

**CAPTAIN ROBERT ROWE (SR.) OF KENSINGTON, N.H.**

and

Robert Rowe Jr. of Hampton Falls, N.H.

(1st Generation)

(by Alfred Rowe, Chelsea VT)

As I do my genealogical research, I have found a certain amount of confusion regarding my predecessor Captain Robert Rowe. To resolve any question, I have found that there were two Robert Rowe's (then spelled ROW) that came to Hampton Falls, then part of Hampton, N.H. and were first taxed in 1709. They no doubt were cousins as they were nearly of the same age.

The older of the two became known as Robert Rowe Sr. and later as Captain Robert Rowe. The younger was known as Robert Rowe Jr. and they are so designated in the early records. Both Robert Rowe's bought a tract of land on the Drinkwater Road in what is now Hampton Falls from Josiah Dow April 13, 1706, and there-on built a house and started clearing the land. The deed states that they were of Hampton, N. H. which shows that they had resided at Hampton prior to the purchase.

The two Roberts started courtships with two maidens of Hampton. Robert Rowe Sr. courted Mehitable Leavitt and on December 19, 1707, took her for his bride. Six months later, Robert Rowe Jr. took for his bride, Mehitable Swayne on May 26, 1708. By an odd coincident the two Roberts chose brides with the same given name of Mehitable.

The two couples lived on the Drinkwater Road together until 1710, when Robert Rowe Sr. purchased land on the Drinkwater Road, in what is now Kensington, N. H., from James Fuller and there-on built a new home. As soon as the home was completed he moved his family there and in 1714 paid a tax on a "two story house."

Robert Rowe Jr. remained at Hampton Falls and made the place on the Drinkwater Road his permanent home. He died there September 1757. His will is recorded in the Probate Records of the N. H. State Papers. His wife Mehitable (Swayne) Rowe died July 2, 1772, age 89 years. To them were born the following children:

1. Daniel Rowe, 1709-1776, married 1st Catherine Rundlett, married 2nd Abigail Stockman. He settled at Candia, N. H.
2. John Rowe, born 1711, died young, married Leah Blake. Had one son, John Rowe that settled at Andover, N. H.
3. Mary Rowe, born 1713, married Jedediah Hake.
4. Paine Rowe, born 1716, married Ruth Stevens.
5. Elizabeth Rowe, born 1719, married John Taylor.
6. Abigail Rowe, born 1722, married Jonathan Palmer.
7. Nathan Rowe, born 1725, died 1812, married Lydia Page.

The following information contained in this manuscript will deal with the descendants of my predecessor **ROBERT ROWE SR.** or CAPTAIN ROBERT ROWE of Kensington, N. H. as he was more commonly called.

Captain Robert Rowe acquired his military title in the early French and Indian wars. He served in Queen Anne's war under Colonel Shadrach Walton against Port Royal, Nova Scotia from July 21 to November 8, 1710. It was in this battle that Port Royal was defeated and its name changed to Annapolis after Queen Anne. In 1712 he was on a two weeks scouting expedition under the command of Captain James Davis in Captain Green's company. (Reference: Vol. XIV, New Hampshire State Papers, see Roe-Row) It was in 1712 that Dover, Kingston and Exeter, N. H. were attacked by the Indians. Captain Robert Rowe also served in other expeditions.

Captain Robert Rowe was highly respected by the town folks, served as deacon of the church and was a staunch supporter of Rev. Jeremiah Fogg, the first minister of Kensington after this town became a separate Parish from Hampton Falls in 1737. He was one of a committee of five chosen to "hiere a scool master" for Hampton Falls, now Kensington, in 1718, and served the town as surveyor of highways, constable, assessor, and repeatedly as selectman. (Reference: Town records of Kensington, recorded in Sec. of State Office at Concord, N, H.)

Robert was one of the town proprietors of the township of Old Chester, N. H. and owned large tracts of land. In his will he left tracts of land and real estate to all of his sons and monetary gifts to his daughters.

All of his sons served in the militia. He thought a great deal of his children and often in the N. H. Provincial Record of Deeds you will find the following: "for love and affection of my son———, I give ———" signed Robert Rowe Sr. The children by his first wife, Mehitable Leavitt, were baptized at the Hampton Falls Church by Rev. Joseph Whipple December 10, 1726.

