

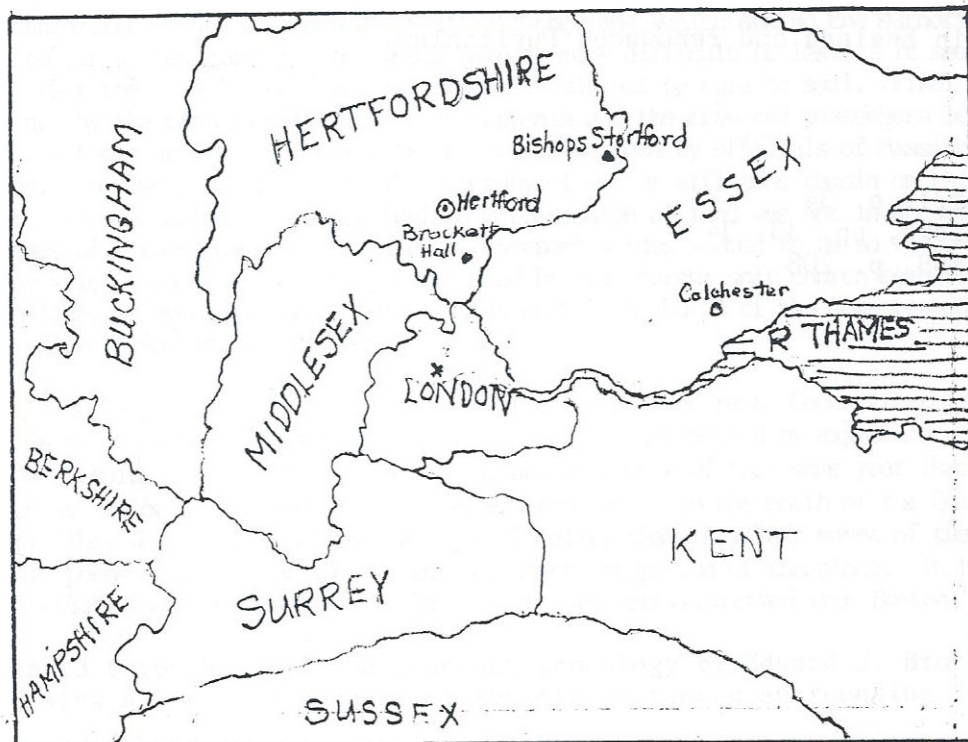
SIR JOHN BROCKETT

Sir John Brockett, father of John the immigrant, was of Brockett Hall, Hertfordshire, England (map 1 #27). When his son embraced the Puritanical ideas, he disinherited him. Sir John had been knighted by Queen Elizabeth and his son gave up all claims to the title and estates of the Brocketts in England rather than relinquish his religious convictions. "Sir John not only disinherited his oldest son John, but had his name removed from all the family records, so that it should never appear in any published lists of the family, or the connection with himself ever be traced." ¹

Such a procedure, however, is not foolproof, for in New England John's identity was recorded and later research by the Brockett descendants has uncovered the devious plot of Sir John, and all in behalf of his son's posterity in America.

"In 1899, application was made to the parish clerk at Hertford, Eng. to make research to establish these claims. In reply it was written: 'I am told that the first son of Sir John Brockett was outlawed, is it not possible that this first son is the one who migrated to America and settled there between 1630-1635.'" ²

Since the above search, others have been made which further uncover the intrigue which made John Brockett Jr.'s ancestry so secretive and obscure in the English records. Our debt to the early writers of New England records as well as the research done by family genealogists can hardly, if ever, be paid, unless our personal endeavors to carry on from where they left off could be termed a partial payment.



Sir John was living during the time of difficult and radical changes in English thought. It was a time when trends were leading many away from arbitrary religion. No doubt he was seeing himself enveloped in a struggle that was threatening his domestic peace and obstructing, probably, his designs for his son's future. When John, his son, espoused Puritanism, the blow must have been very severe and deserving of a severe reproach.

Most royalty supporters hated the Puritans or any group of dissenters or separatists; regarding them as apponents of the divine right of kings or any of the king's delegated clergy.

"The Anglican or, as it was called in America, the Episcopal Church, was now the established church of the nation, commonly referred to as the Church of England. Anglicanism was a compromise between Catholicism and Protestantism. It was Protestant because it refused to acknowledge the headship of the pope, and because it repudiated certain Catholic doctrines and practices, such as the mass, confession, monasticism, and celibacy of the clergy. It was Catholic because it was governed by bishops, and its services included processions, kneeling, vested choirs, and alters. Puritanism was primarily a movement to make the Anglican Church, or the Church of England, completely Protestant. 'Pure' Christianity, according to the Puritans, meant that a church should be governed by laymen, not by bishops; that a minister should be a preacher, not a priest; that a church building should be a plain structure without crosses, alters, or stained-glass windows; and that services should be confined to sermons, prayers, Bible reading, and congregational singing. To a Puritan, almost anything in a religious service that was symbolic, was idolatrous." ³

Sir John Brockett of Hertfordshire, lived within easy distance from London and had, no doubt, prestigious connections with many of the more wealthy people of England. He had much in worldly goods and title to offer his son had he remained in England and renounced Puritanism.

1. #71, p. 34
2. *ibid*, pp. 33, 34
3. #68, p. 208