

The Descendents of Squire John Doane:  
Pictures & Stories from the Archives of Helen Perry Curtis

Helen Doane Perry was the grand-daughter of Squire John Doane of Orleans, MA, and she was great grandmother to myself and a hoard of others. She treasured her family and her heritage, and saved many things because of this: photographs, letters, memoirs, and stories which were passed down to her daughter, Helen Perry Curtis, who passed them on to us, the twelfth generation of Deacon John Doane's descendents. It is a pleasure to share some of these with other Doane relatives.

Squire John Doane (Timothy<sup>6</sup>, John<sup>5</sup>, Simeon<sup>4</sup>, Samuel<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, John<sup>1</sup>) (Image 1) lived his life in Orleans, making a name for himself as a lawyer who advocated arbitration over litigation, as a trailblazing arborculturalist, and as a representative of the people in the Massachusetts Legislature and Senate.

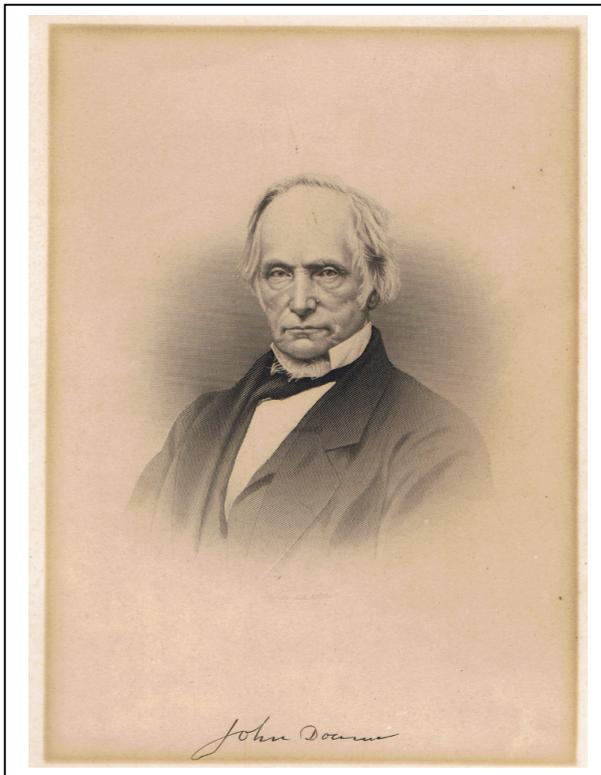


Image 1: Squire John Doane (1791-1881)



Image 2: Mary (Polly) Eldredge Doane ( 1796-1875)

The Squire married Mary (Polly) Eldredge (Image 2) in 1820, and together they had eight children.

- Thomas (1821-1897) -- m 1850-- Sophie Dennison Clark (1826-1868)  
-- m 1870 – Louisa Barber (1828?-1903)
- Caroline (1823-1882) -- m 1849 -- Capt. Allen Knowles (1814-1875)
- John (1825-1873) -- m 1853 -- Almira Starkweather (1831-1854)
- Martha (1827-1894)
- Mary (1829-1894) -- m 1866 -- Capt. Seth Doane (1830-1877)  
– Seth is brother of Capt. Isaac Snow Doane (1813-1860)
- Lucy (1831-1849)
- Henry (1834-1865)
- Charles Watson (1840-1912) -- m 1877-- Mary Appleton Doane (1850-1923)  
Mary is daughter of Capt. Isaac Snow Doane (1813-1860)

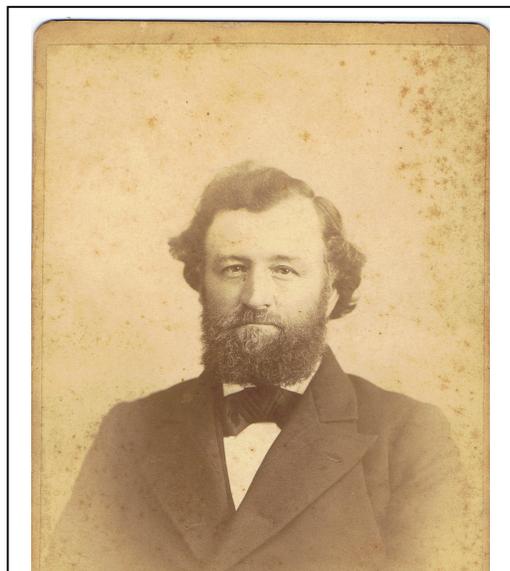


Image 3: Thomas Doane, late 1850s or early 1860s.

The Squire's oldest son, Thomas (Images 3 & 5), of Doane College fame, was trained as a civil engineer. He and his brother, John, started an engineering firm called T & J Doane, Jr., in Charlestown, MA in 1849. Their specialty was railroads, and, through the years, Thomas worked for every railway that ran into Boston. Of course, he is best known for his remarkable and (excuse the pun) ground-breaking work on the Hoosac Tunnel with his use of nitroglycerine and air compressor drills. For a series of 112 archival photos of the tunnel construction and Thomas' drawings, go to <http://www.flickr.com/photos/mastatelibrary/4797059038/in/set-72157624502198012/>.

Thomas married Sophie Dennison Clark (Image 4) in 1850. More on their children later.



