

Kennedy Family History

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James Kennedy 1717-1807

James Kennedy, grandfather of John Pratt Kennedy, was born about 1717. The place of his birth is not known at this time. James married his wife, Elizabeth (last name not known), in 1747. In 1750, James and Elizabeth were living in Merrimack, Hillsborough, New Hampshire. In that year, he sold his land there to Forgous (Fergus) Kennedy and moved to Corry's Bush, Schenectady, New York. James lived out the later part of his life in Corry's Bush, a small community part of what today is Princetown, Schenectady, New York.

Most of the early settlers of Merrimack, Hillsborough, New Hampshire were Scotch-Irish people who had migrated from Northern Ireland. They were Scottish by tradition and manner. Being Presbyterians by faith, their ancestors had been forced out of Scotland in the early 1600's to Northern Island. There they were not particularly welcome but were tolerated. There was a revolution between King James and William of Orange in which these Scotch-Irish participated. The King considered their participation so important in the defense of Londonderry, Ireland that he had an act passed that gave them tax-exempt land grants in the American Colonies.

In 1718, these Scotch-Irish people embarked in five ships with their ministers. They set sail for Boston, Mass. and arrived there on 4 August 1718. The majority of the people aboard these ships were not allowed to disembark at Boston. One ship thus sailed up to Maine and became frozen in a Bay there by unseasonable severe weather. In the spring, they sailed south to Haverhill, Mass. There, they heard about land inland at a place called Nutfield. After a party investigated, they decided to take up a grant there. These brave pioneers ventured inland and eventually settled the towns of Derry, Londonderry, Windham and Merrimack. It is believed that James Kennedy was one of those settlers. He would have been a very young boy at the time. There has been no record of the passengers of those ships discovered to date so there is not absolute proof of their immigration. However, this region was settled by these Scotch-Irish, of which James Kennedy was likely one.

After selling his land in Merrimack, James Kennedy moved to Corry's Bush along with some other Scotch-Irish. Corry's Bush was named for William Corry, who was also believed to have come on one of the five ships from Northern Ireland.

A portion of the land comprising what is now known as the township of Princetown was originally ceded to the Reformed Dutch Church, of Schenectady, and the remainder belonged by right of patent to George Ingoldsby and Aaron Bradt in the year 1737. It is not positively known just when white men made the first settlement there, but the probable date is about 1700. Ingoldsby sold out his holdings to a man with a more enduring name, William Corry, and the settlement became known as Corry's Bush, later called Currybush, near the center of the town. Nothing remains of this settlement today but the ruins of an old stone church and the mossy tombstones of the adjacent graveyard.

In 1755, Corry sold his interest to John Duncan, a Scotsman, residing in Schenectady. Many title searches still reveal the name of John Duncan as original owner of the properties in town. The town was formed March 20, 1798, and was named in honor of John Prince, a member of the Assembly from Albany County and a merchant residing in Schenectady.

The first settlers of Princetown were Scots and Scots-Irish. They were devout Presbyterians and a leading influence in the development of the town. Most of these Scots-Irish did not come to Corry's Bush directly from Europe. Princetown was an unsettled frontier at the time they immigrated. Some of these Scots originally landed in New York City and sent agents up the Hudson with instructions to find a place that looked something like the hills of their homeland.

Others of these Scots had come from Galway in Saratoga County, New York where an established Scots-Irish community already existed. They then pioneered out into the territory west of Schenectady. We know that James Kennedy came to Corry's Bush in 1750 because of the document selling his property in New Hampshire and his second son, John, was also born there in that year. There is not a clear record of where their first son, Robert, was born in 1748 but based on the deed transfer in New Hampshire, it is assumed that he likely was born in Merrimack, Hillsborough, New Hampshire. The third son, Samuel, was also born in Corry's Bush, so there is clear evidence that James came to Corry's Bush by no later than 1750.

The US Census of 1790 showed two males and two females in the house of James Kennedy at Schenectady, New York. By this time, all the children of James Kennedy were raised so it could have been that a man and woman in the employ of James Kennedy were living at the residence along with James and his wife.

James died at Corry's Bush, Schenectady (then Albany) County, New York before 15 June 1807.

