

WILLIAM HARVEY (abt. 1614-1691)
 JOANNA HUCKER

The Harvey ancestry was noted for its gentlemen of high ranking positions in England. Thomas Harvey (7-17) was known to have four children and three of them were destined to leave their homeland to seek a new life in America. William was 22 years of age and his brother Thomas, 19, when they accompanied their married sister and her husband, Anthony Slocum, on the venturous journey across the ocean to the Boston Harbor, in 1636, sixteen years after the Pilgrims set foot in Plymouth.

The Harvey line of ancestry has been included on the confidence placed upon the more recent research of Brainard T. Peck, 1968, rather than the speculations of Oscar Jewell Harvey, 1899, in his writing of "The Harvey Book." This book, however, gives a tremendous insight into the Harvey ancestry and the circumstances of events through the years in England. The question of finding the links of kinship of our New England ancestors to those of the homeland has required much searching by reputable genealogists. It is in this respect that when Mr. Peck announced that Experience Harvey, the daughter of William and Joanna Hucker, was, in fact, the one who married our Jonathan Briggs (7-9) that this fact gave us the link that satisfies both the Harvey and Briggs line in this study.¹ What had earlier been questionable data must now be accepted on the strength of someone of repute.

A lengthy account of William is given in Oscar Jewell Harvey's writing of which the most revealing incidents have been selected for this writing.

"William Harvey, son of Thomas, was born in Somersetshire, England about 1614. Accompanied by his brother, Thomas, he came to America in 1636 and settled at Dorchester (now Milton). . . . During the first few years of the Massachusetts Colony, Dorchester was the first settlement in the Boston Bay area. It is now included within the municipal limits of Boston but for many years it was the most important town in Massachusetts . . .

"In 1637 William was one of the company of forty-six 'first and ancient purchasers' so called, who 'feeling much straightened for want of room' purchased from Massasoit, the chief sachem of the Wampanoag tribe of Indians, land lying thirty-two miles south of Boston, in the Colony of New Plymouth (now known as Taunton) (map #2). . ." ²

It seems incredible that in so short a time after Dorchester was settled, the planters of the Bay Harbor's shoreline should become so crowded that explorations into wilderness areas further inland became necessary. Such was the case and Oscar Harvey goes on to explain this in the following words:

"During the summer of 1638, twenty ships arrived from England and at least 3,000 persons were in need of plantation ground. The newly acquired land of New Plymouth was quickly settled and since many of the new proprietors of Taunton had come from their native home of Taunton, England in Somersetshire, they gave their new purchase on the 3 March 1639, the name of Taunton - 'in honor and love to our dear native country, and owning it a great mercy of God to bring us to this place, and setting of us on lands of our own, bought with our money in peace, in the midst of the heathen, for a possession for ourselves and for our posterity after us as they afterwards declared'. . .

"The great immigration into New England under the Massachusetts Bay Charter, which began in 1630, continued for a period of ten years or more, or until the cessation in England of persecution for non-conformity. It is estimated that during this period 20,000 persons came to these shores.

"It was not the peasantry of Great Britain, nor her paupers, nor her fortune hunters that founded New England. It was her staunch yeomanry, her intelligent mechanics, her merchants, her farmers, her middle classes - and of devout women not a few - whose enlarged vision beheld a realm of freedom beyond the ocean, and whose independent spirits distained the yoke of oppression, were it to be imposed either on the soul or the body." 3

William Harvey's name appears in the list of early proprietors. He was the owner of eight shares in the new purchase. The first recorded marriage in the new settlement was Nov. 8, 1638 and in the following Spring the second marriage took place. It was that of William Harvey and Joane (Joanna) Hucker, April 2, 1639. In the latter part of that year, or early in 1640, William and Joanna removed to Dorchester (Boston) retaining their land holdings in Taunton, however. They remained in Boston during which period four children were born to them. The family then returned to Taunton. Their home lot was on what is now the north side of Cohonnet Street, between what is known as Taunton Green (formerly the towns Commons or Training Field), and Mill River.

