



## School Tours Held @ The Luther Store

June brought the return of the Swansea School Tours to the Luther Store. Our local 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes visited during the second week of June.

The Store was arranged with 1880 period appropriate items so the students could see what it was like to visit back then.

The young visitors were fascinated by facts like :

*there was no electricity - for lights you used candles and oil lamps;*

*there was no television, radios, computers or cell phones;*

*to get water, you had to go outside and pump the well - if you were lucky enough to have one - and if you didn't have one, you had to grab some special pails and go down to the stream for your water;*

*there were no bathrooms - you had to go to the outhouse or, when the weather was bad, some houses had a chair and they cut a hole in it and put a pot underneath;*

*there was no toilet paper - people used rags;*

*there were no washing machines - it would take a mother of five 10-15 hours to wash a weeks worth of laundry.*

The school principals' and teachers' reviews were wonderful. They said that they have been coming to the school tours for many years and the tours have never been so much fun and educational.



Items on display in the Luther Store for the School Tours

## Women of '76

Join us at the Swansea Community Center on Saturday, July 11th for an entertaining production about the women of 1776.

The talented Rita Parisi of Waterfall Productions will tell us the untold stories of courage and convictions from five remarkable women who witnessed and shaped the American Revolution.

Tickets are \$15 each and are selling out quickly. Please contact Cheryl Bogle at [integracrete2@gmail.com](mailto:integracrete2@gmail.com) or 508-496-9564 to reserve your seat now.

If we haven't sold out by then, tickets will be available at the door.

This event is supported in part by the Swansea Cultural Council and the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

The Swansea Historical Society

presents

1:00 p.m. on July 11, 2026

## WOMEN of '76

Experience the untold stories of courage and conviction from FIVE remarkable WOMEN who witnessed and shaped the American Revolution.

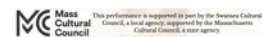


Presented by Rita Parisi of Waterfall Productions



Swansea Community Center  
200 Ocean Grove Ave, Swansea, MA

For tickets and/or more information, please contact SHS President, Cheryl Bogle at [integracrete2@gmail.com](mailto:integracrete2@gmail.com) or 508-496-9564



Please visit our website at [swanseahistoricalsociety.org](http://swanseahistoricalsociety.org) and click on the "Store" link to see our available items for purchase - mugs, wind spinners, rope bowls and many other items!.



Find us on Facebook

Donations are always accepted and appreciated! Donations will be used for daily operating funds unless otherwise requested by the donor.



Visit our website

## Come Visit Us!

The Swansea Historical Society is pleased to announce that the Luther Store will be once again open for visitors. There will be a small admission charge of \$2 for adults, \$1 for children and children 5 and under free. Donations appreciated.

Hours are volunteer-dependent, so are subject to change. Please check our website or Facebook page for possible last minute changes.

We hope to see you soon!

The Luther Store will be open from 10 a.m. to 12 noon on the following days:

- |                                 |                                   |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Saturday, July 4 <sup>th</sup>  | Sunday, August 2 <sup>nd</sup>    |
| Sunday, July 5 <sup>th</sup>    | Saturday, August 8 <sup>th</sup>  |
| Sunday, July 12 <sup>th</sup>   | Sunday, August 16 <sup>th</sup>   |
| Sunday, July 19 <sup>th</sup>   | Saturday, August 22 <sup>nd</sup> |
| Saturday, July 25 <sup>th</sup> | Sunday, August 30 <sup>th</sup>   |

We are also having a YARD SALE on August 8<sup>th</sup> !

# FAIR POSTER AT BARNEY'S SHIPYARD

by Russell Easterbrooks

The detail that painters put into their artwork is often overlooked. In this painting of Mason Barney's shipyard, we see great detail, right down to a fair poster nailed to a building. Notice the size of the fair poster compared to the workmen just below the poster. It appears to be a large poster advertising the event.



