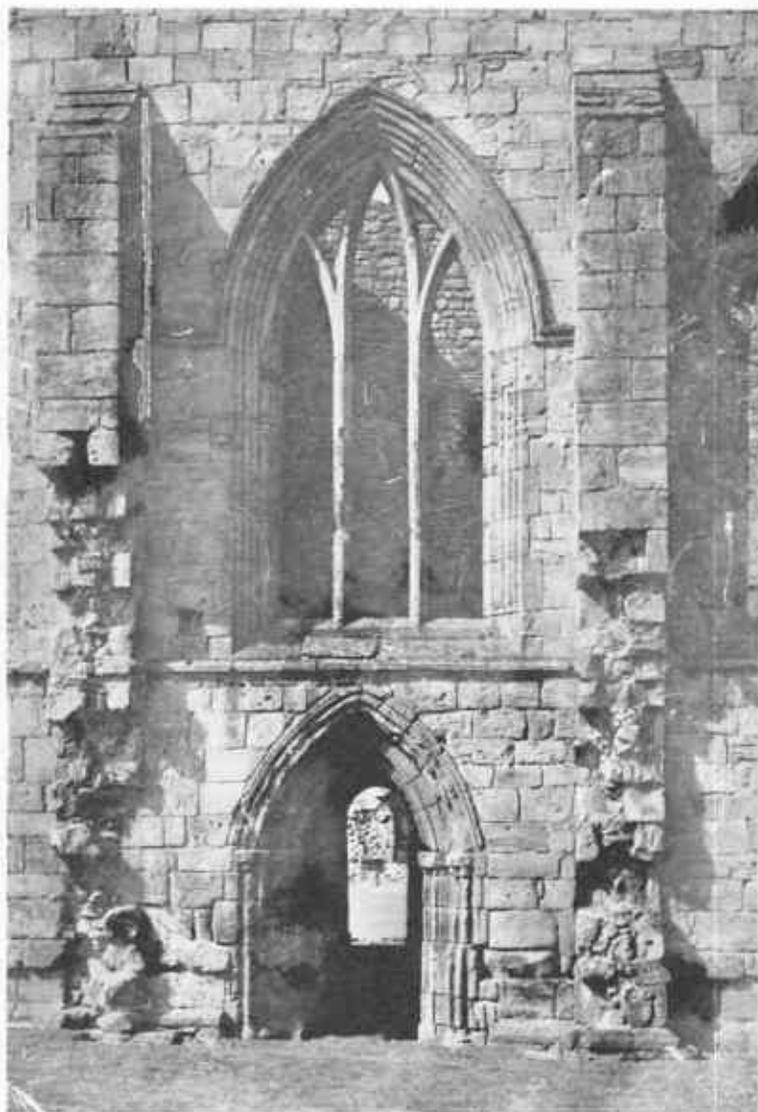


SOME DESCENDENTS OF
BYGOD EGGLESTON
OF YORKSHIRE, ENGLAND
AND WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT

BY GEORGE T. EGGLESTON

60000



*Ruins of historic Egglestone Abbey, Yorkshire, founded 1195 A.D.
(South door of Nave).*

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VIRGIN ISLANDS

HIS MAJESTY'S SLOOP-OF-WAR DIAMOND ROCK
(with Vivian Stuart)

ROOSEVELT, CHURCHILL, AND THE WORLD WAR II OPPOSITION

★ ★ ★

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★ ★ ★

AN EARLY INTEREST IN SURNAMES

I first encountered the name Bagot Egleston in 1924 when as a freshman at the University of California at Berkeley I was browsing in the University library. In a book titled *American Armory and Blue Book* I discovered under an alphabetical listing the following:

Egleston

Bagot Egleston, b. in England 1590, d. at Windsor, Connecticut 1674. Arms: Argent, a cross sable, in the first quarter, a fleur-de-lis of the second. Crest — talbot's head, erased sable. Motto, *In Cruce Salus*.* [The paragraph was illustrated with an engraving of the coat of arms.]

Because the surname of the long-dead gentleman resembled my own I was curious enough to go to the card index and discover several volumes of books titled *Genealogical and Family History of the State of Connecticut*. In volume IV of this series I found on page 1,888 a further reference:

Eggleston

Begat Eggleston, immigrant ancestor, was born in England about 1590 or earlier. His name is also spelled Bagget and Beget. He was called 'neare one hundred years old' at his death Sept. 1st, 1674. He came to Dorchester, Mass. in 1630 in the ship *Mary and John*, was admitted a freeman in 1631, and was one of the original members of Rev. Mr. Warham's church which came to Windsor, Conn. in 1635.

I dutifully recorded these two items in the back of a classroom notebook and thought no more about Bagot, Begat, Beget, Bagget for a couple of years. The subject might have been forgotten by me forever had it not been for an interesting coincidence. Just after graduation from U.C.,

*In the Cross Truth

when I was preparing to go to New York to look for a job, my father gave me the key to a wooden chest in the attic of our house. He said the chest contained some things of my grandfather's that might interest me. My grandfather Ambrose Theodore Eggleston had died when I was thirteen. He was a Civil War veteran and had been with Sherman's Army on the march from Atlanta to the sea. I remembered him as a handsome man, always immaculately groomed, soft spoken and not given to talking about himself.

The contents of the chest proved a revelation to me and I spent hours going through the things in utter fascination. Besides the blue army tunic and sword there were packets of carefully preserved letters and documents, as well as odd mementoes of the war. A fragment of Confederate uniform had a note pinned on it written in grandfather's precise hand-writing, "A bit of rebel gray picked up on the field at Gettysburg." There was a day by day account of his service in the war — again in the clear handwriting, written some years after his discharge. There was the grim diary of Ambrose T. Eggleston's brother-in-law, Benjamin Horton White, who survived the horrors of imprisonment at Andersonville. But there was also a startling reminder of "Bagot Eggleston."

While Ambrose T. Eggleston was in the service he received several letters from the Rev. Ambrose Eggleston of Coldwater, Michigan. The Rev. Ambrose was Ambrose T.'s grandfather, and thus my great, great grandfather. He was an earnest Presbyterian churchman and had a good academic background. He had graduated from Yale in the class of 1813. In a letter dated Dec. 26, 1864 addressed "care of Sherman's Army" the 71 year old clergyman began with the words:

My dear Grandson,

We have just got the news of the capture of Savannah. I suppose you have participated in this as well as in all the

movements of Sherman's army through Georgia. We are lately encouraged to hope the rebellion will soon be cramped into close quarters. . . . [The letter was full of family news and closed with:]

Several of your last letters were well written and I shall put some of them in my history of the descendents of Bigot Eggleston.

So here was the curious combination of names again. No matter how many ways Bigot Eggleston's name was spelled there could be no doubt that they all referred to the same man. If the name had been Bigot Smith or Henry Eggleston there might have been some doubt as to identification. But Bigot Eggleston or Bagot Eggleston or Begat Egglestone could only have been one and the same person.