In 1661 William Harvey was Excise Commissioner; in 1664 and in 1677 he was a Representative to the General Court (Plymouth Colony); in 1665 he was chosen as a selectman, holding many judicial powers and duties in Taunton for several years; he was one of ten men chosen by the town to draw up lists of purchasers as inhabitants for the area. He was one of a committee of seven appointed in 1672 to manage the purchase of certain tracts of land from "Philip, alias Metacum, Chief Sachem," who was the son and successor of Massasoit, and is known in history as King Philip "the most wily and sagacious Indian of his time."

The year 1675 brought with it the gloom and horror of an Indian war. The first overt act of hostility by Metacum (King Philip) happened at Swanzey, about twelve miles to the south of Taunton. Several houses were burned and men slaughtered. The news of a widespread consolidation of many Indian tribes within central and eastern sections of Massachusetts had been formed under the leadership of King Philip with the design of exterminating the white race from the land.

Taunton was selected for a rendezvous for troops from Plymouth, Boston and elsewhere, because of its central location. For reason of its position, it became a constant point of attack by the savages. Its dwellings were often consumed and their inmates butchered. In the Spring of 1676 the destruction of the village was so eminent that the Cape towns invited the people of Taunton to take up their abode with them until the war could be ended. The offer was declined in a remarkable letter subscribed in the name of the town of Taunton and written by William Harvey. Rather than include the letter in this writing, because of its length, it can be read in appendix #9. Briefly, it might be stated here that the opinion of the people was that their removal

to any other settlement would render it a more serious danger for those who offered their help. The letter, further, made a plea, "beseeching you not to cease to pray for us that the Lord would heal their sins and spare a measure of the cup of His indignation as seems good to Him to order us to drink." 4

William experienced this period of war but none of the family died as a result of Indian atrocities.

William Harvey's death, as given by the author of quote, occurred at Taunton in the summer of 1691 at the age of about 77. He married a second wife, _____ Slocum about 1650 so Joanna his first wife died prior to that year. One author stated that she died in 1649. As the name of William's second wife was not mentioned in his Will, found in the Bristol County, Mass. Probate Records Book 1, page 41, it becomes evident that she, too, preceded him in death. Because of the length of his Will in disposing of his extensive properties, we omit its inclusion here.

The children of William and Joanna (Hucker) Harvey are given below as stated by Oscar Harvey in his writing:

1. Abigail Harvey, b. 25 April 1640; died 20 Aug. 1691
2. Thomas Harvey, b. 18 Dec 1641; died 1728
3. Experience Harvey, b. 4 March 1644 (md. Thomas her cousin according to the above author but later established as Jonathan Briggs)
4. Joseph Harvey, b. 8 Dec. 1645; died 1691
5. Jonathan Harvey, b. 1647 in Taunton, Massachusetts; died 1691 5

The four older children were born in Boston. There were three more children born to William and his second wife and they were listed:

6. William Harvey, b. 27 Aug. 1651
7. Thomas Harvey, b. 10 Aug. 1652
8. John Harvey, b. 5 Feb. 1655 6

One author stated that William, the father died 15 Aug. 1658, but Brainard Peck does not accept this statement. He records William's death as the summer of 1691. 7 There seems to have been a question about the possibility of another William in the area. Records can be confusing and not always can we find the truth for want of valid research.

In the year 1691, William the father and three of his children, Abigail (1), Joseph (4) and Johathan (5) of his first family passed away, leaving only Thomas (2), for Experience (3) passed away in 1688/9 after, or at the time of, the birth of her thirteenth child, whom they named Experience. All thirteen of the children are listed in the story of Jonathan and Experience (Harvey) Briggs in (7-9).

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| 1. #2 Vol 2 chart (17-42) | 5. ibid pp. 33, 34 |
| 2. #46 p. 27, 28 | 6. ibid p. 34 |
| 3. ibid pp. 28, 26 | 7. #2 Vol 2 sheet (17-42) |
| 4. ibid p. 31 | |