Maritime artists typically used posters like auction bills, election notices, fairs, etc. in their artwork to act as time-markers to signal the fall season.

Seasonal agriculture fairs were major community events and were heavily advertised with posters. These posters were widely distributed in surrounding towns in great numbers.

Fall River had printers actively producing local familiar fair posters in the 1830s to 1850s.

Almy & Milne printers or Borden & Co. printers were possibly one of the companies to do the work. Each of these companies did printing work for the Bristol County Agricultural Society Fair.

The society was founded in 1834 with their fair held annually in Taunton during the fall. It was the largest fair in the region at that time.

The town of Swansea held cattle shows/parish fairs sponsored by area churches. These were quite small events, but they used posters, too.

Today, advertising posters of the type seen in the painting are rare. Most were discarded after the event was over.

*Note: This article is the opinion of the author and not the Swansea Historical Society. It is published with his permission.*

## Planning Ahead – Pumpkin Patch Event

We are planning ahead for the Pumpkin Patch event in October.

Vendors will be responsible for their own tables, chairs and tents.

New this year will be a limited number of Vendor/Crafter spaces. The spaces will be available for \$25 each.

Please contact SHS President Cheryl Bogle at 508-496-9564 to reserve your space now. Space is limited.



## We Stepped Back in Time

On May 9<sup>th</sup>, the Swansea Community Center was transformed into the setting for a 1908 Victorian Tea. The event sold out early and was a great success.

The menu consisted of various teas as well as delicious savory dishes, scones, breads and desserts.

The talented Rita Parisi entertained the guests in her portrayal of Mrs. Michael Gordon and stories of her life at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Guests left asking when the next Tea will be held.

Thank you to all who attended and all who helped make our Tea a huge success, especially Girl Scout Troop 876.



Photos courtesy of the Girl Scout Troop 876



## SCC/COA Talks

The Swansea Historical Society continues its monthly presentations at the Swansea Community Center/Council on Aging.

April had an engaging poetry presentation by Jim Bronson that was part of the Swansea Council on Aging's celebration of Poetry Month.

May celebrated Mother's Day with a talk on Swansea Women in History, including a mention of poor Jane Dane, the first women to be thrown out of Swansea in 1749. Visit our website under the Swansea History section for the rest of the story.

In June, we welcomed Bob Cembrola for his fascinating talk on the British Frigates that sank off the coast of Aquidneck Island in 1778.

Many of these presentations have been recorded by Swansea Cable Access and the links to the videos can be found on our website.

## Upcoming Events

Please visit our website for event details  
swanseahistoricalsociety.org

### July 11<sup>th</sup> 1:00 p.m.

Women in History 1776 w/ Rita Parisi  
Swansea Community Center  
Tickets \$15

### July 15<sup>th</sup> 11:00 a.m.

Swansea Community Center  
Swansea and the Revolutionary War

### August TBD

A Talk by Brandon Travers on luxury liners of the 1800s & early 1900s

### September TBD

Bob Cembrola Talk on U-boats  
85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner

### October TBD

Talk on Lizzie Borden  
Pumpkin Patch Event  
Abram's Rock Walk

### November TBD

Talk on King Philip's War

## SHS Officers & Board

President - Cheryl Bogle  
Vice President - Karen Bowen  
Treasurer (acting) - Karen Bowen  
Acting Secretary - Brandon Travers

Patricia Redfearn      Diane Luther Silvia  
Ruth Ann Liggett      Robert Alford II  
J. Whitney Bowen II      Kathleen LeBlanc

# Swansea & the Revolutionary War

Here are a few of the items we have found about Swansea's connection to the Revolutionary War. The SHS will present a talk in more detail on July 15<sup>th</sup> at the Swansea Community Center. Please join us.

## Colonel Peleg Shearman

Colonel Shearman was the grandfather of Elizabeth Richmond Case Stevens.

