

## Captives and Captivity

### Three Enemy Captives, 1724

1724 August 23 (Sunday). Preach'd all Day. Tit. 2.12. News that Captain Harmon had slain 5 or 6 Score Indians at Norridgewock with Sebastian Ralle the Old Jesuit and brought in his and 26 or 27 Scalps besides and Delivered Three Captives from the Enemy. Among those that were Slain of the Indians Bummageem was one. His wife and Two Sons were taken Captive and brought to York and Piscataqua. And in all we lost not a Man but an Indian, a Cape Fellow. Deo Opt. Max. Gloria Triumphi. Captain Harmon (it is storied) found an Iron Chest with the Jesuit which had many Letters in it, Some from Gentlemen at Boston (O Horrids) Betraying our Country.

### Tarbell: two lads captured at Groton, visit Boston as adults, 1739

1739 April 23 (Monday). N.B. Captain Eager from Court gave advice to Neighbor Rice to go down to Boston to Confer with Two men who had been Captivated from Groton when they were but Ladds and had dwelt with the Indians ever since, whose English names were Tarbell -- Captain Kellogg being likewise at Boston who was ready to serve them as an interpreter.<sup>1</sup>

1739 April 26 (Thursday). N.B. Neighbor Seth Rice came up from Boston where he had Conference with the Tarbells of Groton and with Captain Kellogg upon the Affair of his Brethrens coming down from Canada.

1740 September 15 (Monday). N.B. This Day arriv'd Neighbor Eliezer Rice from Albany with his Brother Ozorongoughton and Mr. Tarbell for a Companion and Interpreter.

### Rice Boys:<sup>2</sup> Visit Westborough, 1740

1740 August 6 (Wednesday). Letter from Mr. Lydius of Albany, informing that the Rices of Canada desire one of their Brethren of New England would go up to Albany and meet them on September 6 next, in order to their making a Visit hither. Nei[gh]bour Seth Rice here with the Letter, himself under Indispositions.

1740 August 19 (Tuesday). Mr. Asher Rice here to take my Advice respecting his Journey to Albany.

1740 September 15 (Monday). N.B. This Day arriv'd Neighbor Eliezer Rice from Albany with his

---

<sup>1</sup>Samuel A. Green, *Groton During the Indian Wars* (Groton, 1883), 109-24.

<sup>2</sup>See *The Story of the Rice Boys, Captured by the Indians, August 8, 1704, as Written by Rev. Ebenezer Parkman, May, 1769* (Westborough: Westborough History Society, 1906), 5-6; Heman Packard DeForest and Edward Craig Bates, *The History of Westborough, Massachusetts* (Westborough: The Town, 1891), 36-40. See [https://www.google.com/books/edition/The\\_Story\\_of\\_the\\_Rice\\_Boys/4TEBAAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=story+of+the+rice+boys&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Story_of_the_Rice_Boys/4TEBAAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=story+of+the+rice+boys&printsec=frontcover).

Brother Ozorongoughton and Mr. Tarbell for a Companion and Interpreter.

1740 September 16 (Tuesday). Mr. Baxter and Madam, Captain Winchester and his wife rode from hence to go to Brimfield. I rode with them as far as Neighbor Seth Rice's, where I saw the Captives.... Towards Evening the Captives came to view to [sic] old House where Mr. Rice us'd to dwell, and they were at my House, Some number of the Neighbours accompanying them.

1740 September 17 (Wednesday). I rode to the South and South west of the town, was at old Mr. Rice's. The Chief had been there and remember'd the Old Gentleman. They were down with him to view the place where he was carry'd away Captive. N.B. I wrote to the Governor [Jonathan Belcher] concerning the Captives.

1740 September 18 (Thursday). The Strangers went from us to Groton to visit Captain Tarbell. They were at my House as they went.

1740 September 24 (Wednesday). Having receiv'd no return from the Governor touching the Captives with us, I waited on his Excellency, who told me the Governor and Council had directed the Secretary to write me an Answer and he had done it, but knew not where it lodg'd, or where it miscarried.... N.B. I wrote to Captain Tarbell.

1740 September 27 (Saturday). Eliezer Rice rode to Groton for Mr. Tarbell in order to his going down, at the Command of the Governor, to Boston.

