

# The Royce Quarterly

Summer 2024

A Publication of the Royce Family Association (RFA)

Volume 37 Number 3

**Co-Editor's Note:** September has arrived and summer is winding down, officially ending on September 21, 2024. As I sit here relaxing on my porch overlooking Lake Whatcom in the far northwest corner of Washington State, I am reflecting on our Royce, Rice, Roys ancestors and imagining their perspective of the changing summer season and the approach of fall and winter. Even though I am a part-time teacher and have plenty of my own duties to keep our old "homestead" in repair, I am feeling particularly lazy and a little guilty knowing that our forebears spent their time chopping wood for heat, sewing clothing for warmth, hunting, harvesting, and preserving food for the possibility of a long, cold winter for the sake of survival. Today I give thanks to those who came before me that I may have my lazy day on my porch watching boats go by.

**Inside this Edition:** RFA member Jim Ward presents his multiple connections to his Royce ancestors and RFA member Kate Renner shares her research regarding the Colonial Dames Old House Survey of the Nehemiah Royce House as well as other historical information about the Nehemiah house in Wallingford, Ct.

**DON'T FORGET to CHECK OUT the NEW and IMPROVED: Royce Family Association Website @ [roycefamilyassociation.org](https://roycefamilyassociation.org).**

## New and Improved RFA Website

Our Royce Family Association president Lori DiDonato has been working with web designers to complete the RFA's website. You may see a few changes if you visit [roycefamilyassociation.org](https://roycefamilyassociation.org) in terms of content, layout and links. We are nearing the finalization of our website design and hope to see it fully launched in mid-September. Lori has been working with a company named Vznayres. Since we

started working with them in May, we have already seen an uptick in interest in the RFA. People are finding our website and subscribing which is the result of the SEO/search engine optimization that Vznayres is facilitating. In the near future the website will include more information about the Y-DNA project, a link to download Al Rhods' book "The Royce Family in America" and also the ability to pay dues online via credit card. If you log in to the site, you can click on "My Account" to see some members-only features: RFA bylaws and board members, DNA Project information, and under "Member Resources" you can find older and more recent newsletters. If anyone has difficulty logging in, please email Kate Renner at [K8renmayo@gmail.com](mailto:K8renmayo@gmail.com)

### **Purpose of the RFA**

The purpose of the RFA is to collect, maintain, and distribute genealogical and historical data pertaining to the early Royce/Royse settlers of England and New England, and their descendants, to preserve and display artifacts of the early descendants, and such other activities in recognition of the early settlers as may be determined by the Board of Directors not inconsistent with the articles of incorporation. The Association membership is open to all descendants of Robert Royce, who arrived in North America before 1648 and eventually settled in New London Connecticut, and anyone who is researching any of the variations of the Royce name, including but not limited to, Royse, Roice, Roys, Rice, Ryse, and Ries.

### **The Future of the Royce Family Association**

The RFA Newsletter is now being emailed to all members who can receive emails. Paper copy editions will continue to be mailed to members who cannot receive it by email and any members who let us know they would prefer a mailed paper version. If you have not already done so, please indicate your preference on your renewal form or by email to Diana Royce Smith at [diana1319smith@comcast.net](mailto:diana1319smith@comcast.net). You can also send Diana a note addressed to 1930 Oak Avenue Boulder, CO 80304.

### **Current Board**

The Royce Family Association board of directors voluntarily stepped forward in 2022 to keep the RFA alive and well and moving forward into the future. The board will serve until there is interest among the membership to hold elections. **President:** Lori DiDonato **Treasurer:** Diana Royce Smith **Secretary and Newsletter Advisor:** Kate Renner **Vice President:** Cynthia Royce **Newsletter Co-editor:** Anne McGreevy **Newsletter Advisor:** Richard Rice **Lou Rice:** Board Member at Large **Ed Royce:** Board Member at Large

**The Royce Family Association is Now on Facebook!** A Facebook group called Royce Family Association (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1127883208081516>) was formed to initiate a presence on social media. If you are on Facebook and interested in joining the private group, input the name into the Facebook search bar, upper left side, answer a few questions, and you should be admitted. If that does not work, please email Kate Renner at [k8renmayo@gmail.com](mailto:k8renmayo@gmail.com).

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## A Quadruple Royce Lineage and the Beach-Austin Connections

By Jim Ward

I descend from Robert Royce and Mary Jackson four different ways. First, here are the four lines, and then below are charts showing the interrelation of these lines.

### Line 1

Robert Royce 1605-1676  
Samuel 1641-1711 and Hannah Churchill  
Robert 1669-1759 and Mary Porter  
Mary 1707-1799 and John Austin  
Abigail 1735-1793 and Edward Fenn  
Theophilus Fenn 1769-1860 and Mary Dibble  
Daniel Fenn 1812-1895 and Adaline Gardner  
Oscar Fenn 1836-1899 and Salina Wilson  
Cora Fenn 1863-1896 and Frank Miller  
Ruth Miller 1885-1988 and Alphonsus Ward  
Robert Ward 1921-1980 and Marjorie O'Brien  
Jim Ward  
Robert Royce 1605-1676  
Samuel 1641-1711 and Hannah Churchill