Sources (including sources from records of Jerry Neiderhauser and Ila Peck):

1. New Hampshire Deeds, Volume 38, page 327, FHL Film 15427
2. Otsego County Deeds, Book H, p. 42, 43. Deed Dated 18 July 1784, recorded 15 June 1807, 9 o'clock a.m., FHL Film 1003767, page 428-429. This deed transfer establishes connection between James and his sons, Robert and Samuel.

Robert Kennedy 1748-1819

Robert Kennedy was born 18 September 1748, possibly at Merrimack, Hillsborough, New Hampshire. Robert was the oldest of three sons of James and Elizabeth Kennedy. Little is known of Robert growing up. He married Jane Pratt about 1772 at Mohawk, Mohawk, New York. Together, they had 11 children.

Britain resorted to the Stamp Act of 1765 as a means to raise money from the Colonies. This act resulted in outrage from the Colonies and led to rioting, rhetoric, and the formation of the Stamp Act Congress. These actions quickly led to the repeal of the Stamp Act; however, there were many new taxes levied to take its place. The Americans continued to object strongly to these new measures and formed organized political groups such as the Committee of Correspondence and the Sons of Liberty. "Taxation without representation is tyranny," quickly became the battle cry of the Colonies.

In Boston, the Americans became quite outspoken and even resorted to violent acts against the British customs officials as they attempted to collect the unpopular taxes. Britain was forced to send troops to protect the customs officials. In the year of 1770, the British drew the first blood as the troops opened fire into a group protesting the "unfair" taxes. Five members of the group were killed in what later became known as the Boston Massacre.

Robert Kennedy served in the Revolutionary War. The American Revolutionary War was the outgrowth of the colonists' desire not to be taxed without the right to representation in the Parliament of England. Following the French and Indian War, England needed to recoup some of the cost of the war from the colonists. To the British, it only seemed fair that the Colonies pay a share for their own defense. Robert first enlisted as a Private on 9 April 1776 in Capt. Samuel Van Vechlen's Company in Col. Cornelius D. Wynkoops Batallion. Robert served as a Sergeant in the company commanded by Capt. Amaunniel Degrauf

in the 3rd regiment (Mohawk District) of Tryon Co., New York State militia commanded by Col. Frederick Fisher (Visscher). In June 1785, Robert was serving in Col. Fishers regiment as indicated by pay slips from that time frame. On a pay slip dated June 25, 1785, Robert signed with his mark, an “x”. Whether he served continuously during this entire period is not known but the fact that he increased in rank from a Private to a Sergeant would indicate that he likely served throughout this period of the conflict.

The Kennedy family was living through some very dangerous and tumultuous times in the Mohawk area during the Revolutionary War. To illustrate just how difficult the times were, several examples will be outlined which involved Robert Kennedy’s regimental commander, Colonel Frederick Fisher that will give some idea of the times Robert and his family faced during this period in the area where they lived.

A skirmish grew out of an incident in the spring of 1775, two years after James Kennedy, son of Robert and Jane Kennedy, was born. Colonel Fisher, who had been commissioned Colonel by Congress, assembled his regiment for training near Peggy Wemple’s tavern at Caughnawaga, New York. Sir John and Lady Johnson, riding through the village. Sir John Johnson was a Baronet for the King of England. When he found what was going on, he had his carriage driven to the spot of this assembly. He inquired of the Colonel why he had called the Regiment together. He was told they were gathered to parade and review. Sir John directed them to disperse. The Colonel ordered the to keep rank. Sir John, enraged at this contempt, raised a sword threatening to run the Colonel through. The Colonel told him to act his pleasure. Gaining nothing by this threat, Sir John Johnson went to his carriage and obtained his pistols, now threatening to shoot the Colonel. One of the troops under Col. Fisher’s command shouted out, “If ye offer to lift a finger against my master, I’ll blow you through!” The Tory got in his carriage and left. Incidents like this taught the citizens and soldiers to defy the representatives of British power and nerved them with the endurance to resist and fight.



Figure 1. Revolutionary War.

Sir John Johnson was forced to leave the area in 1778. The subsequent invasion of Sir John Johnson, in May, 1780, was felt on several of the towns along the Mohawk Valley. The principal object of the incursion was to obtain silver plate and other valuables left behind by Sir John Johnson in his hasty retreat of 1776. The enemy proceeded to the house of Garret Putnam, a staunch Whig. Unknown to the invaders, he had rented his house to two Tories, Gort and Platto. The assailants broke into the house in the night, scalped the two men and did not learn of their error until daylight, thinking they had killed Putnam and his son instead of two of their friends. From here, they proceeded upriver, plundering and burning the buildings, murdering their old friends and neighbors. Several slaves and white male prisoners were taken to

Canada.