*"Of three militia captains of this town Peleg Sherman, afterwards Colonel, was a leading factor in the conduct of Swansea's relation to the great struggle. He was often moderator of town meetings and at the head of important committees on military affairs. He was in active service along our shore during the British occupation of Rhode Island, e. g. at Slade's Ferry from January 6 to June 5, 1777, and at Bristol later in the same year. He also served the government as commissary for the supply of stores to the troops. His home, where at one time troops were quartered, was at Shewamet Neck, at what is now known as the Henry H. Mason place, where he died Nov. 20, 1811, aged sixty-four."*

~ This information came from History of Swansea Massachusetts 1667 - 1917 by Otis Onley Wright, page 86. ~

Colonel Shearman is buried in Christ Church Cemetery in Swansea.



## The Prison Ships

Many Swansea soldiers were taken prisoner on the British Prison Ships – especially on the HMS Jersey. Sadly, they did not return alive.

This is taken from the American Merchant Marine at War website (<http://usmm.org/revolution.html>)

*"About 55,000 American seamen served aboard the privateers. When captured by the British Navy, they were given a choice: join the British Navy or prison. The conditions of captivity aboard the prison ships, mostly abandoned ships moored in New York harbor, were inhuman. The most infamous of these was the HMS Jersey. About 11,000 privateers died of disease and malnutrition, their bodies dumped onto the mud flats of Wallabout Bay, where Brooklyn Navy Yard now stands.*

*"These Mariners lost their lives in the founding of our Nation and were a major factor in the winning of the Revolution."*

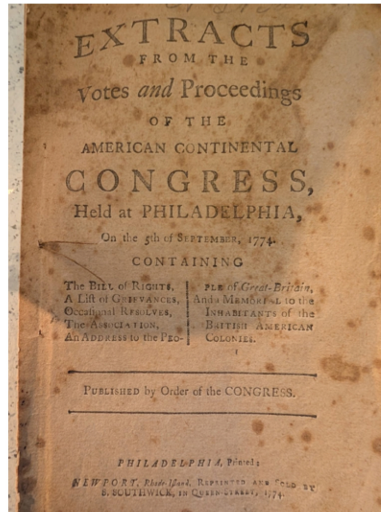


Photo of cover of a pamphlet that was sent to all New England cities and towns after the signing of the Declaration of Independence



## Eddy Family

Taken from the Swansea Bicentennial Pamphlet in 1974 – the Eddy family descendants that participated in the Revolutionary War:

- Ichabod Bosworth 1739 - 1820
- Martin Luther 1761 - 1841
- Mial Pierce 1728 - 1810
- Hepzibah Mason 1741- 1820
- Daniel Sherman 1728-?
- Daniel Martin 1737- 1796
- Tea League Peck 1736-807
- Frederick Luther 1731- 1822
- Daniel Cole 1727 - 1819
- Jeremiah Wheeler 1731- 1811
- John Carpenter 1733 - 1821
- Benjamin Davis



- Some of the houses that were standing during Revolutionary War times.
- Ben Martin House - Locust St. (above)
  - Barney House - Old Providence Rd. (left)
  - Luther House - Market St.
  - Barrington House - Sharps Lot Rd.
  - Martin House - Stoney Hill Rd.