The old Rowe Homestead that Captain Robert Rowe built and first paid a tax on in 1714, still stands today, located in Kensington or as he describes it in his will as "laying on west Side of Road that goeth from Kensington to Exeter." This road is still called the Drinkwater Road and is now a side road. The house has ship-carpenter joints that we find also in many of the early pioneer homes. It also shows various places where the construction is cruder than the later day colonial houses.



**Figure 1 Farmhouse of Captain Robert Rowe**  
**Drinkwater Road Kensington, New Hampshire**  
(photo taken September 2010)

The home remained in the Rowe family until 1944. The late Hon. Stewart Everett Rowe, active in New Hampshire politics and former mayor of Portsmouth, was born there and in later years had used it as a summer home. After Mr. Rowe died, his widow and brother, Gilman Rowe, sold the place to Mr. Harold Dickinson who has made extensive repairs but made no changes in its construction so the house still stands today just as it was built, over 240 years ago. (written in 1953 by Alfred Rowe)

Through the first quarter of a century of Kensington the town had no representation at the Assembly that met at Exeter and Portsmouth. On August 6, 1740 Capt. Robert Rowe and Ezekiel Dow, selectmen of that year, petitioned the Assembly for representation but were refused. On September 22, 1742 the same gentlemen were sent again with a petition but were again turned down. It was not until 1761 that the Assembly was again petitioned, and by an odd coincident, Robert Rowe's son, Dr. Benjamin Rowe presented the request and permission for representation was given. Robert died in 1761.

Volume 1, page 323, Town Records of Kensington, N. H. at the Sec. of State Office at Concord, N, H, states: "February ye 21st 1761 There Died the Honorable Captain Robert Rowe in the Seventy Seventh year of his age."

Captain Robert Rowe was born in 1684, and died at Kensington, N. H. February 21, 1761, age 77 years. Will proven March 25, 1761. (His will is recorded in the New Hampshire State Papers, Vol. XXXVI, page 205.) He is buried in Kensington old cemetery.

He married first at Hampton, N.H. on December 19, 1707, to **Mehitable Leavitt**. She was born at Hampton, N. H. June 8, 1682, and died on October 20, 1725. She was the daughter of **Aretas Leavitt** and **Ruth Sleeper** of Hampton. (Ref: Vol. 67, page 80 of N, E. Historical and Genealogical Publications.

Following the death of his first wife, he married second at Hampton Falls, N.H. on March 3, 1726, to Apphia (Shaw) Sanborn, widow of Peter Sanborn, and daughter of Caleb Shaw and Elizabeth Hilliard of Hampton, N.H. Apphia was born in Hampton, December 22, 1699. (Ref: Shaw Genealogy and Sanborn Genealogy)

Following are the children of Captain **Robert Rowe** and **Mehitable Leavitt** (first wife) all born in what is now, Kensington N.H., then part of Hampton and Hampton Falls.

1. Joseph Rowe, born Sept. 20, 1708, died at Kensington, N. H, Aug. 4, 1773, age 65 years. He married Ruth Sherburne, and they had the following children: Ruth, Joseph, Sherburne, Mehitable, Jane, Elizabeth, all mentioned in Joseph's will. John, Jonathan and Stephen died before Brentwood): Jacob, Jeremiah 2nd, Aretas, Judith and Charlotte. Jacob died at age 17 in 1758.

2. Jonathan Rowe, born Sept. 30, 1710, died at Kensington N.H. July 9, 1778, age 68 years. He married Abigail Dow, and they had the following children: Moses, Jonathan, Abigail, Jane, and Mehitable, all mentioned in Jonathan's will.

3. Moses Rowe, born Sept. 17, 1712, died at Kensington Jan. 17, 1766, age 53 years. Married Elizabeth James, and they had the following children that reached maturity: Mercy, Susannah and Anna, all mentioned in Moses's will. They also had many other children that died before reaching maturity.

