



LINNELL FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Rachel Linnell Wynn, Founder and Historian Emeritus

Volume 23 • Issue 1 • March 2010

Where Do Our Linnells Come From In England?

By Dan McConnell

We know that our common ancestor, Robert Linnell, came to America in 1638 with his second wife, Peninah Howes Linnell, and their children, and settled briefly in Scituate, MA to rejoin the congregation of his famous



Northampton Castle

brother-in-law, Rev. John Lothrop. In 1639 they moved again to their permanent home in Barnstable, MA on Cape Cod. They were among the founding settlers of the town.

We know that Robert carried the title, Mister Linnell, in the

Barnstable records, which was not commonly or lightly granted. It was usually reserved for people of some standing in the old country – large landowners, ministers, lawyers, merchants, and the like.

We also know that Robert Linnell belonged to Rev. Lothrop’s congregation in London, as it states that fact in Rev. Lothrop’s published diary. This congregation, which is generally known as the world’s oldest continuous Congregationalist Church, met in secret in the homes of members and was known to meet in various parts of London and Southwark, across the Thames River. According to the surviving records of this congregation, Robert Linnell and his wife joined in 1634.

(Where Do We Come From - Continued on Page 3)



100 YEARS!!!!

Orrell Linnell is celebrating 100 years! Yes, our cousin, Orrell Linnell of West Paris, Maine celebrated his 100th birthday March 16. He has been a staunch supporter of the Linnell Family Foundation with his articles and many contributions over the years. Happy Birthday, Orrell and we hope you know what a great role model you are for all of us.

Editor’s Note: Orrell Linnell has submitted two articles for publication in the LFA Newsletter about life during WWII . These are articles previously published in the Advertiser-Democrat, a local newspaper in Norway, Maine. Orrell’s articles chronicle his life at the Portland Shipyard, during WWII and his travels to the west coast toward the end of WWII. We are unable to publish all of the articles in this copy of the newsletter and will publish the remainder of the articles in future LFA Newsletters.

WWII at the Portland Shipyard

By Orrell Linnell (2008)

(Part 1 of 2)

The year was 1942. The bombing of Pearl Harbor, in 1941 had brought the states into the Second World War in earnest. We had been involved in the war for some time and I had felt rather remote from it, but now it seemed a little different. The sneaky attack part seemed to make it worse.

In wartime, there is a feeling of uncertainty in the air. There is no way of knowing where it may lead. In World War II, submarines made up a big part of the Naval Fleet and likewise with the enemy.

The Brunswick Maine Naval Air Station patrolled the whole Atlantic coast, spotting enemy submarines, and on the west coast giant amphibian planes, based in Oregon, patrolled the coast. Because of Maine’s extensive and irregular coast it was feared the enemy might drop off demolition crews and destroy vital installations or even cities.

(WWII at the Portland Shipyard - Continued on Page 4)

Letter From The Chairman

By Jerry Linnell



Greetings Cousins:

So you think you have had snowstorms in your lifetime? Well, as the ol' saying goes, "You ain't seen nothin" like the ones we had in the good old District of Columbia the early parts of February. My goodness gracious, you would have thought that the good Lord said to Mother Nature, "The politicians aren't doing anything in the Nation's Capital so shut down the government for awhile with a good old fashioned snow storm and maybe that will wake them up a bit."

Well, as usual, it is pretty hard to wake up politicians to anything, but you can believe the storm surely had them delayed going and coming and they had a double dose of their own medicine. They were stranded in town with no place to go just as people all over the country are unemployed with nowhere to go; just as people all over the country have no health insurance and no place to go; just as people all over the country are mad at their congress people and believe their opinions don't matter because they don't have a lobbyist to speak for them.

Well, enough politics and on to the good ol' LFA. As you have probably deduced by now, you are not getting as many newsletters as in previous years and that is because the steering committee has decided to publish three newsletters instead of four, thereby cutting the mailing costs somewhat. And with the new website up and running, [you may now read your newsletter online and not worry about the paper copy.](#) If you wish to discontinue the newsletter being mailed to you, please contact Lori Linnell at membership@linnellfamilyassociation.com and let her know that you are perfectly happy to receive your newsletter via the website. She will email you when the newsletter is available online.