Image 4: Sophie Clark Doane (1826-1868)  
Photo by Whipple Studio, Boston circa 1860



Image 5: Thomas Doane  
Photo by Whipple Studio, Boston early 1860s

Squire John's eldest daughter, Caroline, married into the seafaring Knowles family of Brewster. Her husband, Capt. Allen Knowles (Image 7), was the long time captain, and possibly majority owner, of the magnificent Donald McKay built clipper ship "Chariot of Fame" (Image 6). He, as well as his brothers, and Doane brothers-in-law, sailed the Far East trade routes. Capt Allen Knowles' brother, Josiah Nickerson Knowles, is famous for his wild adventure as captain of the "Wild Wave", which wrecked at sea in the middle of the Pacific. Check out <http://www.winthrop.dk/wildwave.html> for an account in Josiah's diaries.

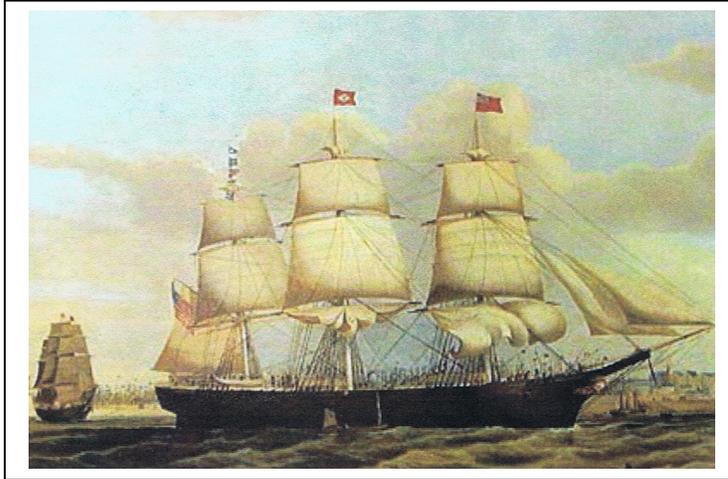


Image 6: Lithograph of the "Chariot of Fame"  
Built by famed Boston shipbuilder, Donald McKay and captained by Allen Knowles.

When Caroline married Allen in 1849, it was his second marriage. His first wife had died leaving him with two young daughters. The older daughter kept copies of many of her letters to her father and other relatives. In her old age she donated these and all of her father's maritime papers to the Peabody Essex Museum.

Caroline and Allen had six children of their own, including three sons who died in infancy. Their youngest child, Caroline Doane Knowles, married a distant cousin, Alfred Oliver Doane, and so became a "double Doane".



Image 7: Capt. Allen Knowles (1814-1875)

The Squire's third child, John, Jr. (Image 8), trained as a civil engineer, and cofounded the family engineering firm. He lived in Charlestown and ran the business when he could, but he suffered some form of eye disease that made working difficult. In 1853, he married Almira Starkweather. She died within the year and John never remarried. He died at age 48.



Image 8: John Doane, Jr. (1825-1873)  
Photo taken in Orleans, date unknown.

Martha (Image 9) was the Squire's fourth child. She never married. When her mother's health began to fail, Martha became the homemaker and kept that role for the remainder of her life. Her sister, Mary, rejoined her after she was widowed. After the Squire's death in 1881, the ladies had the house to themselves. It became a favorite vacation spot for nieces, nephews, and grands. The family came to call it the "Aunt Hill". The ladies were so pleased with this that their stationery was embossed with that moniker.



Image 9: Martha Doane (1827-1894)  
Photo taken in Lincoln, NE, date unknown.

Martha and her sister, Mary (Image 10), were close throughout their lives, sharing the family home for most of it. At age 37, Mary married master mariner, Capt. Seth Doane (Image 11), a distant cousin.



Image 10: Mary "Seth" Doane (1829-1894)  
Photo taken in Boston, 1891.



Image 11: Seth Doane (1830-1877)  
Photo taken San Francisco, CA, date unknown.

Mary spent several years in San Francisco, Capt. Doane's home port, while he sailed throughout the Far East for the Pacific Mail Steamship Company. A painting of one of his steamers, the "Great Republic", hung in Mary's room at the family home in Orleans (Image 12). The general decor of the room is typical of a well-to-do family in the Victorian Era.



Image 12: "My room and a portrait of my husband's steamer";  
Photo taken at Orleans in 1880s.

Capt. Doane also sailed "Great Republic's" sister ship, the "America". On the night of August 24, 1872, the "America" was destroyed by fire in Yokohama Harbor, Japan, claiming the lives 59 people. Following the horrible event, Seth retired from the sea. He and Mary moved to St. Augustine, Florida, hoping the warmer climate would help his deteriorating health. He died five years later at age 47. He and Mary had been married only 10 years. Mary returned to the family home, where she and Martha cared for their aging father.

In her later years, Mary was called "Mary Seth", both to honor her husband, and to distinguish her from her deceased mother and her sister-in-law, Mary Appleton Doane. Mary was an accomplished watercolorist, who produced a beautiful series of botanicals that are now in the possession of Doane College.

The Squire's youngest daughter, Lucy, died at age 18 of fever. His seventh child, Henry, volunteered for the 45th Regiment, known as the Tiger Regiment, of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia and served as a lieutenant in North Carolina during the Civil War. Henry was involved in a number of skirmishes, but was spared the full battles of the war. His health, however, was not spared, and he was mustered out with his regiment in poor health. Just as the war was ending in 1865, Henry died.

