

My Travels through Family History

And Lessons Learned
Bob Alford

My personal journey (so far)

- An overview of my journey
- The problems of false information
- We all have some amazing ancestors
- The big lessons learned
- Future Directions

I had an early Introduction to Family History



- My father and his brother started the work on our family history.
- They did their research by visiting libraries, town halls, and cemeteries. My father often took me with him.
- He attempted to interest the family by creating a three-ring binder for each of his children and grandchildren that summarized his work.
- When my father died my mother gave all of my father's research papers to his brother.
- My cousin gave all the research to a local library when her father died.
- They discarded everything!

My personal journey began in 2008



- All the copies of my father's notebook have badly degraded.
- I started to resurrect my father's work in 2008.
- Initially I was just going to reenter his text, format it, and publish it in a non-degradable format.
- I quickly discovered that I could greatly expand on, and in some cases correct what he did, using the Internet.
- Later I started to explore my wife's family history.
- I initially recorded my family tree in Legacy and posted it on MyHeritage.
- I then developed the first version of my own website: rtreeoflife.com.
- About 2010 I joined a Genealogy Club.

A Place to Start



- My father had included short biographies of many of our Alford and Hathaway ancestors.
- I needed to choose one to start with, so I chose Grandma Lockhart.
- She died before I was born. I had heard about her all of my life, but I never understood who she was.
- My grandmother on my mother's side was a Messer. The one on my father's side was a Burton. So, who was Grandma Lockhart?
- As a youngster, I was embarrassed to admit I didn't know who this woman was that everyone seemed to love so much.
- It turned out she was my father's mother's, mother. In other words, my great grandmother. She had remarried years after her first husband, Hiram Burton, had died.

Lillian Culver



George Burton and Edmund Scott Burton
Approx. 1890
(Sons of Lillian Culver Burton Lockhart)



The family of
Hiram Burton Jr. &
Lillian Lodema Culver
Married
March 22, 1872

James W. Lockhart &
Lillian Culver Burton
Married June 13, 1901



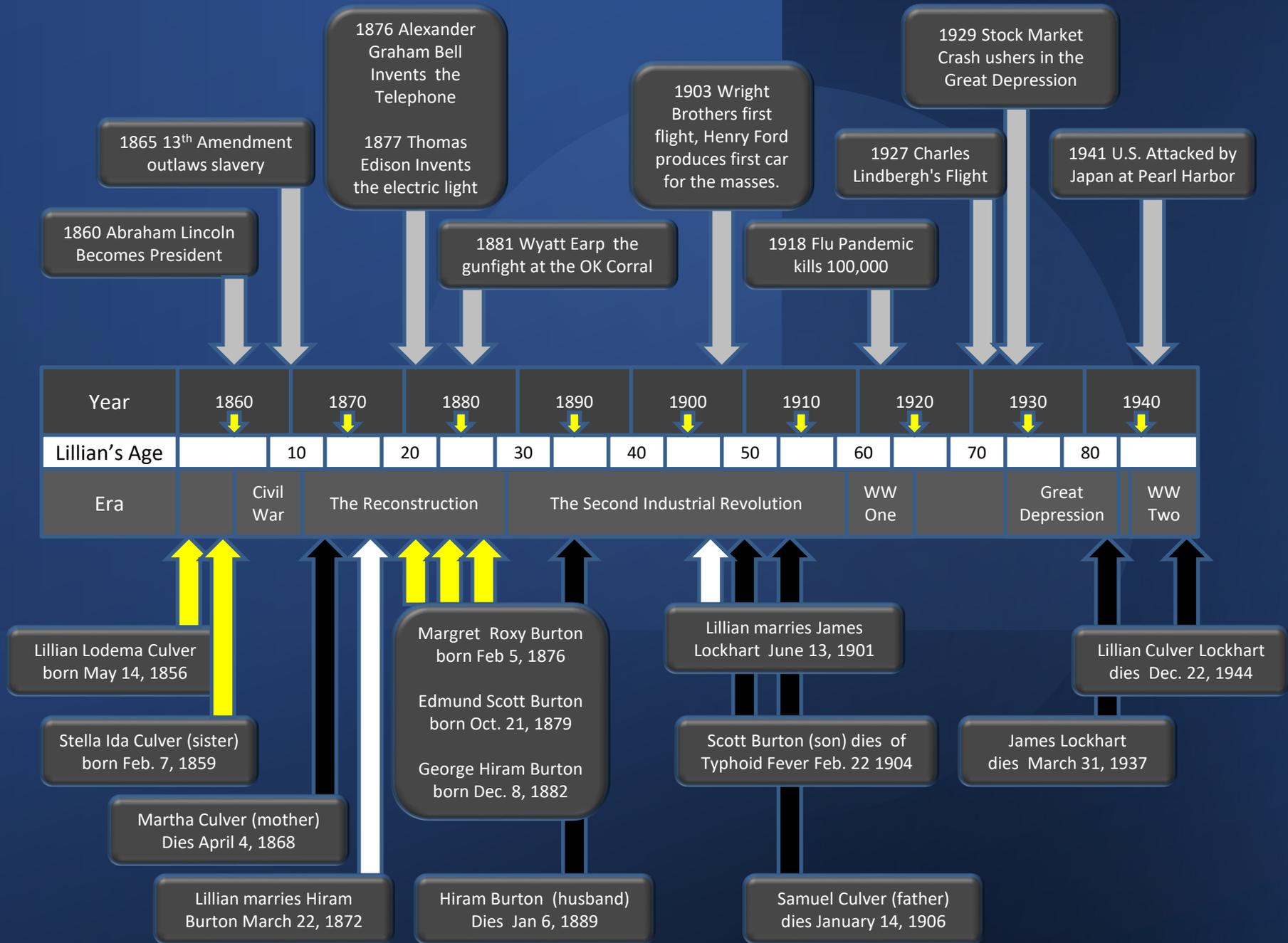
- Lillian Lodema Culver – Born May 14, 1856, in Starbuckville, NY. Five years before the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln.
- Married to Hiram Burton, Jr., March 22, 1872. She was 15. He was 38 and a widower.
- Her daughter Margaret was born February 5, 1876. Her son Edmund Scott was born October 21, 1879, and her son George Hiram was born December 8, 1882.

Grandma Lockhart



- Her husband, Hiram Burton, died January 9, 1885. He was 55. She was 30.
- She had three small children, Margaret age 9, Edmund Scott age 6, and George age 3 and lived in a small house on the shore of Lake George, NY with no central heat and no running water.
- She managed to raise money to keep her family together by doing laundry work in her home for neighbors and summer vacationers at the lake and chopping and selling wood off of her lot.
- She married James William Lockhart, June 13, 1901, after her children were grown up. Her son-in-law, Rev. Charles Burdick Alford, came to Lake George from Ausable Forks to perform the ceremony in the Methodist Church.

To understand her life better I created a timeline.



More Ancestors

- That was fun! Let's do some more.
- I started with a series of biographies on my recent Alford ancestors, usually 4-6 pages each (including pictures, maps, and charts.)
- I took copies of these to a “cousins party” of my Alford cousins who I had not seen in many years.
- This got a good reaction with many telling me stories about their memories of my Alford family. Several followed up by sending me photos and information so I could expand my efforts.
- I did a few of my Hathaway (maternal) ancestors and sent them to my Hathaway cousins with a similar reaction.



The Rev. Charles B. Alford and Family ~1913

Front row: Betty, Scott, George, Culver

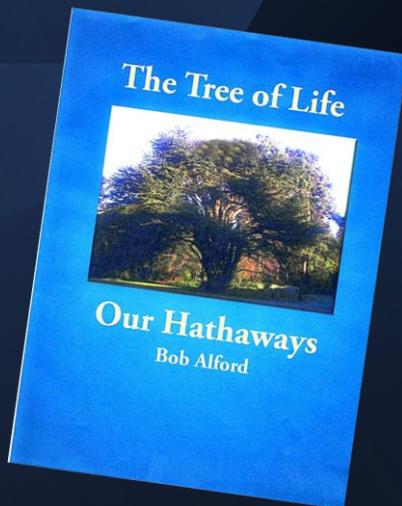
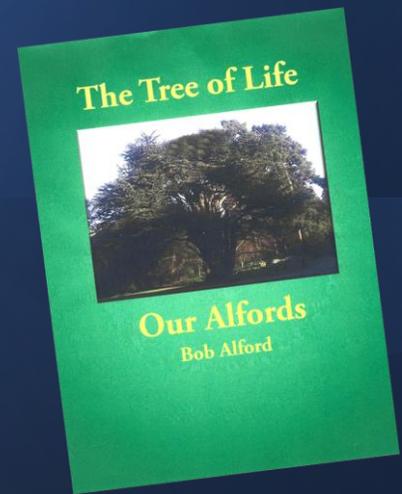
Back Row: David on Charles's lap, Dick on Margaret's lap, Grandma Lockhart

surprising interesting
AMAZING ADDICTIVE
captivating consuming addictive
intriguing frustrating fascinating
fun challenging rewarding fascinating emotional
fascinating

Surprising Hermitage Healing glorious nights
Remarkable Many Revealing disgruntled frustrating moving mysterious inspiring expensive long thrilling Exciting Missing FUN riveting life intriguing annoying Inspiring REMARKABLE mind
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Voyage fantastic understanding MOVING unpredictable complicated engrossing fun House rewarding uplifting belonging delightful fulfilling well shocking discovery confusing
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Notebooks of Biographies

- I continued to research my paternal and maternal ancestors and wrote many biographies.
- As I became more experienced in doing this, I developed my own standard format, which made each one easier.
- I also began incorporating history and how historical events impact the lives of my ancestors.
- My biographies grew from an average of 4-5 pages to an average of about 20 pages.
- I kept all of these both electronically and in two three ring notebooks, which I still have.



What's in a Name?



Where did the name Alford come from?

- Common surname in England, Scotland and US.
- Appears to have originated about 1,000 years ago
- Best theory is that it was originally Aldford.
 - Ald is the old English word for old.
 - Ford is a crossing for a river

An ALD (old) Ford

- On the eastern side of Cheshire, just south of the city of Chester, there is the remains of an old Roman road that crosses the River Dee.
- There is no evidence that there was any settlement here in Roman times.
- In the early 1100's a castle was built near the location where the road crossed the river. It was called Ald Ford castle, or "Old Ford (crossing)" castle.
- The castle was destroyed by Lord Cromwell's forces in the 1600's, but a village and civil parish called Aldford, remain to this day.



Ricardus, Dominus de Aldford



- It is believed that Aldford Castle was built by Ricardus, Dominus de Aldford
 - His title was Ricardus. This word is of Latin origin and generally means “powerful ruler”. The name was used by multiple lords in tenth century England.
 - Dominus is a Latin word meaning master
 - de Aldford means “of Aldford”
- So, he was the Powerful Ruler, Master of the castle at the old ford in the river, or Ricardus, Dominus de Aldford

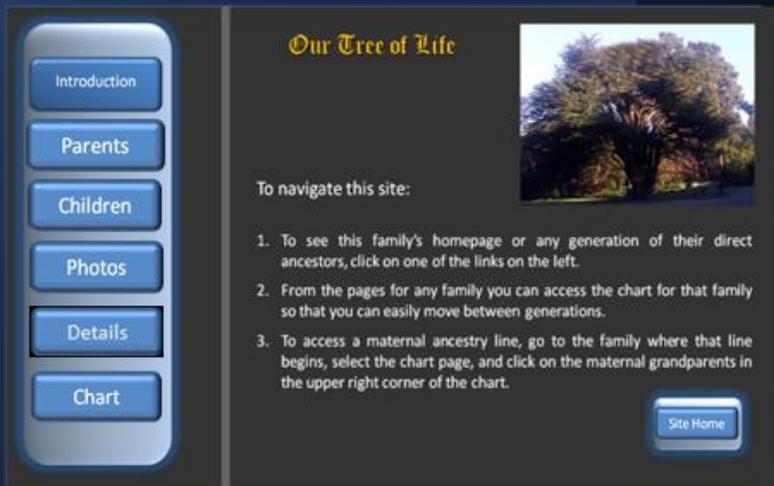
Same Name Not Related



- The descendants of two people from the same village may have the same last name but not be related at all:
 - Richard Alford descendent of Robert de Aldford
 - James Alford descendent of William de Aldford
- The Alford Family Association, through DNA testing, has identified nine distinct lineages of Alfords in the US, and has a category for “other.”
- Many surnames have this issue. Many lords took the name Ricardus. Many men named Sam or John or Robert had sons. There were many bakers, smiths, coopers and other professions in the old world.

