

**JOB LANE**  
**Of Malden and Billerica**  
**1620-1697**

Compiled by  
Ina Mansur  
Historian of the Town of Bedford  
1982

## JOB LAINE OF MALDEN AND BILLERICA 1620-1697

The lives of the leading English migrants who settled New England in 1630 and later have been investigated and described in detail. The governors of the colony, the ministers of the first churches, the poets, diarists, judges, and school teachers - most are well known. It is the lives of the inhabitants, the plebeians that lack color and understanding. By what dreams were they led? What was important to them? How did they arrange half a century of living in this place which has been called a howling wilderness?

One ordinary citizen, a freeman named Job Laine, lived in Malden and Billerica for forty years. When he died in 1697 he left so many papers as part of his personal property that an image of his affairs can be assembled. He had built an estate in this colony, one with which he endowed his descendants. As an artisan he contributed to the expansion and enrichment of the area. His relatives were important to him; he kept in touch with them over the miles and through the years.

Job had been born in 1620 in Hertfordshire, 50 miles north of London or in Buckinghamshire, a little further out and to the north west<sup>1</sup>. He was a carpenter, a vocation he may have learned before he sailed to America. He probably came to New England twice because a man named Job Lane drew a house lot in Rehoboth in 1644<sup>2</sup>. He had an uncle in Marshfield who appointed Job the executor of his will. But Job was in England when he refused that duty in 1647. He returned to Massachusetts Bay in 1650.

Job and his wife, Sarah, probably lived in Dorchester for a few years. They were closely associated with the church in that town where Richard Mather was minister. They carried their children to him to be baptised<sup>3</sup>. Yet Job was buying land in Malden and probably in Charlestown<sup>4</sup>. In 1656 he was named a freeman in Malden<sup>5</sup>. His wife Sarah died there in 1658<sup>6</sup>.

By the time Sarah died Job was well known. He had taken in a black servant, Ebedmelech, or apprentice whose 9-year contract was nearly over<sup>7</sup>. Later he also had a servant, Mercury, and apprentices, John Quinne and Thomas Austin<sup>8</sup>. He had a house where his family was living and several acres of land. He had built Malden's first meetinghouse, a building 33-foot square with a turret on top. It was made of oak, both black and white. It lasted for 70 years<sup>9</sup>.

Job's second marriage was well founded and substantial<sup>10</sup>. The Lanes may have met the Reyners during the winter of 1654/5 when the Reverend John Reyner and his family were in Boston<sup>11</sup>. The minister was leaving the pulpit in Plymouth and soon would be installed in Dover, New Hampshire. He and his wife were the parents of seven children. Their oldest daughter, Hannah Reyner, was younger than Job Lane.\* In 1660 she became Job's second wife and Job built a new house for her in Malden<sup>12</sup>. Once more he remembered the church in Dorchester and carried Hannah's first child, John Lane, there for baptism<sup>13</sup>.

*Ed. Note: Nothing noted on my copy for \*.*

*Ed Note: His name has been written Laine, Lain and Lane.*

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Job had a friend named John Coggin. John's wife, Martha, had been widowed twice before he married her. She was Martha Rainsborough, a woman who had been born in England. Before she came to this colony she had married Thomas Coytmore. They had lived in Charlestown and Thomas had acquired a mill in Malden which became Martha's when he died about 1645. Martha had married secondly in December, 1647, Governor John Winthrop as his fourth wife. The Governor had lived to be 61, dying in 1649. Two years later Martha had married thirdly John Coggin as his third wife<sup>14</sup>.

Martha probably knew that the Governor's previous wife (his third), Margaret (Tyndal) Winthrop, had been granted 3000 acres in northwest Billerica in 1640<sup>15</sup>. And that the Governor's own farm in southwest Billerica, the one granted to him in 1638, now belonged to his grandson, Fitz-John Winthrop<sup>16</sup>. Information like this became important to Job.

In 1658, when John Coggin died, Martha buried her third husband. Soon she sold her corn mill in Malden to Job Lane<sup>17</sup>. The neighbors called it Coggin's mill. Job kept it and years later it became one item in his estate. He was renting part of his property and probably hired someone to operate the mill for him.

Job continued his carpentry. Martha Coggin's step-daughter, Mary Robinson, wanted a house in Boston. Job contracted to raise its frame for Mary's husband, Thomas, on land Thomas owned. For this he received £50<sup>18</sup>.

