

SIR THOMAS DUNHAM (1560-)

In this attempt to record the Dunham (Denham) life reviews of these two early ancestors the challenge was limited to generalities and the research to mere genealogical data.

"Dunham is an ancient English village on the west bank of the Trent River, Nottingham County. Duna is supposed to have been the name of the Saxon chief of this ham or village, hence the name Duna's ham or Dunham.

"The records cover a period from the Saxon King Edwin about 600 AD on down to the present time. The Dunham family is mentioned frequently in the land grants of Norman times in the early part of the 12th century.

"Previous to the last five or six hundred years family names were unusual, being limited to nobility. Only a few families in England can trace their ancestors in an unbroken line from Norman times, the name Dunham being one of them.

"In a book called "Domesday" dated 1086, we find records of a survey made by William the Conqueror of the land he conquered, the five great manors of Dunham, Bethansall, Mansfield, Arnold and Overton - Dunham being the most important.

"In 1511 (Henry VIII) a Sir John Dunham was Sheriff of Nottingham. The family later went to Scrooby, from whence a John Dunham (7-39) went to Holland and then to Plymouth, Mass." 1

"Mrs. Anna M. (Denham) Lunt is a descendant of an ancient and illustrious family whose immigrant ancestor came to America from Lancashire, England, in the ship "Hope" in 1630, and was admitted a freeman that year. The surname of the family is identical with Dunham, Donham, Dunhame, and is spelled various other ways in the ancient records, the spelling Dunham being more common than Denham until later generations. Mrs. Lunt's line is:

- "(1) Sir John Dunham, or Denham, was born at Dunham-on-the-Trent, England, in 1525
- (2) Sir Thomas Denham, son of Sir John Denham, was born in England in 1560. He lived in Kirklington, England, and had a son, John, of whom further
- (3) Deacon John Dunham, son of Sir Thomas Denham, was born in England in 1589, and came from Lancashire in the ship "Hope" to America, in 1630 and was admitted a freeman in Plymouth, Massachusetts, where he was settled in 1633. . .
- (4) Joseph Denham, son of Deacon John Denham, was born in 1637. . ." 2

Mrs. Lunt, of whom reference is made here, was a descendant of this Joseph (4). The line of ancestry that concerns this study links with Joseph's brother John Dunham (#4) below, whose daughter, Mary, married into another early American family of Hamlin (7-35). (see also 7-40, child #1)

From the research done in the case of Mrs. Lunt, we, too, are able to connect to Sir John Dunham who was born in 1525.

- (1) Sir John Dunham 1525 (7-38)
- (2) Sir Thomas Dunham 1560 (7-38)
- (3) Deacon John Dunham 1589 (7-39)
- (4) John Dunham (Jr.) abt. 1620 (7-40)
- (5) Mary Dunham, who married James Hamlin of Barnstable, Mass. (7-35)

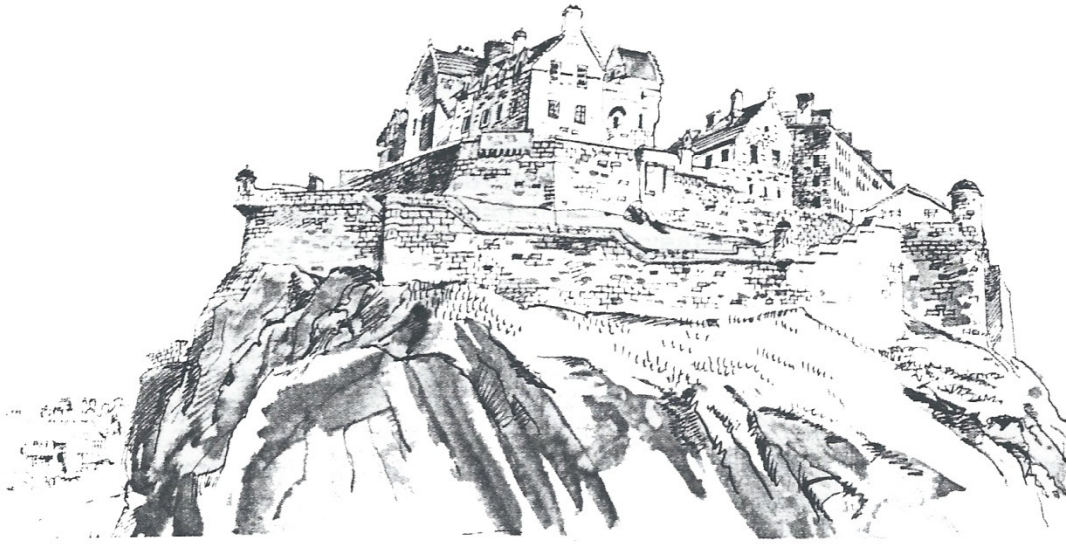
Of all the names of our English ancestors none gives us the right to speak of the ancient conquests as does the name Dunham. When the last of the ruling Romans left in about 400 A.D. England lay open to invaders - first the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, established kingdoms.



Later from the north thundered fleets of fierce Danish and Norwegian Vikings, who pillaged England from the ninth to the eleventh centuries. Viking influence survives today in many of England's place-names.

The last major invasion came in 1066 when Normans of France brought a new, French-speaking nobility. They set about building larger fortresses to stave off rebellion and outside attack. To those castles the restive native English looked for protection. (Illustration on the next page)

For solace in a world marked by hardship, the closeness of death, and the fear of hell, people looked to religion. Churches became centers of social life as well as places of worship. Prayer and learning thrived, first in the monasteries and later in the universities. Here were sown the seeds of law, theology, science, art, and philosophy that today influence man's view of himself and his world. As Americans of today we owe a great debt to our English heritage. Our institutions of learning, our democracy, our culture all reflect the evolving progress made by the thoughts and strivings of our English forebears.



Typical Fortress Castle

We must not avoid any recognition of the area of the Midlands of England that housed the area around Nottingham where the Dunhams lived as early as we have record. If we were to miss the area because of the numberless mills that rose during the industrial revolution, we would miss the lush beauty of the quaint villages with their moorlands and wooded dales and streams where trout splash. Robin Hood's Sherwood Forest still holds out near the city of Nottingham (see map 1 #9).

1. #71 p. 64
2. #72 p. 20