

THE  
HIGGINSONS

IN ENGLAND AND  
AMERICA

BY EBEN PUTNAM

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PART I

ENGLISH ANCESTRY OF NEW ENGLAND AND  
VIRGINIA FAMILIES



RESEARCH PUBLICATION COMPANY

14 BEACON ST., BOSTON

1903



## THE HIGGINSONS IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA.

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Looking at the map of England, one observes the counties of Shropshire, Stafford, and Leicestershire, in the order named, nearly in the centre of the kingdom and running from west to east. Butting against Stafford and Leicester, on the south, is Warwickshire. From Shrewsbury town to Leicester town, as the crow flies, is about eighty miles. Ten miles to the north of Shrewsbury, and half-way to Whitechurch, is the town of Wem. About twenty miles south-west of Leicester, in the northern central part of Warwickshire, is the noted city of Coventry. Five miles west of Coventry is Berkeswell, and west of that parish is Solihull.

It is in this territory, so rudely described, that one must turn for information regarding the ancestors of the American Higginsons. There was the original home of the name. To be sure, the name occurs in Lancashire at a date as early as the middle of the sixteenth century, notably at Leigh, near the southern border, and at other places in neighboring counties; but the name seems in early days to have particularly developed in that western central part of England.

As the forms in which the name could and did appear are varied, it would be an almost hopeless task to attempt to arrange in genealogical sequence the families or persons bearing those forms at the earlier periods.

Isaac and Ike may be the earliest form of the name from which may have been derived Higgins and Higginson. Hickey and Hicks, Hickerson and Hickens, are very likely

but modifications of the same name. Of those forms, Higgins certainly is very early, and Higginson was sometimes so written. Hickerson for Higginson is not an uncommon occurrence. The name was so pronounced in Virginia. By the opening of the sixteenth century the names Higginson and Higgins were apparently fixed, and only slovenly usage has confounded them.

While Higgins is quite a common name and found extensively throughout England, the name of Higginson is confined to localities, and such localities are generally in western England and in parts of the Midlands. It is by no means a common name. The bearers of it have been, as far as one can judge from the records coming down to us, a race of well-to-do yeomen, and now and then of higher estate. Undoubtedly the Higginsons in Shropshire north of Shrewsbury, and the Higginsons in northern Warwickshire, are all of the same family. Whether the other and smaller groups revealed by investigation belong to that family, or are descendants of some other early Higgins or Hickerson, etc., is an open question. It does not seem probable that all bearing the name are of the same male descent. No such claim could be made for the Higginsons, and it is likely that the affix *son* was given in more than one case and became a fixture.

Guppy, in his work showing the distribution of English names, shows that in 1890 there were to every ten thousand farmers and land-owners in Cheshire fourteen by the name of Higginson; in the combined counties of Leicestershire and Rutland, which may be taken to mean the former in this case, seventeen; in Lancashire seven; and in Salop no less than twenty. Under the heading of the latter county he lists Higginson as a district name, *i.e.*, one that is found in from four to nine counties.

The name of Higgins is also a Wem name.

In Eyton's large work on the "Antiquities of Salop," in twelve volumes, covering the period from the Norman con-

quest to the end of the reign of Henry III., 1066-1272 (much later data are given, however, often as late as the middle of the fourteenth century), there is no mention of the name of Higginson.

There are, comparatively, few families, either in England or America, who can claim a proved descent from a progenitor living in the early part of the fifteenth century; the exceptions being those who have held possession of the same lands for many generations, or who have been of such importance that the chain of descent has been preserved by the historian.

To this rule the Higginsons are no exception. The name, as far as I have learned, does not appear on such records as are accessible prior to the year 1500.

It is evident, however, by that time the family was established in and about Wem, in Shropshire, and then, or soon after, in and about Barkeswell, in Warwickshire.

The Higginsons of Wem and Barkeswell were related, as appears from wills on record; but the connecting link is missing. Probably, if we could find the will of the father of John Higginson, of Barkeswell, it is almost a certainty that the exact relationship between him and those of his generation living in Wem would be shown. It is doubtful, however, if the family could be carried farther back unless a careful search of the subsidy rolls, and other rolls and records at the Public Record Office, should reveal something upon which it was possible to build a pedigree.

#### WEM.

Wem is so near Shrewsbury and the Welch border that the inhabitants must have suffered from the frequent forays of the Welch, and, perhaps, in a great measure were of the ancient Celtic or British race.

In the time of Edward (13th century) it has been estimated that the population of England was but two and a quarter million, and in 1650 that of England and Wales

but five and one-half millions; having increased but a half million during the preceding century. In 1871 the population of Salop was only a quarter million. These figures are given to show that in the fifteenth century and at the beginning of the next, Wem could not have been very densely populated, although it was the seat of the Pantulfs. As it is evident at that time in the parish were several families of Higginsons, it follows the family was of considerable antiquity in that neighborhood.

