

CS 71  
A977  
1912

Benjamin A. Ayers--his ancestry and  
descendants.

by

Mrs. Rebecca Graham (Ayers) Andrews.



THE LIBRARY  
OF  
THE UNIVERSITY  
OF CALIFORNIA  
LOS ANGELES

BENJAMIN A. AYARS

HIS

ANCESTRY AND DESCENDANTS

COMPILED

BY

BESSIE AYARS ANDREWS

VINELAND NEW JERSEY

1912





Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2008 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation



BENJAMIN A. AYARS

BENJAMIN A. AYARS

HIS

ANCESTRY AND DESCENDANTS

COMPILED BY

BESSIE AYARS ANDREWS

VINELAND NEW JERSEY

1912





C571  
A977

P R E F A C E .

“The glory of children is their Fathers.”

My sister, Elizabeth A. Ayars gathered a record of the Ayars family; descendants of Robert Ayars the first settler of that name in South Jersey. From her manuscript, I have traced the line of Benjamin A. Ayars, our father, and have added a biographical sketch. I trust the information contained in the following pages may be of service to those who are interested in this particular branch of the family.

Rebecca Graham Ayars.

[Mrs. Bessie Ayars Andrews.]

Vineland, N. J. May 1, 1912.



The Ayars family is very old. It is said in England complete records exist going back to 1060 the time of William the Conqueror.

The name has many synonyms: Ayars, Ayers, Ayer, Ayre, Eyre. Ayr.

The legend concerning its origin dates back to the eleventh century and is found in Thorp's "Catalogue of the Deeds of Battle Abbey."

"Legend: The first of this family was named Truelove who was one of the followers of William the Conqueror at the battle of Hastings in 1066. The Duke was flung from his horse and his helmet beaten into his face, which Truelove observing, pulled off and horsed him again. Duke William said to him, "Thou shalt hereafter instead of Truelove be called Eyre or Ayr; because thou hast given me the air I breathe."

After the battle the Duke found him severely wounded, his leg and thigh having been struck off. He gave him lands in Derby, a coat of arms—the leg and thigh in armor cut off—and an honorary badge yet worn by all the Eyres in England. Arms: Argent, on a chevron sable, three quarters foils or crest: An armored leg couped at thigh erect per pole. Motto: *Lacte aere florent.*

Robert Ayars emigrated from England in 1664, first settling in Rhode Island, where he married Hester Bowen, remaining there about twenty years.

In 1684'5 he left Hopkinton, where he had located in Rhode Island, and removed with his family to Back Neck, Cumberland County, New Jersey, on Cohansey River in what was then known as Shrewsbury Neck, just across the river from Greenwich.

He purchased 200 acres from the daughters of John Gilman and 600 acres of Restore Lippincott, from a tract of one thousand acres purchased of John Fenwick. This section south of the Cohansey river was surveyed as early as 1678 by Fenwick's deputy surveyor, Richard Hancock, who laid off 500 acres for William Worth, the first white person to settle on that side of the river; he was however soon followed by others.

November 21, 1795, Robert Ayars purchased 2200 acres of land covering the present site of the village of Shiloh, of Dr. James Wass, a London physician who bought 5,000 acres July 12, 1675 of John Fenwick before he sailed for America. This tract was located and surveyed in 1694 by John Worledge a deputy surveyor. It was resurveyed October 15-18, 1705 by Jacob Barkstead and 2200 acres conveyed to Robert Ayars, late of Rhode Island, gentleman.

"The first Virginia councils were composed almost entirely of men of title. The spirit of adventure which had brought Hawkins, Drake, the Gilberts and others such honors and renown

drew the young gallants fresh from their father's estates or from the wars in the low countries, and the term 'Gentleman,' as showing one of the arms bearing class is constantly found in the list of immigrants."

After a residence of upwards of twenty years on his estate at Shrewsbury Neck, Robert Ayars took possession of his new purchase. He was one of the early Baptist settlers and is thought to have been a Seventh Day Baptist, as most of his descendants adhered to that branch of the Baptist denomination which keep the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath. He sold off his tract to those of the same faith, who naturally settled in the neighborhood, the better to carry out their belief.

The place was called Cohansey Corners, but a short time after the establishment of the Church of the Sabbatarian order in 1737, the name was changed to Shiloh, after the Biblical Shiloh, in the land of Canaan that was consecrated to the worship of God.

In a deed to his grandson Caleb Ayars, jr , the name was written *Ayers*, by the person who wrote the deed, but when Robert signed his name he wrote it *Ayars*, and his descendants have generally followed his way of spelling.

