

SWINNERTON

FAMILY HISTORY

Heraldic and Genealogical Studies

of the family

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But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies and contentions, and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and vain. (St. Paul's Epistle to Titus iii. 9)

THE WARWICKSHIRE SWINNERTONS - PART 2

by S.K. Armitstead

THOMAS SWINNERTON, the ancestor of the Warwickshire branch, had nine children by his two wives, Mary and Ann - four sons and five daughters. Only two of the sons appear to have founded a family and all the present-day members of the branch descend from the second son, John, who lived as a farmer at Astley, the next parish to Fillongley, in the second half of the eighteenth century. John's will survives at Lichfield and is reproduced here in part as it tells us a lot about his family.

"In the Name of God Amen. I, JOHN SWINNERTON THE ELDER, of the Parish of Astley in the County of Warwick (Farmer) being aged and weak in Body, but of sound and disposing mind, memory and understanding, Praised be to God for the same, do make and publish this my last Will and Testament in manner and form following.

First I will that all my just debts and funeral expences and the expence of proving this my Will be fully paid and satisfied." (In those days a will was proved by a church court and was, in a sense, a religious document, hence the opening invocation. It was also considered unlucky to make one's will until death was near, in this case a fortnight later. We also see that the lawyer makes sure of getting his fee first.)

"Also I give and bequeath unto my three sons, JOHN SWINNERTON, THOMAS SWINNERTON, and ISAAC SWINNERTON, one shilling each, in consideration that I have already provided for them." (It was customary to remember children already provided for in this way so that they could not contest the will on the grounds of being left out - this is the origin of the phrase 'being cut off with a shilling'.)

"Also I give and bequeath unto my daughter, SARAH, wife of JONATHON HINKLEY, the sum of eighty pounds to be paid by my executrix and executor hereinafter named within twelve months after my decease." (This delay would allow time for the money to be raised from the next harvest and so avoid using capital.)

"Also I give and bequeath to my Son, WILLIAM SWINNERTON, the sum of One Hundred Pounds

"Also I give and bequeath to my loving wife SARAH SWINNERTON, the sum of One Hundred Pounds for her to dispose of at the time of her decease to such of my children as she shall think most proper and convenient." (A little encouragement to them not to neglect their mother !)

"Also I give and bequeath unto my said wife the rents, issues and profits of a messuage tenement and premises now in occupation of my said son WILLIAM SWINNERTON for and during her natural life. Also all the rest of my personal estates I give and bequeath unto my said loving wife SARAH for the time of her natural life and at the time of her decease unto my son JOSEPH SWINNERTON absolutely. And I do appoint my wife SARAH and my son THOMAS Executrix and Executor of this my Will."

At the time of making this Will John had six children (a daughter, Mary, had died in the

previous year). They were, in order of age, John, Thomas, Sarah (Hinkley), Joseph, William and Isaac. John, Thomas and Isaac had already been provided for and received their token shilling. An interesting point is that it was not the eldest son, John, who was appointed the executor, but his brother Thomas who became a well-to-do farmer at Caldecote as we shall see later. John, my own ancestor, was presumably a less reliable man, perhaps a bit of a spendthrift with a weakness for beer or the horses, for he left no will and does not appear to have provided for his children as his brothers did, neither had he used his father's 'provision' to set up as a farmer, as Thomas did at Caldecote and Isaac at Weddington.

Joseph, the next son, was the residuary legatee who would come into his father's property when his mother died, while the remaining son, William, would appear to have been a tenant of his father. I will now proceed to deal with the families of each of these children so far as my researches have carried me to date.

JOHN, THE ELDEST SON, provided for in his father's lifetime but not appointed executor, lived at Green End, Fillongley, where he raised a family of nine children. In the days before birth control large families were the rule rather than the exception and we must remember that with the high level of infant mortality and the prevalence of incurable disease this was just as well for the survival of the human race. In this case two of the sons died in their first two years and a third at twenty, while the two daughters never found husbands and worked as dressmakers all their lives. This leaves us with three sons whose subsequent life is so far unaccounted for, as they moved away, and my great-great-grandfather WILLIAM. WILLIAM had three children, a son GEORGE who lived only three months, a daughter HELEN and a second son JOHN. His wife, ELIZABETH, presumably died or ran away, as Helen went to live with her dressmaker aunts while William and son John worked as wheelwrights at Wall, near Lichfield, over twenty miles away. William died there in 1850 and three years later his son married the daughter of the lock-keeper on the Lichfield canal. This has now been dry for some years but five years ago the lock gates and foundations of the lock cottage were still there; now they have gone leaving no trace.