## Listed Below are Some of the 39 Houses That Stood During the Revolutionary War

- Dagget House- 22 Barney Ville Rd- 1771-1774
- Barney House- 166 Old Providence Rd - 1749
- Ben Martin House- 24 Locust St - 1757
- Eddy Baker Farm- 23 Locust St- 1750
- Melatihah Martin House- 387 Locust St- 1736
- Brown- Luther House- 2 Maple Ave- 1740
- Mary Althom House -107 Elm St- 1790
- Nottingham house- -160 Elm- 1794
- Slate House- 169 Elm St- 1758
- 160 Wood St- 1778
- John Hill House/ Eddy House- 1 Main St - 1710
- Northam House- 27 Main St- 1794
- Hull House - 73 Main St- 1790
- Bend of the Road House- 181 Cedar Ave- 1740
- Deacon Buffington House- 260 Cedar Ave- 1790
- Joseph Gardner House- 1700
- Luther House- 177 Market St- 1725
- Hooper House- 306 Hortonville- 1790
- Sam Gardner House- 1035 Gardner's Neck Rd- 1768
- Shorts Tavern- 282 Market St- 1742
- Norton House- 62 Old Providence- 1779
- Benjamin Cole House- 412 Old Warren Rd- 1690
- John Luin House- 24 Cedar Ave- 1740
- Sam Gardner House- 1788
- Thomas Parkinson House- 210 Hortonville Rd - 1750
- John Brown IV House- 703 Pearce Rd- 1740
- John Brown House- 793 Pearce Rd- 1740
- Sisson Inglaid House- 2 Seaview Ave- 1710
- Barrington House- 445 Sharps Lot Rd- 1790
- John Martin House- 22 Stoney Hill Rd- 1728

# Swansea Revolutionary War Soldiers Buried in Swansea Cemeteries

Christopher Barney  
1739 – 25 Sep 1823  
Thomas Cemetery

Israel Barney  
16 Feb 1731 – 1781  
Thomas Cemetery

Josiah Barney Jr.  
10 Aug 1736 – 14 Feb 1819  
Thomas Cemetery

David Brown  
11 Feb 1740 – 18 Apr 1822  
Luther-Riley Cemetery

CAPT Elisha Brown  
2 Nov 1755 – 23 Sep 1846  
Luther-Riley Cemetery

PVT Elisha Brown  
14 Aug 1731 – 28 Sep 1813  
Luther-Riley Cemetery

Constant Cole  
23 Jun 1735 – 26 Oct 1832  
Cole Cemetery

CAPT John Cotton  
13 Feb 1748 – 7 Feb 1830  
Mount Hope Cemetery

Michael Eddy  
25 Jul 1715 – 23 May 1801  
Eddy Burial Ground

William Eddy  
9 Mar 1748 – 3 May 1826  
Eddy Burial Ground

Samuel Gardner  
5 Mar 1745 – 20 Sep 1822  
South Gardner Cemetery

Daniel Hale  
30 Jul 1758 – 5 Sep 1830  
Hale Cemetery

John Hale  
19 Aug 1726 – 11 Apr 1810  
Hale Cemetery

John Hale  
25 May 1750 – 27 Feb 1790  
Hale Cemetery

Benjamin Kingsley  
1760 – 1 Feb 1852  
Thomas Cemetery

Hezekiah Kingsley  
5 Dec 1739 – 20 May 1820  
Thomas Cemetery

Nathaniel Kingsley  
28 Feb 1754 – 30 Dec 1832  
Thomas Cemetery

Deacon Thomas Kingsley  
13 Oct 1725 – 20 Jul 1809  
Thomas Cemetery

Stephen Lee  
22 Mar 1755 – 21 Aug 1821  
Lee Cemetery

James Luther  
1754 – 3 Feb 1831  
Luther-Riley Cemetery

Samuel Luther II  
26 May 1764 – 15 Nov 1835  
Luther-Riley Cemetery

Daniel D. Martin  
23 Sep 1737 – 11 Sep 1796  
Martin Burial Ground

Melatiah Martin III  
23 Mar 1736 – 9 Sep 1794  
Martin Cemetery

Amos Mason  
22 Mar 1748 – 2 Dec 1806  
Mason-Horton Cemetery

Benjamin Mason  
4 Dec 1730 – 13 Feb 1813  
Mason-Horton Cemetery

Caleb Mason Jr.  
11 Feb 1756 – 2 Jul 1812  
Mason-Horton Cemetery

CAPT Caleb Mason Sr.  
23 Nov 1724 – 3 May 1808  
Mason-Horton Cemetery

PVT Christopher Mason Jr.  
22 Oct 1737 – 13 Jul 1805  
Christopher Mason Cemetery

