

JOHN KEEP. The earliest record found concerning our ancestor, John Keep, is the following extract from the records of Springfield, Massachusetts:

“ffebr: 18th 1660—O. S.

Whereas Quince Smith had liberty of abode in this Town for 2 months, his tyme being now expired he was by the Select men this day warned to depart the Towne:

John Keepe desiring entertaynmt in this Towne as an Inhabitant his desires were granted by the Select men y^e day above said:”

The records of the Town of Springfield have been carefully examined and the following extracts are all that in any manner relate to John Keep.

“March 13th 1660.

There is granted to John Keepe ffive acres of meddow on fresh water brook provided all former grants of meddow there be first made good:” (Fresh water brook is in what is now Enfield, Connecticut, being south of Longmeadow, and at that time was in the jurisdiction of Springfield.)

At a meeting of the Selectmen, Jan. 6, 1662:—

“Theres granted to John Keepe ffoure acres of wet meddow on y^e back side of y^e Long meddow if there be Soe much there undisposed of by former grannts: vitz, to Goodman Cooley.”

“ffebr. 23 1662.

The order of Seateing psons in y^e meeteing house, as followeth:—
In y^e upp^t part above y^e Pillars on y^e North side, Henry Chapin:
John Bliss: J^o Keepe:

“ffebr 6th 1664.

Theres granted to Jonathan Burt & to John Keepe ffoure acres a peece at y^e grape swamp by the Long meddow, only the small lotts ag^t that Swamp are to run thorow the Swampe then the remaynder to ffour acres a peece granted to them, if Soe much there:

Theres granted to John Keepe what land lyes at the East end of his own land below George Coltons house pvided he leave a high way by y^e pond of 4 rod on firm land at the reere of all his land there."

Concerning what shall be Town Highways:—

"And in reference to y^e Meddowes upon ffresh water River the way thereto is to be made & maintayned by Capt Pynchon, George Coulton, Benjamin Cooley, Samuell Marshfeild, Nathaniell Ely and John Keepe, from the place where they shall leave the Countrey high way that goes down to y^e foot of y^e falls till they come to y^e head of their Meddowes."

In the "list of Townesmen, or men of this Towne of Springfield, that is to say, of the allowed Inhabitants who they are this present ffebr: 1664," appears the name of John Keepe with seventy three others.

"January 5th 1665—John Keepe also hath y^e Pond ag^t his lands & so up to y^e brow of y^e hill Granted him, pvided it be noe wrong to y^e Indians."

"At the Generall Towne Meeting, being the first Tuesday in ffebruary and the Sixth day of the month, 1665—John Keepe was Hayward for y^e Long Meddow."

"ffbruary the 11: 1666—There was choise made of veuars of fences for the severall ffeilds. John Keepe and Samuel bliss veiwers for the long medo and the Home Lotts as far as the meeting house."

At Town meeting 1st Tuesday in "ffebuary 1667 John Keepe was chosen Haward for Long Meddow."

"At y^e Generll Towne meeting on y^e first Tuesday in ffebruary being y^e 2d day of the month, 1668—William Warrener & John Keepe are chosen Surveyors for the Countrey high ways of this town for the yeere ensuing."

"At y^e Generall Towne meeting, on the 1st. Tuesday in ffebr: being y^e 1st. day of y^e month, 1669—John Keepe was chosen Haward for y^e Long Meddow."

The records of the Colony show that on May 19, 1669, John Keepe subscribed to the Freeman's oath before William Pynchon.

"Oc. 12, 1670. At a meeting of the Selectmen: Whereas in Aprill last there was granted to Mr Glover an addition of £20 per annum to his £80 p annum,— the £20 for this yeere should be rayseed thus: vitz, y^t Mr. Glovers fire wood for this yeere should be gotten for him as pt of y^e pay & £10 to be another pay, & it was left to y^e Select men to pportion each man his share: that is to say who should gett y^e fire wood & how much & who should pay y^e £10 and how much: now the Select Men doe judge y^t he will need for y^e yeere 70 loads of fire wood w^{ch} they Order thus to be gotten for him: the persons undernamed to get it & cart it:" (Mr. Glover was the minister: "Of the £10 of other pay" John Keepe was assessed 6s. He was not required to get any wood)

At Town meeting Feb. 6, 1671 "John Keepe Hayward for Long Meddow whose yard also is allowed of for a pound."

