

# Joseph Brownell (1699–ca.1773) of Dartmouth, Massachusetts, and Little Compton, Rhode Island: Corrections to the Identities of His Wives and Children

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Genealogical scholars have made conflicting claims about the number and identity of the wives, and the number and mothers of the children, of *Mayflower* descendant Joseph Brownell<sup>5</sup> (*Esther Taber*<sup>4</sup>, *Mary*<sup>3</sup> *Cooke*, *John*<sup>2</sup>, *Francis*<sup>1</sup>), who was born at Little Compton, Rhode Island, 16 February 1699, son of Thomas and Esther (Taber) Brownell.<sup>1</sup>

Close examination of indirect and negative evidence in Quaker meeting records and the vital, land, and probate records for Dartmouth, Massachusetts, and Little Compton, Rhode Island, proves that Joseph Brownell in fact had five wives and eight children. Correlation of this evidence with the time span of each marriage enables his children to be assigned to their correct mothers.

## Conflicting claims

Thomas Brownell and Esther Taber married on 15 November 1698 at Little Compton,<sup>2</sup> and the births of their children, including Joseph, were recorded there.<sup>3</sup> Joseph first appeared at Dartmouth on 24 February 1721/2 when he purchased from Thomas Brownall [*sic*], husbandman of Dartmouth, sixty-one acres, “it being the Northerly Part of the Homestead of the said Thomas Brownall.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Little Compton, R.I., Town Clerk, Births, Marriages, Deaths Transcriptions, 1:83, Thomas Brownell family, entry for Joseph (1699), FHL #7727420, image 309 of 654. The surviving records examined for this family are the 1842 transcript of the original, created by the Town Clerk. The transcript did not indicate Old or New Style dates, so whether 1698/9 or 1699/1700 was meant by the original cannot be discerned.

<sup>2</sup> Little Compton, R.I., Town Clerk, Births, Marriages, Deaths Transcriptions 1:164, marriage entry for Thomas Brownell and Esther Taber (1698), image 354 of 654.

<sup>3</sup> Little Compton, R.I., Town Clerk, Births, Marriages, Deaths Transcriptions, 1: 83–84, Thomas Brownell family, images 309–310 of 654.

<sup>4</sup> Bristol County, Massachusetts, Deeds, 14: 444–445, Thomas Brownall to Joseph Brownall, warranty, 24 Feb. 1721/2. The grantor, Thomas Brownell, was perhaps his father, rather than his brother Thomas Jr. Thomas Jr. was born 15 Feb. 1702 and is unlikely to have owned property of such size along with a “homestead” at age 19 or 20, nor would he have been likely to sell it without intervention of a guardian at such an age. For Thomas

Ralph V. Wood Jr., author of *Francis Cooke of the Mayflower: The First Five Generations* (also known as the “silver book,” and hereinafter as “Wood”), asserts that while at Dartmouth, Joseph Brownell had four children by an unidentified daughter of Peleg Tripp of Dartmouth, whose names were Sarah, Robert, Jeremiah, and Peleg, and four by a second wife, Experience Gifford, whose names were Joseph, Stephen, Mary, and Hannah.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, Frank J. Doherty, author of *The Settlers of the Beekman Patent, Dutchess County, New York* (hereinafter “Doherty”), states that the same Joseph Brownell married at Dartmouth in 1736, Leah Lawton. Doherty states they had at least three children, of whom “tradition” records the name of just one: a son named Joseph, who lived in Dutchess County, New York, married Ruth Butts, and moved to Moulinette, Ontario, Canada.<sup>6</sup>

A third source, *The Brownell Chronicle* newsletter, claims without citing evidence that Joseph Brownell had five wives: an unidentified daughter of Peleg Tripp, plus Leah Lawton, Hannah Bowditch, Anne Hicks, and Experience Gifford.<sup>7</sup> Joseph Brownell—who married Ruth Butts—is identified as his only certain child, through wife Leah Lawton.<sup>8</sup>

In his unpublished genealogy of the Brownell family, Elijah Ellsworth Brownell agrees with the account of five marriages asserted in *The Brownell Chronicle* and with Wood’s assignment of children Sarah, Robert, Jeremiah, and Peleg to the daughter of Peleg Tripp. He differs from Wood in his assignment of children Joseph, Stephen, and Mary to wife Leah Lawton, and Hannah to wife Hannah Bowdish. Unfortunately, he gives no sources to support any of these claims.<sup>9</sup>

Wilbour’s compilation *Little Compton Families*, regarded as a reliable source for Little Compton genealogy, acknowledges Joseph’s birth but does not attempt to trace his marriages or children.<sup>10</sup> Other Brownell genealogies over the last century either do not trace his family, or do not

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Jr.’s birth, see Little Compton, Newport, Rhode Island, Town Clerk, Vital Records, 1:83, Thomas Brownell family, entry for Thomas (1699).

<sup>5</sup> MF5G, 12, Cooke (1999), 365–366.

<sup>6</sup> Frank J. Doherty, *Settlers of the Beekman Patent, Dutchess County, New York: An Historical and Genealogical Study of All the 18th Century Settlers in the Patent, Volume II* (Pleasant Valley, N.Y.: Frank J. Doherty, 1993), 800–801, 803–804.

<sup>7</sup> Bill Brownell, “The Fourth Generation: William Brownell’s Grandchildren,” *Brownell Chronicle: The Lives and Times of the Brownell Family* 3 (July 1996): 6.

<sup>8</sup> Bill Brownell, “Joseph Brownell—American Loyalist,” *Brownell Chronicle: The Lives and Times of the Brownell Family* 3 (July 1996): 5.

<sup>9</sup> Elijah Ellsworth Brownell, “Brownell collection—genealogical records of Brownell and allied families: with alphabetical lists of names appearing in the tax lists of various localities in Dutchess County, New York, 1748, 1753, 1760, 1765, 1770–1779,” FHL #7900736, image 487 of 640, Joseph Brownell (4). The manuscript is undated; E. E. Brownell died in 1968.

<sup>10</sup> Joseph appears as a child in the sketch of Thomas Brownell’s family in Benjamin Franklin Wilbour, *Little Compton Families Vol. 1*, 5th ed. (1967; repr., Baltimore: Clearfield Co., 2007), 89.

mention him at all.<sup>11</sup> His family has not been treated in peer-reviewed journals.<sup>12</sup>

These conflicting claims raise significant questions about the makeup of Joseph Brownell's family. Did Joseph have one, two, or five wives? Did he have one, three, or eight children? To which wife, or wives, were they born?

### **Marriages of men named Joseph Brownell at Dartmouth**

Within Joseph's lifetime, four marriages involving men of the same name were directly recorded at Dartmouth:

- 3 June 1736, Leah Lawton (Dartmouth Monthly Meeting)<sup>13</sup>
- 24 February 1747/8, Hannah Bowdish (Dartmouth Monthly Meeting)<sup>14</sup>
- 24 April 1751, Anne Hix (intentions only) (Dartmouth Town Records)<sup>15</sup>
- 6 March 1755, Experience Gifford (Dartmouth Town Records)<sup>16</sup>

A careful review of evidence reveals, contrary to the competing claims by Wood, Doherty, and others, that all of these marriages involved Joseph, the son of Thomas and Esther (Taber) Brownell.

<sup>11</sup> He is mentioned, but not carried forward, in George Grant Brownell, comp., *Genealogical Record of the Descendants of Thomas Brownell, 1619–1910* (Jamestown, N.Y.: George Grant Brownell, 1910), 42. He is not mentioned in Seymour Brownell, comp., *Genealogical Record of The Descendants of John Brownell 1773 to 1903* (Detroit: Seymour Brownell, 1903), nor in J. Archer Brownell, comp., *Brownell Genealogy from Thomas of Rawmarsh, England* (Fall River, Nova Scotia: J. Archer Brownell, 2000).

<sup>12</sup> Relevant 2022 searches of journals included in “PERiodical Source Index” (PERSI) (FindMyPast.com), AmericanAncestors.org, NewYorkFamilyHistory.org, and *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*.

<sup>13</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth Mass., Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1699–1880, 281, (dartmouthhas.org/uploads/1/0/0/2/100287044/bmd\_1699-1880\_p\_201-301\_signed.pdf), PDF p. 41 of 51.

<sup>14</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1699–1880, 253, PDF p. 27 of 51.

<sup>15</sup> Dartmouth, Mass., Town Clerk, Intentions 1748–1821, Marriages, 1755–1792, unpagged marriage intentions entered chronologically starting on eleventh page of entries, intentions entry, Joseph Brownell–Anne Hix, 24 April 1751, FHL #4279436, image 209 of 429.

<sup>16</sup> Dartmouth, Mass., Town Clerk, Intentions 1748–1824, Marriages, 1755–1792, unpagged marriages entered chronologically, marriage entry, Joseph Brownell–Experience Gifford, 6 March 1755, FHL #4279436, image 220 of 429.

## Marriage to Leah Lawton

The first marriage for a Joseph Brownell on record at Dartmouth appears in the records of the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends, or Quakers,<sup>17</sup> rather than in town records.<sup>18</sup>

Quakers believed that neither religious nor civil authorities could marry a couple, but rather only the man and wife could do so through mutual agreement before God.<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, the Dartmouth Meeting adopted a 1691 rule from the New England Yearly Meeting prohibiting marriage by priests and outside authorities; it reaffirmed the prohibition in 1741 and 1744.<sup>20</sup> The Meeting also adopted rules for the process by which members could marry. First, the couple would bring their intent to marry before the Women's and Men's meetings at the monthly meeting for publication at two successive meetings. A committee from each would then examine the bride and groom to ensure he or she was a Quaker, had consent of parents or guardians, had settled all pre-existing contracts, was free of scandal, and was generally of good character. Once "cleared" by the committee, the couple would stand before a "grave & Publick Assembly of Friends & Relations" and commit themselves to one another in marriage.<sup>21</sup> Following the couples' commitment, relatives and friends would sign a certificate attesting that the marriage took place, and it was recorded in the Meeting records.

In keeping with the rules of the Dartmouth Meeting, Joseph Brownell and Leah Lawton declared their intentions to marry before the Men's Meeting on the 15th day of the 1st month [March] 1735/6; William Wood and Joseph Tripp were assigned to evaluate Joseph's

<sup>17</sup> The Dartmouth Monthly Meeting began in 1699, and during Joseph's lifetime it was inclusive of the Massachusetts Quaker communities at Acoaxet, Acushnet, Allen's Neck, Apponegansett, Centre, New Bedford, New Swansea, Newtown, Bedford, Nosquechuck, Rochester, and Smith's Neck. See "Dartmouth Monthly Meeting (P/G/U) (South Dartmouth, Mass.);" in Richard D. Stattler, comp., *Guide to the Records of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in New England* (Providence: Rhode Island Historical Society, 1997), 43–44.

<sup>18</sup> No entry in *Vital Records of Dartmouth Massachusetts to the Year 1850, Vol. 2—Marriages* (Boston: NEHGS, 1930), reflecting marriages in Dartmouth town records.

<sup>19</sup> Marilyn Dell Brady, "Early Quaker Families, 1650–1800," *Friends Journal*, 1 June 2009 ([FriendsJournal.org/2009060/](http://FriendsJournal.org/2009060/)), para. 7.

<sup>20</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Christian and Brotherly Advices Given Forth from time to time By the Yearly Meeting In London Alphabetically Digested under Proper Heads" [Book of Discipline], p. 147, section "near kin by Priests mixt marriages & too Early in time" [1691], 152–153, section "those who marry by the Priests to be Dealt with" (1741), 153–154, section "those who Do Marry in any manner Contrary to our Rules to be Dealt with" (1744), and 154, section "To deal in due time with such & all other Disorderly Walkers" [1744], ([dartmouthhas.org/uploads/1/0/0/2/100287044/book\\_of\\_disipline\\_1\\_p\\_126-231\\_signed.pdf](http://dartmouthhas.org/uploads/1/0/0/2/100287044/book_of_disipline_1_p_126-231_signed.pdf)), PDF pp. 9, 12–13 of 42.