Edward Mason Sr.  
26 Jan 1760 – 5 Sep 1792  
Christopher Mason Cemetery

Joseph Mason Sr.  
28 Jun 1753 – 20 Jul 1833  
Christopher Mason Cemetery

Noble Mason  
23 Nov 1747 – 13 Aug 1827  
Christopher Mason Cemetery

CAPT Peleg Peck  
6 Mar 1736 – 22 Jun 1807  
Thomas Cemetery

Thomas Peck  
1741 – 9 Feb 1812  
Old Baptist Church Cemetery

Lieut William Peck  
1758 – 1 Apr 1778  
Thomas Cemetery

Aaron Peckham  
31 Mar 1756 – 16 Mar 1843  
Thomas Cemetery

Benjamin Saunders Sr.  
28 Aug 1736 – 16 Jan 1808  
Thomas Cemetery

COL Peleg Shearman  
31 Aug 1747 – 1811  
Christ Church Cemetery

Ebenezer Short  
18 Oct 1752 – 24 Apr 1828  
Thomas Cemetery

Richard Sisson  
unknown – 10 Sep 1804  
Sisson Family Burial Ground

COL Peleg Slade  
8 Dec 1729 – 28 Dec 1813  
Col. Peleg Slade Cemetery

Jonathan Wheaton Jr.  
28 May 1758 – 30 Sep 1841  
Wheaton Cemetery

Barnabas Wood  
31 Dec 1742 – 22 Feb 1816  
Wood Cemetery

Caleb Wood  
16 May 1745 – 19 Oct 1805  
Wood Cemetery

Seth Wood Sr.  
6 Feb 1731 – 4 Apr 1815  
Mount Hope Cemetery

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**The following men are  
marked as Revolutionary War  
Soldiers in Swansea Cemeteries  
but are not listed on the Muster Rolls.  
We have no documentation to  
verify either way.**

Elisha Burr  
1735 – Nov 1815  
Thomas Cemetery

Nathaniel Burr  
1742 – 21 Jan 1818  
Thomas Cemetery

CAPT Daniel Davis II  
20 Sep 1736 – 23 Jun 1817  
Thomas Cemetery

Benjamin Grant  
1752 – 1839  
Thomas Cemetery

Asa Kingsley  
1736 – 20 Oct 1807  
Thomas Cemetery

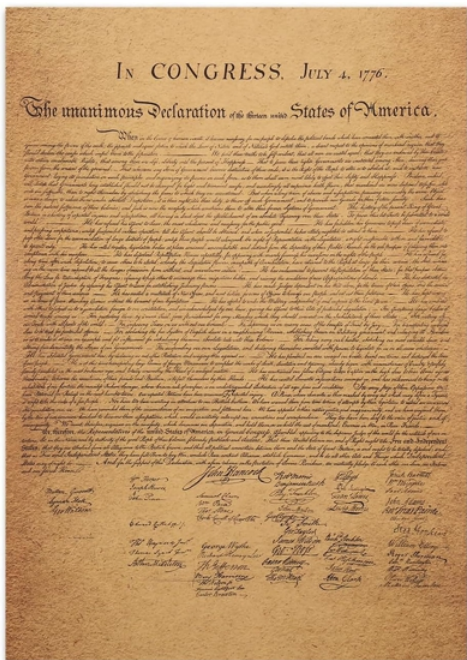
LIEUT Hezekiah Martin  
7 Sep 1719 – 4 Nov 1786  
Old Baptist Church Cemetery

Elisha Mason  
7 Jan 1729 – 9 Jan 1780  
Eddy Cemetery 01

James Mason  
17 Jan 1724 – 28 Nov 1795  
Eddy Cemetery 01

# From Revolutionary War Records

History of Swansea Massachusetts 1667 - 1917, by Otis Olney Wright, page 60



April 21, 1775

"Voted that 40 guns, 250 lbs. powder, 750 lbs. lead, and 600 flints be provided. The committee of inspection shall provide provisions and all other necessaries for the poor upon any special emergency. That 50 men be enlisted to be ready at a minute's warning, and pd 3 s. a week for exercising two half days a week, and 6 doUs. bounty if called out of town. The officers to have the same as Rehoboth pays their officers."

