

The Early Settlers of Eastham, Mass. by Josiah Paine of Harwich

Thomas Prence

years. Hannah married first, Nat. Mayo of Eastham, Feb. 13, 1649-50; second, Captain Jonathan Sparrow of Eastham. Jane, born November, 1637, married Mark Snow of Eastham, Jan. 9, 1660; she died in Harwich, now Brewster, in 1712. Mary married John Tracy of Duxbury. Judith married Isaac Barker of Duxbury, Dec. 28, 1665. Sarah, born in Eastham about 1646, married Jeremiah Howes of Yarmouth and died, according to grave stone, in 1706, aged 60 years. Elizabeth married Arthur Howland, Jr., of Marshfield, a son of a Quaker, much against the feelings of the puritanical governor, Dec. 9, 1667.

Soon after the death of Gov. Prence, the widow removed to that part of Yarmouth now North Dennis, and occupied a house belonging wholly or in part to Captain Thomas Howes, brother of Jeremiah Howes, who married Sarah Prence. Here she died. The Yarmouth book of records has this entry respecting her death: "Mrs Mary Prence wife of the late Governor Thomas Prence, died upon the ninth day of December, 1695, and was buried upon the eleventh day of ye said 1695." It is not known where she was interred; if at Yarmouth, doubtless in the old Howes Yard at North Dennis.

Gov. Prence's will bears date March 13th, 1673, and codicil March 28th, 1673. He appointed his wife, Mary, executrix, and desired that his brother, Thomas Clark, and Mr. Josiah Winslow be her advisers. To his wife Mary, he gave the profits of his part of the mill at Sauquatuckett, now West Brewster, with the land adjacent to it, which he desired at her death to go to his grandson, Theophilus Mayo, who was living with him. This, he said, he gave him for his encouragement to proceed in learning. He also gave him all his "books fit for him in learning." He enjoined him to "carry it well with his grandmother," and, in case he did so, to have a "bed." How dutiful he was to his aged grandparent, we have no means of knowing. He doubtless removed with her to Yarmouth. From what can now be gathered he did not survive her. His death, it is supposed, took place about 1678. He was the youngest son of Nathaniel and Hannah (Prence) Mayo, and it would seem, at the death of his father, was taken by the governor into his family. The governor also gave him one-half

of his land and meadow near Namassakett, in Middleboro, which if he died without descendants, would be equally divided between Gov. Prence's daughters. Of his books he gave, among others, "to Maj John Freeman, of Eastham, Speeds' Church's and Wilson's Dictionary; Simpson's History of the Church, and Newman's Concordance." He made other bequests, but we cannot mention them all.

The inventory of the governor's estate shows he owned on the Cape, "one fourth of the mill and land adjoining to it at Satuckett," now West Brewster; twenty acres of land and three acres of meadow at Tonsett in Eastham, and eighteen acres on Porchy Island. Before his death Gov. Prence disposed of most of his estate by deeds. Thomas Prence's descendants are numerous upon the Cape. Thomas Prence, the only son of the governor, died in England, leaving no sons, consequently he has no descendants of the patronymic living.

NICHOLAS SNOW.

Nicholas Snow, one of the first seven who settled at Naussett, was a man of sterling worth and very prominent in the settlement. He came over from England, a passenger in the Ann, in the latter part of July, 1623, and at first located in the township of Plymouth, where he soon married. The Ann brought over many of the near relatives of the Pilgrims, besides quite a number of other passengers to settle with them, among whom might be mentioned Thomas Clarke, Anthony Anable, Edward Bangs, Experience Michell and George Morton. The settlers of Plymouth at the arrival of Nicholas Snow and other passengers of the Ann, were sadly destitute, not only of apparel, but of food to eat. The new comers were "diversely affected" to behold "their low and poor condition." "The best dish," says Bradford, the renowned leader of that settlement, "they could present their friends with was a lobster or a piece of fish without bread or anything else but a cup of fair spring water." Bradford farther says, "Some of the passengers wished themselves in England again; others fell aweeping, fancying their own misery in what they saw now in others; some pitying the distress they saw their friends had been

long in and still were under; in a word, all were full of sadness." In this ship it may be well to state, came Mrs. Alice Southworth, to become the wife of the renowned leader, and they were married shortly after.