### Line 2

Robert 1669-1759 and Mary Porter  
4. Prudence Royce 1680-1742 and John Austin  
5. John Austin and Mary Royce 1707-179  
6. Abigail 1735-1793 and Edward Fenn  
7. Theophilus Fenn 1769-1860 and Mary Dibble  
8. Daniel Fenn 1812-1895 and Adaline Gardner  
9. Oscar Fenn 1836-1899 and Salina Wilson  
10. Cora Fenn 1863-1896 and Frank Miller  
11. Ruth Miller 1885-1988 and Alphonsus Ward  
12. Robert Ward 1921-1980 and Marjorie O'Brien  
13. Jim Ward

### **Line 3**

Robert Royce 1605-1676

Samuel 1641-1711 and Hannah  
Churchill

Robert 1669-1759 and Mary Porter

4. Nathaniel 1693-1760 and Phebe  
Clark

5. Dinah Royce 1724-1771 and Linus  
Beach

6. Michael Beach 1756-1830 and  
Eunice Hester

7. Eunice Beach 1786-1855 and  
Alpheus Madden

8. Nelson Madden 1804-1855 and  
Olive Parks

9. Mary Ann Madden 1848-1939 and  
Clark Beach

10. Lodema Beach 1872-1920 and  
Walter Spencer

11. Evelyn Spencer 1901-1987 and  
Frank O'Brien

12. Marjorie O'Brien 1923-2009 and  
Robert Ward

13. Jim Ward

### **Line 4**

1. Robert 1605-1676 & Mary  
Jackson

2. Samuel 1641-1711 & Sarah  
Baldwin

3. Mary Lane Royce (1695-1767)  
& Deacon John Beach

4. Dinah Royce 1724-1771 and Linus  
Beach

5. Michael Beach 1756-1830 and  
Eunice Hester

6. Eunice Beach 1786-1855 and  
Alpheus Madden

7. Nelson Madden 1804-1855 and  
Olive Parks

8. Mary Ann Madden 1848-1939 and  
Clark Beach

9. Lodema Beach 1872-1920 and  
Walter Spencer

10. Evelyn Spencer 1901-1987 and  
Frank O'Brien

11. Marjorie O'Brien 1923-2009 and  
Robert Ward

12. Jim Ward



The following is my complicated Royce/Beach/Austin ancestry. On the left side of the image below is my mother's Beach line and on the right side is my father's Austin line. The Robert Royce and Mary Jackson connection links them both together. I knew some of this about 15+ years ago but realized there were errors and put it aside for a while. This makes a lot more sense than the old-style HTML table mess that's hiding in my now-archived RootsWeb site.

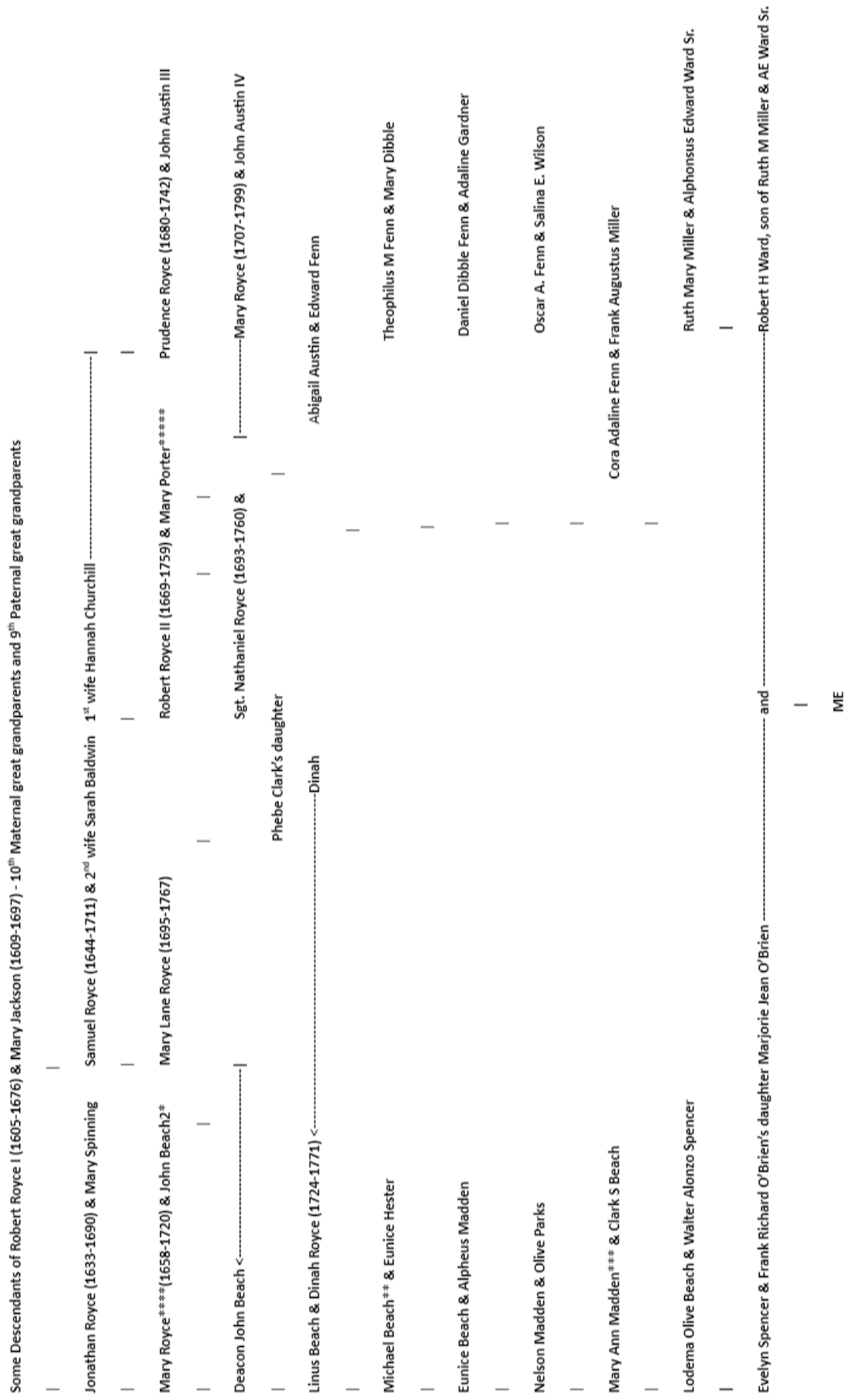
I did a lot of genealogy research this past winter, spending nearly a month getting the following information together and searching for a commercial descendancy chart that would accommodate the lines of both parents with multiple shared ancestors. I'm confident that there is no chart that can accomplish what I have here. There are multiple connections detailed in the text below that I could not add to this chart because there's not enough space available. The reason for all this complication could be endogamy, as, at last count, I have 73 ancestral families in Colonial Connecticut that are both maternal and paternal "rellies." I'm trying to pin my multiple Royce/Jackson connections on a "Personal Pile Up Region," which shows SNPs over 1,000 and centimorgan numbers limited to between 3 and 4 in chromosome 6 between 25,xxx,xxx and 32,xxx,xxx. I still have a ways to go on that project.

