



In-Depth First Settler Profile: ***John Kirby (1653) / Elizabeth (Hinds) Kirby***

Name: John Kirby

Birth: Baptised January 4, 1624, Rowington, Warwickshire, England (*Kirbys of New England/Dwight*, 1908)

Emigration: To Boston 1636 (“Jo Kerbie aged 12 years” registered as passenger on the Hopewell, September 11, 1636.); in Hingham, Mass. by 1643; in Hartford in 1645; in Wethersfield, Conn. by 1647; to Middletown, Conn. between 1652 and 1654. (*Kirbys of New England/Dwight*, 1908)

Death: April 1677, Middletown, Conn.(MAN)

Occupation & Public Service: Farmer (*Kirbys of New England/Dwight*, 1908); deputy constable, surveyor of highways, pound keeper, & townsman.(FFS)

Marriage: m. Elizabeth (unknown surname), perhaps Hinds (MUH), 1644, Hartford, Conn. (b. 1627, Bury St. Edmunds, England; d. 1697, Middletown or Windsor, Conn.) (*Kirbys of New England/Dwight*, 1908)

Parents: Humphrey Kirby & Marjorie White (*Kirbys of New England/Dwight*, 1908)

Children (MVR, Land Records, vol. 1, page 5; BCVR; MUH; in absence of vital records, information is from *The Kirbys of New England/Dwight*, 1898):

(1) Mary Kirby, b. 1644, probably Hartford, Conn.; d. January 17, 1712, Wethersfield, Conn.; m. Emanuel Buck of Wethersfield, April 17, 1658. (2 children)

(2) Elizabeth Kirby, b. September 8, 1646, Hartford, Conn.; d. about 1668, Middletown, Conn.; m. David Sage, about 1664, Middletown, Conn. (3 children) (*David Sage of Middletown, Conn./H.K. Sage*, NEHGS Register, July 1952).

(3) Hannah Kirby, b. March 2, 1649, Wethersfield, Conn.; d. October 1717, Guilford, Conn.; m.(1) Thomas Andrews of Middletown, 1673 (7 children); m.(2) Alexander Rollo, about 1693, Middletown, Conn.; m.(3) William Stone, about 1716, Guilford, Conn.

(4) John Kirby, b. December 18, 1651; Wethersfield, Conn.; d. 1676 (Killed by Indians on the road between Upper Houses and Wethersfield. The Colonial Records state that an investigation was held by the authorities in August, 1676. Menowniett being examined was asked “who killed the man between Middletown and Wethersfield?” He gave the names of Munch, Cohas, Tosocum, Cawcohchoage, and Wewawoas. At a meeting of the Council of War, Sept. 8, 1676, Cohas, who had been captured by friendly Indians and brought in a prisoner, was accused by Menowniett. The Council decreed he should die by the hand of an Indian. “The Marshall’s appoynted to see execution done - which was performed by an Indian.”

(5) Eunice Kirby, b. December 18, 1651; twin with John; d. 1677 (unmarried)

(6) Esther Kirby, b. 1652, Middletown, Conn.; d. unknown; m. Benajah Stone of Guildford. Conn., 1673. (4 children)

(7) Sarah Kirby, b. January 16, 1654, Middletown, Conn.; d. unknown; m. Samuel Hubbard, August 9, 1673, Middletown, Conn. (11 children)

(8) Joseph Kirby, b. July 17, 1656, Middletown, Conn.; d. December 2, 1711, Middletown, Conn.; m.(1) Sarah Markham, Dec. 10, 1681, Wethersfield, Conn. (7 children); m.(2) Mary Plum, October 17, 1704, New Haven, Conn. (3 children)

(9) Bethiah Kirby, b. Feb. 14, 1658, Middletown, Conn.; d. before November 21, 1700; m. John Andrews of Fairfield, Conn., before 1680, Middletown, Conn. (2 children)

(10) Susannah Kirby, b. May 3, 1664, Middletown, Conn.; d. October 1729, Guilford, Conn.; m. Abraham Cruttenden, May 6, 1686, Guilford, Conn. (7 children)

(11) Abigail Kirby, b. Mar. 6, 1666, Middletown, Conn.; d. 1694, Guilford, Conn.; m. David Robinson, about 1689, Guilford, Conn. (3 children)

Residence/Property: “His homestead was on the north side of what is now Cromwell, at the extreme western side of the present town. The bridge there is still called Kirby’s Bridge, and the foundations of the old house are still visible.”(*Kirbys of New England/Dwight*, 1908) “In 1654, he had settled ‘north of the rivulet’ later known as ‘Middletown Upper Houses’ on what is known as Pleasant street, in the present village of Cromwell.(GFHC) His will indicated that he owned 24 parcels of land comprising 1068 acres.(MAN)