The Squire's youngest son was Charles Watson Doane. We probably have pictures of him, but have not been able to identify him. Charles went to sea at an early age, starting with a sea voyage with his brother-in-law Seth. He became a master mariner and sailed the East Indies in the tea and spice trade rounding treacherous Cape Horn several times.

Sailing was a hazardous occupation, and Charles Watson had his share of misadventures. It was a stormy night on April 18, 1874, when Capt. Doane and the "Puritan" ran aground on a shoal off Sandy Hook, NJ on their way into New York harbor. A nearby steam tug saw them and was able to pull them off the shoal, but the ship's hull was damaged and she was taking on water fast. So the tug hauled the "Puritan" into the harbor and ran her aground there to prevent sinking and loss of the cargo. Because of the stormy night, the crew abandoned the ship there. No sooner had they left, than two other steamer tug captains saw their chance for salvaging an abandoned vessel, and made claim on the "Puritan", hauling it off to Brooklyn. The claims were settled in court, the insurance company paid out, and two months later, Charles Watson sailed the "Puritan" out of New York.

Several years later, on another stormy night, the "Puritan" again came to grief. At the mouth of the Hoogley River near Calcutta, India, a local pilot responsible for getting the ship up the river, miscalculated the current in the bad weather and ran the vessel aground, this time in quicksand. Because of the heavy seas, no steamer or tug could come to their aid and the crew was forced to abandon ship. All crew reached safety, but the ship and its cargo were lost in the quicksand.

Charles had married the year before. His wife was Mary Appleton Doane (1850-1923), daughter of Capt. Isaac Snow Doane (1813-1860), who was a brother of Capt. Seth Doane, Charles' his brother-in-law. At the time of the "Puritan's" sinking, Charles Watson's new wife had a baby on the way, and the family was concerned that sailing was a particularly hazardous profession for Charles Watson. So Thomas Doane helped Charles purchase a sheep farm near Crete, NE where Thomas' family already had a home.

Charles Watson and Mary Appleton had two children, John Appleton (1878-1954) (Image 13) and Charles Watson II (1879-1954). John Appleton married twice. His first wife died in childbirth less than a year after the wedding. His second wife born him two daughters, Beulah and Polly. There were no grandchildren. Charles Watson II also married, and had two sons, Charles Watson III and Thomas. There were no grandchildren, so the Charles Watson Doane line ends here.



Image 13: John Appleton Doane at age 21.  
Photo taken in Crete, NE, April 1899.

It was through Beulah Appleton Doane that Capt. Isaac Snow Doane's legacy was preserved. She inherited a portrait of her great grandfather (Image 14), and having no immediate family to pass it along to, gave it to Helen Perry Curtis, Thomas Doane's granddaughter. It now hangs in the dining room of Helen's grandchildren, who admire it often.



Image 14: Portrait of Isaac Snow Doane  
(1813-1860)

Isaac was a captain of clipper ships. He engaged in the East India trade and also made two voyages to deliver missionaries to the Sandwich Islands (now Hawaii). Voyages such as these took six months in each direction. Like many seafaring men, he died fairly young at age 46, worn out from the rigors of the ship's master's life.

Squire John Doane built his family a fine house in Orleans, MA, at the head of Town Cove. It sat where the Orleans Post Office Square now sits. Miraculously, the house was moved a few miles down Monument Road in Orleans, rather than being torn down when the new post office was built. The back of the house (Image 15) faced the cove, which provided a clear vista with few trees, as compared to today (Image 16). Behind and to the side of the house was a carriage barn (Image 17). Near the front of the house, close to the road, was the Squire's law office (Image 18), a lovely Greek Revival structure.



Image 15: Back of Squire John Doane's house in Orleans, late 1880s.



Image 16: Looking out on Town Cove from the back lawn of Squire John's house. Unknown family members and friends. Late 1980s.



Image 17: House of Squire John and carriage barn. Late 1880s.



Image 18: Front of Squire John's house with law office at front right. Late 1880s.

When Thomas Doane married Sophie Clark, they purchased a home in Charlestown, Ma. (Image 19). The house remained in the family until several years after Thomas died.