One of the many genealogy groups I'm a member of is the Royce Family Association on Facebook. Please tag me in a new post with any questions.

My mother's genealogy research in the 1980s noted her two Beach lines from brothers John and Thomas Beach, immigrants in the Great Migration of the early 1600s. We still don't know when the three Beach brothers arrived, but Mom established her line of descent to John and Thomas. You will see each line in the chart below and where they merged. A son, grandson, and great grandson of Thomas Beach married Royce women. Note the asterisks next to some of the names.

\*John Beach2 is a son of Thomas Beach and had John Beach1 for an uncle. John Beach 1 did not marry a Royce woman. Believe me, I'm glad he didn't! Both Thomas Beach and John Beach1 are 9<sup>th</sup> great grandfathers. Michael Beach\*\* was a Revolutionary War veteran. Mary Ann Madden\*\*\* is a descendant of Thomas Beach. Clark S. Beach is a descendant of Thomas' brother, John Beach1. Mary Ann and Clark were 7<sup>th</sup> cousins. With my "Beach Boys," being that I have 2 brothers for 9<sup>th</sup> great grandfathers and that 2 of their descendants, Mary Ann Madden & Clark Beach, married, I'm a 10<sup>th</sup> cousin to myself. My 2 children are 10<sup>th</sup> cousins once removed and they are 11<sup>th</sup> cousins to themselves.

All 5 Royce women and 4 Royce men named above – Mary 1, Mary 2, Mary Lane, Prudence, Dinah plus Jonathan, Samuel, Robert II and Nathaniel – are descendants of Robert Royce and Mary Jackson. Mary Royce Austin is a daughter of Robert Royce II & Mary Porter, a sister of Sgt. Nathaniel Royce and an aunt of Dinah Royce Beach plus she's also a daughter-in-law of Prudence Royce Austin and a 1<sup>st</sup> cousin once removed...maybe?



\*\*\*\*Eugene H. Beach Jr., Beach Family Journal author, says in his genealogy report that after John Beach<sup>2</sup> died in 1709, Mary Royce Beach married 2<sup>nd</sup>, John Atwater Sr. The Atwater family is connected to the Austin family in my paternal line. Wikitree notates Mary Royce Beach Atwater, 1658-1720 and John Atwater Sr's. marriage (<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Royce-50>) Mary is 60 years old. So, there are no children from that union. There isn't much information on John Atwater Sr.

\*\*\*\*\*If this isn't complicated enough yet, here's more - Sarah Baldwin, Samuel Royce's 2<sup>nd</sup> wife had a half-sister named Elizabeth Baldwin. And guess what? Mary Porter Royce is a daughter of Elizabeth Baldwin and Nathaniel Porter. That means Mary Porter Royce is the niece of Sarah Baldwin Royce. Mary Royce Austin is a daughter of Robert Royce II and Mary Porter. Mary Royce Austin is a granddaughter of Samuel Royce's 1<sup>st</sup> wife, Hannah Churchill, and she's also a great granddaughter of John Baldwin & Mary Bruen via Samuel Royce's 2<sup>nd</sup> wife, Sarah Baldwin. I hope I have this correct, yipes!

### My Beach maternal descendency:

John Beach, 1619-1677, m. Mary Staples	Thomas Beach, 16??-1662, m. Sarah Platt
their son:	their son:
Thomas Beach, 1659-1741, m. Phoebe Wilcoxon (b. 1669) in 1688	John Beach, 1655-1709, m. Mary Royce
their son:	their son:
Nathan Beach, 1692-aft. 1737, m. <a href="#">Jemima Curtis</a> 1694/95-1738/39	Deacon John Beach, 1690 - 1773, m. 2nd, Mary Lane Royce
their son:	their son:
William Beach, 1716 - 1799, m. Martha Clark	Linus Beach, 1721 - aft. 1791, m. Dinah Royce
their son:	their son:
Isaac Beach, 1746 - 1775(?), m. Mary Elizabeth Berry	Michael Beach, 3 Feb 1756 - aft. 1830, m. 1st Eunice Hester, m. 2nd Eliza Castle.
their son:	Daughter of Michael & Eunice:
Clark Beach, 1775 - 1848, m. Elizabeth Church	Eunice Beach, 1786 - aft. 1855, m. Alpheus Madden
their son:	their son:
Thomas C. Beach, 1804 - 1885, m. Lodema Z. Ford	Nelson Madden, 1804 - 1855, m. <a href="#">Olive Parks</a>
their son:	their daughter:
Clark Beach, 1846 - 1923, married 6 March 1867 to	Mary A. Madden, 1848 - 1939
Clark & Mary's daughter:	
Lodema Olive Beach, 1872 - 1920, m. Walter A. Spencer	
their daughter:	
Evolyn (Evelyn) Spencer, 1901 - 1987, m. <a href="#">Frank R. O'Brien</a>	
their daughter:	
Marjorie J. O'Brien, b. 1923, m. Robert H. Ward	
their son:	
Me	