Weme is mentioned in Domesday, and the Saxon owners were Wighe, Lenuinus, Alveva, and Aelviava. The place was granted to Count Roger, in capito, whose mesne tenant was Willelmus Pantulf. The latter held Edstaston, Horton, Cotton, etc. The Norman, William Pantulf, held no less than eleven manors in the old Hundred of Odenet. He was Lord of Noron, near Falaise, and had followed Roger de Montgomery into England, and received gifts of manors in Salop, Stafford, and Warwickshire. He was the first baron of Wem. Roger intrusted to him the administration of his earldom of Shrewsbury.\*

Rev. Samuel Garbet, in his history of Wem, printed in 1818, but written at a much earlier date (about 1750), says: "The parish of Wem is very extensive and contains the chapelries of Edstaston, Newtown, and the townships of Aston, Cotton, Horton, Lacon, Lowe with Ditches, Nothwood, Soultton, Tilley, and Wolverly." The Trench farm, whence Rupert viewed the town of Wem but cared not to attack, is in Tilley, and it is said that here a castle formerly stood. Wem was the first town in Shropshire that declared for Parliament and received a garrison.

Under Cotton (formerly Cote, of which Cotten is plural, [Eyton]) Garbet states that the whole township was called Cotton, but more especially three houses about half mile from Quino brook. The first of those was a copyhold, and with a small estate formerly belonged to John Higginson,

\* Anderson's Early History and Antiquities of Shropshire.

and from his heirs passed to the Sherrats. The next messuage stood upon a freehold estate formerly in possession of Richard Higginson, who at the survey in 1561 produced an old deed with an ancient seal without date, whereby Madoc,\* the son of Yarefoot, son of Madoc, of Acton in Brumfield, gave to William, the son of Roger de Tyshoo, four bovates of arable land lying in the fields of Cotton in the fee of Wem. This grant would be about fifty-two acres. Some part of this land had been sold by Richard Higginson, who produced other new deeds whereby it appeared that he held a messuage with several parcels of land by knight's service, viz., one-tenth part of a knight's fee, and did pay the same part, being ten shillings, on the death of his father, William Higginson.

Tyschoo is, or was, a manor in Warwickshire,† and in the time of Edward II. (1307-1327) was among the possessions of Edward, Baron of Stafford.

The return of William Pantulf, Baron of Wem, is missing in the *Liber Niger*.

Between 1500 and 1560 there were residing in Wem as heads of families, Allen, Johan, William, William (2,) Richard, John, and Thomas Higginson, some of these dying after 1550, and at Broughton, Halen (Alen) Haken-son.

Probably in the above enumeration two or more stand in the relationship of father and son, but this state of affairs shows a settlement in Wem prior to 1500.

In 1561 John and Richard Higginson were freeholders in Wem, and in 1564 John and Thomas Higginson were two of the twenty customary holders.

It is with the Berkeswell branch of the family that we shall presently deal. In this connection, however, the in-

\* A certain Madoc ap Griffin of Brumfield, in 1226, had a difference with William Pantulf, Baron Wem, which was settled by arbitration (Eyton).

† Tyshoo in Warwick, near the battlefield of Edgehill. Acton in Brumfield would appear to be Acton near Clun, in the south-western corner of Shropshire.

There was a family bearing the name Tysoo, but examination of the probate records at Lichfield failed to discover the testaments of any of the name.

section of such entries on Wem parish register as relate to the Higginson family will prove of value.

It is through the kindness of the rector of Wem, Rev. Gilbert H. F. Vane, a lineal descendant of Sir Harry Vane, Governor of Massachusetts Bay, that these entries can be given.

The entries are only given to the year 1600. Following the Register abstracts appear a list of wills of Higginsons of Wem and vicinity, with brief abstracts.

With these and a few gleanings from Garbet, we must abandon, for the present, the Higginsons of Wem.

EXTRACTS FROM THE PARISH REGISTER OF WEM, SALOP.

