

**GENEALOGY OF
THE
BLETHEN FAMILY**

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Genealogy of the Blethen Family by Alden Joseph Blethen

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W. H. C. O. L.

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Names of Sixth and subsequent generations not given in this table may be found in pages following the Fifth generation.

INTRODUCTION.

RESEARCH PROMOTED BY WILLIAM W. BLIVEN, ESQ.

William W. Bliven, Esq., New York, began a research for the genealogy of the Blethen family, thinking that the Blethens and the Blivens were of the same ancestry. But after much correspondence with Blethens and officials, and the expenditure of seventy-five dollars in cash, he came to the conclusion that he was not on the track of his ancestors.

His correspondence had brought him in touch with Colonel Alden Joseph Blethen, President of The Times Printing Company and Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Times, Seattle, Washington, who paid Mr. Bliven his cash expenditure for Blethen genealogy and took upon himself the work of co-ordinating and publishing the material collected.

Among others, Mr. Bliven, in 1896, employed Mary E. Arvedson, Assistant Librarian of Essex Institute, Salem, Massachusetts, and George Arvedson, "Competent Guide to Salem, Massachusetts," to make researches in Salem, Lynn, Boston, etc., in public and private records and libraries.

As the older generations of Blethens were members of the Society of Friends, and as it was the tradition that their immigrant ancestor was a member of that sect and lived in Massachusetts, Mr. Arvedson examined the an-

cient records of the Quakers at Lynn, Massachusetts. The Friends were extremely careful of their ancient documents and had them preserved in a safe in their church. After several unsuccessful attempts to get access to them he finally succeeded and on the first day found nothing, except, as he passed a book back to the watchful custodian, he saw the names "John and Jane Blethen" and reference to something they had done wrong. His second attempt he relates as follows:

Salem, July 10, '97.

Wm. W. Bliven, Esq.

Dear Sir: I have just returned from Lynn, Mass., where I have just put on another day at the terrible old records. I thought everything was arranged; that the new man would open the safe at once. He was in doubt what was best to do. The records are so valuable, he did not like to take the responsibility. I told him I had seen the other two who had charge; that I had the young lady, who was well known in Lynn, to look after their interest; and then there were men at work replacing the seats, one of whom was a Brother Quaker. I told him if he got through before I did that I would pay him for the extra time he would have to stay. I began to think that the prospect of what might be before me was lost, just as he got the safe open and very reluctantly passed one book. As it was the one I had been through, no more until it was passed back, when the true old Quaker came in and I had it to suit me. It was nothing but perseverance that conquered. I soon got the right side of the man who was at work, by speaking of a name that turned out to be one of his ancestors over two hundred years ago. He then says: "That work you are doing is as much of

a trade that takes time to learn as his trade of a carpenter."

The first I found—Marriage Certificate—1704-5:

"Elizabeth Blethen, dau. of John Blethen (and) Isaac Chase of Swansea.

Witnesses: Sarah Blethen
John Blethen
Abigail Blethen
Hannah Blethen

and quite a number of other names.

"1714, 16, 10.

Certificate.

Sam'l Pope and Sarah Estes.
Geane Blethen, one of the witnesses.

He examined the Quakers' Quarterly and Monthly Record Book (in bad shape).

"At our men and womans meeting held at Joseph Boyces house the 6th day of the 5th month, 1680, a committee of Daniel Southwick and Bro. Gaskill go to John and Jane Blethen and others and to deal with those contrary spirited people for their disorderly walking and keeping on their hats and continuing sitting in the time when Friends of Ministry are at prayer to Almighty God, and other disorderly things which the above said people are guilty of, which is contrary to the truth and practice of the Lord's people and so you are desired to return their answers to the next monthly meeting held in house of Joseph Boyce."

"Salem, 6th day, 6th month, 1680, the Committee reported left them very stubborn and obstinate refusing to give plain answers according to the truth, except John Blethen, who gave some small satisfaction upon which Josiah Southwick and Bro. Gaskill was desired by the