John Beach<sup>1</sup> married a woman named Mary but it apparently was not Mary Staples.

### How many ways am I related to Robert Royce & Mary Jackson?

I'll try to guesstimate my relationships to my Royce crew by listing them by way of my maternal and paternal lines. The easy part is that Robert & Mary are maternal 10<sup>th</sup> great-grandparents and paternal 9<sup>th</sup> great-grandparents. From that point on, wish me luck! (Note: GGm = Great-Grandmother and GGf = Great-Grandfather) My Austin male ancestors are noted as II, III and IV to determine their birth order. My two Robert Royce ancestors are also noted as I and II for the same reason.

Maternal Line	Paternal Line
Jonathan Royce is the father of Mary Royce Beach, father-in-law of John Beach <sup>2</sup> . Jonathan Royce is a brother of Samuel Royce, brother-in-law of both Hannah Churchill and Sarah Baldwin AND an uncle of Mary Lane Royce, Robert Royce II and Prudence Royce. There's more to it besides those relationships.	Prudence Royce Austin is the mother-in-law of her cousin Mary Royce Austin, sister of Robert Royce II (1669-1759), half sibling of Mary Lane Royce and cousin of Mary Royce Beach. Mary Royce Beach m. 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 1718, John Atwater Sr, likely a descendant of David Atwater, 9 <sup>th</sup> GGf, whose daughter, 8 <sup>th</sup> GGm Mercy Atwater married 8 <sup>th</sup> GGf John Austin II. No issue from the marriage of Mary Royce Beach and John Atwater Sr.
As noted above, descendants of Thomas Beach married Royce women. Thomas and his brother, John Beach <sup>1</sup> were ancestors of Mary Ann Madden and Clark S Beach, who are 2 <sup>nd</sup> great-grandparents.	Mary Royce Austin: Sister of Sgt. Nathaniel Royce, Aunt of Dinah Royce Beach, half-first cousin once removed of Mary Lane Royce PLUS an aunt & a daughter-in-law of Prudence Royce Austin.
Samuel Royce is a 9 <sup>th</sup> maternal GGf. Samuel's brother, Jonathan Royce is also a 9 <sup>th</sup> paternal great-grandfather.	Hannah Churchill Royce – 8 <sup>th</sup> paternal great grandmother, great-grandmother of Dinah Royce Beach and a 9 <sup>th</sup> maternal GGm.
My parents were 10 <sup>th</sup> and 11 <sup>th</sup> cousins, or is it 10 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> once removed? Yipes! I doubt that they knew that. Maybe there is something to the concept of genetic memory. 😊	Sarah Baldwin Royce – Mother of Mary Lane Royce Beach, Mother-in law of Deacon John Beach and aunt of Mary Royce Beach, who is the mother of the 7 <sup>th</sup> maternal GGf Deacon John Beach.
	Samuel Royce is an 8 <sup>th</sup> paternal GGf.



Eugene H. Beach Jr, of Highland, MI, published The Beach Family Journal from 1996 to 2003. He's a Beach cousin whose recent common ancestor was Michael Beach, a 5<sup>th</sup> great-grandfather. Eugene is about the same age as I am, so we're likely to be 6<sup>th</sup> cousins. Here's his assessment of his Beach/Royce/Baldwin line, which doesn't include my paternal line. His work has no copyright notice. He asked for the courtesy of being noted as the origin of this part of my research.

Mary Lane Royce, daughter of Samuel and 2<sup>nd</sup> wife Sarah Baldwin and granddaughter of Robert Royce & Mary Jackson, wife of Deacon John Beach, is a first cousin to her husband's mother, Mary Royce, whose father is Samuel's brother Johnathan. Deacon John Beach is his wife's first cousin once removed. The children of Mary and the Deacon are their mother's first cousins twice removed, their father's second cousins and 2<sup>nd</sup> cousins once removed to each other.

When Deacon John and Mary's son Linus married Dinah Royce, more genealogical fun ensued. My own assessment is that Dinah is a half first cousin once removed to Mary Lane Royce Beach and a first cousin to Mary Royce Beach. Eugene notes that Dinah was Linus' 1<sup>st</sup> cousin once removed via Samuel Royce. Dinah and Linus were also 3<sup>rd</sup> cousins to Robert Royce I via Mary Royce Beach and her father, Jonathan Royce. Eugene also notes that the children of Linus and Dinah were 4<sup>th</sup> cousins to each other, 2<sup>nd</sup> cousins to their mother, 1<sup>st</sup> cousins twice removed to their father and 2<sup>nd</sup> cousins twice removed to their grandfather, Deacon John Beach. Eugene also states that the children of Linus & Dinah had Samuel Royce as a 2<sup>nd</sup> great-grandfather once and a 3<sup>rd</sup> great-grandfather twice.

