

CS 71
.R52
1903
Copy 1





Class 1.27

Book P.

1903

SUPPLEMENT.

Richardson Ancestry.

WATKINS.





A VIEW OF WEST MILL, HERTS.



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, WEST MILL, HERTS.



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, STANDON HERTS.

THE RICHARDSONS

OF

WEST MILL, HERTS, ENGLAND,

AND

WOBURN IN NEW ENGLAND.

WALTER KENDALL WATKINS.

BOSTON:

1903.

CS 71
THE
1703

[Reprinted from the New-England Historical and Genealogical Register for July, 1903.]

2832*

17

PRESS OF DAVID CLAPP & SON.

SOME EARLY EMIGRANTS FROM HERTS, ENGLAND.

As early as 1628, religious disturbances were frequent in the county of Herts. The feeling is plainly shown in the incident of affixing, on the church door at Hemel Hempstead, a place seven miles west of St. Albans, the letter against forms of worship, etc., mentioned in the REGISTER, *ante*, Vol. 55, page 298.

In 1627, Charles Chauncey, afterwards President of Harvard College, became Vicar of Ware, twelve miles east of St. Albans, where he was soon involved with the authorities by his preachings, and was charged by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, 10 Apr., 1630, with "omission of the Athanasius Creed, the Lesson from the Old Testament, the Litany, the surplice, the cross in Baptism and the Exhortation in Matrimony."

His speeches were in praise of the Puritans, and disparagement of the church's authority; in anticipation of changes between church and state, and of his assertions "that some families were preparing to go to New England."

Chauncey made answer to his accusers, and proceedings were stopped till 23 June, 1634, when he was again summoned—having been for a year or more at Marston St. Lawrence, Northamptonshire—and his trial before the High Commission was continued.

At Lambeth Palace, 19 Nov., 1635, he was found guilty of opposing the setting up of a rail, with a kneeling bench affixed, about the communion table in the church at Ware, where he had returned to preach. He pleaded that there was a rail at Marston St. Lawrence, and some twenty churchwardens and parishoners testified to this fact: besides, seven clergymen witnessed to his being a diligent student of theology. Several of the clergy complained of his mode of preaching and administering the communion, also that strangers from other parishes frequented his Sunday afternoon meetings at Marston.

11 Feb., 1635-6, he made his submission, in regard to his visit to Ware, to the High Court. Under date of 12 June, 1637, Dr. Samuel Clark wrote of him, to Sir John Lamb, an official of the Archdeacon of Buckingham, "Mr. Chauncey, whom you lately corrected in the High Commission, mends like sour ale in summer. He held a fast on Wednesday last, and, as I am informed, he with another preached some six or eight hours. The whole tribe of God flocked thither, some threescore from Northampton; the Lord Say with his lady, honored them with their presence. The end was, as I am told, to join in prayer that God would deliver his servants from persecution." This prayer was answered in the case of Chauncey, and many others, by their emigration to New England in the winter of 1637.

We have alluded to the religious excitement at Hemel Hempstead, and the probability that Rev. Robert Fordham was responsible for giving the town of Hempstead, Long Island, its name, and applying the name of

Littleworth, which is a village two miles from Bedford, Herts, to a locality on Long Island, situated, as I am informed by Mr. William Wallace Tooker, the local authority, between Water Mill Post office and Southampton Village. Littleworth was frequently mentioned in old records, but is now seldom heard.

It was at Sacomb, four miles north-west from Ware, that Philip Fordham, father of Rev. Robert Fordham, lived. The latter was born in 1603, was admitted to Caius College, Cambridge, 3 July, 1622, at the age of nineteen, matriculated 1623, and received his degree of B.A. in 1625, and M.A. in 1629. It is likely that Robert Fordham was active in the religious excitement attendant on the incident at Hemel Hempstead in 1628, and the events in which Chauncey was prominent in Herts, as it was not till 1640 that he came to New England, and was at Sudbury. (See REGISTER, Vol. 2, p. 163.)

Religious persecution was not the only factor in driving the people of Herts to other parts. It was necessary, in 1632 and succeeding years, for the justices of the peace for the county to take measures for the relief of the poor, the country being over-populated, and it was with difficulty that the poor obtained employment and food.

It was, however, the ship money tax, first designed in June, 1634, and to which I have alluded in other communications to the REGISTER, that in the succeeding four years was a cause for the emigration to New England of many of the people in Herts.

In 1637 it was reported by the tax collector that Thomas Welsh, of Bishop Stortford, had gone to New England. The town is about ten miles east of Ware, and Welsh appeared at Milford, Conn., in 1639.

Richard Miles, of Wormley, was reported as "gone into New England." He appeared in Milford in 1639. Wormley is six miles south of Ware.

William Fowler of Powlett, Stevenage, was taxed for his lands in Potter's Fields, and to avoid the tax he fled, and was in Milford in 1639. Stevenage is ten miles north-west of Ware, and seven miles from Sacomb.

Edmund Tapps, of Bennington, went to New England, and appeared with the others at Milford in 1639. Bennington is eight miles north-west of Ware.

From Royston, sixteen miles north of Ware, Richard Parker went to New England, and one of the name appears in Boston in 1638.

Eight miles north of Ware is West Mill, a parish with a station on a branch railway terminating at Buntingford.

Francis Wyman, of West Mill, made his will, 15 Sept., 1658, which was proved 14 Feb., following. In it he left bequests to his two sons, Francis and John Wyman, "which are beyond the seas." (See REGISTER, Vol. 43, p. 56.) The sons were in Woburn in 1640. A reference to the parish register of West Mill, which begins with baptisms in 1550, marriages in 1562, and burials in 1565, gives the following items:

1617, "Francis Wymant and Elizabeth Richardson were married 1^o May."