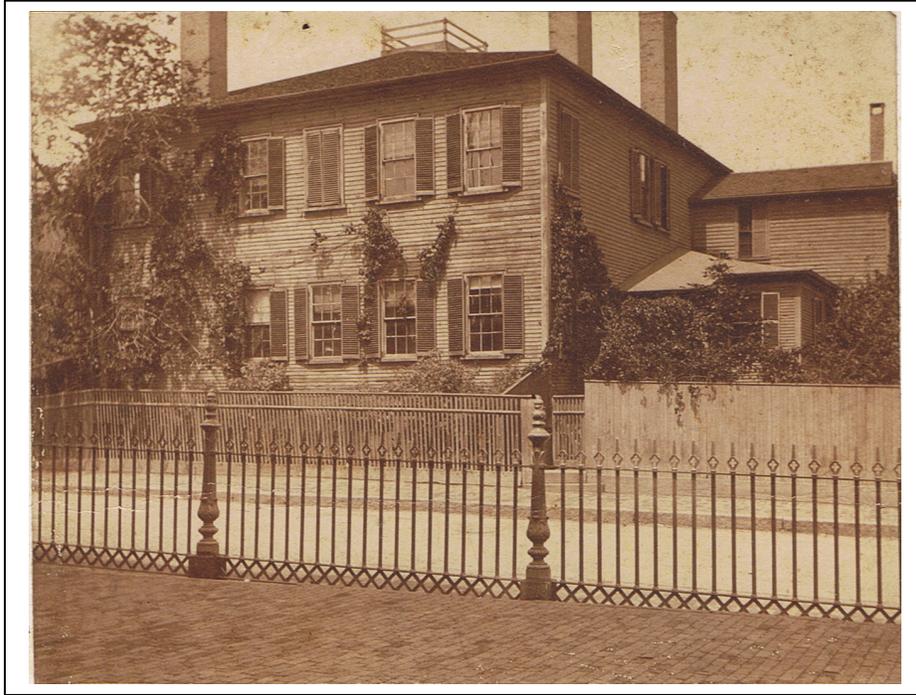


Image 19: Thomas Doane's house in Charlestown, MA. No longer extant.

Thomas and Sophie had five children:

- Helen Clark (1853-1935) -- m 1876– David Brainerd Perry (1839-1912)
- Reverend John (1855-1913) -- m 1884 – Alice Cowles (1860-1941)
- Caroline (1859-1941) -- m 1888 – Reverend William Weeden (1857-1935)
- Frances (Patty) (1860-1942) -- m 1889 – Henry Bancroft Twombly (1862-1955)
- Thomas (1863 died in infancy)



Image 20: Helen Clark Doane (Perry)  
Photo taken about 1860



Image 21: (Rev) John Doane  
Photo taken about 1862



Image 22: Caroline Doane (Weeden)  
Photo taken about 1863



Image 23: Frances (Patty) Doane (Twombly)  
Photo taken about 1865

Sophie Clark Doane died of consumption (tuberculosis) on December 1, 1868. Her children were 16, 13, 9, and 8 years of age. Soon after, Thomas was appointed chief engineer of the Burlington and Missouri Railroad in Nebraska. An aunt & uncle on Sophie's side of the family came to live in the Charlestown house while Thomas was in Nebraska. Son John was not well and his father decided a sea voyage would be good for him. So 14-year-old John set sail with his Uncle Seth as he captained the steamer "America" on its maiden voyage around the world.

In 1870 Thomas went up to Brattleboro, VT, Sophie's hometown, to meet Louisa Amelia Barber (Image 24), an old friend of Sophie's, to see if she would be hired on as a teacher for his children. The meeting went in a different direction than planned. Something clicked between them and they decided marriage was better than employment. They married on November 11, 1870. After the wedding, Thomas took his new bride out to Orleans to meet the extended family, then the two of them left the children in Charlestown and headed out to Nebraska. Louisa arrived in Nebraska by open ferry boat in a snow storm, sitting on her trunk of wedding clothes with a buffalo robe across her lap to keep her warm. In the summer of 1871, Thomas and Louisa brought the children west and started building the Grange, their Gothic Revival home in Crete (Image 25). Thomas and the Reverend Frederick Alley had already started an academy in the town, so the children would be assured an education. The following year, the house would be finished, the family installed, and Doane College would be officially established.



Image 24: Louisa Amelia Barber (1828?-1903)  
Photo taken in Boston, about 1880.



Image 25: The Grange, Crete, NE  
Home of Thomas Doane, and later Doane College President  
David Brainerd Perry and his wife, Helen Doane Perry.

This was also the year that David Brainerd Perry (Image 26) arrived in Nebraska as a missionary minister. He was hired as the first professor at the college, and began teaching Greek, Latin, and the Classics. Thomas's eldest daughter, Helen (Image 26), studied Virgil with him. In her memoir, Helen states, "I was the only student in the class. Nuf said." They were engaged in 1874 and married in 1876. In 1881, Perry was appointed as the first president of the college, giving him official recognition as the primary fundraiser for the growing institution.



Image 26: David Brainerd Perry, early 1870s and Helen Clark Doane, 1882, Nebraska City, NE.

Children arrived quickly (Image 27) and the family filled the Grange, now the President's official residence. The landscape between the Grange and the college was mostly barren of trees in those days, and in her memoir, Helen says she kept a telescope handy to watch for her husband's return in the evening. From afar she could count the number of people he was bringing home unannounced for dinner, and have the table set for all by the time they arrived.

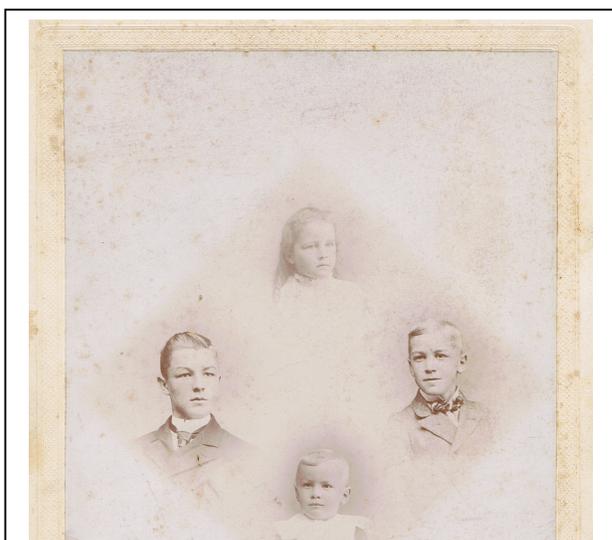


Image 27: The Perry Children, Christmas 1893, Crete NE

- Thomas Doane 16 years (1877-1958)
- Charles "Carl" Boswell 9 years (1884-1928)
- Helen Clark 5 years (1888-1980)
- Henry Eldredge 4 years (1889-1950)
- Brainerd Clark died in infancy (1879-1880)

Thomas's second child and only son, John (Image 28), was an ordained minister in the Congregational Church and served pioneer parishes in various states throughout his life. He married Alice Cowles (Image 29) in 1884. They spent the early years of their marriage in Lincoln, NE, starting a family and sharing holidays with Helen and her growing family. They has three children, John, Jr. (Image 30), Leroy Cowles (Image 31) and Sophie Lois (Image 31).