I'm still on my maternal line here since it's so complicated. John Baldwin (1619-1681) married first, Mary Camp (unsure of her maiden name) whose daughter was Elizabeth Baldwin. She married Nathaniel Porter and was the mother of Mary Porter, who married Robert Royce II. The two related children of Mary Porter Royce and Robert Royce II were Sgt. Nathaniel Royce and Mary Royce. Sgt. Nathaniel and wife Phebe Clark's daughter Dinah married Linus Beach, as noted in the previous paragraph. Dinah's Aunt, Mary Royce, married John Austin IV in my father's line. That's the 2<sup>nd</sup> link between the lines of my parents. The first connection was Prudence Royce (1680-1742), daughter of Samuel Royce and 1<sup>st</sup> wife Hannah Churchill. Prudence married John Austin III, father of John IV. As previously noted, Prudence was Mary Royce Austin's mother-in-law and an aunt via Samuel Royce & Hannah Churchill.

AND there's another Royce in the scheme of things – Josiah Royce (1670-1694), 1<sup>st</sup> husband of Elizabeth Parker, brother of Robert Royce II is a son of Samuel Royce and 1<sup>st</sup> wife Hannah Churchill. Elizabeth Parker Royce's 2nd marriage was to Ebenezer Clark, whose daughter, Phebe, married Sgt. Nathaniel Royce. Ms. Parker Royce was the grandmother of Dinah Royce, wife of Linus Beach. Ancestry.com says Josiah Royce is a 7<sup>th</sup> great grand uncle while Elizabeth Parker Royce Clark is an 8<sup>th</sup> great-grandmother.

So far, there are 9 surnames associated with the 1600s-1700s Royce families and a lot more if you add all the descendants. Atwater, Austin, Baldwin, Beach, Churchill, Clark, Parker, Porter, Sayre and Spinning. One of my 2 links to famous British Prime Minister Sir Winston Leonard Churchill is through Mercy Atwater, wife of John Austin II and her parents, David Atwater and Damaris Sayre. Mercy's brother, John Atwater, is one of Sir Winston's 5<sup>th</sup> great grandfathers. My 2<sup>nd</sup> connection is 7<sup>th</sup> maternal great-grandparents, Nathan Beach and Jemima Curtis, parents of Mehitable Beach, who was the wife of Ambrose Hall Sr., a great-grandfather of Jeanette "Jennie" Jerome, mother of Sir Winston Leonard Churchill. I have not been able to connect Hannah Churchill Royce with Sir Winston's ancestors yet.

One more endogamous link is Martha Clark Beach, daughter-in-law of Nathan Beach and Jemima Curtis. She is a descendant of Josiah Clark, a half-brother of Phebe Clark Royce.

I think it's safe to say that 5<sup>th</sup> great-grandfather Michael Beach, who arrived in Michigan about 1819, had more Royce DNA than Beach DNA. Part of this report was adapted in a presentation to be included in the "Acorns to Oaks" quarterly publication of the Oakland County (Michigan) Genealogical Society. Royce descendant Michael Beach arrived in Michigan in 1819 after living in Parma, Genesee County, New York. Oakland became a county in 1820, 16 years before Michigan was granted statehood.

Another Royce descendant, paternal 2<sup>nd</sup> great grandfather Oscar A. Fenn, and wife Salina E. Wilson, arrived in Michigan in 1866 after being born, raised and married in Medina County, Ohio. Oscar Fenn's mother, 3<sup>rd</sup> great-grandmother Adaline Gardner Fenn, is a descendant of Mayflower passengers Stephen Hopkins, his daughter Constance, John Howland and his wife Elizabeth Tilley, plus her parents, John and Joan (Hurst) Tilley. My father's brother's wife, Ruth Mildred Clark Ward, is also a Howland/Tilley descendant, so my first cousins are also my 11<sup>th</sup> cousins.

### **Ancestors related to me in more than one way:**

Robert Royce and Mary Jackson – 10<sup>th</sup> Maternal and 9<sup>th</sup> Paternal great-grandparents

Samuel Royce – 9<sup>th</sup> maternal great-grandfather via Sarah Baldwin plus 9<sup>th</sup> maternal and 8<sup>th</sup> paternal great-grandfather via Hannah Churchill

Robert Royce II and Mary Porter Royce – 6<sup>th</sup> maternal great-grandparents via granddaughter Dinah Royce and a 7<sup>th</sup> paternal great-grandparents via Mary Royce Austin

John Baldwin is a 9<sup>th</sup> paternal great-grandfather via daughter Sarah and an 8<sup>th</sup> maternal great-grandfather via daughter Elizabeth. Sarah and Elizabeth had different mothers. Sarah was the elder of the two. There was a Sarah Baldwin listed as the wife of Benjamin Fenn, father of Edward Fenn in my father's line. That was debunked by about 2005. Edward Fenn's father is still unknown.

I QUIT!!!      © 2024, Jim Ward, All Rights Reserved

# Colonial Dames Old House Survey of the Nehemiah Royce House

By Kate Renner

Between 1915 and 1935, the Connecticut Society of the Colonial Dames of America compiled over 1,000 surveys to be included in the series "Old Houses of Connecticut" and one of the houses was the Nehemiah Royce house in Wallingford. Many of the documented structures were built in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries as inns along the post roads that connected the towns of early America. The surveys which were partially fill in the blank, required a title search, floor plans, detailed descriptions and included architectural elevations. The Royce house report, compiled by Lucy Atwater Royce, just prior to her death in 1928, was accepted by the Connecticut State Library on January 1, 1929. In 1998, an 18-page application was submitted to the National Park Service for the Royce house to be designated on the National Register of Historic Places.