*Burials.*

- 1583. Thomas Higginson was buried the XIth daye of Marche.
- 1584. Margery the daughter of George Higginson was buried the VIth daye of June.
- 1584. John the sonne of Edwarde Higginson was buried the XVth daye of Julye.
- 1584. Richarde Higginson was buried the XVIIIth daye of September.
- 1584. Jane Higginson was buried the first daye of December.
- 1584. Elizabeth the daughter of Roger Higginson was buried the VIIth daye of februarye.
- 1586. Margery Higginson wydowe was buried the XXth daye of June.
- 1587. John Higginson of Lakeken was buried the XVIth daye of Aprill.
- 1587. Thomas the sonne of Roger Higginson was buried the XVth daye of October.
- 1589. Mary the wyfe of John Higginson was buried the XXth daye of September.
- 1590. William the sonne of John Higginson the eldest was buried the XXVIIth day of December.
- 1591. Katheryne the daughter of George Higginson was buried the XXIIIth day of October.
- 1591. Elizabeth the daughter of Edwarde Higginson was buried the Vth daye of January.
- 1592. Rycharde Higginson the eldest was buried the XXIIIth daye of October.
- 1592. Arthure the sonne of George Higginson was buried the VIth daye of Januarye.
- 1594. Allen Higginson was buried the VIth day of October.
- 1596. Thomas Higginson of the Loc was buried the XXVIIIth daye of Aprill.



1596. Thomas the sonne of John Higginson the youngest was buried the VIIIth daye of September.
1597. Allen Higginson clearke was buried the XIIIth daye of Aprill.
1597. Margery Higginson widdowe was buried the XVth daye of Julye.
1597. Allen Higginson of Tilstocke was buried the XIIIth daye of October.
1597. Margaret Higginson wyddowe was buried the Xth daye of february.
1598. Hughe the sonne of John Higginson the youngest was buried the IXth daye of January.
1599. William the sonne of John Higginson the elder was buried the XXVth daye of November.

*Christenings.*

1584. } Higginson was  
of Maye
1584. Raphe the son George Higginson  
baptized the XXVth daye of September {
1584. } cell the sonne of John Higginson  
was baptized the XXVIIIth daye of Januarie
1585. Elizabeth the daughter of Edwarde Higginson was baptised the IVth daye of Maye
1588. John the sonne of William Higginson was baptised the XVIIth daye of Marche.
1586. Christopher the sonne of John Higginson was baptised the XXVIIIth daye of Marche.
1586. Thomas the sonne of Roger Higginson was baptised the XVth daye of September.
1588. Rendell the sonne of John Higginson was baptised the Vth daye of Marche.
1587. Thomas the sonne of George Higginson was baptised the XXth daye of Maye
1588. William the sonne of George Higginson was baptised the XVth daye of Marche
1590. William the sonne of John Higginsonn was baptised the XXth daye of August.
1591. Katherine the daughter of George Higginson was baptised the first daye of August.
1592. Elizabeth the daughter of John Higginson was baptised the XXVIIth daye of Julye.
1593. Rolande the sonne of George Higginson was baptised the XIth daye of february.
1593. Arthur the sonne of George Higginson of Coton was baptised the XIth daye of february.
1596. Rose the daughter of John Higginson was baptised the XXVIIIth daye of Marche.
1596. Thomas the sonne of John Higginson Junior was baptised the XIIIth daye of Maye.
1597. Edmonde the sonne of George Higginson (?) was baptised the VIth daye of October(?)

1598. Rolande the sonne of John Higginson the eldest was baptised the last daye of Aprill.  
 1598. Hughe the sonne of John Higginson the youngest was baptised the XVIIIth daye of June.  
 1599. George the sonne of William Higginson yeoman was baptised the XXIIIth daye of June.  
 1599. William the sonne of John Higginson the eldest yeoman was baptised the Vth daye of September  
 1588. Mary the daughter of John Higginson of Coton the youngest yoman was baptised the XVth daye of Marche.

*Marriages.*

1584. John Higginson & Mary Hinton were maryed the XXVth daye of Januarye.  
 1585. Richarde Higginson & Katherine Higginson were maryed the XXVIIIth daye of August.  
 1585. William Higginson & Margaret Calcott (?) were maryed the IVth daye of December.  
 1586. Thomas Robinson & Ellyne Higginson were maryed the VIth daye of Maye.  
 1588. Thomas Ellis & Margery Higginson were maryed the XXVth daye of Januarye.  
 1590. William Burlton & Elizabeth Higginson were maryed the XXth daye of June.  
 1591. Leynarde Bromeley & Anne Higginson were maryed the XVIIIth daye of September.  
 1594. Rolande Wade & Margery Higginson were maryed the last daye of Januarie.  
 1594. John Margrave (?) & Jane Higginson were maryed the VIIth daye of february.  
 1599. George Higginson chapman & Elizabeth the daughter of John Peate husbandmen were maryed the first daye of December.

PROBATE RECORDS FROM LICHFIELD.