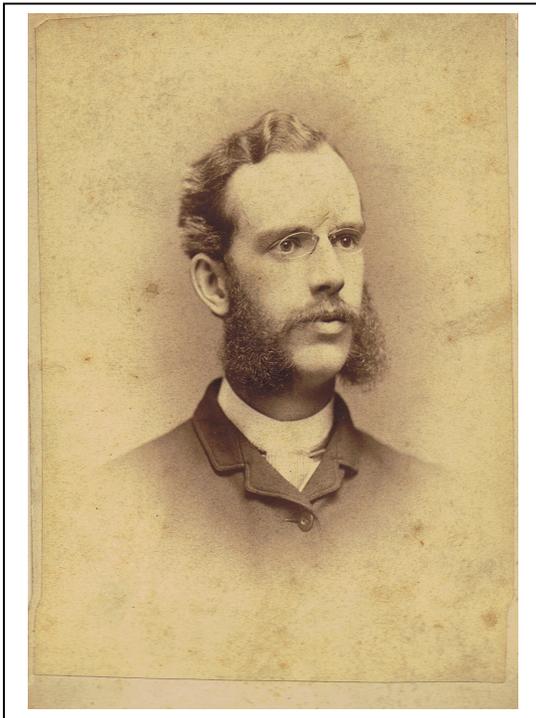


Image 28: Reverend John Doane, Sr.  
Photo taken in Boston, date unknown.



Image 29: Alice Cowles Doane (1860-1941)

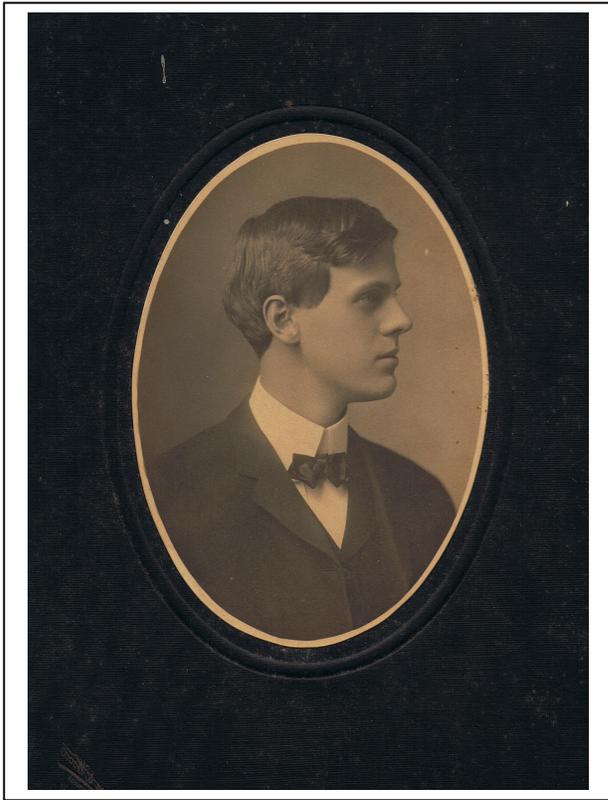


Image 30: John Doane, Jr. (1886-1958)



Image 31: Leroy Cowles Doane (1888-1969)  
& Sophie Lois Doane (1893-1965).  
Photo taken in Cleveland, OH about 1898.

Neither John, Jr, nor Lois married. Leroy married Ethel Fryman in 1919. They had two sons, John Doane (Images 32 & 33) and Leroy Cowles, Jr. (Image 33). John died at age 20 in the Battle of the Bulge, WWII. Leroy never married, so this line ended.

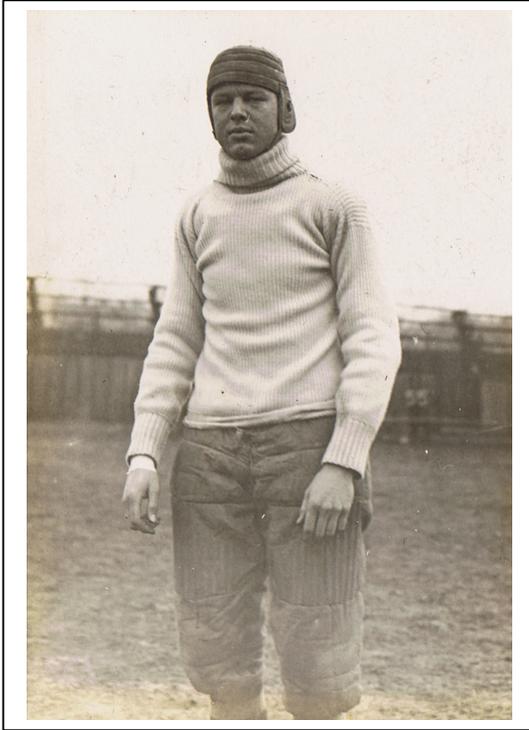


Image 32: John Doane (1924-1944), grandson of Rev. John Doane  
Wearing his college football uniform, 1940.