Job's mother-in-law, Anna (Boys) Reyner, had inherited one quarter of an estate in England. Her three sisters owned the other quarters. Anna Reyner died before Job's marriage to her daughter. She had left 1/3 of her quarter to her husband, the minister, and 2/3 to her oldest son, Jachin Reyner. At the time of Job's marriage to Hannah, her father gave 1/2 of his portion to his son, Jachin, and the other half to his son-in-law, Job Lane. Shortly after that Job bought Jachin's share and became the sole owner of the deceased Anna Boys' quarter in England. It was 22 acres of farmland with tenants' housing 170 miles northeast of London. The other owners were Joanna (Boys) Prudden, wife of the Reverend Peter Prudden of Wethersfield, Connecticut; one who had married John Robinson, and another, the wife of Mr. Simonds. Job hired an agent in England who leased the property to farmers, collected the rent, and paid the taxes each year. The rent was £10, the costs were £1, and Job had an income of £9, per year from it<sup>19</sup>.

Job's agents were relatives or close friends; men he trusted. Through them he heard not only the affairs of his property, but also news of his wife's uncle, Humphrey Reyner, of cousins, and of acquaintances. Some of the letters were full of family news because Job had a brother John living in London; uncles John, Henry and George, and cousins Baker and Dickinson<sup>20</sup>.

On this side of the ocean Job's brother, Edward lived in Boston and his brother, James, had come to Malden to be near him<sup>21,22</sup>. In a few years James moved to North Yarmouth, Maine, where his family lived for 70 years. Today there is an island off Freeport, Lane Island, bearing his name.

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In Malden Job was busy. He had built not only several houses and a meetinghouse, but now he and a man who was a forger constructed a draw bridge. Moreover, he erected a building in Harvard College yard<sup>23</sup>. Probably it was through Martha (Winthrop) Coggin that Job met Fitz-John Winthrop. Job contracted with Fitz-John to build a mansion house for him in New London, Connecticut, and from him to buy the Winthrop Farm in Billerica<sup>24</sup>.

The farm of 1200 acres had been granted to Governor John Winthrop by the Great and General Court in 1638. A survey later proved it to be about 1500 acres. Today it is the northwest part of Bedford, Massachusetts. Roughly, but not precisely, it extended from Concord River eastward to Bedford's North Road and from the junction of Chelmsford and North Roads southerly to a line south of Carlisle Road. It was not an active farm because it had lain unoccupied and unused since it first had been marked out.

Job moved out to the farm where he lived most of the time from 1665 to 1681. His wife, Hannah, stayed in Malden occasionally. She was charged for her firewood there while Job was away<sup>25</sup>. Their family was six daughters and one son. The birth of the youngest daughter, Dority, was recorded in Billerica.

Job built a house on his farm. Henry Hazen in his History of Billerica and Abram English Brown in History of Bedford surmised that the salt box on North Road in Bedford near Sweetwater Avenue may have been Job's<sup>26</sup>. Recently historical architects have inspected that house and have estimated the oldest part to be about 260 years old, or approximately 50 years later than Job's farmhouse. (*Ed Note: Ina Mansur wrote this in 1982.*)

Job had lived in Billerica only a few years when he was given the contract to build a bridge over Concord River. The abutments on each end were suitable for carts to pass over it and the arches were 16 feet wide. It was floored with 4-inch planks of oak. It was repaired once after 10 years of use and at last it was swept away in a flood<sup>27</sup>.

When the arena of King Philip's War moved into the western and northern sections of the colony in 1675, Job's farmhouse was ordered to be fortified and used as a block house or a garrison<sup>28</sup>. Job was impressed to serve his turn on guard or watch duty<sup>29</sup>. John was 14 but he went along with his father. Job was so disturbed by the turmoil that he wrote to his agent in England about it<sup>30</sup>. It was not his only community service because in 1676 and 1679 Job went to Boston as the representative of Billerica and he was chosen selectman three times<sup>31</sup>.

John married in 1681. His wife was Susanna Whipple, his second cousin.<sup>32</sup> Susanna's mother, Martha (Reyner) Whipple, was John's mother's cousin. Martha was the daughter of Humphrey Reyner and Hannah (Reyner) Lane's father had been John Reyner, brother of Humphrey. Once again, the Lanes had kept in touch with their relatives, even with those on outer branches of the family tree.