<sup>21</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Book of Discipline, 146, section "[marriages] to be twice proposed at least to the meetings and accomplished publicly" (1675), and 148, section "to be proposd to two Monthly Meetings or to two two [*sic*] weeks meetings" (1692), PDF pp. 9, 10 of 42.

clearness.<sup>22</sup> The couple declared their intentions to marry before the Women's Meeting on the 14th day of the 2nd month [April] 1736; Ruth Tucker and Rebecca Russell were chosen to evaluate her clearness.<sup>23</sup> They received approval from the Men's Meeting at its next meeting on the 17th day of the 3rd month [May] 1736,<sup>24</sup> and from the Women's Meeting at its meeting the same day.<sup>25</sup> Their marriage on the 3rd day of the 4th month [June] 1736 was recorded as follows [emphasis added]:

**Joseph Brownell the son of Thomas Brownell and Esther his wife** of Dartmouth in the province of the Massachusetts bay in New England and Leah Laton, daughter of George Laton and Mary his wife of Dartmouth afore s'd were married this third day of the fourth month called June and in the year according to the English account one thousand seven hundred and thirty six. . . .<sup>26</sup>

The marriage record gives Joseph's parents as Thomas and Esther Brownell. The only Joseph Brownell recorded in vital records at either Dartmouth or Little Compton, or even more broadly in Massachusetts or Rhode Island, as having parents named Thomas and Esther, was the son of Thomas and Esther (Taber) Brownell.<sup>27</sup> Their other son, Thomas Brownell Jr., had a wife at the time named Hannah, eliminating him as a candidate father.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., The Records of the Discipline of Friends, In the Monthly Meeting of Dartmouth Containing a Register of the Several Transactions, for the Affairs of the Church; From the Tenth Month A.D. 1727, Old Stile, To the Ninth Month A.D. 1762 New Stile, Inclusive [Men's Meeting minutes, 1727–1762], 101, 15th day 1st month [March] 1735/6 ([dartmouthhas.org/uploads/1/0/0/2/100287044/men\\_1727-1762\\_p\\_60-123\\_signed.pdf](http://dartmouthhas.org/uploads/1/0/0/2/100287044/men_1727-1762_p_60-123_signed.pdf)), PDF p. 21 of 32. For a guide to interpreting the Quaker calendar, compared to Gregorian and Julian calendars, see “Quaker Calendars & Dates: In Just Two Days, Tomorrow Will be Yesterday,” 22 May 2014 ([Ancestry.com/corporate/blog/quaker-calendars-dates-in-just-two-days-tomorrow-will-be-yesterday/](http://Ancestry.com/corporate/blog/quaker-calendars-dates-in-just-two-days-tomorrow-will-be-yesterday/)).

<sup>23</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Women's Meeting minutes [1699–1782], 93, monthly meeting minutes, 14th day 2nd month [April] 1736, PDF p. 50 of 54. Leah was probably of majority age (21) at her marriage, calculating to a birth by 1715, though no birth record is found.

<sup>24</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Men's Meeting minutes, 1727–1762, 102–103, monthly meeting minutes, 17th day 3rd month [May] 1736, PDF p. 22 of 32.

<sup>25</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Women's Meeting minutes [1699–1782], 93, monthly meeting minutes, 17th day 3rd month [May] 1736, PDF p. 50 of 54.

<sup>26</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1699–1880, 281, marriage, Joseph Brownell-Leah Caton [Lawton], 3rd day of the 4th month [June] 1736, PDF p. 41 of 51. The surname Lawton is variously spelled Lawton, Laton, and Caton within the same record.

<sup>27</sup> A search of Massachusetts (inclusive of Dartmouth) and Rhode Island vital records (inclusive of Little Compton) show no other such couple and no other such birth. For records reviewed, see *Vital Records of Dartmouth, Massachusetts, Town and Vital Records, 1620–1988* (Ancestry.com), and Arnold, *VRR*.

<sup>28</sup> He and Hannah were married by 22 July 1732, when their daughter Hannah was born. They were still married on 13 Nov. 1738, when Hannah released her right of dower in a sale of land at Dartmouth by Thomas to Joseph. For daughter Hannah Brownell's birth

The matching parents for Joseph in the Little Compton birth record and the Dartmouth Meeting marriage record, combined with the absence of another candidate, leaves Thomas Brownell and Esther Taber's son as the only Joseph Brownell of Dartmouth fitting the description who could have married Leah Lawton.

The marriage of Joseph Brownell to Leah Lawton is acknowledged by Doherty but not mentioned by Wood.<sup>29</sup>

### Marriage to Hannah Bowdish

The second marriage for a Joseph Brownell on record at Dartmouth also appears in the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting records rather than in town records.<sup>30</sup>

According to minutes of the Women's Meeting, Joseph Brownell and Hannah Bowdish declared their intentions to marry on the 17th day of the 11th month [January] 1747[/8]; Experience Smith and Hannah Tucker were appointed to assess Hannah's clearness.<sup>31</sup> The next day, they, along with two other couples, declared their intentions before the Men's Meeting. Jedediah Wood, Nathaniel Parker, Peleg Huddleston, Benjamin Wing, Jabez Barker, and James Sherman were appointed to assess the men's clearness.<sup>32</sup> The three couples received approval from the Men's Meeting on the 15th day of the 12th month [February] 1747/8. James Barker, John Howland, Joseph Tucker, Abraham Tucker, Jonathan Wood, and Edward Cornell were appointed to ensure the marriages took place according to the rules set forth by the Meeting.<sup>33</sup> They received clearance from the Women's Meeting on the 21st day of the 12th month [February] 1747[/8].<sup>34</sup> Their marriage on 24 February 1747/8 was recorded as follows [emphasis added]:

. . . **Joseph Brownell son of Thomas Brownell** of Dartmouth in the county of Bristol in the Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England and Hannah Bowdish daughter of William Bowdish and Mercy his wife of Dartmouth . . . this twenty fourth day of the

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record, see *Vital Records of Dartmouth*, 1:50. For deed, see Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds, 27: 420–421, Thomas Brownell to Joseph Brownell, quitclaim, 13 Nov. 1738.

<sup>29</sup> Doherty, *Settlers of the Beekman Patent*, 800–801; *MF5G*, 12, Cooke (1999), 365–366.

<sup>30</sup> *Vital Records of Dartmouth*, 2:90.

<sup>31</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Women's Meeting minutes [1699–1782], 120, 17th day of the 11th month [Jan.] 1747[/8], PDF p. 9 of 54. Hannah was born April 1717 (*Vital Records of Dartmouth* 1:44), making her age thirty at the marriage.

<sup>32</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Men's Meeting minutes, 1727–1762, 219, 18th day of the 11th month [Jan.] 1747/8, PDF p. 16 of 32.

<sup>33</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Men's Meeting minutes, 1727–1762, 220, 15th day of the 12th month [Feb.] 1747/8, PDF p. 17 of 32.

<sup>34</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Women's Meeting minutes [1699–1782], 120, 21st day of the 12th month [Jan.] 1747, PDF p. 9 of 54.

month called February in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty seven or eight . . .<sup>35</sup>

Among the twenty-four signing witnesses to the marriage were Ebenezer Tripp and Stephen Willcock, who had also been among the twenty-eight witnesses to the marriage of Joseph Brownell and Leah Lawton.<sup>36</sup>

The marriage record named only Joseph's father, Thomas Brownell. Vital records for Massachusetts and Rhode Island record only one birth for a Joseph Brownell to a father named Thomas, and that is the previously mentioned birth of Joseph Brownell to Thomas and Esther (Taber) Brownell.<sup>37</sup> Their son, Thomas Brownell Jr., had no known child named Joseph.<sup>38</sup>

For Thomas Brownell and Esther Taber's son Joseph Brownell to have been the husband of Hannah Bowdish, Leah Lawton must have died or divorced Joseph prior to January 1747/8, when he and Hannah first declared their marriage intentions. Her death was either not recorded or the record has been lost, and no marked grave has been found.<sup>39</sup> She was cited for a "miss step" in the Women's Meeting minutes on the 20th day of the 10th month [December] 1742.<sup>40</sup> She was still living on 15 February 1742/3, when she released her right of dower in a sale of land at Dartmouth by Joseph Brownell to George White, yeoman of Dartmouth.<sup>41</sup> She died by 10 February 1749/50,

<sup>35</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1699–1880, 253, marriage, Joseph Brownell-Hannah Bowdish, 24 Feb. 1747/8, PDF p. 27 of 51.

<sup>36</sup> For Joseph's marriage to Leah Lawton, see Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1699–1880, 281, marriage, Joseph Brownell-Leah Caton [Lawton], 3rd day of the 4th month [June] 1736, PDF p. 41 of 51.

<sup>37</sup> A search of Massachusetts (inclusive of Dartmouth) and Rhode Island vital records (inclusive of Little Compton) show no other such birth. For records reviewed, see *Vital Records of Dartmouth, Massachusetts, Town and Vital Records, 1620–1988*, and Arnold, *VRR*.

<sup>38</sup> For Thomas Brownell Jr.'s children's names, see Dartmouth Records, 1667–1844, 24, FHL #775496, image 20 of 408.

<sup>39</sup> No entry found in *Vital Records of Dartmouth, Vol. 3—Deaths*, which includes the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting vital records, and the known burials at Apponogansett Meetinghouse Burial Ground. No entry found elsewhere within Rhode Island Vital Records, FindAGrave.com, and the *Rhode Island Historical Cemetery Commission* database.

<sup>40</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Women's Meeting minutes [1699–1782], 109, 10th month [Dec.] 1742, PDF p. 4 of 54.

<sup>41</sup> The land was described as bounded by the homesteads of George White, William Davel, and Edward Cornell. Joseph had purchased the land on 20 Nov. 1738 from his brother, Thomas Brownell Jr. In the 1747/8 deed to George White referencing Joseph Brownell's original 1738 purchase from Thomas Brownell [Jr.], Thomas's "wife," Hannah, signed the deed, thereby identifying Thomas Jr. as the seller rather than his father, Thomas Sr. For the 1742/3 sale to White, see Bristol County, Massachusetts, Deeds, 68 (1789–1790): 343–344, Joseph Brownell to George White, warranty, 15 Feb. 1742/3, FHL #7442233, image 193 of 596. For the 1738 deed to Joseph Brownell, see Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds, 27 (1737–1739): 420–421, Thomas Brownell to Joseph Brownell, quitclaim, 13 Nov. 1738, FHL #7442190, image 226 of 623.

when her father, George Lawton, yeoman of Dartmouth, identified her in his will as “my second Daughter Leah Brownell Being dead. . . .”<sup>42</sup>

Together, these documents show that Thomas and Esther (Taber) Brownell’s son Joseph Brownell married Hannah Bowdish after Leah Lawton’s death. First, Joseph, Hannah, and Leah were all members of the Dartmouth Meeting, and the marriage ceremonies shared witnesses in common, suggesting the same groom. Second, the absence of records for any other contemporary Joseph Brownell of Dartmouth born to parents with the same names points to Thomas and Esther’s son as the only candidate for both marriages. Finally, the deed of 24 February 1742/3 combined with George Lawton’s will on 10 February 1749/50 establish that Leah Lawton died between those dates, providing Joseph with a plausible opportunity to marry Hannah Bowdish on 24 February 1747/8.

The marriage of Joseph Brownell to Hannah Bowdish is not mentioned by Wood or Doherty.<sup>43</sup>

### Marriage to Anne Hix

The next marriage recorded for a Joseph Brownell at Dartmouth is an intention to marry Anne Hix, entered in Dartmouth town records on 24 April 1751:

the intention of marriage between Joseph Brownell and Anne Hix  
both of Dartmouth was entered with me the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month called  
April 1751

Jabez Barker town clerk<sup>44</sup>

Their marriage was subsequently performed on 10 May 1751 by Samuel Wilbor, Justice, at Little Compton.<sup>45</sup> The parents of the parties were not named in either the intentions or marriage records.

Since the Dartmouth Meeting prohibited marriage by civil authority, the two records suggest that the Joseph Brownell who married Anne Hix could not be the Joseph Brownell who had previously married Leah Lawton and Hannah Bowdish. However, indirect evidence from probate records and Dartmouth Meeting records identify them as the same man.

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<sup>42</sup> Bristol County, Massachusetts, probate records, estate of George Lawton, Dartmouth, 1752; will, dated 10 Feb. 1749/50, proved 2 May 1753, FHL #7702691, images 992–994 of 1406.

