

James Parshall, the Emigrant.

FAMILY I

JAMES¹ [1], was born, beyond a doubt, in England, probably about the middle of the seventeenth century. There are no records extant showing the exact date, but the fact that he died about twenty-three years after his marriage indicates that he had not, in all probability, reached a very advanced age. He *d.* at Southold, Suffolk County, N. Y., 15 Sept., 1701,* *m.* probably at Easthampton, Suffolk County, about 1678, Elizabeth, only *da.* of David and Mary (Lerringman) Gardiner, of Easthampton.†

Children‡

- 2 I. Mary² *b.* abt. 1679.
- 3 II. Israel² *b.*—Mch., 1680. FAM. II.
- 4 III. David² *b.* 1683. FAM. III.
- 5 IV. Benjamin² *prob. d. inf.*
- 6 V. Margaret² *m.* 1710, Caleb Howell.§

The first record of him that we have is a deed, under date of Dec. 12, 1679, by which it appears that he was at that time a resident of the Isle of Wight, or Gardiner's Island, as it is now known, and which was included within the limits of the township of Easthampton. As this deed is the earliest known record in which his name is mentioned I reproduce it here in full:

* Rec. Probate Court; Early L. I. Wills, 227.
† Moore's Index of S'old; II. S'old Town Rec. 266; Id. 438; Early L. I. Wills, 226.
‡ I. Doc. Hist. of N. Y. 453.
§ Salmon Record.

"This indenture made ye twelfth of December in the two and thirtyeth yeare of ye reighn of our Sovereigne Lord Charles ye Second by the grace of God King of England &c and in ye yeare of our Lord Christ one thousand six hundred seventy-nine Between John Yongs Senr of the Towne of Southold on the one part and James Parshall of ye Ile of Whight in New England on the other part Witnesseth that the said John Yongs for and in consideration of a full satisfaction to me payd have granted and sould and by these presents doe grant and sell unto the said James Parshall, the first division of Acquabauk being five lotts of upland which the sd Yongs purchased of Joseph Horton and John Tucker, butting and bounding as followith—To the North Sea or Sound North—and to the East the land of Mary Wells, and to the sd John Yongs his late division West:—Also five lotts of meadow lying and being on the South side the River and on the East side of the deepe Kreek butting and bounding as followeth—on the North west to a tree marked in manner of a crows foot to a pine tree marked with ye sd Yongs his mark South Est. To have and to hold &c.

"In witness whereof I the sd John Yongs have hereunto sett my hand and seale the day and yeare first above written.

"JOHN YONGS"

"Witnesses

Benjamin Yongs
Thomas Osman"

"Entered ye 22d of the 1 Moth 1679
Pr Benjamin Yo : Rdr"*

It was prior, in all probability, to the date of this deed that he had married his wife. It is of record that his eldest son, Israel, was born in Mch. 1680, and there is every probability that his *dau.*, Mary was older than her brother. Her name is mentioned first in contemporary records which would be absolutely inexplicable on any other hypothesis. This would indicate a date hardly later than 1678 for his marriage. The parents of Elizabeth Gardiner were married, 4 June, 1657,† hence she could not have been more than 20 years of age at the time of her marriage, and may have been two or three years younger. Her parents had three sons beside the daughter Elizabeth, but as the dates of their birth are not of record, we have no means of knowing whether she was the eldest child. As to the age of James, we can only conjecture: It is not probable that he was more than 40 at the time of his marriage and he was probably

* I. S'old Town Rec. 379 &c.
† II. Sav. Gen. Dict. 225.

considerably younger. The males of the early generations of the family in America seem to have died comparatively young, and it is probable that at the time of James' death, he had not reached his sixtieth year. His eldest son died at 58; his second son at 43; his third son probably in childhood, and the only one of his grandsons of whom we can speak with certainty, died at about 50 years of age. I believe the birth of James may safely be placed between 1640 and 1650.