AGNES HYGGINSON of Edgmond, Co. Salop. *Dated* 10 January, 1583:

to be buried in church of Edgmond; to Saint Chads of Lych IIII<sup>d</sup>; Thomas Harp, Wyllm Harp, Wyllm Hy—  
 to Areryatt Higgins a mantyll; to Edgmond church II tapers;  
 to Homfrey Seddon IIII<sup>d</sup>; to S<sup>r</sup> Raff Barker IIII<sup>d</sup>; residue  
 to "watt chylde or frynde of myne as wyll pay my debts."  
 Executors — Thomas Cheryn and Tho<sup>r</sup>. Harper  
 Witnesses — Homfrey Seddon pryst, Rye Charite, Wyllm Hays, Thomas Harper

= Proved at Lichfield, 10 July 1534, by Thomas Harper —

= Will very dilapidated and half destroyed

THOMAS HYCKYNSON of Kirk Ireton, Co. Derby.

The Will is missing, vide Act Book, it was proved at Lichfield, 27 February, 1545/6, by Agnes Hyckynson, Widow, the relict

WILLIAM HYGGINSON, of the Este Foryatts, p'sh St Giles, neare Salop, Sherman, granted at Lichfield, 4. October 1552, to Helene Hyggynson, the relict.

Inventory 29 September, 5. Edw<sup>d</sup>. VI.

Surety — Rad Barker of Wolorecott, Husbandman

HALEN HEKENSON, of Broughton Shrewsbury, co. Salop. *Dated* 29 December 1554 :

buried in churchyard of Broughton ; to " my foure chyldren " Roger, Elen, *Noesse*, and Cesslie, 40/ each ; " my daughter in law " 40/ ; Thomas my son.

Executors — John Nouley and Bessey my Wife.

Witnesses — John Howell, John *Predan*.

= Inventory, 29 December 1554 (ye day of his departyng), by Jhon *Preten* & Richard Rosell —

= Proved at Lichfield, 13 May 1555.

ELLYN HYGGINSON, of Shrewsbury, Wedowe. *Dated* 24 February, 1555 :

to Alles Hyggynson " my son Wyllyam's bastard daughter " — pans, potts & pewter dishes ; —

to Raffe Barker a mattress ; residue to Wyllyam Hyggynson, and appoint him executor.

Witnesses — Tho<sup>s</sup>. Lyenew, George Hyggons.

= Inventory (no date) by Thomas Sherarand and Ryc Glacyer.

= Proved at Lichfield, 4 May, 1556, " 2<sup>d</sup> & 3<sup>d</sup> of Philip and Mary."

ELIZABETH HIGGINSON, of Ruiton, Co. Salop, Widow. *Dated* 19 January, 39 Eliz : A.D. 1596 :

my son Richard Higginson to pay my son John Higginson £13.6.8, and to my daughter Jane £3, and to my daughter Margery 40/ :

my son Thomas deceased ; " if the said Margery do live after she is delivered of the childe she is now grete of ; "

my son John to pay unto John Blanche and Elizabeth the children of Tho<sup>s</sup> Robbins 6/ 8 ; —

to my daughter Ellene — clothing; to my daughter Jane — clothing; to Anne Menlove, clothing; my *daughter* Ann Beddoe; Roger Beddoe my *brother in law*; hay, etc. my son John, Jane my daughter and John Grace —

Executor — my son John Higginson.

Overseer — my brother in law, Roger Beddoe.

Debts — to my brother William Menlove, David Beddoe and Roger Grison.

Witnesses — Tho<sup>s</sup> Dauyes, Roger Beddoe, David Beddoe and Jane Higginson.

= Inventory (of the Lowe, psh. Wem, Co. Salop, Wid.) 17 March 39. Elizabeth, by Rich<sup>d</sup> Peye and Ralph Mides.

= Proved at Lichfield 24 May 1597.

RAPHE HIGGINSON, of St Allemunds, Salop, Corviser. Dated 13 January 1607; buried in St. Allemunds;

to Ales my Wife, my goods; to Thomas my son — apostle Silver spoons &c; to my son in law William Aston — apparel &c; to my daughter Sara, a gowne; to Ales Aston my daughter Sarah's chylde £5; to Amy Aston 50/; to Mary Aston 50/; to Thomas Aston 40/;

Executrix — Ales my Wife,

Witnesses — Thomas Lloyd Clarke, Griffie ap Pritchard, Reese Griffith, Katherine ap Pritchard,

= Inventory, 4. March 1607, by Thomas Bowker, Tanner, and Griffith ap Pritchard

= Proved at Lichfield 1. June 1608.