4. **JEREMIAH ROWE**, (predecessor) was born on May 15, 1715, and died at Brentwood, N.H. April 22, 1772, age 57 years. Jeremiah married **JUDITH PRESCOTT**, and they settled at Brentwood N.H. His estate is recorded at Exeter N. H., #3938-03. They had the following children (all born at

5. Josiah Rowe, born Feb. 25, 1716, died 1723 age 7 years.

6. Jane Rowe, born Oct. 9, 1717, died at Hampton Falls, N.H. Jan. 5, 1751, at the age of 34 years. She married Jonathan Swett, and they settled at Hampton Falls. They had the following children: Joseph, Josiah, Jonathan, Mehitable and Sarah.

7. Benjamin Rowe (Dr.) was born on Oct. 3, 1720, and died at Kensington N.H. Mar. 28, 1790, age 70 years. He married Susanna Fogg. The following children are mentioned in Benjamin's will: Benjamin Jr. (Dr.), Mary, Betty and Susannah.

8. Ruth Rowe, born Sept. 3, 1722, died at Kensington N.H. March 7, 1798, age 77. She married Jeremiah Fellows, and they had the following children: Jeremiah, Benjamin, Ruth, Jonathan, Ephraim, Daniel and Nathan.

9. Elizabeth Rowe, born Sept. 6, 1723, died at Bristol, N.H. married Abner Fellows. They had the following children: Elizabeth, Sarah, Abner, Mehitahle, Josiah and John, (may have been others).

Following are the children of Captain Robert Rowe and his second wife, Apphia (Shaw) Sanborn; all born in what is now Kensington, N.H.

10. Robert Rowe, born Dec. 11, 1726, died at Brentwood, N.H. Jan. 21, 1804 at the age of 78 years. He married Abigail Tilton, and they settled at Brentwood N.H. They had the following children: Robert 3rd, Simon, Lovey and Apphia. He served in the Revolution.

11. Winthrop Rowe (Captain), born April 3, 1729, died at Kensington, N. H. June 22, 1810, age 81 years. He married Anna Page, and they had the following children, (all mentioned in Winthrop's will except Samuel who died prior to his father): Mercy, Enoch, Samuel, Elizabeth, Winthrop and Molly. They settled in Kensington. He also served in the Revolution.

12. Peter Rowe, born April 6, 1731, died 1735 age 4 years.

13. Mehitahle Rowe, born 1733, died 1736, age 3 years.

14. Caleb Rowe (Lieutenant), born Oct. 20, 1735, died at Belgrade Maine in 1819 age 84 years. He married Priscilla Perkins, and they lived in Chester, N.H., Standish, Me., and Belgrade, Me. They had the following children: Caleb Jr., Robert, Sarah, Apphia, Benjamin, Ephraim and Joanna. Caleb served in the Revolution.

15. John Rowe, born May 17, 1738, died at Shapleigh, Me. June 30, 1820 age 82 years. Married 1st to Mary (unknown), married 2nd to Mrs. Sarah Wilson. Children of John and Mary: John, James, Caleb, Ephraim, Molly, Lydia, Rosa, and Sally. All the children are mentioned in John Rowe Sr.'s will, which is recorded at Alfred, Me. They lived at Chester, N. H. and Shapleigh, Me. John Rowe served in the Revolution.

16. Ephraim Rowe, (Major), born Feb. 26, 1741, died in Standish, Me. Jan. 7, 1834, at the age of 93 years. Ephraim married Mary Philbrick, and they had the following children: Apphia, Robert, Ephraim and Peter. Lived at Chester, N.H. and Standish, Me. Served in the Revolution.

Notes:

Apphia (Shaw) Sanborn, Robert's 2nd wife, was the widow of Peter Sanborn who died in 1724; Apphia was administrator of his estate, the estate inventoried at 361 pounds. Robert Rowe was one of her bondsmen. Apphia, by her marriage with Peter Sanborn, had the following children: 1. Lydia Sanborn, born 1718, died 1735, 2. Esther Sanborn, born March 29, 1720, married Feb. 3, 1737 to Joshua Gilman of Gilmanton, N. H., son of Joshua Gilman of Kensington, 3. Apphia Sanborn, born July 12, 1722, married Jan. 10, 1739 to John Sleeper Esq. of Kingston, N.H., 4. Peter Sanborn, born 1724, died 1730. Mr. Rowe was appointed guardian of the surviving children by the court in May 1735. Reference: Sanborn Genealogy and Vol. 2, page 226 of the Probate Records of the Province of N.H. and New Hampshire State Papers.