The enemy met with a warm reception at the home of Col. Frederick Fisher, the commander of Robert Kennedy. The Colonel’s wife and children had been sent to Schenectady for safety at this time. His two sisters and an old Negro fled to the woods and escaped on the first alarm, leaving the Colonel, his mother, and two brothers, John and Harmon inside the house. The Indians made a desperate attack upon the house and those within responded with constant gunfire until their ammunition ran out. They then retreated to the chamber except John, who stationed himself in the stairway, and defended it with a hatchet until he had killed seven Indians. He then retreated above, and slipping upon some peas, which lay upon the floor, he fell and was dispatched with a tomahawk. Harmon leaped from a window to put out a fire that had been applied to the roof. He was standing on a fence and was shot dead. The mother was knocked down with the breach of a gun and left for dead. The Colonel was also knocked down by a tomahawk, dragged down the stairs by his hair and thrown upon the ground. An Indian leaped upon him, drew a knife across his throat, cutting it from ear to ear, then cutting across the scalp, seizing it with his teeth and tore it from the head,

then giving him a blow upon the shoulder with a hatchet, the Indian fled. The Colonel had retained his senses through all this mangling, and his throat, which had been protected by a leather belt worn inside his cravat, was only slightly wounded. As soon as the Indians disappeared, he arose, went up the stairs and brought down his mother, placing her in a chair and leaned her against the fence, then brought down the body of his brother John and laid it on the grass. By this time, he became so exhausted from the loss of blood and the wounds he had received, that he lay down to die.

The old Negro and the girls returned later, finding the house burned and the dead and wounded. By signs, the colonel made known his desire for some water, which was brought, and his head bathed. After drinking a little, his speech was restored. A Tory named Clement passed by and the Negro asked him what he should do. Clement replied, "Let the rebel die." The Negro, following the directions of the Colonel, caught some colts which had never been broken, harnessed them to the wagon and took him to the house of a man named Putnam. From there, the whole family, including the bodies of his brothers, was conveyed to Schenectady in a canoe, arriving about sunset. Here, the Colonel finally had his wounds dressed. After five years of suffering, he had nearly recovered from the effects of these wounds.

Robert and Jane were married in Mohawk in 1772 and he joined the militia in April 1776. Robert was a member of the militia in the local area and experienced first hand fighting the Tories and the Indians who had been hired to wage war on the local population who did not agree politically with those loyal to England.

As noted below in a deed dated in 1784, Robert was a yeoman (small farmer in early days) along with his brother Samuel. In 1790, Robert was living in Canajoharie township (later to become Springfield), Montgomery, New York. He resided in Springfield until the time of his death in 1819.

Sources (including sources from records of Jerry Neiderhauser and Ila Peck):

1. Otsego County Deeds, Book H, p. 42, 43. Deed dated 18 July 1784, recorded 15 June 1807, 9 o'clock a.m. "Lot # 67 of patent grant to John Grosbeck, Peter Waggoner and others deeded by James Kennedy of Corry's Bush, Albany County, to Robert and Samuel Kennedy, yeomen, residing Mohawk District, Montgomery, N.Y." This land in 1790 known as part of Canajoharie that in 1800 was designated Springfield. This important document also identifies James Kennedy as the father of Robert and Samuel Kennedy. It further indicates the approximate death of James Kennedy through the verification of grantor by Joseph C. Yates a master of the Court of Cancery, New York State in which he interviews one of the witnesses, Lawrance Vrooman who testified that the document was executed by James Kennedy and recorded 15 June 1807.

2. The obituary of Robert Kennedy appeared in the Cherry Valley Gazette, Tuesday 24 August 1819. Verification of this obituary was received by correspondence from Jerry Neiderhauser with Olin Library, Cornell University, Ithica, New York, Jan 23, 1988. It states that Robert Kennedy was 71 years of age and died from a fall from a horse on Sunday, 22 August 1819. "He was an outstanding and well liked member of the community."

3. Index to Deaths in New York Newspapers; "Albany Gazette, 28 August 1819, FHL US/F# 1022834

4. US National Archives Revolutionary Service Record, FHL US/F# 1486015, 1486055

5. New York in the Revolution as Colony and State, arranged by: James A. Roberts, comptroller, 1895-1898, p. 179, 180. FHL US/974.7 M28n, 1898.