<sup>43</sup> MF5G, 12, Cooke (1999), 365–366; Doherty, *Settlers of the Beekman Patent*, 800–801.

<sup>44</sup> Dartmouth, Mass., Town Clerk, “Intentions 1748–1821, Marriages, 1755–1792,” intentions entry, Joseph Brownell–Anne Hix, 24 April 1751.

<sup>45</sup> Joseph Brownell and Anna Hix, “both of Dartmouth,” were married 10 May 1751 by Samuel Wilbor, Justice. Little Compton, R.I., Town Clerk, “Births, Marriages, Deaths Transcriptions,” 2:185, marriage entry, Joseph Brownell–Anna Hix (1751), FHL #7727420, image 375 of 654.



Anne was the widow of William Hix of Dartmouth, whom she had married on 30 April 1730 at Little Compton as “Hannah Cory.”<sup>46</sup> She was appointed administrator of his intestate estate on 8 April 1745.<sup>47</sup> On 5 October 1752, Anne signed a guardianship petition that identified her as the wife of Joseph Brownell of Dartmouth [emphasis added]:

... your Petitioner **Anna Brownell Late Anna Hix** hath sum time past taken Letters of Guardianship for three of her children namely Anna Hix Durfey Hix and Marcy Hix children of William Hix <sup>deceased</sup> and since I have taken s<sup>d</sup> Letters of Guardianship **I have ben married to Joseph Brownel of s<sup>d</sup> Dartmouth** so that I am now in no Capasity to take care of s<sup>d</sup> children neither of theyr estates therefore Pray that I may be dismist from my s<sup>d</sup> trust of Guardin to s<sup>d</sup> children and sum other sutabile Person or Persons appointd in my stead. . . .<sup>48</sup>

Even though Joseph and Anne’s civil marriage intentions were not registered until April 1751, they had represented themselves as husband and wife in probate proceedings on William Hix’s estate nearly a full year earlier. On 12 June 1750, they filed a petition with the Bristol County Probate Court using the surname “Brownell” in both of their signatures [emphasis added]:

... Whereas In the Settlement of the Estate of William Hix Late of Dartmouth deceased there was Several omissions in the accompt Exhibited by the Widow Administratrix in her own favor Which ought to have ben laid before the judge Where upon pray that the Matter May be Suspended until We can be better advised in the affar and then We Shall desir to proceed a division as Soon as possible.

**Joseph Brownell**  
**Ann Brownell**<sup>49</sup>

Since Quakers did not participate in civil marriage, recording a marriage and its witnesses within meeting records was critical when it came to probate matters. Without written proof of a marriage, legitimacy

<sup>46</sup> William Hix and Hannah Cory “both of Dartmouth” were married 30 April 1730 by Sylvester Richmond. Little Compton, R.I., Town Clerk, “Births, Marriages, Deaths Transcriptions,” 2: 171, marriage entry, William Hix–Hannah Cory (1730), FHL #7727420, image 361 of 654.

<sup>47</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., probate records, estate of William Hix, Dartmouth (1745), letters of administration and bond, Anne Hix, 8 April 1745, FHL #7702814, image 223 of 1524.

<sup>48</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., probate records, estate of William Hix, Dartmouth (1745), guardianship petition of Joseph Brownell and Ann Brownell, 5 Oct. 1752, FHL #7702814, image 218 of 1524.

<sup>49</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., probate records, estate of William Hix, Dartmouth (1745), petition of Joseph Brownell and Ann Brownell, 12 June 1750, FHL #7702814, image 236 of 1524. Later, on 5 Dec. 1750, Anne was referred to in the inventory of William Hix’s estate three times as Ann Hicks or Hix rather than as Ann Brownell; however, none of those occurrences were statements by her, suggesting the use of the name Hicks/Hix was made by the writer for clarity. For inventory, see Bristol Co., Mass., probate records, estate of William Hix, Dartmouth (1745), inventory, 5 Dec. 1750, FHL #7702814, images 215–216 of 1524.

of children and inheritance of property could be disputed under civil law.<sup>50</sup> The Dartmouth Meeting was scrupulous about enforcing standards for proof of marriage in order to protect members' legal rights. In 1691, the Meeting ordered the "Due & Orderly Publication" of marriage intentions to the membership, and the conduct of marriages at meetings specifically appointed for the purpose, "as it has been lately made appear in the <sup>eye</sup> of the Government and well resented."<sup>51</sup> In 1692, the Meeting reminded members that the purpose of the rules for marriage were so that "friends may own & Stand by their Proceedings befor the Government & all in Authority which otherwise they cannot . . . being a Matter greatly Enquired into truly Warrantable and to be stood by."<sup>52</sup> In 1748, the Meeting published guidance urging members to be "very Careful" to ensure that each marriage certificate receive a tax stamp "as Required by Law."<sup>53</sup>

If the Joseph Brownell who married Anne Hix was the same Joseph Brownell who belonged to the Dartmouth Meeting, he would have been well aware of its prohibition against marriage by civil authority as well as the important reasons for recording marriage within the Meeting. Joseph and Anne's 1750 petition therefore suggests two possibilities: either Joseph and Anne had married in the Quaker tradition by 1750 and were compelled for some extraordinary reason also to register their marriage by civil authority in 1751, or they had been cohabitating *as though* husband and wife for a year but were somehow prevented from marrying within the Meeting and decided to do so by civil authority in 1751 instead. If the former were true, then one would expect to find notice of their intent to marry published in the minutes of two successive meetings of the Dartmouth Meeting where Joseph belonged, along with clearance from the examining committees, and a record of their marriage ceremony with witnesses. None of these records exist.<sup>54</sup>

Instead, Dartmouth Meeting minutes record that at a meeting on the 20th day of the 3rd month [May] 1751, a complaint was brought against member Joseph Brownell for "marrying out":

. . . whereas Joseph Brownell hath gone out and married out of the good order of Friends, therefore this meeting appoints Jonathan Wood

<sup>50</sup> Brady, "Early Quaker Families, 1650–1800," para. 7.

<sup>51</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Book of Discipline, 147, Concerning orderly Proceedings (1691), PDF p. 9 of 51.

<sup>52</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Book of Discipline, 148, "to be proposd to two Monthly Meetings or to two two [*sic*] weeks meetings" (1692), PDF p. 10 of 51.

<sup>53</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Book of Discipline, 155, entry on marriage certificate stamps (1748), PDF p. 13 of 51.

<sup>54</sup> No entry for marriage intentions found in Dartmouth Meeting Men's Meeting minutes or Women's Meeting minutes, and no entry found in its marriage records, from 1744—the year before Anne was appointed administrator of William Hix's estate—through 1752—the year after Joseph and Anne filed intentions with the Dartmouth town clerk.

and Edward Cornell to talk with him to see whether he will make any acknowledgement.<sup>55</sup>

Although Anne's name does not appear in the record, the May meeting was the very first to be held following the May 10th marriage by Joseph Brownell and Anne Hix at Little Compton, suggesting the groom was the Dartmouth Meeting member against whom the complaint was brought.

Complaints for "marrying out" occurred when a member married a non-Quaker. The Dartmouth Meeting had steadily increased its penalty for marrying out in the years leading up to Joseph and Anne's marriage. In 1741, it adopted rules urging all Friends upon hearing of intentions by a member to marry out to "use their utmost endeavours" to prevent it and, if unsuccessful, to condemn the offender before the Meeting. A condemned member could no longer worship with the Meeting, financially contribute to it, seek its financial support, or join any other Quaker congregation. Despite these penalties, the 1741 rule allowed for "the Charity of Friends in their Private Capacities" towards the condemned.<sup>56</sup> That changed in 1744, when the Meeting replaced the 1741 rule with instructions also to disavow personally anyone who married out.<sup>57</sup>

Anne had represented herself as a Quaker at the inventory of William Hix's estate on 5 December 1750, when she ". . . made her Solemn affirmation (she being one of those People Called Quakers). . . ."<sup>58</sup> However, neither Anne nor her prior husband William Hix appear in the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting records, indicating she was not a member.<sup>59</sup> Her absence from them instead suggests that Anne began identifying as Quaker only after entering into her relationship with Joseph Brownell but had not been accepted into fellowship by the Dartmouth Meeting. Since Anne didn't belong to the Meeting, approval of her marriage to Joseph would have been impossible, making declaration of their intentions before it futile.

Anne's lack of bona fides as a Quaker was not her only offense. Quakers also required that a widow who wished to remarry first ensure that the inheritance of any children by her deceased husband was

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<sup>55</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Men's Meeting minutes, 1727–1762, 20th day of the 3rd month [May] 1751, 256, PDF p. 3 of 31.

<sup>56</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Book of Discipline, 152–153, "those who marry by the Priests to be Dealt with" (1741), PDF p. 12 of 51.

<sup>57</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Book of Discipline, 154, "To deal in due time with such & all other Disorderly Walkers" (1744), PDF p. 13 of 51.

<sup>58</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., probate records, estate of William Hix, Dartmouth (1745), inventory of estate, 5 Dec. 1750, FHL #7702814, images 216–217 of 1524; Anne's affirmation appears on image 216.

<sup>59</sup> Neither William nor Anne's names appear in the Dartmouth Meeting Men's Meeting minutes or Women's Meeting minutes from their marriage on 30 April 1730 to the time of Anne's remarriage to Joseph in April 1751. Neither appeared as witness to any marriage in the same period. Neither their children's births nor William's death were recorded in Meeting records.

settled.<sup>60</sup> When Joseph and Ann married in 1751, William Hix's large estate—which included a lucrative toll bridge—had been in probate for six years and was ongoing, leaving his children's inheritance still very much in question. Two more years passed before an estate division was proposed on 28 May 1753, and another year before it was approved by the court on 5 March 1754.<sup>61</sup> Joseph and Anne's inability to marry within the Quaker tradition on account of Anne's apparent lack of membership would have left them without the proof of marriage they needed as part of settling her and her children's inheritance with the court. As probate of William Hix's estate dragged on, civil marriage would have been an obvious way for Joseph and Anne to create a legal record of their marriage for inheritance purposes.

Unfortunately for Joseph, his choice to marry Anne was a three-pronged violation of the Dartmouth Meeting's prohibitions: against marrying out, against civil marriage, and against remarriage to a widow who had not settled her children's inheritance. The inevitable consequence was his disownment from the Meeting.

The decision to separate themselves from Joseph must have been a difficult one for the Dartmouth Meeting members; a judgment on the consequences for Joseph's offense was postponed at each of the next five monthly meetings.<sup>62</sup> Subsequently, on the meeting held the 18th day of the 9th month [November] 1751, the society resolved to draw up condemnation, "... whereas Joseph Brownell hath been dealt with from time to time, but we can find no inclination in him to make up the matter. . . ."<sup>63</sup> Finally, at the meeting held on the 16th day of the 10th month [December] 1751, Joseph was expelled from the meeting:

... Whereas Joseph Brownell of Dartmouth in the County of Bristol in the Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, being one that hath made profession for these many years with us the People called Quakers, yet for want of keeping steady to his profession hath of late contrary to our good order married in the common way of other

<sup>60</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Book of Discipline, 144, "outward estates to be settled before engaged" (1690), PDF p. 9 of 51. For further discussion of Quaker rules for widows, see Dorothy A. Mays, "Courtship," in *Women in Early America: Struggle, Survival, and Freedom in a New World* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2004), 90. Also, Brady, "Early Quaker Families, 1650–1800," para. 5.

<sup>61</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., probate records, estate of William Hix, Dartmouth (1745), division of estate, written 28 May 1753, approved 5 March 1754, FHL #7702814, image 227–232 of 1524. For history of Hix's Bridge, see Jenny O'Neill, "The Region Near Hix Bridge By Gladys Gifford Kirby Published in 1925," *Westport Historical Society* (wpthistory.org/2019/01/the-region-near-hix-bridge-by-gladys-gifford-kirby-published-in-1925/), 23 Jan. 2019.

<sup>62</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Men's Meeting minutes, 1727–1762, 24th day of the 4th month [June] 1751, 256, the 15th day of the 5th month [July], 258, the 19th day of the 6th month [Aug.] 1751, 258, the 16th day of the 7th month [Sept.] 1751, 261, and the 21st day of the 8th month [Oct.] 1751, 261, PDF pp. 3, 4, and 5 of 31.

