

**RICHARD PINKHAM OF OLD
DOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE
AND HIS DESCENDANTS
EAST AND WEST**

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Richard Pinkham of Old Dover, New Hampshire and His Descendants East and West by
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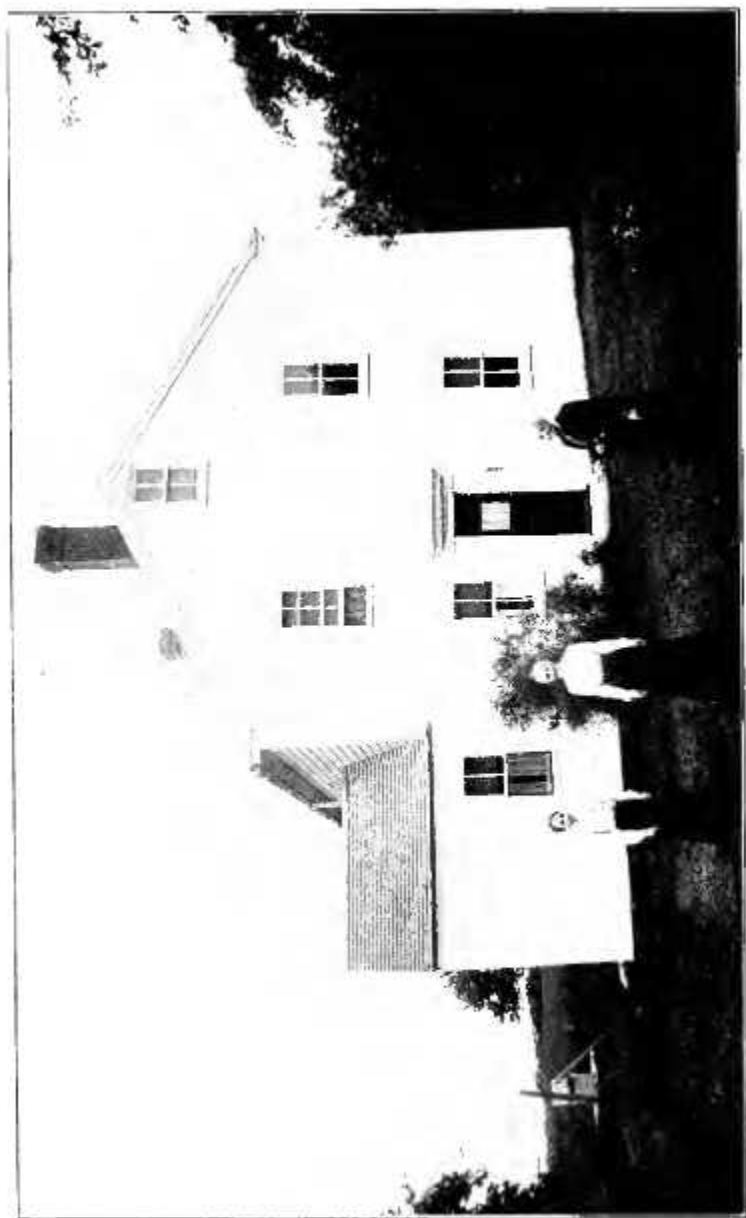
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CHARLES NELSON SINNETT

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Home of Paul Pinkham, Jr., Cape Porpoise, Maine
Built 1881; always occupied by Pinkhams

RICHARD PINKHAM

OF OLD DOVER

NEW HAMPSHIRE

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EAST AND WEST

BY

REV. CHARLES NELSON SINNETT

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INTRODUCTION.

Richard Pinkham, the ancestor of many families in New England and the West, was at Dover Point, N. H., as early as 1640, and no doubt arrived there at an earlier date. Of all the legends in various branches of the family that he was accompanied by two brothers who settled at other points in New Hampshire, that able historian, Rev. Dr. A. H. Quilut of Dover, N. H., has well said, "There is not a grain of historical evidence to support them." The writer of this book examined all these legends with care and found them with strong points of difference in various branches of the Pinkham family, many of them asserting that this band of brothers came to America a hundred years after the ancestor Richard had landed here. The ancestor stands out as a figure of clear and sturdy worth. The family traditions are quite unanimous in claiming that this ancestor, Richard Pinkham, came from the Isle of Wight. This, however, has no historical proof. If he came in the good ship *James* in 1633, he was evidently, like most of her colonists, from the west coast of England.

