

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

THOMAS PEARSALL

Genearch of American Parsell-Parcell Family

This chapter has been in part deleted. See Note, page 1041.

SECTION 1.

THOMAS PEARSALL, born 1609, son of Thomas Pearsall of England and Virginia. See Chapter 27, Section 1. He resided at Pearsall, Hellgate Neck, Maspeth, or Middleburg on Long Island, New Netherlands, later called New York. All of these names designate the same place. Children:—

1. Thomas Pearsall, Chapter 29, Section 3.
2. William Pearsall, Chapter 29, Section 17.
3. Joseph Pearsall, Chapter 29, Section 34.

Thomas Pearsall, aged 26 years, sailed October 24, 1635, from ye port of London aboard the ship *Constance*, Clement Campion, Master. [Hotten's List of Emigrants.]

With the exception of what has already been related concerning Thomas Pearsall in the preceding chapter, every item of information concerning him has been lost by the destruction of the Middleburg and Hellgate Neck records. It was fortunate, therefore, for this genealogy, that his sons settled at first in Hempstead, at Cow Neck, from which place they returned to Hellgate Neck after it had been absorbed by the town of Newtown, which brought their names upon the records of that town.

As we have seen in the preceding chapter, Thomas Pearsall and his brothers first settled on the territory which later came to be known as the out-plantations-of-Newtown, but which at first was known as Pearsalls, and later the name was changed to Hellgate-Neck-upon-Long-Island. It was the outpost of Dutch civilization, beyond this lay the unbroken wilderness of Long Island. Even when they had made a settlement farther west at Hempstead, and the Middleburg towns had been organized along-side of the Hellgate Neck outlying locations, still the place was exposed to Indian attack, specially if it should appear that these attacks were perpetrated with the tacit acquiescence of the Dutch authority.

Thomas Pearsall died quite as early as his brother Henry, namely circa 1667, when his brother Nicholas took charge of the minor children, and became like a father to them, so much so that each of the sons of Thomas Pearsall had sons called Thomas and Nicholas, and for many generations this was a distinguishing characteristic of their descendants. The name of Nicholas Pearsall appears at this time, 1683, on the tax list of Newtown.

Upon becoming of age Thomas, William and Joseph, the sons of Thomas Pearsall, did not settle at once at Hellgate Neck, but joined in a movement to settle Cow Neck in Hempstead. From this they were dispossessed in 1675 by John

Cornell. Thomas Pearsall and his brother Joseph remained in Hempstead until 1678, taking part during these three years in the civil warfare between the Cornells and the inhabitants of Hempstead. It is not possible to say how long William the other brother remained in Hempstead.

SECTION 3.

THOMAS PEARSALL, son of Thomas Pearsall of Chapter 2, Section 1, resided on Barren Island, Spectacle Island and Staten Island, all in New York Harbor. He married 1674, Christine Van Hatten. She was the granddaughter of Arent Van Hatten, the first Burgomaster of New Amsterdam. Children:— [New Netherland Register, page 55.]

1. Nicholas Pearsall, born circa 1675, Chapter 29, Section 4.
2. Henry Pearsall, Chapter 29, Section 5.
3. John Pearsall, born February 19, 1676; Chapter 29, Section 10.
4. Hannah Pearsall, married John Lanyon.
5. Eda Pearsall, married, October 21, 1707, Walter Dobbs, 'Young man from Barren Island.'
6. Jacob Pearsall resided in New York City where he was made a freeman February 5, 1744-5 during the term of Mayor Stephen Bayard. He married ——. Children:—
 1. Jacob Parcell born circa 1713. He was made a freeman of the City of New York July 8, 1748 during the term of Mayor Edward Holland.
 2. Nicholas Parcell born circa 1715. He was made a freeman of the City of New York August 29, 1750.
 3. Thomas Parcell born circa 1721. He was made a freeman of the City of New York May 9, 1756.

Thomas Pearsall first settled on Cow Neck within the bounds of Hempstead from which he was ejected by John Cornell. In this controversy he was associated with his cousins Nathaniel, Daniel, George and Thomas Pearsall, the sons of his father's brother Henry Pearsall, of Hempstead. He remained there during the early stages of this locally famous controversy when he returned to Hellgate Neck which had then become incorporated within the bounds of Newtown.