A Family Website

- Shortly after I started, I built my first family website.
- It was based on Webstarts, a GUI website builder, so no code was required, and it was reasonably fast to create.
- It was just Web generation #1 pages.
- Without a database behind it, nothing could be generated automatically, so it got very large as I started adding ancestors.
- My family, including cousins, loved it.
- It was about 2010, and the Genealogy Club was started by Mike O'Berne.
- My next-door neighbor, Cindy Harrison, interested me in the club and I joined.

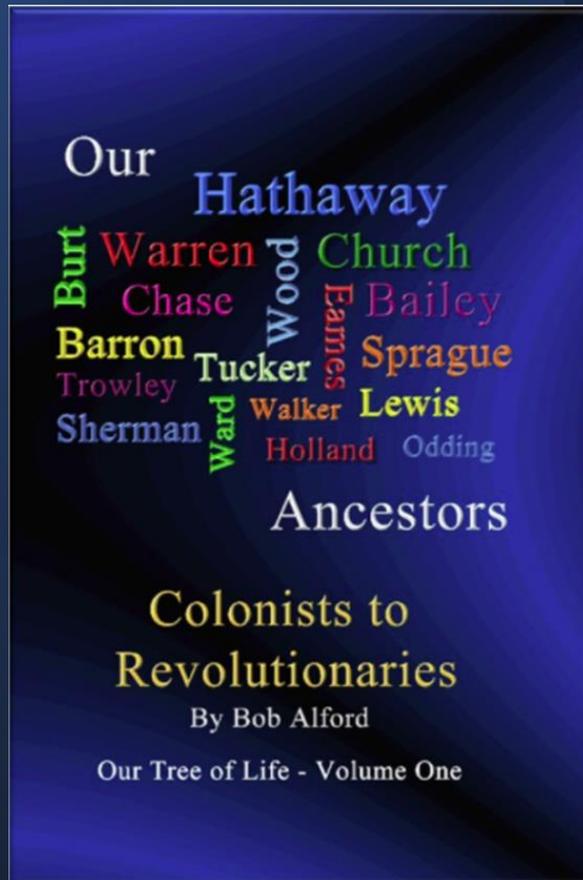


A second-generation Website

- The first-generation website became too big and cumbersome.
- I soon replaced it with a second-generation site based on TNG software that is database driven.
- Adding new ancestors and linking them to others is now much easier.
- That was many years ago.
- A few years ago, I did a major redo of this site to bring it up to current state-of-the-art web technology and add features like flipbooks.
- The site is rtreeoflife.com.

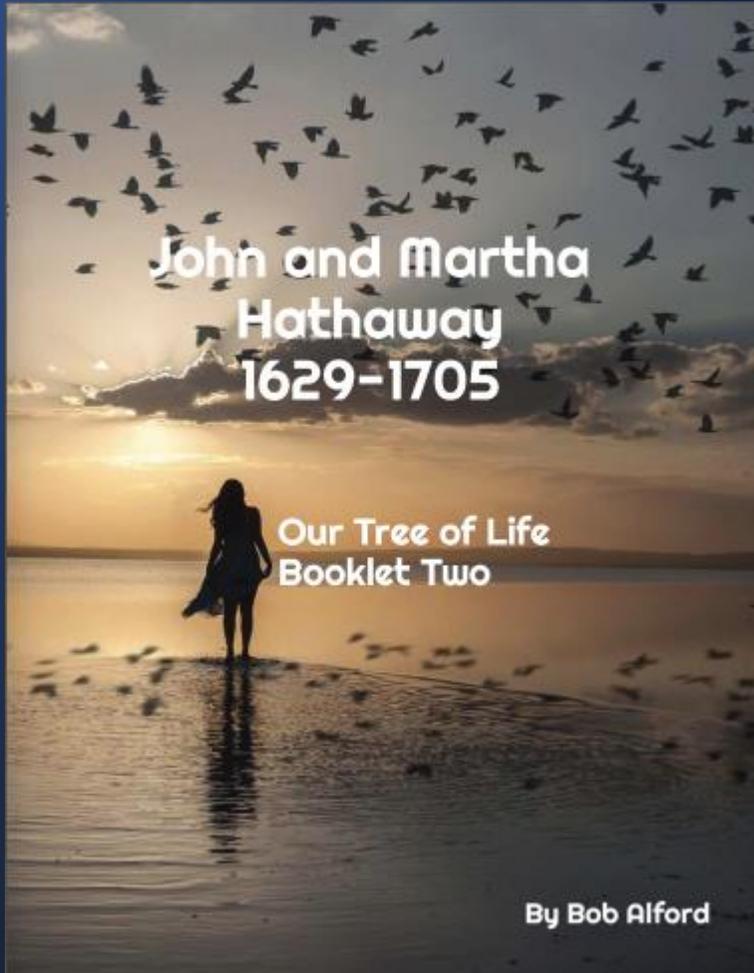


Creating a more permanent record



- As I age, I have become concerned about the long-term existence of my work.
- To address this, I started writing a series of books.
- These are professionally printed and bound using acid-free paper and should last hundreds of years.
- I completed the first one on my Hathaway ancestors in 2021 and gave copies to my children, my one remaining sibling, and some other relatives as gifts. I also have copies put away for my grandchildren, who are all currently too young for this.
- Initially I was just going to reformat what I had in my binders, but I found myself rewriting and expanding these and adding many more maternal ancestors.
- Volume One spans six generations of my Hathaway ancestors. It contains biographies on twenty-eight couples. All of whom are my direct ancestors from that era.

Ebooks and Booklets



- My primary goal was to complete the printed book. I believe that if it is of high enough quality, it will be passed down to future generations, thereby preserving my work.
- Once you have completed the manuscript, it is easy to create a digital book and publish it on rtreeoflife.co as a flipbook.
- Third-party tools can also help.
- I use designrr.io because it allows you to create booklets in numerous formats, including flipbooks.
- I created a booklet for each couple and published them on my website as flipbooks.

What's next

- In December of 2023 I published the second book.
- I have also added twenty-six flipbooks to the website.
- Since then, I have found and explored the lives of numerous ancestors I did not know previously.
- I have started a third book.
- And so, the adventure continues...

Connecticut River Colonists

Our **Alford**

Owen Hoskins Wilson
Higley Newton Bliss Holcomb
Drake Brown
Griffen Penny
Bancroft Wade Brewster Easton Hulins
Bidwell Ancestors

Our Tree of Life
Volume Two

By Bob Alford

Fake News, Tall Tales, Family Legends, Genealogy



- Other people's genealogies, whether on the Internet or in a book or document, are packed with false information.
- An Example from my Alford Genealogy
 - One of my immigrant ancestors, Isabel Browne, married Anthony Hoskins on July 6, 1656, in Windsor, Connecticut.
 - Many genealogies report she was the daughter of Peter Browne, Mayflower Pilgrim.
 - The data comes from a book written in the late 1800s about the Alford/Chase Ancestry. In that era, being descended from a Pilgrim was considered prestigious.
 - Original Plymouth Colony records, now available online, show this is impossible. This underscores the importance of verifying genealogical information before accepting it as fact.
 - My father believed this and was proud to be a Mayflower descendent. He was not. My mother was, but that's another story.
 - I have recently been able to identify Isabel's real parents in records from England.

My Mayflower Ancestor



- My Mayflower ancestor on my mother's side is Richard Warren, a Mayflower pilgrim. This is verifiable through original records.
- I also have a Warren ancestor, John Warren, who came on the Winthrop fleet, also verifiable.
- Many genealogies claim they were brothers and identify their parents from England.
- Through these parents they trace the Warren line back to Charlemagne, identifying many ancestors along the line.

Wrong!

- A professional genealogist studied this back in the 1930s and proved Richard and John were not the sons of this English Warren couple. While the couple did have sons named Richard and John, they were born long before my Richard and John. This means the line back to Charlemagne is also false.
- I have proof from original records of John's ancestral line going back three generations. Richard's line remains unknown, but it can't be the same as John's. John came from a big family, but he did not have a brother named Richard.
- Richard and John came from different parts of England. Richard died in Plymouth several years before John arrived in Massachusetts.
- It is highly unlikely they even knew, or knew of, each other.



The Really Bad News



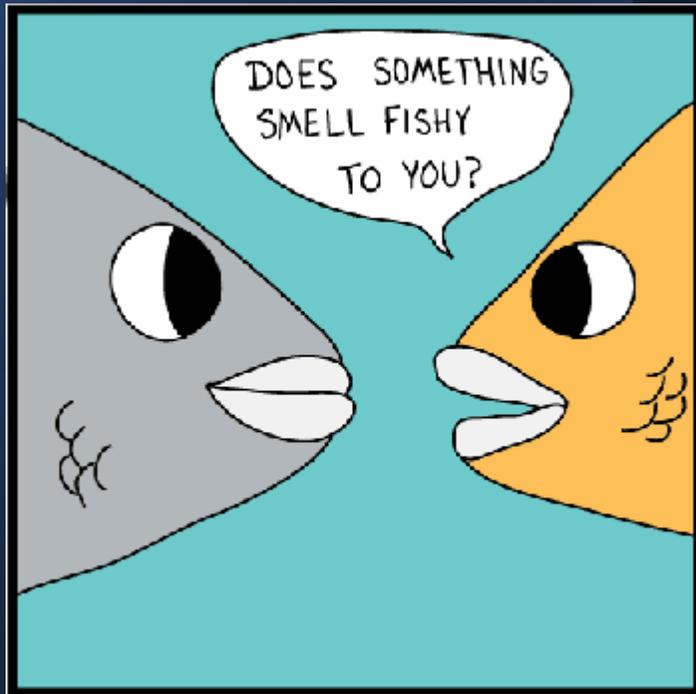
- Both Ancestry and MyHeritage have this bad information in their hints.
- They each periodically send me an email saying that they have discovered a great new find in my family history, and with a single click, they can add a long line of ancestors to my tree.
- Many people have done this, and this information, proven false almost ninety years ago, is all over the Internet.
- If they click on the link, as suggested, your tree will be polluted with a massive amount of false information.

The Hathaway Ironmen (NOT)



- Many genealogies and some history books claim that John Hathaway (my immigrant ancestor) and his son John and grandson Jacob owned and operated Iron Works.
- Some go so far as to declare the Hathaways to be “Iron Men.”
- The Hathaways were successful businessmen who invested in many things. They were NOT Ironmen.
- The origin of this nonsense is the Chartley Ironworks (shown on the left) was built in 1695, Many genealogies claim this was built and operated by John Hathaway.
- John Hathaway was sixty-six years old in 1695.

