

THE BUNNELL/BONNELL NEWSLETTER

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CURRENT NEWS

The response to the first issue of this Newsletter has been very gratifying. Along with their requests for future issues, many people sent me additional information about their own or other branches of the family. Several people even sent money to help defray the costs, for which I thank them. It really does help. Among the responses, I received two items of news of great interest to everyone doing research on this family:

1. Ruth Duncan has published her genealogy of the Bunnell/Bonnell family. It is entitled William Bunnell And His Descendants. The book is 8 ½ X 11 inches in size, handsomely bound in red cloth, and fully indexed. Ruth has made excellent use of the primary records available to her in the Hartford area, and the genealogy of the Bunnells who lived in Connecticut is especially strong. In the back of the book is a list of the references she has checked in compiling her material. It is very impressive. If you wish to ask her about obtaining a copy, her address is Mrs. Ruth Duncan, P.O. Box 249, West Simsbury, CT 06092.

Ruth and I have disagreed about the interpretation of several important aspects of the early records. Her book sets forth her point of view. In the Newsletter and in the Bunnell/Bonnell history I am compiling I will present the case for my own interpretation.

2. In my first Newsletter I mentioned the manuscript prepared by John Addison Biles around the turn of the century. After receiving the Newsletter, Marian Biles wrote to me saying she had obtained a copy of the original manuscript from a cousin and that I could borrow it and copy it. It consists of about 375 pages, mostly typed with very copious additional handwritten notes. Data on the Bonnell side of the family is very limited. However, the Bunnell material added very substantially to the information I already had. It is particularly valuable for the descendants of Solomon and Mary (Holdren) Bunnell.

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What would you like to see in the Newsletter? I am anxious to make it as broadly interesting to all of you as possible. Most people are particularly concerned with their own branches of the family, and I don't want to spend so much space on one branch that others will find it dull. Current news events – births, graduations, marriages, deaths, or other items of significance involving members of the family – can be

Inserted if you will send them to me. Original records, such as Bible records, cemetery inscriptions, census records, etc., might be of interest. If a family reunion is planned, let me know well in advance and I will print a notice of it.

Nona Bassett, of Merced, CA, writes: "I haven't seen in any published work the pronunciation of the name Bunnell. My mother and my uncle both said it was pronounced like 'bundle' with the 'd' removed and many times written 'Bunnel'."

Well, Nona, in this part of Pennsylvania there are a great many Bunnells, and most of them have always pronounced the name that way, with the accent on the first syllable. However, many who have moved away from here prefer to say BunNELL. I believe that most who spell the name with an "o" accent both syllables equally. Anyone care to comment?

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In Vol. I, No. 3, of the Newsletter I plan to discuss the question of whether William Bunnell, who appears in the records of Watertown, MA from 1630 to 1646, is or is not the same person as the William Bunill found in the New Haven, CT, records from 1649 to 1654. In preparation for this discussion, this issue includes every contemporary record which I have found referring to William Bunnell and his wife. If you know of any others which I have missed, please let me know as soon as possible to ensure that my analysis is as complete and as correct as can be.

The first five entries are from the Records of the Governor and Company of Massachusetts Bay, edited by N. B. Shurtleff, 6 vols., 1853.

Vol. 1, page 77.

28 Sept. 1630. A jury (of fifteen names, "Willm Bunell" being seventh on the list) was impaneled to inquire concerning the death of Austen Bratcher.

"The Juryes Verdict:--

Wee finde that the strokes giuen by Walter Palmer were occationally the meanes of the death of Austin Bratcher, & soe to be manslaughter./"

Vol. 1, page 307.

7 Oct. 1640. "A Genrall Cort, held at Boston"

"The country desires Watertowne to graunt Willi: Bunnell a lot, & if hee do pve chrgable, the country to beare it./"

Vol. 2, page 134.

1 Oct. 1645. "At a Session of the Generall Court"

"Mr Sparhauke & Leift Mason are appointed a committee with

all powr to dispose of ye children of Goodman Bunnell, if their grandfather will not take care ym.”

Vol. 2, Page 139.

1 Oct. 1645. “It is thought meet yt those things, viz, cotton woole, canvas, or else, which returnes wⁿ Capt Bridges returnes, should be delivred to Mr Sparhauke & Leift Mason to be disposed of to Goodman Bunnell & his use.”

Vol. 2, Page 149.

6 May 1646. “At a Generall Courte, at Boston, for Election”
 “It is ordred yt if Mr Maverick & Mr Manning shall please to lay out 30 s in cloathing in England for Wm Bunnell at his arrivall, on their receipt undr his hand for so much delivred by them to ye said Wm Bunnell in England this Corte determines it shalbe repaid them againe here.”