"That we keep a post to ride to Boston (and leave it to the selectmen how often) for the best intelligence that can be had there."

May 22, 1775

Chose a committee of regulation and inspection. "The Town will secure and defend the said committee and empower them to follow and observe such directions as they shall receive from time to time from the Provincial Congress or Committee of Safety."

Five shillings penalty was imposed for wasting a charge of powder, and the offender's ammunition was forfeited to the town.

April 1777

"Voted, in addition to what the General Court pays, 20 £ to every soldier enlisted in the Continental service for three years or the war," subsequently restricted to "those credited to the quota of the town." Later the town treasurer was allowed to pay what he chose to secure men for the quota, "and the town will make him complete satisfaction for his trouble therein."

Chose a committee to provide for the families of "soldiers in the Continental service."

January 26, 1778 Voted to provide a hospital. Voted to buy one hundred bushels corn for soldiers' families.

"Voted, August 31<sup>st</sup>, to provide soldiers with shirts, stockings and shoes."

November. "Requested Gen. Sullivan to provide a guard against the enemy on Rhode Island."

May, 1779. "Voted that there be a guard on each of the necks for the safety of the good people of the town; that each man have four dollars for each night's service on guard."

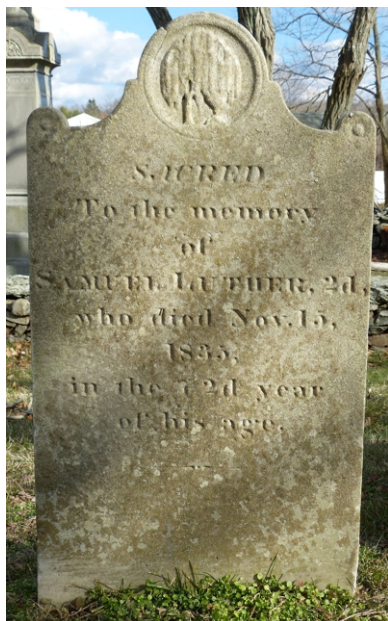
1779. "Voted twenty-two men to guard the shores, who shall have four dollars per night, or, if they choose, two dollars with rations and Continental wages."

January, 1780. "Voted four thousand pounds to buy blankets, according to the order of the Court, and to pay necessary expenses."

June, 1780. "Voted three hundred pounds Continental money to all who enlist for six months."

1783. "Petitioned General Court for a lottery to rebuild Myles\* bridge."

1785. "Chose a committee to divide the school districts to accommodate the children."



Grave of Samuel Luther II  
Luther-Riley Cemetery



Grave of Seth Wood, Sr.  
Mount Hope Cemetery



Grave of Cpt. Elisha Brown  
Luther-Riley Cemetery

## Swansea Cemeteries of the 1600's and 1700's

- Ye Olde Eddy Cemetery- 1687
- Mason Christopher Cemetery- 1783
- Wood / Eddy Cemetery - 1755
- Hale Cemetery - 1784
- Kingsley Cemetery- 1731
- Luther Cemetery Milford Road- 1776
- Luther-Riley- 1764
- Martin Cemetery Locust ST.- 1787
- Marin Cemetery Vinnicum Road -1781
- Martin Horton Cemetery-
- First Baptist Church Cemetery -1731
- Small Pox Cemetery- 1770
- Old Thomas Cemetery -1770
- Polly Wood Cemetery-1794
- Sisson Cemetery- 1776
- Old Gardner's Neck Cemetery- 1776
- Town Hall Cemetery- 1737
- Wheaton Cemetery- 1745

# A Brutal Outrage - Shocking Affair in Swansea

Alzada Estes Gifford was born on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1871 to Eli M. Gifford and Susan Caroline Petty.