I was to eventually discover that Bagot was spelled some dozen different ways. Eggleston was variously spelled: Egelestone, Eagleston, Eggleston, Eccleston and Ecelstone. In Elizabethan times and earlier it was rare indeed to find even a famous name spelled twice the same way. Shakespeare's baptism in the Church of the Holy Trinity at Stratford is recorded: "William, son of John Shakspere." Cardinal Wolsey's father spelled his name Wolci. Earlier it was spelled Wulcy.

The chest in the attic revealed no part of the Rev. Ambrose's "History of the Descendents of Bigot Eggleston." If such a work was ever completed it has never come to light. But there was one treasure in the chest which interested me greatly. This was a large, well worn leather-bound family Bible with listings of births, marriages and deaths in the Eggleston family from 1793 onward. All of these names and dates I carefully copied. I thought that at some future time I might do some further library research and find the link, if any, proving a relationship between old Bagot and myself.

Several years went by before I once again found myself leisurely browsing in the genealogical shelves of a library. This time it was in the New York Public Library at 42nd Street and 5th Avenue. Here were *all* the volumes of *The Genealogical and Family History of the State of Connecticut* – probably one of the very few complete sets in existence. Here to my great surprise and gratification I found listed seven early generations of Egglestons and their wives, linking precisely with the birthdate of The Rev. Ambrose Eggleston as entered in the family Bible. The total to my birthdate included eleven generations.

In the same library in Volume 23 of the *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* I found a revealing reference to a “Major Azariah Eggleston who served in the army of General Washington.”:

His ancestor Bagot Eggleston was born in England in 1590. He married Mary Talcott of Braintree in Essex by whom before leaving England he had two sons. They embarked on the *Mary and John* which sailed from Plymouth, England on March 20, 1630 and carried 140 passengers, ‘Godly families and people’.

Many of them were from the congregations of John Warham and John Maverick who sailed with them. Mr. Warham had been a celebrated minister in Exeter. The people left England to form a colony in the Province of Massachusetts Bay. All of these colonists were men and women of good family and well-to-do; possessing high courage, determined moral purpose and strong religious convictions. They organized a church in Plymouth before they embarked.

In 1635 Bagot (and his family) removed to Windsor, Connecticut and he was assigned a position inside the Palisado. He afterwards by reason of purchase from other Colonists was appointed sole owner in the plan of 1654. He died in Windsor, Conn. Sept. 1, 1674 in the 84th year of his age.

WORD FROM THE COLLEGE OF ARMS, LONDON

Again some years went by while I was preoccupied with other pursuits more practical than ancestor searching. Then in the fall of 1950 when my wife and I were spending a few days sight-seeing in London we noted that one of the historic spots "open to visitors from 10 to 4" was the College of Arms. This noble institution, founded by Edward IV in 1464 and chartered by Richard III in 1483, is the official repository for one of the most complete files of genealogical and heraldic records in the world. The building containing the records is itself of historic importance having been designed by Sir Christopher Wren.

The presidency of the College has long been an honorarium held by the hereditary Dukes of Norfolk. As this is written the executive director of the institution is Garter King of Arms Sir Anthony Wagner, K.C.V.O. (Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order.) At the time of our visit Sir Anthony was plain Mr. Wagner and in his capacity as Richmond Herald he received us cordially and listened patiently as I inquired about the possibility of his finding anything in the records concerning Begat Eggleston. Our guide book told us that officials of the College of Arms welcomed inquiries, and a standard of fees had been established to pay for research depending on the amount of time involved.

Mr. Wagner suggested that what he called a "preliminary search" be attempted. Then if we felt that such a beginning justified going further we could authorize a more thorough undertaking. We wrote a check for the preliminary search, which was a nominal charge of a few pounds.

Some weeks later, back in Connecticut, we received the

following very interesting comments on the possible ancestry of Begat Eggleston.

College of Arms
Queen Victoria Street
London, E.C. 4

Dear Mr. Eggleston,

I have now made the promised preliminary search of our Records to ascertain the general background of the work needed to establish the origin of your settler ancestor Begat Eggleston who came to America in the *Mary and John* in 1630.

As you know, the name Begat Eggleston was spelt in a great many different ways, among them Bigod, Bigot, Bygod, and I think there cannot be much doubt that he was the Bygod, son of James Egelston who was baptised at Settrington, Yorkshire on the 20th February 1587. This date apparently fits the particulars we have of his age quite well.

Now Bygod or Bigod is an ancient and very distinguished surname. Roger Bigod was one of the Barons of William the Conqueror and his son Hugh was created Earl of Norfolk in 1140. The office of Marshall of England came into the family by marriage about 1207 and they held both the Earldom and the Marshalcy down to 1306 when Roger Bygod Earl of Norfolk died without issue. The last Earl's brother, Sir John Bygod held the Manor of Settrington, Yorkshire and there his descendents in the direct male line continued down to 1569. A younger branch, however, seems to have continued to exist in Settrington down to the 1620's and it appears to me most probable that Bygod Eggleston was given the Christian name of Bygod because his mother or some other near ancestress was a member of the Bygod family.

Mr. Wagner's letter went on to say that he had examined an Index of ancient Yorkshire Wills and found several Egglestons mentioned which might provide clues for further

research. He believed that the family derived their name from Egglestone in the county of Durham near the Yorkshire border. Here today may be seen the ruins of Egglestone Abbey with foundations dating back to 1195.

Mr. Wagner was frank to state that further research would require sending someone up to Yorkshire to do some in-depth investigating of local records – which could prove rather costly. So another number of years went by while my folder of notes on Bygod Eggleston gathered dust.

Came the spring of 1967 and we were again bound for a holiday in England, this time from the island of St. Lucia, West Indies where we had built a home in 1957. We were passengers on the *Brunstal*, a Dutch banana carrier of the Van Geest fleet, which made the circuit regularly between the Windward Islands and its unloading port in Preston, Lancashire on England's West coast.

Previous to our sailing we had had an exchange of letters with Mrs. Alice Tonks who lived in Aldborough, Yorkshire, northeast of Preston, and had accepted her invitation to spend a couple of day's with her and do some sight-seeing. Mrs. Tonks was the widow of the late H.N.V. Tonks, Bishop of the Windward Islands. We had known the Tonks family intimately during their stay in the islands, and we had kept in touch by letter with her since the Bishop's passing.

An easy drive by rental car took us to Aldborough for a pleasant reunion with Alice Tonks, and some interesting sight-seeing. The tiny unspoiled village of Aldborough is another of those gems of English antiquity luckily by-passed by the new super highways cutting through the north country. We attended a service in the 14th century parish church and admired a very fine brass representing "William de Aldborough" in armor, dated 1360. A short walk from the church took us to a small museum containing a large collection of rare finds dating to Roman times, including some exquisite

examples of mosaic tile flooring. Aldborough, (then called Isurium) was a residential area of handsome villas in the second century A.D. when York (called Eborac) was the Roman capital of the north. In this rich atmosphere of past glory we were reluctant to bring up the subject of Bygod Eggleston and Settrington, but of course we did and found our hostess as usual, sympathetically attentive.