ALES HIGGINSON of Shrewsbury, Co. Salop, Widow. Dated 11 July, 1615; buried near my pew in the church;

“my late husband Raphe Higginson dec<sup>d</sup> hath lefte to my sone Thomas Higginson and my daughter Sara and her children” certain legacies,

to my son in law William Astle 40/ & to his son Edward Astle 40/; to my goddaughter Ales Astle a gowne; to my daughter Sara — apparel; rest to my said son and daughter.

Overseer — Thomas Lloyd, Clerke,

Witnesses — Robert Sheerer, Peter Whitcombe, Isacke Longdon,

= Inventory, 18 august 1615, by Raphe Astle, Tho<sup>s</sup>. Bowker, Griffith ap Pritchard and Isacke Longdon —

= Proved at Lichfield, 5 September, 1615

JOHAN HYGGINSON of Weme, Co. Salop. Dated 8 February, 1542;  
buried in ye church or chyard of Weme;

5/ to church of Weme; xx' to my daughter Elsabet; my son  
Thomas; my son Wyllm; rest. half to "my Wieff" and  
other halfe to my chylde according to ye custome.

Executors — Rychard Drurye pryst and Alane my Sone, —

Witnesses — Wyllm Watkys of Aston, Wyllm Powy of  
Weme

= Inventory — the name given is "*Joane*" Hyggynson —

= Proved at Lichfield, 5 July, 1543.

Will, *much* decayed

WYLLA HYGGINSON, of Wem, Co. Salop. Dated 19 July, 1548:

I "being demytted to the Kinges Comyssoners for to goo  
onto the Kinges warfere unto Skhotlande;" to be buried  
where itt shall please God; to Elsabeth Drurye fowrre  
markys; to Rycharde Newnes my brother in lawe xx'; to  
Rycharde Haylys a heyfer; rest to Thomas my brother and  
appoint him my executor.

Witnesses — Homfrey Drury, Rycharde Newnes.

= Inventory by John Alysson, baly, of Wem, Hugh Rycroft.

= Proved at Lichfield, 30. September, 1549.

WILLIAM HYGGINSON, of Cotton, psh. Wem, Co. Salop. Dated 30  
June, 1552; buried in church or churchyard of Wem;

to Alan my son, certain goods; to Thomas Pole son to Mar-  
garet my daughter 1 heyfer; to Cicile Sherarde 1 calf; to  
William Brocton son to Maude Brocton my daughter 1  
calf; to the poor at my buryall 10/.

Executors — my Wife and son Alan.

Witnesses — Robert Hyggynson, Robert Ryddeley, Richard  
Nycholls pst,

= Inventory 20 August 1552, (late deceased), by John She-  
rarde and Robert Sherarde.

= Proved at Lichfield, 3 October, 1553.

JOHN HYGGINSON, of Cotton, psh. Wem, Co. Salop, yeoman.

Administration granted at Lichfield, 13 June, 1608; to Rose  
Hyggynson, Widow, the relict.

Bond for tuition of John, Roland, Elizabeth, and Rose, the  
children.

Inventory 29 May, 1608, by Alan Hotchkis, John Bruyon,  
John Higginson, and Francis Sault.

THOMAS HIGGINSON, of Wem, Co. Salop, Husbandman, *Dated* 10 March, 1582; buried in churchyard of Wem;

to Margery Higginson my Wife and to "my children" all my goods, &c;

Executors — my Wife Margery Higginson and William Higginson my son.

Overseers — William Barnes and Tho<sup>s</sup> Saulat.

Witnesses — William Jenins, William Brayne.

Debts — Alan Brayne, Willm Brayne of Pryst, Richard Hales, John Wixteds, Thomas Pey.

= Inventory by John Cowper & Rich<sup>d</sup> Jebbe.

= Proved at Lichfield, 10 October, 1583.

WILLIAM HIGGINSON, of Wem, Co. Salop, Yeoman. *Dated* 23 February, 1632; buried in Chyd of Wem;

to my son Thomas Higginson certain goods for life, then to his son Richard Higginson;

to my son John 1/-; to my daughter Mary Parton 1/-; to my daughter Jane Sandland 1/-; to my daughter Alice Cartwright 1/-; to my Servant Margaret Roberts 3/4; residue to Elizabeth Higginson my wife and appoint her executrix.

Witnesses — Thomas Morris, Richard Moss.

= Inventory, 18 March 1632, by Richard Cowp and Griffin Turner.

= Proved at Lichfield, 3 April, 1633.

GEORGE HIGGINSON, of Whitechurch, Co Salop, shoemaker. *Dated* 8. November 1613;

to Anne my Wife all her goods, hers before our marriage; £11 due to John then her brother; to William Higginson my eldest Son, my dwellinghouse; — rest to John Higginson and Jane Higginson "my other two children."

Executor — Lawrence Higginson my brother,

Overseers — Robert Podmore my brother in law, and Thomas Higginson "one other of my brethren."