That he was of English ancestry and a descendant of the family mentioned in the preceding chapter is morally certain. The family was a small one and the similarity of name leaves no room for doubt on the subject. There is a tradition in one branch of the family (the descendants of Jonathan⁸) that the ancestor was a Huguenot refugee, but this is untenable. The very fact that the tradition is confined absolutely to this one branch is sufficient to disprove it. The Huguenot strain in this branch, if any, doubtless came through marriage with the daughter of some of the Huguenot refugees who had settled in Orange County, N. Y., where this branch of the family located at an early period.

Elizabeth Gardiner, wife of James, was the only daughter of David Gardiner, Esq., second proprietor of Gardiner's Island, and granddaughter of Capt. Lion Gardiner, the founder of the family which bears his name and the first proprietor of the estate. David, her father, was educated in London, where, 4 June, 1657, he married Mary Lerringman, a widow, of St. Margarets, Westminster.* He died very suddenly at Hartford, Conn., whither he had gone, probably on public business, 10 July, 1689.† His grave was discovered in 1836, in the ancient burying ground back of the Congregational Church at Hartford, and bears this inscription:

* II. Sav. Gen. Dict. 225.

† Grave at Hartford, Ct.; Conn. Hist. Col. 59.

"HERE LYETH THE BODY OF MR. DAVID GARDINER
OF GARDINER'S ISLAND DECEASED JULY 10, 1689
IN THE FIFTY FOURTH YEAR OF HIS AGE.
WELL, SICK, DEAD IN ONE HOVRS SPACE.
"Engrave the remembrance of Death on thy heart
When as thov doest see how swiftly hovrs depart"*

Her grandfather, Lyon, or Lion, as he wrote it, born in 1599,[†] of English parentage, was an engineer in the service of the Prince of Orange in the Netherlands. On 11 Aug., 1635, with his wife, and a single female servant, Elizabeth Colet, and eleven other male passengers, he embarked at London in a small vessel, the Bachilor, of only 25 tons burthen, and reached Boston, 28 Nov., in the same year.[‡] In possession of the Gardiner family, on Gardiner's Island, is an old Bible, on a blank page of which is written, in the handwriting of Lion Gardiner, the following:

"In the year of our Lord, 1635, the 10th of July, came I, Lion Gardiner and Mary my wife from Worden, a town in Holland, where my wife was born, being the daughter of one Diricke Willemsen, deureant; her mother's name was Hachir, and her Aunt, sister of her mother, was the wife of Wouter Leanderdson, old burger Muster, dwelling in the hostrade, over against the Bruser in the Unicorn's head; her brother's name was Punce Garretson, also old burger Muster. We came from Worden to London, and from there to New England, and dwelt at Saybrook fort four years—it is at the mouth of Connecticut river—of which I was commander, and there was born to me a son, named David, 1636, the 29th of April, the first born in that place, and in 1638 a daughter was born, named Mary, 30th of August, and then I went to an Island of my own, which I had bought and purchased of the Indians, called by them Monchonack, by us, Isle of Wight, and there was born another daughter, named Elizabeth, the 14th September, 1641, she being the first child of English parents that was born there."*

He commanded the fort at Saybrook during the Pequot War and was a man of great energy and force of character. He died late in 1663. The following is a description of his tomb at Easthampton:

* Conn. Hist. Col. 59; II. Sav Gen. Dict. 225.

† Grave at Easthampton.

‡ II. Sav. Gen. Dict. 226.

"On a sunny knoll in the old burial ground of Easthampton, (L. I.) amid blue-eyed grass and cinquefoil, rises the granite tomb of the first English planter within the limits of the present State of New York. On the slab beneath the roof whose pediments bear the escutcheon of his family, lies in helmet, cuirass, and greaves, the effigy of Lion Gardiner. On the plinth is inscribed, on the four sides, a brief summary of his life:

"An officer of ye English army and an Enginery of ye Master of Workes Fortification of ye Leaguers of ye Prince of Orange in ye Low Countries. In 1635 he came to New England.

"In service of a Company of Lords and Gentlemen He build'd and command'd Say Brook Forte

"After completed his terme of service he moved in 1639 to his Island of which he was sole owner. Born 1599, he died in this towne in 1663.'"