An Esso road map was procured and sure enough, in small type about five miles from York was a tiny dot labeled *Settrington*. On a lovely sunshiny April morning I hired a driver who was familiar with the area, and we four drove over a succession of back country roads to the spot marked on the map.



Sir Anthony Wagner, K.C.V.O., Executive Director of the College of Arms, London, has been described in The New York Times as England's greatest authority on genealogy.

A GENEALOGICAL SURPRISE

There was no town where Settrington was supposed to be. At a crossroad I enquired of a shopkeeper if he knew the whereabouts of a Settrington parish church. I was directed to a small farm down the road where a young man was digging in a vegetable garden. When I asked about the church he called across the yard to an older man. "Oh Andrew, come over here." The older man identified himself as Andrew Chaplow and said he was a vestryman in the church and that it was located "down the road a mile and turn right." He said he would be glad to show us around but a better idea would be to first call on the vicar, the Reverend Frank Blanchard, who lived some five miles away at Kirby-Grindale.

I was greeted warmly by Rev. Blanchard himself when I rang the bell at the vicarage, a comfortable red-brick house in the center of the village of Kirby-Grindale. After I explained in a few words what I was about, the vicar said to please bring the others in — he and his wife were about to have morning tea and cakes and he wished we would join them. The Reverend was a good-looking man in his early thirties. He wore a short beard and was dressed in corduroy trousers and a lounging shirt topped with a clerical collar. Mrs. Blanchard, pretty and extremely cordial, seemed not at all disturbed by our intrusion, and helped by her five year old daughter, a spread of cakes, tea and coffee very soon appeared. A bit of conversation brought out that the Blanchards were familiar with the name of our late Bishop. While the others chatted, the vicar took me into his study and explained that he was new in the Parish and was presently serving five churches in the area. He didn't think there were any records in the church. All old records he thought had long since been collected in the vaults of York. The church called All Saints, was indeed old — thirteenth century. The baptismal font

was early Norman – twelfth century. He thought perhaps some of the records were in the hands of the present senior warden, Lord Bucton, a life peer who had recently purchased Settrington Manor house and restored it. Lord Bucton had also been active in restoring the church. The lord was not available at the moment – he was vacationing in Scotland. The vicar apologized that he could not accompany us to the church because he was driving to York on parish business. But we were very welcome to visit All Saints and look around inside and out.

As we were about to leave, Mrs. Blanchard said she knew a neighbor whom she thought might contribute to our quest. In response to her phone call the neighbor came by ten minutes later and showed us two volumes titled *Yorkshire (East Riding with York)* by one Arthur Mees. The books were well indexed and I soon found some paragraphs identifying the Bygod family with Settrington. Also mentioned was the baptismal font at All Saints as dating from the 12th century, “one of the oldest fonts in all of England.”

A short drive over more back roads took us to the church, which was on a gentle rise at the end of a heavily wooded lane. Beyond the church and almost adjoining it was a glimpse through the trees of the imposing-looking manor house of Lord Bucton. In outward appearance the church is the same as scores in England dating from the same period. It stands in the center of the usual walled graveyard containing higgledy piggledy and half-sunken tomb stones. Above a pair of heavy wooden doors rises the single square tower, crenelated at the top and pierced by gothic arches and a blackfaced clock.

Our first impression inside the church was of a harmony of pillars and arches, a very much worn stone floor, and the intense cold of an ice storage vault. Everything was well-dusted and several of the front pews were obviously new. As

we paused, an elderly cleaning woman who had been waxing one of the new pews picked up her things and entered the vestry room. We followed her and greeted her, asking if there might be any sort of booklet about the church which we could purchase. She said no, she had been cleaning the church for some twenty-six years and knew of no such thing. But she led us back into the church proper and took considerable pride in



All Saints parish church, Settrington, Yorkshire – est. 1248 A.D.

showing us the new oak pews, which Mrs. Tonks immediately recognized as the work of "Thompson of Kilburn," a well-known present day wood carver. She pointed out that Thompson always carved a very realistic small mouse into each piece of his work, as his signature. One of the mice was particularly well-done with its rear and tail showing on one side of the leg of a pew and its head poking out of a hole at right angles. The cleaning woman said there had formerly been a carved mouse in the communion rail of the side altar but it was so real it distracted some of the women communicants and had to be chiselled out.

While the several mice were being pointed out to us I happened to look across toward the vestry room door and noticed that Bill, our driver, was beckoning vigorously for me to join him. He had overheard us constantly referring to old records and had decided to do a little research on his own. He had found an ancient iron strongbox unlocked and had removed three large volumes of parish records from it. Having just been told that all old parish records were probably in York or the Manor House I was dumbfounded when I read on the fly leaf of the first volume I opened the following:

SETTRINGTON

A redgister of all the Christnigs
weddings and buriales in this Booke
hereafter followinge in their severall places
1560

The book felt damp on the outside but all the entries were clear and legible in a beautiful flowing script. All pages were

of parchment. It took but a few moments to run through the dated entries and find this:

1587

Februarie

Bygod Egelston filius Jacobi Egeleston baptiz
fuit 20 die menfis eiusdem

(Meaning, "1587, February,
Bygod Egelston son of James* Egeleston
was baptised on the 20th day of the same month")

The other two books that Bill unearthed went through the 1600's. In them were several listings of Egglestons, spelled in various ways.

I imagined as we carefully replaced the three books in the strong box that somewhere – possibly in York – there were other books dating back into the 13th century when the Settrington Church was established. But on this assumption I later learned I was wrong. There were few parish records kept in any of the churches of England before the reign of Henry VIII. When Henry became supreme head of the Church of England following his excommunication by the Pope in 1534, one of his first official edicts directed all priests and deacons to henceforth keep meticulous records of parish births, marriages and deaths. So the 1560 volume which we found in All Saints, Settrington, was a rare find indeed.

After pondering the name Bygod and its variations for so many years it was gratifying and somewhat startling to at last come upon it in the handwriting of a clergyman who almost four hundred years before had baptised the infant Bygod under this very roof.

*Jacobi is the latin for James

Stratton.

A register, of all the Christiane
weddings, and buriales,
in this Booke here:
after followinge
in their severall
places.

1560.

Februazie

Willms Ego filius Rayneri Ego baptizatus
fuit 13^o die mensis p̄dicti

Bygod Eggleston filius Jacobi Eggleston baptizatus
fuit 20^o die mensis eundem.

Margareta Jacobson filia Johannis Jacobson baptizatus
fuit 27^o die mensis eundem.

Marsch

Robertus Belwood filius Willms Belwood baptizatus
fuit 12^o die mensis p̄dicti.

Maye

Agneta Dodswortz filia Georgij Dodswortz
baptizatus fuit 19^o die mensis p̄dicti.

Maria Aoster filia Gidonij Aoster baptizatus
fuit 21^o die mensis eundem.

