

Philip, Martha, Married Overseas?

That for a number of years our ancestor Philip was seafaring we know by the evidence of two deeds⁶¹ to which he was party, of dates respectively 1708 and 1710. In the first of these he is named a "sailor," in the second a "mariner." For how long his occupation was seafaring we have no direct means of knowing. But since at 1708 he must have been around thirty years of age, (judging by the date, 1695, of the birth of his eldest child), it seems a reasonable surmise that at that date he would scarcely be just entering upon a calling so strenuous as was the seafaring of those days. Moreover, by the fact that in addition to having a growing family⁶² to care for, he had acquired by that time the wherewithal to add to his home acreage some several acres more, he during the preceding years must have been engaged in a fairly remunerative occupation, and scarcely then would he be exchanging this for the hazards of seafaring. Accordingly it seems entirely reasonable to assume that seafaring had been his calling for some years before this 1708 deed in which he was named a sailor, as, by the evidence of the 1710 deed, (wherein he is named a mariner) it was his calling for some years thereafter.

Since, as we learn from historical accounts of the Huguenot exodus⁶³ from France at that time many of the young men sought escape by giving service on ships bound for foreign lands, and that many of these continued this seafaring for a longer time, it seems a justifiable surmise that our ancestor Philip must have been one of these, and that accordingly this was his occupation at the first

of his coming to Beverly, and the one followed by him until some time after the 1710 deed at which time his occupation was still given as seafaring ("mariner").

It seems quite likely, too, that our Philip may have been seafaring for a couple of years before purchasing a home in Beverly, for in the light of history⁶⁴ scarcely would a young Huguenot refugee just arrived from France have had the wherewithal to purchase this home with its partly developed six acres of land. We may, if this assumption be correct, explain Philip's not being English-speaking at the time of this purchase, as the record above quoted seems to indicate, by the further assumption that these earlier years of his seafaring were spent on ships where only French was spoken. But in the meantime what of his wife, Martha, and their eldest child born 1695? Perhaps as was the case for many Huguenot refugees, Martha found shelter on the English owned but French-speaking island of Jersey or Guernsey⁶⁵ until Philip could provide a home for her in the new world.

That seafaring was not this ancestor's inherited occupational interest seems plainly evidenced by several indications from the records. Quite decidedly indicating that his ancestry was not seafaring is the fact that in purchasing a home in the new world, to which he evidently came in early manhood, he chose this in Beverly, which, while not far from the sea was not a seaport town. Moreover, that his ancestry was land-owning seems indicated by the fact that this purchase of a home included six acres of land;⁶⁶ and further by the fact that he later added to this acreage by the purchase of other acres in Beverly and nearby, as evidenced by the deeds of 1708 and 1710.

Moreover that husbandry and not seafaring was our Philip's inherited occupational interest seems entirely evidenced by the fact⁶⁷ that while still in the health and strength of middle life he removed from Beverly to the entirely farming district of Hopkinton where for some twenty years he devoted himself to the development of one hundred acres of land into the worthwhile farm described in his will.⁶⁸ And there is further evidence in the fact that none of his sons were seafaring; all who grew up eventually established themselves at Hopkinton where they too engaged in farming.

By the fact that Philip was named a "weaver" in the deed for the sale of his Beverly home, 1723, it might seem at first thought that in giving up seafaring he had intended to make weaving his occupation. But upon reflective consideration of the records, this seems scarcely to have been the case. For since, by the evidence of the 1710 deed, he was seafaring at that date, and quite likely for some time thereafter, and since by 1720 he had acquired the land at Hopkinton which he soon began to farm, his having turned to weaving seems more likely to have been by way of supplementing his income while attempting the husbanding of his Beverly land to which he had probably given some time even while seafaring.

It is indeed a matter of interest to us, his descendants, to know that our immigrant ancestor Philip, a Huguenot refugee with probably a wife and child at the time of his coming to the new world was able while meeting the needs of a growing family, to accumulate sufficient property during the years of his seafaring to enable him to turn to an occupational interest of his choice, which he so far successfully followed during the remaining more than twenty years of his life that he left to his family a worthy farm-inheritance, as we know by his will,⁶⁹ probated in 1743.