Jan. 1, 1672—"Granted to Jo: Keepe 4 acr of wet meddow at fresh water brook by his own meddow there'".

"Att y^e Genrll Towne Meeting ffebr 3d 1673—Nathaneel Ely, Ens. Cooley, Benjamin Parsons, John Keepe & Elizur Holyoke are chosen for Select Men for the Yeere ensuing, to Order the Prudential affaires of the Towne.

At this Towne Meeting consideration was had concerning the Meeting House, specially concerning the want of Room in the house for convenient Seating of the People (there beinge through the favor of God Soe great an Increase of Inhabitants in this Plantation) whereupon the Town chose diverse persons to consider of the case what they should judge convenient to be done to help y^e business & to make report to the Town what they should reckon expedient to be done. The Persons chosen were y^e Worpll (Worshipful) Major Pynchon & the five Select Men (John Keep being one). Also Leiut Cooper, Samuel Marshfeild, Jno Dumbleton Thomas Miller, Rowland Thomas and Henry Chapin and Quarterm^r Coulton."

"Feb: 9th. 1673—At a meeting of y^e Select Men there being 4 present, vizt: E: Holyoke, N: Ely, Ens: Cooley & John Keepe.

The Select Men according to Town order considering how to seate there [in the meeting house] doe reckon that there being not neere enough to seat all y^t want seates they judge it not convenient to doe any thing in it till more roome be made."

"Aprill 15 1674: Att a meeting of the Select Men: there were present E: Holyoke, N: Ely, Ens. Cooley & John Keepe."

"Aprill 29th 1674: At a meeting of y^e Select Men of whom there were present E: Holyoke, N: Ely, B: Parsons, Jo: Keepe."

"Att this Genrll Town Meeting ffebr: 1st, 1675, Ensigne Cooley, Jonathan Burt, John Keepe, John Hitchcock & ^capt Elizur Holyoke are chosen Select men for ordering all y^e Prudential affaires of y^e Town for y^e yeere ensuing'".

"At a Town Meeting June 8th 1676, god in his providence having taken away John Keepe by death Anthony Dorchester was chosen by a Cleare voat of the plantation a Select man to supply that want for the yeere ensuing."

Some of the descendants of John Keep have claimed that he was in Longmeadow prior to 1640 but the extracts from the Springfield records [Longmeadow being then a part of Springfield] show the date of his appearance in the town to be in 1660, the "entertaynmt" desired being the privilege of boarding with some family in the town. From his being assigned a seat in the gallery of the church with Henry Chapin and John Bliss it is supposed that John Keep was about twenty years of age at that time. No record has been found of the date or place of his birth. The name Keep is found frequently in old English records and a thorough examination has been made of wills and deeds in various

parts of England prior to 1700 but nothing has been found that enables us to determine the ancestry of John Keep.

In addition to the services he rendered the town as shown in the foregoing extracts, the court records which are preserved at Northampton show that John Keep served on the jury several times.

These records, although meagre, are sufficient to show us that our ancestor was a man of good judgment and ability and was held in high esteem by the community in which he lived.

Following the occupation of a farmer he seems to have been industrious and to have added more land from time to time. The inventory of this estate (which follows) shows that he accumulated a very respectable property for the time.

On December 31st. 1663 John Keep was married to Sarah Leonard, of Springfield. She was born at Springfield, December 13, 1645 and was a daughter of John and Sarah Leonard. John Leonard settled in Springfield in 1639 and married November 12, 1640 Sarah Heald (or Hale). They had fifteen children of whom Sarah was the fourth. One of the daughters Mary, married Samuel Bliss and was an ancestor of Ralph Waldo Emerson and also of Levi Parsons Morton, who was Governor of New York, Vice-President of the United States, etc. A son of John Leonard, Benjamin, was an ancestor of Benjamin Franklin Wade, for many years a Senator in Congress from Ohio.

Some of the descendants of John Keep have claimed through John Leonard two lines of descent from William the Conqueror, but this ancestry as claimed, is not given here for the reason that the date, place of birth and parentage of John Leonard is not known. John Leonard was a farmer and for a time held the office of constable. He was killed by the Indians 1676. His widow, Sarah, married in 1677 Benjamin Parsons and after his death she married for her third husband in 1690, Hon. Peter Tilton. She died in Feb. 1711.

The following account of the circumstances attending the death of John Keep is taken from the History of Hadley, by that eminent antiquarian, Sylvester Judd.