I obtained a copy of Lucy's survey from the State Library. Most of the survey was handwritten by her and included lots of photos and newspaper clippings. One especially interesting tidbit on page 7 was a listing of the inheritors and purchasers of the house that Nehemiah Royce Sr built in 1672:

~Nehemiah Royce 2nd (1682/3-1725)

~Captain James Royce (1711-1796), buried in Center Street Cemetery. His stone gives his name as Rice, whereas his wife's stone has Roys

~James Royce (1748-1827) in Center Street Cemetery as James Rice

~Joel Royce (1787-1828), on Findagrave.com, referred to as Captain and spelled Rice

~Captain Joel Royce (1823-1896) was a sea captain and had one daughter, buried at In Memoriam Cemetery in Wallingford

~Edward Miller Sr. purchased 1866

~Edward Miller Jr

~H. Earl Dunn

~Clarence Hall (sic) Hale

~Lucy Atwater Royce purchased 1924 (1876-1928)

Lucy provided other information about the house in her survey responses:

The house, also known as the Washington Elm House, has 7 beamed ceilings and originally had 4 rooms, but had 8 rooms in 1928. It was built for Nehemiah Royce and Hannah Morgan. Originally, the house faced south, set back 20 feet from North Street and 15 feet from North Main Street. She noted that the house was “removed 1924 to North Main St.” Other structures were “one old red barn and well, shops (for Nehemiah’s blacksmithing?), cider mill, tan yard.” Regarding old trees and gardens, she noted an “Elm tree exceptionally large, grape arbor, tall lilac hedge and Rosa Rugosa bushes.” (The famous Washington Elm on the property came down in a storm in 1896. A probable small descendant of that tree was found on the property in 2018 and nurtured by a local Master Gardener who replanted it in the front yard of the Royce house). Like many early New England homes, it has a center chimney but the original chimney was taken down about 1866. Lucy provided the window count with the number of panes and on which facade they were located. The original five fireplaces were removed/replaced and are found in the kitchen, living room, parlor and two bedrooms. The description in the 1998 NPS application is much more detailed. The earliest mention of the house is found in the will of Nehemiah Royce on file in the town records. Published mentions of the house are in “Old Landmarks of Wallingford CT” by H. W. Davis and in the “History of Wallingford and Meriden” by C. H. S. Davis p. 899. Lucy also included a write up about the Washington Elm, excerpts from George Washington’s diaries and a narrative about her visit to Wallingford with her sister Helen, referred to as “The Genealogist,” and how they came upon the Royce house and its owner, unidentified, but likely Clarence Hale, who informed them that the house was about to be demolished.

The 1,070 Old House Surveys are stored at the Connecticut State Archives and copies can be requested through the State Library. They provide a valuable record, as many of the structures are no longer standing. The surveys were later conducted in connection with the State Historical Commission which was established by statute in 1955 to perform a variety of functions having to do with the preservation of historic sites and structures.

In the Archives are surveys for these other homes in Wallingford:

Colonel Thaddeus Cook House built 1758

Elnathan Street House also called Captain Lawrence Clinton House built 1720

Hull-Barnes House also called Dr. John Hull House (survey written by Helen Elizabeth Royce) built for Benjamin Lewis 1669-70

Joseph Nest House also called Gungywamp built 1679

Oakdale Tavern built 1769?

Reverend Samuel Street House built 1674

Washington Elm Street (survey by Lucy Atwater Royce) and built for/by Nehemiah Royce in 1672

Lucy’s work led to the 1998 NPS application for the Royce house which you can read here: [https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/98000966\\_text](https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/98000966_text) and is summarized in an accompanying article in this issue of the Royce Quarterly.

There are 26 Connecticut houses listed in the National Register of Historic Places that are older than the Nehemiah Royce house. How fortunate for posterity that the Royce house remained in the family for almost 200 years. In addition to the Royce house, there are nine other properties in Wallingford that are recognized on the National Register of Historic Places:

The John Barker house  
The Joseph Blakeslee house  
The Center Street Cemetery  
The Franklin Johnson house  
The Theophilus Jones house  
The Samuel Parsons house  
The Samuel Simpson house  
The Wallingford Center Historic District  
The Wallingford Railroad Station

### **Lucy's Narrative about the Nehemiah Royce House Part of the 1928 Survey for the Colonial Dames**

By Lucy Atwater Royce

The old town of Wallingford Conn, 1670 being its date of settlement is divided into tow parts: the lower Wallingford is on the Boston Post Road, through which the motorist dashes on his way to New York or Boston. The upper Wallingford, the Wallingford the Motorist seldom sees, is a quaint old New England town, whose streets are lined with fine elm trees and attractive houses of various periods.

In November 1924 the Genealogist and I decided to explore this upper town, to look for our ancestral home, which we knew vaguely to be at the far end of the main street and was built in 1672 by our ancestor Nehemiah Royce who married Hannah Morgan of Roxbury, Mass.

As a concession to the Genealogist\* we lingered a few moments in an old cemetery at the foot of the hill in Wallingford where we found some very quaint slate head stones. Strange portrait likenesses of many of the early settlers were carved on the stones and proved most interesting.

We then climbed the steep hill which leads to the main street running north and south. From this street one gets fascinating glimpses of distant blue hills, the Sleeping Giant of Cheshire and the Hanging Hills of Meriden.