It appears to have been several years after the purchase of the land at Aquebogue, before James finally removed to Southold. The rate lists of 1683 do not contain his name, but in the census of Southold taken in 1686,† it appears that he was then a resident of that place; his family consisting of "six white males, two white females, three male slaves, and two female slaves." The names of the different members are not given. The census of 1698,‡ however, gives the names of James and his family as follows:

James Pershall
Margaret Pershall
Mary Pershall
Israel Pershall
David Pershall
Benjamin Pershall
Margarett Pershall Junjs.

Whether the name of Margaret is an error for Elizabeth or was the name of a second wife, evidence fails to disclose. I strongly incline to the former hypothesis. We have no record of the death of Elizabeth, nor of a second marriage of James. Elizabeth was living June 26th, 1690, as the following receipt to the executors of her father's estate will show:

* Early Long Island, 216.
† XXXIII. N. Y. Col. Mss. 94.
‡ I. Doc. Hist. of N. Y. 453.

"Receipt and release of James Parshall of Southold to John, David and Lyon Gardiner dated 26th June 1690, for ninety pounds current mony as a legacy and for any other sum due Elizabeth Parshall his wife, and daughter of David Gardiner late deceased.

"Witnesses

Joseph Griffin

Stephen Baily

Entd pr Benj: Yo. Rdr.

mark of

JAMES X PARSHALL

"I do also hereby engage, in case of a nonpayment of the sd above obligation never to exact or desire any more than ninety pounds, as my wife's and my full proportion of the estate of my father in law Mr David Gardiner deceased.

"Witness my hand and seal 26th June 1690.

"Memorandum: If the sd Estate shall be wasted or destroyed by robbery or fire before the obligation of ninety pounds be performed then I am to bear my proportion of what shall be wasted or destroyed—June 26th 1690—

mark of

"JAMES X PARSHALL

"Entd pr Benj: Yo. Rdr—"

His will, made in 1692, a little more than two years after the receipt set forth on the preceding page, mentions his wife, but without naming her. I insert that extremely interesting document in this place:

"In ye name of God Amen—Southold this 14th. of Oct. 1692 I James Parshall of the town of S'hold in ye County of Suffolk upon Long Island in ye Province of N. York being weak in body but of sound memory do ordain & establish these presents to be my last will & testamt in manner & form following—First—I bequeath my soul to Jesus Christ my merciful Redeemer & my body to ye earth by decent burial in ye last assured hopes of its resurrection again at ye last day & as to my outward estate all my just debts being first paid & funeral charges allowed for by my executors I do will & dispose as followeth—Impms I do give and bequeath unto my two sons Israel & David all my accommodations of both upland & meadow to them & their heirs forever equally to be divided between them two only my eldest son Israel is to have the eastermost side of this my accommodation of upland in Occabauke with all the improvements thereon that is to say my dwelling house barn outhouses fences orchards & improved lands—also my will is that all my implements of husbandry & arms be equally divided between my sd two sons. 2ly I do give & bequeath to my beloved wife one bed with all the furniture thereunto belonging—4ly I do give & bequeath her choice of my Indian Girls also my will is that my wife enjoy one room of my dwelling house & half my orchard during her widowhood and no longer— 5ly I do give and bequeath to my eldest daughter

* II. S'old Town Rec. 266.

Mary one bed with all ye furniture thereunto belonging Also I give unto my sd daughter my other Indian Girl— 6ly my will is yt all ye rest of my estate shall be equally divided between my wife & all my surviving children— 7ly My will is yt & if my two grown Indian slaves do serve faithfully five years (that then and not else they shall be free) Lastly—My mind & will is yt my beloved brothers in law John Gardiner & David Gardiner together with my friend Mr. Thomas Mapes be executors to this my last Will & testamt. And I do advise them to put out my two sons to such trades as they shall incline to learn for the confirmation hereof I have hereunto set my hand & fixed my seal in Southold this 14 day of Oct in ye year of our Lord God, 1692.