October

Robertus Awarre filius Leondi Awarre baptizatus
fuit primo die mensis p̄dicti.

Anno Domini 1587
an: 29.

Parchment pages of the *Settrington Parish Register* recording the baptism of Bygod Eggleston, February 20, 1587.

Before leaving the church we paused at the ancient Norman baptismal font and were further fascinated upon reading a plaque on the wall nearby. Here was graphic evidence that the early Bygods of Settrington had enjoyed a rather long association with All Saints. In the listing of 57 vicars covering eight centuries there were several descendents of the first Baron.

The roll call began with John Le Bigod, 1248*. Then there was John Bigot 1299. Then later Edmund Bygot 1322, and Richard Bigot 1475.

We then drove back to the Blanchards to find that the Vicar had already left for York. When we told Mrs. Blanchard of our discovery she readily agreed to have the page in the registry as well as the title page photographed, with negatives and prints sent to us in America. She said she was certain that her husband would straight-away have the records removed to York, and see that the strongbox would not be left unlocked in the future. Those four hundred year old parchment pages would have been a valuable find for a light-fingered antique hunter.

*The Universal Encyclopedia lists Hugh Bigot as First Earl of Norfolk, and adds: "The origin of the family name has been traced to the oath 'bi got' frequently used among the Normans."

THE BOAT PEOPLE OF 1620-1630

Although the ship *Mary and John* which carried Bygod Eggleston and his family to the new world sailed at a time of year when an Atlantic crossing can be bitterly cold and hazardous, the 140 "Godly Souls" aboard, apparently made the passage without incident. One of the number, Mr. Roger Clapp, wrote in his memoirs, "Two of our magistrates came with us, Mr. Rossiter and Mr. Ludlow. They had made the choice of those two Reverend Servants of God, Mr. John Warham and Mr. John Maverick to be our ministers. By the good hand of the Lord we came comfortably through the deep, having preaching or expounding the word of God every day for ten weeks together by our ministers."

The England of 1630 that these people were leaving was a kingdom torn from one end to the other with civil and religious strife. Puritans and dissenters against the practices of the established church were relentlessly persecuted. King Charles the First ruled not only as absolute monarch but as despotic head of the church. His father James I had sworn to crush the non-conformists. "I will make them conform," he declared, "or I will harry them out of the land."

The dictionary defines Puritans as "Members of that party of English Protestants who regarded the Reformation under Elizabeth I as incomplete, and demanded further 'purification' of the church from forms and ceremonies still retained; also any persons who later separated from the Established Church on points of ritual or doctrine, held by them to be at variance with 'pure' New Testament principles."

The party of the *Mary and John* called themselves Congregationalists. They were the "radical" wing of English Puritan Protestantism and advocated immediate separation from

the Church of England. Thus they were also called "Separatists." When two of the early separatist leaders, Henry Barrows and John Greenwood, both Cambridge graduates, attempted to establish a Congregational Church in London they were promptly arrested and hanged. The greater part of the membership then went into exile in Holland. By 1620 a group of these Holland exiles obtained a charter from the London Company and sailed from Southampton in the *Mayflower* to Massachusetts Bay to found the Plymouth Colony. The Plymouth Colony experienced a rough first decade in their struggle to survive the adversities of climate and hostile Indians. The arrival of the *Mary and John* with 140 reinforcements was a very welcome sight to the Pilgrim Fathers whose ranks then totalled but 300 souls. From 1630 onward the increasing harassment of dissenters in England was to bring a flood-tide of Puritans to the New World.

It was soon realized that in the Massachusetts Bay settlements there was a degree of dissention among the dissenters. The Rev. Warham did not quite see eye to eye with the Rev. Cotton of the Bay Colony when the latter made the blunt statement, "Never did God ordain democracy for the government of the church or people." Besides there was a growing restlessness among the heads of families in the Warham congregation to move West into more fertile territory.

According to Windsor historian Daniel Howard, a small group from the Plymouth colony established the Windsor settlement in Connecticut in September 1633. The site they chose was some six miles north of where the city of Hartford stands today — on land adjoining the point of confluence of the Farmington and Connecticut Rivers. By 1635 the Rev. Warham and some sixty of the original passengers of the *Mary and John*, including Bygod E. and family, had joined the founders of Windsor and established the first Congregational church in America there.

The winter of 1635 was so severe and their rude shelters so inadequate that several families returned to Massachusetts. But the following spring they returned to Windsor with almost all the congregation and commenced building permanent homes. In their dealings with the Indians they made friends with the River tribes who had been driven from their lands by the fierce Pequots who had usurped the territory. The settlers recognized the River Indians' claims and paid them for the area occupied by Windsor township. It was a convenient arrangement for the River Indians who thus recovered their hunting ground and could count on English fire-arms to keep the Pequots at bay.

By 1639 the first permanent meeting house and place of worship had been constructed and a palisade of strong timbers put up around it where the women and children could be protected in case of surprise attack by the Pequots.

In G. H. Hollister's *First Settlement of the Colony of Connecticut*,* he expresses wonderment that these founding fathers and mothers of Windsor had the necessary experience, physical strength, and energy to build their frame houses, produce their food and spin their cloth, while at the same time engaged in a contest of survival against hostile Indians and the harsh New England winters. The author comments that most of them came from backgrounds of means, and education above that of the average colonist. On the Windsor roll an exceptional example of this type of Englishman was Henry Walcott, the squire of a large estate and historic manor house in Somerset. So enamoured was he of the Puritan cause, and so determined to settle in the New World that he sold his English holdings for eight thousand pounds sterling "much less than its value." (In terms of 17th century purchasing power, however, the selling price was

*Case Tiffany, publishers. Hartford, Connecticut, 1857

equal to a quarter of a million dollars today.) Since there was no labor class available from which to hire help in the Windsor of the 1630's Henry Wolcott was often to be seen doing his own ploughing, haying and caring for his livestock.



*Seal of the Tercentenary celebration
September 1933*

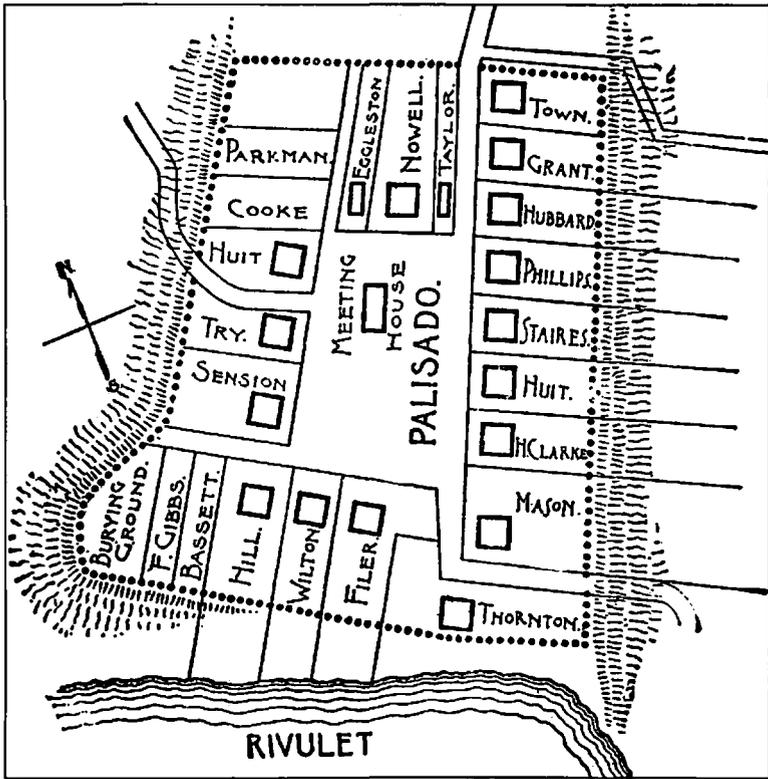
FIRST FAMILIES OF EARLY WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT

In 1640 the population of Windsor numbered some 250 men, women and children. According to the town records for that year there were then in Windsor the following "heads of families":

Mathew Allen	Capt. John Mason
John Bissell	The Brothers Newberry
Thomas Barber	Richard Oldage
Thomas Buckland	Wilham Phelps
Thomas Bascom	George Phelps
Daniel Clark	John Porter
Aaron Cook	Eltwed Pomeroy
Thomas Dibble	Elias Parkman
Thomas Dewey	George Philips
Nicholas Denslow	Nicholas Palmer
Bigot Eggleston	Abraham Randall
Lt. Walter Filer	Bray Rosseter
Thomas Ford	Thomas Stoughton
Deacon Wm. Gaylord	Henry Stiles
Nathan Billet	Return Strong
Edward Griswold	Isaac Shelden
Matthew Grant	Peter Tilton
Thomas Holcomb	John Taylor
William Hill	Stephen Terry
William Hosford	Owen Tudor
William Hayden	Thomas Thornton
John Hillyer	Richard Vore
William Hurlburt	Rev. Warham
Roger Ludlow	Robert Watson
Joseph Loomis	John Whitefield
Deacon John Moore	Roger Williams
James Marshall	Henry Wolcott

Thus after ten years in the New World Bygod seems to have permanently adopted the name Bigot in preference to

the ancient name in which he was baptised. It is understandable that to our early puritan ancestors the name Bygod had the ring of blasphemy and was intolerable. Later chroniclers of early colonial history took even greater liberties with the spelling of Bigot.



“A diagram of Palisado Green and the homesteads adjoining it at the beginning of the Pequot War in 1637. A palisade of high stakes with a wide ditch dug outside, surrounded the area. In the early years a constant guard watch was on duty alert for Indian attack. The dimensions of the palisade were approximately 500 yards by 350. The “Rivulet” is the Farmingham River. Ferry Lane, shown between the plots of Filer, Captain Mason, and Thornton led to the ferry crossing and preceded the present main road.”

- From *The Memorial History of Hartford County*.

Although ancestor Eggleston and several of his descendents lived out their lives in Windsor and were buried there, other members of the family moved to various towns in Connecticut and New York State. It is in the record that "Samuel, son of Bagget, beat the drum at the meeting house in Windsor in 1651. After his marriage to Sara Disbrough he moved to Middletown where he bought the house of William Smith on Meeting House Square. He was admitted to the Wethersfield Church on certificate from Windsor." According to the listing of old houses of Windsor in Howard's *History of Old Windsor*, the "First brick house in Connecticut" was built in 1670 by Samuel's brother, Thomas Eggleston, and still stands today. Samuel's son, Samuel Jr. was one of the founding members of the church in East Middleboro, Connecticut. His last will and testament was recorded Feb. 1, 1737.

Muster rolls of several wars list members of the Eggleston family from Windsor. In 1744 England was fighting the War of The Austrian Succession and troops from New England were ordered north to attack the French in Canada. Five hundred men from Connecticut under the command of Lieutenant-Governor Roger Wolcott of Windsor marched north to join a British fleet in an attack on Cape Breton Island, then considered the Gibraltar of North America. After the fortress surrendered following a siege of seven weeks the volunteers from Windsor marched home to be greeted as heroes. Among them were James Eggleston and Joseph Egelstone. Their Captain was Ebenezer Grant, for-bear of General U.S. Grant.

In the campaign of 1755 of the French and Indian War we find listed among the volunteers from Windsor one John Eggleston Jr. In the list of Windsor men who fought in the War of the American Revolution we find nine Egglestons; David, Isaac, James, Joseph, Jonathan, Nathaniel, Samuel, Thomas and Timothy. By this time the descendents of Bigot

were scattered fairly wide around New England, and several times the number of Egglestons from Windsor were listed on the various Continental Army muster rolls of New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut.

Several Egglestons served in the infant continental navy but only one is recorded as holding a Captain's Commission. This was Ebenezer Eggleston of Middletown, Connecticut, who commanded the armed schooner *Hawk* in 1778, and the sloop of war *Farmer* in 1780*. Both of these ships were built and fitted out on the Connecticut River. In the records, Ebenezer is also listed as Captain Eaglestone, of the privateer *Hawk*. In the *Hawk* he ran into some trouble on July 6, 1778 when he seized a merchant vessel, the *Jenny*, off Montauk Point. The *Jenny* was carrying a cargo of rum, sugar and molasses. She also carried two colonial minute-men who had escaped from a British prison in New York. Her papers proved that she was bound for New London to return the Americans. The Maritime Court of Hartford ruled that the *Jenny* was not a lawful prize and ordered "Eaglestone" to



The Third Windsor Church, built in 1754, and the Covered Bridge built in 1833 (from an old print).

**Maritime Connecticut During the American Revolution, by Louis R. Middleton, Essex Institute, 1925.*

return her to her captain. In his sloop-of-war with the unlikely name *Farmer*, Ebenezer had even worse luck. On the night of October 15, 1780 the ship was driven ashore in a severe gale and wrecked. Captain and crew were lucky to get ashore alive. The *Farmer* was armed with four 6 pounders and carried a crew of twelve. The vessel was listed as "Bonded for \$20,000." which was a large sum of money in those days.

Author Daniel Howard in his *New History of Old Windsor* states that during the early post-Revolutionary years Windsor became an important and thriving mercantile community.