And, of course, any of our youngsters who are looking to move on to college next year or continuing their education beyond year 1, should be sharpening their pencils and digging into their family history to enter their application in the LFA scholarship sweepstakes. You will find

all the information you need on the website www.linnellfamilyassociation.com. Remember, all applications must be received by the Secretary by April 15.

As usual, my wife Jane and I will be traveling to Grand Marais, MN again this summer and we always look forward to seeing as many cousins as possible. This year will be especially important as some of our local cousins and I will meet to further discuss the upcoming family reunion in Grand Marais/Grand Portage in 2012. As always, it is never too early to be thinking about joining as many of your nearest family members as possible in what we have been calling Linnell mini-family reunions at the same time the larger association gathering is taking place. For those of you who have never been to Grand Marais, you will never regret your travels to such a wonderfully serene place. Be sure to book your reservations well in advance if you plan to stay beyond the reunion dates.

Between now and the time of the next family reunion is a good time to dig up some stories about your immediate family (maybe even especially in that northern Minnesota area) and send them on to the editors for inclusion in one of the upcoming newsletters. They are always looking for articles to fill out the pages, so we get a good dollar's worth when it comes to news and entertainment.

In signing off, I say to you that even though we have had lots of snow here and the plows have just not been able to keep up with it, the hot air continues to emanate from this Capitol building. The progress to help people in these tough economic times will be as slow, if not slower, than the plows in D.C.'s harshest winter in a long, long time. But conditions will get better and you will still be proud to be an American. How can we not be after what the good ol' US of A did in the Winter Olympics. Bring on the summer games.

As Gene Autry used to say: "Til we meet again."

Jerry Linnell

(Where Do We Come From - Continued from Page 1)

His wife-to-be, Peninah, had joined on her own in 1632. At that point, we reach a dead end concerning certain knowledge about Robert. He lived in London in the 1630's but before then, we don't know. Nor do we know his parents and where his own family of Linnells had come from in England.

However, there are some intriguing clues about the ancient origin of Linnells in England, and a court case that might lead us there as well. In 1618, there was a trial in Middlesex Sessions [London] concerning one Robert Linnell, who had two horses stolen from him while he was staying at Whitechapel, outside the city walls. It doesn't say if he got his horses back, though the thieves were convicted, but it does give his home as Weedon Bec, Northamptonshire. This may or may not be our Robert, but the records of the area around the City of Northampton, about 60 miles north of London, are very rich and busy with Linnells. Almost certainly, this area is the largest and oldest concentration of Linnell families anywhere in England.

It is also the only area where the name Robert Linnell is common, and we know that English families tended to use the same names of fathers, grandfathers and uncles for generations. We find a Robert Linnell as Church Warden in Weedon Bec from 1607 to 1617, and a will from a prosperous landowner named Robert Linnell in the same place in 1557. This will mentions his brother, Richard Linnell, the Vicar of Tiffield, a graduate of Eton and Cambridge, so the family was prominent. There are other Robert Linnells in the Northampton area, and far more Linnells in general than in any other part of the country. We find a Robert Linnell marrying an Anne Rawson in nearby Blisworth in 1586, another being baptized in Paulspury in 1633, and another marrying at Alderton in 1600. There are a lot of Robert Linnells near Northampton, and very few anywhere else.

So, if it is likely that Northampton is the ancestral home of the Linnells, what do the local histories say about them? In the book, "The History of the Antiquities of the County of Northamptonshire", the Linnells of Kislingbury [also nearby] traces them to Walter de Lunell, a Norman Knight who was granted lands in Farthingstone and Kislingsbury as early as 1181. The name is mentioned down to the present day in these nearby towns but apparently changed to Linnell in more modern times.

One might speculate that a Norman Knight named de Lunel, would have come from France sometime after William The Conqueror and his Norman armies invaded England in 1066. Of course "de" means "from" in French, and there is a town named Lunel in the South of France, but all of that would be pure speculation.

