

SWINNERTON

FAMILY HISTORY

Heraldic and Genealogical Studies

of the family

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This year, as I am sure you will have read, is the Bicentennial Year of the United States of America. To mark this important occasion there will be special celebrations and exhibitions throughout the United States and it is a happy coincidence that it also coincides with the XIIIth International Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences which is being held at Imperial College, London from the 31st August to the 7th September.

This is the first time that England has been host to this Congress, the first was held in Barcelona in 1929; the next, in Rome & Naples, was not held until 1953, but since then it has been held biennially in Madrid, Brussels, Stockholm, Edinburgh, The Hague, Paris, Berne, Vienna, Liege and Munich. Many Americans will be attending this Congress and this journal, together with other Swinnerton Society publications will be on display there.

I have had the honour to be elected a Vice-President of the Congress and have been invited to give one of the lectures - on 'Family Associations and One Name Societies'.

To mark this important year, the Council of the Swinnerton Society have appointed the Society's first American Vice-President - Mr. HAROLD NORMAN SWINNERTON A.Sc. of Santa Barbara, California. He has been actively working on our behalf for some years and acts as a clearing house for all our American and Canadian correspondents. A descendant of the Liverpool Branch of the family, he is a brother of our artist WILLIAM SWINNERTON.

To fill the vacancy caused by the death of Sir Leonard Schroeder Swinnerton Dyer, the Council have appointed as a Vice-President Mr. ROGER JOHN MASSY SWYNNERTON, CMG. OBE. MC., a grandson of the Rev. Charles Swynnerton, the first family historian.

A full 'curriculum vitae' of both these gentlemen will appear in the next issue.

As this journal's contribution to the Bicentennial Year there follows now a reprint of the Rev. Charles Swynnerton's article on the first American Swinnertons which he published in 1882.

THE SWYNNERTONS OF SALEM,¹ MASSACHUSETTS, UNITED STATES

by the Rev. C. Swynnerton, Bengal Chaplain

(First published in 'The Reliquary' Vol. XXIII No. 90. Oct. 1882)

I am indebted to my learned and respected friend, the Rev. Henry Ulyate Swinnerton, the Pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Cherry Valley, in the state of New York, for some interesting notes upon this family.

His principal authority is a paper (compiled from the Salem Records, and from other authentic sources) by Miss N. A. Swinnerton, of Danvers Centre, Massachusetts (1875), which was forwarded to him for inspection by John R. Swinnerton of Baltimore.

Job Swynnerton and his wife Elizabeth left Staffordshire for America in 1628, forming part of the famous Salem Colony of Massachusetts. They were people of intelligence and property, but at the same time Puritans of a decided stamp, and of

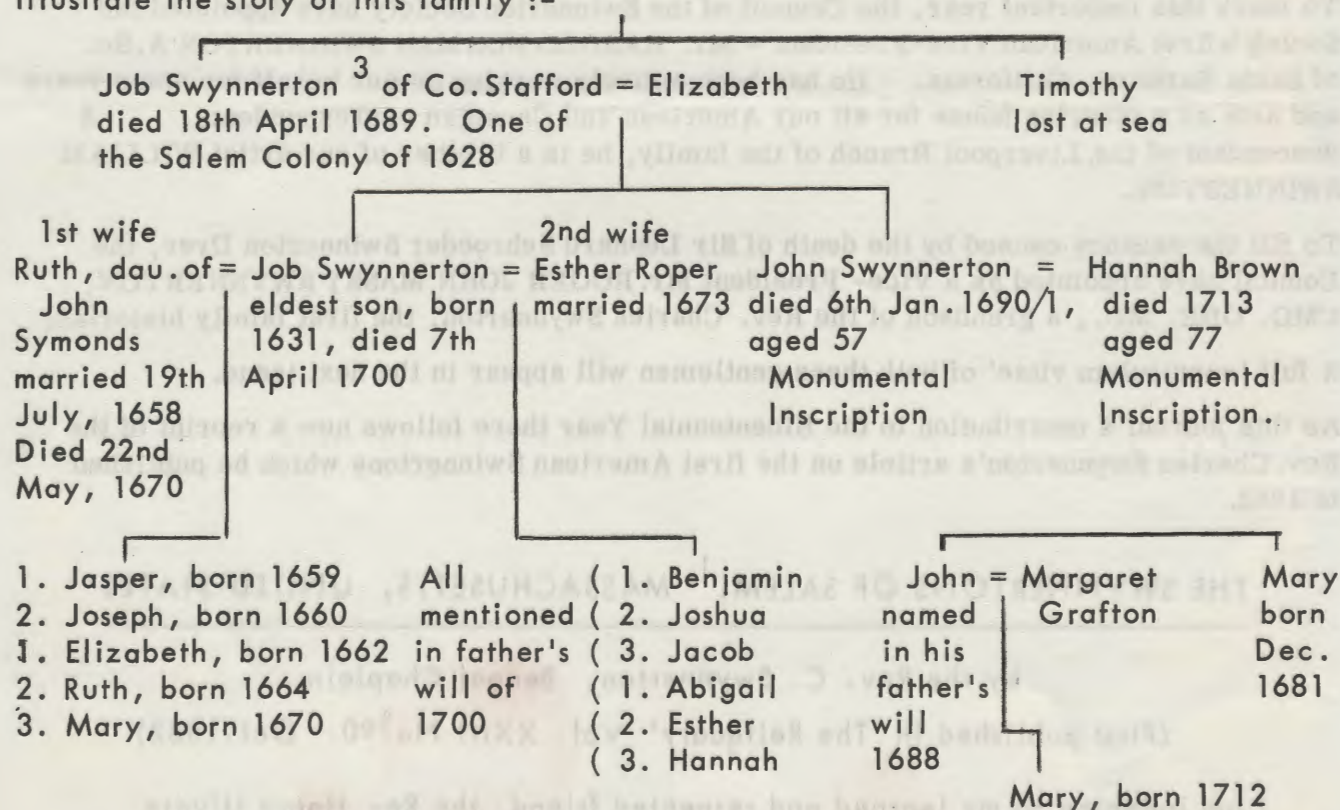
active piety. In the annals of the time they are represented as settlers who took no part in the commotions of the new colony, being quiet and unobtrusive, and uninfluenced by the witchcraft delusions which so tried that early struggling community.