Image 33: John (left) and Leroy Cowles Doane, Jr (1922-1983)

Thomas's younger daughters, Caroline and Frances are seen as young adults in Image 33 vacationing at the Aunt Hill in Orleans, a few years before each married. In 1888 Caroline (Image 34) married the Reverend William Weeden (Image 35). They had no children, so their line ended.



Image 33: Caroline (left) and Frances Doane  
On Town Cove, Orleans, late 1880s.



Image 34: Caroline Doane

Photo taken in Boston, early 1880s

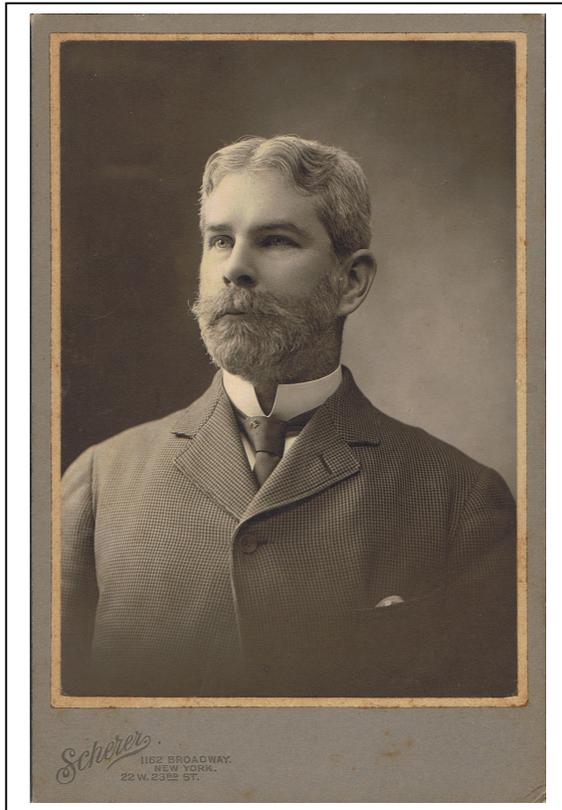


Image 35: Rev William Weeden (1857-1935)  
Photo taken in NYC, date unknown.

Frances, known as Patty, married Henry Bancroft Twombly (1862-1955), a New York lawyer, in 1889. They had one son, Edward (1891-1969). In 1932, Patty had the stone marking the Deacon John Doane homestead re-erected and the area refurbished, as it had fallen into disrepair.

In 1891, Mary Seth Doane celebrated her 62nd birthday with a large outdoor party at the Aunt Hill. Photographs of the party (Images 36 & 37) show several family members and many friends.



Image 36: Mary Seth Doane's 62nd Birthday party, Orleans, MA, Sept 17, 1891. Mary Seth is first on right. Martha Doane is second from right. Frances Doane Twombly is center front and her husband is immediately left of her on the other side of the table.

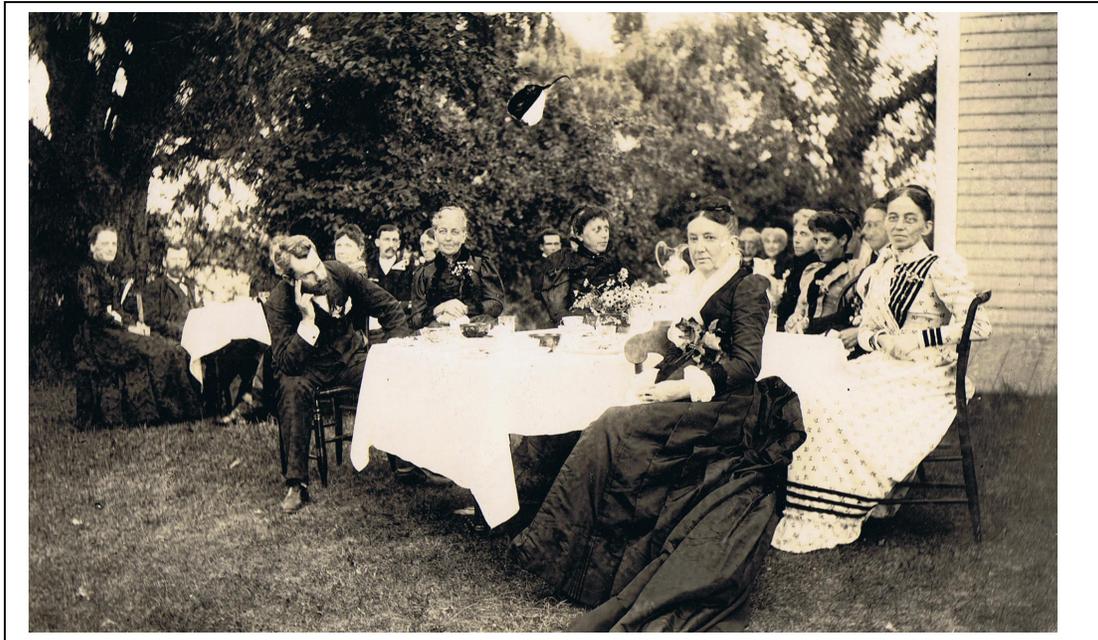


Image 37: Mary Seth Doane's 62nd Birthday party, Orleans, MA, Sept 17, 1891. Mary Seth is in the foreground. Martha is first from right.