6. 1790 US Census, Montgomery County, New York, Canajoharie Township p. 100.

7. 1800 US Census, Otsego County, New York, Springfield, p. 56; FHL US/F#19317

8. 1810 US Census, Otsego County, New York, Springfield, p. 222; FHL US/F#181388

9. History of Springfield, Otsego County, New York, p. 190; FHL US/974.774/st H2g.

10. History of the Town of Mohawk, Montgomery County, New York,

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~nyherkim/mohawk.html>

11. The Tryon County Militia Project, Tryon County Militia – 3rd Regiment,

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~nyherkim/militia/tryon3.html>

12. New Hampshire Deeds, Volume 38, page 327, FHL Film 15427

Jane or Janitje Pratt 1751-1820

Jane or Janitje Pratt was born 13 September 1751 at Mohawk, Mohawk, New York. She married Robert Kennedy about 1772 at Mohawk, Mohawk, New York. She and Robert had 11 children. They raised these children in very turbulent times. The Revolutionary War began around the time they were married and battles were waged in many parts of New York including the area where they lived. Robert went to war during this period.

The first child of Jane and Robert was James Kennedy, born 12 April 1773 in the Mohawks District, Tryon, New York. Next came John Pratt Kennedy. He was born 18 September 1774 in the Mohawks District, Tryon, New York. Elizabeth Kennedy was born 2 July 1776, also in the Mohawks District, Tryon, New York. Anne Kennedy was born 2 December 1778 in the Mohawks District, Montgomery County, New York. Mary Kennedy was born 4 February 1780 in Springfield, Otsego, New York. Sarah or Sally Kennedy was born 5 August 1781 in the Mohawks District, Montgomery Co., New York. Catherine Kennedy was born 15 July 1784 in the Mohawks District, Montgomery, New York. Elijah Kennedy was born 17 May 1785 in Springfield, Otsego, New York. Samuel Kennedy was born 30 January 1790 in Springfield, Otsego, New York. Isaac Kennedy was born 17 January 1792 also in Springfield, Otsego, New York. Clarissa Kennedy was born 3 April 1794 in Springfield, Otsego, New York.

From this large group of children came four doctors, John Pratt Kennedy, James Kennedy, Isaac Kennedy and Samuel Kennedy. Every one of the sons except Elijah went into the medical profession. This is quite a tribute to this family as these children were born and raised in very turbulent times in this part of America. Few places saw as much of the Revolutionary War as did New York. Yet, in spite of the war, the children came through it quite well. This would seem to be a big tribute to this set of parents raising a family in what at that time was the frontier and in the midst of a war.

Jane Pratt Kennedy died between June 1820 and October 11, 1820.

Sources (from records of Jerry Neiderhauser and Ila Peck):

1. BIRTH: Bible Record from DAR Application Papers of Eleanor Havens Anthony. Application #146337.
2. MARRIAGE: Ibid.
3. CHRISTENING: The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record v. 67 p. 207; FHL: US/974 B2n, Records of the Trinity Parish Church.
4. DEATH: It can be assumed from two sets of administrative papers referenced in Robert Kennedy's notes that sometime between June 1820 and October 11, 1820 that Jane Pratt Kennedy died. So far all searches in Springfield have been fruitless.

Dr. John Pratt Kennedy 1774-1847

John Pratt Kennedy was born 18 September 1774 in the Mohawk District, Tryon County, New York. John grew up with the Revolutionary War going on all around him as a youngster. It must have been a very frightening time for a young boy growing up. John did not marry till he was nearly 30 years old. Whether that was due to his receiving his medical training has not been determined but could have been part of the reason for his not marrying earlier. He married Elizabeth Churchill at Pittsfield, Berkshire, Mass. on 24 May 1804. Numerous references exist regarding John as a physician in Madison, Steuben, and Tioga counties of New York, places where he resided over his lifetime.