All of the towns mentioned above are within 5-10 miles of each other, South and West of Northampton. It is a beautiful area and one that I plan to visit for future research. Maybe one of us can establish the connection from our Robert Linnell to the Linnells of Northamptonshire. Until then, we'll just have to keep digging.

In Remembrance

In January, we were informed of the sad news that Judy (Anderson) Spelde, passed away on December 22, 2009. Judy was born and raised in Grand Marias, MN and spent most of her life in Coeur d'Alene, ID. Her wishes were to be buried in Grand Marais at the Maple Hill cemetery along with her parents and brothers and sisters who preceded her in death.



The Linnell Family Association was very near and dear to Judy's heart and she attended many Linnell Family Reunions. Most of us will remember her for her work with LFA. Judy served as LFA Treasurer and on the Steering Committee during the earlier years of the association's organization.

She helped gather information of family links in her Samuel Linnell/Alma Anderson branch of the family and of the many cousins, aunts and uncles that are part of our family. In addition she was such an important part of the early LFA organization, taking charge of the financing of the early reunions, helping establish the LFA Newsletter, and suggesting ideas of linkages to our many family groups.

(WWII at the Portland Shipyard - Continued from Page 1)

Locally, the South Portland Shipyard had been turning out Liberty ships at the rate of two per month. All together, it built more than 700, while in the whole nation 2,700 were completed. Thirty-thousand workers were employed at South Portland alone and they came from all over Maine and even from New Hampshire.

Liberty ships were built to join the Naval Fleet in carrying war cargo and sometimes troops were transported, each carrying 500 personnel. They were plain looking ships, but seaworthy. Their top speed was 11 knots.

Portland Harbor was designated as the headquarters of the North Atlantic Fleet during World War II, under the command of Admiral William King. Apparently, Casco Bay had water deep enough to anchor the largest of the fleet's warships. The ships would have to be fueled and the Navy was working on a large fuel depot with underground tanks on Long Island in Casco Bay. There was a lot going on in Portland.

I had worked in the woolen mill at Oxford for five years and although I like my job I felt, perhaps, I should be doing something more directly connected with the war. I was ineligible for the armed services. Perhaps I could stay with my sister who lived in Portland while finding a job and getting settled.

I did go, and I think it was a good decision. As it turned out I worked there about two and a half years. The experience was interesting and in a way, educational. I had always like boats and the water and I got to learn something about them - on the farm it was a rope, on the water it was a line.

I had often been swimming on the ocean beach, when on one day, there would be a narrow strip of beach with a long walk to the water, but the enormity of the tide would be brought home when, on one day, I would have to climb four feet to get aboard the lighter (a large barge) I was working on, and another time climb down a long ladder, built into the dock, to get down to the deck. The difference between country and waterfront was refreshing.

A job was easily found. Ellis Snodgrass, Inc. was a construction company with a small office on Brown's Wharf on Commercial Street. There was access to dock frontage, some working space and limited parking.

The company could construct almost anything needed and building docks and wharves was their big field. There was a large business office uptown to take care of the paperwork, especially when the company began working with the Navy. There had to be a large working yard to accommodate and store equipment with parking available. I was never at this yard. I always reported to and was dispatched from Brown's Wharf.

Ellis Snodgrass was a small man but very active. He was running many jobs at a time and was all over the place to see they were running properly. Rusty Higgins was superintendent of operations and his little office on Brown's Wharf was central to the many operations. He was a big man, friendly and smoked a pipe.

I do not know how many foremen there were as the crews were not dispatched from Brown's Wharf. There were many. One phase of the company's work was building and repairing docks and wharfs. A man named Murray was foreman of that crew with an operating engineer, a fireman and five men, all on working lighter. A lighter, in the usual sense, is a large barge used in loading ships off shore in the case of shallow water harbors. They are moved with a tugboat. Portland would be considered a deep water port so not much lightering was carried on.

Ellis had what I would call a "working lighter". It was a big barge, perhaps 60-70 feet long and proportionately wide. On its stern was an engine house, which housed a huge upright fire tube boiler and a large two drum hoisting engine and a one drum steam engine to operate the huge bull wheel which was the base for the massive wood boom which allows it to swing. Below deck were two large tanks with fresh water for the boiler.