1740 September 28 (Sunday). Mr. Tarbell came after meeting from Groton.

1740 September 29 (Monday). The Captives went to Boston. In the middle of the Night Mr. Sables came from the Secretary with another Letter concerning the Captives, the first having miscarried. But I had already taken effectual Care.

1740 October 5 (Sunday). The Chief, Rice not well. Was at my House at Eve as he went from his Brother Wards to his Brother Seths.

1740 October 8 (Wednesday). The Captives went off, desiring Prayers in our Congregation for them. N.B. Captain Tarbell of Groton return'd home. I rode 2 or 3 Miles with him to Shew him the Road. N.B. His levelling Rice and his Brother, etc. I visited Mr. Jacob Rice and his Family, and Mrs. Thankful Rice.

1769 March 28 (Tuesday). Wrote his Honour Governour Hutchinson an Account of the *Rice's* Captivity; designing to send it the first good Opportunity.

1769 April 3 (Monday). Old Mr. *Charles Rice* and Lt. Bruce here, to whom, one after the other, I read my Account of the Captivity of the *Rice's*, and they testified to the Truth thereof.

1769 April 11 (Tuesday). Call to take old Mrs. Bradishs Testimony to what I have drawn up

concerning the Captivity of the Rices.

1769 April 12 (Wednesday). [Boston.] Was at His Honours this Eve, and read him my account of the Captivity of the Rice's.

1774 July 28 (Thursday). I made an Extract from my Account of the captivating the 4 *Rices*, to be inserted in Governor Hutchinsons History.

1774 July 29 (Friday). Sent by Mrs. *Whitmore* (who goes to *Milton* to day) to Mr. Thomas *Hutchinson* for the Memoirs of *Phil. de Comines* translated: and sent him my Account of the Captivating of the 4 Rices.

### **Gorham Town, 1746 – “4 killed and 3 carry'd Captive”**

1746 April 22 (Tuesday). We din'd at Brother Samuels and Mr. Jabez Fox of Casco with us, who informs us of the Mischief done by the Indians at Gorham Town. 4 killed and 3 carry'd Captive.<sup>3</sup>

### **Ashuelot – “Captive Deacon Brown and another man,” 1746**

1746 May 14 (Wednesday). More sad news from the Frontiers -- the Indians have wounded Several persons at Colerain and Husack, and led away Captive Deacon [Timothy] Brown and another man from lower Ashuelot.<sup>4</sup>

### **No. 4 (Charlestown, NH) - “one carry'd away Captive,” 1746**

1746 June 9 (Monday). Noah Forbush here who gives me a distinct account of the Skirmish with the Indians at No. 4 last Saturday was fortnight when 5 Englishmen were kill'd, one wounded, and one carry'd away Captive. N.B. Noah was in the hottest Engagement, and broke through the Indians though in a Lane, and 70 Rod from the Fort. So memorable the Goodness of God towards him that he got in Safe.<sup>5</sup>

### **Tainter, Benjamin: captured at Hoosuck, 1746; returned 1747**

1746 June 20 (Friday). After Dinner our Company went off. Sorrowfull News that Benjamin

---

<sup>3</sup>Josiah Pierce, *A History of the Town of Gorham, Maine. Prepared at the Request of the Town* (Portland, Maine: Foster & Cushing, and Bailey & Noyes, 1862), 43-52.

<sup>4</sup>See Nehemiah How, *Of the Captivity of Nehemiah How, Who Was Taken by the Indians at the Great Meadow Fort above Fort Dummer, Where He Was an Inhabitant, October 11th, 1745...* (Boston, 1748), in Samuel G. Drake, *Tragedies of the Wilderness; Or, True and Authentic Narratives of Captives, Who Have Been Carried Away by the Indians from the Various Frontier Settlements of the United States, from the Earliest to the Present Time...* (Boston: Antiquarian Bookstore and Institute, 1841), 135.

<sup>5</sup>"We hear from No. 4. of the Narragansett-Townships, that on the 24th of May past, four Men were killed by the Indians; another was dangerously wounded, and two more are missing...." *The Boston Weekly News-Letter*, June 5, 1746.