For the first few years of their married life, John and Elizabeth or Betsey, as she was more commonly known, lived in Massachusetts. Their first child, Cedillia, was born in July of 1805 at Great Barrington, Berkshire, Mass. John and Betsey made several land transactions at Cazenovia, Madison, New York in 1806 and 1807. Their second daughter, Mary Ann, was born at Great Barrington, Berkshire, Mass. on 7 December 1807. Mary Ann was the one child that John and Betsey did not show as having inherited part of their estate when they died. Mary Ann, however, had moved away so it is not known if they did not know where to contact her or if they were still unhappy because she joined the Mormon Church after her marriage to Charles Bird. John and Betsey were residing at Great Barrington, Mass. during the census of 1810. Eliza, the third child of John and Betsey, was born 2 December 1809 and in later years stated she was born at Madison, Madison, New York. She may well have been born at Great Barrington, Mass. as her parents resided there in 1807 and were residing there in 1810. There is no evidence discovered to confirm that, however.

Their only son, Bradford, was born in 1812, possibly in Pennsylvania. As early as 1807, John and Betsey were making property transactions at Cazenovia, Madison, New York, so it may be that Bradford was born at Cazenovia, Madison, New York rather than in Pennsylvania. Bradford, however, in the censuses of 1850, 1860, 1870 and 1880, listed his birthplace as Pennsylvania. John and Betsey had a daughter, Henrietta on 11 October 1816 in Madison County, New York. Their daughter, Caroline Matilda, was born in Madison County, New York on 21 October 1818. It is likely, but not proven, that these last two children may have been born at Sullivan, Madison, New York where John had purchased a lot in 1816. In 1819, John and Betsey, then of Sullivan, sold their property in Sullivan.

By 1820, John and Betsey had moved to Bath, Steuben, New York and were recorded living there in the 1820 census. By 1825, they had moved to Southport, Tioga, New York and in 1830, they resided at Warwick, Orange, New York. By 1835, they had taken up residence at Dryden, Tompkins, New York, where they remained for the rest of their lives. John made out a will dated 29 September 1847 and died 11 November 1847. His will was proved on 4 April 1848. John is buried at the Green Hill Cemetery, Dryden, Tompkins, New York.

Sources (from records of Jerry Neiderhauser and Ila Peck):

1. BIRTH: D.A.R. Application Papers OF Eleanor Havnes Anthony, Nat'l #146337, Bible Record of Anne Kennedy Havens. Name given is John Parsons Kennedy. This is in error because; (1) Mothers maiden name is Pratt; (2) FHL F# 183385, E.H. Records of Baptisms for the Dead, Vol. D, p. 365, #16759, His name is John Pratt Kennedy work done by son-in-law, Charles Bird, 29 Oct 1873. (3) Daughter Mary Ann Kennedy Bird named oldest son John Pratt Kennedy Bird.

2. MARRIAGE: Pittsfield, Berkshire County, Massachusetts Town Records, 1761- 1850, (FHL F# 234543 p. 68 item 5, line 34); also, Intentions To Marry, in same reference, p. 144 (p.25).

3. DEATH: WILL, Vol. F p. 120-124, Wills and Probates, Tompkins County, New York. Will dated 28 September 1847 and proved 4 Apr 1848 (FHL F#853072). Also, Endowment House Baptisms for the Dead, Book D p. 365 #16759, death date 11 Nov 1848. (Note the discrepancy in year). Abraham Tanner, a witness to the will testified before Judge Alfred Wells that John P. Kennedy "was between seventy and eighty years old and died sometime in the winter or fall of the year 1847".

4. BURIAL: Green Hill Cemetery Records, Green Hill Cemetery, Dryden, Tompkins, New York, plot 1-249.

5. 1810 Census of the United States p. 140 FHL F# 205625. Gt Barrington, Mass.

6. 1820 Census of the United States p. 220 FHL F# 193729. Bath, Steuben, N.Y.

7. 1825 Census of New York p. none, line 33, Village of Southport, Tioga, N.Y. FHL F# 816363.

8. 1830 Census of the United States p. 84, FHL F# 17173, Warwick, Orange, N.Y.

9. 1835 Census of New York taken before 27 Oct 1835, Dryden, Tompkins, N.Y. FHL F# 856513 item 2

10. 1840 Census of the United States p.192, FHL F# 17208, Dryden, Tompkins, N.Y. Head of family, son Bradford Kennedy.

11. Proof of parentage, Otsego County deeds, Book RR p. 458, dated 14 July 1821, (John P. Kennedy Physician of Bath, Steuben Co., N.Y. sold to James Kennedy property received as heir from Robert Kennedy, witnessed by Heiro Kennedy. Deed was never recorded until 2 September 1830. On 19

June 1830, John P. Kennedy and wife, Betsey appeared before Anthon Yelverton along with Jane Smith of Goshen, Orange Co. who swore that she personally knew them. They acknowledged the deed and witnessed that they had signed this deed.)