It seems highly probable to all who have given this matter earnest study that Richard Pinkham came with the famous colony which Captain (Richard) Wiggins (Wiggans in the old records) brought from England in 1633. He has the same sturdy characteristics of the other colonists, many of whom bore names which are famous in history. In 1631 this Captain Wiggins was sent to what is now Dover Point, N. H., to superintend the affairs of the colonists. In about a year he returned to England to secure ample means for carrying on the "plantation." "Meanwhile, the merchants of Bristol, England, had sold out their interest in these lands to Lords Say and Brooke, George Willys and William Whiting, who continued Wiggins in the agency. For the 'plantation' a number of families were procured in the west of England, 'Some of whom were of good estates and of some account for religion.' Governor Winthrop of Massachusetts gives the following description of the coming of these people to Salem, Mass., on Oct. 10, 1633: "The good ship *James*, which was but eight weeks between Gravesend and Salem, brought Captain Wiggins and about thirty, with one Mr. Leverich, a godly minister, for the Pascataquack (which Lord Say and Lord Brooke had purchased of the Bristol men), and about forty for Virginia, and about twenty for this place, and about sixty cattle." This was one of the most God-fearing, sturdy bands of colonists which landed in America after the coming of the *Mayflower*. This Captain Wiggins was at the head of this colony for some seven years, "having the power of Governor hereabouts."

On the 22d day of October, 1640, the people of Dover, N. H., established, or renewed, a formal government. The fourth name

signed on that wonderful document is that of Richard Pinkhame. Rev. Dr. Quint designates this document as "Dover's Magna Charta." He says: "It antedated in practice by a hundred and thirty-six years the principles announced in the Declaration of Independence of 1776. A copy of this paper was found in the Public Record Office of London, England." Every Pinkham should turn with deep interest to such a record as this.

The next mention of Richard Pinkham in the old Dover, N. H., records is equally interesting: "27th of the 9th month, 1648; It is this day ordered by a publique Towne meeting that Richard Pinkham shall beat the drum on the Lord's Day to give notice for the time of meeting, and to sweepe the Meeting house, for the which he shall be allowed six bushels of Indian corn for his pay this yeare, and to be free from rates." It is evident that this religious sentry stood long at his carefully chosen post! "No sinner could assert that he knew not that it was ye Lord's Day, while the stirring drum beats were heard far and wide!" The musical ability of this man is seen in many of his descendants.

Rev. Dr. Quint has given this clear statement: "Richard Pinkham appears to have been a man of good character, and had his share of public offices. The spot where he early dwelt is said to have been the same on which stood the Pinkham garrison, which Richard afterwards made into his habitation. The precise location of this is easily pointed out, inasmuch as it continued to be a dwelling-house until one side of it fell down seven and twenty years ago; that event rendered it necessary for the family to remove, which they did as soon as possible, into a new house standing about five rods from the old one. After passing the house of Hanson Roberts on Dover Neck the traveler will notice a lane on the west side of the road leading towards the river. On the north side of this lane is a house now occupied by Elijah Pinkham, a man of more than eighty years, who owns land once owned by his ancestor, Richard." (After the death of this Elijah Pinkham in 1862, the house was occupied by Mr. Charles Thompson, who married Rose Pinkham, daughter of Elijah. This old homestead was after this owned by those not of the Pinkham line for a short time; it has lately been purchased by Mr. De Orville L. Pinkham.) "About four rods west of this home of Elijah Pinkham was the Pinkham garrison house, half of which was taken down about two years after the wind had demolished the other half. The spot on which the fortress stood in the ancient days a few months ago presented the aspect of a flourishing cabbage yard!"