They soon acquired considerable property, and in the year 1637 both Job and his wife Elizabeth joined the first regularly-organised Church in Salem. The fabric stood and, I believe, stands still, in what is now called Higginson Square, which was so named after the first appointed minister.

In 1699, three hundred acres of land were laid out on behalf of Job Swynnerton the younger; but this was part of his inheritance, having been owned by his father so early as 1650. It was, in fact, the original homstead of the family. It was bounded by Governor Endicott's farm on the east, and it extended up the plain through which Andover Street now passes. Besides other lots in Salem, this Job possessed land in North Salem, and in Middletown. The dwelling house stood on the site of Amos Cross's house, on the first farm below the hill by Andover Street.

According to some accounts, old Job, the Puritan, had a brother Timothy, who sailed with him, but who perished at sea, together (it is said) with certain family records of importance. He had also issue two sons - the above mentioned Job, and John. Job, like his father, was a farmer, and he lived on an estate close to his father's, on the opposite side. A bridle path led across to the old road, which was distant half a mile. John, the second son, received a medical training and was for many years the only practitioner in Salem. In his old age his house was burnt down (by Indians ?), and his unfortunate wife perished in the flames. ².

The following short pedigree compiled from the same authority, will further illustrate the story of this family :-



The original home of this interesting family in Staffordshire is as yet unknown. The writer will feel much obliged if any contributor to the Reliquary can throw light upon their earlier history, before the exigencies of the times drove them into exile.

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1. Now called Danvers.
 2. This tradition is at variance with the dates given in the pedigree. It possibly refers to Job the father.
 3. Vide also Savage's 'Genealogical History of New England', vol. iv., p.242.
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The Rev. Charles' last sentence still holds good, 94 years later we still don't know where JOB came from in Staffordshire or from which branch of the family and we would still welcome any information.

We would also like to hear from any of our American members if they have any knowledge of any descendants of his grandchildren and also any information about the Rev. HENRY SWINNERTON, Miss N.A.SWINNERTON and JOHN R. SWINNERTON who he mentioned.

OBITUARY

Sadly, we have to record the death of Mr. RICHARD SWINNERTON of Manchester after a long illness. Our sincere sympathy goes to his wife, Edna, who tells me that the information and interest he found in our Newsletters helped him to take his mind off his medical troubles and were a comfort to him.

EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK OF PENN

By the Rev. Prebendary E. Hartill, (Vicar of St. Bartholomew's, Penn.)

"There is a story that when Sir Hugh de Bushbury built the churches of Bushbury and Penn he did so as an act of penance because he had killed a man in a quarrel. This may be true, but there seems to be no historical record of it. It seems, however, that the story grew out of an event that did not happen until 100 years after the building of the church when another Lord of Bushbury was charged with the murder of the Lord of Swynnerton.