Something Doesn't Smell Right



- Something doesn't smell right. Why would a successful 66-year-old suddenly take up a difficult and strenuous new trade?
- A little research into Ironworks in Taunton uncovered the problem.
- The confusion appears to have come from the word proprietor, which has changed meanings over the centuries.
- John was one of the "proprietors" or owner/developers of the town of Taunton.
- In 1696 he signed a grant on behalf of the proprietors of the town to Thomas and James Leonard, experience ironmen, to build an ironworks in Taunton.

Tall Tales, Fake News, and Family History



- My wife's first-generation Labadie ancestor was Antoine Louis Descomps dit Labadie, born in Ville Marie (Montreal) New France in 1730.
- In ~1740 he migrated with his parents 640 miles by canoe to Detroit, which at that time was a fort on the frontier of New France, built by Cadillac to support the Fur Trade.
- Today, thanks to the Internet, we can access records for the Archives of Canada, and other sites, and learn (and prove) quite a bit about him, how he lived, and the mark he left on history.
- The Internet is also loaded with Tall Tales and Fake News concerning him.
- But there is one whopper, and it is widely repeated.

It is Reported...



- Many genealogies claim he had 33 children (false.)
- He and three wives. His second wife was a native woman, the daughter of Chief Pontiac (probably true.)
- Many genealogies claim she was a slave named Marie Mannon (false.)
- Some claim he bought her as a “sex slave” (Why do we always think the worst of the French?) (false.)
- Some claim that Antoine and Marie-Mannon had seventeen children (false.)
- Many conclude that the children were all illegitimate (false.)

Thirty-three children... Really???

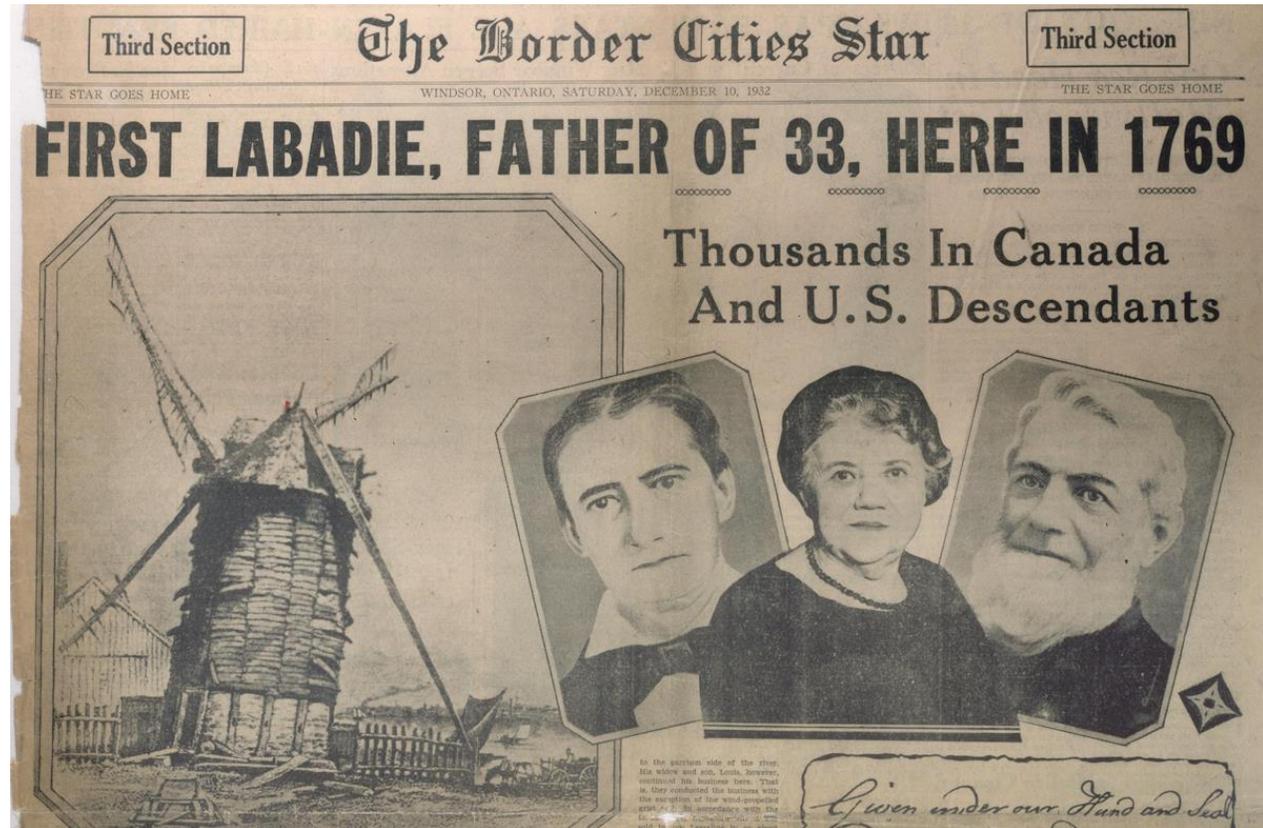


- The oldest claim I can find of 33 children is in a book published by the Essex Historical Society in 1913, *Papers and Addresses, Volume 1*.
- There is a section titled” *The Labadie Family In The County of Essex*, with the subtitle: *Notes read by A. Philippe E. Panet before the Essex Historical Society in the Windsor Public Library on March 16th, 1905*.
- On page 45 it says: “From the information contained in my notes, it appears that Antoine Louis Descompte dit Labadie raised a family of thirty-three children.” The author goes on to rave about how amazing this is but gives no sources for this information.
- In other parts of the article historical documents are quoted and sources cited, but not concerning the thirty-three children.

Front Page News

Fake News

- On December 10, 1932, the Border Cities Star published a third section front-page article.
- The article plagiarized the book but never named it as a source.
- You can find many copies of this on Ancestry, cited as a source.



American French Genealogical Society

- In 1985 Volume VIII, No. 2 of the Society's publication *Le Me Souviens* (meaning Remember Me) contains an article on Antoine Louis Descomps dit Labadie claiming thirty-three children.
- This article quotes heavily from the *Border Cities Star* article but gives no other sources.



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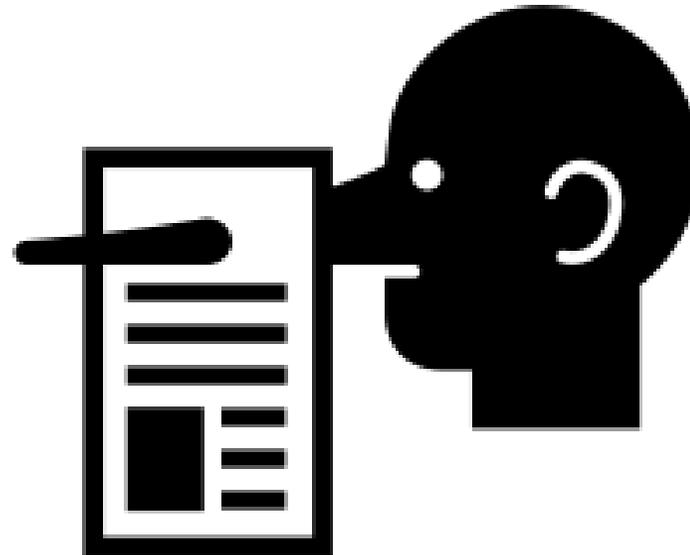
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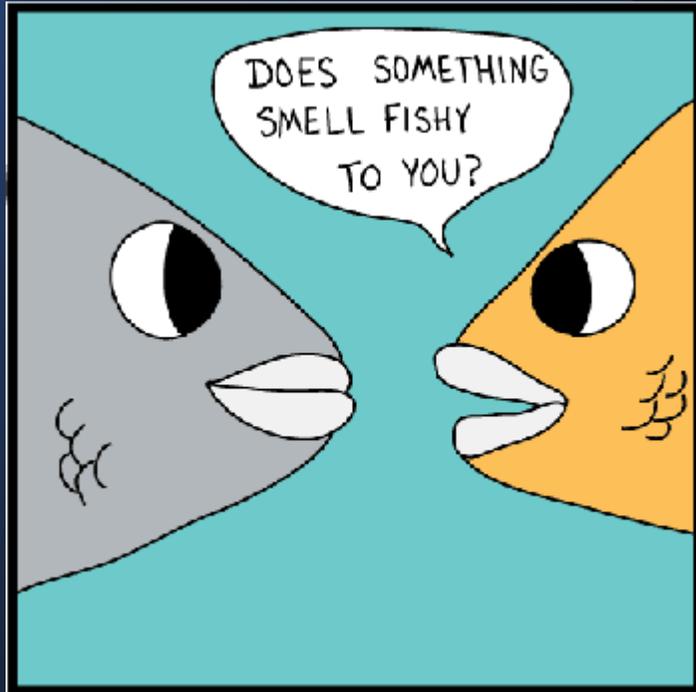


We Have Proof

- A Book from a Historical Society
- A Newspaper Article
- The American French Genealogical Society
- Must be True!



Something Smells Fishy

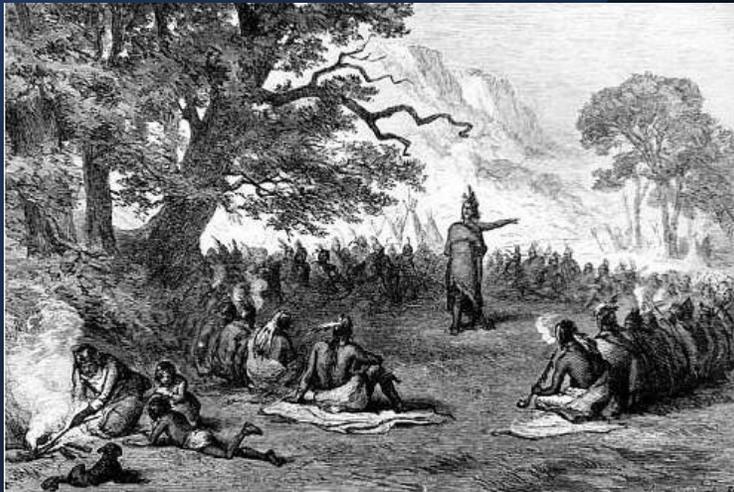
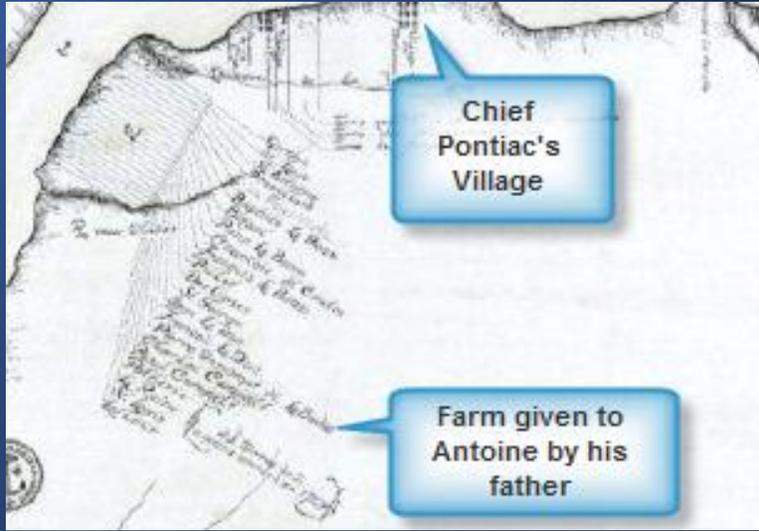


- Marie and Antoine's oldest child was born in 1769 (we have the baptismal record), but Antoine didn't acquire Mannon until October 10, 1775 (we have the receipt). Marie's fourth child (Pierre) was born that year. How can Marie and Mannon be the same person?
- We have baptismal records for eight children of Antoine and Marie, the last one dated December 31, 1783. Marie died in February of 1784. How could she have given birth to seventeen children?
- Antoine was thirty years old when his first child was born. He was thirty-nine when Marie's first child (Antoine's sixth) was born. He was fifty-four when he married his third wife, Charlotte Barthe, with whom he had ten children. That doesn't add up to thirty-three.