Witnesses — Isaac Cook, John Danes *a/s* Jenkins, Ralph Higginson, Willm Higginson, Eleanor Podmore.

= Inventory 1 December, 1613, by John Hotchkis, John Tayne, George Downe, Richard Richardson

= Proved at Lichfield 2 December, 1613.

WILLIAM HIGGINSON of Whitechurch, Co. Salop, Corvisor. *Dated* 19 May, 1632;

to my Son William Higginson 1/-; to my Son Richard Higginson 1/-; to my daughter Alice Higginson 1/-; to my daughter Jane Higginson 1/-; to my daughter Anne Higginson 1/-; rest to my Wife Alice Higginson and appoint her executrix.

Witnesses — John Nevitt, Robert Royley, Owen Jenkin, John Hockis, Jun,

= Inventory, 12, June, 1632, by John Hochkis, Thomas Higginson, and John Prym —

= Proved at Lichfield, 23 June, 1632.

GEORGE HIGGINSON of Tilley, psh Wem, Co. Salop, Yeoman.

*Dated* — A.D. 1613: buried in churchyard of Wem.;

to "my Wife" my 3 kyne & all rest of cattel; to "all my Sons" xii<sup>d</sup> each and to "my daughter" xii<sup>d</sup> —; residue to my Wife.

Executors — my Wife and my Son George Higginson,

Debt to John Higginson,

Witnesses — John Heyward, Robert Podmore, John Cooke, John Goughe.

= Inventory 9. September 1613, by Thomas Richardson, and Adam Tyler —

= Proved at Lichfield 11. September, 1613, by Jane Higginson, Widow, power for George Higginson.

GEORGE HIGGINSON of Cromer, Co. Salop. *Dated* 19 June, 1624;

to poor of Wem 40/-;

to Elizabeth Higginson daughter of my brother Richard £60 if she marry with consent of Thomas Barnes and Richard Jebbe, if not, 10/-; to Anne Higginson and Martha Higginson daughters of my Said brother Richard £10 each; to Mary Peate & Elizabeth Peate daughters of Thomas Peate a cow ea.; to Richard Peate a cow —; to John Peate & Ellinor Peate son and daughter of said Thomas Peate 40/- ea.; to children of William Mullyner, being Six 40/-; to William Mullyner and Anne his Wife 40/-; my Wife and brother Richard to convey a tenement in Lowe to Thomas Gadd my Servant and Jane Mullyner; to my Sister Moade Gadd 40/-; residue to Elizabeth my Wife and appoint her executrix.

Witnesses — William Roe Rector of Wem. Tho<sup>s</sup>. Barnes W<sup>m</sup> Mulliner, Rich<sup>d</sup> Higginson and Rich<sup>d</sup> Jebbe —

- = Inventory 26 June 1624 (as of Edstaston, Yeoman) by  
Tho' Jebbe and Tho' Barnes —
- = Proved at Lichfield 1. July, 1624.

Of the Higginsons of Wem, the first person of whom we have actual knowledge is William, the father of Richard Higginson, who was a freeholder in 1561.\* That William may be, and very likely was, identical with William Higginson of Wem whose will was proved in 1542.

In the will, sons Thomas, William, and Allen are named; but it was not uncommon to omit mention of the eldest son, who came into possession of lands by right.

There appears another, and probably younger, William, whose will was proved in 1552, and who names but one son, Alan. I do not doubt but that this latter William had other sons.

In 1561, Richard Higginson, the son of William, held lands in Cotton by one tenth of a knight's fee which he had inherited from his father, and Allen held Woodend Hall and a large copyhold estate there. (Garbet.)

The name Allen appears to have been common among these Wem Higginsons. One Allen was buried in 1594, another, of Tilstocke, in Oct., 1597, and a third Allen, "the clerke," was buried 13 April, 1597. Allen, the clerk, I think identical with Allen, the clerk, who is a witness to the will of Thomas Higginson, of Berkeswell, in 1573, and who is probably the same as the "cozen Allen Higginson" mentioned by the testator.

By reference to the wills of the Berkeswell Higginsons, to follow, it appears that Allen, the clerk, was the son of John Higginson, of Cotton, and at the time of the making of his will was dwelling in Cotton in Wem.

As the earliest Higginsons of Wem of whom we have definite knowledge, *i.e.*, the two Williams above and their

\* Margery Higginson, daughter of Higginson of Wem, married Richard, son of Hugh Bostock. See Visitation of Chester, 1530. She must have been born as early as 1505. Her great-grandson William, living in 1580, was married prior to 1577.



families, were contemporaries of John Higginson of Berkeswell who died in 1540, it is probable that the Williams of Wem and John of Berkeswell stood in the some near degree of relationship. The presence of two of the sons of John in Wem, and the mention of the niece, a daughter of a deceased brother living there, as well as the numerical preponderance of persons bearing the name in Wem over Berkeswell at that early date, is abundant proof that the Berkeswell Higginsons came out of Salop, not the latter from Warwickshire.