The ejectment of Thomas Pearsall from Cow Neck was one of the many incidents growing out of the warfare between the Dutch-English traders and the New England traders under the leadership of Isaac Allerton. In 1640 an effort had been made by a party who came principally from Connecticut to secure a trading place on Long Island, adjacent to the Hellgate section. They landed on the shores of Matthew Garretsons Bay within the present bounds of Hempstead and proceeded to build houses and clear the land. They were promptly ejected by the Dutch authorities. The controversy appears to have continued as a private quarrel between the two divisions of traders until 1644, when some sort of a compromise was effected whereby the seed leaf growers from Wethersfield, Connecticut, united with the Dutch-English traders to incorporate the Town of Hempstead. During all this time Captain Thomas Willit held the oral title to the Exchange place back of the City Hall in New Amsterdam, but the New Englanders were politically powerful enough to prevent its confirmation by the Governor

and the issuance of a patent for the same. As a result of the compromise between the two divisions of traders the town of Hempstead was not only incorporated with representatives of both divisions interested in the town patent, but Willitt obtained a patent to the site for the Exchange, immediately conveying to George Woolsey, the clerk or manager for Isaac Allerton, a part thereof. Apparently everything was now smoothed over so far as the Hempstead folks were concerned, but unfortunately for their peace of mind and their general happiness Captain Thomas Willitt had married Sarah Cornell on September 1, 1643, and in December, 1647, George Woolsey married Rebecca Cornell, whereby the Cornell family was introduced into the mysteries of the tobacco trade. When later the opportunity seemed to be at hand, certain members of the Cornell family, particularly Richard Cornell of the next generation to the one of which we are writing, made an effort to secure a foothold on Cow Neck in utter disregard of the rights of the proprietors of the incorporated Town of Hempstead. The Cornells attempted this intrusion under a claim based largely on the English grant, which had been the basis of the New Englanders' claims and which had been settled by their being given a share of the Patent for the Town of Hempstead. It is only fair to John Cornell to say that he appears to have been filled entirely with a desire to acquire a homestead and was not party to the ambitious scheme of his brother Richard. The result of the claims made by the Cornells so far as Thomas Pearsall was concerned was to compel him to return to his old home in the vicinity of Hellgate Neck, which was now included within the bounds of Newtown and Middleborough. [Innes, *New Amsterdam and Its People*, page 195, and *Willits Genealogy*, page 238.] The time of his return is shown by Newtown Records, Book 1, page 102, which reads, April 1, 1678, at a town meeting it is given to Thomas Parsoll of Cow Bay, a parsell of land being on the hook between the said parsall and Steven Georgeson down to the salt meadow. The property was located in the old Pearsall settlement. [Newtown Town Records, book 1, page 102.]

How as there was a voat past April the 1st 1678, concerning a parcel of land given to Thomas Parsell by further confirmation the land lying on a hook between the said Parsells land and Steven Georgeson, the inhabitants of the said town finding the said parcel of land belongeth to M. Pargar therefore the said voat to Parsell is void and of no effect. The 28 of April, 1679.

Note—It will help the student if he is reminded that at this time Thomas Pearsall, son of John Pearsall, alias Beecher, was only thirteen years of age. His father, John Pearsall, alias Beecher, had been born in England and was

about twelve years of age when Thomas Pearsall, the son of Thomas Pearsall, was born. This makes the children of the two Thomases overlap and not parallel generations.

September 29, 1679. Laid out for Thomas Parsell twelve acres of land or thereabouts joining to the land of John Desent bounded on the west by the path that goes to Mr. Hallets, on the north by the part that goes to Renors Mill. [Newtown Town Records, book 1, page 139.]

John Woolston Craft of Maspeth Kills in the bounds of Newtown, bargained to Hamfry Clay, a certain parsell of fresh meadow and upland next to Showmans (Jarmans) land running from that down to the way that people commonly go over called the run. Dated February 16, 1678, witnessed by Theophilus Phillips and William Trayler.

January 19, 1679, Hemphrey Clay assigns this agreement to Thomas Parsell. Bee it known unto all men by these presents that I, Thomas Parsell of Newtown do assign and make over unto William Alburtis of Hempstead, all my right, and title of this Bill of sale recorded page 139, I say to him the said Alburtis and his heirs for ever as their own proper good and right from me and my heirs for ever I do own to have received full satisfaction for this same as witness my hand this 22nd of February in the year 1681.—Thomas Parsell, witnessed by Johannes Lorasson and John Woolstoncraft. [*Ibid.*, book 1, page 161.]