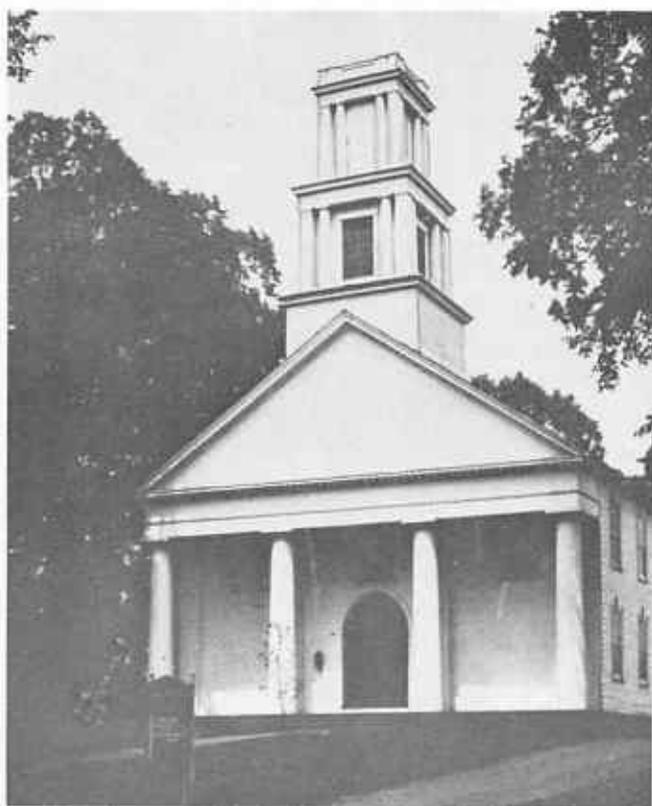
Here was the great firm of Hooker and Chaffee, well known in New England for its extensive dealings and its high mercantile honor. Among other things the firm made barrel staves which were loaded onto sailing ships at Windsor dock and destined for the West Indies. The returning ships carried the staves transformed into hogsheads filled with West Indian rum. Beef, cattle, horses, tools, wheat, and general merchandise of every sort poured into Windsor via river traffic, from every port of the country. It was not unusual to see several coasting sloops and some larger English and West Indian ships docked at the river's edge at the same time.

Windsor was a port of entry for an extensive trade to and from Liverpool and the tropics. An eye witness once counted thirty wagons queued up near the dockside waiting their turn to pick up stores from the waiting vessels.

The early Connecticut Egglestons were definitely not merchants. Of five generations in Connecticut — Samuel I, Samuel II, Samuel III, Samuel IV, and Nicholas — all were farmers. My great, great grandfather, the Rev. Ambrose was apparently the first non-farmer of his line. After receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree from Yale he taught school for a

time, then studied law and was admitted to the bar before marrying Elizabeth Harper and entering Auburn Theological Seminary.

The children of the Rev. Ambrose Eggleston and Elizabeth (Betsy) Harper were, George H., Nicholas A., Hamilton E., and Mary E. The eldest son, George, my great grandfather, with the help of his father bought a farm near Windsor, New York, and was fairly successful. The children of George H. and Emily Tryon were my grandfather, Ambrose T., Albert E., and Mary Lucretia.



The fourth (and present) Meetinghouse, erected inside the boundaries of the Windsor Palisado in 1794; the oldest Congregational Church in America. (Hazel Nicolay and G.T.E. were married here in 1936.)

AMBROSE T. EGGLESTON, AND HIS PROGENY

In an unfinished memoir written by my grandfather, Ambrose T. Eggleston, he recalls the very happy childhoods he, his brother Albert, and sister Lucretia spent on the farm. Grandfather Ambrose was sixteen years old in the spring of 1861 when "Fort Sumpter was fired on, and Lincoln issued his call for 75,000 volunteers to put down the rebellion." Brother Albert had already joined the Navy. On August 9th, 1862 with a month to go until his eighteenth birthday Ambrose presented himself at the recruiting station in Binghamton, New York and enlisted for the duration of the war. He was assigned to the 137th New York Volunteers and with 1000 other young men was shipped to the front by box car. Less than 100 of these brave lads were destined to be alive when the war ended. Grandfather must have had a guardian angel looking over his shoulder to have survived the many battles in which his regiment took part. After Gettysburg he wrote: "I never saw the dead so thick as the rebels lay in front of our brigade position. One could have walked the whole length of the line of battle on dead rebels without once being obliged to step on the ground. The trees in front of our position were completely riddled with musket balls; that is, the bark of every tree was so completely riddled from the roots to the branches that there was no spot the size of a silver dollar not bullet-scarred."

Of the fighting in Georgia he refers to one engagement in particular that took place just five miles from Atlanta:

The Battle of Peach Tree Creek, fought July 20, 1864 was as severe for our corps as any during the campaign. The rebels came on in grand style and for a time quite demoralized our brigade which was not in line of battle, but massed by regiments, and the enemy's line of battle took

us in flank. But we soon formed and though driven steadily back for fifteen minutes we fought them stubbornly and effectually checked the advance against our part of the line. We next gathered ourselves together, delivered one or two well-directed volleys and then made a desperate charge on the enemy driving them back and winning the day. The whole fight did not last at our point of the line much over one-half hour. Charley Williams, one of my tent-mates and a good fellow and brave boy was killed at my side. I received a glanced ball from a musket on my right hip which knocked me over and made me think for a time that I was shot clear through; besides I had four bullet holes through my clothing and lost my hat. On the 2nd of September 1864 we occupied Atlanta. This was particularly gratifying to me as it was on my twentieth birthday.

There were still some eight months to go until Lee's surrender. During this period the 137th marched with Sherman through Georgia to the sea, and then through the Carolinas. Of the triumphal march to Washington, Ambrose wrote, "Now that the war was over orders were issued to destroy no more property. Rail fences must not be burned for campfires — or at least if we could not find any wood but fences, we were cautioned to take only the top rail. I noticed that in most cases the top rail proved finally to be the bottom one, or rather the bottom one proved finally to be the top one."

The reception the victorious troops received in Washington brought the largest turnout of cheering crowds in the Capital's history. Wrote grandfather, "I marched with my regiment at the Grand Review through the streets of Washington. Our army aroused the wildest enthusiasm among the assembled thousands of spectators. Every available space along our line of march was literally packed with a living mass of humanity."

A. T. Eggleston and the remnants of the 137th were finally discharged at Bladensburg, Maryland June 9, 1865. A

farewell message to the troops was delivered by General John W. Geary. A copy of this address has been preserved. It is in my grandfather's handwriting, as he was head clerk in Brigade Headquarters at the time, with the rank of Sergeant Major.

*Head Quarters 2nd Div. 20th Corps.
Near Bladensburg, Md. June 6, 1865.*

*General Orders
No. 28*

The time for the dissolution of this Division is now at hand. Before we separate from that organization under whose guiding star most of us have marched and fought for years, your General feels right and just to address you a parting word.

It may safely be asserted that no organization in any army has a prouder record, or has passed through more arduous, varied, and bloody Campaigns.

To remind us of this, we have but to ennumerate the battles in which all, or the most of us, have participated. Rich Mountain, Carrick's Ford, Winchester, Port Republic, Bolivar, Cedar Mountain, Second Bull Run, Antietum, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Wauhatchie, Lookout Mountain, Missionary Ridge, Ringgold, Mill Creek Gap, Resacca, New Hope Church, Pine Hill, Muddy Creek, Noses Creek, Kolbs Farm, Kenesaw, Peach Tree Creek, Atlanta, Savannah, and the labor, exposures and dangers of the Georgia and Carolina Campaigns, are lettered on your banners, while the part you have bravely borne in scores of actions, small of note in this war, but equal to battles in other days, is attested by hundreds of scars on your own persons and by the remembrance of our heroic dead, throughout Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, North and South Carolina.