Tainter is either kill'd or Carry'd away Captive, by the Indians who have besett Massachusetts Fort at Hoosuck.

1746 June 29 (Sunday). On 2 Tim. 2.3, a. and p.m. N.B. Lieutenant Tainter receiv'd a Letter from Aaron Warrin at Fort Pelham informing and Certifying of the onsett of the Indians on Hoosuck or Massachusetts Fort, and killing or carrying away Benjamin Tainter.

1746 June 25 (Wednesday). I visited Lieutenant Tainter and his Family in their Distress for Benjamin, who, as they conclude, is carry'd away Captive by the Indians.... Frequently bad news respecting our poor Englishmens Sufferings in the Indian Wars. We hear of another Skirmish at No. 4, and that a Trooper Shot himself with his own Pistol.

1747 July 6 (Monday). Letter from Mr. Taylor<sup>6</sup> of Milton to request me to send him all I could collect about Benjamin Tainter, he being about to write to a Gentlemen in Canada.

1747 August 19 (Wednesday). Mrs. Winchester here p.m. tells us that about 170 Captives are Come from Canada to Boston, and that Benjamin Tainter is come, but that Phinehas Forbush is Dead.

1747 August 21 (Friday). Benjamin Tainter, I hear, got home.

1747 August 20 (Thursday). In the morning I rode over to see Deacon Forbush and his Daughter in law the widow of his son Phinehas to mourn with them under their Bereavement and pray'd with them. Went to Lieutenant Tainters to rejoice with them but was somewhat troubled to see Lieutenant's Indifference about going down to Boston for his son.

1747 August 22 (Saturday). Benjamin Tainter came to see me and gave me a narrative of his Captivity and Return.

1747 August 30 (Sunday). P.M. Repeated with some Alterations and additions sermon on Ps. 126, on occasion not only of Benjamin Tainters but a great Number of Captives returning from Canada. Mr. Norton their Chaplain being among them.

**Note:** Tainter spoke of his captivity in the relation that he prepared for admission to the church:

“the Lord has Still bin waiting To be greatious unto me and has (as I humbly hope) by his word and by sum very Remarkable providences awakened me to a sence of my miserable and Undon Estate and condision whilst in a Estate of nature for he hes by his all mighty power apeared for me in amost wonder ful maner when he was plesed to Deliver me at the Time of my being in grait Danger of being killed by the Indins; but God in his infinite mercy apeared for me and delivered me from Death. However God was plesed to order it that I was led into captivity by the Indins: which God was plesed to make (as I humbly hope) to me a mens to stur me up to my

---

<sup>6</sup>The Reverend John Taylor (Harvard 1721), the minister of Milton, 1728-1750. *Sibley*, VI, 569-571.

Duty; God was pleased also to visit me with sickness whilst in captivity but god was pleased to Appear for me in my sickness and Raised me To helth Again and Returned me home in safty which put me upon considering of my duty to God which I have thought to be to come to Him and obey his commandments.”

For Tainter’s relation, see: <http://nehh-viewer.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/#/content/ParkmanEbenezer/viewer/Relations2C20173617742C20undated/125>

### **Hoosuck Fort: English captured at, 1746**

1746 September 11 (Thursday). Captain Maynard here to inform me from Dr. Breck that his Sister and my son were well last Friday was Sennight at Hartford: and he tells me he Saw a Copy of a Letter Sign'd by Mr. John Norton<sup>7</sup> late preacher at Hoosuck Fort which informs that the French and Indians besieg'd their fort, slew Thomas Knowlton and captivated all the rest. Read the account of Canada in six Chapters with an appendix lately published.

### **Forbush, Phinehas, husband of Sarah (Bellows): captured and died in captivity, 1746**

1746 September 15 (Monday). Had Mr. Tomlins Mare to go to Mr. Eleazer Bellows to see his Daughter Forbush in her great Trouble by her Husbands Captivity and sickness of her Child.

1746 December 30 (Tuesday). Dr. Breck here and din'd as he did Yesterday also whilst I was gone from home. Deacon Forbush, Mr. Moses Pratt of Shrewsbury and Mr. Samuel Warrin of Grafton here, and wants a petition to be drawn to be presented to the General Court for their Compassion towards their Captive children and Friends.