John Woolston Croft appears to have been the next door neighbor to Thomas Pearsall and his brother George Pearsall. He was an Englishman. The rate list of 1678 for Newtown shows him living there adjoining Stephen Georgeson and Larens Peterson [N. Y. Hist. Rec., vol. 14, page 738] and he is named in the Dongan Patent of 1686, evidently in the geographic order of their holdings, along with Robert Blackwell, John Parcells, William Parcell, Jarvis Stevenson, Thomas Parcell, Steven Jorissen, John Bockout, Eli Gretie, Burger Thomas Skillman and John Woolston Croft. It is a remarkable fact that all the above are related in some way to the Pearsall family.

John H. Innes, in his History of Newtown, says of Woolston Croft,—little is known. He figures to some extent in the annals of the town for several years, covering the period about 1670 to 1690, then his name disappears completely, he having probably either died leaving none of his name or sold his property and removed to some other place, not to New York, for his name appears to be unknown in the annals of that city. His house, there is little reason to doubt, occupied the site of that which was lately known as the William Gragaw place, which stands upon the north side of the Dutch Kills road about a quarter of a mile west of the Astoria Road and may be seen with its ancient barn and rows of pear trees and remains of an old apple orchard occupying a gentle rise of ground south of the railroad at this point. Here, as early as 1678, John Woolston Croft had succeeded in clearing and bringing under cultivation about 14 acres of land, the balance of the farm of nearly 100 acres being still covered with swamp and forest.

September 29, 1679, Laid out for John Desent six or seven acres of land or thereabouts upon the east side of Johannes Lorasson's land bounded on the west by Johannes Lorasson's land, on the eastward by John Woolston Craft, on the northward by the path that goes to Renor's Mill running twenty rods in breadth lying near the Narrow Passage that goes into Hellgate Neck. John Lawrenson was among the early settlers in Middleburg, his name appearing on the Indian rate of 1656 which was levied four years after the town was planted. He was a highly educated man, deeply interested in maintaining the schools and in the continuance of religious worship. He was the son of Peter Lawrenson, a Dutch trader who was in New Amsterdam before 1633, at which time he witnessed an Indian deed, and who had a trading station on the Rappahannock River, Virginia, close to the Isle of Wight station of the Pearsalls. In 1671 John Lawrenson and his wife Abigail had passes to go from New York to Port Royal in the Carolinas, dated November.

October 13, 1679, John Desent of Mashpot Kills, in the bounds and limits of Newtown in the west Riding in Nassau, conveyed to Johannis Lorasson certain

land in Newtown situate near to a place called the Narrow Passage that goes into Hellgate bounded on the west by Johannes Lorasson, and on the west by Thomas Parsell.

April 3, 1679, it is noted that Thomas Parsell and Abram Frost shall have each of them twelve acres of land in allowance of the highway that goes through their land not interfering with any man's land. [*Ibid.*, vol. 1, page 125.]

The Court Records of Middleburg disclose: Book 285, a deed dated September 6, 1681, wherein Thomas Parsell enters an action of trespass against Sherman Georgson (Jarnun, Jorisson). November 3, 1681, George Stevenson enters an action of trespass against Thomas Parsall. Thomas Parsall's hogs got into George Stevenson's corn field. Judgment; Defendant to pay 5 shippels of Indian Corn; the costs to be divided between them; the plaintiff to bear the loss of the buckwheat because they both appeared to be in fault.

The Town Records of Newtown, Book 1, page 248, circa 1683, disclose:—Thomas Parsell: Mark obtained for his cattle a piece cut off of the end of the ear and a slit on the same ear and a piece almost from the root of the same running upwards to the end. November 15, 1682, at a town meeting Thomas Parsell did own that he had had his compliment of land, laid out by the surveyor Mr. Youngest, laid out without the highway.

Newtown Records, Book 1, page 175. April 25, 1685, Thomas Waran of Maspeth Kills in Newtown sold Johannes Lorasson a piece of land bounded by John Woolston Craft, Thomas Parsell, witnesses Mary Collwoll and Ro. Ryder, which discloses that John Lorensen returned from the Carolinas.