That is the last reference to William Bunnell in the Massachusetts records. The next entry is from Records of the Colony and Plantation of New Haven, from 1638 to 1649, by Charles J. Hoadly, M. A., 1857.

Vol. I, Page 478.

“At a Court Held at Hewhaven the 7th of August, 1649
 Jeremiah Osborne informed the court that Henry Pecke reported that their maide (Sarah Ollard,) was with child by him ye said Jeremiah. Henry Pecke answered that such a report of ye maid was brought into his house as he tooke it vp, but vpon examination it proved to be but a supposition, and he reported that it was so, but he sees that it was his mistake and his sinn & is sorrey that he was so foolish to speake so, and for Jeremiah being the father of it, it was his mistake also, for he hearing some a talking of Jeremiah and the maide, tooke it vp that they spake of that matter and him to be ye father, but vpon examination it appeared they spake of no such thing, but that Jeremiah was to haue her, but vpon this mistake he reported it. He was asked whoe brought it to his house, he said goodwife Bunill. Goodwife Bunill said that she had said to goodwife Pecke that goodwife Charles wished ther was no more in ye towne in Rebecka Turners case, for ther was a maide that satt neere her at meeting that did barnish apace, but she named nobody, nor could she tell who it was, and she said to goodwife Charles, if that be yor thoughts yow were best speake of it wher yow best may. Goodwife Charles, that she and Thomas Marshall (whoe was at worke at her house,) being speaking aboute Rebecka Turner, what a sad thing it was, she said it is well if ther be no more in her case, she remembers no more that she saide. Henry Pecke was asked if he had any witness that could cleare it that either of these women was ye auther of this report, he said he had none. The plantifs hauing also spoken what they would in ye case, the court proceeded to sentence, and ordered that Henry Pecke paye to Jeremiah Osborne & Sarah Ollard for ye wrong he hath done them 5 l, wch is to be devided betwixt them.”

The following entries are taken from the Ancient Records Series of the New Haven Historical Society, edited by Franklin Bowditch Dexter, Volume 1, New Haven Town Records, 1649-1662, identified as "Dexter," and for Vital Records of New Haven, Conn., identified as "NHVR".

Dexter, page 20.

"At a Generall Court Held at Newhaven Aprill 3th 1650."

"The Court freed old Goodman Bunill from paying his poll money to ye towne, because of his poverty, age and weakness."

NHVR, page 5.

"Mary Bunill the Daughter of William Bunill was borne the 4th of may 1650."

Dexter, page 44.

"At a Court Held at Newhaven August 6th 1650."

"Mr Tuttill, Jno Wakefeild, William Bunill was Ordered to paye 5 s a peece because ye names of each of them a child was not brought in wthin three monethes after they were borne:/"

Dexter, page 55.

"At a Court Held at Newhaven January 7th 1650."

"John Tompson declared that he lett William Bunill his house, & he is willing to give him a yeeres rent, if he would goe peaceably out: Bunill said he is willing to goe out but cannot tell where to haue another house, he hath inquired but cannot yet here of any, he hath sent to Thomas Barnes aboute his house, but yet hath no Answer from him. Jno Tompson desired ye help of ye Court that William Bunill might goe out of his house: William Bunill was told he must not live in another mans house against his will, but must provide for himselfe elsewhere: he said he would doe what he could:/

John Tompson was asked if he would lett him be in it a while till he may speake with Thomas barnes: Jno Tompson said he cared not if he staid in it a fortnight, or three weekes, so he may then haue his house free, and not be troubled to come to ye Court any more. The Court told Goodman Bunill he must hasten to gett out, he hath libbertie but for a fortnight or three weekes: if he be not out by that time he must be warned to ye next Court, when the Court will doe as they see cause, though John Tompson be not here, for ye charges of ye Court it is at present forborne:/"

Dexter, page 60.

"At a Court Held at Newhaven February Ye 4th 1650."

"John Tompson desired William Bunill might be put out of his

house. Mr Goodyeare desired he might stayer in one weeke more & he would vndertake he should then goe out, with wch Jno Tompson was satisfied at present:/"

Dexter, page 89.

“At a Court Held at Newhaven the 7th of October, 1651.”

“William Bunill declareth that while he was gone for England, his wife and her father put forth his sonn to Nico Elsy and his daughter to Sam: Whithead, to prentice without his consent. wch when hee came he disallowed of; onely was willing they should keepe them a while, but now desires that he may haue them againe for his help.

