

Spelling of the Name

Of our Philip's ancestry we have as yet no knowledge. Nor, as above noted, have we any record concerning him before his arrival at Beverly. Doubtless before long someone of his descendants may turn to the French records of his time, with the hope of finding there a record of his birth, and of his marriage, or something concerning him during the earlier years of his life. As a help for such research we present here what in the light of our records seems likely to have been the French spelling of his name.

By the evidence above given we know that in any French record concerning Philip, his name would be written with the definitive "le" qualifying its distinctive part. And in the light of the fact, above noted, that in five of the six deeds to which Philip was party during the years of his Beverly residence, the distinctive part of his name was spelled with "g" as its initial letter, we may reasonably conclude that since this was the spelling he gave for deed recordings of his name, it must have been that of his customary usage, and accord-

ingly that of his inherited name. That is, it seems reasonable to assume that, in any French record concerning this ancestor, the distinctive part of his name would have "g" and not "c"⁴⁵ for its initial letter. That it would scarcely have "y" as its final syllable is suggested by the fact that in no list of French surnames available to us did we find Cody or Gody⁴⁶ either with or without the "le". But quite frequently, in the various lists consulted, we found the surname Godet⁴⁷ the French pronunciation of which, as the French-speaking tell us, has the sound of Gody. Possibly then the inherited surname of our first American ancestor Philip of Beverly and of Hopkinton (1698-1743) may have had not "y" but "et"⁴⁸ as its final syllable. Accordingly in looking through French records of this ancestor's time, with the hope of finding any mention of him, we should keep in mind that the inherited spelling of his surname may have been Le Godet⁴⁹ or possibly written Legodet.

But whether or not the French spelling of Philip's surname had "y" for its final syllable we know by the evidence of the Beverly records above quoted that Philip's inherited pronunciation of his name led him to be commonly known as Beverly as Philip Legody.⁵⁰