On the 28th of April 1686, the following appears on the records. How as there was a voat past April 1st, 1679, concerning a parcel of land given to Thomas Parsell for further confirmation the land lying on a hook between the said Parsell land and Steven Georgeson though the inhabitants of said town finding the said parcel of land belongeth to Mr. Pargar, therefore, the said voat to Parsell is made of no effect.

So far as the Parsells were concerned there were three different interests in the Newtown patent which in 1686 comprised the whole of Newtown and the outlying but dependent settlements. Thomas Pearsall's interest was vested in his sons, Thomas, who was then represented by his son Thomas, and Joseph who was then represented by his son John; while John Parsell, alias Beecher's, interest was vested in his son Thomas. For which see Newtown Book of Records, vol. 1, page 338, and Riker's Newtown, p 110.

Riker says: Great Barent Island was now to become productive under the well directed toil of a new proprietor and experienced farmer Thomas Parsell of Newtown. He contracted with Jacob Millborne, February 17, 1687, for the purchase of the Island for £600, Millborne being empowered to sell it by Samuel Seynock. Having paid his three instalments Parsell on June 23, 1690, obtained a full deed from Millborne to whom in the interim Seynock had conveyed the island Aug. 9, 1687.

April 6, 1687, Whereas Thomas Parsell and Roelof Peterson were chosen by Newtown to appraise some damages apprehended to be done by John Firman and William Prashar, the ebon, said Thomas and Peter did not bring in any damage and further saith not. To obtain the money to complete the purchase of Barren Island, Thomas Pearsall disposed of all or nearly all his holdings in Newtown, this is shown by the Land Records of Queens County, New York, which disclose: Deed Book B2, page 353, a deed dated June 21, 1690, wherein Thomas Parcel and Stenteye (Christine) his wife of Great Barn Island convey to Bourgon Brocard and Hans Tunis Covert, both of Bedford, Kings County, Long Island, New York, all that parcel of Parcel's of land and meadow with the

houses, barns and tenements, being in Mespath Kills, s^o as ye same was in the occupate and possession of ye said Thomas Parcel and also the land that was before in ye possession of Burger Joris being groat about 29 morgans and 5 morge of meadow according to patent thereof, and also 10 acres of land formerly belonging to Peter Rowliffe and 10 acres formerly belonging to Johannes Lawrence (son) and also 6 acres or more formerly belonging to Jan Decent and 12 acres in the commons belonging to said Thomas Parcel and also 2 lotts of land formerly belonging to Andre Bord, containing 22 acres of upland and 10 acres of fresh meadow and one parcel of upland formerly unto Edward Stevens known by the mark trees as also the meadow formerly belonging unto Humphrey Clay and lastly a home lot formerly belonging unto Jan Bockhold all situate and being between Burgers Huyrs and the Narrow Passage, witnesses, Robert Blackwell, Edward Antil and John Loyd.

Thomas Pearsall resided in New York City for a short time. The tax lists of 1695-1699 for the City of New York, vol. 2, East Ward, give Thomas Pearsall, house No. 221, no street given, real estate £1800, 11s. 6d. 1½, house No. 220 £800 5s. 0d. 6 gr.

The Land Records of Queens County, New York, disclose in Deed Book B2, page 340, a deed dated February 1, 1698, wherein Edward Stevenson of Newtown conveys to Thomas Parcel of Barren Island and John Convers of Newtown land at Mespath Kills on Hellgate Neck on the path to William Halletts, bounded by Edward Stevenson.

Petition of Thomas Parsell of Great Barns Island read to the Council of the Province, and in consideration of the charge he hath been at in the erecting of a mill on the said Island, and that the same is for the benefit of his neighbours, ordered that the Solicitor General prepare Letters Patents for four rodss square into the water on the North side of the Island at Little Hellgate to the Petitioner, that he may make a dock or such works as be necessary for the security of his mill, at a pepper-corn rent, if demanded. April 13, 1702, Minutes of Council of New York. [Calendar of State Papers, America and West Indies.]

Daniel Pearsall, son of Henry Pearsall of Hempstead, in his will dated April 29, 1702-3, makes his cousin, Thomas Pearsall, one of his executors, and Nathaniel Pearsall, brother of Daniel, by his will dated October 20, 1703, makes Thomas Pearsall, Jr., one of the overseers of his estate.