1747 August 19 (Wednesday). Mrs. Winchester here p.m. tells us that about 170 Captives are Come from Canada to Boston, and that Benjamin Tainter is come, but that Phinehas Forbush is Dead.

1747 August 20 (Thursday). In the morning I rode over to see Deacon Forbush and his Daughter in law the widow of his son Phinehas to mourn with them under their Bereavement and pray'd with them.

---

<sup>7</sup>John Norton (1715-1778), Yale Class of 1737. According to Franklin Bowditch Dexter, “In 1746 he was acting Chaplain to the soldiers garrisoned in the various forts in the northwestern part of Massachusetts, and on August 15 arrived at Fort Massachusetts, in what is now the town of Adams. Four days later, the fort was besieged by eight or nine hundred French and Indians; and on the 20<sup>th</sup> the feeble garrison of twenty-one men surrendered. Mr. Norton was taken, with the rest, to Canada, and after a year spent in captivity, was exchanged, and arrived at Boston, by sea from Quebec, on August 16, 1747.” Norton published *The Redeemed Captive, Being a Narrative of the Taking and Carrying into Captivity The Reverend Mr. John Norton, When Fort Massachusetts Surrendered to a Large Body of French and Indians, August 20, 1746* (Boston, 1748). Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College with Annals of the College History, October 1701-May, 1745* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1885), 587.

1747 September 11 (Friday). Deacon Forbush and his wife and Mrs. Tainter here, as they return'd from Suffield. N.B. Mr. Nortons Letter to Deacon Forbush concerning his son Phinehas that dy'd at Quebeck.

**Saratoga: "kill'd and carry'd off Captive 40 Soldiers," 1747**

1747 April 16 (Thursday). But whilst I was abroad heard Sorrowful Tidings of the Indians assaulting the Garrison at Saratoga, and they kill'd and carry'd off Captive 40 Soldiers -- and at Kenderhook kill'd and Captivated 11.

**Hinsdells Fort and Fort Dummer, Fort: "Three kill'd and Seven Captivated," 1748**

1748 June 19 (Sunday). Bad News from the Frontiers. Last Thursday 10 men assaulted by a great Body of Indians between Hinsdells Fort and Fort Dummer. Three kill'd and Seven Captivated.

**Woodwell, Mary: collection for redemption, redeemed, 1749-49**

**Note:** Mary, dau. of David and Mary Woodwell, b. 30 April 30, 1730; *Hopkinton VR*, 208. See "Captivity of Mary Fowler of Hopkinton," in Samuel G. Drake, *Tragedies of the Wilderness; Or, True and Authentic Narratives of Captives, Who Have Been Carried Away by the Indians from the Various Frontier Settlements of the United States, from the Earliest to the Present Time...* (Boston: Antiquarian Bookstore and Institute, 1841), 141-43.

1748 November 25 (Friday). N.B. Mr. Benjamin Carryll here with the Petitions of his Brother in Law David Woodwell for a Contribution that he may be able to redeem his Daughter from the Hands of the Indians.

1748 November 27 (Sunday). Read to the Congregation the petition of David Woodwell of Hopkinton.

1748 December 29 (Thursday). N.B. Mr. Caryl from Hopkinton here to see whether we had done anything in Contributing for the Redemption of his Brother Woodwell's Daughter out of Captivity -- whereas this was one part of Deacon Newtons Business with me, to acquaint me that the Deacons and Committee of the Precinct did advise to my publicly proposing it, to our Congregation next Sabbath. I was sorry we were so late; for other Congregations round about had collected already, and they now (who were concern'd) were receiving it, that our Bills may be Exchang'd into Silver.

1749 January 8 (Sunday). Preach'd on 2 Cor. 8.7 (repeated), on occasion of the design'd Contributions for the Redemption of the Daughter of Mr. David Woodwell. But by reason of the Extremity of the Season I (not without advising upon it) thought it prudentest to adjourn it

to another Sabbath. N.B. Deacon Forbush was the person I talked with -- he din'd with me, as did his daughter in law (widow Forbush) as well as master Upham.