The Original handwritten Records of the Catholic Church Hold the Key



- Antoine was married three times.
- His first wife was Angelique Campeau
- They had five children:
 - Marie Angelia baptized February 14, 1760
 - Catherine baptized October 20, 1761
 - Jean Baptiste baptized February 7, 1763
 - Jacques Phillipe baptized September 22, 1765
 - Elizabeth baptized November 24, 1767
- Elizabeth died shortly after being baptized
- Angelique died December 10, 1767, 16 days after giving birth to Elizabeth



- His second wife, a native, was probably Pontiac's daughter. We have proof that Antoine had a close relationship with Pontiac, who named him Badichon. We have DNA proof that Antoine was married to a Native American.
- They were married by a native Chief, probably Pontiac, in 1768.
- We don't know her native name, but Antoine had her baptized as Marie in the Catholic Church in July of 1683.
- Antoine and Marie had eight children.
 - Joseph born April 1769
 - Antoine born April 1771
 - Angélique born June 23, 1773
 - Pierre born 1775
 - Teresa born 1777
 - Cecilia born 1780
 - Marie born October 25, 1782
 - Charlotte born December 31, 1783, buried March 26, 1784.
- Antoine obtained a female native slave (Mannon) and her husband on October 10, 1775, to help Marie.
- After Marie died, Mannon raised Marie's children.

Three Wives Twenty-three Children



- Antoine married Charlotte Barthe on October 17, 1784
- They had ten children:
 - Cecilia born January 16, 1786, buried January 18, 1838
 - Antoine born August 5, 1787, buried August 6, 1787 (infant death)
 - Louis born September 17, 1788, died 1863
 - Euphrasie born January 7, 1791, buried July 24, 1827
 - Elenore born September 26, 1792, buried July 15, 1853
 - Felicity born July 4, 1794, buried November 9, 1847
 - Elizabeth born August 1, 1796, buried February 4, 1850
 - Margarete born February 25, 1798, March 28, 1851
 - Pierre born August 21, 1800, died 1800 (infant death)
 - Nicolas born December 5, 1802, died March 13, 1867
- That adds up to 23 (5+8+10)

How Does This Happen?



- Researcher #1: “I can’t find any evidence concerning this, but my best guess is”
- Researcher #2: “It has been hypothesized that” (reference researcher #1)
- Researcher #3: “Many Genealogists report that” (no reference given)
- Researcher #4: “It has been shown that” (no reference given)
- Researcher #5: “It has been proven that” (reference researcher #3 and #4)
- At each telling the story gets embellished (just a little)

WHY?

- Lack of real information
- Lack of understanding about sources
- Desire to tell an interesting story

Beware of Tall Tales and Fake News in Family History



- False information prevails on the Internet.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- If it smells bad, don't swallow it.
- Oral family legends and tall tales grow with every telling.
- Beware of any author who doesn't provide sources.
- Check for original records to back up claims.
- Detecting and correcting fake stories is one of the great challenges and most rewarding adventures in family history.

I had some
incredible
ancestors
(and so do you!)

I have “met” many of my ancestors and am amazed at the challenges they overcame, their contributions to community and family and the marks they left on history.

I would like to tell you about just a few of them:

- Richard and Elizabeth Warren
- Richard and Elizabeth Church
- Philip and Sarah Sherman
- John and Anna Griffin



Richard and Elizabeth Warren



- In 1608, the Pilgrims escaped from King James's England to Leyland Holland.
- In 1617 they became fearful that the Spanish King might invade Holland and force them to become Catholics.
- After many delays, the Speedwell sailed from Leyden, Holland on July 31, 1620, with the pilgrims on board.

Richard and Elizabeth Warren



- They rendezvoused with the Mayflower in South Hampton, England, where they were joined by additional people, including Richard Warren, and probably his wife and daughters.
- On August 21, 1620, the two ships set sail for the new world.

Problems at Sea

- About 300 miles into the trip the Speedwell was leaking badly, so both ships returned to England where the combined cargo and passengers onto the Mayflower.
- Not everyone could fit so a number of family members were sent back.
- Richard Warren stayed on the Mayflower, but his wife and children were not with him. There is a strong possibility that they were among those required to stay in England.
- The writings of William Bradford include this entry: *“The names of those which came over first, in the year 1620, and were by the blessing of God the first beginners and in a sort the foundation of all the Plantations and Colonies in New England; and their families ... Mr. Richard Warren, but his wife and children were left behind and came afterward.”*



Arrival in a strange world



- They expected to settle in Virginia Colony but arrived at Cape Cod instead.
- In school, I was taught they missed by a great distance, but the truth is slightly different.
- Virginia Colony extended to just south of NYC at that time and their charter was for northern Virginia. If you look at a map, that is a near miss. They attempted to sail south, but winter weather was at hand and they had to turn back toward Cape Cod.
- Many of the Passengers were discontent that they were in the wrong place.
- The leaders produced the Mayflower compact where every signer swore to combine into a “Civil Body Politic” for the well-being of all.
- Richard Warren was the twelfth signer of the Mayflower Compact.

First Landing, First Contact

- On December 6th, 1620, the first exploratory party went ashore. It was led by Miles Standish and included William Bradford and eight other men. Among them was Richard Warren, my ancestor.
- They built a barricade out of logs for shelter and to protect them from the wind and potential threats.
- The morning after the second night they were attacked by natives but were able to fight them off as the English had muskets and the natives only had bows and arrows.
- There is a detailed account of this landing and encounter in the writings of William Bradford.
- It is fascinating to read this knowing one of your ancestors was there.



Plymouth and the First Winter



- The pilgrims landed at Plymouth in late December 1620.
- The hard frozen ground was covered with snow and ice.
- About half of the 102 that sailed from England had died by the time Spring arrived.
- Richard Warren survived this horrible winter.
- It was very fortunate that Elizabeth and their five daughters stayed in England.
- Elizabeth and the girls arrived in Plymouth on the Ann in 1623. By that time Plymouth Colony was well established.

Life and Death in Plymouth

- Richard and Elizabeth had two sons in Plymouth, Nathaniel, born in 1624, and Joseph born in 1627.
- Richard died unexpectedly in 1628, leaving seven children, the oldest eighteen years old and the youngest about one year old.
- The Colonial record states: *“This year died Mr. Richard Warren, who hath been mentioned before in this book, and was a useful instrument, and during his life bore a deep share in the difficulties and troubles of the first settlement of the plantation of New Plymouth.”*



Elizabeth Warren my Amazing Ancestor

- In Colonial America, as in all of Europe at the time, women had few or no rights.
- When a man died, unless he provided for his widow in his will, the wife was left with nothing.
- She often would lose custody of her children, and the estate would be divided among the children's guardians appointed by the court.
- Widows often quickly remarried to any available man who would have them in order to survive and protect their families.
- Elizabeth Warren was an exception to this rule.



Elizabeth Takes Charge

- After Richard's death, Elizabeth took charge of her family and their estate.
- Here is the entry from the Plymouth Colonial Records dated March 7, 1636/7: *“it is agreed upon, by the consent of the whole court, that Elizabeth Warren, widow, the relict of Mr. Richard Warren, deceased, shall be entered, and stand, and be purchaser instead of her said husband, as well because that (he dying before he had performed the said bargain) the said Elizabeth performed the same after his decease, as also for the establishment of the lots of lands given formerly by her unto her sons-in-law Richard Church, Robert Bartlett, and Thomas Little, in marriage with their wives, her daughters.”*
- In other words, she was given full standing within Plymouth as a head of household and a member of the community.

Records of the
Colony of New Plymouth
in New England

Court Orders



Volume IV: 1661-1668

Edited by
Nathaniel B. Shurtleff

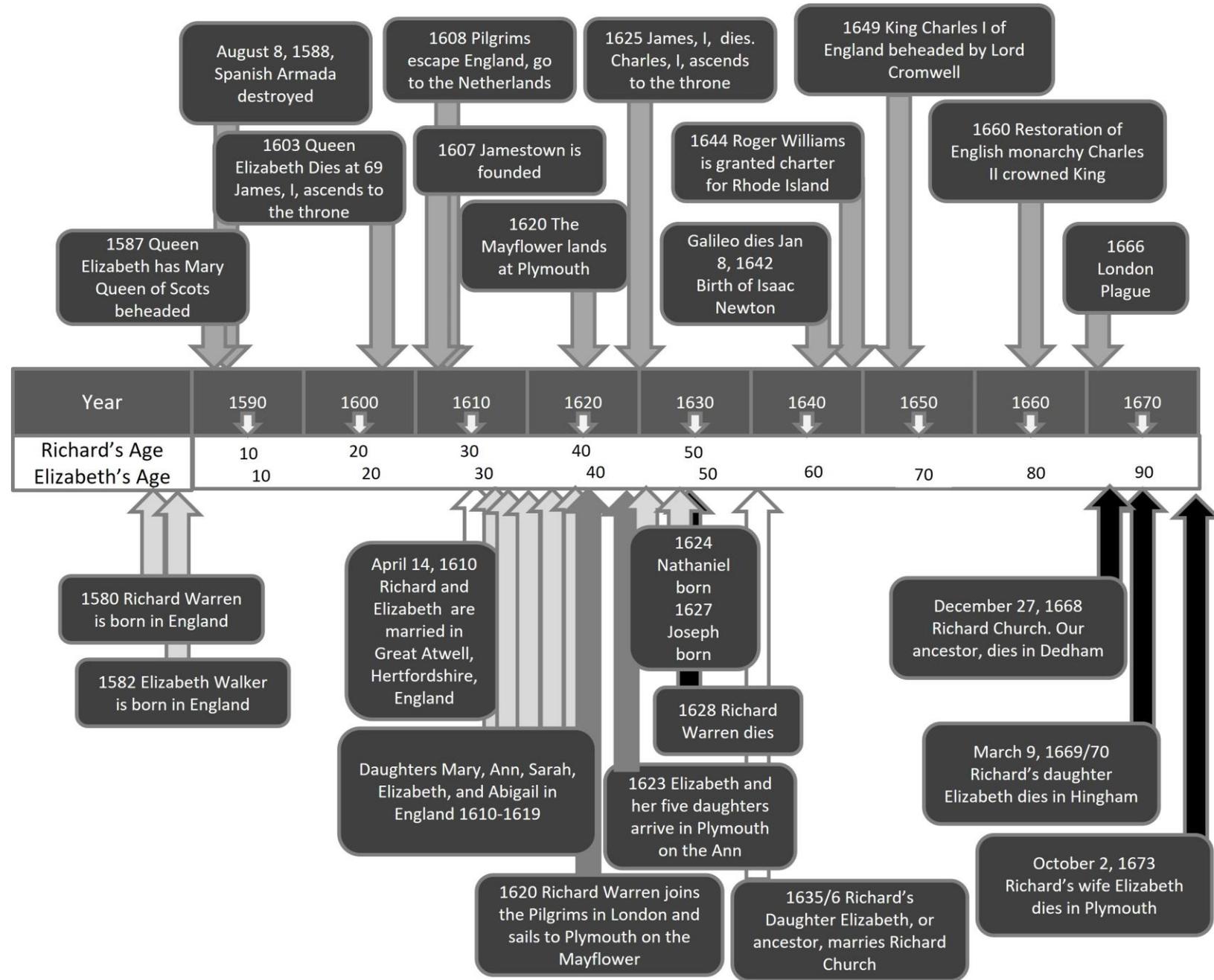
A Ripe Old Age

*“A shocke of
corn fully ripe”*

- Elizabeth appears many times in the Plymouth Colonial records.
- She lived to be over 90 years old.
- Her death is recorded in the colonial record as:
“Mistris Elizabeth Warren, an aged widow, aged above 90 years, deceased on the second of October 1673, who, having lived a godly life, came to her grave as a shocke of corn fully ripe. She was honorably buried on the 24th of October aforesaid.”
- She outlived both her daughter Elizabeth, who died March 9, 1669/70, and her son-in-law, Richard Church, who died December 27, 1668.
(my ancestors)