The Cotton Higginsons and the Berkeswell Higginsons appear to have enjoyed about the same social and financial position. Both families were connected with the gentry, though styling themselves yeomen.

It is among the ancestors of the Higginsons of Cotton in Wem that one may expect to find the ancestor of the Berkeswell family.

Garbet says that an estate in Tilley in Wem, which formerly belonged to the Donnes, passed in 1561 to John and George Higginson.

Robert Higginson, the grandson of John, was concerned with many of the inhabitants of Wem in an attempt to establish their ancient privileges against the purchaser of the manor, one Daniel Wycherly. The case was lost, it was thought, through the treachery of the attorney and the burning of valuable papers. This was in 1683, after ten years of litigation. Higginson lost heavily. The last representative of this line died in 1747. He wasted his paternal estate by a wild life.

Another branch of the family was settled at Cranmore, a part of the lords domain, in Edstatston. It came to them in the time of James I. To this family belonged George of Cromar who died in 1624. He was succeeded by his brother Richard.

A Mr. Richard Higginson was one of the feofees of the school in Wem.

Ashhouse in Edstatston was a copyhold estate in posses-

sion of the Higginsons for years. John possessed it during the legal contest above mentioned.

The several branches of the family in Wem were in good circumstances and among the most substantial people in the place.

From the lists for Salop, of disclaimers to the right to bear arms, in 1664, were Richard Higginson, of Wem, and Thomas Higginson, of North Gate street, Chester.

The evidence of the list of disclaimers would seem to show that the Wem Higginsons were not armigerous. But it is not proof that they could not have proved their right.

Unfortunately at the date of these disclaimers, 1664, the practices of the heralds were not above suspicion. They were very apt to incur the resentment of the persons summoned to prove their claims to coat armor. So strong was the local feeling in some places, that the heralds were presuming upon their position, that in some cases monuments defaced of armorial bearings by the heralds were immediately repaired. The names of persons disclaimed include many who could have proved their right, but who would not. The greater number, however, are of persons who sought to obtain honors to which they had no legal claim. The case to a certain extent was very likely analogous with the position taken by some American families at the present day who insist upon using arms upon traditionary evidence solely. It is also more than probable that in some cases persons were summoned who had never claimed coat armor; the names of the more wealthy persons of a town being taken, perhaps in the hope that rather than be disclaimed they would pray for a grant of arms and so enrich the heralds.

As this record is a century and a half later than the probable date of the separation of the Wem and Berkeswell families, it can have little value in throwing light upon the origin of the arms in use by the Salem Higginsons at a very early date, and which will be described later.

## THE BERKESWELL HIGGINSONS.

Berkeswell was anciently spelled Berghewell. It is now in the diocese of Worcester. It is about six miles west of Coventry and a like distance north-west of Kenilworth.

There is a church there ancient and interesting, but unfortunately the registers do not commence till 1653.

Stoneleigh is about four miles east of Kenilworth and ten miles south-east of Berkeswell.

In October, 1538, Robert Bocher and wife Elizabeth obtain a grant of certain lands in Stonely, and also lands called Cokkeswaste, late in the tenure of John Hykynson. (State papers.) John Higginson, of Berkeswell, in 1518, is said to have been named as executor in the will of a resident of Berkeswell.

JOHN HIGGINSON, of Berkeswell, who made his will 10 Dec., 1540, which was proved 4 February following, was connected with the Wem Higginsons. He had at the time of his death four grandchildren. It is not unlikely, therefore, that he was identical with the John Higginson named above. If so, he presumably was quite an aged man at his death. His date of birth may with reason be assumed to be prior to 1480. Certainly not much later. From his will it appears that he had a brother deceased, who formerly lived in Wem, and who may have been an elder brother. Two of his sons lived in Wem, namely, John and Nicholas. The former was of Cotton. An abstract of his will follows :

John Higison, of Berkeswell, yeoman; will dated 10 Dec., 1540, and proved at Lichfield, February, 1540-1, mentions children and grandchildren given below, together with (grandchildren) Robert and Dorothy Higginson, each £8, and cousin Agnes Higinson who shall receive of Nicholas Higginson, dwelling in the parish of Wem, three kine, as he had received for her from her father thirty-six shillings. His wife to deliver the kine to Nicholas. Small

legacies of equal amount to Agnes Walltan, of Coventry, and Margaret Bamforth. Wife Jane. Sons-in-law, Raufe Olyver and Rolande Radforthe, overseers. Soul of Mistress Burway to be prayed for.