1749 January 15 (Sunday). A.M. read the latter part of Genesis 17 and gave some Exposition (as I have done several Times) and I preach'd on Mat. 25.46 latter Clause. Mr. Upham brought his Father to dine with me. P.M. read the latter part of Mat. 17 and deliver'd part of Several Expositions of Mat. 6 but from 2 Cor. 8.7, and after Sermon we Contributed for the Redemption of the Daughter of Mr. David Woodwell of Hopkinton. The Lord bless his word, and accept of our Offering!

1749 January 16 (Monday). N.B. Deacon Newton was with me to count the money gather'd yesterday and it amounted to a few Shillings above 20£ old Tenor.

1749 January 17 (Tuesday). Mr. David Woodwell here on his Return from Deerfield to Hopkinton. He tells us that last week dy'd Mr. Benjamin Doolittle the pastor of Northfield.

1749 January 23 (Monday). P.M. Deacon Newton came to review the counting of the late Contribution for Mr. Woodwell, and he brought somewhat more which a person put into his Hands, who was not at Meeting on the Day of the Contributions -- the whole sum now amounts to £29.11.2.

1749 February 3 (Friday). Mr. David Woodwell here and receiv'd the Contribution of our Congregation for the Redemption of his Daughter out of Captivity, viz. £29.11.11 old Tenor.

1749 July 1 (Saturday). Yesterday and the Day before when I was at Hopkinton there was considerable said in Conversation, of poor Mr. Woodwell that went to Canada for his Daughter: fearing he was lost -- but last Night he came to Captain Maynards and this morning was at my House. But his Daughter was not with him: he had not obtain'd as yet, her Redemption.

1749 October 27 (Friday). N.B. Mr. Carryl from Hopkinton here in behalf of his Brother Woodwell and din'd with us.

1749 November 8 (Wednesday). At Eve Lieutenant Tainter and his son Benjamin brought in Mary Woodwell the Captive return'd from Canada. They left her and she lodg'd here, and Lieutenant brought home my steer which had been missing from Thurstons at Reads Farm, having found him at Brookfield.

1749 November 9 (Thursday). Lieutenant came and kill'd a Cow for me -- weigh'd 16 score. He and Mary Woodwell after Dinner left us, that She might go over to her Father at Hopkinton.

1749 November 12 (Sunday). P.M. Molly Woodwell's thanks were offer'd in our Congregation -- also prayers for no less than Six Children that are sick -- 3 of Neighbour Beriah Rice's -- who have a malignant Fever. The rest have the Canker or Throat Distemper. Read Luke 10 from 21, and ended at 29, and gave the Exposition on Mat. 11.25.26.

1750 January 25 (Thursday). Mrs. Tainter and Daniel Hastings din'd here.... N.B. Word Sent by Mrs. Tainter to Mary Woodwell not to come to live here.

### **How, Nehemiah: death of his wife Margaret, 1758**

1758 January 25 (Wednesday). We had the sorrowful Tidings of the Death of Mrs. *Margaret Miller*, wife of Ensign James Miller. She was heretofore the Wife of Mr. *Nehemiah How* of Grafton, who was carried away Captive from the great Meadows.<sup>8</sup> Her maiden Name was *Willard*, Daughter of Capt. Benjamin Willard. A Woman of many Vertues. Her Death is not only a great Loss to me and mine, but to all the Place. May the god of all Grace Sanctifie it to me and mine, to the bereaved Ensign (who is under great Infirmitys by the Palsey) and to all the Relatives and Neighborhood!

### **Hubbard, Molly – “calls her self an English Captive,” 1760**

1760 April 10 (Thursday). In returning home Saw at Mrs. Nurse's one that calls her self an English Captive, and her name *Molly Hubbard* -- who was taken from No. 4 when she was 5 years old and had been among the French and Indians 15 Year. She says She was brought from Quebeck 4 months agoe. Wants to find her uncle Joseph Hubbard.

### **Dunham, Richard: allegedly “in Captivity ten Years,” 1769**

1769 February 25 (Saturday). There came in also a stranger who says his name is *Richard Dunham*, that he has been in Captivity ten Years etc.<sup>9</sup> Deacon Wood took him home with him.