Nicolas Elsy said that the Grandfather of the boy came to him, and desired him to take him, and he did. Goodman Willmot, the Grandfather of the boy was asked the ground thereof; hee said his sonn Bunill was in the Bay, and was a charge to the country there, after went to England, left his wife and children but no meanes to maintayne them; after hee was gone shee & her children came vp heither to him, but hee was not able to keepe them; therefore they did advise together, and agreed to put forth the children, and did put the boy to Nico Elsy:

Samuel Whithead said for the girle he sought her not; but Goodwife Bunill came to his house, declared her condition, wch was to be pittyed, hauing diuers small children and no meanes to maintayne them, and desired him to take her daughter, wch they did vpon the termes they agreed. Goodwife Bunill was asked what direction her husband left for providing for the children; she said he left little or nothing to maintayne them, and she asked him what she should doe with them; hee said they were hers as well as his, and he left them with her. And the boy saith he remembers his father did say so to his mother:

William pecke said that his wife heard Goodman Bunill say after hee came here from England, that he was well satisfied with the children where they were; and Luke Atkinson said he heard Goodman Bunill say he was well satisfied in ye placing of ye children. Goodman Bunill said hee ment for the present, a yeere or two, or so. Goodman Bunill was told hee must not thinke that they will take children small and keepe them till now and let him haue them againe, but he must allow what is just for keeping them; wch he is not able to doe, and the case was such it seemes that if they had not placed them, the Magistrate must haue taken care to dispose fothem. Wherefore, all things considered, the Court cannot but confirme the placing of them: but if they finde the time too longe, they will consider that some of it be abated, or some thing allowed to them:/"

Dexter, page 108.

“At a Generall Court for Newhaven, February 9th 1651.”

“The Townesmen were desired to consider of the charge wch old Bunill hath bine to ye Towne, and how it may be lessened, and setle a weekely allowance to him, as they see cause, that hee may not runn out in vnnecessary charges:”

Dexter, page 116.

“At a meeting of the Townesmen, February 21th, 1651.”

“The case of old Bunill ws taken into consideration, and for the present it is agreed that hee should haue 2 s a weeke allowed him, provided that hee and his family doe what they can towards their maintaynance.”

Dexter, page 112.

“At a Generall Court for Newhaven the 11th of March, 1651-52.”

“The Townesmen were desired to speake with old Bunill aboute putting forth his boy, that his famylie may be lessened, that the Towne may be at as little charge as may bee. It was saide that Goodman Judsons sonn offered him a cow for the boy, so he might haue him such a number of yeares as might answer it. It was answered if any in the Towne would haue him vpon the termes that another would give, they might: if not, then the Townesmen must put him out as they can; for it was said that the boy is not onely a charge, but he will be spoyled for want of gouermt:”

Dexter, page 129.

“At a Generall Court for Newhaven the 10th of May, 1652.”

“The Towne was acquainted that old Bunill refuseth to let his sonn be put forth as an Apprentize, according as they gave Order he should: where vpon ye Towne declared that his weekely allowance should be withdrawne, for they are not willing to maintayne the boy at home, when he may be put out so as will be both an advantage to ye family in a cow that is proffered for him, wch will be a good help to keepe them, and for the good of ye boy, who now for want of due nurture growes rude and offensives:”

NHVR, page 9.

“Ebenezer Bunill the sonn of William Bunill was borne the 28th of August 1653.”

Dexter, page 200.

“At a Generall Court for New Have, February 27th, 1653.”

“The Gouvernor informed that one cause of this meeting is aboute Goodwife Bunill who is sicke, vpon whom the Towne hath bine at some charge, but whether as much be done as her case requireth

is a question; and is by some reported they are neglected; others say they are at two much charge with them. The Towne was desired now to speake their minds, and not privately in a complaining way. Also, there is two children to be put out, both for the good of the children (who are not educated as they should) & for the easing ye Towne of charge. Concerning what hath bine done for Goodwife Bunill, none spake against it; but for ye children, ye Towne desired they might be put out, and referred it to ye Townesmen to doe it speedily:/"

Dexter, page 208.

“At a Generall Court for Newhaven, May ye First, 1654.”

“The Towne was informed that old Bunill (whose wife and child is dead) is desirous to goe to old England, wch if it could be attained might free the Towne from some charge, though they made some present disburssmt for his passage and other necessaries for him, and vnderstanding a vessel at Milford is bound for Newfoundland, it was Ordered that the Townsmen and Treasureer should treat with them for his passage theither, and Agree of some course how he may be sent from thence to old England, where he saith he hath some friends to take care of him:/"

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F. L. Hastings, Stilwell, KS, asks, “Do you have a proof of Nathaniel as son of William?” I believe that is satisfactorily proved by the will of Benjamin Wilmot, William’s father-in-law. The will, dated 7 Aug 1669, includes, “Item twenty shillings to each of the foure children of my daughter Anne Bunnell, vizt: Benjamin & Nathanll Bunnill & Lydia ffrench & Mary Bunnill, the which I will to be payd them at or before ye terme of two years from ye date thereof.”