*Ed Note: The house at 295 North Road is now thought to have been built in 1713.*

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After John's marriage, Job and Hannah moved back to Malden, leaving the farmhouse as John's home<sup>33</sup>. Job was now past 60 years of age. He was elected selectman of Malden for two or three years and he was that town's representative for two years<sup>34</sup>. He continued to have tenants in Malden and to direct his agent in England. When he was 69 he became ill and lost the use of his right hand. His agent refused to follow his directions because he feared they were forged<sup>35</sup>. John said his father's health had been a problem for some time. In 1695 Job, then 75 received his allotment of Malden's common land<sup>36</sup>. The next year he wrote his will and in 1697 he died.

Job Lane was worth £2038<sup>37</sup>. His house in Malden had a cellar, four rooms on the first floor and three above. He owned cattle, horses, swine, carpenter tools, books, arms, and clothing. He was the proprietor of two farms and a mill in Malden, a farm in Billerica, and an English estate.

Job's farm in Billerica always has been known as Winthrop Farm. In 1729 it, with other land, was separated from Billerica politically and became about one fourth of Bedford. It never had been used until Job bought it in 1664. He built one and probably two houses on it and divided it into three parts among members of his family. It has been occupied continually since that time and today is the homesite of several hundred families. Neither of Job's houses remains and the site of only one, that of Samuel Fitch, is known\*.

Job gave his accumulated estate to his family<sup>38</sup>. Three of Job's daughters had died before he did, but he had a wife, four children, and several grandchildren. He remembered all of them. He left his widow, Hannah, the west end of his house, both up and down, 1/2 of his moveables, the wood in his pasture for her firing provided she retain enough to provide shade for the animals grazing there, and an annual income of £10. Hannah was younger than Job and she lived until 1704<sup>39</sup>.

To his son, John, he gave 1/2, 750 acres, of the farm in Billerica, including his farmhouse, the associated outbuildings, and the orchard, and the entire estate in England.

The other half of the Billerica farm he divided between the two sons of his deceased daughters, Sarah and Jemima. Samuel Fitch, son of Sarah, had 375 acres with a house, a fenced field, an orchard, meadow and wood land. Matthew Whipple, son of Jemima, received 375 acres of undeveloped land.

The children of his dead daughter, Mary, had 1/3 of his two farms in Malden, 1/4 of the common land he had so recently received, and 1/6 of his moveables. Each of the two girls received a pewter platter.

\* It is on the west side of North Road at the present location of Apple Tree Lane

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His daughter, Elizabeth, already had his basin. Additionally she was given his rugs and a pewter platter. Her children were to have 1/3 of the two farms in Malden, 1/4 of his common land, and 1/6 of the moveables.

To his daughter, Anna, he gave a pewter platter. Her children received 1/3 of the two Malden farms, 1/4 of the common land, and 1/6 of the moveables.

His daughter, Dority, was remembered with the east end of his house, both up and down, and she was to have the west end after her mother no longer needed it. She was given also a brass kettle provided she return the one she had, and the mill with the land near it. The mill became known by the name of Dority's husband, Edward Sprague.

Job had amassed an estate to leave to his descendants. He had acquired three farms, a mill, and an income property. He had built several dwelling houses, one mansion house, a college building, a meetinghouse, and two bridges. He had served during the Indian uprising; he had been a selectman and a representative.

Job Laine (Lane) was an artisan and a teacher. He could read and write, keep accounts, work with and direct others. His family and his friends were important to him, and his acquaintance with Governor Winthrop's family, his widow Martha and his grandson Fitz-John, was a benefit to Job and to his descendants.

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Job's children:

Sarah who married Samuel Fitch and died in 1679; she had one son,  
Samuel Fitch, Jr., born in 1674, who was an heir

Mary born in 1652, married William Avery of Dedham; died in 1681 at  
29 years; had two daughters, Mary born in 1674 and Sarah who were heirs

Elizabeth born about 1656, married Robert Avery in 1677; died in 1746 at  
90 years; had six children; she and her two daughters, Elizabeth and  
Rachel, were heirs

Rebecca born in the 2nd month of 1658, died in 1659

John born in 1661, married Suzanna Whipple of Ipswich in 1681; died in  
1714; had six children who lived; he was an heir

Anna born and died in 1662

Anna born about 1665, married James Foster of Dorchester; died in 1732 at  
67 years, she and her children were heirs