What really happened seems to have been a fight between a considerable number of retainers on both sides, during which Lord of Swynnerton was killed. But the widow gave an amazing account of the affair at the trial. She swore that she was on a hill some distance away and saw Sir Hugh and a crowd of others shooting arrows at her husband; that Sir Hugh shot 6 arrows and she saw exactly where each one went and that she also saw where each of the arrows hit him.

The Judge apparently congratulated her on her excellent eyesight, but said he did not think anyone would believe a word she said - so Sir Hugh was acquitted."

Penn Church was built in 1242 so this happened about 1342. Incidentally, Lady Godiva is buried in Penn Churchyard.

From Mrs. M. Carroll (née Swinnerton) (MS. 90)

THE GREAT PLAGUE OF LONDON

Mr. RAYMOND SWINNERTON of Bolton last year paid a visit to EYAM, Nr. Sheffield and discovered that some of the family were involved in the famous act of self-sacrifice of 1665. The following extract from "The Parish Church of Eyam - A Little Guide for Visitors" by Ernest M. Turner, MA. B. Litt. Rector of Eyam 1946-1975, tells the story.

"Eyam is also famous for an event which took place 300 years ago and which has stirred the hearts of men ever since. This was the visitation to the village by the Great Plague from London at the end of August 1665. The story unfolds how a parcel of cloth was brought by carrier from London and set down at the door of the local tailor, a man called George Viccars, who lived at a cottage still standing just west of the Churchyard.

Unfortunately, the cloth had become infected with the Plague germs before being despatched and the tailor soon became the Plague's first victim in Eyam. At this stage it would have been easy for the remainder of the inhabitants to seek safety in flight. Had they done so they might have been responsible for spreading the Plague

over a large part of the North of England and it is to their eternal glory that acting under the inspired leadership of two men, William Mompesson, rector of Eyam, and Thomas Stanley, who had been his immediate predecessor but had become a Non-conformist on his refusal to subscribe to the Act of Uniformity, the inhabitants voluntarily cut themselves off from contact with the outside world, so that the pestilence should not spread elsewhere.

It meant death for many of them, for during the 15 months that the Plague did its dread work, 260 persons perished out of a presumed total population of 350. In the fields in and around Eyam you can see mute memorials to that sad time in the form of tombstones erected over victims who were buried near the places where they died, e.g. the Riley Graves, where members of the Hancock family lie buried, and the Lydgate Graves, in the village.

In the Church you can see the pulpit from which Mompesson preached, the so-called "Plague Cupboard", a fine chair which belonged to Mompesson, and a copy of the Plague Register, while in the Churchyard there is the notable tombstone of Catherine Mompesson, wife of the heroic rector.

Mompesson and Stanley both survived the Plague, Mompesson becoming rector of Eakring, in Notts. where he remained for 38 years, and Stanley dying in Eyam in 1670.

During the summer of 1965 there was a special tercentenary commemoration of this great act of heroism by a whole community. "

On the Roll of Honour listing the victims of the plague appear :

ANNE SWINNERTON	- August 4 1666
ABRAHAM SWINNERTON	- August 8. 1666
MARGARET SWINNERTON	- August 14 1666

Our congratulations go to EDWIN CHARLES SWINNERTON (ES. 53) who has been made a member of the Order of Australia in the first Australia Day Honours since Australia inaugurated their own honours system.

Our congratulations also to his cousin, our Council Member JOHN WALTER SWINNERTON who has been appointed Chairman of the Hertfordshire National Savings Committee.

You will also, I am sure, have seen in the National Papers that our member COLONEL J. C. A. SWYNNERTON, OBE. was the last Commander of 28 Infantry Brigade in Singapore and as Senior British Officer was the last representative there of a historic military presence on the Island which had lasted for nearly 150 years.

A warm welcome to the latest 'twig' on the tree - RICHARD FRANKLIN SWINNERTON (RS. 45) born on 2nd April and our congratulations to his parents, Mr. & Mrs. FRANKLIN JOSEPH SWINNERTON of Sutton Coldfield.

STAFFORDSHIRE DIRECTORIES (6)

NEWCASTLE & POTTERIES GENERAL & COMMERCIAL DIRECTORY. T. Allbut,
1822-3

NEWCASTLE under LINE

SWINNERTON Thomas Attorney's Clerk. Marsh Street

STOKE, ETRURIA & PENKHILL

SWINNERTON Thomas Cratemaker. Comm. Buildings

COTTRILL'S POLICE DIRECTORY of NEWCASTLE under LYNE 1839

SWINNERTON The Misses Gentlewomen 4 Queen St.