"On Sunday, the 26th. of March, some of the people of Longmeadow, men and women, with children, ventured to ride to Springfield to attend public worship, in company with several Colony troopers. There were 16 or 18 men in all, but some had women behind them, and some had children in their arms, and when they were near Pecowsic Brook, 7 or 8 Indians in the bushes fired upon the hindmost and killed a man and a maid, wounded others, and took two women with their babes, and retired into a swamp*. Those forward rode some distance towards Springfield set down the women and maids, and then returned, but could not find the two women and children. A letter from Major

*Six are said to have been slain or mortally wounded. John Keep, his wife Sarah, and his infant son Jabez are three of them. The names of the others are not in the Springfield records.

Savage [to the Governor's Council], dated at Hadley, March 28, 1676, gives the following account of this affair:—"On the 26th. inst., we had advice from Springfield that 8 Indians assaulted 16 or 18 men besides women and children as they were going to meeting from a place they call Longmeadow, and killed a man and a maid, wounded 2 men, and carried away captive 2 women and 2 children. In the night I sent out 16 horse in pursuit of them, who met with some that were sent from Springfield, and overtook the Indians with the captives, who as soon as they saw the English, killed the 2 children and sorely wounded the women in the heads with their hatchets, and so ran away into a swamp where they could not follow them. The scouts brought back both the women and the children. One of the women remains still senseless by reason of her wounds and the other is very sensible and rational."

This disaster was a severe reproach to the guard who in a popular rhyme of the day are described thus:

Seven Indians and one without a gun,
Caused Captain Nixon and forty men to run.

Rev. John Keep Nutting, now of Sioux Rapids, Iowa, (son of Lucinda Keep, 133) claims that the pillion upon which John and Sarah Keep rode that day was preserved till 1846 or 1847 when it was destroyed by the burning of the Nutting homestead at Groton, Massachusetts.

John Keep, his wife Sarah and the son Jabez were buried in the old cemetery at Springfield.

The following matter relative to the settlement of the estate of John Keep is copied from the Probate records at Northampton.

"An Inventory of the estate of John Keepe being presented to this Courte Sept. 26 1676, By Samll Bliss and Joseph Leonard of Springfield to which inventory they made oath too Before the Courte which is on file with the Recorder of this Courte, and Power of administration upon the Estate of John Keepe, Deceased, is By this Courte granted unto the sayd Samll Bliss and Joseph Leonard aforesayd. And for the settlement of the Estate this Courte have Ordered that Whereas there being presented by the Persons Concerned in the management of the Estate of John Keepe Some Consideration as to the settlement of the estate aforesayd, viz. a paper presented (which is on file) which is as followeth: viz. That the son of John Keepe Deceased, viz. Samll Keepe shall have the land and houseing all of it to be to him and his heirs, he paying as a legacy to his two sisters Sarah and Hannah Keepe the just and full sum of Thirty three Pounds in good Current Pay at least within two years after he the sayd Samll Keepe comes to be of age, viz. one and twenty years. All the rest of the Estate to be Equally Divided Between the sayd Sarah and Hannah Keepe. Likewise if either of the Children Dye before they come to be of age then the survivors to enjoy the Deceased childs part. This Courte approved of the above sayd Settlement of the estate and have confirmed it.

Here followeth a copy of the Inventory of the Estate of John Keepe off Springfield taken the 10th September 1676, By Anthony Dorchester and Samll Marshfield.

