an omission in the 1790 census, one might assume we could find it correct it in the subsequent census of 1800. But the only additional family member listed there is a young boy, whose name we do not know.

*Table 2: Family of Joseph Dunham of Biddeford in the 1800 Census*

<b>Census Classification</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Born</b>
Males under 10	1	?	?	?
Males 10-15	1	John?	abt 18	1782
Males 16-25	1	Jeremiah	abt 22	1778
Males 26-44	0			
Males 45 and over	2	Joseph ?	at least 45 ?	bef 1756 ?
Females under 10	0			
Females 10-15	2	Mary Nancy	abt 16 abt 14	abt 1784 abt 1786
Females 16-25	0			
Females 26-44	1	Miriam	say 44	say 1756
Females 45 and over	0			

Hephzibah, then aged 18, was not listed among the family because she had married Israel Pike two years before the census enumeration. Joseph Jr., of course, had died four years prior. John should be 17 or 18 at this time (depending on the date of the enumerator's visit); he would likely not have left the family until he married Hannah Emery in 1809. So did the enumerator make an

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<sup>44</sup> United States Census Bureau, *Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790: Maine* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1908) p. 10.

error, putting the number in the wrong column? Who was the boy under 10? Was the male over 45 Joseph's father, or a relative with his own son under 10 years of age?

These are all interesting questions, but none of them suggest that a 12- to 13-year-old James Dunham Jr. was a member of this household, who would move alone 140 miles to Orland, a place where he had no family.