

# HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL RECORD

Of the Descendants

as far as Known

OF

## RICHARD AND JOAN BORDEN

Who Settled in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, May, 1638

WITH

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL

SKETCHES OF

Some of their Descendants.

COMPILED BY

HATTIE BORDEN WELD.

Sarah, he gave one hundred and fifty pounds; the balance of his money went to his sons. Some years later Joseph sold his interest in Hog Island farm to his brother William, and bought the homestead of his father and the whole of John's share, and John removed to Dutchess County, New York. The old family seat of John Borden of Quaker Hill is a place well known. It contained, a few years ago, two houses near each other. The oldest one, which has been taken down since the death of the late Mrs. John Borden (for she would never consent to its removal while she lived), was without any doubt the new house which Richard Borden built and gave in his will to his son John." The other house, though almost in ruins now, was called the new house, but there is no tradition of the builder, or when it was built.

Thomas Borden died about 1745, leaving a widow much younger than himself. She subsequently married Christopher Turner of Dartmouth, a widower with several children. One of Turner's daughters married Thomas' son Joseph, thus forming a twofold connection between the two families." S.

41. MARY, born 1684, died April 2, 1741. She married Thomas Potts, 1698. From this marriage came the long line of the Potts family in America. Thos. Maxwell Potts of Canonsburgh, Penn., has lately published a work entitled "Historical Collections Relating to the Potts Family in Great Britain and America."

42. HOPE, born 1685, March 3, date of death not known. She married William Almy, Jr., of Tiverton.

43. WILLIAM, born in Portsmouth, R. I., Aug 15, 1689, died 1748 in North Carolina.

"He married Alice Hull, daughter of William Hull, Esq., of Jamestown, R. I., July 7, 1715, at the Friends Meeting-house in Newport. Among the witnesses who signed the marriage certificate were ten Bordens, viz: Innocent, Hope, Mary, Sarah, Benjamin, Abraham, Benjamin, Elizabeth, Richard and Christopher. There were eight Hulla: Catherine, Sarah, Hannah, Robin, John, Alice, Tedman and John. These were probably all very near relatives of the married couple and to each other, evincing a deep sympathetic interest in this matrimonial connection and the future happiness and prosperity of their friends.

William Borden early engaged in the construction of vessels at Newport and procured his lumber and plank from Tiverton, making his home for months together at the house of his brother, Richard, about two and one-half miles south of Fall River. And the tradition in his family is that his son William was born in Tiverton. And there is an entry in the old family Bible of this son, made by himself, stating that "he was born in Tiverton, R. I." The records of that day are extremely deficient in regard to births, marriages and deaths of the permanent population and would not be likely to notice those of transient persons.

After some years spent in this employment, feeling more and more the necessity of a constant supply of duck for sails, he turned his at-

tention to this also as a necessary branch of his business, and having collected what information he could on the subject, he concluded that the manufacture of duck in this country was practicable as well as desirable, and determined, if the necessary funds could be procured, to carry on the work, to commence the undertaking. The novelty of the thing itself, the wants of the shipping interest, and the credit of introducing a new branch of domestic industry and thus saving at home large sums which then were sent abroad for duck, all pressed heavily upon his mind and urged him to engage in the enterprise.

He first presented the proposition to the legislature of Rhode Island who favored the object in various ways. They first passed a law granting a bounty on every pound of flax or hemp which should be raised for this object. They then gave Mr. Borden the exclusive privilege of making duck for ten years. They offered a bounty of one pound per bolt of hemp duck made by him that should equal Holland's duck.

Under such auspices the business was commenced. Mr. Borden built the duck factory at Newport in 1722, got it into operation apparently on his own responsibility and with his own resources. After carrying on the business three years, he applied to the state for a loan of five hundred pounds for three years, which was granted him on a mortgage of real estate. This loan was for the manufacture of duck and bore date May, 1725. Another loan, or rather an advance of three hundred pounds for the same purpose, was made him by the state June, 1725, on the condition that he should manufacture one hundred and fifty bolts of duck annually for the colony. After this the business seems to have progressed without any further legislative aid until the stock of flax and hemp declining yearly, an act was passed in the assembly raising the bounty on both of these articles; that on hemp was 9d, that on flax 6d per pound. This act passed May 5, 1731.

This is about all I have been able to glean of this enterprise. I judge that he was successful in producing a good article of duck, but the high price of the stock for the manufacture and the small quantity produced by the farmers, left but a small margin for profit. He entered upon his new enterprise with the zeal of an enthusiast and seems to have devoted all his energy to promote the success of the duck manufacture. He imported laborers from Europe, who had been brought up in the business and who were intimately acquainted with the machinery used there and were familiar with all the manipulations necessary for the perfection of the work; still he found himself unable to master the difficulties of his position; and after laboring hard for ten years he was forced by circumstances he could not control to abandon the undertaking.

The real difficulties seem to have been the insufficiency of good stock—the high price of labor and the scarcity of good help. In fact the movement was premature, the country was not then prepared for it. The enterprise was a patriotic one; its object being to supply a great na

tional want by the labor of our own citizens. It was pursued with energy, and patronized by the State government, but the farmers found other crops more easily raised and better adapted to their soil, requiring less labor to prepare them for the market, and therefore they would not cultivate more land in hemp or flax than what was needed for the supply of their own families. The rich bottom lands of Kentucky, Tennessee and other western States which now produce hemp and flax in abundance were then one vast wilderness which had never been trod by the foot of a white man; and with all the improvements in mechanism, the manufacture of sail duck from either has not yet been begun. Mr. Borden disposed of the duck factory about 1732 or 1733 and in the fall embarked for North Carolina and settled at Core Sound on a river which he gave the name of Newport River, in remembrance of the town from which he had emigrated. Here at a point near Beaufort he formed a settlement and soon commenced building vessels for his friends and customers at the North. And he soon became extensively known, both north and south, as William Borden, the ship builder. He was the pioneer in this business at the south, and employed a large number of men from Rhode Island in the winter season, lumbering and building vessels, year after year, most of them returning before the heat of summer had become oppressive. Mr. Borden was attracted south by the excellence and cheapness of the lumber of that country and its close proximity to his ship-yard; and many others since his day have yielded to the same temptation, though few of them have become permanent citizens of the south. I recently saw a letter dated Core Sound, 1752. It was signed by Hannah Borden and directed to her mother then a widow living in Tiverton, R. I. Hannah was a Stafford and married Joseph Borden, the son of John Borden, Jr., the brother of the above William Borden. Of course William was uncle to Joseph, the husband of the letter writer, and this connection accounts for their being at Core Sound at the same time. In 1771 Hannah came to Tiverton, bringing her daughter Mary, who was married to Samuel Little, the son of Fobes of Little Compton. Hannah was a widow then and resided at Nixonton, Pasquotank County.

By patient, persevering industry, Mr. Borden accumulated a sufficiency for himself and family. He left a son, William, and four daughters, Alice, Catherine, Hope and Hannah, the last of whom was born in North Carolina. The record of those born in Rhode Island I have not been able to find." S.

44. BENJAMIN, born 1692, died Nov., 1743.

Benjamin was born in Portsmouth, 1692, but the precise date cannot be found. By the will of his father he came into possession of five hundred acres of land in Pennsylvania, being one-half of a lot of one thousand acres purchased by his father and divided equally between his two youngest sons, William and Benjamin. That he was a favorite of his father appears from a condition in his will in his favor; he directed "that if Thomas dies childless, the homestead and all the property given