

❖Sweetland/Swetland Lore #13❖

Formerly Swetland Lore

March 2000

A Call For Help or Do You Want S/S Lore to Continue?

This is not a threat. But let's hope that the headline calls attention to the current state of data for the newsletter.

Since S/S Lore #12, almost no material has come in. Is it because the holidays allowed no time to think about S/S Lore?

Yes, I can continue to print the newsletter filling it with data on my family and my ancestors for another two or three years but I believe that you would rather read about other Sweetland/Swetland/Swetland lines?

I have a box of family letters, probably over two hundred that will fill more than two years of newsletters. Some of them make fascinating reading. They have stories that may not have seen the light since the events of the past century took place. Some may need editing or leaving out since the information affects people still alive. Others tell about people whose accomplishments were significant at the time they happened.

Another box has about sixteen letters written by John H. Thomas who served in the Civil War. A picture which may be John was in S/S Lore #8. One of his letters he wrote from Washington the day he was wounded. As you learned before, he died from his wound although on the day he wrote this letter, he thought it to be minor. One of his letters lists all the members of his company and how each member had conducted himself prior to this letter. A few were killed, some wounded but not John up to that date, some had deserted or were missing without leave. If I live long

enough, I want to put all of John's letters together in a story. Quite possibly, more of his letters exist among other family members. Memory says that at one time more of his letters were stored at Gladys Swetland's home in Mills, PA but I have no idea who has the others.

Does this stir you to send me stories like these? You do not need literary skill to tell stories from old letters, newspaper articles, or tales of your parents or ancestors. Please do let me hear from you soon.

Pennsylvania Women in the Revolutionary War

Irwin Messick has sent a story on Hannah Tiffany, wife of Luke Swetland, on the internet in Ancestry.com. The story on Hannah is under *Some Pennsylvania Women During the War of the Revolution, Matrons of the Revolution, Hannah Tiffany Swetland*. It pays tribute to women who stayed at home while men went off to fight. Search under Luke Swetland in Ancestry.com.

Two John Thomases, John W. and John H.



S/S Lore #8 showed a picture of a Civil War soldier who might have been John H. Thomas. The picture was not identified and we will be never be sure who he was. The picture above was labeled only John Thomas. While not positive, it is most likely John W., not John H. The reasoning is that I have pictures of John W. Thomas taken when he was older but the features look the same. Therefore, I believe the above is that of John Wallace Thomas, my grandmother's father. When my grandmother was born, the family lived in Beloit, WI.

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Pamelia Stevens Swetland

Pamelia Stevens Swetland was the wife of Morgan Swetland, eldest son of Harmon Swetland and Rosamond Watrous. Pamela was the youngest of nine children of Henry and Jerusha Fox Stevens and the last surviving member of her father's family. Morgan was born on November 25, 1825 and Pamela on June 26, 1829. They were married in Freetown, on January 17, 1849. They had five children, the first four born in Freetown, Cortland County, NY, where all four of Harmon's children had been born and the fifth in Harrison Valley, PA, after Morgan had moved his family to Pennsylvania.

In 1863 they moved from Freetown, NY, to Harrison Township, Potter County, Pennsylvania with their children, Clara, Karl, Chester, Louella and Henry. Morgan and Pamela lived for five years on Snyder Hill above the valley. In 1868 they moved from there to the farm in Mills, PA, where Morgan died in 1896. Pamela continued to live on the farm until her death on January 13, 1915.

In her obituary it states that "Pamela was one of the few women whose lives stretched back to the earlier part of the nineteenth century when women carded and spun their own yarn and wove their own cloth for homespun garments.

"She remembered well her mother's tales of the pioneer days in Cortland County, NY, and was familiar with all the household arts of colonial times. All the quiet simplicity, the charming hospitality and high-bred gentility of colonial life were in her heart and home.

"Naturally domestic in her tastes, she found her greatest joy in life in making a home for her family.

"Children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren gathered about her in a big family group twice a year with unflinching regularity.

"Her birthday and the birthday of

each New Year were days of joyous home-coming for the whole family, to the remotest and youngest great-grandchild.

"Gentle in speech, mild in manner, tender in heart, there was still a quiet strength in her character which won not only the respect but the loving obedience of all the members of the household. No wish of her's was ever disregarded; few were ever denied.

"In early life she gave her heart to God and became a member of the Pres-

No wish of her's was ever disregarded; few were ever denied.

byterian Church. Her Christianity was a part of herself and found expression in good deeds.

"Serene in spirit, confident in hope, unshaken in faith, overflowing in love, after eighty-six years of a beautiful life, she went unafraid to be with her God in a still more beautiful life beyond.

"She leaves to her descendants a

memory fragrant as the flowers she loved and tended day-by-day, an abiding memory, without one spot or stain, of the two best things this world holds—home and motherhood."

Morgan and Pamela's children were Clara (Clarissa), born May 15, 1850, Karl Fox, born August 5, 1852, Chester Allen, born December 18, 1854, Louella Rosamond, born April 12, 1859 and Henry Harmon, born June 5, 1865.