What were the feelings of the subject of this sketch upon knowing the sufferings of these poor ragged and half-fed Pilgrims, we are not told, but from what we can gather relative to the character of the man, we are led to believe he regretted their condition, cheerfully lent them a helping hand and prayed for better times, which, according to both Bradford and Morton, came at harvest time.

Nicholas Snow, not long after his arrival, became acquainted with Miss "Constanta" or Constance, an elder daughter of Mr. Stephen Hopkins, who had but a few years before braved the dangers of the Atlantic in the Mayflower and escaped the first winter's distress, and took her for his wife, who, before 1650, had borne him twelve children, all then alive. The date of his marriage does not appear; but he was married before 1627, as by the record of the division of the cattle, May 22nd, he and his wife Constance received their share, they belonging to Mr. Stephen Hopkins' company, which was composed of thirteen persons. In 1633 he was a freeman and a tax payer in Plymouth. The following year, with Edward Bangs, he was appointed to lay out roads in Plymouth. In 1636, he was one of the arbitrators to settle the difficulty between Joseph Beadle and Edward Dowty. In 1638, he was one of the jurors appointed to investigate the cause of the death of John England, a lad found dead on Plymouth flats. In 1640, he was one of the surveyors of highways at Plymouth. In 1645, with Gov. Prence, Josiah Cooke and others, he removed to Naussett; and when that place became a municipality, to him was assigned the duties of town clerk, an office he held until about 1663, when his son Mark succeeded him. He was surveyor of highways at Eastham in 1647; a deputy to the Colony court in 1648, also 1650-52-57. He was a selectman in 1668-71-72-74-75. He also held other offices in town. His death occurred at Eastham, according to the records of that town, November 15th, 1676. His will bears the date November 14th, 1676. It was witnessed by

his pastor, Mr. Samuel Treat, and his son-in-law, Thomas Paine, Sen. His wife, Constance, survived him and died in October, 1677. The settlement of the estate he entrusted to his fellow townsmen, Deacon Samuel Freeman and John Mayo. He remembered the Eastham church and left a small sum towards furnishing "the furniture of the table of the Lord with pewter or otherwise."

The children of Mr. Snow are not recorded, and consequently the names cannot all be given. Gov. Bradford says he had twelve children in 1650, all alive. He mentions no daughters in his will, though it is certain he had several then alive. His sons mentioned were Mark, Joseph, Stephen, John and Jabez. He was a large land owner. He had land in Harwich, Eastham and Truro. Mark, Joseph and Stephen came into possession of his landed estate in Harwich, then Satucket; John, of that in Paomet, now Truro, and Jabez of that in Eastham, including the homestead. His "moveable goods," at his wife's decease, he ordered divided among all his children equally. His residence was in that part now Eastham, not far from Gov. Prence's homestead, as far as it can be ascertained from the records. He undoubtedly was buried in the old yard at Eastham, though no stone with inscription marks the place. His son Mark, who married Gov. Prence's daughter Jane, and his son-in-law, Mr. Thomas Paine, were distinguished men in their day. The descendants of Mr. Nicholas Snow are numerous, and an effort by them should be made to erect a monument to his memory in the old yard, that the future generations may know where their Pilgrim ancestor lies buried.

#### JOHN DOANE.

Mr. John Doane was the eldest of the seven first settlers, and undoubtedly next in rank to Gov. Prence. They were the only persons of that band whom the records of that period honor with the prefix of Mister, which in those days was only given to men of means, magistrates and ministers. At what time he arrived at Plymouth, it does not appear. Mr. Pratt, the Eastham historian, was certain he came over in one of the three first ships, his authority he does not state. This, however, is certain:

SNOW Family

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