The Times of the Lives of Richard and Elizabeth Warren

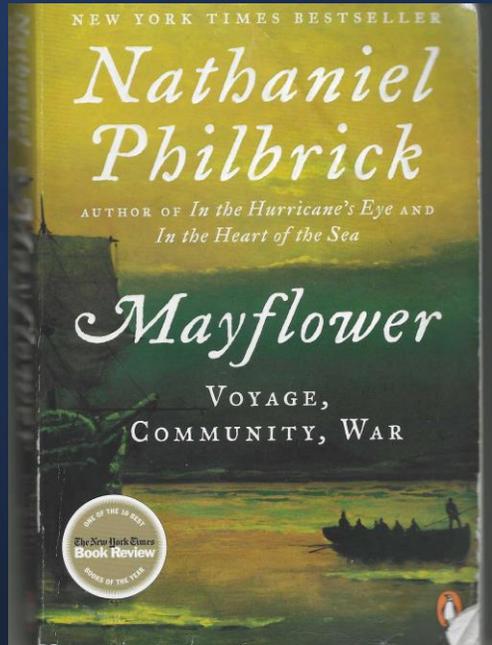


Lessons Learned



- Our colonial ancestors were amazing people who overcame incredible hardships.
- I have only scratched the surface in this brief summary. All the records from Plymouth Colony, and many from the other colonies, are available online.
- I have elaborated on the lives of Richard and Elizabeth Warren in much more detail in my book.
- Colonial history as told by the original records left by those who lived through it is much different than what we were taught in school.
- Revisionist history as often promoted today is even further from the truth.
- It takes some digging but learning what really happened during the times in which our ancestors lived enriches the story of their lives.

More Information on the Mayflower Plymouth Colony



- <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcdigitalrecords/pcolony.htm> - Official archives of the Records of New Plymouth 1620-1691, Secretary of State of Massachusetts.
- William Bradford, *History of Plimoth Plantation, 1651* – The personal account from the first governor of Plymouth with events recorded as they happened.
- Edward Winslow, *The Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth*, Creative Media Partners, LLC, 2018 reproduction.
- Nathaniel Philbrick, *Mayflower*, Penguin Books, 2007 - Great book with a lot of detail and hundreds of references to records.
- MayflowerHistory.com – Contains many records from Plymouth.

Richard and Elizabeth Church

- Richard Church was born in England, probably in 1608. We have no record of his birth and don't know who his parents were.
- Richard came to the new world on the Winthrop Fleet.
- He appears on the 1630 list of applicants to become Freemen in Massachusetts but not on those accepted as Freemen in 1631.
- Instead, he is on the list of Freemen in Plymouth Colony dated October 4, 1632.
- How he came to Plymouth from Boston is somewhat of a mystery.



Richard and Elizabeth Church



- In February of 1631/32, he was in Plymouth as Governor Bradford refers to him in a letter to the Governor and Assistants of Massachusetts Bay Colony.
- *“Richard Church came likewise as a sojourner to work for the present; though he is still here resident longer than he purposed; and what he will do, neither we nor I think he himself knows. But if he resolve here to settle we shall require of him to procure a dismissal, but he did affirm to us that he was one of Mr. Webb’s men, and freed to go for England or whither he would, the which we the rather believed because he came to us from Wessagusset upon the falling out with his partner.”*

Richard and Elizabeth Church



- The first entry mentioning Richard Church in the Plymouth Court Records is dated January 2, 1632/33. It stated his acceptance as a Freeman of the Colony and that he took the oath.
- *“At the same Court, Richard Church was admitted into the freedom of this society and received the oath.”*
- The year in the records is the year of the King. This notation translates to 1632/33. In Plymouth, they used the old calendar where the new year occurred near the end of March. It was the tenth month of 1632 on the old calendar. That converts to January of 1633 on ours.

Richard and the Sawyer



- Richard was a skilled carpenter and a millwright.
- Just as a blacksmith needs iron, a carpenter needs sawed lumber. Logs were readily attainable, but in the early 1600s, there were no lumber mills or power saws to make boards from the timber.
- On February 16, 1632/33, the Plymouth Court recorded an agreement between Richard Church and Will Baker, a sawyer. Richard hired Baker to work for him from March 1 through the end of September. Richard would provide the logs, the pitting, and the area in which to work. Richard also agreed to pay Will fourteen bushels of corn and twelve shillings. They agreed to divide the sawed wood equally between them.

Richard and the Apprentice

- On July 23, 1633, Richard Church took Will Mendloue as an apprentice for seven years. In the Court record, Richard committed to teaching Will the carpentry trade, and upon successful completion of his apprenticeship, he provided him with two sets of apparel.
- Will Mendloue previously served as an apprentice to Will Palmer but had been whipped for having sex with the maid and run away. Richard agreed to pay Will Palmer three pounds sterling for the time he had invested in Will Mendloue's training.
- Indentured servitude was a way of life in Colonial times. This was not slavery, although slavery existed. It served both the apprentice and the master.



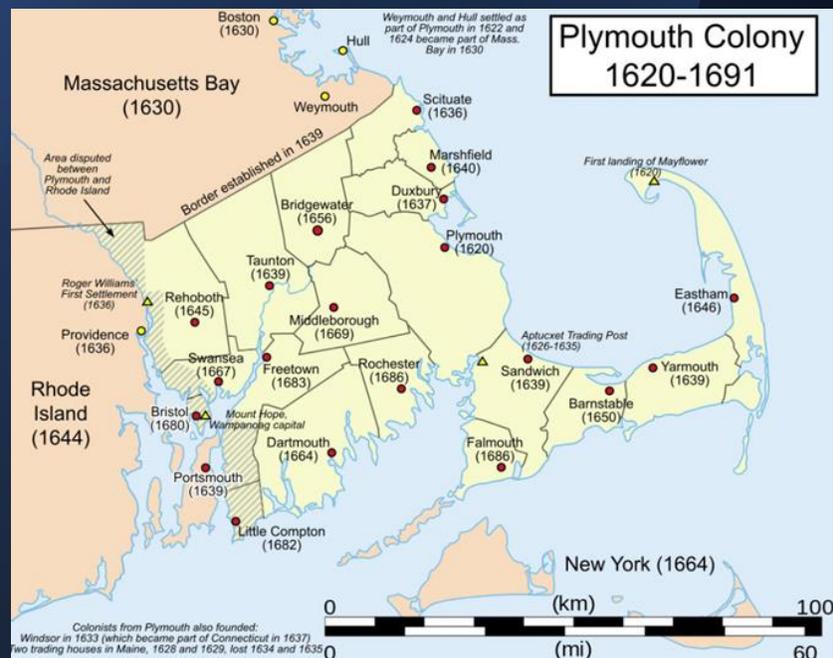
Richard Church and Elizabeth Warren



- Sometime before 1636, Richard Church married Elizabeth Warren, daughter of Richard and Elizabeth Warren.
- There are no records of this nor of most of their children's births, a common situation for those who lived in early Plymouth Colony.
- Richard Warren died when Elizabeth was only twelve, and her mother raised her.
- She was about twenty, and Richard Church was about twenty-eight when they wed.
- Richard and Elizabeth had ten children.
- Two of them, Joseph and Caleb, are my ancestors

Large Footprints

- Richard Church left large footprints on the history of Plymouth Colony.
- He was an active citizen who served on juries, including seven times on Grand Juries
- He volunteered for service in the Pequot War
- He was granted, bought, sold, and traded numerous properties.
- He was a self-made wealthy individual.
- He even held a share in the Taunton Ironworks (This is not the Chartley Ironworks mention earlier, which was not built until the 1690s.)
- The Plymouth Colony Court recognized Richard as one of the “ancients”, a title normally reserved for those that came on the Mayflower.



Richard Church Miller

- On January 4, 1652/3, Thomas Joy of Boston and his wife sold Richard and Elizabeth one-half ownership in a corn mill in Hingham for forty pounds sterling and leased the other half to him for twenty-one years, for ten pounds a year in corn.
- He moved his family to Hingham and became a miller as well as a millwright.
- On December 26, 1668, Richard was killed in an accident at a mill he and his son Caleb were building in Dedham.
- Caleb returned to Dedham after his father's funeral in Hingham and finished the mill.