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QUERIES

The name and address of the inquirer is included with each query. However, if you are able to provide the inquirer with the information requested, I would appreciate your sending me a copy of your reply.

1. MILES BUNNELL was born in Connecticut. He married AMELIA DOUD, daughter of DAVID DOUD, In 1800 they lived in Danbury, CT. By 1802 they were living in what is now Rush Twp., Susquehanna co., PA. They had at least three children: Martin, b. 1800, Amos, b. 1803, and Sarah N., b. c. 1808. Miles Bunnell is said to have had a brother Hezekiah who moved to Missouri. Did he move to Kentucky first? Who were the parents of Miles, and when and where was he born? EVELYN INGHAM, 2122 Franklin St., Escalon, CA 95320.

2. BARNABAS C. BUNNELL was born in NJ c. 1808. He married ELIZA J. _____ born c. 1810 in VT. They had at least 5 children: SARAH ELIZA b. 25 Nov 1832 in NY, ELIZA J. b. c. 1837 in MI, SOHN S. b. c.

1839 in MI, MARY b. c. 1841 in MI, and HARRIET b. c. 1843 in MI. They lived in Livonia Twp., Wayne co., MI, where Barnabas was listed as Justice of the Peace in 1856 and 1867. Sarah Eliza married JOHN J. SMITH and had 5 children: JAMES EDWARD, GEORGE W., MINNIE ELIZA, ANN E. and MARY J. Larry P. Neal, 204 Whims Lane, Rochester, MI 48064.

NOTE from WRA: In the "Registers, Minutes & History of the First Presbyterian Church of Morristown, NJ, 1742 to 1891," we find: "Barnabas C. Bonnell, bap. & confirmed Sept. 2, 1827; dismissed Aug. 4, 1829 to Lima, NY." Perhaps that will help.

3. Who was THOMAS BONNELL of Hanover Twp., Morris co. NJ, whose will, dated 23 Jan 1788 and proved 11 May 1790, mentions sons HENRY, JAMES, BENJAMIN and JOSEPH; daughters HANNAH, wife of Dr. JOHN RAGUE, PHEBE, and AFFA? Was son James identical with Capt. JAMES BONNELL, 1754-1808 (or 1814 or 1815), who married ELIZABETH SHIMER? If so, Snell says in "History of Sussex & Warren Co's, NJ" that Thomas was born in England and located in Morristown, NJ "at an early day." If true this would represent a different line from that of William Bunnell's son Nathaniel. Also, was son Benjamin identical with BENJAMIN BONNELL, b. c. 1744, Morris co., NJ; m. c. 1779 SARAH _____; loyalist who served with British forces under Benedict Arnold; fled New York City in July 1783 with wife and 2 children under 12 to Saint John, Nova Scotia; died 17 Feb 1828 at Greenwich, Kings c., New Brunswick. Paul Bunnell A.G., 31 Timber Lane, W. Barnstable, MA 02668.

4. The following Bunnell families were in Kentucky: 1810 Hardin county: WILLIAM; Barren county: JEREMIAH. 1820 Hart county: JEREMIAH; Mercer county: SAMUEL; Green county: PETER. An ISAAC BUNNELL who does not appear on a Kentucky census witnessed a deed in Mason county 16 August 1798.

JEREMIAH, born about 1780, and PETER, born 15 January 1784, appear to be brothers. WILLIAM, born 2 May 1778, may also be a brother. Were they sons of the Isaac who signed the deed? Members of these families can be found later in Indiana, Missouri and Oregon. Would be interested in corresponding with anyone who has information on any families that "moved west". Lenore Hibbard, 205 Virginia, Crockett, CA 94525.

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In our small local telephone book 26 Bunnells are listed. They all trace back to Connecticut and ultimately to William and Ann (Wilmot) Bunnell, but through five different lines. Their ancestors who left Connecticut were Solomon and Mary (Holdren) Bunnell, Miles and Amelia (Doud) Bunnell, James and Azuba (Carter) Bunnell, Israel and Beulah (Hitchcock) Bunnell, and Isaac Samuel and Harriet (Tupper) Bunnell. Can any other 25 mile radius match that?