Robert Ayars' will is dated February 25, 1716-17. He probably lived for sometime after that as the will was not proved until May 1, 1719. His wife and Henry Buck were named as executors. The inventory of his personal estate, made by Dickason Shepherd, amounted to £167 6.7, including books valued at £1 6.

Robert Ayars' family consisted of nine children, as follows:

- |           |            |          |
|-----------|------------|----------|
| 1. Isaac  | 2. Stephen | 3. Judah |
| 4. John   | 5. Robert  | 6. Caleb |
| 7. Joshua | 8. Hester  | 9. Ann   |

Isaac, eldest son of Robert (1), married Hannah Barrett, and has many descendants in West Jersey one of whom, James Hunt, participated in the "Tea-Burning" at Greenwich in 1774.

Stephen, the second son of Robert (1) died in 1726. His will is dated February 27, 1725-6, and Joseph Reeve, William Garton and Samuel Johnson were witnesses. An inventory of his personal estate was made by the two first named, April 12, amounting to £45 12; the will was proved the next day. His brother John was the executor.

Judah, third son of Robert (1), is said to have returned to Rhode Island.

John, fourth son of Robert (1), married Cecilia Colwell. He was constable in 1729, his death occurred in 1741.

Robert, fifth son of Robert (1) married Sarah Burgin. She was a descendant of John Burgin, first settler of that name, who in 1651, married Mary Winthrop of Dudley, Mass. and came from that province to New Jersey. The Burgin family was of considerable importance in England, Burgin Castle being situated in the county of Norfolk, a few miles from the town of Great Yarmouth.

On the Burgin coat of arms is seen a sword and key crossed, with the motto, "*Sud Spe.*"

Robert died in the year 1735.

Caleb, sixth son of Robert (1), married Rebecca Berryman, he died January 24, 1760, aged 67.

Rebecca died September 19, 1774, aged 75.

Joshua, seventh son of Robert (1), born in 1695, married Kezia Brooks, daughter of Rev. Timothy Brooks. His second wife was Anna Swinney. Joshua died May 5, 1759.

Hester, eighth child of Robert (1), married John Jarman.

Ann, ninth child of Robert (1), remained single.

The children of Robert (2), and Sarah Burgin Ayars, fifth son of Robert (1), and Hester Ayars, are as follows:

- |               |           |           |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. James      | 2. Burgin | 3. Robert |
| 4. Temperance | 5. Sarah  | 6. Ann    |

James, first son of Robert (2), married Hannah Ayars, he died in 1796.

Burgin, second son of Robert (2), was born in 1726, he married Susanna Gilman.

Robert, third son of Robert (2), no record.

Temperance, fourth child of Robert (2), married Henry Paulding.

Sarah, fifth child of Robert (2), married Joseph Paulding.

Ann, sixth child of Robert (2), no record.

Burgin, second son of Robert (2), of whom Benjamin Ayars was a descendant, was born in Shiloh, New Jersey, in 1720. He settled in Upper Pittsgrove, Salem County about 1750-60. He married Susanna Gilman May 28, 1754.

Bishop Asbury in his writings informs us of preaching at Murphy Meeting House now Friendship. He says, "after service we came to the

widow Ayars, the mother and daughter are serious and the son thoughtful." Mrs. Susanna Ayars, of whom Asbury here speaks was one of the first Methodists in Pittsgrove. She first received the Lord's prophets in that place. She died in peace in 1807.

The children of Burgin and Susanna Ayars are as follows:

- |              |           |          |
|--------------|-----------|----------|
| 1 Temperance | 2 Robert  | 3 Sarah  |
| 4 Elizabeth  | 5 John G. | 6 Burgin |
| 7 Ann        |           |          |

Temperance, first child of Burgin (3), remained single.

Robert, first son of Burgin (3), was born in 1750, married Elizabeth Morgan, he died in 1828

Sarah, third child of Burgin (3), was born March 2, 1755, married Joast Newkirk, she died November 14, 1831.

Elizabeth, fourth child of Burgin (3), married Stephen Garrison.

John G., second son of Burgin (3), was born about 1764, married Mary Sparks, who was born November 14, 1768, died December 1, 1821. He died September 29, 1838, aged 74.

Burgin, third son of Burgin (3), married Hannah Early.

Ann, seventh child of Burgin(3), married Rev. Jephtha Abbott.

The children of Robert and Elizabeth Morgan are as follows:

- |              |             |           |
|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1 Elizabeth  | 2 James     | 3 Susanna |
| 4 Sarah      | 5 Burgin M. | 6 John    |
| 7 Temperance | 8 Samuel    | 9 Rebecca |
| 10 Mary      | 11 Robert   |           |



