12. John Pratt Kennedy was a physician. Reference to his practicing can be found in references from Madison Co., Steuben County, Tioga County and perhaps others yet to be found. See Historical documentation on James, Samuel and Isaac.

13. Deed dated 20 Feb 1806, Cazenovia, Madison Co., N.Y. (FHL F#404291, Book D pp.416-418, John P. bought part of lot #5, containing a little more than two acres located in the new town of Cazenovia. Verification of sale dated 28 Aug 1806 and recorded 18 May 1809. Land bought from Aaron and Ruth Baldwin.

14. Deed dated 6 Feb 1807, John P. and Betsey Kennedy sell part of lot #4 bought from David Hutchinson and piece of land (part of lot #5) purchased from Aaron Baldwin to Truman Beeman. Total acreage was six and three quarter acres. Verification dated 13 Feb 1807 and recorded 18 May 1809. Reference Cazenovia, Madison County, Book D, pp.418-419 (FHL F# 404291).

15. Deed dated 13 Feb 1807, Cazenovia, Madison Co., N.Y. (FHL F#404291) Book C pp. 340-341, John P. bought from David Hutchison part of lot #4 containing four acres. Verification dated 13 Feb 1807 and recorded 18 May 1809.

16. Deed dated 24 Jan 1816, Cazenovia, Madison, N.Y. (FHL F# 404296) Book O, pp. 425-426. John P. Kennedy bought Lot # 18 in the town of Sullivan, Madison, New York from Johnathan Smith of Cazenovia, Madison, N.Y. Verification 15 Dec 1817 and recorded 16 Oct 1818.

17. Deed dated 3 Feb 1819 Madison County, N.Y. (FHL F# 404297) Book P, pp. 122-123, John P. and Betsey Kennedy of Sullivan, Madison, N.Y. sold to Charles Parmelee Jr. of Cazenovia and Moses Parmelee of Sullivan lot #18 in Sullivan. Verification dated 10 Feb 1819 and recorded 15 Feb 1819.

18. Spec Coll. F# 1263072; Index Card To St George Temple Records,#5907,Book C page 316.

Elizabeth Churchill 1778-1862

Elizabeth Churchill was born 8 December 1778 in Plymouth, Mass., the daughter of John Churchill and Molly Bradford. Elizabeth came from a distinguished heritage. She was a direct descendant of three of the original Mayflower passengers. She was a direct descendant of Governor William Bradford, one of the original passengers and one of the early governors of the Plymouth colony. She also descended from Sir Isaac Allerton, the original purchasing agent for the Plymouth Colony and also one of the original passengers. Elizabeth also was a direct descendant of Richard Warren. Little is known of the early life of Elizabeth, growing up in Plymouth, Mass.

Elizabeth met and married Dr. John Pratt Kennedy. They were married on 24 May 1804 at Pittsfield, Mass. Elizabeth would go on to birth and raise five children, four girls and one boy. The first child born to Elizabeth and John was Cedillia Kennedy, born in July of 1805 at Great Barrington, Mass. Mary Ann Kennedy was the next born and was born on 7 December 1807, also at Great Barrington, Mass. Eliza Kennedy was born on 2 December 1809 at Madison, New York. Bradford Kennedy was born in 1812, probably in Pennsylvania, although this has not been positively determined. Henrietta Kennedy was born on 11 October 1816 in Madison, New York. The last child, Caroline Matilda Kennedy was born 21 October 1818 at Sullivan, Madison, New York.

As can be noted in the history of her husband John, Elizabeth lived a number of places during her live, primarily in New York. Elizabeth died on 22 December 1862 at Dryden, New York. Elizabeth is buried at Green Hill Cemetery, Dryden, Tompkins, New York.

Sources (from records of Jerry Neiderhauser and Ila Peck):

1.BIRTH: Hall, Descendents of Gov. William Bradford, p. 181

2.MARRIAGE: Union Parish Church Records, Pittsfield, Berkshire Co. Mass. p. 386.

3.DEATH: Francis Bird's Genealogical Records Book, containing temple record books of different family members. The death date taken from Charles Bird's Temple record book which was included in this collection. (FHL F# 673261). Also, Endowment House Baptisms for the dead Book D,p. 365; (FHL F# 183385).