The large deck was ample to store piling for the job to be done. Most piling is wood but some are steel. In the case of wood, piling is driven top down into the mud by two methods. One is a heavy built up hammer dropped from a height, guided in a set of leads to hit the top of the pile and drive it into the mud. Another way is with a steam hammer which is a vibrating hammer and sits on the top of the piling and it works its way into the mud. Either way takes a lot of steam and a fireman is kept quite busy.

To operate the big, heavy boom, which holds the piles or the heavy leads, or to transfer any heavy load from the shore to the deck, requires an enormous and heavily timbered "A" frame to support and stay all the cable shrouds.

(WWII at the Portland Shipyard - Continued on Page 5)

(WWII at the Portland Shipyard - Continued from Page 4)

All this, mostly on the stern, added up to tremendous weight and due to her length and now her age, she was extremely arched in the middle and looked like she might break in two. The crew affectionately named her "Humpback Hattie."

Lonnie Thomason was the operator on the lighter. To manipulate a load on a boom from a vessel afloat requires a special skill and he had worked on such long enough to acquire it. He had grown up in Connecticut and was familiar with waterfront life and some at sea. He had done some ocean towing. He was paid full-time. An older man was fireman and he was content to work only when steam was needed to drive a pile.

I always worked for a man named Rusty and parked my car at Brown's Wharf. I did a lot of Rusty's "knitting work", where an extra man might be needed. Sometimes I might be loaned out to a nearby contractor who might need an extra man in a pinch for a day or two. On my first day of work, I was taken by lobster boat to a little island in Casco Bay just east of Long Island - it may have been Cliff Island. The old hulls of two sailing ships, with their masts removed, had been sunk to block the channels so submarines could not sneak into Casco Bay at high tide. Gaping holes had been cut in their sides and little hand pushed carts on light portable track, loaded with a shale type rock, were dumped in the holds to hold the hulls in place to block the channels.

I joined three other men who were already there. I remember I got tired but it was a wonderful new experience to have the nice long boat ride and see Portland Harbor and the beautiful islands of Casco Bay, I worked on the rock ballast about three days. I never knew when I went to work where I might be going.

Sometimes the dock building crew got to the point where the "Hattie" was not needed for a few days and she would be tied up at the western end of Commercial Street. (The area up where the Scotia Prince has tied in recent years was at that time undeveloped.) A couple of piles had been driven in and the Hattie would be tied up with her boiler secured. This relieved Brown's Wharf for other uses. Lonnie Thomason would be aboard, if to not do more than be reading paperbacks.

Below deck were two large steel tanks to hold fresh water for the boiler. They badly need to be chipped and painted and Rusty took me up there one day to work on them. I worked diligently on them and at noon I would eat my lunch with Lonnie. He saw that I was interested and curious about things marine and he was willing to tell me. He taught me how to tie some knots commonly used around boats and the waterfront. He sort of liked me and we became good friends although he was much older. One day Ellis came along, stood on the rocky bank and shouted over to Lonnie and said, "We have to make a lift. How long to get up steam?" Lonnie replied, "An hour and a half." Ellis said, "I will go look up a fireman". Lonnie replied, "We have a man right here who can take care of it," meaning me and Ellis left.

Lonnie and I gathered up old scrap lumber and got a coal fire going, but it was a large boiler and took some time. When the pressure got up to 80 pounds, Lonnie showed me how to inject fresh water into the boiler. It should be noted that the water has to be injected against 80 pounds of pressure. The boiler's own steam is used to do this.

This boiler had an old inspirator off a railroad locomotive and could sometimes be tricky. A steam valve and a cold water valve are opened slowly and simultaneously and the water is picked up and injected. If the steam valve is opened too fast, the inspirator gets hot and fails. Lonnie says, "There is one thing. If you have trouble injecting water you be dammed sure to call me." I was now a steam boiler fireman. I fired off and on for about three years and never did have a license. It was all in wartime and for the government. No one was ever under the impression that I had one. It was always low pressure steam, under 100 pounds. If it had been super heated steam with 400-500 pounds pressure, it would have been a different story.