Morgan as the oldest son and having five children did not serve in the Civil War as his brothers Mulford and Austin Aaron did. He was most likely exempt from the draft. Neither were his boys old enough to serve in this war. His children were old enough to know the pain that losing men to the war could mean to those left at home.

Undoubtedly, the family was at the funeral of John H. Thomas when he was brought back from Washington, DC in a coffin and had first hand experience with the odor which made it necessary to store the coffin in the barn until he was buried. John's sister Susan was the wife of Austin Aaron Swetland, my great-grandfather.

Hartford, CT Sources for Swetlands

Two excellent sources for data on early Swetlands are The Connecticut State Library and The Connecticut Historical Society. The State Library is at 231 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106 and the Historical Society is at 1 Elizabeth Street, Hartford, CT 06105. The State Library has probate records of many Swetlands including Benjamin, son of William of Salem, MA and Benjamin's wife, Hannah. These probate records, however, are not complete. We know that the heirs of Benjamin and Hannah brought suit against the executor, John Richards, for not distributing the proceeds of the estate. It is possible that the missing documents were needed to settle the suit and are now filed with the papers of the suit, if such papers still exist. This is a fine research opportunity for a family genealogist.

The Connecticut Historical Society contains many records of early residents of Connecticut and numerous genealogical collections. For Swetlands the papers of Homer W. Brainard, Alice M. Gray, Myrtle M. Jillson, L. B. Barbour and Donald Lines Jacobus have information on early Swetlands who lived in Connecticut. Several books with information on Swetlands are also on their shelves.

William and Agnes Swetland of Salem, MA

This article provides all of the information collected on William and Agnes Swetland of Salem, Massachusetts.

We start with Isaac Sweetland, born 1560, in Sussex County, England and his sons, John, born 1603, Thomas, born 1609, and James. We believe the three sons were also born in England. We know descendants of John and Thomas in this country but know no more about James.

The data on Isaac and his sons comes from Leon Hiram Sweetland, C. A. Sweetland and C. A.'s sons thanks to a copy of a C. A. Sweetland's letter November 12, 1937 to Leon. In this letter he writes that his sons found the information but he does not recall now where it was.

Isaac's son John had three wives, Susanna, Temperance and Elizabeth. My ancestor, William was born in 1646, the first son of Susanna, John's first wife. Their second child was Susanna born in 1647. John's other children were Temperance, born in 1649, John Oliver, born in 1651, Mary, born in 1654, Abigail, born in 1656, Mehetabel, born in 1659 and Edward, born in 1677.¹

William married Agnes on March 8, 1674/75 in Salem.²

Perley³ says that "William Swetland, a tailor, lived here from 1676 to about 1686." In a footnote on the same page, he records "William Swetland, born about 1646, married Agnes ____; she married secondly Simon Lovitt of Beverly, Oct. 10, 1676; children; 1. Peter, born Sept. 1, 1676; 2. Grace, born March 8, 1679/80; 3. John, born Sept. 1, 1681, fisherman, lived in Marblehead in 1705; 4. Joseph, born January 5, 1684/84."

Perley refers to William in 1684 where he is among a list of jurymen.⁴ He also records him⁵ in a "Warrant to Constable John Lambert for collection of county rate, dated November 23, 1683, and among the list is Wm. Swetland, 3s. The minister's rate was about three time as much.

To create a mystery, Perley also wrote, "John Lovett, husbandman; lived in Beverly; married Bethiah Roots; died September 10, 1727, aged 91; children; 1. Simon, born about 1689; lived in Beverly; married Agnes Swetland, October 10, 1682; died February 2, 1744; had

Perhaps, the parts of the estate papers of Benjamin and Hannah not in the microfilm records are in the records of the suit.

children; 2 (continues with other children of John Lovett).⁸ Note that we now have two different dates for the marriage of Simon Lovett and Agnes Swetland, neither of which agree with the births of William's later children.

William Swetland appears in the Essex Quarterly Court Records⁷ between 1676 and 1686, mostly appraising clothing for estates.

Church records in Salem record four children to William, Peter, born July 1, 1676, Grace, born March 6, 1678/79, John, born July 1, 1681 and Joseph, born, November 5, 1683.⁸

William had two other children, Sarah and Benjamin. Sarah married William Bassett at Milton, CT on June 14, 1693.⁹ She died April 13, 1703 and her tombstone states she was age 29.¹⁰ This puts her birth year as about 1674.