Veterans truly all of you, men of whom your Country is proud, and who are now prouder than ever of your Coun-

try. Your Children, Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren will have passed away long before your heroic deeds shall be forgotten.

Your Country has been saved, and yours is no small share in the glorious right to be proud of the result. Cherish the memories of the banner under which you gloriously fought and won the victory; the badge of our Union — the spotless star-emblem of hope and Glory.

Soldiers, Comrades, farewell, may the memories of our fallen heroes, stricken down by thousands at our side, hallow our parting, and consecrate our devotion to our God, our Country and each other.

*By Command of
General John W. Geary*



Ambrose T. Eggleston, age 18, shortly after joining the ranks of the 137th New York Volunteers in 1862.

After their discharge the fortunate survivors of the battle-scarred 137th were shipped to Binghamton, N.Y. Again they rode in box cars. In Binghamton, Ambrose was met by his brother Albert who had just received his honorable discharge from the Navy. The two veterans then walked the fourteen miles to Windsor, N.Y. for a very emotional reunion with their mother and sister Mary.

On September 2, 1868, his twenty-fourth birthday, Ambrose T. married a beautiful nineteen year old belle of Binghamton, Emily Frances White. My grandfather wrote of her "She was the most charming girl I ever met. I wish my pen were capable of describing her. She was not too tall, nor too short, just right in height and size. She had beautiful large brown eyes that could look tender and loving, tearful and sad, or angry and flashing, as occasion might require. I found her as beautiful and perfect in mind as in feature."

Emily Frances White, or Frankie as my grandfather called her, was also of Puritan descent. Her family Bible traced the Whites to William White and Susannah Fuller White, who came to New England in 1620 on the *Mayflower*. William White had not seen eye to eye with his father John White, Bishop of London, and was another young English intellectual who took up with the Separatists. When the *Mayflower* came to anchor in Cape Cod Harbor Susannah White gave birth to a baby boy. The infant, the first white child born in New England, was appropriately named Peregrine. (from perigrination, journey.)

In the early years of his marriage to Emily Frances White my grandfather was manager of the office of the Willcox and Gibbs Sewing Machine Company, in Newark, N.J. During this period my father Charles was born. When Willcox and Gibbs opened offices in California grandfather packed up the family and went west to be in charge of the San Francisco

headquarters of the company. There on March 7, 1883 my aunt Ethel (later Mrs. William Chamberlain) was born. When the family moved to Berkeley and grandfather commenced commuting by ferry to San Francisco, Ethel entered the University of California. She graduated from U.C. in 1905, one of the few women in her class.

My father Charles was a rebel as far as education was concerned. He left school in his early teens and shipped out to Hawaii as a cabin boy on a square-rigger. Later he became established in the real estate business in Oakland, California and met and married my mother, Mabel Teeple. The date of their marriage was December 25, 1904.

My mother possessed a record of the births and deaths of her parents and grandparents which introduces a few more surnames to the family tree. My grandparents on my mother's side were George Morgan Teeple and Mary Childs. Great grandparents were Henry Tinsdale Teeple and Paulina Morgan. George Whitney Childs and Ellen Wallis.

My first marriage, to Martha Downing of Berkeley, California ended in divorce in 1934. A daughter, Day Eggleston, only child of this marriage, was three years old when my marriage to Hazel Nicolay of New York, took place in 1936. Day was brought up in our home and later attended Wellesley College and was married to Edward Pierson of Darien, Connecticut, a graduate of Princeton University, and Hartford Theological Seminary. The children of this marriage were George Norris Pierson and Elizabeth Day Pierson.

Over the years, I served in editorial posts on several magazines, notably the old satirical *Life*, *Time's Life*, and the *Reader's Digest*. Taking early retirement to do some creative writing, Hazel and I spent a number of years in St. Lucia, West Indies, during which time, between us, we authored

eight books which were published. Four of these books record most of our activities during the first forty-five years of our marriage.

It was in 1979, our last year on the Isle of St. Lucia that we heard a final word on the identity of Bygod Eggleston. A Massachusetts couple, the Walter Millers, travelling as tourists, looked us up to say they had read some of our writing, and as Mrs. Miller had been Shirley Eggleston before her marriage she thought perhaps we would be interested in a bit of research they had done in the Mormon Genealogical Archives in Salt Lake City, Utah. Of course we were intrigued.

We had thought that London's College of Arms contained the greatest collection of genealogies in the world. Not so. For almost ninety years the Mormon Church has been collecting genealogies in countries around the world. Their present family-tracing operation expends \$5,000,000 a year, employs 500 people and has been filming vital statistics records in a dozen countries — on some 350,000 feet of microfilm a month.

In huge vaults in caves carved deep in a canyon of granite cliffs twenty miles south of Salt Lake City the world's largest collection of genealogical records — 650,000 rolls of microfilm — 500 million pages of records — is secured behind a series of bank vault doors in an atmosphere of controlled temperature and humidity.

We were delighted when Shirley Eggleston Miller presented us with xerox copies of two official statements from the "Mormon Recorder of Archives", stating that "Bygod Eggleston, born Feb. 20, 1587, Settrington, Yorks. England, was the son of James Eggleston b. 1562, Settrington, Yorks, and Juliane Bygod, b. 1565, Exeter, Devon, England. Her father's surname was Bygod."



*EMILY TRYON
EGGLESTON*



*ELIZABETH HARPER
EGGLESTON*



*EMILY WHITE
EGGLESTON
(above)*



*MABEL TEEPLE
EGGLESTON
(above rt.)*

*AMBROSE T. EGGLESTON
AND FOUR YEAR OLD
GEORGE T. E., 1911*



- Copy -

Head Quarters 2^d Div. 20th Corp.

Near Blacksburg, W. Va., June 1, 1865.

General Order }
No. 28. }
3

The time for the dissolution of this Division is now at hand. Before we separate from that organization under whose guiding star most of us have marched and fought for years, your General feels right and just to address you a parting word.

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To remind us of this, we have but to enumerate the battles in which all, or the most of us, have participated, Rich Mountain, Garnetts Ford, Winchester, Fort Republic, Polwin, Geeders Mountain, Second Rich. Run, Chatham, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Nankatesie, Lookout Mountain, Missionary Ridge, Briggotts, Mill Creek Exp., Rosacea, New Hope Church, Pine Hill, Muddy Creek, Rose Creek, Kelbos Farm, Keneseaw, Rock Run Creek, Atlanta Savannah, and the labor, exposure, and dangers of the Georgia and Carolina Campaigns, are lessons on your

Page of General John W. Geary's farewell address to his troops, handwritten by Sergeant-Major A. T. Eggleston (age 20).

FAMILY RECORD.

BIRTHS.