4.BURIAL: Green Hill Cemetery Records, Green Hill Cemetery, Dryden, Tompkins, New York, plot 1-249.

Mary Ann Kennedy 1807-1867

Mary Ann Kennedy was born 7 December 1807 at Great Barrington, Berkshire, Mass., the second of six children of Dr. John Pratt Kennedy and Elizabeth Churchill. By the time Mary Ann was a teenager, the family had moved to nearby New York. She moved with her family to several locations within New York over the next few years, ultimately settling in Southport, New York. Mary Ann arrived in Southport with her family in 1825. Mary Ann's future husband, Charles Bird, had come with his family from New Jersey to nearby Elmira, New York. Charles Bird was involved in learning the textile industry, which was a relatively new industry. Southport where Mary Ann lived was near to Elmira so it is assumed that Charles and Mary Ann met in one of the two villages. However they met, the result was that they were married on 22 March 1826 at Covington, Tioga, Pennsylvania. Covington lies between New Jersey and western New York and was probably a days drive by horse drawn buggy. She was 18 years old at the time of their marriage. Her parents, John and Elizabeth, were reportedly not been very happy when she and Charles joined the Mormon faith. Charles was baptized in 1836 and Mary Ann in 1837. There were reports that her parents disowned her but that is unclear. She was not named in the will of John Pratt Kennedy but she had also moved far away and had little or no contact with the family so it is unclear whether she was left off the will just because she no longer lived nearby or whether her father, indeed, was still unhappy with Mary Ann and her choice of faith.

Marrying Charles formed the beginning of a great adventure for Mary Ann. Not only would she move away from the home and family she had grown up with but she and Charles would eventually face many grave challenges in the upcoming years. Mary Ann eventually gave birth to fourteen children.

The first child of Charles and Mary Ann was John Pratt Kennedy Bird who was born 24 August 1827 at Burdette, Tompkins, New York. John Pratt was followed by the birth of Elizabeth (Betsy) Ann Kennedy Bird on 30 October 1829 at Hector, Schuyler, New York. Their third child, Benjamin Freeman Bird, named for Charles' father, Benjamin Freeman Bird, was born 19 June 1831 at Hector, Schuyler, New York. Benjamin only lived to the age of 18 and died on 24 December 1849 at Council Bluff, Iowa. Henrietta was born 7 June 1833 at Newton, Tompkins, New York. Amanda Sedilla Kennedy Bird was born on 23 March 1835 at Hector, Schuyler, New York. Amanda Sedilla Bird died at the age of 5 on 26 Jun 1840. Kelsey Bird was born next on 11 January 1837 at Hector, Schuyler, New York.

By 1838, Charles and Mary Ann had moved to Kirtland, Ohio. This was a very troubled time there with apostates of the Mormon Church along with other local citizens threatening the lives and property of the members. In early July of that year, a camp was formed for the migration out of Kirkland for a movement to Missouri. The caravan leaving Kirkland was a mile long. Mary Ann had six young children at this time with the youngest barely a year and a half old. A total of 529 were on the move with this relocation and they had but 59 wagons and 33 tents so each family took very few of their possessions from Kirkland and had to jointly use the available tents. This caravan arrived at a camp called Adam-ondi-Ahman in 2 October 1838. They only stayed at this location for a couple of months and were again forced to move. Charles and Mary Ann moved to nearby Far West. While at this location, Charles and Mary Ann and their children were subjected to the atrocities and persecutions inflicted upon them by local Missouri residents. A number of the residents of Far West were killed, some of the women raped and homes and possessions looted.

A son, Charles Bird, was born 13 January 1839 and died on 4 December 1839 at Far West, Caldwell, Missouri. Charles and Mary Ann and their family were forced to flee Far West in the middle of a winter blizzard. They had to abandon their wagon containing all they owned. Mary Ann was pregnant at this time. In trying to escape, Mary Ann overextended herself trying to care for her young children. Her toes on one foot were severely frost bitten and the toes had to be amputated without anesthetic. Mary Ann soon had to manage moving the family by herself as Charles was called to help settle the estates of those driven from Missouri and, along with several others, stayed behind to try and sell properties belonging to the Saints who had fled.

