

**A HISTORY OF THE
COBB
FAMILY. PART IV**

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A history of the Cobb family. Part IV by Philip L. Cobb

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PHILIP L. COBB

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PART IV

BOSTON FAMILY

BY
PHILIP L. COBB

CLEVELAND

1923

100-2

100-3

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100-4

THOMAS COBB OF BOSTON AND HIS DESCENDANTS

THOMAS COBB was one of the pioneers of the Cobb family in America. It does not appear that he was related to any of the several other original immigrants who settled in New England and Virginia. His former home was the town of Banbury, in Oxfordshire, England. This place is an old market-town, well known as the location of Banbury Cross of the children's rhymes and famous for its Banbury cakes. Its most marked characteristic during the seventeenth century was devotion to the puritan cause in politics and religion, so much so that it became a common butt of ridicule for all the royalist wits. Growing up in this atmosphere, Thomas Cobb was saturated with the puritan spirit and became one of the protesters among the protestants. His adherence to non-conformist worship doubtless was a most important factor leading to his emigration to America. While he was married in an English church and some of his children were baptized in the church, this may have been a matter of legal requirement rather than a religious choice.

In his youth he doubtless received some schooling, for we find he could sign his name in a free, bold hand, in a time when many men were content simply to make their marks. His boyhood was during the stirring times of the Civil War. The battle of Edgehill, the first in the war, was fought when he was a youth, within a half-dozen miles of his home, and later, the town of Banbury was captured and held successively by the parliamentary and royalist armies.

In 1642, when Banbury was captured and occupied by the royalists, the King put forth a declaration of pardon to all in Oxfordshire who had taken up arms against him, except Lord Saye, Nathaniel Fiennes, Sir William Cobb of Adderbury and John Doyley, Esq. Adderbury is a small town about four miles from Banbury and was the home of an aristocratic family making claim in the "Visitations of Oxfordshire" to a long line of ancestors of gentle birth. At the head of this family was the Sir William Cobb whom King Charles refused to forgive. We do not find definitely the relationship between this man and Thomas Cobb of Banbury, but it is evident that they were both of the puritan party and subject to the displeasure of the royalist government and may have been kinsmen. Thomas Cobb was married four years before the Restoration and continued to live in Banbury throughout the reign of Charles the Second. Soon after the death of the King, which occurred February 6, 1685, we find the Cobb family on its way to

America. Doubtless a strong reason for their emigration was the severity of the laws against non-conformists.

Thomas Cobb and his fellow travelers relate, in the petition made after they reached Boston harbor, that "the occasion of our coming hither—was in affect no other than that of the bird flying into the Sennetor's Bosom for shelter when it was furiously chassed by a fowle of prey." This flowery language means without doubt that they emigrated to avoid being thrown into prison by the authorities on account of their religious and political beliefs and practices.

During the summer of the year 1685 both Argyle and Monmouth had invaded England with rebel troops and the country seethed with excitement, culminating in the "Bloody Assizes" and the execution of the two leaders and many of their followers.

Our emigrants sailed about the first of June, and it was none too soon, for a few weeks later it would have been impossible to get away. On August 28th, Samuel Sewall of Boston heard "news of Argyle's being taken and of Monmouth's being in Arms in England, with Rumors of a great Engagement and 30 or 40,000 slain, . . . many are clapt up in London, so that the Halls full."

We will give at this point some extracts from the parish registers.

Chipping Norton Parish Register

Thomas Cobb & Dorothy Hobby, both of Banbury,
24 July 1656. (married)

Banbury Parish Register

Jan: 13, 1658-9 Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Cobb
was born.
Aug: 27, 1660. Dorothy, daughter of Thomas Cobb,
was born.
Aug: 10, 1662. John, son of Thomas Cobb, was
baptized.
May 19, 1664. Henery Cobb, son of Thomas, was
baptized.
August 11, 1666. Richard Cobb, son of Thomas Cobb,
baptized.
August 30, 1659. Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Cobb,
buried.
October 5, 1669. Sarah Cobb, daughter of Thomas
Cobb, buried.

It will be noted that the first two Banbury entries, made during the Commonwealth, give the dates when the children

were born, while the next three, made after the Restoration, are dates of baptism.

About the first of June, 1685, Thomas Cobb, his wife Dorothy and son Richard embarked, quite probably at London, on a ship that was commanded by Captain William Condey and sailed for America. The daughters Elizabeth and Sarah had died some years before and we have no knowledge as to what became of the other children. If they were then living they were of adult age. During the voyage four cases of small-pox developed on the ship, so that the vessel was quarantined when it reached Boston harbor on the 31st of July. The time of crossing the ocean was a little over eight weeks. On reaching port the passengers were not allowed to land in the town, but were placed on Lovell's island in the harbor, where they suffered much from lack of proper protection and care. They were confined there for thirteen days, with poor supply of water, with no house to shelter them and no beds to lie upon. After much delay, in response to their petition, they were permitted to land in Boston on the 13th of August. Captain Condey died on the 25th of the month (whether of small-pox or not, we do not know) and was buried in the Granary Burying Ground.