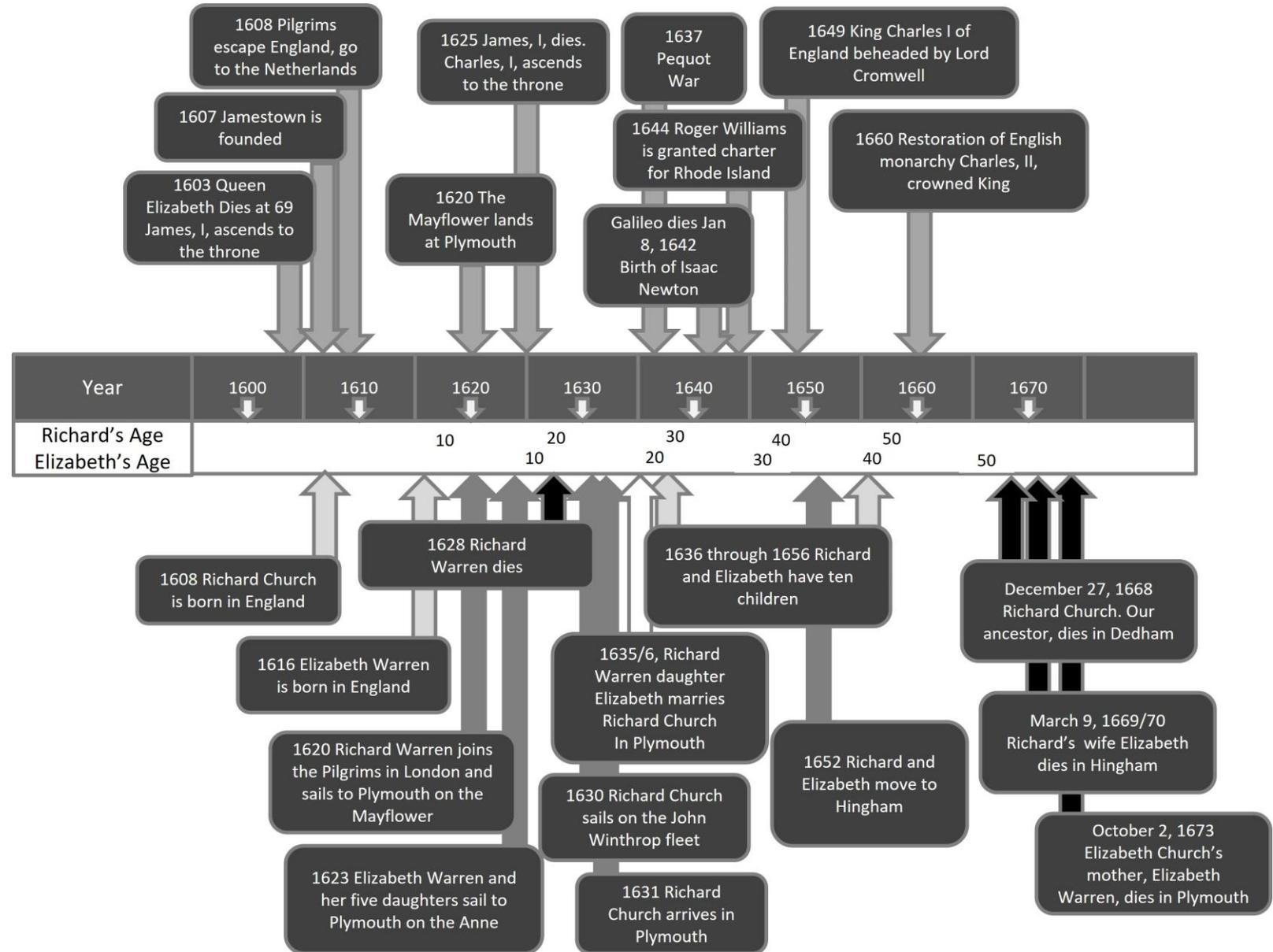
Legacy



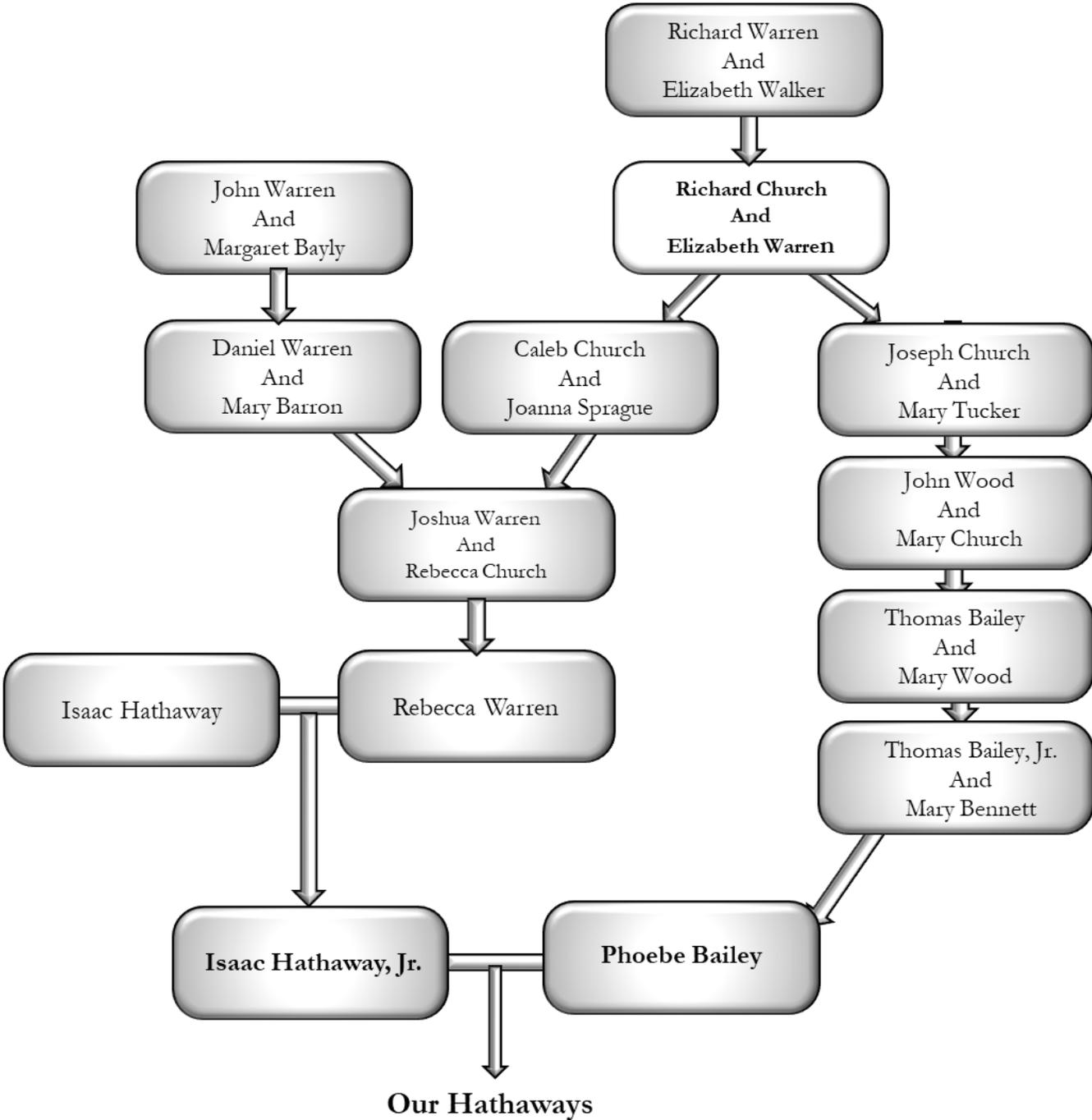
CAPTAIN BENJAMIN CHURCH

- Richard and Elizabeth left a strong legacy through their sons.
- Their oldest son, Joseph, became a judge and the founder of Little Compton, which is now in Rhode Island. He served as magistrate for many years and was referred to as “Joseph Church, Esquire.” Later, he became a member of the Governor of Massachusetts Bay Province’s Council and a Justice of the High Court.
- Their second son, Benjamin, served in the military and was the founder and commander of the Church’s Rangers, which was a force made up of half natives and half English that tracked down Metacomet (King Philip,) killed him, and captured his lieutenants, ending King Philip’s War.
- The third son, Caleb, became a famous millwright and builder. He moved to Watertown where he built and ran a Tavern and played a major role in local government.

The Times of the Lives of Richard and Elizabeth Church



My
Warren/Church
Ancestry



Philip and Sarah Sherman

- Philip Sherman was born in Dedham, Essex, England on February 5, 1609/10.
- His father died in 1615/16 and his mother died in 1617.
- Philip's older sister was eighteen when her mother died. She married Andrew Bacon in 1619 and raised the children. Bacon was one of the founders of Hartford, Connecticut.
- Philip immigrated to Roxbury in 1633. Records from the Church of Christ at Roxbury, Massachusetts state:

“Philip Sherman came into the land in 1633, a single man. The man was of melancholy temper. He lived honestly and comfortably among us for several years.”



Love and Marriage



- In 1633, Philip married Sarah Odding.
- Sarah had lost her father when she was young, and her mother had married John Porter, a man who would have great influence on Philip's life.
- Philip and Sarah had 13 children and 85 grandchildren.
- On May 14, 1634, Philip was made a Freeman, which gave him the right to participate in town meetings and own land.
- In 1635, Philip returned to England with the blessings of the church, to urge relatives to come to Massachusetts.
- He was successful in this mission. His Brother Samuel arrived sometime before 1637, perhaps returning with Philip, as did his oldest sister, Mary, and her husband, Andrew Bacon. Other Shermans came as well. Six first cousins named Sherman arrived in Roxbury between 1633 and 1637.

The Anne Hutchinson Affair



- The Puritans who founded Massachusetts Bay Colony, led by John Winthrop, did not come to establish religious freedom. They came to establish their own theocracy with their own state religion.
- Anne Hutchinson was a Puritan spiritual advisor, religious reformer, and an important participant in the Antinomian Controversy, which shook the infant Massachusetts Bay Colony from 1636 to 1638.
- Her strong religious convictions were at odds with the established Puritan clergy in the Boston area. Her popularity and charisma helped create a theological schism that threatened to destroy the Puritans' religious community in New England. She was eventually tried and convicted, then in 1637 banished from the Colony with many of her supporters.

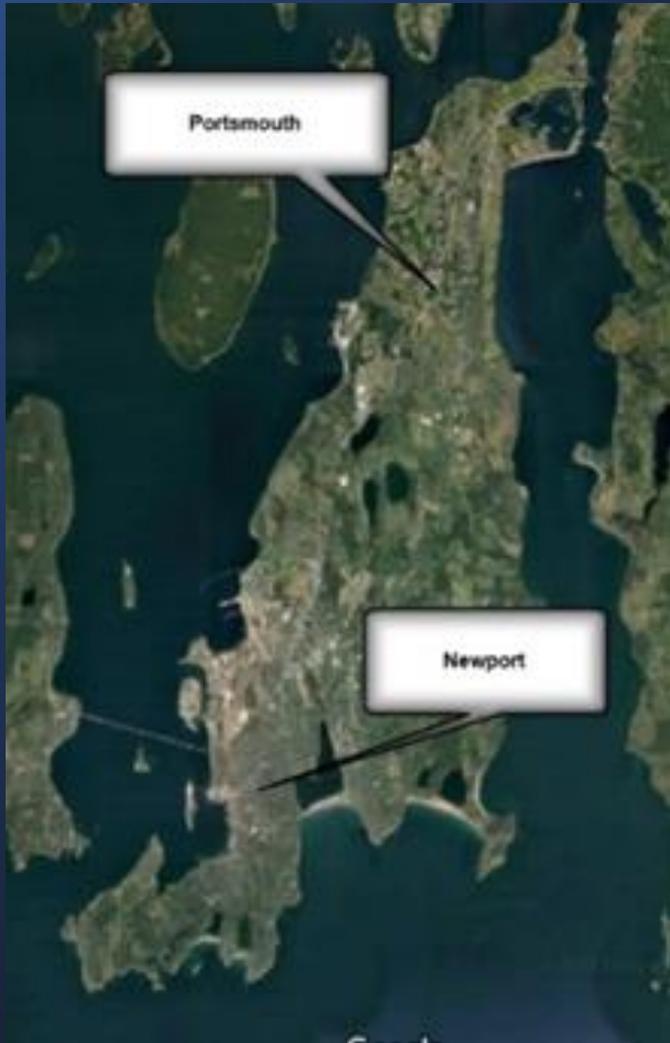
Banishment



Roger Williams

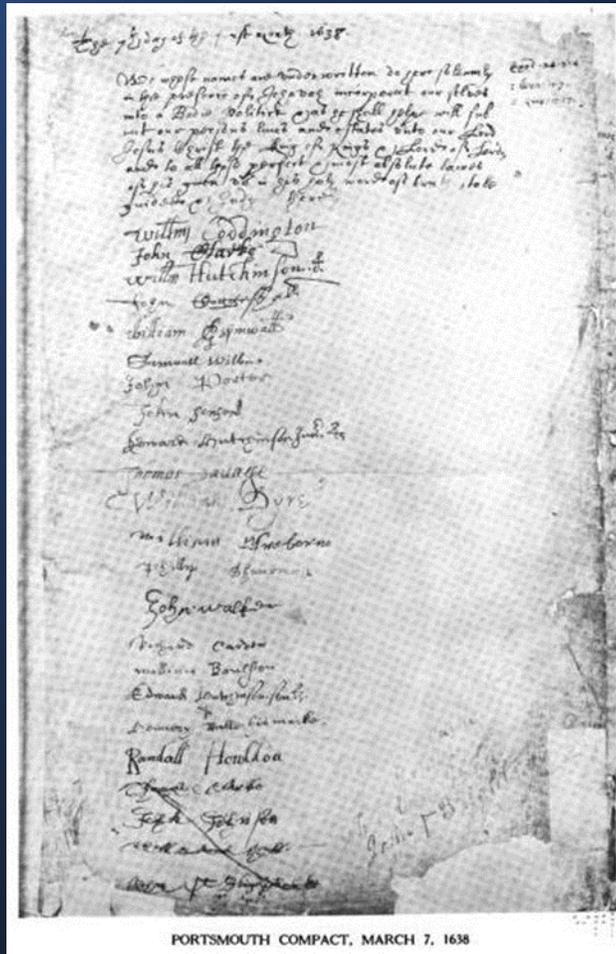
- Among those who supported her were John Porter, Sarah's mother, and Philip and Sarah Sherman.
- They fled to what is now Rhode Island, and sought the advice of Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island, who had been earlier banished from Massachusetts Bay because of his religious teachings.
- In 1636 Williams and twelve of his "loving friends" moved to Narragansett Bay, where they purchased land from Canonicus and Miantonomi, the Chiefs of the Narragansett tribe. There they established a settlement, which they named Providence.
- Williams believed in a strict separation of Church and State and Providence was the first settlement to be ruled by a representative democracy.