Will: Vol. 1, p. 211 (MAN). (Estate evaluation, April 27, 1677: 552-05-10, i.e. 552 pounds)

Burial Location: Unknown

Notes:

(CAF): “John Kirby, one correspondent states, settled first in Boston, and it may be that he landed there and remained for a short time. Another correspondent says that his first child was born in Hartford, and a third that he had a child born or baptized in Hartford in 1646, but adds that he lived in Wethersfield, and had children born there in 1649 and 1641. From this town he removed to Middletown. In 1654 he owned a house and land in Rowington, Warwickshire, Eng., and the presumption is that he emigrated first from that place.” (Field, pg. 146-147)

(SAV): “JOHN, Middletown, whither Dr. Field thot. he rem. from Boston, and Hinman made him of Hartford 1645; but be£ the sett. of M. he had been at H. and Wethersfield, and at Plymouth 1643; had Elizabeth b. at Hartford, 8 Sept. 1646; and at Wethersfield, Hannah, 1649; John, and Eunice, tw. 18



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Dec. 1651; Sarah, 1653; Joseph, 17 July 1656; Bethia, 19 Feb. 1659; Susanna, 3 May 1664; and Abigail, 6 Mar. 1666. He own. an est. at Rowington, near Kenilworth in Warwicksh. His s. John was k. by the Ind. 1676; and he d. Apr. 1677, his will bears date 6, and was pro. 27 of that mo. He left wid. Elizabeth and ch. Mary, then w. of Emanuel Buck, aged 32; Hannah, w. of Thomas Andrews, 27; Esther, w. of Benajah Stone, 25; Sarah, w. of Samuel Hubbard, 23; Joseph, 21; Bethia, 18; Susanna, 13; and Abigail, 11; beside Elizabeth w. of David Sage, wh. was dec. Susanna m. Abraham Cruttenden. JOSEPH, Middletown, only surv. s. of the preced. went to Carolina, but at the end of some yrs. came home poor, bad lawsuit with other heirs a. est. of his f.”

(MUH): The Parish Register of Rowington, County Warwick, England, contains this record under the year 1624: “ The 4th of January John Kerbe the son of Humphrey Kerbe was baptized.”

“John Kirby, was registered as ‘Jo Kerbie aged 12 years,’ on the passenger list of the *Hopewell*, Captain Babb, Master, which sailed September 11, 1635, from London, Eng., for New England. In 1643, he was registered in Plymouth, Mass., as ‘able to hear arms.’ It is supposed that Richard Kirby of Sandwich, Mass., and Joseph Kirby of Hartford were his relatives. Before April, 1645, John Kirby had become a resident of Hartford, Conn., for in that year he and Seth Grant contracted to herd the cattle. In 1647 he resided in Wethersfield, Conn., as the town records give the ‘ear marks’

of his cattle. In 1654 he had settled ‘north of the rivulet,’ later known as ‘Middletown Upper Houses,’ on what is known as Pleasant street in the present village of Cromwell, the Upper Houses having been set apart in 1851 as the town of Cromwell. On this street he lived and died. He was made a free-man by the General Court of Connecticut in May, 1658. He d. Apr., 1677, leaving a will made on April 6th and an estate valued at £551. This will and the inventory are printed in full in *The Kirbys of New England*, by the Rev. M. E. Dwight, D. D., to whom the compiler of this chapter is much indebted. He owned twenty-four parcels of land, comprising 1068 acres. The homestead included a house, barn, and two and one half acres, on what is known as Pleasant street in the village of Cromwell. He had sold a part of the original homestead to his son-in-law, David Sage, who resided next south of him. His ‘nine bibles=3-0-0,’ are the only books named in his inventory. His wife Elizabeth, it is supposed, was Elizabeth Hinds. She married (2) Abraham Randall of Windsor, Conn., outlived her second husband, and died 1697. She deeded the homestead of two and one-half acres to Samuel Stocking, son of the settler. (*This chapter is taken mainly from *The Kirbys of New England*.)”

(GFHC): “John Kirby, the immigrant ancestor, was baptized January 4, 1624, in Rowington, county Warwick, England. He was the son of ‘Humphrey Kerbe.’ He was registered as ‘Jo Kerbie aged 12 years’ on the pasenger list of the *Hopewell*, Captain Babb, Master, which sailed September 11, 1635, from London to New England. In 1643, he was registered in Plymouth, Massachusetts, as ‘able to bear arms.’ Before April, 1645, he had become a resident of Hartford, and in

Abbreviation code used in SMFSD
biographical sketches and in-depth profiles:

(MVR) Middletown Vital Records (originals at Middletown City Hall, Middletown, Conn.; also available on microfilm at Russell Library, Middletown, Conn.)