Benjamin married Mrs. Hannah

Hale of Boston, MA, at Lynn, MA, on September 11, 1707.¹¹ They settled in New London, CT, and died without children. "Benjamin was well informed and left a large estate. In 1728 he subscribed to the "Prince's Chronology" It was said that those upon that list were considered as "Principal Literati" of New England. He owned land in New London and Hartford counties."¹² Benjamin died February 9, 1751¹³ at the age of 62. This puts his birth year as after February 9, 1689 and before February 9, 1690. Hannah died on March 17, 1756.¹³ The data for the death of Benjamin is taken from his tombstone. Hannah's death date comes from the diary of Joshua Hempstead also lived in New London and his diary has been published.¹³ Hempstead also noted that on March 31, 1758; "I was in town most of the day taking evidence for Major Charles Bulkley in Swetlands case."¹³

A suit took place commencing in May 1760¹⁴ when Benjamin's and Hannah's heirs filed a claim against John Richards, Hannah's executor¹⁷ and previously Benjamin's executor. In October 1760 the Assembly heard the report.¹⁵ Then in May 1764 the Assembly appointed a new committee to determine to whom Hannah's estate belongs.¹⁶

John Richards, as the executor of Benjamin's will and later of Hannah's will, did not release the property, the possessions and proceeds of either estate upon their deaths until the Connecticut Assembly in October 1764 finally accepted the committee report and directed that the estate be settled.¹⁷

Benjamin had left his estate to

William and Agnes Sweetland of Salem, MA (cont.)

Hannah until her death and then to be left to people he named. Before the estate was finally settled, some of them died and their children inherited in their own names. The Committee report said in part, "Which last mentioned committee have executed said commission and reported, that the said articles by the last will of said Benjamin, deceased, did of right belong to the first dissenting church of New London, to the old North church at Boston, and to John Sweetland, Joseph Sweetland, William Sweetland, Jonathan Sweetland, Peter Sweetland, Zeruiah Clausen, Caleb Sweetland, Nathan Bassett, William Bassett, Joseph Bassett, Gideon Bassett, the said petitioners, and also to William Lovet, Sarah Lovet and Grace Lovet, all of said Beverly, children of Agnes Lovet, said Beverly, deceased."

It is difficult to think that descendants of Sarah Bassett and Agnes Lovet would have been heirs of Benjamin unless Sarah was his sister and Agnes his mother. How else should they have been related?

Perley in the another article "Salem in 1790" in *The Essex Antiquarian* on pp 69-70 tells about the Joseph Douglas Home Philip Cromwell of Salem, also a slaughterer, and Mr. Bridges purchased of John Reed, who then owned the Spooner estate, that part of the lot lying north of the dashes; and those grantors; for seventy pounds, conveyed the entire lot (one fourth of an acre) with the dwelling house and shop thereon, to William Sweetland of Salem, tailor, September 18, 1680.*

**Essex Registry of Deeds*, Book 5, leaf 89.

In 1893, the title of the estate was in Stephen Sewall of Salem, merchant. Mr. Sweetland was living in 1688, but whether he died possessed of the estate or conveyed it before his death to Mr. Sewall the writer does not know.

Another note about William Sweetland in the same article says that he lived in the Nathaniel Gedney House in 1677.

Space does not permit including data on the descendants of Sarah Sweetland Bassett or Agnes Sweetland Lovett in the suit. This data must wait for another issue.

References:

1. LDS microfilm record number 1035549, under the title Sweetland Family Genealogy.
2. Torrey, *New England Marriages before 1700*.
3. Sidney Perley, *The History of Salem, Massachusetts*, 3 volumes, Volume III, p. 102.
4. *ibid.* Vol. II, p. 9
5. *ibid.* Vol. II, p. 70.

, *ibid.* Vol. II, p. 70

7. *Essex Quarterly Court Records*, 1675-1678, 1678-1680, 1680-1683, 1683-1686.

8. Copy of *Salem Church Records* received from Thelma Sweetland of California.

99. William Montgomery Clemens, *American Marriage Records before 1699*, p. 207, Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., Baltimore, MD, 1984.

10. Letter from Hazel Corbin, May, 1987.

11. Douglas Sweetland, *The Sweetland / Sweetland / Sweetland Family in America 1560-1977*, p. 1..

12. *ibid.* p. 1

13. *Diary of Joshua Hempstead, 1711-1758*, Collections of the New London County Historical Society, Providence, 1901..

14. *Public Records of Connecticut*, Volume 11, pp 392-393.

15. *ibid.* Volume 11, pp 446-447.

16. *ibid.* Volume 12, pp 260-261.

17. *ibid.* Volume 12, pp 311-313.

Sweetland Sources in Massachusetts

Since Salem, Massachusetts, was the home of William and Agnes Sweetland, it is natural to find a number of locations for records of them. At least three major holdings of such data exist. These are the New England Historic and Genealogical Society Library in Boston, the Boston Public Library and The Essex Institute in Salem, MA. The New England Historic and Genealogical Society is at 106 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02106. The Boston Public Library is at 700 Boylston Street, Boston, MA -2117-0286 and The Essex Institute is at 132 Essex Street, Salem, MA 01970. Across the street from The Essex Institute is the Peabody Museum, Phillips Library, East India Square, Salem, MA 01970-3773.

Other important sources for Sweetland data are the vital records of the Massachusetts towns that have been published. These record the data from the founding of the town up to about 1849. Of course, it is important to know that Sweetlands lived in those towns. One way to learn this is to look through town records until you find Sweetlands, Sweetlands or Sweetlands listed.