By early 1840, Charles and Mary Ann had moved to Clayton, Adams, Illinois and their son, Bradford Kennedy Bird, was born there on 26 January 1840. Shortly thereafter, they moved to Nauvoo, Hancock, Illinois. During 1840, Charles was called away on a mission so once again Mary Ann had the family to manage by herself. Charles went to North Carolina on his mission. On 26 June 1840, Mary Ann lost her daughter Amanda Sedilla at the age of 5. A few months later, Mary Ann gave birth to daughter Eliza Jane Kennedy in Nauvoo on 7 February 1841. Things went well in Nauvoo for a time. Charles Henry Bird was next in line and was born 2 July 1843 at Nauvoo, Illinois. William Bird was born in Nauvoo on 6 April 1845. By this time, the people of Nauvoo were beginning to encounter hostility and problems with the local citizens from surrounding communities. By February 1846, it was time for the Bird family to move again leaving behind another nice home. They crossed the Mississippi river on the ice with their team and wagon. They were accompanied by many others fleeing Nauvoo. They stayed for a time on the opposite side of the Mississippi River in Iowa at a camp called Sugar Creek before starting their journey west. By April 1846, they had arrived at Garden Grove, Iowa. They moved on to the Missouri River by June 1846. There they established another temporary home. Martin Lewis Dainy Bird was born on 6 January 1847 at Winter Quarters, Douglas (Indian Territory), Nebraska.

When the main body of Saints prepared to move on to Utah and the Great Basin, Charles was asked to stay behind and help others who would be bound for Utah but who needed help as they had few or no clothes. Charles and some of his other family members were weavers so they established a simple woolen mill to manufacture clothing for the emigrating Saints. George Albert Smith Bird was born 26 January 1849 at Council Bluff, Nebraska. Council Bluff and Winter Quarters were located just across the river from each other. Mary Ann and Charles son, Benjamin, died on Christmas Eve, 24 December 1849, at Council Bluff.

By 1850, the Bird family was released from their calling to move on to Utah and they emigrated in a wagon train with the Milo Andrus Company. They left the Missouri River on 3 June 1850 in a company of 206 people. They entered the Salt Lake valley on 3 August 1850. Charles and Mary Ann moved to the Cottonwood area of the valley. Mary Ann Bird, the last of the children of Charles and Mary Ann was born in 1851 in South Cottonwood, Salt Lake, Utah.

On 3 February 1853, Charles entered into polygamy by marrying Sarah Ann Dunston. They remained in South Cottonwood for a few years where Charles served as a Bishop in one of the local wards but in the spring of 1859, they moved to Mendon, Utah in the Cache Valley of northern Utah. There they lived in their wagons until rooms inside the fort could be built. The fort at Mendon was a collection of houses built end to end to comprise the fort. Once it was deemed safe to move outside the fort, Charles built a home for each of his wives in Mendon. The fort was disassembled and some of the townspeople used the buildings, which were a part of the fort by moving that part of the fort to their town lot. Times were tough there in those early days. The family had to survive Indians, bear attacks, grasshopper invasions, drought, and a host of other challenges.

Mary Ann died in Mendon, Cache, Utah on 10 October 1867, and is buried in the Mendon Cemetery there. She was truly one of the strong pioneers in every sense of the word. She had endured having to leave behind numerous homes and watch them burn to the ground, being harassed by mobs and threatened with death, being frozen and losing some of her toes, enduring the death of several of her children, and still she maintained her faith in her religion to the end. She is truly one of our ancestors to be honored.

Sources (from records of Jerry Neiderhauser and Ila Peck):

1. Birth date of Mary Ann from L.D.S. Membership Record, Nauvoo Temple Endowment and Sealing Record and Nauvoo Temple Index Card.

2. Death date of Mary Ann from Cemetery Records, Mendon Utah and Membership Record of L.D.S. Church.

3. Marriage and parentage of Mary Ann Kennedy from 10,000 VITAL RECORDS OF WESTERN NEW YORK, 1809-1850 by Fred Q Bowman, Baltimore, Md.(FHL 974.7 Y2b). p.23. Note the date different from established family records. The date in this record is Mar-Apr 25, 1827.

4. Spec. Coll. ;--Index Card to Nauvoo Temple Records, Book B, p. 47,#504, for Charles Bird- which was a living ordinance- gives date of marriage as 22 Mar 1826.

This Kennedy History was compiled and written by Larry Mace, a descendant of the Kennedy family.