(BCVR) *The Barbour Collection of Connecticut Town Vital Records* (original index at Connecticut State Library, Hartford, Conn.; printed index available from Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, Md.; digitized index available on CD-Rom as part of *The Ricker Compilation of Vital Records of Early Connecticut*, Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, Md.)

(MLR) *Middletown Land Records* (originals at Middletown City Hall, Middletown, Conn.; also available on microfilm at Russell Library, Middletown, Conn.)

(MAN) *Digest of Connecticut Probate Records*, Hartford District (Manwaring, Charles William. *A Digest of the Early Connecticut Probate Records*. Originally published 1904-1906; reprinted 1995. Baltimore, Md.: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1995.)

(CBRMC) *Commemorative Biographical Record of Middlesex County, Connecticut, Containing Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens, and Many of the Early Settled Families*. Chicago, Ill.: J.H. Beers & Co., 1903.

(MUH) *Middletown Upper Houses* (Adams, Charles C. *Middletown Upper Houses, A History of the North Society of Middletown, Connecticut from 1650 to 1800 with Genealogical and Biographical Chapters on Early Families*. New York, N.Y.: The Grafton Press, 1908.)

(FFS) Frank Farnsworth Starr (“The Settlers of Mattabesec 1650-1660.” *Middletown Penny Press*, Oct. 11, 1900; also published in the *Middletown Tribune* 250th Anniversary supplement.)

(CAF) *Centennial Address of Rev. David Field*. (Field, David D. *Centennial Address: With Historical Sketches of Cromwell, Portland, Chatham, Middle Haddam, Middletown, and its Parishes*. Middletown, Conn.: W.B. Casey, 1853.)

(GMB) *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England 1620-1633* (Anderson, Robert Charles, FASG. *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England, 1620-1633, Vol. I-III*. Boston, Mass.: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1996.)

(SAV) *Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England* (Savage, James. *A Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England, Showing Three Generations of Those Who Came Before May, 1692, on the Basis of Farmer's Register*. Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown & Co., 1860-1862.)

(GFHC) *Genealogical & Family History of the State of Connecticut* (Cutter, William Richard. *Genealogical and Family History of the State of Connecticut: A Record of the Achievements of Her People in the Making of a Commonwealth and the Founding of a Nation*. New York, N.Y.: Lewis Publishing Co., 1911.)

(HMC) *The History of Middlesex County* (Henry Whittemore, ed. *The History of Middlesex County 1635-1885*. New York, N.Y.: J.H. Beers & Co., 1884)

(RPCC) *Records of the Particular Court of Connecticut, 1639-1663* (Adams, Arthur W., ed. *Records of the Particular Court of Connecticut 1639-1663*. Hartford, Conn.: Connecticut Historical Society, 1928.)

(HCCM) *Hartford County Court Minutes, 1663-1687* (Ullmann, Helen Schatvet, CG, FASG., ed. *Hartford County, Conn., County Court Minutes, Vol. 3 & 4, 1663-1687, 1697*. Boston, Mass.: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2005.)

(NEHGSR) *NEHGS Register (New England Historical and Genealogical Register)*. Boston, Mass.: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1847-2007. (Online database available at NewEnglandAncestors.org)

(TAG) *The American Genealogist* (articles by Donald Lines Jacobus, ed., 1922-1971) (*The American Genealogist*. New Haven, Conn.: D.L. Jacobus, 1922-1971)



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that year, he and Seth Grant had contracted to herd the cattle there. In 1654, he had settled 'north of the rivulet' later known as 'Middletown Upper Houses' on what is known as Pleasant street, in the present village of Cromwell, the Upper Houses having been set apart in 1851 as the town of Cromwell. His homestead was situated in the west part of Cromwell, at the bend of the Mattabessett river, now known as Kirby bridge. In the same year, September 31, 1654, he sold a

house and land in Rowington, county Warwick, England, to Richard Lord of Hartford. In May, 1658, he was made a freeman by the general court of Connecticut. He died April, 1677, leaving a will made on April 6, and an estate valued at 551 pounds. He left twenty-four parcels of land, comprising 1,068 acres. Part of the original homestead he had sold to his son-in-law, David Sage."

For further reading:

The Kirbys of New England, by the Rev. Meletiah Everett Dwight, D.D., (New York: The Trow Print, 1898).

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