1769 February 26 (Sunday). Preached a.m. on *Eph. 4.30*, first Clause. *Richard Dunham* desired to give Thanks in the Assembly. I took him home to Dinner and invited to come here after Meeting. P.M. though my forenoon discourse was (as to the preparation) longer than ordinary, yet I did not divide it, but was minded to finish that Subject in this one Exercise more. Yet it took up such Time as I had (consistent with my other Employments) to compose my preparation in so that My Second Exercise was on *Rom. 13.14*, latter part. *Dunham* was here with us at Evening. Deacon *Wood* also came and brought with him Neighbour Zebulun Rice.

<sup>8</sup>See note 4 for How's narrative of his captivity.

<sup>9</sup>"Providence, Feb. 18, 1769. Last week passed through here, in his way to Barnstable, the place of his residence, Richard Dunham, who in the year 1763 was wounded and taken prisoner near Detroit, by a party of French and Indians. He belonged to the N. Eng. forces, and was in a detachment under Capt. Dalzell when taken. During the engagement his jaw bone was shivered by a ball, which passed through his mouth, tore away part of his tongue and destroyed some of this teeth. The ball being poisoned, his wound was never thoroughly cured, and became loathsome to himself. He, with 5 other prisoners, was sold from one Indian nation to another, till they arrived at the Spanish Main, where they endured a long and cruel captivity; frequently seeing their fellow prisoners burnt at the stake, or inhumanly butchered by the savages. Being sent out to hunt with five others, attended by three Indians, in crossing a lake in a canoe, they threw the savages over, and travelling 13 days, got to North Carolina." *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 15 (Apr. 1861), 148, quoting the *Boston Evening Post*, Mar. 6, 1769.



*Dunham* lodges again at Deacon Woods. May God be gracious to the poor Man and grant him spiritual Deliverance!

**Allen, Ethan: narrative of his captivity, 1780**

1780 April 12 (Wednesday). Read Col. Ethan Allen's Narrative of his Captivity....<sup>10</sup>

**Newton, Timothy of Hardwick: son's and son-in-law's "Captivation," 1780**

1780 November 30 (Thursday). Was at Neighbor Newton's where was his Br. Timothy of Hardwick, who gave me a sorrowful account of his son and son-in-law's Captivation by the Indians last August from Barnard's Town, and their wives pregnant, exposed to the woods, destitute: but now at Hardwick.<sup>11</sup>

**Royalton – "Incursion of the Indians and Tories," 1781**

1781 January 7 (Sunday). N.B. Mr. [Curtiss relates?] the Incursion of the Indians and Tories upon *Royalton* when [blank] were killed, [blank] Captivated. Among the last was his own Brother, *Elias Curtis*: He himself was one of those who hastened up to the relief of Town, on Pursuit of the Enemy; and having an Horse, brought off his Brothers Wife and [illegible] Children.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup>A Narrative of Col. Ethan Allen's Captivity, from the Time of His Being Taken by the British, near Montreal, on the 25th Day of September, in the Year 1775, to the Time of His Exchange, on the 6th of May, 1778: Containing His Voyages and Travels...Interspersed with Some Political Observations. Written by Himself, and now Published for the Information of the Curious in all Nations. [Two lines from Franeau's [i.e., Freneau's American Independence]. [Boston] Philadelphia: printed, Boston: re-printed by Draper and Folsom, at their printing-office, at the corner of Winter-Street., M,DCC,LXXIX. [1779]. Evans 16181

<sup>11</sup>"On the 9th of August, 1780, this town was visited by a party of 21 Indians, who made prisoners of Thos. M. Wright, Prince Haskell and John Newton, and carried them to Canada. Newton and Wright made their escape the spring following, and Haskell was exchanged in the fall. They suffered many hardships while prisoners and on their return; but they arrived safely at Barnard, and were all living in 1824, upon the farms from which they were taken." *Gazetteer of Vermont*, Part III, 7, in Zadock Thompson, *History of Vermont, Natural, Civil, and Statistical, in Three Parts, with a New Map of the State, and 200 Engravings* (Burlington: Published for the Author by Chauncey Goodrich, 1842.

<sup>12</sup>Evelyn M. Wood Lovejoy, *History of Royalton Vermont, with Family Genealogies, 1769-1911* (Burlington, Vermont: Free Press Printing Company, 1911, 139 et passim.