By this time steam traction was expanding rapidly and John seems to have felt the call of the railways which has attracted so many Swinnertons, for the following year he was working as a joiner at Watford station. His first four children were born here and it is interesting to see that each of them was taken back to Staffordshire to be baptised in the parish church at Wall where their parents had been married - no doubt much to the joy of the wife's parents who still lived there.

John was evidently an industrious and successful worker, for in the early 1860's he moved to Croydon and set himself up as a builder. Of his seven children five survived childhood, the eldest - my grandfather JOHN - emigrating to Amsterdam where he had a jeweller's business and also married a Dutch girl, my grandmother. My mother was born in Amsterdam and lived there for the first seven years of her life with her twin brother and two sisters. In 1899 they returned to England and went to live in Croydon where my mother tells me that they were at first known at school as "The Dutch Cheeses". Her twin brother Willy, a sergeant in the Royal Marine Artillery, was killed at the battle of Ypres in the first world war and she is now the sole survivor of her line, but she has eight grandchildren, while her sister Nellie who died in 1937 having married a Frenchman, has several French great-grandchildren to carry on the Swinnerton blood across the channel.

In the next article we will look at the families of THOMAS and ISAAC.

FAMILY NOTE

Congratulations to DEREK SWINNERTON from Canada (son of WILLIAM LESLIE SWINNERTON - our Heraldic artist) who recently took 1st place in the Expert Class (Rifle Shooting) of Canada with a score of 2359 out of a possible 2400. This was the sixth highest score ever recorded in the competition.

THE EARLY AMERICAN SWINNERTONS

Part Three of this story consists of an extract from "A History of Salem" pp. 438-440, originally published by the New England Genealogical Society. This as you can see, includes a facsimile of Job Swinerton's actual signature of nearly 340 years ago - a fascinating link with the past.

July 30, 1637, Mr. Batter was granted a farm "next to o' brother Ray Northward & it is to runn vp to the great meadow

Job Swinerton

Westwards and not more than twenty acres of meadow." Job Swinnerton¹ was admitted for an inhabitant that day and was granted half an acre of land "neere o' brother Marshall" for a house lot.

JOE SWINNERTON,¹ born about 1601; probably married Elizabeth —, perhaps in Eccleshall, Staffordshire, England, and lived in Salem Village. A private record in the possession of the family states that when he and his wife were aged and infirm their house "took fire on the roof, in the absence of their family, and before they discovered it, all retreat from the door was cut off. Mr. Swinnerton escaped from the window, holding his wife's hand; but did not succeed in rescuing her from the flames. When the son returned he found his father sitting on a rock, viewing the smoking coals, and on inquiring for his mother, his father replied, she has gone to heaven in a chariot of fire." Mr. Swinnerton died April 11, 1684. Children: 1. Job,² born about 1630; 2. John,³ born about 1633.

JOE SWINNERTON,² yeoman; lived in Salem Village; married, first, Ruth Symonds July 19, 1658; she died May 22, 1670; married, second, Hester Baker Sept. 2, 1673; died April 7, 1700; his widow Hester (Esther) died in the winter of 1719-20; children: 1. Jasper,³ born June 4, 1659; 2. Joseph,³ born Feb. 3, 1660; 3. Elizabeth,³ born Feb. 26, 1662-3; married Joseph Hutchinson; 4. Ruth,³ born March 22, 1664; died, unmarried, Oct. 27, 1694; 5. Mary,³ born May 17, 1670; married Anthony Needham; 6. Joshua,³ under age in 1700; died, probably unmarried, in or before 1713; 7. Benjamin,³ baptized Oct. 8, 1682; 8. Esther,³ baptized Oct. 8, 1682; married John Giles; 9. James,³ baptized Nov. 6, 1687; 10. Abigail,³ baptized Sept. 7, 1690; married Elias Trask; 11. Hannah,³ baptized Oct. —, 1692; married Jonathan Flint. DR. JOHN SWINERTON,² physician; married Hannah (Bartholomew), widow of Elder John Browne March 8, 1679-80; died Jan. 6, 1690-1; she died, his widow, Dec. 23, 1713; children: 1. Mercy,³ born Dec. 24, 1681; died, unmarried, Nov. 3, 1727; 2. John,³ baptized June 17, 1683; 3. Antipas,³ born Dec. —, 1685.

