

The Duttons: Taken from Down The Ages With The Old Garrison House, Bedford, Massachusetts

Written by Lillian Dutton who was the last person to live in the house.

Hiram L. Dutton (1815-1901) of Westford, Mass was the next owner of the house, land, and barn (purchased from the estate of Oliver R. Abbot) and operated a farm here.

On May 17, 1843, he purchased the estate of 37 acres on the east side of the road and 6 acres on the west, from the executor of the Oliver Abbot estate. It was during his ownership in 1880, that the old barn was torn down and a larger one was built. The lumber for it cut from the estate, carried to Clark's Hill on the Shawsheen River to be sawed.

During Mr. Dutton's ownership, a large elm tree was growing on the lawn in front of the house; a hurricane blew off the top leaving a stump of about 20 feet in height. The stump stood for many years until it decayed and was removed. Hiram Dutton lived here for 58 years until his death on March 15, 1901. He raised a family of nine children.

In his will the house and land on the east side of the highway or North Road and barn on the west side with one half of the land was left to a grandson, Warren H. Dutton (1871-1953) George H. Dutton (1846- ?) son, who had 5 children.

To his daughter Ella F. Dutton was left the other half of land on the west side of North Road. This latter half was purchased by Warren Dutton. Later he sold all of his land on the west side, except three quarters of an acre on which stood the barn.

Note:

Lillian Dutton, Warren's wife, lived in the house with their two daughters, Elinor and Olive, and became known for her herb mail order business, called Garrison House Gardens. In 1972 Louise K. Brown, Bedford Town Historian rescued the house by purchasing it from the Duttons. The following year, the Town of Bedford purchased the house and the land from Mrs. Brown.

THE PARLOR~THE DUTTONS, Jeannette Pothier, Guide.

May 11-2021, Film for 3rd grade

This room is truly beautiful, but when the last family that lived here, the Duttons, the walls had wallpaper.

In 1853 the house was purchased by Hiram Lee Dutton (1815-1901) operated it as a farm. (Warren's father was George Henry Dutton (1846-1915) who had married Harriet Hartwell, and Harriet knew the Lanes, which is how the Duttons came to purchase the house).

The last person who here was Lillian Dutton, and after the death of her husband in 1953, she was left with two daughters, Elinor, and Olive. She made cottage cheese, and then she sold herb by mail to support the family. Lillian's daughter Olive came here many times and talked about living here, and now her daughter Carol comes to visit us, which is her grandmother's house.

Gail, the other daughter of Olive. came to visit us with her mother and I made them a stew for supper after the tours, and we ate in the Great Hall. It was Fall and I had made a Grape Pie. It was important to me to do that because it was Lillian who planted the Concord Grape. It had been beside the front porch on the south side of the house. When the town purchased the house, and it was being changed back to its original look, we removed that porch, and moved the grape to what is now the west side of the barn.

The Herb Garden today is the creation of the Bedford Garden Club with Josephine Champney overseeing it since she planted the first herbs in 1978. Jo, as we call her, turned 100 on April 30, 2021, and still is our advisor. Jo rescued plants she found growing in the yard, and that includes many of the ones growing here now. (List is attached).

We love being part of this Garden. The herbs date to the Colonial period. We are studying the use of herbs for the kitchen used in cooking, the medicines they created from them, as well as lovely, scented herbs for many uses. Two of our four raised beds contain herbs used for medicine. Very important as they had few doctors.

Please come in the summer and visit our gardens. We now have a Native Plant garden at the parking lot inside the fence. It attracts many birds and butterflies, and other bugs. I'm sure that is of great interest now to everyone in the world.

We are open from May to October 2nd and 4th Sunday, 2 to 4 pm, and we are all volunteers. We give tours of the house and barn.

The Gift Shop, children's games and much more happens in the newly built barn, and it may be rented. See you next year.