When the Hattie was being used to build docks, she was brought back to Brown's Wharf at night. I took over from the day fireman, banked the fire, cleaned out the ashes and then had steam up for 7 in the morning. I was actually a night watchman, checking the lines and seeing that everything was right.

It was a good job, especially in the warm weather. I spruced up the engine house and cleaned up the dirty hoisting engines.

(WWII at the Portland Shipyard - Continued on Page 6)

2010 Linnell Family Scholarship

-
Are you a current high school senior or student of an accredited higher education program and a descendent of Robert Linnell? You could be our next \$1000 scholarship winner! Mail your scholarship application between now and **April 15th** to be eligible for this award.

- ◆ Information about the scholarship and application can be found on the LFA webpage: linnellfamilyassociation.com
- ◆ Questions about the scholarship can be emailed to: scholarshipfund@linnellfamilyassociation.com.

Donations to the LFA Scholarship Fund

-
Your generous donations to the LFA Scholarship Fund allow us to continue to award our deserving Linnell students a scholarship to apply towards their higher education.

(WWII at the Portland Shipyard - Continued from Page 5)

I even bought some gray paint and painted them, drew decals and painted them. It got a little lonesome at times but here was a bunk and I had a radio. The smell of the salt water was a treat to me.

There was a narrow six-foot deck just astern of the engine house and in that was a 24" by 24" trapdoor to the area just under the boiler. I arrived to work one day at 4 pm and did my usual routine chores. About 6 pm I noticed some whiffs of smoke coming from that trapdoor. I raised it and below was full of smoke. When it cleared enough I went down with a flashlight. The boiler had been set on the wood deck over a framework of 10"by 10" wood timbers with a thin coat of cement in the bottom of the ash pit. The boiler had been worked hard that afternoon and heat from the ashes had penetrated that cement and charred those timbers nearly halfway through. Being damp and dank down there with no oxygen, the charring did not erupt into flames. There was nothing aboard like a fire extinguisher. The only thing available was a 10-quart pail with 10 feet of help rope tied to it to bail water from over the side.

I had to draw a pail, lower it down through the trap door, climb down in there myself and slosh the water up over the charred timbers. It was slow work and had to be repeated many times. I had no access to a phone so there was no one to call. I let the banked fire go out. Seven men would be reporting at 7am to work and no steam. Had I done right? Were the timbers weakened enough so the lighter could not be used? I spent an uneasy night.

When Murray arrived in the morning he went below with a flashlight. I was saved. The timbers had to be replaced and the crew set about doing it.

It was a beautiful afternoon and the Hattie was brought back from the work site of dock building and tied up at Brown's Wharf as usual. In those days there were no weather satellites in the sky, not even TV, to give warning of approaching bad weather. Sometime after midnight a bad nor'easter blew up and pounded us hard. The Hattie had a lot of surface exposed to the wind and we were blown against the deck with a tremendous force. As she receded away the bow and stern lines would snap like string. The rigging on the "A" frame would bang and clatter. Our only salvation was the fact we were on the east side of the wharf. The wind first blew us against it. If we had been on the west side, it would have blown us into the channel and up to the bridge in no time. None of the crew ashore seemed aware of the storm and seemed surprised to see us in such a mess in the morning. The two, long spring lines, which hold a vessel from going to and fro along the dock, were the only lines holding it at all. Lonnie commandeered a couple of men and went below where there were a couple of old, big hawser lines and managed to get them tied to the bow and stem. I could never have handled them alone. We came out of it pretty well - nothing badly broken and nothing lost overboard. I would never like to put in another night like that again.

... to be continued in our next newsletter!

Editor's note: This is Part One of Orrell Linnell's article, "WWII at the Portland Shipyard". We will publish Part Two in our next LFA Newsletter and Orrell's second article, "A Landlubber Goes West" in future newsletters.

From the Editors

We invite you to share your stories with our cousins around the globe! Submissions are preferred via email. Please include the text of the article in the body of the email. All pictures should be high-quality JPGs. If you are unable to submit via email, please send regular post to the editors, Brian and Kathy Linnell. Take a look at the Steering Committee list for the contact information.