This is an excerpt from the book entitled "Two Forks, Two Spoons."

## A Brutal Outrage

**WARNING** – This chapter contains a detailed account of the violent abduction and sexual assault of a child. Reader discretion is advised.

On August 4, 1884, when Alzada was twelve years old, as she and her friends were walking together, a man twice her age dragged her from the road and raped her. The horror of that day is unspeakable, and the events that followed only prolonged her trauma.

She had to identify her assailant – probably face to face, without the protection of the two-way mirrors they use nowadays – and then this young, innocent child was mercilessly pushed into the spotlight of all the local newspapers with zero regard for her privacy.

The day after the attack, reports ran in both the *Fall River Daily Herald* and the *Fall River Daily Evening News*, with the latter publishing a much more detailed account, which follows here in its entirety – and yes, they spelled Alzada's name wrong.

*"A Brutal Outrage – Shocking Affair in Swansea – A brutal outrage was committed in Swansea, yesterday, by a tramp, the victim being a twelve-year-old girl, Alzadia Gifford. The girl lives on the David Anthony farm, at Gardner's Neck, with her parents, who recently removed from this city. Yesterday afternoon she was on her way, accompanied by two other girls of about her own age, from her house to Charles Anthony's new house on Gardner's Neck, when a tramp started up from some bushes by the road side, and inquired the way to Fall River. The Gifford girl told him to inquire of the men at work on Edmund Whitehead's new house. The man then seized the girl and dragged her, despite her screams and struggles, into a cornfield at the side of the road, where he brutally outraged her.*

*The other girls ran away and gave an alarm, and a farm hand named Samuel Bradley started in pursuit of the tramp, who continued on the road to this city, and captured him before he reached Slade's Ferry Bridge. The tramp was then turned over to officer Shaw of the North Station. He gave his name as George Babcock, aged 25, and claimed to belong in Sag Harbor, L.I. [Long Island].*

*He was arraigned in the District Court this morning. The girl positively identified him, and he was also identified by witnesses who saw him come out of the cornfield. He made no defense, but claimed the witnesses were mistaken in the man. He was adjudged probably guilty and committed in default of \$1,000 bail to await the action of the grand jury.*

*Babcock was arrested here for drunkenness about a year ago and then gave the name of Charles Albion."*

There it was, for everyone to read, and while her family, friends, and neighbors no doubt sympathized with her, society was not kind to victims of such brutal crimes. Twelve-year-old Alzada's "reputation" was publicly ruined – in print – before she even reached her teens.

Charles Albion served twelve years of his fifteen-year sentence, and immediately upon his release in 1896, he began actively and loudly proclaiming his innocence to anyone who would listen.

The legal outcome may have provided some small sense of justice for Alzada, but her attacker kept pulling her back into the headlines, back into the nightmare she fought so hard to escape, until Charles Albion was finally thrown back in jail for unrelated crimes – drunkenness, mostly.

But Alzada was resilient, and with grit and grace, she moved on with her life and began building a family.

Alzada led a very private life and had five children:

Frank Bradford Gifford 1893 – 1990  
- married Helen Hale in 1925

Caroline Elusana Gifford 1895 - 1973

Susan M. Gifford 1897 - 1993  
- married Louis Weaver

Audrey E. Gifford 1898 - 1898

Minnie E. Copenhagen 1902 – 1902



Alzada died on November 21st 1922 at the age of 51 from ovarian cancer, 20 days after her 51st birthday. She is buried in Beech Grove Cemetery in Westport, MA.

If anyone has any other information on Alzada and her life, please contact the Swansea Historical Society so we can share that information with her family.