Portsmouth



- In late 1637, Roger Williams advised Anne Hutchinson's group to purchase the island of Aquidneck from the Narragansetts and helped them make the purchase.
- There they established the settlement of Portsmouth.
- In spring 1638, some of those settlers split away and founded the nearby settlement of Newport.

The Portsmouth Compact



- In 1638, the founders of Portsmouth signed the Portsmouth Compact. The text reads:
 - The Seventh Day of the First Month 1638. We whose names are underwritten do hereby solemnly in the presence of Jehovah incorporate ourselves into A Body Politick and as He shall help, will submit our persons, lives, and estates unto our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and to all those perfect and most absolute laws of His given in His holy word of truth, to be guided and judged thereby.
 - Philip is one of eighteen signers of the compact.

Purchasing Aquidneck

- On March 24, 1638, the Narragansett Native Chiefs signed a deed selling the island to the settlers in trade for forty fathoms (240 feet) of white beads.
- A later agreement provided ten goats and twenty hoes for the Natives to remove themselves from the island before the following winter.
- However, it took additional payments of wampum, beads, coats, and other items to satisfy all the individual Natives.



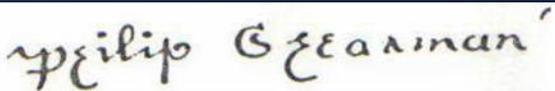
Philip and Sarah's House

- Initially, each family in Portsmouth was allotted six acres for a home lot and more for farms.
- Philip was allotted a house lot and 200 acres.
- Philip Sherman's house, which is still standing and in excellent repair in Portsmouth, was built on Philip's property in 1670.
- Reportedly, the house was moved in the early 1800s to be closer to the water.



An Exceptional Individual

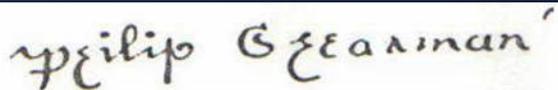
- On May 13, 1638, Philip took part in the first town meeting in Portsmouth, Rhode Island.
- On July 1, 1639, the colonists established an official government in the new Colony, which later became the State of Rhode Island. William Coddington was chosen as the first Governor and Philip Sherman as the first Secretary.
- In 1640 Philip Sherman was selected to serve on a committee of five Portsmouth landowners to layout property boundaries within the town.
- From 1644 until 1657, Philip served as the Town Clerk of Portsmouth, responsible for keeping all town records. These records are still on file in the City of Portsmouth and show Philip to have excellent handwriting and grammar skills. Between 1648 and 1652, while still serving as Town Clerk, he also maintained all the Colony records of Rhode Island.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Philip Sherman".

Signature of Philip Sherman

An Exceptional Individual

- Philip lived the rest of his life in Portsmouth and served in many roles in the town government, including Surveyor of Cattle (twice), Member of the Town Council (seven times), Tax Assessor (thirteen times), and Town Auditor (three times).
- In 1656 he became the Magistrate for the Town of Portsmouth and is now often referred to as “The Honorable Philip Sherman.”
- From 1656-1667 Philip served as Deputy to the General Court (Assembly) of the Colony of Rhode Island.
- In 1660 he was a Grand Juror at the Rhode Island Colony’s General Court.



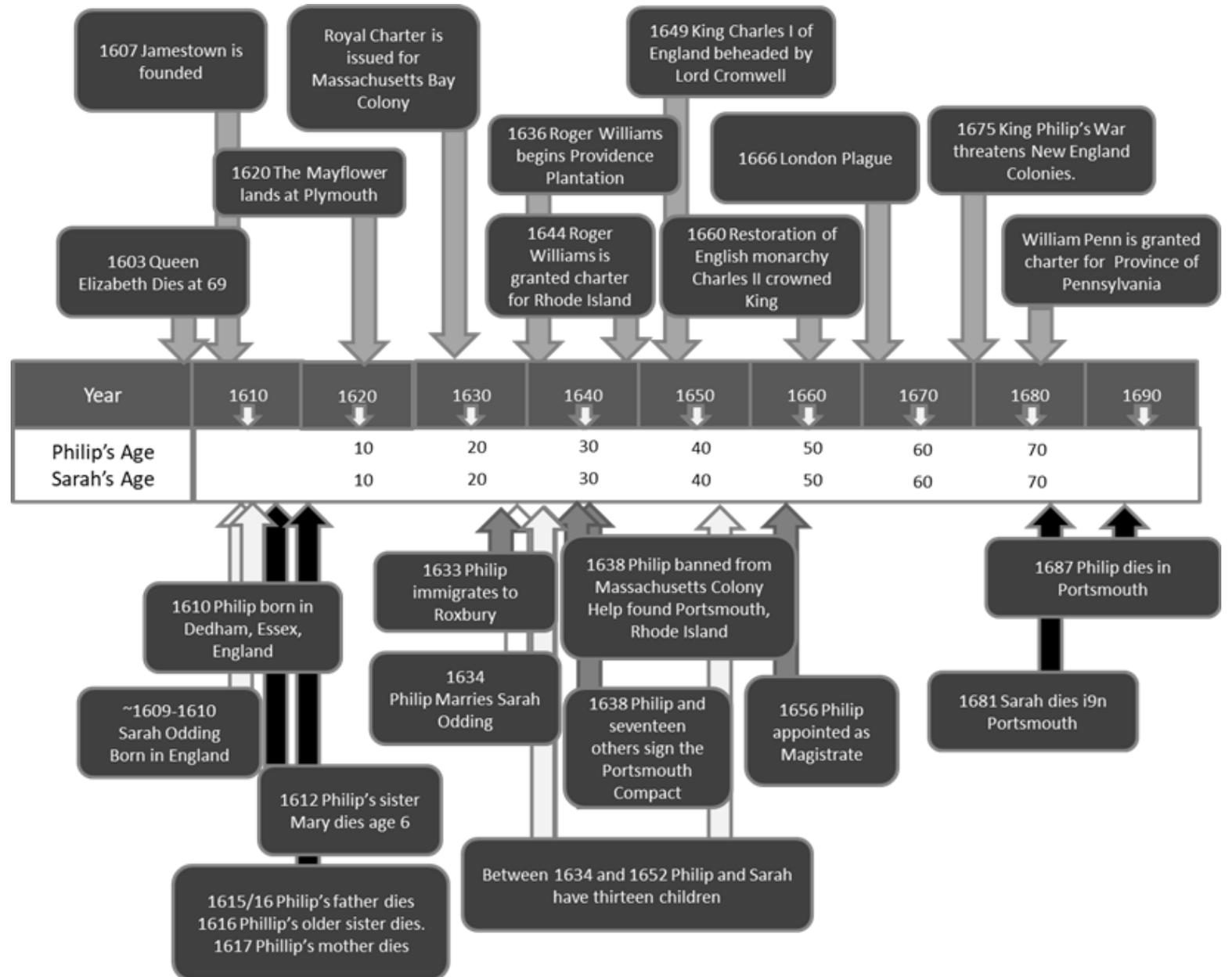
Signature of Philip Sherman

A Giant in Colonial History

- Philip Sherman lived to the age of seventy-seven, remaining active in town and colony affairs most of his life.
- Philip's wife Sarah died on February 5, 1681, at the age of seventy-two.
- Philip lived another six years. He died on March 22, 1687.
- Philip left a sizable estate to his children and a giant footprint on colonial history.
- Philip and Sarah are two of my 7th great grandparents.



The Times of the Lives of Philip and Sarah Sherman



Connecticut Colony had a Cash Problem



- Connecticut Colony, led by Windsor, Hartford, and Weathersfield, was founded in the mid 1630s.
- Most of the settlers were farmers who came for the rich Connecticut River valley soil.
- They purchased their land from the natives and successfully established their farms and built their communities.
- The problem was trade. They traded among themselves and with the natives. But they had nothing to export, and without exports they couldn't generate cash.
- Without cash they couldn't import manufactured goods from England that they couldn't make themselves.

John and Anna Griffin

- Then, in the early 1640s, John Griffin came to town and started a pine tar business.
- Pine tar was much in demand by the British Navy and shipping industry to seal the hulls of ships. Colonists used Pine tar during shipbuilding, and no vessel sailed across the Atlantic without at least one barrel of pine tar on board to fix any leaks.
- Pine tar was made from Pitch Pines, which were plentiful in the Connecticut valley at that time.
- Pitch pine was once abundant in the Connecticut River Valley but is now largely gone. Part of this is due to colonial harvesting, but the loss of these forests came mostly from fire prevention efforts. The pine trees burn readily and require fire to pop their pinecones and spread their seeds. Without large fires, the trees can't reproduce.

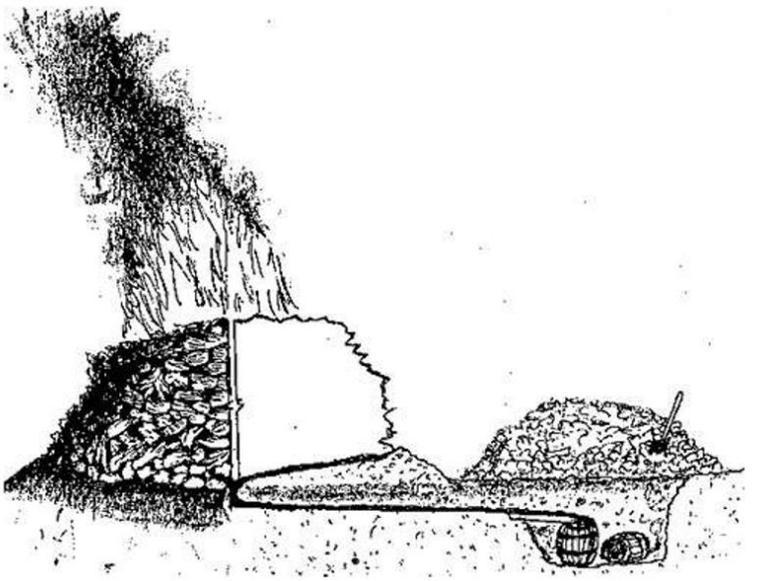


John and Lord Baltimore



- John is believed to have been born in Wales about 1608/09. There is no hard proof of this and it has been questioned in the pages of the American Genealogist for the lack of original records.
- He came to Virginia on the Constance in 1635, and the ship's list shows a John Griffin age as twenty-six.
- Lord Baltimore was the ruler of Maryland which he founded as a refuge for Roman Catholics.
- In 1638 John escaped an attack on the Virginia Islands of Kent and Palmer by Lord Baltimore and fled to Connecticut.
- We can't confirm his whereabouts between then and 1643 when he first appears in the Windsor Connecticut records, but by 1643 he had a well-established business in Windsor.