JASPER SWINERTON,³ yeoman; married Mary Taylor Feb. 2, 1720; died in the winter of 1733-4; she married, secondly, William Ellenwood of Beverly May 14, 1735; child: 1. Mary,⁴ baptized June 8, 1729; married Nathaniel Pope. JOSEPH SWINERTON,³ yeoman; lived in Salem Village; married Mary Sumner of Milton; died in the winter of 1731-2; she survived him; children: 1. Mary,⁴ born March 22, 1692-3; married Thomas Dismore; 2. Joseph,⁴ born Dec. 1, 1694; 3. Joanna⁴ (twin), born Nov. 22, 1696; married, at Roxbury, Benjamin West June 4, 1718; 4. Ruth⁴ (twin), born Nov. 22, 1696; married Hazadiah Smith May 24, 1723; 5. Sarah,⁴ born Jan. 17, 1698-9; married Joseph Whipple; 6. Job,⁴ born Nov. 30, 1701; probably died before 1720; 7. Elizabeth,⁴ born in 1706. BENJAMIN SWINERTON,³ yeoman; lived in Salem Village; married Ruth —; died in the spring of 1742; children: 1. Joshua,⁴ baptized Oct. 5, 1718; 2. Jasper,⁴ baptized Oct. 1, 1721; lived in Danvers; died Dec. —, 1733; had a daughter Ruth who was under fourteen in 1730; lived in South Brimfield in 1769; 3. Ruth,⁴ baptized Oct. 3, 1725; married Jacob How of Marlboro Dec. 8, 1742. JAMES SWINERTON,³ married Sarah Dier June 9, 1715; died in the spring of 1732; she survived him, and died Dec. —, 1768; children: 1. Elizabeth,⁴ born Nov. 21, 1715; unmarried in 1769; 2. Sarah,⁴ born April 18, 1717; published to Benjamin Upton Nov. 9, 1736; 3. Hester,⁴ born July 2, 1719; probably died before 1768; 4. Ruth,⁴ born June 28, 1721; married John Putnam Feb. 4, 1741-2; 5. Job,⁴ born Aug. 13, 1723; 6. James,⁴ born June 6, 1728; yeoman; lived in Danvers; soldier in the Revolution; married Emma Putnam July 20, 1748; had children. JOHN SWINERTON,³ cooper and schoolmaster; removed to Boston about 1734; married Margaret Grafton Sept. 19, 1711, and probably, secondly, in Boston, Elizabeth Pope of Salem July 2, 1744; child: 1. Mercy,⁴ born April 30, 1713.

JOSEPH SWINERTON,⁴ married Hannah Fuller July 26, 1722; died in the winter of 1739-40; she married, secondly, Joseph Fowle; children: John,⁵ born July 19, 1722; lived in Danvers; soldier in the Revolution; married Ede Putnam (published Nov. 8, 1755); died in the winter of 1784; she died Dec. —, 1807; 2. Elizabeth,⁵ born Dec. 18, 1724; married Jasper Swinerton; 3. Job,⁵ born Aug. 6, 1727; died in the winter of 1752; 4. Ebenezer,⁵ born Oct. 30, 1730; potter; lived in Lynnfield; married Lucy Hopkins of Monson Dec. 22, 1757; died in Lynnfield Nov. 12, 1795. JOSHUA SWINERTON,⁴ lived in Salem Village (Danvers); married, first, Elizabeth Giles Feb. 8, 1737-8; she died Dec. —, 1753; married, second, Mary Buxton Dec. 12, 1754; children: 1. Hannah,⁵ baptized Sept. 2, 1739; 2. Benjamin,⁵ baptized July 19, 1741; 3. Asa,⁵ baptized July 15, 1744; married Eliza Dempsey Oct. 24, 1769; 4. John,⁵ baptized June 15, 1746; lived in Danvers; married Elizabeth Phippen Dec. 20, 1770; died April 19, 1825; she survived him; had children: 5. Samuel,⁵ baptized July 10, 1748; died young; 6. Samuel,⁵ baptized Sept. 20, 1751; lived in New Braintree; soldier in the Revolution; married Phebe Peirce June 7, 1778; 7. Joseph,⁵ lived in New Braintree; 8. Esther,⁵ of New Braintree, unmarried, in 1782; 9. James,⁵ of Richmond in 1782. JOE SWINNERTON,⁴ lived in Salem Village (Danvers); married Sarah Hutchinson of Middleton Sept. 1, 1748; died in 1767; she died in 1769; children: 1. Sarah,⁵ born April 9, 1750; married Eleazer Goodale; 2. Job,⁵ born Feb. 22, 1752; died, under age, soon after his father; 3. Elisha,⁵ born Sept. 17, 1754; 4. Ruth,⁵ born April 22, 1757; 5. Esther,⁵ born May 13, 1760; 6. Betty,⁵ born Sept. 8, 1762; 7. Josiah,⁵ born Nov. 13, 1764.