<sup>63</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Men's Meeting minutes, 1727–1762, 18th day of the 9th month [Nov.] 1751, 262, PDF p. 6 of 31.

people, for which breach of our wholesome order we can do no other for the clearing of the Blessed Truth but give forth this as a Testimony against him, having cleared ourselves, on advice and counsel in that affair, and do deny him the said Joseph Brownell to be one in unity with us, yet only desiring that he may come to a sense of the outgoing and find mercy. . . .”<sup>64</sup>

Further evidence from the Dartmouth Meeting records as well as land records also identifies Joseph Brownell who married Anne Hix as the son of Thomas and Esther (Taber) Brownell:

First, the text of the Meeting’s 1751 condemnation of Joseph referred to him as one who “hath made profession for these many years with us.” By comparison, Joseph, son of Thomas and Esther, had been a member of the Dartmouth Meeting since at least his marriage to Leah Lawton in 1736.

Second, land records show that Jonathan Wood and Edward Cornell, who were assigned by the Meeting to talk Joseph out of marrying Anne, were neighbors of Thomas Brownell and Esther Taber’s son Joseph Brownell. On 2 September 1728, Jonathan Wood had sold land at Dartmouth to Joseph Brownell, yeoman of Dartmouth, bordering in part the lands of Thomas Brownell.<sup>65</sup> On 28 March 1737/8, Joseph Brownell, yeoman of Dartmouth, had sold land at Dartmouth to Edward Cornell bordering Cornell’s land and that of Thomas Brownell.<sup>66</sup> Later that year, Cornell was one of the boundary owners along property at Dartmouth that Joseph Brownell, yeoman of Dartmouth, purchased from his brother, Thomas Brownell Jr., on 13 November 1738.<sup>67</sup> Joseph sold the latter property to George White on 15 February 1742/3 in the same transaction in which his wife, Leah Lawton, released her right of dower,<sup>68</sup> proving it was the same Joseph Brownell, once married to Leah Lawton, who was neighbors with Edward Cornell.

Third, Wood and Cornell were associated with the same Joseph Brownell during two prior marriages: They both witnessed his marriage to Leah Lawton on 3 June 1736.<sup>69</sup> They were also among the six men appointed by the Dartmouth Meeting on 15 February 1747/8 to

<sup>64</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Men’s Meeting minutes, 1727–1762, 16th day of the 10th month [Dec.] 1751, 264, PDF p. 7 of 31.

<sup>65</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds, 19 (1729–1730): 133–134, Jonathan Wood to Joseph Brownell, warranty, 2 Sept. 1728, FHL #7442295, image 83 of 514.

<sup>66</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds, 30 (1740–1742): 405, Joseph Brownell to Edward Cornell, warranty, 28 March 1737/8, FHL #7442191, image 214 of 413.

<sup>67</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds, 27 (1737–1739): 420–421, Thomas Brownell to Joseph Brownell, quitclaim, 13 Nov. 1738.

<sup>68</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds, 68 (1789–1790): 343–344, Joseph Brownell to George White, warranty, 15 Feb. 1742/3.

<sup>69</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1699–1880, 281, marriage, Joseph Brownell–Leah Caton [Lawton], 3rd day of the 4th month [June] 1736, PDF p. 41 of 51.

oversee the marriages of Joseph Brownell and Hannah Bowdish and others.<sup>70</sup>

Fourth, Joseph, son of Thomas and Esther, and Anne Hix had known each other for many years. Anne was born 17 January 1703 at Tiverton, Rhode Island, daughter of Benjamin and Prudence (Earle) Durfee.<sup>71</sup> On 5 May 1725 at Tiverton, she filed intentions to marry Thomas Cory [Jr.] as “Anna Durfey.”<sup>72</sup> Thomas Cory’s mother, Sarah (Taber) Cory, was the sister of Joseph’s mother, Esther (Taber) Brownell,<sup>73</sup> making Joseph Brownell and Thomas Cory first cousins. Thomas Cory [Jr.] died at Dartmouth by 5 July 1727, when the inventory of his estate was made.<sup>74</sup> The will of his father, Thomas Cory [Sr.], showed that Thomas [Jr.] and Anne had made their home there.<sup>75</sup> The property that Jonathan Wood

<sup>70</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Men’s Meeting minutes, 1727–1762, 220, 15th day of the 12th month [Feb.] 1747/8, PDF p. 17 of 32.

<sup>71</sup> Her birth was not recorded. E. E. Brownell misidentifies her as possibly the daughter of Thomas Hix and Judith Akin, b. 9 Feb. 1733/4. In his Durfee genealogy, William F. Reed gives her birth (without sources) as 17 Jan. 1703 at Tiverton, to Benjamin Durfee and Prudence Earl. Their marriage intention states, “There is an intention of marriage between Thomas Cory and Anna Durfey Daughter of Benjamin Durfey of Tiverton Entd the 5 Day of May 1725.” The identification is further supported by the names of her children as given in Dartmouth vital records compared to the grandchildren named in Benjamin’s will. Though not giving her maiden name, Dartmouth vital records list her children by both Thomas Cory and William Hix on the same page, namely Thomas Cory, Constant Hix, Sarah Hix, Joseph Hix, Ruhamah Hix, Anna Hicks, *Durfee* Hicks, Prudence Hix, and Marcy Hix. By comparison, in his will written at Newport on 28 [June?] 1753, proved 4 Feb. 1754, Benjamin Durfee gave “to my Daughter Ann Browning fifty pounds,” followed immediately in the text by a gift of 100 acres at Dartmouth to grandson *Durfee* Hix. That “Ann Browning” was a reference to Anne, wife of Joseph Brownell, is confirmed by the absence in the will of any other daughter named Ann or Hannah and by Anne’s guardianship petition of 1752 in which she identified herself as the wife of Joseph Brownell, the widow of William Hix, and the mother of Anna, *Durfey*, and Marcy Hix. For misidentification, see Brownell, “Brownell collection,” image 487 of 640. For Durfee genealogy, see William F. Reed, *The Descendants of Thomas Durfee of Portsmouth, R.I., Vol. 1* (Washington, D.C.: Gibson Bros., 1902), 185. For marriage intention, see Tiverton, R.I. Town Clerk, “Town Meetings, births, marriages and deaths 1697–1732,” p. 202, marriage intention, Thomas Cory–Anna Durfey (1725), FHL #7548754, image 81 of 504. For her children by Thomas Cory and William Hix in Dartmouth town records, see Dartmouth Town Clerk, “Births, Marriages, Deaths, Intentions, 1667–1788,” p. 286, FHL #7009647, image 411 of 452. For Benjamin Durfee’s will, see Newport Town Council Records, 1750–1755, Vol. 11, unpaginated, records entered chronologically, will of Benjamin Durfee, Newport, written 28 [June?] 1753, proved 4 Feb. 1754; Newport Historical Society, Newport; the pages in this volume are faded and their edges badly damaged, preventing a sure reading of the month the will was written. For Ann’s petition, see Bristol Co., Mass., probate records, estate of William Hix, Dartmouth (1745), guardianship petition of Joseph Brownell and Ann Brownell, 5 Oct. 1752, FHL #7702814, image 218 of 1524.

<sup>72</sup> Tiverton, R.I., Town Clerk, “Town Meetings, births, marriages and deaths 1697–1732,” p. 202, marriage intention, Thomas Cory–Anna Durfey (1725).

<sup>73</sup> For shared ancestry of Joseph Brownell and Thomas Cory, see *MF5G*, 12, Cooke (1999), 79–81, 138, 142, 349, 365–366.

<sup>74</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., probate records, estate of Thomas Corey, Dartmouth (1727), inventory of estate, 5 July 1727, FHL #7702709, image 94 of 1452.

<sup>75</sup> On 23 Sept. 1734, his father, Thomas Cory [Sr.] of Tiverton, R.I., wrote a will, proved 21 March 1737/8, leaving to “. . . my Grandson Thomas Cory the son of Thomas Cory of Dartmouth Deceased . . . Two Hundred of Land and salt meadow with the housing

(the one assigned to prevent the marriage of Joseph Brownell and Anne Hix) sold to Joseph Brownell in 1728 was “bounded westwardly on lands belonging to Thomas Cory. . . .”<sup>76</sup> In short, Thomas and Esther’s son Joseph Brownell and Thomas Cory were not just first cousins, but they and their wives—including Anne—were also neighbors.

Fifth, Thomas Cory’s and Anne Durfey’s marriage intentions were not declared before the Dartmouth Meeting, and their marriage didn’t occur there, indicating they were not members.<sup>77</sup> This is consistent with Anne’s absence from Dartmouth Meeting records during her subsequent marriages to William Hix and Joseph Brownell and with Joseph’s disownment for marrying out to her in 1751.

A marriage by Joseph Brownell, son of Thomas and Esther, to Anne requires that Joseph’s prior wife, Hannah Bowdish, died or divorced him before the 12 June 1750 petition in which Joseph and Anne both signed as “Brownell.” Hannah’s death was either not recorded or the record has been lost, and no grave is known<sup>78</sup>; however, the following probate record of her father shows she died.

On 25 April 1750, Hannah’s father, William Bowdish of Dartmouth, wrote a will distributing his estate as follows:

- **Nathaniel Bowdish – son** – 10 pounds within two years after William’s death, a small Bible, brass mortar, leather jack, and sheep;
- **Freegift Bowdish – son** – 6 pounds within two years of death, a Great Bible, plus bed, bedding, wearing apparel; all to be distributed to Nathaniel Bowdish and the executor if Freegift died without heirs before William;
- **Katharine Bowdish – daughter** – curtains, warming pan, and “a feather bed well cloathed as my other daughters have had,” half of the household movables, etc.;

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thereon Being the homestead farm where my son Thomas Lived in Dartmouth . . .” and, “. . . forty acres of Land by measure Lying between George Wood and Philip Tabor of New London and Joyning to my Brother in Law Philip Tabers . . . when he comes of age at twenty one years. . . .” See Bristol Co., Mass., Probate Records, 9 (1737–1740): 39–42, FHL #7703532, images 326–327 of 596.

<sup>76</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds, 19 (1729–1730): 133–134, Jonathan Wood to Joseph Brownell, warranty, 2 Sept. 1728.

<sup>77</sup> No entry for marriage intentions found in Dartmouth Meeting Men’s Meeting minutes or Women’s Meeting minutes, and no entry found in its marriage records for 1724 or 1725, the year before and of their intentions. For Men’s Meeting minutes reviewed, see Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Men’s Meeting minutes, 1699–1727, 239–260, PDF pp. 18–28 of 35. For Women’s Meeting minutes, see Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Women’s Meeting minutes [1699–1782], 69–73, PDF pp. 38–40 of 54. For marriage records, see Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1699–1880, 201–301, PDF pp. 1–51 of 51, entries not in order but inclusive of 1724–1725.

<sup>78</sup> No entry found in *Vital Records of Dartmouth, Massachusetts, Town and Vital Records, 1620–1988*, and Arnold, *VRRI*, FindAGrave.com, or *Rhode Island Historical Cemetery Commission* database. E. E. Brownell gives her death date as 11 Oct. 1749, but without evidence; see Brownell, “Brownell collection,” image 487 of 640.

- **Elizabeth Russel** – “**Daughter** . . . wife of Paul Russel” – half of William’s sheep and the other half of household movables;
- **Mercy Bowdish** – “**Grand Daughter** Mercy Bowdish Daughter of my son <sup>^</sup>William Bowdish – a silver spoon;
- **Hannah Brownel** – “**Grand Daughter** Hannah Brownel (Daughter of Joseph Brownel)” – “when of seven years old a small bible and silver spoon . . . her mother having had considerable of my estate. . . .”;
- **William Bowdish** – **son** – appointed executor; given a gun, stillyards, doctor’s equipment and books, and all land at Dartmouth with improvements, reserving two rods for a burial ground.<sup>79</sup>

The language William Bowdish used and the gifts he bequeathed indicate his daughter Hannah was dead at the time the will was written. First, while all other living family members were directly named, Hannah was referred to only indirectly and in the past tense as “**having had** considerable of my estate” [emphasis added]. Second, William’s granddaughter, Hannah Brownel[l], was referred to not as Hannah’s daughter, but as her *husband* Joseph Brownell’s daughter; by comparison, granddaughter Mercy Bowdish was referred to as the daughter of his *living* son William Bowdish. Third, the household movables were distributed equally to the only two daughters mentioned by name in the will, Katharine and Elizabeth. Katherine was apparently single, while Elizabeth was married, suggesting marital status was not a factor in the distribution; therefore, had Hannah been living, the distribution logically would have been in thirds.

Together, the evidence supports the conclusion that Joseph Brownell, son of Thomas and Esther, married Anne Durfey, widow of Thomas Cory and William Hix. First, their marriage date coincided with the Dartmouth Meeting’s condemnation of member Joseph Brownell who, like Thomas and Esther’s son, had been with the meeting “for many years.” Second, the men whom the Meeting assigned to prevent the marriage were both neighbors of Thomas and Esther’s son, Joseph. Third, Thomas and Esther’s son had a natural opportunity to have known Anne for several years, since she had married his first cousin and was also his neighbor. Finally, the will of William Bowdish shows that Joseph had the opportunity to marry Anne, since his prior wife, Hannah Bowdish, had died by 5 April 1750.

Joseph’s marriage to Anne (Durfey) (Cory) Hix is overlooked by both Wood and Doherty.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., probate files, William Bowdish, Dartmouth (1755), will of William Bowdish, written 5 April 1750, proved 6 May 1755.

<sup>80</sup> *MF5G*, 12, Cooke (1999), 365–366; Doherty, *Settlers of the Beekman Patent*, 800–801.



## Marriage to Experience Gifford

The fourth marriage record at Dartmouth for a Joseph Brownell is that to Experience Gifford, found in town records, rather than in the Dartmouth Meeting.<sup>81</sup> On 1[1?] February 1755, their marriage intentions were registered as follows:

The intention of Marriage Between Joseph Brownell and  
Experience Gifford Both of Dartmo. Was Entered with me February  
1[1?]th Day 175[5?] Ben[ja?]min Akin Town Clerk<sup>82</sup>

The marriage was subsequently recorded on 6 March 1755:

Bristol : SS March the 6<sup>th</sup> 1755 Joseph Brownell & Experience  
Gifford were Married ----- Jr Sam<sup>l</sup> Willis Justis paeis<sup>83</sup>

These records make no identification of either party's parents. Wood identifies this Joseph as the son of Thomas and Esther without citing evidence, while Doherty does not acknowledge the marriage.<sup>84</sup>

The marriage of this Joseph Brownell by civil authority at first suggests that he could not be the Quaker son of Thomas and Esther; however, he cannot be excluded on this fact alone because that Joseph's disownment by the Dartmouth Meeting in December 1751 had since left civil marriage as his only option. Land, probate, and Dartmouth Meeting records show they were the same man.

First, Wood shows that Joseph, husband of Experience Gifford, was of Little Compton when he made his will in 1769.<sup>85</sup> For him to be the same Joseph Brownell, yeoman of Dartmouth, who married Leah Lawton, Hannah Bowdish, and Anne (Durfey) (Cory) Hix, would therefore require evidence of a move to Little Compton. Such evidence is found in land records. Experience Gifford was born 21 August 1715, the daughter of Benjamin Gifford.<sup>86</sup> On 29 April 1755, she and Joseph

<sup>81</sup> No entry for marriage intentions found in Dartmouth Meeting Men's Meeting minutes or Women's Meeting minutes, and no entry found in its marriage records for 1754 or 1755, the year before and of their marriage. For negative findings in Men's Meeting minutes, see Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Men's Meeting minutes, 1727–1762, 272–292, PDF pp. 16–26 of 31. For Women's Meeting minutes, see Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Women's Meeting minutes [1699–1782], 133–138, PDF pp. 16–18 of 54. For marriage records, see Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1699–1880, 403–411, PDF pp. 1–5 of 56.

<sup>82</sup> Dartmouth, Mass., Town Clerk, "Intentions 1718–1724, Marriages 1755–1892," unpagged volume, intention entries arranged chronologically, intention entry, Joseph Brownell-Experience Gifford, 1[1] Feb. 175[5?], FHL #4279436, image 216 of 429. The intention entry is the last entry on a page with damage on the bottom edge; the last digit of the year is partially illegible (as is the first name of the town clerk), but is almost certainly a "5," given the chronology of entries immediately before and after, and the date of their marriage.

<sup>83</sup> Dartmouth, Mass., Town Clerk, "Intentions 1748–1824, Marriages, 1755–1792," marriage entry, Joseph Brownell-Experience Gifford, 6 March 1755.

<sup>84</sup> MF5G, 12, Cooke (1999), 365–366; Doherty, *Settlers of the Beekman Patent*, 800–801.

<sup>85</sup> MF5G, 12, Cooke (1999), 365.

<sup>86</sup> Dartmouth Records, 1667–1844, p. 51, FHL #775496, image 33 of 408.

together sold land at Dartmouth that had belonged to Benjamin, “late of Dartmouth Deceased.”<sup>87</sup> In the deed, Joseph was referred to as yeoman of Dartmouth. On 24 August 1756, Richard Hart, gentleman of Little Compton, sold two lots to Joseph Brownell “Late of Dartmouth in the County of Bristole in the province of the Masetusets Bay in Newengland yoeman and now Resident in Little Compton.”<sup>88</sup> A few days later, on 30 August 1756, Joseph and Experience, along with her siblings, sold land at Dartmouth they had received by the will of their “Hond father Benjamin Gifford.”<sup>89</sup> In that deed, Joseph was referred to as a yeoman of Little Compton.

Second, Dartmouth Meeting records show that Benjamin and Experience Gifford had known Thomas and Esther’s son Joseph Brownell for several years. On 24 February 1747/8, both Benjamin and Experience had signed as witnesses to Joseph’s marriage to Hannah Bowdish.<sup>90</sup>

Third, probate records show this Joseph Brownell owned Hannah Bowdish’s property during his marriage to Experience Gifford. In the will of Hannah’s father William Bowdish, he left to daughter Katharine Bowdish “...a feather bed well clothed **as my other daughters have had**” [emphasis added]. Elizabeth and Hannah were the only other “daughters” (plural) indicated either directly or indirectly in the will. Since, according to the will, Hannah had already received her “considerable” portion of William’s estate, Hannah must have received a feather bed and bed clothes from her father before she died. Evidence of such a bed and bed clothes amongst the belongings of the Joseph Brownell who married Experience Gifford would then establish him as the same Joseph Brownell who married Hannah Bowdish. Amazingly, such evidence exists. On 10 June 1769, Joseph Brownell wrote his will at Little Compton, naming “my Well Beloved wife Experance Brownell,” and leaving to his daughter Hannah Brownell [emphasis added]:

... one feather bed, bedstead & cord one Bolster & Bolster case two Pillers & Piller cases two Blankets two sheets & one Coverlid the Bed to Be that **Which Was her own Natural Mother’s Bed**.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>87</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds, 41 (1753–1756): 369, Joseph Brownel and wife Experience Brownel to Job Almy, warranty, 29 April 1755, FHL #7442196, image 205 of 591.

<sup>88</sup> Little Compton, R.I., Land Evidence 1 (1747–1764): 317–318, Richard Hart to Joseph Brownell, warranty, 24 Aug. 1756, FHL #8204827, images 187–188 of 524.

<sup>89</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds, 43 (1758–1759): 227–228, Joseph Brownel et al. to William Wood, warranty, 30 Aug. 1756, FHL #7442197, images 123–124 of 600.

<sup>90</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1699–1880, 253, marriage, Joseph Brownell–Hannah Bowdish, 24 Feb. 1747/8, PDF p. 27 of 51.

<sup>91</sup> Little Compton, R.I., Town Council and Probate records, 2 (1764–1781): 226–228, will, Joseph Brownell, written 10 June 1769, proved 6 April 1773; Little Compton Town Hall. The will was witnessed by William Samford [sic], Ephraim Gifford, Constant Hart, and Rescombe Sanford. It was proved at Little Compton on 6 April 1773 by William Sanford and Constant Hart, who were the only witnesses still living.

Although Hannah Bowdish is not directly named in either William Bowdish's or Joseph Brownell's wills, both wills indicate that she owned a feather bed with significant bed clothing. Both wills refer to her in the past tense as though she were dead. When correlated with the marriage record for Joseph Brownell and Hannah Bowdish, the wills identify Hannah Brownell as their daughter. Joseph's possession of the bed when he was married to Experience Gifford shows he was the same man who married Hannah Bowdish and ergo was the son of Thomas and Esther (Taber) Brownell.

Joseph Brownell's marriage to Experience Brownell in early 1755 requires that his prior wife, Anne (Durfee) (Cory) Hix, either died or divorced Joseph beforehand. Anne's death was either not recorded or the record has been lost, and no grave is known.<sup>92</sup> She never appears in land transactions with Joseph,<sup>93</sup> possibly signaling a brief marriage. She was living 28 May 1753, when she was named in the division of William Hix's estate as "Anne Brownel (the Now Wife of Joseph Brownel) & formerly the Widow of Said deceased"; she was presumably still living on 5 March 1754 when the division was approved as written by the court, granting her one third of William Hix's real property.<sup>94</sup> She was dead by 4 December 1755 when Robartt Crossman, John Case and Wesson Sowle, petitioned the court to divide her widow's third [emphasis added]:

... we the Subscribers pray that you <sup>would</sup> order A Devision to be made as soon as may be of the Estate of the Late widow of William hix: & her two sons Joseph Hix & Durffe hix all Late of Dartmouth Deceased....<sup>95</sup>

Although her exact death date is unknown, her death between 5 March 1754 and 4 December 1755, provides a window of opportunity consistent with Joseph's remarriage to Experience Gifford in early 1755.

In sum, although the marriage record of Joseph Brownell and Experience Gifford did not name his parents, evidence shows he was the son of Thomas and Esther who participated in the three prior marriages recorded at Dartmouth. First, the marriage to Experience Gifford took

<sup>92</sup> No entry found in *Vital Records of Dartmouth, Massachusetts, Town and Vital Records, 1620–1988*, and Arnold, *VRR1*, or *Rhode Island Historical Cemetery Commission* database.

<sup>93</sup> A review of grantor and grantee indexes for Bristol County, Mass., yields no relevant entry for Anne or Hannah Brownell recorded from the time of their marriage in 1751 to the time of Joseph's death in 1773. She is not named in any of the deeds in which Joseph was grantor or grantee in the same period. For deeds reviewed, see Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds, Grantor Index, Vol. 1–3 & Grantee Index Vol. 1–5, entries for Joseph Brownell and Hannah Brownell (no entries found for Anne or variants), FHL #7446170, 7446171, 7446145, and 7446146.

<sup>94</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., probate records, estate of William Hix, Dartmouth (1745), division of estate, written 28 May 1753, approved 5 March 1754; images 227–232 of 1524, esp. 227 and 232.

<sup>95</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., probate records, estate of William Hix, Dartmouth (1745); petition of Robartt Crossman, John Case and Wesson Sowle, 4 Dec. 1755, image 220 of 1524.

place in Dartmouth, where Joseph, son of Thomas and Esther, was living at the time. Second, Experience and her father, Benjamin Gifford, were both witnesses to the same Joseph's marriage to Hannah Bowdish in the Dartmouth Meeting. Third, Joseph and Experience's marriage via the Dartmouth justice of the peace was consistent with Thomas and Esther's son Joseph's condemnation and ouster by the Dartmouth Meeting four years earlier, which had left civil marriage as his only option. Fourth, the wills of Joseph Brownell and William Bowdish show Joseph was in possession of Hannah Bowdish's feather bed and bed clothes while he was married to Experience Gifford. Finally, probate proceedings on William Hix's estate show that Joseph reasonably had opportunity to marry Experience Gifford on 6 March 1755, since his prior wife, Anne, died between 5 March 1754 and 4 December 1755. Since the Joseph Brownell who married Experience Gifford was the same man who married Hannah Bowdish, Leah Lawton, and Anne (Durfey) (Cory) Hix, he must be the son of Thomas and Esther (Taber) Brownell.

Experience Gifford died intestate on 24 August 1808.<sup>96</sup> No probate records for her in Little Compton have been found.

### A Fifth Marriage: Peleg Tripp's Daughter

Probate and land records indirectly prove another unrecorded marriage by Joseph Brownell, son of Thomas and Esther, that predates his earliest recorded marriage to Leah Lawton.<sup>97</sup>

On 12 April 1753, Peleg Tripp, yeoman of Dartmouth, wrote a will, proved 3 November 1761, distributing his estate as follows:

- **Othniel Tripp – son** – five shillings and wearing apparel; “the Reason that I Give him no more at this time is that I have Already given him the Chief that I intend for him”;
- **Joseph Brownel – “my well beloved” son-in-law** – made executor; given “the southerly half of all upland which is Contained in my sd homestead farm With all the edifices thereon,” based on a line run “from the highway at the west End of my homestead farm on such a pont of Compass to the sol meadow . . .”; also life use of “all the Land & meadow housing & orchard” given in the will to grandson Peleg Brownel;

<sup>96</sup> Her death was recorded as “Elizabeth Brownel, widow of Joseph Brownel, died August 24th, 1808,” in a memorial of deaths of “neighbours and acquaintance” kept by Constant Hart (d. 1824) of Tiverton, Newport Co., R.I.; see transcript published in Irving Hart and Scott P. Hart, “Records of Constant Hart, of Tiverton, R.I.,” *Register* 105 (1951): 214.

<sup>97</sup> No marriage record found in in *Vital Records of Dartmouth, Massachusetts, Town and Vital Records, 1620–1988*, Arnold, *VRRI*. A review of Dartmouth Meeting Men's minutes, Women's minutes and marriages records for the period from 1715 (when Joseph would have been 16 years old) to 1736 (when he married Leah Lawton) yields no record of intention or of marriage.

- **Robert Brownel – grandson** – “all my piece or parcel of salt meadow or sedg flat” in Dartmouth and in “acoakset River near the horsneck,” with reference to an unnamed survey showing the boundaries;
- **Peleg Brownel – grandson** – “the northerly half of all the upland which is Contained in my sd homestead farm with all the housing buildings & orchards & edifices,” together with “all my solt meadow Lying to the East End of my sd homestead farm . . .”;
- **Jeremiah Brownell – grandson** – thirty pounds lawful money to be paid by Peleg Brownell “one year after he comes to In heret the Gifts herein Given unto him,” plus bed and bedding; if Peleg Brownell dies without issue within one year of Peleg Tripp’s death, then his share to go to Jeremiah, who must pay grandson Robert Brownel “thirty pounds . . . one year after he comes to inherit the gifts . . .”
- **Sarah Peckcom – granddaughter** – household goods not otherwise disposed of.<sup>98</sup>

By comparison, in Joseph Brownell’s will, written 10 June 1769 at Little Compton, he distributed his property as follows:

- **Experience – wife** – offered her choice between “her Right of Dower & Power of Thirds” or all the household goods she brought to the marriage, an improved bedroom in the northwest corner of his house, two Spanish milled dollars a year after his decease and two dollars every year as long as she remained his widow, “a full sufficiency of Every sort of Necessaries of this Life” while his widow, and a “Gentle Beast” to ride;
- **Robert Brownell – son** – one Spanish silver milled dollar one year after decease;
- **Peleg Brownell – son** – one acre of meadow land in Dartmouth, bounded westerly on land Joseph sold to Joseph Tripp, southerly and easterly on salt meadow, and northerly on land given to Peleg Brownell “by his grandfather Peleg Tripp”;
- **Sarah Peckham – daughter** – “Late of Dartmouth aforesd Decd”; to “all my Beloved Grand Children” through Sarah four pounds and ten shillings within a year of decease to be equally divided.
- **Jeremiah Brownell – son** – Forty-six Spanish silver milled dollars, which Jeremiah then had in hand, but owed to Joseph through a note written 1 December 1764, together with the interest due;

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<sup>98</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., probate records, Peleg Tripp, Dartmouth (1761), will of Peleg Tripp, 12 April 1753, proved 3 Nov. 1761, FHL #7702827, images 1041–1043 of 1472.

- **Joseph Brownell – son** – Eighteen pounds “Lawfull Money of the Colony,” one year after decease;
- **Mary Crandle – daughter** – four pounds and ten shillings lawful money, one year after decease;
- **Hannah Brownell – daughter** – three pounds, one year after decease; also, “one feather Bed Bedstead & cord one Bolster & Bolster case two Piller and Piller Cases two Blankets two sheets & one coverlid, the Bed to Be that which was her own Natural Mothers Bed”;
- **Stephen Brownell – son** – appointed sole executor; received the rest and residue of the estate.<sup>99</sup>

Robert, Peleg, and Jeremiah Brownel, and Sarah Peckcom, named in the will of Peleg Tripp as his grandchildren via son-in-law Joseph Brownell, match the children named in the will of Joseph Brownell of Little Compton, written while he was married to Experience Gifford. Joseph also directly named Peleg Tripp as his son Peleg Brownell’s grandfather. Together, the two wills confirm that Joseph Brownell who married Experience Gifford previously married a daughter of Peleg Tripp.

Wood draws the same conclusion based on the two wills, while Doherty does not mention the marriage.<sup>100</sup>

Unfortunately, the name of Peleg Tripp’s daughter has been lost. E. E. Brownell identified her as possibly “Sarah” or “Experience.”<sup>101</sup> There is no record of the births of Peleg Tripp’s children.<sup>102</sup> Her marriage to Joseph appears to have been unrecorded or the record lost.<sup>103</sup> She was not named in any land transactions with Joseph.<sup>104</sup> Neither Peleg Tripp’s

<sup>99</sup> Little Compton, R.I., Town Council and Probate records, 2 (1764–1781): 226–228, will of Joseph Brownell, written 10 June 1769, proved 6 April 1773.

<sup>100</sup> MF5G, 12, Cooke (1999), 365; Doherty, *Settlers of the Beekman Patent*, 800–801, 803–804.

<sup>101</sup> Brownell, “Brownell collection,” image 487 of 640. His typed notes read “Sarah.” A handwritten entry on the same notes reads: “In the Public Library in New Bedford, Mass is a mss of Peleg Tripps family which states that his daughter Experience Tripp married Joseph Brownell.” On 21 Nov. 2022, Special Collections Department staff at the New Bedford, Massachusetts, Free Public Library, identified its Paul L. Tripp Archives as the only potential location of the manuscript cited by Brownell. Using a detailed finding aid, this author conducted a page-by-page review of Box 1, v.1; Box 2 v.7; Box 3, v.16; and Box 7, v. 57. No corresponding manuscript was found.

<sup>102</sup> A search of Massachusetts (inclusive of Dartmouth) and Rhode Island vital records (inclusive of Little Compton), show no such births. For records reviewed, see *Vital Records of Dartmouth, Massachusetts, Town and Vital Records, 1620–1988* (Ancestry.com), and Arnold, *VRRI*.

<sup>103</sup> No relevant entry for a wife of Joseph Brownell found in *Vital Records of Dartmouth, Massachusetts, Town and Vital Records, 1620–1988* (Ancestry.com), Arnold, *VRRI*, FindAGrave.com, or for any female Brownell in the expected time frame in *Rhode Island Historical Cemetery Commission*.

<sup>104</sup> She is not named in any of the Bristol County deeds in which Joseph was named as grantor or grantee between 1720, when he would have turned 21 and been of majority age to own land, and the time of his death in 1773.

nor Joseph Brownell's will named her. Her death was not recorded in vital records and no marked grave exists.<sup>105</sup>

The question of when Joseph married Peleg Tripp's daughter is answered indirectly by evidence in the two men's wills, land records, Joseph's birthdate, and the records of Joseph's other marriages. Peleg Tripp's will shows his granddaughter Sarah (Brownell) Peckcom was married when he wrote it on 12 April 1753, suggesting she was probably of majority age by that year,<sup>106</sup> calculating to a birth by 1732. By comparison, Joseph married his earliest recorded wife, Leah Lawton, in 1736. Furthermore, Sarah's brother, Robert Brownell, witnessed Joseph's sale of land at Dartmouth to Nathaniel Tripp on 17 April 1742, which would have required Robert to be of majority age, pushing Joseph's marriage to Peleg Tripp's daughter back to about or before 17 April 1721.<sup>107</sup> That timing is consistent with Joseph's own birth on 16 February 1699, which would have made him of majority and marriageable age around 1720–1721. The absence of a marriage in Dartmouth Meeting records suggests neither she nor Joseph were members at the time; however, Meeting records show that Peleg Tripp signed as a witness to Joseph Brownell's next marriage to Leah Lawton in 1736.<sup>108</sup> On 28 March 1737/8, Joseph sold land at Dartmouth to Edward Cornell that was bounded by Peleg Tripp and Thomas Brownell [Jr.], and the sale was witnessed by Nathaniel Tripp and Timothy Tripp.<sup>109</sup> On 17 April 1742, Cornell was a witness with Joseph's son, Robert Brownell, to Joseph's sale of land at Dartmouth to Nathaniel Tripp. Cornell was later assigned in 1751 by the Dartmouth Meeting to discourage the marriage of Joseph Brownell and Anne (Durfey) (Cory) Hix.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> A search of Massachusetts (inclusive of Dartmouth) and Rhode Island vital records (inclusive of Little Compton), show no such births. For records reviewed, see *Vital Records of Dartmouth, Massachusetts, Town and Vital Records, 1620–1988* (Ancestry.com), and Arnold, *VTRI*.

<sup>106</sup> In neighboring Plymouth Colony, Massachusetts, women born 1675–1700 married for the first time at age 22.3 on average. In nearby Bristol, Rhode Island, women born before 1750 married for the first time at age 20.5 on average. Since Dartmouth lies between Plymouth Colony and Bristol, one can reasonably predict that Sarah would have married for the first time around age 20–22. See Robert V. Wells, "Quaker Marriage Patterns in a Colonial Perspective," *William and Mary Quarterly* 29 (1972): 429.

<sup>107</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds, 40 (1753–1755): 160, Joseph Brownell to Nathaniel Tripp, warranty, 17 April 1742, FHL #7442195, image 526 of 745.

<sup>108</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1699–1880, 281, marriage, Joseph Brownell-Leah Caton [Lawton], 3rd day of the 4th month [June] 1736, PDF p. 41 of 51.

<sup>109</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds, 30 (1740–1742): 405, Joseph Brownell to Edward Cornell, warranty, 28 March 1737/8.

<sup>110</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Men's Meeting minutes, 1727–1762, 20th day of the 3rd month [May] 1751, 256, PDF p. 3 of 31.

### *Marriage Timeline*

A summary timeline of the five marriages of Joseph Brownell, son of Thomas Brownell and Esther Taber, and the births and deaths of his wives emerges from the evidence as follows:

Spouse	Birth	Marriage Act	Death
<b>Dau. of Peleg Tripp</b>	ca. 1699–1700	ca. 1720–1721 ( <i>marriage</i> )	by 15 Mar. 1735/6
<b>Leah Lawton</b>	ca. 1715	15 March 1735/6 ( <i>intentions</i> ) 3 June 1736 ( <i>marriage</i> )	15 Feb 1742/3 – 17 Jan. 1747/8
<b>Hannah Bowdish</b>	Apr. 1717	17 January 1747/8 ( <i>intentions</i> ) 24 February 1747/8 ( <i>marriage</i> )	bef. 25 April 1750
<b>Anne (Durfey) (Cory) Hix</b>	17 Jan. 1703	12 June 1750 ( <i>signed as if married</i> ) 24 April 1751 ( <i>intentions</i> ) 10 May 1751 ( <i>marriage</i> )	5 March 1754 – 4 Dec. 1755
<b>Experience Gifford</b>	21 Aug. 1715	1[1?] February 1755 ( <i>intentions</i> ) 6 March 1755 ( <i>marriage</i> )	24 Aug. 1808

### *The Mothers of Joseph Brownell's Children*

The births of Joseph Brownell's children were not recorded in vital or church records;<sup>111</sup> however, based on the timeline of his marriages, combined with probate, vital, and land record evidence, their mothers and their approximate births can now be identified.

Joseph Brownell's 1769 will named eight children: Robert Brownell, Peleg Brownell, Jeremiah Brownell, Sarah Peckham, Joseph Brownell, Stephen Brownell, Mary Crandle, and Hannah Brownell. The first three sons were given in the same order in Peleg Tripp's will, implying that in Joseph's will, the names of at least the sons were likely listed in birth order, or close to it.

Robert, Peleg, Jeremiah, and Sarah were directly named in the will of Peleg Tripp as his grandchildren, and Joseph's will verified his son Peleg Brownell was Peleg Tripp's grandson. Thus, all four can be assigned as children from Joseph's first marriage to Peleg Tripp's daughter.

<sup>111</sup> A search of Massachusetts (inclusive of Dartmouth) and Rhode Island vital records (inclusive of Little Compton), show no such births. For records reviewed, see *Vital Records of Dartmouth, Massachusetts, Town and Vital Records, 1620–1988* (Ancestry.com), Arnold, *VRRI*, and records of the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1699–1880.



Accordingly, their births must have occurred between his marriage to her about 1720 or 1721 and his 15 March 1735/6 marriage intentions with Leah Lawton, as follows:

**Robert Brownell** is described in Wood as born before 21 April 1732, based on a reasonable assumption that he was of majority age when he purchased land at Dartmouth from his father Joseph Brownell on 21 April 1753.<sup>112</sup> However, Wood overlooks Robert's earlier role as a witness to his father's sale of land to Nathaniel Tripp on 17 April 1742, evidence that he was born by 17 April 1721.<sup>113</sup> This year coincides closely with when Joseph likely married Peleg Tripp's daughter and is in keeping with the likelihood that Robert was Joseph's eldest son based on the children's name order in his and Tripp's wills.

**Peleg Brownell** received land without mention of a guardian in his grandfather Peleg Tripp's will, written 12 April 1753, implying he was born by 12 April 1732.<sup>114</sup> He registered intentions to marry Else Sherman on 7 November 1755.<sup>115</sup> Assuming majority age at marriage, that date calculates to a birth by 1734, consistent with the birth date implied by Tripp's will.

**Jeremiah Brownell** first appeared in land records on 7 June 1757, when he was named as a bounding landowner in a deed of sale from Joseph Brownell [Sr.] to Gideon Cornel of Swanzey, yeoman.<sup>116</sup> Assuming majority age, the sale date calculates to a birth by 1736. On 4 November 1763, he sold to Peleg Brownell land at Dartmouth, described as:

Part of That Land which I bought of my father Joseph Brownell and it is Part of the homeStead farm which Died Belong to my Grandfather Peleg Tripp Late of sd Dartmouth Deceased.<sup>117</sup>

In another deed the same day, he sold to James Cornel, yeoman of Dartmouth, land at Dartmouth formerly owned by his father Joseph and bounded by land belonging to himself, Benjamin Tripp, and his brother Peleg Brownell. In the deed he referred to Experience (Gifford) Brownell as "my mother-in-law," confirming she was not his natural mother.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> MF5G, 12, Cooke (1999), 365.

<sup>113</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds, 40 (1753–1755): 160, Joseph Brownell to Nathaniel Tripp, warranty, 17 April 1742.

<sup>114</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., probate records, estate of Peleg Tripp, Dartmouth (1761), will of Peleg Tripp, 12 April 1753, proved 3 Nov. 1761.

<sup>115</sup> Dartmouth Records, 1667–1844, FHL #775496, image 239 of 408.

<sup>116</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds 42 (1756–1757): 398, Joseph Brownell to Gideon Cornel, warranty, 7 June 1757, FHL #7442196, image 499 of 591.

<sup>117</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds 47 (1763–1765): 284, Jeremiah Brownell to Peleg Brownell, warranty, 4 Nov. 1763, FHL #7442222, image 447 of 593.

<sup>118</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds 47 (1763–1765): 285, Jeremiah Brownell to James Cornel, warranty, 4 Nov. 1763, FHL #7442222, image 447 of 593.

**Sarah Brownell** was condemned by the Dartmouth Meeting on the 19th day first month [March] 1743/4 for marrying out of order to Stephen Peckham Jr.:

Whereas Sarah Peckham Daughter of Joseph Brownell and now the wife of Stephen Peckham Jur. of the Dartmouth . . . being one that was esteemed under the care of Friends yet for want of keeping to the principles of truth as it is held and maintained amongst us the People called Quakers hath gone and married one that is not under our care out of the order Established amongst us although Duly advised to the contrary for which Disorderly Proceeding we find it our Duty to give this forth as a Testimony against for Denying the Sd Sarah Peckham to be one in unity with us the aforesd People. Truly Desiring that she may come to a sense of her Outgoing and find mercy.<sup>119</sup>

Based on marriage age patterns for the time and place, she was probably around majority age at her marriage, suggesting a birth about 1723.<sup>120</sup>

Wood agrees with the assignment of Robert, Peleg, Jeremiah, and Sarah to Peleg Tripp's unidentified daughter based on the two wills.<sup>121</sup> However, by omitting the evidence for Joseph's other marriages to Leah Lawton, Hannah Bowdish, and Anne (Durfey) (Cory) Hix, Wood assumes the remaining four children—Joseph, Stephen, Mary and Hannah—were born to Experience Gifford. The evidence shows otherwise:

**Hannah Brownell** was identified as a granddaughter of William Bowdish in his will, written 5 April 1750,<sup>122</sup> and therefore was a daughter of Joseph's third wife, Hannah Bowdish. The will indicated Hannah Brownell had not yet reached age seven, consistent with the date of Hannah Bowdish's marriage to Joseph on 24 February 1747/8. Hannah Brownell's birth therefore occurred between her parents' marriage on 24 February 1747/8 and her grandfather's will on 5 April 1750. William named none of Joseph Brownell's other children in his will, supporting a conclusion that Hannah was his only grandchild among them.

By process of elimination, Joseph's remaining three children, Joseph, Stephen, and Mary, must have been born to Leah Lawton, Anne (Durfey) (Cory) Hix, or Experience Gifford.

When Leah Lawton's father, George Lawton, made his will on 10 February 1749/50, he left money to her children, as follows [emphasis added]:

Item whereas **my second Daughter Leah Brownell Being dead** and She having Received part of what I Intended for her portion

<sup>119</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Men's Meeting minutes, 1727–1762, 173–174, PDF pp. 25–26 of 32.

<sup>120</sup> Wells, "Quaker Marriage Patterns in a Colonial Perspective," 429.

<sup>121</sup> *MF5G*, 12, Cooke (1999), 366.

<sup>122</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., probate files, William Bowdish, Dartmouth (1755), will of William Bowdish, written 5 April 1750, proved 6 May 1755.

out of my Estate in her lifetime **I give unto her three Children and to there Leagale Representatives** Each of them ten pounds in mony or bills of Credit such as shall pas at time of payment In full of her portion to be paid by my son John with in two year after my decease. . . .<sup>123</sup>

The “three Children” ascribed to Leah, though unnamed, match exactly the number of Joseph’s remaining children, indicating she was the likely mother of Joseph, Stephen, and Mary Brownell. The mention of “there Legale Representatives” confirms the children were minors at the time of writing in 1749/50, consistent with the date of Joseph’s marriage to Leah on 3 June 1736. If the assignment of these children to Leah is correct, then each of them must have been born prior to Joseph’s marriage intentions to his next wife, Hannah Bowdish, on 17 January 1747/8:

**Joseph Brownell** [Jr.] does not appear in Massachusetts or Rhode Island records other than his father’s 1769 will. No marriage or death record for a Joseph Brownell in either state can be attributed to him, and he was not involved in any recorded land transactions in Bristol County or Little Compton.<sup>124</sup> Since his father’s will did not refer to him as a minor, presumably he was of majority age, calculating to a birth by 1748, consistent with the timeframe of Joseph’s marriage to Leah Lawton.

Doherty identifies him as Joseph Brownell, born 16 November 1740 at Dartmouth to Joseph and Leah (Lawton) Brownell, who on about 17 April 1762 married Ruth Butts, daughter of John and Alice (Wordell) Butts of Elbow Crum Creek, Dutchess County, New York.<sup>125</sup> According to Doherty, the information was provided by genealogist Roberta E. Meraz of Jackson, Michigan. Meraz’s information was in turn based on two sources: a set of unsourced family group sheets and biographical notes from James K. “Jim” Brownell of Long Sault, Ontario, and a typescript by Duncan W. “Derby” MacDonald and Jim Brownell entitled “The Descendants and Related Genealogies of The Brownell Families.” Brownell and MacDonald were together researching Joseph Brownell [Jr.] and Ruth Butts and their descendants in Moulinette, Ontario.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., probate records, estate of George Lawton, Dartmouth, 1752; will, dated 10 Feb. 1749/50, proved 2 May 1753.

<sup>124</sup> No mention found in a page-by-page review of deeds in which the name Joseph Brownell is given as grantor or grantee from 1760 to 1800 in indexes for Bristol County, Massachusetts, and Little Compton, Rhode Island, that is not attributable to another man of the same name. He is not noted as a witness or boundary owner in any deeds in the same sources in which Robert Brownell, Stephen Brownell, Jeremiah Brownell, or Stephen Peckham were grantees or grantors.

<sup>125</sup> Doherty, *Settlers of the Beekman Patent*, 800–801, 803–804.

<sup>126</sup> In Oct. 2017, this author requested via email the source of the claims published in *Beekman* from its author, Frank J. Doherty, who kindly replied via email citing Roberta Meraz as his source and included copies of her correspondence to him. Doherty stated he previously donated copies of the same documents to the Dutchess County, New

Jim Brownell published the results of his research with MacDonald in the book *A Genealogical Sketch of Joseph Brownell of Moulinette, Upper Canada*. In it, Brownell relies on two dubious sources to support the claim that Joseph Brownell [Jr.] who married Ruth Butts was the son of Joseph and Leah (Lawton) Brownell. The first source is the unpublished “Brownell Family Tree” by William James Brownell, dated 1 November 1943; however, neither that work nor its sources are shown in the book, so it cannot be evaluated.<sup>127</sup> The second source is a lineage document from Dr. Richard Lowerison Brownell of Salisbury, North Carolina, created in 1962 from the notes of Adelia Brownell of Cincinnati, Ohio, showing her descent from Joseph and Leah (Lawton) Brownell through their presumed son Joseph Brownell and his wife Ruth Butts. Jim Brownell included a copy of the document in his book, and it cites no sources in support of its claims. He concedes, “[I]t has been difficult to find evidence in birth and marriage records regarding this father/son relationship,” but accepts the unsourced family tree and the lineage document as sufficient proof.<sup>128</sup>

Brownell also gives no source for Joseph’s supposed birth on 16 November 1740 at Dartmouth. He gives his death as occurring 22 March 1822 in Moulinette. That date appears to be based on a grave marker for a Joseph Brownell and his wife Ruth originally erected in “the old Methodist burying ground at Moulinette,” which was moved and installed in a brick and stone wall in the memorial garden

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York, Genealogical Society, Poughkeepsie, New York, where they remain on file for researchers to examine. For correspondence, see emails privately held in this author’s files, as follows: Frank J. Doherty, [email for private use,] to Mark A. Wentling, email, 16 Oct. 2017, “Re: Beekman patent, source question BROWNELL”; Doherty states: “Roberta Meraz provided information in this family.” Also, Doherty to Wentling, email, 17 Oct. 2017, “Fwd: 1987 letter from Roberta Meraz.pdf”; with attached PDF, Roberta E. Meraz, Jackson, Michigan, to Doherty, letter, 16 Jan. 1987, providing information on family of Joseph Brownell and Ruth Butts and citing MacDonald and Brownell’s work as the source. Also, Doherty to Wentling, email, 17 Oct. 2017, “Fwd: Jim Brownell to Roberta Meraz plus group sheets.pdf”; with attached PDF, Jim Brownell, Long Sault, Ontario, Canada, to Roberta Maraz[sic], letter, 19 Dec. 1986, providing information on John Brownell, d. 1808, Stormont, Ontario, [alleged son of Joseph Brownell Jr.], accompanied by images of unsourced family group sheets and biographical notes; in his letter, Brownell states “My greatest interest, at the present time, is finding concrete proof that John Brownell’s father and grandfather were both named Joseph Brownell. I have information to suggest this, however I have no concrete proof, (birth records, etc.).”

<sup>127</sup> James K. Brownell, *A Genealogical Sketch of Joseph Brownell of Moulinette, Upper Canada* (Long Sault, Ont.: 1988), Ref-P.2. Brownell does not describe the evidence on which the tree is based, nor indicate why it should be deemed reliable. William James Brownell was almost certainly the same man of that name cited as a great-great-grandson of Joseph Brownell and Ruth Butts in the *Brownell Chronicle*, and the same whose contact information, dated 5 Sept. 1940, appears in E. E. Brownell’s notes for the Joseph Brownell and Ruth Butts family. He may therefore have been the ultimate source of E. E. Brownell’s claim for the father-son relationship, or vice versa. See Brownell, “Joseph Brownell—American Loyalist,” 5. Also, Brownell, “Brownell collection,” images 392–393 of 644.

<sup>128</sup> Brownell, *A Genealogical Sketch of Joseph Brownell*, Ref-P.1, Ref-P.2, 1. Dr. Brownell had the document notarized in 1988 and gave it to Jim Brownell.

at Upper Canada Village, Ontario, in 1958.<sup>129</sup> He gives a transcript of its inscription as:

In Memory of  
Joseph Brownell who died the 22 March  
A.D. 1822 in the --- year of his age  
Ruth Brownell his wife. . . .<sup>130</sup>

Brownell's transcription indicates Joseph's age in years at death was illegible at the time it was made, and no age in months or days is given, making calculation of an exact birthdate impossible. A transcription at FindAGrave.com, attributed to Jim Brownell and Lyall Manson, gives his age as the "[82nd] year of his life,"<sup>131</sup> suggesting the age is either the transcribers' best guess or is based on a source that is not cited, though not on the inscription itself. E. E. Brownell also claims Joseph was 82 years old, though without evidence.<sup>132</sup> None of these sources provides sufficient proof for Joseph's birthdate nor his age at death.

Since Doherty's identification of Joseph Brownell who married Ruth Butts as the son of Joseph and Leah (Lawton) Brownell ultimately hinges on the unverifiable claims in Jim Brownell's book, the relationship cannot be regarded as proven.

A better estimate of Joseph's birth may instead come from the order in which his name appears in his father's will. He was named first out of Leah's three children, suggesting he was probably the eldest. If born first, then a birth in 1740 as claimed by Doherty and Brownell is improbable, since it's more likely that Joseph and Leah began having children shortly after their marriage in 1736 rather than waiting four years. Although the possibility of unrecorded children born before Joseph who died early can't be discounted, there is no evidence for any, and the more reasonable conclusion is that Joseph was probably born around 1736 or 1737.

**Mary Brownell** was identified, after brother Joseph Brownell, in her father's 1769 will as "Mary Crandle." Assuming she was of majority age at marriage, she was born by 1748, consistent with her mother's death by that year. She was perhaps the "Mercy" Brownell, who married Eber Crandall on 10 September 1761 at Little Compton. If true, it would calculate to a birth about 1740, which is also consistent with the timeframe of Joseph Brownell's marriage to Leah Lawton.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Brownell, *A Genealogical Sketch of Joseph Brownell*, 1–3.

<sup>130</sup> Brownell, *A Genealogical Sketch of Joseph Brownell*, 2.

<sup>131</sup> Unfortunately, the inscription itself is obscured by the transcript overlaid as graphical text on the gravestone image of FindAGrave.com (memorial #171186598).

<sup>132</sup> Brownell, "Brownell collection," images 392–393 of 644.

<sup>133</sup> John Crandall Cortland, *Elder John Crandall of Rhode Island and His Descendants* (New Woodstock, N.Y.: J. C. Crandall, 1949), 76, entry no. 280, Eber Crandall family. Crandall identifies her as "Mercy (Mary) Brownell, b. 10 Apr. 1743," citing "E. G. Davis, Rec. Little Compton, R.I." as a source for the sketch generally, for which this author finds no corresponding volume. E. E. Brownell also identifies her as the wife of Eber Crandall and

**Stephen Brownell** was named last in his father's will, possibly suggesting he was the youngest, although as recipient of the residue of the estate and as executor he would be expected to be named last. On 12 March 1767, Richard Hart, yeoman of Little Compton, sold to Stephen Brownell of Little Compton, land there bordering the property that Joseph Brownell purchased from Hart in 1756.<sup>134</sup> Since Stephen would have been at least twenty-one by the time of purchase, the date confirms his birth by 12 March 1745/6.<sup>135</sup>

On 1 June 1769, Stephen witnessed a purchase of land at Dartmouth by his half-brother, Robert Brownell, from their father Joseph, described as:

...one Certain Tract or parcell of Salt meadow ... at the foot or Easterly End of Peleg Tripps home Stead farm and it Contains by Estimation Three acres be the Same more or less: it is Bounded as followeth Westerly on the sd Peleg Tripps Homestead farm Southerly on the sd Peleg Tripps Salt meadow Easterly on the River; Northerly on Salt meadow belonging to William Davel the Son of William &c ...<sup>136</sup>

The deed provides additional evidence that the Joseph Brownell who married Leah Lawton was the same one who married Peleg Tripp's daughter.

With the expected exception of Stephen as executor, the order of the children named in Joseph Brownell's will mirrors the order of his marriages to their mothers.

None of Joseph Brownell's children can be assigned to Anne (Durfey) (Cory) Hix, nor to Experience Gifford, who by their marriages would have been 48 and 40 years old, respectively, and less likely to bear children.

## Conclusion

A thorough review of indirect and negative evidence in the vital, probate, land, and Quaker records of Bristol County, Massachusetts, and Newport County, Rhode Island, proves the claim that *Mayflower* descendant, Joseph Brownell, son of Thomas and Esther (Taber) Brownell, had five wives: an unidentified daughter of Peleg Tripp, Leah Lawton, Hannah Bowdish, Anne (Durfey) (Cory) Hix, and Experience Gifford. It further establishes that he had eight children who were born to his first three wives, and none by his last two. These conclusions correct the accounts of Joseph Brownell's family published in Wood's

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gives her birthdate as 10 April 1743, though without evidence; see Brownell, "Brownell collection," image 487 of 640.

<sup>134</sup> Little Compton, R.I., Land Evidence 2 (1763–1783): 83–84, Richard Hart to Stephen Brownell, warranty, 12 March 1767, FHL #8204827, image 322 of 524.

<sup>135</sup> E. E. Brownell gives a date of 21 Nov. 1741, but without evidence; see Brownell, "Brownell collection," image 487 of 640.

<sup>136</sup> Bristol Co., Mass., Deeds 54 (1771–1772): 219, Joseph Brownell to Robert Brownell, warranty, 1 June 1769, FHL #7442226, image 428 of 613.

*Francis Cooke of the Mayflower, Doherty's Settlers of the Beekman Patent, and elsewhere.*

## Genealogical Summary

**JOSEPH BROWNELL**<sup>5</sup> (*Esther Taber*<sup>4</sup>, *Mary*<sup>3</sup> *Cooke*, *John*<sup>2</sup>, *Francis*<sup>1</sup>) was born at Little Compton, Rhode Island, 16 February 1699. He died there after 10 June 1769 and before 6 April 1773.<sup>137</sup>

He married first about 1720–1721, \_\_\_\_\_ **TRIPP**, daughter of Peleg Tripp. She died by 15 March 1735/6, when Joseph made intentions to marry his next wife.<sup>138</sup>

Joseph married second at Dartmouth, 3 June 1736, **LEAH LAWTON**, daughter of George and Mary (Dennis) Lawton. She died between 15 February 1742 and 17 January 1747/8, when Joseph made intentions to marry his next wife.<sup>139</sup>

Joseph married third at Dartmouth 24 February 1747/8, **HANNAH BOWDISH**, daughter of William and Mercy (Tompkins) Bowdish. She died before 24 April 1750, when Joseph made intentions to marry his next wife.<sup>140</sup>

Joseph married fourth at Little Compton, 10 May 1751, **ANNE (DURFEY) (CORY) HIX**. She was born at Tiverton, Rhode Island, 17 January 1703, daughter of Benjamin and Prudence (Earle) Durfee, and widow of Thomas Cory and William Hix.<sup>141</sup> She died between 5 March 1754 and 1[1?] February 1755.<sup>142</sup>

Joseph married fifth at Dartmouth 6 March 1755, **EXPERIENCE GIFFORD**. She was born at Dartmouth 21 August 1715, daughter of Benjamin and Sarah (Tompkins) Gifford. She died 24 August 1808, probably at Little Compton or Tiverton.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>137</sup> MF5G, 12, Cooke (1999), 365–366; Little Compton, “Births, Marriages, Deaths Transcriptions,” 1:83, Thomas Brownell family, entry for Joseph (1699), FHL #7727420, image 309 of 654; Little Compton Probate records, 2 (1764–1781):226–228.

<sup>138</sup> Bristol Co., Mass. Probate Records, Peleg Tripp, Dartmouth (1761), FHL #7702827, images 1041–1043 of 1472.

<sup>139</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1699–1880, 281, PDF p. 41 of 51; Robert S. Wakefield and Robert M. Sherman, “Henry Howland of Duxbury, Massachusetts, 1633, His Children and His Grandchildren,” *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 75 (1987): 284.

<sup>140</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1699–1880, 253, PDF p. 27 of 51; G. Andrews Moriarty, “Additions and Corrections to Austin’s Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island,” *TAG* 30 (1954): 123–124; Wilbour, *Little Compton Families*, 2: 678–679 (citing the 1719 Nathaniel Tompkins which mentions his daughter Mercy, wife of William Bowditch).

<sup>141</sup> Reed, *The Descendants of Thomas Durfee*, 1: 185; Tiverton, Newport County, Rhode Island, Town Clerk, Town Meetings, births, marriages and deaths 1697–1732, p. 202, FHL #7548754, image 81 of 504; Dartmouth, Town Clerk, “Births, Marriages, Deaths, Intentions, 1667–1788,” p. 286, FHL #7009647, image 411 of 452.

<sup>142</sup> Dartmouth Marriages, 1755–1792, FHL #4279436, image 209 of 429.

<sup>143</sup> Dartmouth Records, 1667–1844, p. 51, FHL #775496, image 33 of 408; Dartmouth Marriages, 1755–1792, FHL #4279436, image 220 of 429; Hart and Hart, “Records of Constant Hart, of Tiverton, R.I.,” 214; Almon E. Daniels, Maclean W. McLean, and Anne

The children of Joseph Brownell below are given in the order presented in his will.<sup>144</sup>

Children of Joseph and \_\_\_\_\_ (Tripp) Brownell:<sup>145</sup>

- i. ROBERT BROWNELL, b. bet. ca. 1720–17 April 1721; m. ELIZABETH TRIPP (GSMD).<sup>146</sup>
- ii. PELEG BROWNELL, b. bet. ca. 1720–12 April 1732; m. ELSE SHERMAN.<sup>147</sup>
- iii. JEREMIAH BROWNELL, b. bet. ca. 1720–15 March 1735/6.
- iv. SARAH BROWNELL, b. bet. ca. 1720–1723; m. STEPHEN PECKHAM.<sup>148</sup>

Children of Joseph and Leah (Lawton) Brownell:

- v. JOSEPH BROWNELL, b. bet. 3 June 1736 and 24 Feb. 1747/8, prob. 1736–7.
- vi. MARY BROWNELL, b. bet. 3 June 1736–17 Jan. 1747/8, poss. ca. 1740; perhaps the Mercy who m. Little Compton 10 Sept. 1761, EBER CRANDALL.<sup>149</sup>
- vii. STEPHEN BROWNELL, b. bet. 3 June 1736–12 March 1745/6.

Child of Joseph and Hannah (Bowdish) Brownell:

- viii. HANNAH BROWNELL, b. bet. 24 Feb. 1747/8–5 April 1750.

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Borden Harding, “William<sup>1</sup> Gifford of Sandwich, Mass. (d. 1687),” *Register* 129 (1975): 35–36.

<sup>144</sup> Little Compton Probate records, 2 (1764–1781):226–228.

<sup>145</sup> Bristol Co., Mass. Probate Records, Peleg Tripp, Dartmouth (1761), FHL #7702827, images 1041–1043 of 1472.

<sup>146</sup> *Vital Records of Dartmouth*, 2:92.

<sup>147</sup> Dartmouth Records, 1667–1844, FHL #775496, image 239 of 408.

<sup>148</sup> Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends, Dartmouth, Mass., Men’s Meeting minutes, 1727–1762, 173–174, PDF pp. 25–26 of 32.

<sup>149</sup> Cortland, *Elder John Crandall of Rhode Island and His Descendants*, 76.