Choate, the famous boys school, is situated just off of the main street in the old days called Long Hill Lane. A lovely chapel, a copy of the old South Church in Boston, as well as a fine library has been recently given to the school by Mr. Andrew J. Mellon.

Strolling along we finally came upon the house of our quest facing south with its gable end to the street. The traditional tall lilac bushes white and purple, we were told, almost hid the house on the west side. Enormous Rosa Rugosa bushes reached to the second story windows in the front, with a narrow path between, thus giving the house great seclusion, although on a thoroughfare.

We approached the old paneled double door of the house and a pleasant lady answered our knock. Once inside we wanteder about the first floor which had the usual small entry with a large room either side. In the leant was a long narrow room with amusing little windows. To our great disappointment panelling or wainscoting had apparently been removed some time ago from the large rooms.



Photo Contributed By Anne McGreevy  
Nehemiah Royce House Wallingford, CT June 2018

However as we went up the little old stair case with its square spindles we noticed that horizontal wainscoting was still on the upper walls. Somewhat cheered we stepped into the west bedroom and found it a lovely big room with entrancing old pine panelling. It was of course to early a period for a mantle (sic) but had an interesting bolecion moulding around the fire place and the chimney breast was beautifully paneled with delicate flutings at the side. Panelling was continued around the room to a height of three feet. A large summer beam\* running north and south support the beamed ceiling, which had been plastered over. On one of the paneled doors in this room we found that the initial R for Royce had been cut on the iron latch.

Much impressed by the beauty of this room we crossed the little wainscoted hall to the east bedroom. In this room the walls were papered, but under the loose edges of the paper we were sure of pine wainscoting and unpainted at that. Wide floor boards which had been walked over during four different centuries, were in perfect shape. A little batten door led in to the leant attic from this room.

Judging by the evident confusion in the house, the pleasant people were on the point of moving out. This they explained by casually saying "How fortunate that you came today, next week the old house will be taken down."

"What this wonderful old house?" The Genealogist and I gasped.

"Yes to make way for a fine new house."

"But would you sell it?" we asked.



“Yes but you must decide at once.”

Now deciding to buy a house is making rather a momentous decision and one likes to mull it over. However the pioneer spirit of our ancestors flared up in us and we then and there decided to buy it. All the way home we shivered wondering what we would with our unusually large and unwieldy toy which must be moved by April 1st. In our dilemma we wrote our architect in New York Richard. H. Dana Jr. who has always enthusiastically helped us with our old houses. \*\*

After seeing it he pronounced it an unusually interesting example of a seventeenth century house and advised us by all means to not only save the beautiful panelling (but) to save the whole house by moving it to some nearby lot. We were fortunate enough to find a beautiful site about 500 feet away.

The gods still further favored us by sending us a very skilled house mover. It seems that in Wallingford, houses are moved about as easily as a chess player moves pawns. So move it we did across trolley tracks, under trolley and telephone wires between two trees with only seven inches play, until it was finally in position over the new cellar.

The old seventeenth century house, two hundred and fifty years old, so straight in front, and with its trailing leant roof so slanting in back, like an ancient peacock, walked across the street with stately tread, and nestled down in its new 20th century site with evident contentment.



The question of placing the house was most vital. The architect favored facing the front to the street, the east, the Genealogist fancied the west, but I having a very strong 17th century complex insisted that the broadside of the house should face the south.

Photo Contributed by Anne McGreevy, Nehemiah Royce House Wallingford, CT June 2018

This brings the gable end to the street, as in the old days and shows the end overhang. Yeas ago, as some people may remember, there was a tornado in Wallingford. At this time the old house received a certain cant to leeward which the clever house mover was able to obviate to a large degree. As every one knows it is extremely difficult to find an early house so charmingly located as the Royce house; the neighborhood so frequently deteriorates in 250 years.

We started on our restoration by reshingling the long roof which took on an interesting wave effect, adding greatly to the antique charm. The plaster ceiling were next pulled down in the various rooms and charming little beams stained a black brown and having beveled edges were revealed; similar beams were also found in the Acadian house in Guilford Conn. built in 1670.

The wainscot when relieved of all its paper wrappings was very beautiful, the horizontal pine boards, in some cases twenty winches wide, had never been painted; the patina of the wood, and its rich warm color give the room a mellow color which has none of the prim perfection of the later painted rooms. On one of the beams of this rare wainscoted room we found the letter R cut for Royce.



Photo By Anne McGreevy, Nehemiah Royce House Wallingford, CT June 2018

There were in the old house various types of things, butterfly, H and DL, and strap. Over a door in a tiny little room we found an original 17th century casement window which had been discarded at a window and used as a transom.

It is our intention to rebuild the old 17th century stone chimney and to replace the panelling and wainscoting missing on the first floor; to catch and hold the old time sweet atmosphere of a 17th century house, early furniture will be placed in the rooms.

In by gone days when Washington came to Wallingford he said farewell to the villagers under the great branches of an elm tree which stood in front of the Royce house. This incident has given it the name of the Washington Elm House. From the



same tree a Tory is said to have hung. This tree fell many years ago. (Lucy pencilled in 1896.)

An old fashioned garden will soon be laid out to the south of the house to be gay with flowers found in old gardens. Lilacs purple and white will be planted, rosa rugosa will shield the house on the east from the highway. A random hedge will be started on the west side.