Ambrose Eggleston May 16, 1798

Elizabeth Harper Decr. 30, 1800

George H. Eggleston June 8, 1821

Emily Tryon April 14, 1823

Nicholas A. Eggleston Nov. 18, 1824

Hamilton Stewart E. June 10, 1835

Mary Emily E. Nov. 24, 1840

Ambrose Theodore E. Sept. 2, 1844

Albert Eugene E. Sept. 26, 1846

Mary Lucretia E. March 23, 1851

Hamilton Clifford E. July 21, 1860

Lucy Frederick E. Oct 10/69

Isaac Vail White, father
of Emily Frances White, born
April 1, 1793.

Mary Norton, wife of Isaac
Vail White + mother of Emily
Frances. born March 22^d
1803.

BIRTHS.

Ambrose Eggleston, Esq.
at San Francisco Cal. 1871

Emily Frances White
at San Francisco Cal. 1877

George Frederick E.
at San Francisco Cal. 1869

Edward White E.
at San Francisco Cal. 1871

Charles Pratt E.
at San Francisco Cal. 1877

Donald White E.
at Boston Mass. 1879

Ethel Earle Eggleston
at San Francisco Cal. 1883

March 7^d 1883
at 6 o'clock a.m.

George Peeples Eggleston
son of Chas P. and Matil:
Nov. 21, 1906
at East Oakland Calif

Frances Chamberlain
daughter of Ethel
July 1, 1911
at Cedar Rapids Iowa

Park Chamberlain
son of Ethel Earle Eggleston
at Cedar Rapids Iowa
Feb. 24, 1913

AFTERWORD

Although to an American the surname Bygod, or Bigod sounds very strange indeed, it is a name well-known to students of English history. The British *Dictionary of National Biography*, devotes five full pages to the house of "Bygod or Bigod" covering six generations of Bygods who were Earls of Norfolk and Earl Marshalls of England.

In volume III of Edward A. Freeman's* *History of the Norman Conquest of England* one finds these paragraphs on the Battle of Hastings:

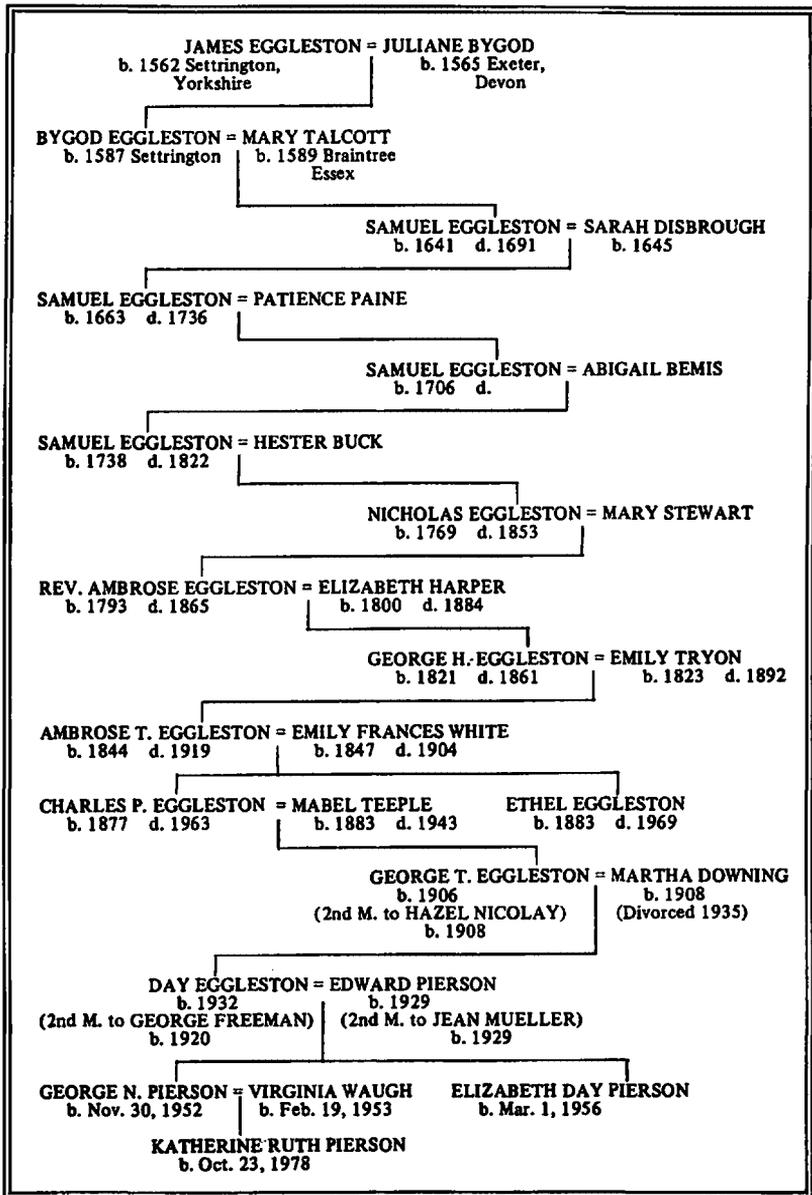
The Knights now put on their armour and mounted their steeds. Close at William's side rode Odo the Warrior — Prelate of Bayeux in full armour, as ready as William himself to plunge wherever in the fight danger should press most nearly. Hard by them rode other knights — Robert of Mortain, Tonstain the White, Ralph of Toesny, Walter Giffard of Longueville — the chivalry of Normandy, the future nobility of England.

There too rode men of more lasting name. There rode Roger the Bigod, forefather of that great house whose noblest son defied the greatest of England's later kings in the cause of the liberties of England.

In the British Museum library one finds the following passage in the volume, *Early Yorkshire Charters*:

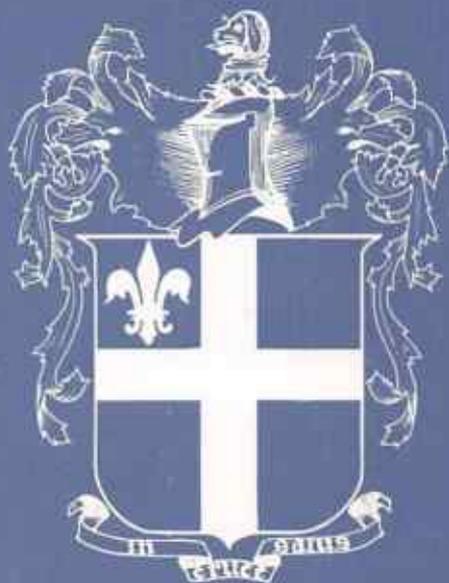
Roger Bigod, who succeeded his father, Earl Hugh Bigod in 1177, gave 2 carucates in Settrington to his younger (or third) son Roger at Michaelmas. Settrington had been in the King's hands. Richard I restored the Manor to Roger Bigod at Michaelmas 1189.

*Late Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford 1871



EGGLESTON
Family

Donated by George
T. Eggleston



EGGLESTON

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The Orange County California
Genealogical Society

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