The petition to the governor reads as follows:

For The Honourable Sir Simon Bradstreet Esq. present.

August the 12.

Honoured Sir, Once allready we have taken the Boldness to write a few lines directed unto your worships, together with the rest of the commissioners, wheare in a few words we signified unto you the occasion of our coming hither, which was in affect no other than that of the bird flying into the Sennetor's Bosom for shelter, when it was furiously chassed by a fowle of prey, the story is famous & therefore we suppose it known unto you and so we shall Leave it unto your consideration and aplication.

We also signified unto you the inconvenience of the place of our confinement viz. that their is no house upon the place, that their is no fresh water, together with many other inconveniences, to many for us in writing for trouble you with. Not hearing nothing from you we adventured a second time to caste a few lines into your hands that you might come to have a right understanding of our condition, for we understand that you have many false informations for instance that many amonge us have not had the small pox and that some of us are sicke of them now and that one hath been buried

upon the sea, and all which things and many others of the like nature are very untrue, for as to the first we have all had the distemper in old England many years since but only four persons had them on board and have been well six weeks and upwards neither have any been taken away by death since we came on shore, that we are not well is true for we have paines in our limbs occasioned by our lying upon the cold ground. Therefore we humbly entreat your worships serious consideration of our condition in order to our admittance into your townes that we may be in a capacity to provide for ourselves and families. We have the same argument to make use of which God himself made an argument to press his own people with to be kind to strangers. Remember that some of you and your predessors weare strangers in this land. We shall trouble you no more at present but subscribe ourselves your worships most humble servants in all Christian obedience to be Commanded.

Thomas Banister
 Thomas Cobb
 James Thornbeck
 George Clearke
 Ralph Killcup

In answer to the petition or motion, the town magistrates ordered that the petitioners have their liberty on the morrow to come on shoar & provide for themselves. August 12 1685 Attest Edward Rawson Sec. By order.

Samuel Sewall has given in his diary the following account of the arrival of the ship and the subsequent events:

Sewall's Diary, 1685

Friday, July ult Condey arrives, hath had the Small Pocks of which Jno. Cutts, his own son, a youth, and one more are dead: but 'tis said have been well a 14 night. When came a little above the Castle, took in the Colours and cast Anchor, and a Man coming from on Board would not tell what the matter was, so began to noise it that the new Governour was come, flocking to the waterside. Not considering that Condey came out before Green.

Satterday Augt. 1. An order from the Council is signed to cause the ship to remove lower to Lovel's Island and there the Passengers, Ship, and Goods between Decks to be Aired: None to come to any Town

till further Order. And None to entertain persons coming from the Ship. Yet Mr. Vaughan and Wyar gone homeward.

July 29th. Mr. Nath. Green arrives this day, come from London June the 6.

Augt. 26 Mr. Condey the Shipmaster dyes about 9 last night. Hath been sick but a little while.

Augt. 27. Mr. Thomas Bayley preaches in Mr. Mather's Turn. After Lecture Capt. Condey buried. Gloves given to the Magistrates.

Three days after he landed we find Thomas Cobb joining the First Baptist Church of Boston, as shown by the following entry:

"Cobb, Thomas adm. Aug. 16, 1685."

The authorities required that every new-comer should furnish security that he should not become a charge upon the town. Our immigrant found a bondsman in Thomas Skinner, a baker, also a member of the First Baptist Church.

"Sept. 4, 1685. Thomas Skinner became surety to the town for Thomas Cobb, blacksmith, and his family."

In the tax lists of 1687 we first find the names of Thomas and Richard Cobb and gather a little information about them. It is apparent that they lived together in a house in the eighth precinct or ward in the south end of the town of Boston near the house of Samuel Sewall. Richard is listed for one head, 1s-8d, being this year twenty-one years of age, but is not taxed for a house or other property. This is what we should now call a poll-tax. Thomas is taxed for one head also, 1s-8d, and in addition 4d for his house and other property, making a total of 2s. The 4d represented a tax at the rate of a penny per pound on a valuation of four pounds. Though this tax does not seem large, one third of the amount could be abated if the tax was paid in money and not in farm products. In the "Boston Valuation" of 1688, which is a "List of the male Persons in the Town of Boston from Sixteen yeares old and upwards" we find in the 8th ward "Tho Cobb" and "Rich Cobb," each listed for "one head," which indicates that Thomas Cobb did not have any other son living in his house with him 16 years old or older. From this the conclusion is that the other sons did not come to America. The lists throw no light upon women in the family. "A List of Inhabitants in Boston 1695" gives these names:

"..... Cob Senr"
"Richard Cob Junr"