Mr. John Seales, Esq., of Dover, N. H., writes under date of Jan. 1, 1908: "The Pinkham garrison was about three-quarters of a mile north of the site of the old First Meeting house on Dover Neck; it was on the west side of the present road, which was called High Street by the early settlers; the garrison was on a street called Low Street, which ran parallel with High Street, and was about half-way between High Street and the Back River. There is no picture of the garrison; it most resembled the Drew garrison. This locality was in plain sight of the old church."

These particular descriptions of the site of the old Pinkham homestead are given in the hope that many readers of this book

will take pains to visit that beautiful spot which slopes gently towards the Bellamy River, and commands a fine view of that stream, and of many other points of interest. I first visited this place on an October day of rare beauty and shall ever keep in mind the memories of the scenes of ancient days of sturdy valor then called up; admiration of the wise choice of a "home spot" by the first Richard Pinkham; memories of the old cemetery, near the site of the First Church, whose headstones are gray and battered by the storms which have swept over them, but which have had no power over the influence for good which has extended widely over our country from these sturdy and true-hearted Pinkhams, who have long slept beneath the gray sods. The calls on all the Pinkhams who still dwell on historic Dover Neck left memories of rare kindness and sunny cheer. Linked with these precious memories are those of the evening when, a little later on, before the large gathering of the New Hampshire Club of Lynn, Mass., I tried to tell the people of what they owed to Richard Pinkham and his noble posterity.

It is well to mark some of the many strong points in the life and character of the ancestor, Richard Pinkham, which have been illustrated in his descendants through many generations.

First of all is the true Christian faith of this ancestor. It has already been noted that the colony of which he, no doubt, was a member, was chosen because the persons composing it "were of some account for religion." This implied a faith which would sustain these men on the long voyage across the Atlantic, in the midst of the many disappointments and dangers which awaited them in a long procession on the "Pascataquack," and which would not only sustain them, but impart itself by strong influence to other colonists. Hence we find the name of Richard Pinkham on that paper which advocates a belief in a God of justice and liberty. He next stands before us at the door of the old First Church in New Hampshire, beating the drum that called to service in sunshine and storm. His broom of evergreen twigs swept deftly the interior of that house of the Lord. His help for the gifted minister who came on the good ship *James* with him, and for others who followed, was clear and unwavering. His children were all of this faithful Christian type. Some of these, and many of the grandchildren and descendants of this ancestor, became the leaders in the Friends' Church, which was organized at Dover at an early date. A very large number of the Pinkhams have been members of that church through all its generations. Others of the Pinkhams have been faithful members of other churches. These instances will be clearly noted in the course of this history. It would be hard to find a family that has in its history so many devoted, humble and helpful Christians.

Some of the earlier Pinkhams were led to the Friends' Church by the earnest preaching of the missionaries which the Quakers sent to America. Others went thither because the Quakers bore with such true Christian faith the bitter persecutions which were heaped upon them. But their strong membership in that church of the Friends had its deepest roots in the fact that the ancestor's teaching had been, "Always follow where the Spirit of God and Duty leads you!" It was this principle which had led the Pink-

ham ancestor from home scenes full of brightness and joy to shores shadowed by shaggy forests and lurking Indian foes. From the first Dover Point had unfolded to its explorers many disappointments. "Martin Pring had sailed up the Piscataqua at an early date. His narrative tells us what he met there: 'We found goodly groves and woods, . . . sundry sorts of beasts. . .

. . . But meeting no sassafras (which was then thought to be the strong remedy for many diseases), we left these waters.' In 1614 Capt. John Smith came up the river, but he also sailed away and left the shores to their loneliness. In the spring of 1623, Edward Hilton, an English gentleman, and his brother, William, established themselves on the neck of land now called Dover Point, building there two houses, and beginning the first permanent settlement in New Hampshire. But the disappointments which they met is clear from the fact that in 1630 there were but three houses in all that part of the country." In her fine article on "Old Dover, N. H.," in the *New England Magazine* for September, 1897, Caroline H. Garland thus writes and has well said: "The first comers here expected to find unexhausted supplies of silver and gold. In the first grants of land a certain proportion of these is reserved to the crown for 'oares' found thereon. When no gold appeared, the settlers tried the planting of vineyards, only to find that New Hampshire is not a grape-growing country." Richard Pinkham and his neighbors met various disappointments like these, but their faith, though it flickered now and then in the strong gusts of adversity, never lost its glow. One can well think that the wise Richard Pinkham counselled again and again, "We came here at the call of duty; it was no evil voice that urged us on; here we will remain; good will come from this voyage which we have made!" And while some colonists went back to England, the Pinkhams, with the Hiltons, Waldrons and many more, staid on Dover Neck.