So that next, when you motor through Wallingford, choose the High Road where you may see the homestead described, and hear the chimes from the Choate school. Then as you dash to the city I am sure the old town of Wallingford will linger in your mind as a pleasant memory.

From Town Votes: "12th Feb. 1671 Agreed by ye Committee for ye Towne of Wallingford that Isack Rise, and Nehemiah Rise, shall have lotts granted provided they process sufficient testamony of their good conversation in the place whear they formerly lived."

\*The Genealogist must have been Helen Royce.

\*\*A Summer beam or bressummer beam supports the weight of the room or house. The word summer derived from sumpter or French sommier, "a pack horse", meaning "bearing great burden or weight."

\*\*\* Lucy and Helen Royce also bought in 1924 another historic home, the Barbour-Seth Young homestead in Windsor Heights. The sisters restored it, removed four coats of wall paper and eight coats of paint to reveal old pine panelling. In 1926 the sisters opened it as a tea room. Because it was the only homestead in Windsor which still had a well-swap over the original old well, "it will be called the Well Sweep Tearoom." The building was sold in early 1928 to a New Jersey woman who planned to have the house deconstructed board by board and rebuilt in Washington, Connecticut. The Misses Royce also bought and restored the Acadian House in Guilford in 1925. It was built in 1670 and is also on the National Register.

## **Summary of the 1998 Application to the National Park Service**

By Kate Renner

An 18 page application was submitted by David Ransom in July 1998 for a request for consideration that the Nehemiah Royce house, also known as the Washington Elm house, be placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Included were photographs of the house which are not viewable on the web link. The descriptions have lots of architectural details (paneled dado, chimney girt?), and credits Lucy and Helen Royce for its rehabilitation under the direction of William Sumner Appleton (1874-1947) of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (later Historic New England), and J. Frederick Kelly (1888-1947), Connecticut's leading historical architect of the time. In the application, there was careful description pointing out what was original to the house and what changes were made after the Royce sisters moved it.

Historical background on the town of Wallingford and the Royce sisters provide some interesting reading. Lucy Royce wrote an article in 1927 for "Old-Time New England" the publication of the SPNEA (not published until 1934) in which she expertly described the house and which she used in the survey for the Colonial Dames. Some color commentary concerned correspondence between Helen Royce and William Sumner Appleton: "One subject of correspondence between Helen and Appleton concerned her predilection for a large cat population in her house, which he abhorred. In his May 25, 1938, letter he threatened not to assist her further if the cats came to stay for the summer in Wallingford. Kelly felt equally strongly in the matter, writing to Appleton, August 21, 1941, 'The house swarms with cats, of all sizes, colors, and ages, and the quintessence of CAT that pervades the house is simply nauseating. But this poor, sick old lady loves them, and I suppose nothing can be done about it as long as she lives.'"

In the same patronizing vein Appleton, himself a bachelor, informed Elmer Keith, director of the Works Progress Administration Federal Writers' Project Census of Old Buildings in Connecticut, "She [Helen Royce], poor lady - again speaking strictly between you and me - is not only a school teacher but a spinster, and has, in the place of a husband and babies, acquired a houseful of cats.... But what can we do about it? It is she who has given us the house and everything in it - a gift certainly worth \$5,000.00 or more, and she is not at the end of her gifts."

Quoting again from the application: "The social history of the Royce House rehabilitation in the 1920s/1940s is significant for two reasons. First, it is a demonstration of an achievement in historic preservation by two knowledgeable, determined women, Lucy and Helen Royce. They were able to evaluate the importance of their ancestral home and quickly take appropriate bold steps to safeguard it. Second, in their relationship with the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities they were relegated to a secondary position consistent with the Brahmin attitude associated generally with SPNEA as outlined at length by James M. Lindgren in his book *Preserving Historic New England*. The SPNEA board was dominated by men of wealth from well-established families, augmented by a few women who were capable of major gifts. In the treatment of the Royces and their house as evidenced by the correspondence, the men made the decisions without seeking or considering the women's judgment."


The summary in the application: "The Nehemiah Royce House, an early Colonial saltbox, is significant architecturally because its framework and the finishes of one bedroom date from the 17th century, and whose latest rehabilitation received the attention of prominent figures in the historic preservation movement during the Colonial Revival period. The original framing of the house and many of the changes in details and finishes made over the centuries are well-defined. The 20th-century work is an unusual example of a documented program, intended as a restoration, carried out by early 20th-century professionals."

Although I have excerpted the juicy parts, you may wish to view the application at [https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/98000966\\_text](https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/98000966_text)

## Who will take on the next Member Challenge? Share Your Genealogical Research on the Royce/Rice Family

The Royce Family Association is always accepting members' research on Royce/Rice ancestors. Perhaps you have interesting information about a Royce/Rice line that you would like to share in article form. Pre-internet adventures in courthouses and graveyards? Email Anne or Kate with the story of your research ([amcgreevy16@gmail.com](mailto:amcgreevy16@gmail.com) or [k8renmayo@gmail.com](mailto:k8renmayo@gmail.com) ).

Dues are \$15/year. If paying by check, make checks out to: The Royce Family Association, and mail to: The Royce Family Association 1930 Oak Ave., Boulder, CO 80304-1319

Preference	 Check One	Name	Address	Email Address	Phone Number
Digital Copy Emailed to Me					
Paper Copy Mailed to Me					

Your connection to our ancestor Robert Royce (if known, optional) :

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Inquiries can be made to Diana Royce Smith at 303.618.7762 or [diana1319smith@comcast.net](mailto:diana1319smith@comcast.net)



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