	£	s	p
To Indian corn, pease and Oats at.....	12	19	9
To buck wheat, a bed, etc.....	3	1	
To Bags, a bed with furniture etc.....	5	15	
To Pewter and Sheets at.....	2	3	
To Arms ammunition & Chest at.....	2	12	
To a Bedstead, Ropes forge etc.....	4	16	
To Axes Pitchfork, Bootes & Shoes at	1	5	6
To Rye Cart Wheels etc.....	1	16	
To 172 l of Bacon at.....	4	6	
To Beefe at.....			12
To 6 Hogs, a paire of bridles at	4		
To 3 Steers at 10£ & 2 Oxen at 12£.....	22		
To 2 Horses at 5£	5		
To Wooden tunnel with small things.....			10
To 2 hides 10s 15 acres Meadow at.....	9		
To 15 acres of ld House & Barn at.....	120		
To 4 acres of land at.....	4		
To 8 acres of Pasture land at.....	12		
To 11 wool at 11s.....			11
To Wheat at Windsor.....	4	9	6
To Chairs iron pots wool.....	2	5	6
To Sevll small things brass.....	5	1	
To Personall apparell.....	9	11	6
To hats, salt, coppery ware.....	2	1	6
To Bedding & Bookes at.....	3	17	
To Coppery ware saddle Pylan.....	2	8	
To Severall husbandry tools.....	4	4	
To Powder & Bullets suite.....		8	6
To Candles with flax 13½.....			19 10
To 2 Cows 2 steeres 2 heifers.....	15		10
To 4 Cows and 3 calves at.....	15		
To Churn, Cradle etc.....	1		
To Pewter Pott Brass skillett			5
To 4 acres of land at.....	12		
To 8 acres of land at.....	20		
To 25 acres of land at.....	8		
To hay 2 loads 20s ffan 3s.....	2		3
Wheat and hay unprized.			
The total sum of the above said inventory is.....	325	11s	7p

The sum total of the inventory of the Estate of John Keepe, Deceased amounting to 329£ 11s 7p out of which deduct the debts and expenses at 30£ 16s 3p Remaynes free Estate 298£ 15s 4p & whereas in the former distribution of the estate by the Courte Sept 26, 1676, the whole of the los was settled upon John Keeps son hee paying out of the lands 33£ to his sisters when at age as part of their portions & said daughters to have the Remainder of the moveable estate after debts payed to make up their portions. But forasmuch as the additional Inventory hath made Alterations and the daughters coming to age before the son, he being youngest, we propose to this Courte as to a further settlement of said estate that the daughters may have the moveable

estate, which is 122£ 15s 4p Equally divided between them which is 61£ 7s 8p apiece when at age to receive it and the son to the deceased to enjoy all the lands which are apprizd at 176£ when he comes to age of 21 years, he paying 14£ apiece to said Daughters in two years after he is possessed of said lands which is to Complete the Daughters portions to 75£ 7s 8p apiece. If any dye before at age the survivors to enjoy their parts and in the mean time the rent of land to pay the just expenses said administrators are out in keeping and settling said children or otherwise, they giving an account of the same. The aforesaid was presented by Samll Bliss & he affirmeth Joseph Leonard hath agreed to the same. This Courte hath Confirmed it as Settlement of said estate.

The additional inventory follows:—

An additional Inventory of the estate of John KEEPE, deceased, some tymes of Springfield, deceased. The original Inventory was presented to the Courte Sept 26 1676, and is upon record folio 180 of this book, and here the Administrators farther give an account of Several Debts paid and expenses in bringing up the Children and which were not mentioned in the former Inventory and are as followeth:—

	£	s	p
To payment to Widdow Leonard for bringing up the children at.	8		
To debt to Mr. Saunders & others at Windsor for 20 Bush. Wheat paid at Windsor.....	4		
To 2 Bush & half peck Wheat at Windsor.....		9	6
To payment to Florence Dressell.....		14	
To payment to Goodman Stewart & the Meeting house rate at...		10	
To payment Thomas Day & Goodman Cooley.....		8	
To removing goods from Longmeadow at.....		3	
To taking Inventory 16s—to hoggs lost in warr tymes 37s 6p.....	2	13	6
To fetching cows from Longmeadow in Warr Tymes.....		6	
To fetching corn & cattle from Longmeadow.....		6	9
To Widow Keeps funeral charges.....		9	
To his funeral charges.....		7	
To Cloathing for children.....	5		
To a debt due Goodman Cooley.....		5	
To 3 bushels wheat paid for 3 pair shoes.....	1		6
To Indian Corn & Peas taken upon Country service & by neglect no account given of it at.....	1		4
To Trouble & Charge in management of the estate by the administrator and expense of bringing up the children..	5		
	30	16	3

Some additional Inventoryed estate and in the former Inventory as follows:

To debt recovered of the Country at 5£ 17s in our pay at.....	4		
The original Inventory amounted to.....	325	11	7
	329	11	7

CHILDREN.

*2.—Sarah, born December 5, 1666.

3.—Elizabeth, born November 15, 1668; died September 2, 1675.

*4.—Samuel, born August 22, 1670.

*5.—Hannah, born June 28, 1673.

6.—Jabez, born December 11, 1675; killed by the Indians, March 26, 1676.