Out of this faith naturally grew the counsel of Richard Pinkham to his children and others in his old age, "This home is on a beautiful slope to the river, but do not forget the land from which I came when Duty called me. If Duty shall beckon you, or here or there, fail not to take your canoes at the brink of yonder stream, or to thread your way through the dark forests to the north."

Hence we find in all branches of the Pinkham family a heed to this wise precept. Many sections of the family turned to Mafne from Dover Neck, or to inland towns of New Hampshire, etc. They always chose beautiful sites for their homes; here they loved to linger, but the call of Duty has been heeded so thoroughly through the generations of this strong old family that they are scattered all over our country from ocean to ocean. Today, in the midst of broad prairies, or beautiful orange groves, or by the waves that are calling them to look well on the ocean that has yielded them much wealth, many are planning a journey into the midst of disappointments which they will meet as heroically as their ancestor, Richard, met his cares on Dover Point, because their belief is firm in God and His wise leading. Other Pinkhams still abide on Dover Neck, and in other old home places, where the fathers have dwelt, and no tales of gold and gain can

lure them away; the Duty that they heed is a hand that points to the placid river, white-capped bay, or the sunny fields and mountains.

In this characteristic is traced one which has ever marked the Pinkham generations—a wise survey of all the points in any matter which has strongly appealed to them. "Slow of choice," they have often been called. This has been frequently manifest in their love stories. Hence we find many Pinkhams marrying at no early date in life, and after courtships of many moons. But the result has been the happy unions which have seen golden weddings of rare joy. The slow choice of a life-work has been marked by the same shining successes. In my native town we were admonished, "Never bother a Pinkham when he is thinking." They were on their way to great spaces of light!

In my story, "The Easter Drum," which follows this sketch, I have pointed out the keen wit which marked the Pinkham ancestor. This story is not moulded altogether on historical lines, but is given as an illustration of what has been preserved in many legends, and in the many generations of this sturdy old family. This has never been a wit which has burst out in peals of laughter. It has been that which gave a merry twinkle to the eyes of blue or gray, and the making of plans which have ended in the foiling of wily purposes and foes of desperate type. Many garrison houses on Dover Point were captured by the Indians, though wise ones guarded them well. No savage foe ever swung his tomahawk inside the garrison of Richard Pinkham. When the winds assailed it after long years a half of its strong timbers stood in place. The builder was as witty with tools as he was in matching the plans of the Indians. In hundreds of towns all over our broad land the Pinkham wit of the ancestral type has been well known.

The ancestor was a man of learning and was constantly adding to his stores of knowledge. Among his descendants this characteristic has been clearly seen. In those who have given all their time to study, teaching, etc., there has always been grand success. On old farms and on ships that made their way to all parts of the world, Pinkhams of quiet ways have been met whose stores of knowledge have been a surprise as great as the joy and help which they have given to all neighborhoods where they have dwelt, or ports to which they have sailed. And this has ever been given without any shadow of boasting, for the true Pinkham has been like the ancestor of my story when the minister urged him to speak, "I did only what I thought was my duty;" whatever they had they counted only as a trust to be used for the helping of others.

And it is a source of deepest gratitude that, with such a willingness to share with others, the Pinkhams have been given such a numerous line of descendants with long life-leases. It was in 1671 that the ancestor, Richard Pinkham, gave the bulk of his property to his son, John, who engaged to support him. He was then an old man, and is supposed to have lived for some years after that date. His sons lived to a good old age. Among the descendants are many examples of this wonderful hardihood, and not only in the Pinkhams, but in those about them whom