Baptized in 1618, "Thomas y^e sonne of Francis Wymant 5 Aprilis."

1619, "Francis ye sonne of Francis Wymant Bapt 21 of Feb."

1621, "John the sonne of Francis Wymant baptised Feb. 3."

1623[1], "Richard the sonne of Francis Wymant baptised 14th of March."

1626, "Elizabeth y^e daughter of Francis Wymant bapt Mar. 26."

1628, "William the sonne of Francis Wymant was Bapt the 31th of Aug."

1630, "Elizabeth y^e wife of Francis Wymant buried June y^e 22."

1630, "William, the sonne of Francis Wymant buried July the xviii."

Of Richardson items in the records, there are :

Thomas Richardson of Standon and Katherine Duxford of West mill were married 24 Aug. 1590.

Elizabeth y^e daughter to Thomas Richardson baptized 13 Jan. 1593.

John son to Thomas Richardson baptized 7 Nov. 1596.

James, y^e sonne of Thomas Richardson baptized 6 Apr. 1600.

Samuel y^e sonne of Thomas Richardson baptized 22 Dec. 1602 [or 1604].

Margaret ye daughter of Thomas Richardson baptized 19 April 1607.

Thomas ye sonne of Thomas Richardson baptized 3 July 1608.

Catherine the wife of Thomas Richardson buryed the xth of March 1631.

Thomas Richardson was buryed the viii daye of January 1633.

It would naturally be supposed that the will of Thomas Richardson would be found in the Commissary Court of Essex and Hertfordshire, but the Archdeaconry Court of Huntingdon, or that portion in the Hitchin Registry, had jurisdiction over part of Hertfordshire, and included 77 parishes.

The original will of Thomas Richardson of West Mill, Herts, found at Hitchin, reads :

March the 4th Anno domini 1630. In the name of God Amen I Thomas Richardson of Westmill in the County of Herts, husbandman, being sick in bodye but of good an perfect memory thanks be to God doe make and ordeyne this my laste will in manner and forme following, firste. I bequeath my soull unto the hands of God my maker and Redeemer by whose merits I only truste to be saved, and my body to be buryed in the place of Christian buryall and Touchinge my temporall goods I doe dispose of them as followeth.

First. I gyve unto Katherine my wife duringe the tearme of her naturall life my littell close of pasture called little hummyeade cont half an acre and after her decease I give the same to my sonn Samuell and his heyers for ever.

Item. I give to my sonn John forty shillings to be payed to him within the space of three yeares next ensueing the decease of me and Katherine my now wife by my executor.

Item. I give to my sonn James Twelve pence.

Item. I give to my sonn Thomas three pounds to be payed to him within the space of fyve yeares next ensueing the decease of me and Katherine my now wife.

Item. I gyve unto Katherine my wife all my movable goods to use for and during the terme of her life and after her decease I gyve the same unto my sonn Samuel whom I doe ordeyne and make my sole executor. In Witness whereof I have sett my hand and Seal the daye and yeare above sayd.

Scaled and declared

in the presence of us

Richard Baker.

Philip Baker.

Sig^m THOMAS

[mark] RICHARDSON

proved 31 July 1634 at Hitchin presented by son Samuel Richardson."

The three brothers, Ezekiel, Samuel and Thomas Richardson, are known as such by the will of Ezekiel, who names the other two as his brothers.

Ezekiel, evidently the oldest, was the first to come to New England, and was a planter in Charlestown in 1630. His departure previous to the making of the will, perhaps against his father's wishes, or possibly having received his share of his father's small estate, may account for the name of

Ezekiel not appearing in the will. His baptism is not found at West Mill, as are the baptisms of Samuel and Thomas.

Ezekiel probably came with Winthrop, he and his wife becoming members of the Charlestown church, 27 Aug., 1630.

Thomas Richardson, baptized at West mill, 3 July, 1608, had wife Mary, who joined the Charlestown church, 21 Feb., 1635-6, and he joined, 18 Feb., 1637-8.

Samuel presented the will of his father for probate at Hitchin, England, 31 July, 1634. He had previously married; and had baptized, at West Mill, a son Samuel, 3 July, 1633, and a daughter Elizabeth, 22 May, 1635.

Samuel Richardson's name does not appear in the Tithes Book of West Mill after 1635. Against Over Green, where he (and also his father, Thomas) lived, is written "none." It was, therefore, after that date he and his brother Thomas sailed for New England, with their families; and we find, on 1 July, 1636, the brothers were on a committee to lay out lots of land in Charlestown, for hay. There is no record of the birth or baptism of a daughter Elizabeth to Samuel in Woburn, but the will of his wife Joanna, in 1666, mentions a daughter Elizabeth, who was probably the one baptized at West Mill, 22 May, 1635.

Doubtless the register of the parish of Standon, which is but a few miles south of West Mill, would, if it existed, give further particulars of the Richardsons, or at least of Thomas who married in 1590; but the earliest entry to be found is 1671. Braughing, just east of West Mill, has a register which begins in 1563, but it gives no items of the Richardson name. Great and Little Horstead, north-east of West Mill, was the home of some of the Wymans in the past, but there are no traces of the Richardsons there. Just east of this locality is the border of Essex, and there are many of the name in that county, though the name is common in all the counties of England. From Nazing, Essex, about ten miles from West Mill, came John Eliot, the apostle, and many of the settlers of Roxbury, Mass.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 021 392 082 0