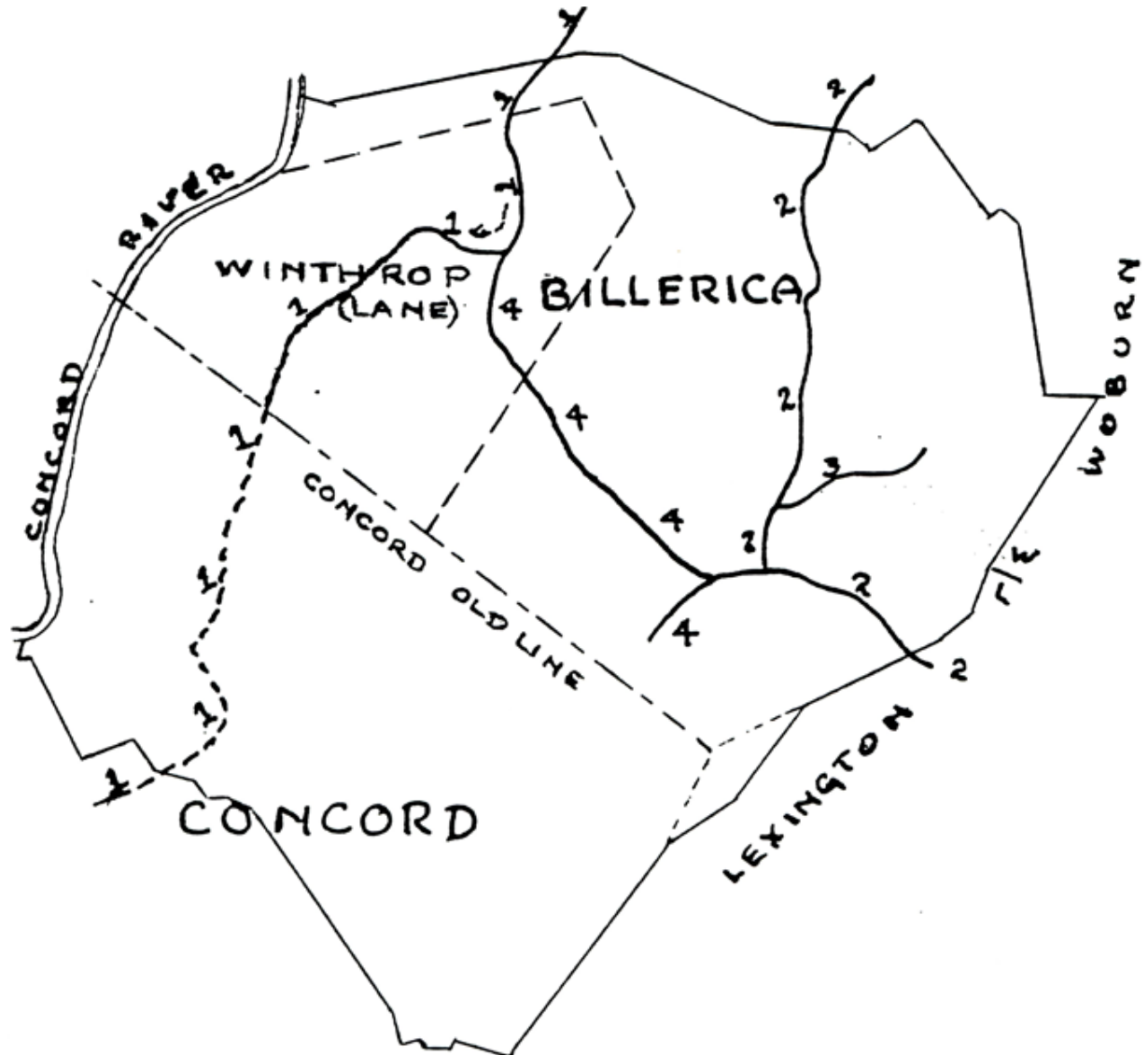
Jemima born in 1666, married Matthew Whipple of Ipswich; brother of  
Suzanna above; died before 1697; had one son, Matthew Whipple,  
Jr., who was an heir

Dority born in 1669, married Edward Sprague in 1693; lived in Malden; she  
was an heir

## JOB LAINE OF MALDEN AND BILLERICA 1620-1697

Plan of South Billerica and Concord East Part about 1700, showing Winthrop (Lane) Grant and early roads

- 1) c1660 Road, Billerica to Concord.  
The dotted line indicates uncertainty of location through swamp in Concord East Part.
- 2) c1663 Billerica to Lexington, now Old Billerica Road and east end of Page Road
- 3) 1683 to Wilson's mills
- 4) 1694 Pine Hill Road, west end of Page Road, and Brooksbie Road



Map 1



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