This concludes the printed sources we have found so far. Now we must start to look at English Records to see if we can track down Job's origin. So far we have no trace in Staffordshire where everyone says he came from but from research done by Mr. R. J. Bowker several years ago, we have the following :-

Parish Register of SHIPTON MOYNE, Glos.

2 Aug. 1612	JESPER SWINERTON & Kathryn Britt	Married
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Parish Register of TETBURY, Glos.

3 Aug. 1612	Katherine SWINERTON, the wife of Jesper Swinerton	Buried
10 Sep. 1616	Ideth SWINERTON, widdow	Buried
1 Oct. 1616	Elizabeth SWINERTON	Buried
25 Sep. 1628	JESP' son JOBE SWYNERTON	Baptised
2 Apr. 1638	ANTIPAS SWINERTON & Margrett Huntley	Married
2 Oct. 1638	JOHN s. ANTIPAS SWINERTON	Baptised
12 Nov. 1640	(illegible) s. ANTIPAS SWINERTON	Baptised
20 Sep. 1649	Jasper SWINERTON & Mary England	Married
4 Mar. 1649	ANTIPAS s. ANTIPAS SWINERTON	Bap.

You will notice the recurrence of the unusual family names of Jasper, Jobe and Antipas which do not occur anywhere else in our records. I have been in touch with Mr. Bowker again and I quote from his reply :-

"Your new information regarding the Swinnerton emigrants is certainly exciting and there would, as you say, appear to be a connection with the Gloucestershire branch - taken purely on the similarity of names alone but, according to the available records and the conclusions drawn from them, any obvious link I cannot make. From the written evidence that I have seen it is, I fear, unlikely that the Job Swinnerton who emigrated in 1628 from Staffordshire is the same as the Tetbury "Jobe Swinerton" who was at Tetbury in 1628, where his son, Jasper, was baptised on the 25 September.

But one could fantasise a little, I suppose, in that Job might have had Jasper baptised at Tetbury where he stopped on his way south from Staffordshire, possibly to visit his relations there, before continuing his journey to the coast and the port from where he sailed. I note that Jasper is not included on the tree you sent which makes me wonder if Job decided it was safer to leave his new-born son in the hands of his Swinerton relatives rather than risking his life on the rigorous crossing to America. The Jasper Swinerton who married in 1649 at Tetbury would, if indeed he was Job's son, have been 21, a likely age at which he may have married Mary England. However, this is all supposition which I cannot prove.

It is, however, interesting to note that Job's other 2 sons, John and Job, were born some time after he settled in America and most likely when the family was well-established there. Perhaps it would be worthwhile trying to ascertain from which port Job Swinnerton sailed and also to locate the marriage licence of Jasper and Mary England.

Otherwise I must tell you, regrettably, that I have turned up no further clues regarding the Tetbury Swinnertons since we were last in touch. The Tetbury Parish Registers 1570-1615 I am unable to trace and are missing. I am sorry not to be able to send you anything more positive and would be pleased to hear from you if you come across anything."

Unfortunately, the Transcripts for the (to us) vital years of 1617, 1619-20, 1624-1626, are also missing and these are the ones that could give us the vital clue to the ancestry of Job. There are no wills which is surprising, there are some later wills of a branch of the family which continued in this area until 1811. Mr. Bowker's gt. gt. grand-father, James Bowker of London married ANN SWINERTON of Tetbury in 1783.