ALERT!!

If you are willing to read the LFA newsletter on the website versus a hard copy, please send an e-mail to Lori Linnell at membership@linnellfamilyassociation.com and inform her you no longer wish to receive a hard copy of the newsletter. The money we save on printing and postage can be used for other worthwhile projects.

REVISED—Family Website Now Available

Brad Johnson has taken over the maintenance of the LFA web site. The new LFA interactive webpage is now available at "www.linnellfamilyassociation.com" and you will find the most recent newsletters (pictures and graphics in color), the scholarship application forms, pioneer photos, reunion information, family photos, genealogy, membership information, etc. We can now offer you direct online contact with your steering committee and more!

CHECK IT OUT TODAY!

Don't miss out on the latest LFA news.

Linnell Family Record Update

Judy Kathleen Anderson Spelde (118,24,112,878)

died 22 Dec 2009 after an extended illness in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Her wish was to be buried in Grand Marais, Minnesota. Judy was active with the LFA for many years and served on the Steering Committee and as LFA Treasurer.

Lorene Phillis Linnell (118,241,231,157)

died 1 Jan 2010 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Lorene had been an elementary school teacher for many years.

THE LINNELL FAMILY ASSOCIATION

Steering Committee 2009 – 2012

The purposes of the Association are to promote fellowship among Linnell Family members through reunions, the publication of the Linnell Family Newsletter, and the preservation of family records.

CHAIRMAN

Jerry Linnell (w) 202-224-2912
416 Constitution Ave NE (h) 202-498-1586
Washington, DC 20002 chairman@linnellfamilyassociation.com

VICE CHAIRMAN

No one at this time.

SECRETARY

Ann R. Weaver (h) 251-661-3106
4208 Lantern Court (c) 251-599-1711
Mobile, AL 36693 secretary@linnellfamilyassociation.com

TREASURER

J. Scott Linnell (p) 732-747-9764
23 Liberty Knoll Dr. treasurer@linnellfamilyassociation.com
Colt's Neck, NJ 07722

HISTORIAN

Dan McConnell (p) 508-432-5378
31 Ellen's Way historian@linnellfamilyassociation.com
Harwich, MA 02645

NEWSLETTER EDITORS

Brian and Kathy Linnell newsletter@linnellfamilyassociation.com
18645 2nd Ave SW
Seattle, WA 98166

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Lori Linnell (h) 619-271-6595
1610 Piedmont St. (c) 480-242-1136
Chula Vista, CA 91913 membership@linnellfamilyassociation.com

VITAL RECORDS

Pam Dittus vitalrecords@linnellfamilyassociation.com
570 Ableiter Road
Wrenshall, MN 55797

WEB SITE

Brad Johnson website@linnellfamilyassociation.com

SCHOLARSHIP FUND COMMITTEE

Maryan Ainsworth scholarshipfund@linnellfamilyassociation.com
Barrie Westerwick
Gail Wahlstrom

Linnell Family Association
MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION
& RENEWAL

Please register me as a member of the Linnell Family Association in the following category:

Single Life Time — \$125.00 flat fee

Single Annual — \$15.00 per year

Family Annual — \$25.00 per year

\$ _____ *Total Amount Enclosed*

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Checks payable to: **Linnell Family Association**

Send to: Scott Linnell, Treasurer
23 Liberty Knoll Drive
Colts Neck, NJ 07722

BOOK ORDER FORM

The Descendants of Robert Linnell
Second Edition — \$35

Additions and Corrections
1994-1997 — \$8

Prices include postage and handling

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please send me:

_____ **The Descendants of Robert Linnell** \$ _____

_____ **Additions and Corrections** \$ _____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Checks payable to: **Linnell Family Association**

Send to: Scott Linnell, Treasurer
23 Liberty Knoll Drive
Colts Neck, NJ 07722

Linnell Family Association Newsletter

c/o Lori Linnell
1610 Piedmont St.
Chula Vista, CA 91913

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED