

Matthias Curwin 1597-1698

Mathias Curwin (10th paternal great grandfather of Larry Mace) was born about 1597, possibly in Warwick, England. He married Margaret Shatswell in England before 1627. Mathias sailed to America with his wife, Margaret Shatswell, and her siblings from Ipswich, England in 1633 and settled in Salem, Massachusetts. Mathias's marriage to Margaret Shatswell before 1627 is confirmed by a chancery suit he brought in 1627 on behalf of his wife and her younger siblings against the man who handled the estate of her mother, Judith, who had died eleven years previously in Sibbertoft, Northamptonshire, England. Also, in his will, dated February 1, 1646, John Shatswell, Margaret's older brother, left his second-best "stufte sute" to "my brother Curwin," i.e. Mathias. In-laws in those days were often termed brother and sister.

John Shatswell and his wife, Johanna, came to Ipswich in 1633. John was one of the first to erect a house for himself and was appointed a surveyor of the land upon which others built.

Rev. George Curwin, in 1715-1717, constructed a family tree which shows John Curwin followed by the names of his three sons: Thomas, Matthias and George. The two wives of George are then listed, followed by the names of their children and those of their descendants. This same Rev. George Curwin in 1698 had traced the arms of the Corwin family, with a description in good heraldic terms. This would have been done when he was about 15 years old, demonstrating that he had a definite interest in his family history, even at a young age. The family tree, short of any other source evidence, would seem to be strong evidence that Matthias's father was John Curwin and George, who resided at Salem also, was his brother.¹

Amongst the early settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, there is mentioned a Mathias Corwin (spelled Curren.) "Given and granted unto John Webster (husband of Mary, sister to Margaret Shatswell) and unto Mathias Curren and unto Phillip Fowler, and unto William Mouedy, and unto Thomas Dorman, and unto Christopher Osgood, and unto Joseph Medcalfe to each of them, 4 acres of meadowe and marsh land as it will arise in 40 pole or rod by the land side unto them."²

In addition, there seemed to be another grant of land where Mathias was granted land which was "lyeing Northward of the Town, the marsh is not limited unto them two acres of land, lying unto his house, on the east end thereof, to him, his heirs, and assigns," etc. This was in 1634, and seems to be a second grant of land.

Mathias moved to Southold, Long Island, New York in 1640. His brother, George, bought his land in Salem, Mass. It has never been questioned that Mathias Corwin came with Parson Youngs in 1640. He had resided for six years previously at Ipswich, Mass. After living in Southold for eighteen years, Mathias died in 1658, leaving two sons, John and Theophilus, and one daughter, Martha, who married Henry Case. In 1656, two years before his death, he was appointed with Barnabas Horton, William Wells, Lieut. Budd, and William Purrier to order Town affairs. This body of officers was possessed of almost unlimited powers, passing laws and ordinances for the government of the Colony, and adjusting local difficulties. Corwin and Purrier appear to have been citizen farmers of sound substantial judgment, and commanded the respect of all classes.

On 5 December 1655, the property of Matthias Curwin is described as follows:

(1) Mathias Curwin, his house lott conteyninge by estimation ffower acres more or lesse, the whom Lott of Barnabas Horton lying West and Thomas Brushes east. (This lot lying directly opposite the Presbyterian Church and parsonage, adjoining Barnabas Horton on the west.)

¹ Source: Matthias Corwin of Southold, L.I. - His parentage and his Relationship to George Corwin of Salem, by Henry Fitz-Gilbert Waters of Salem, Mass. Historical Collection of Essex Institute, Vol. XVII, Salem, Essex Institute, 1881.

² Source: Ancient Records of the Town of Ipswich 1634-1654, by George A. Schofield, 1899.

- (2) Eighteen acres of woodland more or less lying between two highwayes leading from the Towne to wards the North Sea --- the land formerly Henry Witnies and now in the possession of Mr. John Youngs Pastor north and Thomas Moore South.
- (3) One and twentie acres more of woodland lying towards the North Sea behinde the reares of he whom Lotts, the land lately John Peakins and now Mr. Wells east and Mr. Herbert west.
- (4) Six acres moore of woodland in the neck adjoining to Toms Creek head, be it more or less, the land of Philemon Dickison lying Northeast and Mr. John Herbert Southeast.
- (5) Two acres of meadow lying at the head of Tom's Creek, be it more or lesse----
- (6) Ffifteene acres more of woodland, be it more or lesse lying neere or adjoininge too the meadow grounds of John Herbert and John Tucker --- the lands of Wm. Purrier lying west and Henry Whitney east.
- (7) Three acres of Meadow, more or lesse lying neere the old feild by Toms Creeke pond --- the meadow of Mr. John Youngs, Pastor, northeast, Lieutenant Budd, south.
- (8) One acre and an halfe of arrable land, more or lesse in the Old feild lying betweene the Land of Joseph Horton Southeast and John Tucker Northwest.
- (9) Two acres of meadow, more or lesse att Goose Creeke, adjoininge Pine Neck --- the meadow of Henry Scudder and John Scudder, now in the possession of Mr. Elton, lying Northward.
- (10) One acre of meadow, more or lesse on northeast side of Hoggneck, adjoininge to the meadowe of Mrs. Wells's, formerly Edward Ketchums on the Northeast side.
- (11) Three acres of woodland, more or lesse in the Calves Neck lying
- (12) Ffower acres and an halfe of meadow, more or less in the Oysterponds meadowes, neere to the South end of the hedge, about the Tobacco houses is exchanged by me John Curwine with Gidion Youngs, his mother Margaret Youngs, widowe consenting and Agreeing to her said sonnes Gidions exchange for ffourty lott of meadow contayning six acres more or less adjoining to the lands of Charles Glover on the east and the meadowe of Thomas More Senr. formerly John Tuthills west.
- (13) A third lott of meadow at Corchacke lying on the West side of the Old ffield, and extends itself in lenght from the head of the meadow to the sea and containes three acres more or less, and the meadow of Joseph Horton linge on the West.
- (14) A third lott of meadow at Accaboack, the meadow of Jeremiah Vaille ling northeast and the meadow of Abraham Whithare Southwest.
- (15) A fourth lott of meadow lying on the South side of Pehaconnucke River, containing eight acres, more or less ---- the meadow of Thomas Mapes, formerly John Painnes west, and the meadow of John Elton East.
- (16) Two hundred acres of Woodland more or less at Corchack, the land of John Elton east, and the land of Master William Wells west.
- (17) Forty acres of woodland more or less at Corchacke, the land of Richard Benjamin lying on the north, and the meadow of John Budd on the south, and the said meadow of John Budd lyeth within part of the aforesaid lands.
- (18) Exchanged with Samuell King a parcell of meadowe at Corchacke lying on the West side of the old ffeild from the spring upward to the head of the meadow for the parcell of meadow lying at Accabaucke within the land of Henry Case deceased --- this to say a second lot at Accabocke of meadow.³

An extract from Hoadley's Recs., New-Haven, Vol II, 35 "Barnabus Horton" states "The last will and testament of Matthias Curwin, late of Southold, was presented, subscribed by John Underhill, and deposed by Barnabas Horton, at the Court, March 5th, 1660. Before William Wells, John Youngs."

The New-Haven records include the following articles, which refer to the will of Mathias Corwin:

A writing was presented, for the last will and testament of Matthias Curwin, but returned for legal probate. An inventory of the estate of said Matthias Curwin was presented, taken 15th of the seventh month, (1658), by William Purrier and Charles Glover, amounting to 313 8d. That the appraisement was just was witnessed upon the above appraisers before. (It should be noted that William Purrier was 11th paternal great grandfather of Larry Mace and Charles Glover was both 9th and 10th paternal great grandfather of Larry Mace.)

³ Source: FHL Film # 0896629, Southold Town Records, Page 11, December 5, 1655.

WILL OF MATHIAS CURWIN
SOUTHOLD, August 31, 1658⁴

The last will & testament of me, Mathias Curwin, beinge in perfect memorie, do, in the name of our Lord God, & all men, comit my soule to God, & my bodie to the dust from whence it came. My will is, that my wife, Margaret Curwin, & my sonn, John Curwin, shall be my true & lawfull executors to adminster upon my present estate as followeth:

Item: I give to my Daughter, Martha, twentie pounds sterlinge, and over and above such goods my wife shall bury for her in the bay (?)

Item: I give unto my sonn, Theophilus, 20 lbs. sterlinge, to bee payed to them when they shall leave their mother, according to the law and custome of this Colonie.

Item: The remainder of my estate I give to my wife and son, John, equally betwixt them untill my wife marrie. But in case shee shall marrie, then my son, John, is to pay unto her 40 labs. sterlinge uppon the day of her marriae. And this, my will and testiment, to stand in full force & power after my decease.

In presence of John Underhil, Barnabas Horton

MATHIAS CURWIN

The will of Matthias Corwin was proved at Southold on 6 March 1660 and sent to New Haven, Conn.⁵

An inventory of the estate of the said Mathias Curwin, lately deceased.

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IMPRIS. Houses and lands with th' apertened	50 00 00
ITEM Neate cattle	97 00 00
ITEM. In horse flesh	20 00 00
ITEM. Sheepe kinde	23 16 00
ITEM. In goats & swyne	14 00 00
ITEM. Cart, plow, with all furniture	05 17 00
ITEM. Working tools, with other things	06 14 00
ITEM. Corne & hay	29 00 00
ITEM. Bedsteads & beddinge	19 17 00
ITEM. The man's wareinge & tools, & lynnenn	09 16 00
ITEM. Arme's wooll & some cheese	16 13 06
ITEM. Pewter, brasse, & other trumpery	15 18 00

Apprisers: BARNABAS HORTON, WILLIAM PURRIER
Sworn: Charles Glover

Mathias died in Southold on 12 September 1658 and was buried in the Southold Cemetery.

⁴ Source: Southold Town Records, Lib. B., p. 95.

⁵ Source: Personal Index Prior to 1698 and Index of 1698, by Charles Moore, 1868, p. 14.