Making Pine Tar from Pitch Pine (Candlewood)



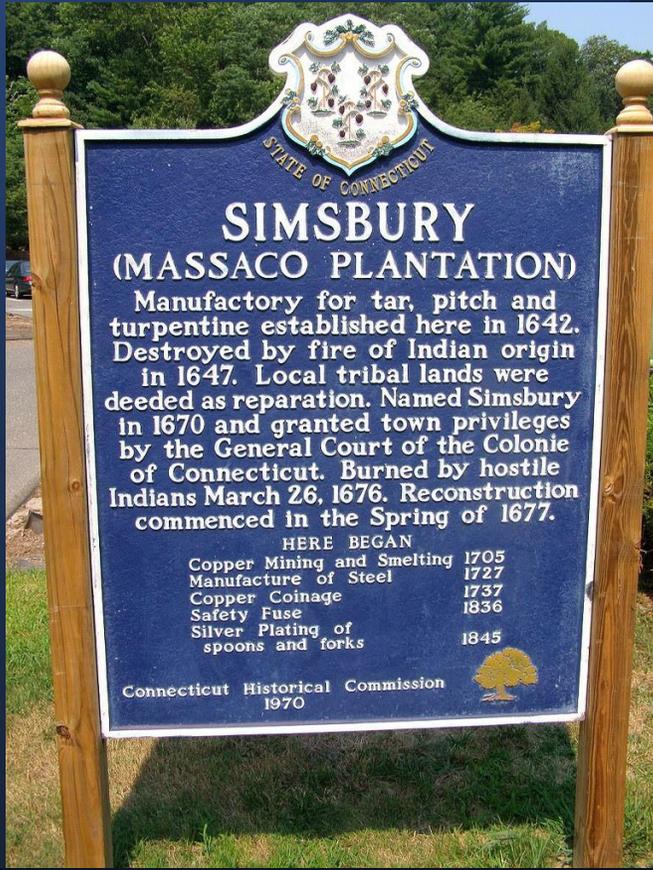
- John and his partner harvested trees, processed them in a kiln similar to the one shown in the diagram on the left, and sold pine tar, pine pitch, turpentine, and candlewood.
- They stacked the logs, burned them, and covered the burning mound with earth, so they would smolder slowly, similar to how you make charcoal.
- The liquid sap drained from the bottom and was channeled to a barrel to collect it. This is pine tar. To make turpentine, the tar is distilled into turpentine, leaving pine pitch as the residue from the distillation.
- The Connecticut Colony Court recognized John Griffin in 1663 as the first person to manufacture pine tar, which led to the creation of a whole industry in the latter half of the 1600s.
- John's business brought English currency into the Connecticut Colony.

Burned Out



- Sometime in late 1645 or early 1646, an old native named Manahannoose set fire to John Griffin's tar works, including a large amount of processed tar, destroying the property.
- John Griffin petitioned the Commission of the United Colonies, charging Manahannoose with "willfully and maliciously setting fire to a quantity of his pitch and tar, bedding, and a cart loaded with candlewood, tools, and other articles."
- The Commission was set up following the Pequot War, especially to handle disputes between the colonists and the natives. It had jurisdiction across the New England Colonies as tribes in one colony might well conflict with nearby colonial towns in another.
- John claimed he could prove it was Manahannoose, a Warranoke, and claimed damages of one hundred pounds.

Land in payment of debt



- The court found on behalf of John Griffin and ordered Manahannoose to pay 500 fathoms of wampum, an enormous amount of money to any native.
- Manahannoose didn't have anything close to that much wampum, so the court ordered him into John Griffin's hands to serve as an enslaved person or be sold.
- The native supporters of Manahannoose didn't have the wampum that the court demanded to repay John Griffin for the damages done. Hence, they agreed to turn over the land that became Simsbury, which they called Massaco, to John, in trade for Manahannoose's freedom.
- The deed was presented to John Griffin by Manahannoose.

Contested in Court



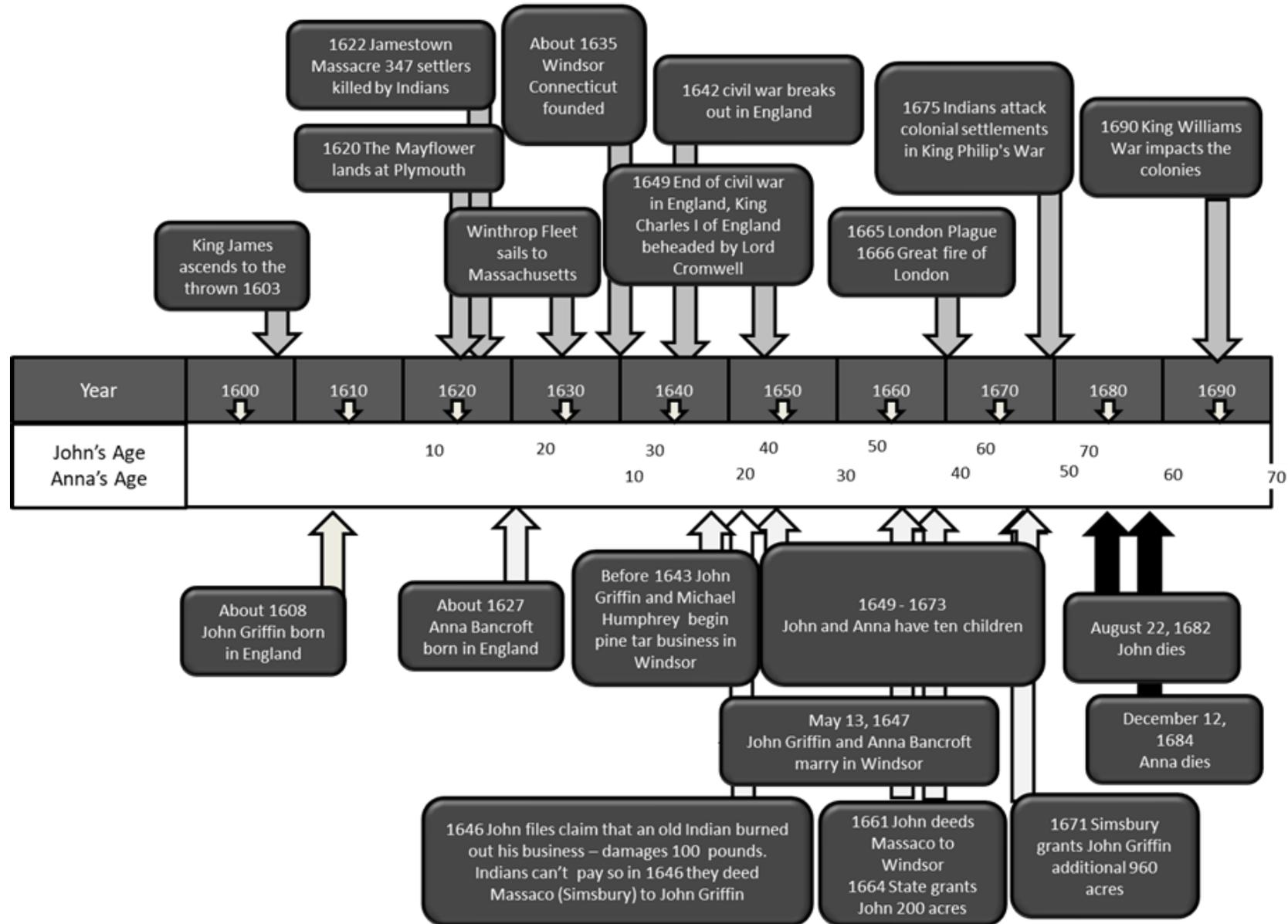
- John held title to this vast land grant for thirteen years; however, there was a problem in that Connecticut Colony law forbade individual settlers from obtaining land directly from the natives.
- In early 1661, almost thirteen years after the original agreement deeding Massaco to John Griffin, the transaction came before the court. On March 14, 1661, John Griffin testified before the court that the land had been deeded to him by the natives and produced documents and witnesses to prove his case.
- There was, however, still a problem. Connecticut Colony law forbade colonists from obtaining lands directly from the natives. The law's authors had not foreseen or allowed for land to be transferred to settle a legal debt due to a settlement imposed by the court. The deed was still in violation of this law.

Settlement

- On December 23, 1661, John signed a deed giving all of Massaco to the town of Windsor.
- The deed does not mention any compensation, but in 1663 John received a grant of 200 acres in Simsbury in recognition of his pioneering pine tar production.
- John became the first settler and a leading citizen of Simsbury.
- The town provided John Griffin with an additional land grant in 1672 of about one and a half square miles, equivalent to 960 acres. Together this was known as Griffin's Lordship.
- There is much more to John and Anna's story. They left a huge footprint on Colonial Connecticut.
- John and Anna are two of my 7th great-grandparents.



The Times of the Life of John Griffin and Anna Griffin



#1

We all have some Amazing Ancestors



- To find them, you need more than names and dates.
- Look for them in church and government records.
- Look for them in business records of the town.
- Study the history of the place they lived.
- Study the history of the world in which they lived.
- It is like a giant jigsaw puzzle that is never completely solved, but each piece you find brings you closer to knowing them.
- And they are worth knowing...

#3 Truth Matters

- Seek truth (quality, not quantity)
- A false entry in your tree can lead to a whole section of the tree that is not your ancestors.
- If it smells bad, don't swallow it.
- Be skeptical, never trust OPTs.
- Look for original records and reliable sources to verify everything.
- Always state your sources to help those that read your work.
- Proving a widely reported assumption false and finding the truth can be a very rewarding experience.



#5 Persistence Matters



- Finding your ancestor and learning about them can be difficult.
- If you get stuck, don't bang your head against a brick wall
- That hurts!
- Record your issue and what you know, then move to other ancestors, preferably related ones.
- Keep a to-do list of hard problems.
- When you feel inspired, or have a new approach to try, go back and work on the problem.
- Learn how to do cluster research.
- Some mysteries may never be solved, but many will over time.
- Additional records are being digitized and indexed all the time.
- Don't let your brick walls discourage you from making progress with other ancestors.

#6

The Story Matters



- Telling the family story is the end game. It is how you leave a legacy to your family and how your work gets preserved for future generations.
- It can be as simple as a picture book about your parents, grandparents, or even about yourself.
- It can be a picture wall with family photos going back as many generations as you can.
- It can be a collection of family stories.
- It can be the story of your life or your memories of a family member.
- It can be biographies of those who came before you.
- It can be printed booklets or books.
- Anyone can do it, but most people think it is too hard. Take it a step at a time and it is a satisfying and rewarding way to travel on your journey in Family History.
- See “Twenty-Five Ways to Tell the Family Story,” on rtreeoflife.com.

Enjoy the Journey

- Genealogy is a fascinating hobby. It is like a huge puzzle which is never completely solved, but one bit of information leads to another, and it becomes especially exciting when you find information on one of your family lines that ties in with your current records and gives you information about those that came earlier.
- Don't let the lack of information about one ancestor stress you out when there are so many to explore.
- You can't get very far with a jigsaw puzzle by picking up a random piece and trying to fit it in somewhere.
- Staring at a hole and trying to find the piece that goes there is only slightly better, and if that piece is missing, you will never get anywhere.
- Solve what you can, and other pieces will start to fall into place.
- Our ancestors were amazing people, and they are worth knowing.
- Relax and enjoy the journey.



My Future Directions

- More stories to tell, more books to write
 - Volume Three – Children of the Revolution
 - Volume Four – Adirondack Pioneers
- Research each surname back to the immigrant ancestors
- Publish updates to rtreeoflife.com and booklets on each couple as I go.

Our **Alford**

Owen Hoskins Wilson
Higley Newton Bliss Holcomb
Drake Brown
Griffen Penny
Bancroft Wade Brewster Easton Hulins
Bidwell

Ancestors



Genealogy

Where Family and
History Come
Together

**I shook my
family tree
and a
bunch of
nuts fell out!**



That's All Folks!

JUST FOR JOKES AND FUN

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