

**THE DIARY OF THOMAS
MINOR, STONINGTON,
CONNECTICUT, 1653 TO
1684**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649562077

The Diary of Thomas Minor, Stonington, Connecticut, 1653 to 1684 by Thomas Minor

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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THOMAS MINOR

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THE DIARY
OF
THOMAS MINOR,
STONINGTON, CONNECTICUT.

1653 to 1684.



Prepared for publication by SIDNEY H. MINER
and GEORGE D. STANTON, JR.



1899.

INTRODUCTION.

This Diary was undertaken by Thomas Minor for the double purpose of refreshing his own memory concerning current events, and for the use of his immediate family. It is at least plausible that because of his partial isolation in the wilds of the New England Colony the consecutive entries of dates were made by him also for the purpose of a record of time, for it will be remembered that at that period of our history calendars were not usually found among the inhabitants, and there was a considerable sameness of the passage of days from one to another.

He has said that it was not his purpose that the Diary go beyond the use of his immediate family, but considering the age of the writing and the various matters contained in the Diary, interesting from the point of knowing how the earliest settlers lived at home and treated the events of importance to themselves and family, and its value to those searching for missing record entries, it has been considered advisable to perpetuate the Diary by printing it, following the orthography and punctuation strictly and the contents generally in every particular.

The legibility of the writing is fast becoming obscured aided by the mutilation of the paper from age, and it has been only possible to translate it now by the aid of a powerful magnifying glass in places, while some of it is wholly illegible.

The Diary has been handed down through successive generations remaining on the old Thomas Minor homestead property at Quiambang, in the town of Stonington, Conn., and is now in the custody of Cornelius V. Miner.

The writer of the Diary, Thomas Minor, came from Somerset County, England, on the good ship *Arabella*, which landed at Salem, Massachusetts, the 14th day of June, 1630. His sterling qualities placed him in the position to at once become a prominent figure in the affairs of the Colony. He early allied himself with the men of authority and soon became recognized in their Councils for his sound judgment. He was a recognized authority in dealing with the Indians, and because of his peculiar ability to deal with them was frequently employed by Governor Winthrop to enter into agreements with, and publish court orders to the tribes.

It is said that he mastered the language and on occasions would accompany a missionary as interpreter to give them the gospel in their own language. We also find him leading the militia against the

Narragansett Indians, and at an age when man's qualifications as a leader of soldiers are not considered worth anything.

He seems to have taken particular pride in entering in the Diary the numerous occasions when "Mr. Winthrop" was his guest, and many times the two are recorded as meeting at the old Mill and other places and talking over the topics of interest.

Between the years 1630 and 1640 Thomas Minor lived at Salem, Charlestown, and Hingham, Mass., but he was not satisfied to settle down in any of those places, and we find a commission of the General Court of Massachusetts, that "Whereas, Mr. John Winthrop Jr. and others have by allowance of this Court begun a plantation in the Pequot Colony which appertains to this jurisdiction as part of our proportion to the conquered country, we grant, etc.," to Mr. Winthrop, Thomas Peters, Thomas Minor, Isaac Wiley, Cary Latham, Jacob Westerhouse, William Morton, John Stebbins and others. Under this commission we find Thomas Minor one of the founders of what he is pleased to call "Pequit," now New London, and here for a while he makes it his home. But it is after he has determined to settle permanently at "Quiambaug," on lands which he has acquired partly by grant, because of valuable services with the Indians, during the year 1653 or 1654 that he takes up the

Diary and carries it on faithfully till July 26th, 1684.

The wild character of the country about his place may be seen from his frequent references to the loss of stock by wolves, and the killing of deer. Indians were frequent visitors and often sought employment from him, payment being made in clothes.

Associating himself with others the town of Southerton, (sometimes called by him Southerntown) now Stonington, was formed in 1600. Referring to the numerous offices held by him from time to time we find a partial list in the following entry in the Diary:

“I was by the Town and this year chosen to be a select man the Town treasurer the towns recorder The brander of horses by the general Court Recorded the head officer of the Train band by the same Court one of the ffour that have the charge of the milishcia of the whole Countie and chossen and sworn Commissioner and one to assist in keeping the Countie Courte.”

In the life of Thomas Minor we have a prominent example of those men, who with their families, came to this country and fulfilled the purpose of time in creating in the new world a people of illimitable resources, jealous of personal rights, with brawny arms and fertile brain and with the unconquerable perseverance so characteristic of the pioneer settlers who attacked the forces of nature's wilderness that a nation might be built for the world to respect.

THE THOMAS MINOR DIARY.

After the leape y
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 yeare and from the Creation
 yeare: 5612
 yeare 1664 : of our lord god is
 first year after the leap
 year and from the creation 5613.

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 the whole compa
 Met it was agreed that
 day namely the : 28 : of No
 every year all the officers
 chosen for the time to co e
 that time Mr. Thomas Stanton
 Chosen Commissioner

(1653-4) (The) ninth month november (torn) tuesday the first wensday the 2. it snowed and thursday the .3. it rained and tuesday the .8. was at mill. the wensday being the (torn) was a day of thanksgiving and tuesday the .15. I gathered turneps (and) pasneps and tuesday .22. I was about fensing of my hay at Poquatucke and tuesday the .29. John cam home and it was a storm & wensday the .30.

the .2. of December Mr. Haynes his cattel was delivered unto me being friday

The tenth month desember .31. days thursday the first, thursday the .8. and wensday the .14. Captin masons man Came for one yoke of oxen and thursday the .15. & thursday the .22. I had plowed two days crose the (la)nd and this same day I begun to (torn) timber at the mill broocke We-(que-te-quoc) (torn) the .29. I plowed a littell and friday the .30. it rained and I (torn) 500 of pales Clover and (torn) day my Brothers brought (torn) from Poquatucke and (torn) .31.

(The) Eleventh month Januarie .31 (days saba)th day the first (mo)nday (torn) (delivered) .2. oxen to Aron Starke for the yuse of major masson satterday the (torn) there was a greate snow sabat day (torn) monday the .9. we fetched the mare I could not find the swine & sabath day .15. ther was aded another