Thomas' sisters, Mary Seth and Martha both died in 1894, leaving the family home in Orleans empty. Prior to selling it, Thomas brought all his children and their families to the house for a last summer-long vacation in 1895. The husbands, were often gone, but the ladies and children enjoyed the house and the town all summer. Thomas' only requirement was that someone, adult or child, wrote in a family journal every day: prose, poetry, sketches. That journal, called *The Whirl*, was carried on as a round robin letter for two more years until Thomas' death in 1897. It is still treasured by Helen Doane Perry's descendents.

One day during the vacation, everyone traveled up to Boston for a grand family portrait of Thomas Doane, his children, and grandchildren (Image 38).



Image 38: Thomas Doane, his children, and grand-children, Boston, 1895.

Back row standing from left: Henry Twombly (husband of "Patty"), Charles Bosworth Perry (son of Helen), Helen Doane Perry, David Brainerd Perry, John Jr. (son of Rev. John), Caroline Doane Weeden, Rev. William Weeden (seated).

Middle row seated from left: Alice Cowles Doane (wife of Rev. John), Thomas (son of Helen), Frances "Patty" Twombly, Thomas Doane, the Patriarch, with Sophie Lois (daughter of Rev. John) on his lap, Louisa Barber Doane (Thomas' second wife), Helen Clark Perry (daughter of Helen), Rev. John Doane.

Front row seated on ottomans from left: Edward Twombly (son of "Patty"), Leroy Doane (son of Rev. John), Henry Eldridge Perry (son of Helen)

Helen and David Brainerd Perry continued raising their children in Crete, with President Perry working hard at the college. Family life included picnics on the banks of the Blue River (Image 39).



Image 39: President and Mrs. Perry picnicking with three of their children (from left) Charles "Carl", Helen, Henry. Photo taken in Crete, 1902 or 1903.

President Perry was known for his absent-mindedness, a consequence of his propensity for deep thought. He was known to walk home in the evening ruminating on some problem, only to arrive home to find he had driven the horse and carriage to the college that morning. Luckily, the family had a college boy living in to help on the farm, and he would be sent back to retrieve old Pete and the buggy. In 1930, nearly 20 years after Perry's death, a plaque was placed on the old hitching post where old Pete would vainly await the President. Some clever students spent the night before the dedication ceremony, wiring the bleached bones of a horse to the post and rigging up a buggy to commemorate patient old Pete and the President's faulty memory (Image 40). Helen Doane Perry and daughter, Helen Perry Curtis, who had returned to the college for the event, thought the prank hilarious.

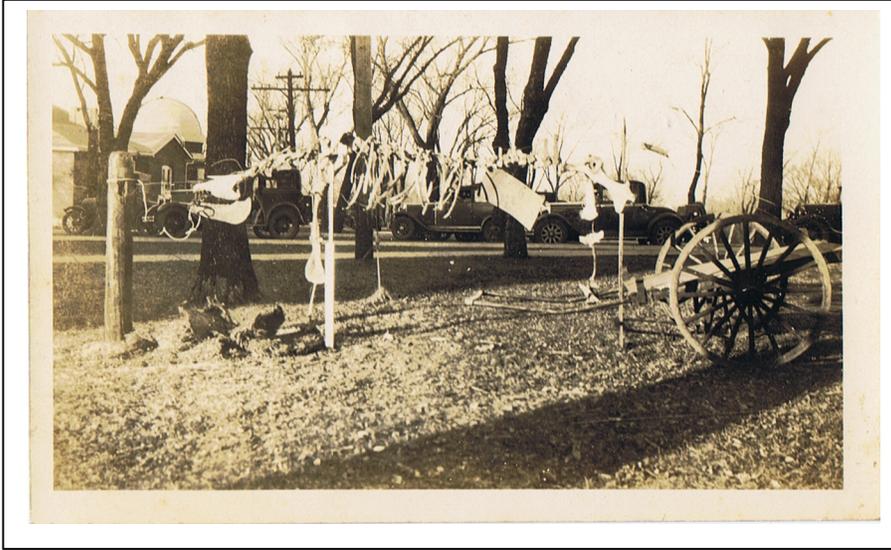


Image 40: Old Pete waiting forever for President Perry to remember to drive him home. Dedication of the old hitching post, Doane College, 1930.

Helen Clark Perry, Thomas' grand-daughter, graduated from Doane College in 1911 (Image 42).



Image 41: Helen Clark Perry

In 1908, Helen spent a year in the east with her Aunt Patty Twombly. During this visit she enjoyed time at the shore (Image 43), wearing the typical bathing costume of the period: a wool dress and wool stockings. Even in the 1960s, she wore a bathing suit of a similar style, though shorter and made of a more modern fabric, which she referred to as her Ulysses S. Grant.