The Lands Records of Queens County, New York, disclose the following quitclaim deed dated March 10, 1706-7 and recorded in Book B2, page 342, whereas Thomas Parcel of Great Barns Island, New York, and John Convers late of Newtown in Queens Co., on Nassau Island, decd. Feb. 1, 1698, did purchase ye inheritance and fee simple of a certain piece or parcel or tract of woodland situate lying and being in Hellgate Neck in ye limits of Newtown aforesaid, on the path that leads to William Halletts and the way that leads from the Narrow Passage to the Poor Bowery, bounded by John Stevenson, Thomas quitclaims to John Convers.

Riker points out that this Thomas Parsall and his wife Christine conveyed the north half of Barren Island, June 4, 1722, to their son John Parsell and on March 29, 1723, they conveyed the south half to their son-in-law John Lanyon, husband of their daughter Hannah Parsel. [History of Harlem, by James Riker, Jr., page 599.]

SECTION 17.

WILLIAM PARSELL, son of Thomas Pearsall, Chapter 29, Section 1; married first, Maria Van der Veer; second, Maria Pieters. Peter Corneliussen Van der Veer was one of the leading merchants of New York in 1653, in which year he, with other merchants, was asked to provide additional taxes to meet the extraordinary requirements of that period of the history of New Amsterdam and New Netherland. Child by first marriage:—

1. Walter Parsell, baptised April 1, 1702, at New York Dutch Reformed Church; "de mooder selt hielt de Kind-Schend en ter drop" (the mother held the child at the Baptism), Chapter 29, Section 18.
Children of second marriage:—
2. Nicholas Parsell, baptised October 2, 1706, at New York Dutch Reformed Church; sponsors Jacob Phoenix and Maria Pieters, moder van der Kinderen. Chapter 29, Section 28.
3. Yte Parsell, baptised October 2, 1706, New York Dutch Reformed Church; sponsor moder van de Kinderen.
4. Jacob Parcell.
5. Thomas Parcell, Chapter 29, Section 32.
6. Abraham Parcell, Chapter 29, Section 33.
7. Abigail Parcell, born 1709; resided in New York City; married, November 11, 1727, Hendrick Baizer, on License of the Governor, dated November 16, 1727. [N. Y. Bio. and Gen. Register, vol. 27, page 39, and vol. 3, page 122.]
8. Catharine Parcell, predeceased her father.
9. William Parcell, born circa 1709; bapt. 1712, in Bergen Village; sponsors, Helwig and wife. He predeceased his father. He was buried March 25, 1732, by Arent Van Hock. [Genealogy of New Jersey, page 1218.]

In the list of Captain Peter Schuyler's Company, in King William's War, June 1, 1692, appears the name William Parcell.

Here also we must notice a curious coincidence: William Parsell, son of Thomas Pearsall, who was born circa 1676, married twice, both of his wives being named Maria, whereas William Parsell, son of John Parsell, alias Beecher, who was not born until circa 1663, married a wife named Mary.

SECTION 34.

JOSEPH PEARSALL, son of Thomas Pearsall, Chapter 29, Section 1; resided at Newtown and Cow Neck, in Hempstead, Long Island, New York. Children:—

1. Thomas Pearsall, Chapter 29, Section 35.
2. John Pearsall, Chapter 29, Section 41.
3. Nicholas Pearsall, Chapter 29, Section 42.
4. Catharine Pearsall, married March 23, 1701, Thomas Studd.
5. Isabel Pearsall (Jezebel), 'young daughter from Newtown,' married January 17, 1706, Abraham Vredenburg.
6. Sarah Parsell, resided in New York City; married January 17, 1706, Johannes Lamontanye, born 1681. He was admitted a freeman of New Amsterdam, 1716. Succeeded his father as Sexton of the New Amsterdam Dutch Reformed Church and died very aged. His will made in health, December 12, 1770, and was proved October 17, 1774.

The effort made by the town of Hempstead to settle Cow Neck having failed, Joseph Pearsall, in 1678, returned to Hellgate Neck, then included within the bounds of Newtown. The Land Records of Newtown disclose the following:—Deed Book I, page 155, an entry which recites,—land laid out for Joseph Pasall, lying near Trauds meadow, bounded on the north by the road, on the south by the road to Hellgate, also by Jonathan Hazard and Theophilus Phillips.