JAMES PARSHALL [Seal] *

"Signed sealed published & declared before us

"Evan Davise
Samuel Swazy
Tho. Mapes"

The following minute of the proceedings on the probate of the foregoing instrument is also of record:

"By the tenor of these presents know ye yt on ye 28 day of Oct. 1701 at ye manor of St. Georges in ye County of Suffolk before ye Honoble Coll William Smith Judge of the Prerogative Court in ye sd County was proved & approved ye last will & testamt of James Parshall late of S'hold in ye sd County deceased on ye 15 day of Sept. 1701 who by his sd will did nominate and appoint his brothers in law John & David Gardiner & Thomas Mapes his executors—and ye administration of the goods & chattels of ye sd deceased was granted to ye sd David Gardiner & Thomas Mapes."*

A careful perusal of this will makes it appear probable that all the children of James, mentioned in the Census of 1698, were born prior to the date thereof. Benjamin probably died in childhood as no records of him are extant. The bare mention of his name in the Census of 1698 is all that is known of him. The Census of 1698, also contains the last record of his eldest daughter Mary, "Margaret Junjr," married Caleb Howell in 1710,† after which she also disappears from the records.

James was "a gentleman," in the sense in which the word was used in Colonial times, and a man of considerable means, which he probably brought with him from England. The following, relative to James, appears in a work relating to Long Island:

* Early L. I. Wills of Suffolk Co. 226.
† Salmon Rec.

"Israel and David Parshall were sons of James Parshall, who married Elizabeth, the only daughter of David Gardiner, who lived on the Pesapunk Neck, at Mattituck, and afterwards became the second proprietor of Gardiner's Island. Of the Parshalls we have no account. James, who styles himself 'Gent of the Isle of Wight,' with his wife figures conspicuously in the settlement of his father-in-law's estate.

"He owned and occupied large tracts of land at Aquelogue, lived upon the North Road, and left his estate to his sons Israel and David. The name of Parshall is not now, we believe, to be found in Southold, or even in Riverhead Town."*

As a curiosity, rather than as possessing any particular genealogical value, I insert the following quaint deed of an Indian girl:

"Know all men by these presents that I James Paresall belonging to Southold in ye County of Suffolk on ye Island of Nassaw yeoman have sold and delivered unto John Parker of Southampton fuller an Indian Garle aged about eight years daughter of one Dorcas an Indian woman, which said Sarah was my slave for her life time: and I doe by these presents sell her ye sd Sarah unto him the said John Parker dureing her naturall life, to be unto him ye said Parker his heires and assigns as his or their proper estate; and I doe bind myself my heirs, executs and administrats to make good ye sale of ye above Indian gairle to him ye said Parker his heirs and assigns; and I doe acknowledge to have received of him ye said Parker for and in consideration of said Indian garle as full satisfaction, the full and just sum of sixteen pounds current money of the province.

"In witness whereof I have hereunto sett my hand and seale this 27th day of March 1698.

"Witnesses

Joseph Moore

Samuel Clark---

"Entd May ye 10th 1712"†

his

JAMES I PEARSALL

mark

The place of burial of James is unknown, though doubtless it is some ancient cemetery in or near Southold. No stone marks his final resting place. The place of his sepulcher is as problematical as that of Moses. The cemetery at Mattituck, where his sons Israel and David lie buried was not opened until 1715, some fourteen years after the death of James, hence it is not probable that he rests there. The following from an unpublished manu-

* II. S'old Town Rec. 438.

† Id. 179 &c.

script by the Rev. Mr. Craven, pastor of the Presbyterian church at Mattituck, though relating only to the cemetery at that place will be of interest in this connection:

Mattituck Burying Ground.

In 1809, the Burying Ground was already nearly one hundred years old, and many were its occupants. Some were probably buried here in 1715, the very year it was given to the parish. No stone in it bears an older date than 1723, but this is not strange, for all the stones had to be brought from a distance, most of them from England, at considerable expense. Those strange, little blue slate gravestones of the last century cost more comparatively than fine marble monuments to-day. *Not one half* the graves, perhaps not *one third*, are marked. There are thirty-five stones placed earlier than 1750. There are twenty-five that mark the graves of men and women whose lives dated into the 17th century. It is not improbable that men and women born before Southold Town was settled in 1640, *lie in unmarked graves* in Mattituck churchyard."

It should be a matter of keen regret that the first ancestor of our family in America lies in a forgotten grave.