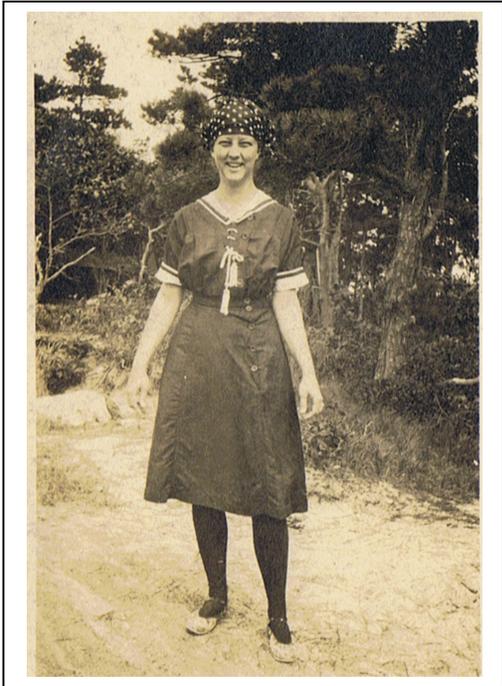


Image 43: Helen Clark Perry in her bathing costume, 1908.

In 1918, Helen Clark Perry joined the YMCA Canteen Service and sailed for France for a year's deployment (Image 44). The YMCA provided canteen services and entertainment for the troops. The canteens sold candy and cigarettes, and gave out hot chocolate. Entertainment consisted of organizing libraries, sing-a-longs, and skits. The canteens were set up throughout France, and after the armistice, the canteens followed the troops into Germany as well. Helen's letters home describe using the last building standing in one town for a canteen. Silliness like "The Kaiser's Picnic" (Image 45), was arranged to entertain the US soldiers.



Image 44: Helen Clark Perry with US soldiers in France, 1918.



Image 45: YMCA Canteen workers and soldiers setting out "The Kaiser's Picnic" after the Kaiser abdicated and the armistice was signed. Helen Clark Perry in German helmet second from left. 1918.

Also in France at this time was Helen Clark Perry's future husband, John Morrison Curtis, a member of the Ambulance Corps (Image 46). Although they did not cross paths in France, John pursued her seriously after both returned home and they married in 1920 (Image 47 & 48).



Image 46: John Morrison Curtis, Ambulance Corps, WWI, France



Image 47: Helen Perry Curtis on her wedding day, at her Aunt Patty Twombly's house, Summit, NJ, 1920.

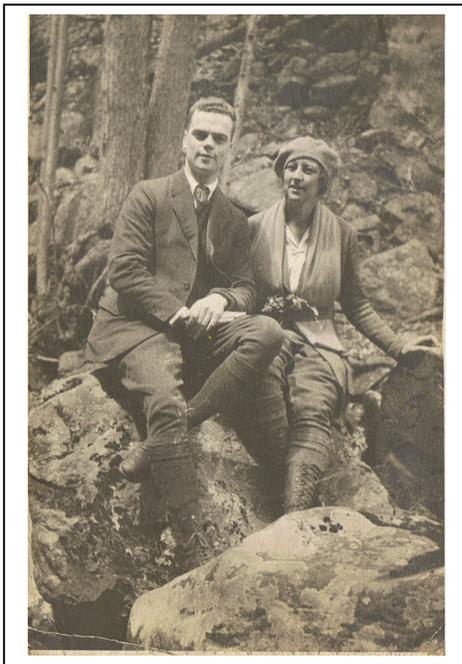


Image 48: John Morrison Curtis & Helen Perry Curtis on

their honeymoon at Luray Caverns, VA, 1920.

Helen and John settled in Summit, NJ near her Aunt and Uncle Patty and Henry Twombly, who helped them start a gallery and decorating business. The decorating business, under the name John Morrison Curtis, is still run by his grand-daughter, Martha Wells.

Both John and Helen had graduated from Columbia University and were active in the Art Students' League in New York. There they met and formed a lifelong friendship with the photographer, Clara Sipprell. Sipprell was noted for her beautiful, softly lit portraits of many famous people of her time. She also made a number of wonderful pictures of Helen, John, and their family (Image 49).



Image 49: Jeanne Hathaway (left) and Polly Eldridge Curtis wearing knit wool dresses with Slavic style embroidery, that were designed and made by their mother, Helen Perry Curtis. The patterns were sold to women's magazines.

After the death of her husband in 1912, Helen Doane Perry traveled annually between the homes of her children and eventually a home of her own in San Diego. In 1925 much of the family gathered at son Henry's home in Terra Haute, IN for Christmas. Son Carl and his family were in Europe where Carl was in diplomatic service, and Henry's youngest two daughters were not yet born, but the rest of Helen's extended brood were there. The family portrait (Image 50) was reminiscent of the one taken in 1895 with Thomas and his big family.



Image 50: Helen Doane Perry with children and grand-children, Terra Haute, IN Dec, 1925. Back row from left: Frances Goodenough Perry (Tom's daughter), Bretton Perry (Tom's son), Helen Perry Curtis, John Morrison Curtis, Ethel Goodenough Perry (Tom's wife), Helen Doane Perry, Howard Perry in his father Henry's arms, Henry Doane, Evelyn Hollister Perry (Henry's wife), Thomas (Todd) Doane, Jr. (Tom's son), Thomas Doane. Children in front row from left: Polly Eldridge Curtis (Helen Curtis' daughter), Henry Eldridge Perry (Henry's son), Phebe Baker Perry (Henry's daughter), Jeanne Hathaway Curtis (Helen Curtis' daughter).

Helen Doane Perry died in 1935 at the age of 83 and was buried in Crete next to her beloved husband. She treasured her family and her heritage and passed that love and many treasures on to her descendents, who are now sharing them with the next generation.