Mr. George Mathew, overseer. Witnessed by Sr. John Fauckner, clerk, Roland Radforth and Thomas Higison. (Cons. Court Coventry and Lichfield.)

Children :

Thomas, witness to his father's will.

John, "dwelling in Cotton in Wem."

Nicholas.

Gregory, unmarried in 1540.

——, probably the wife of "son-in-law" Ralph Oliver,\* and mother of Agnes and Robert Oliver.

Margerie, wife of Rowland Radforthe,† and mother of Robert and Thomas Radforth.

Alice

Margaret

Ellen, alias Joys.

Elizabeth

These four latter unmarried.

THOMAS HIGGINSON, of Berkeswell, yeoman, son of the above John, left a will dated 29 Nov., 1573 : proved 10 Feb., 1573.

To be buried in the parish church. Three pounds to be lent yearly to the poor in the same manner as my mother gave seven pounds. To daughter Ursula £30 : daughter Elizabeth, unmarried, £30 ; son Robert : son Thomas £5 and

\* There were eleven Oliver estates settled between 1543 and 1602 ; of these William 1543-4, and Thomas 1558, were of Wem. None of Berkeswell or vicinity.

† The will of Roland Radforth, or Radford, is at Lichfield. Dated 26 Aug., 1553 ; proved 14 Oct., 1555, by the executrix. He was of Dwething, parish of Berkeswell. To be buried in St. John Baptist, Berkeswell. To eldest son Robert : £10, sons William, Gregore, Thomas each £6-18-4 : daughter Annys £13,-6-9 ; to Annys, Elizabeth Margere, Alys, Phyllys, Thomas Casmore ; residue to wife Margere, whom executrix. Overseers, son Robert Radford, kinsman William Radford, and William Byssell.

Witnesses, Robert Hynd, Edmond Aygford, William Byssell. Inventory by the witnesses and Robert Latham.

six oxen: daughter Dorothy Hanslapp; daughter Joane Benyan; son-in-law Thomas Benyan £20, which he is to repay if he has no children: son George, unmarried, £20; Lawrence Donne: \* my men, William Walt, John Raven, Raphe Shower: my maids Margere Barlee, Elizabeth Milton: Dorothy Grey; my married children: brother John Higginson a cloak: brother Nicholas Higginson a jerkin: cousin Allen Higginson horse grass during my lease: Adam Higginson twenty shillings: Thomas Benium son of son-in-law John Benyon £3-6-8; Thomas, son of daughter Hanslapp, £5; Thomas Higginson, son of son Robert, £5: son Robert Higginson executer: John Myles and Thomas Benion overseers; witnesses Allen Higginson, clerk, Leonard Frerleton, Richard Sloughe, Hugh Higginson. (*P. 6. 6. Martyn 10.*)

Children.†

Robert, had son Thomas in 1573.

Dorothy, who, together with her husband, are mentioned in father's will. She married Nicholas Hanslapp of Arnho, co. Northampton, and had Thomas, Robert, and John. See Visitation of Warwick, 1619.

Ursula.

Joyce, wife of Thomas Benyan.

George, living, unmarried, 1573. The following entry occurs on the lay subsidy for Knightlow Hundred, 39-40 Eliz. (1597-8), "Kenilworth, George Higginson, in terr, XI VIII."

ROBERT HIGGINSON, of Solihull, Co. Warwick, Gentleman, made his will, 7 December, 1610. He gave to the poor of Solihull 40 shillings; to christian Barker's children and Ann Randall's children, a ewe and lamb each; to my daughter Isabel Guerton's children and to my son Thomas, his

\* The Donnes were a Wem family.

† The Visitation of Warwickshire, 1619, and of Northampton, 1618-19, exhibits the pedigree of Wylmer or Wilmore. Robert of Sywell, son of William of Ruyton, died 19 Dec. 1612. His wife was Elizabeth, daughter of *Thomas Higginson* of Berkeswell. Their children were Sir William and Dorothy, wife of Thomas Andrew of Harleston.

children, the same; my son Thomas Higginson: to Thomas Higginson, my grandchilde, plate, etc.; "I did owe to my son Thomas Elliott xx" v<sup>s</sup> —" "his three children which he had by my daughter Alice, viz., Sara and his sonnes when out of apprenticeship;" Rest to Ioane my wife whom executrix; "I have receved the x" which my son Guerton had for Sara — for use of Sara Elliott till of age."

Inventory, 27 April, 1614, by Valentine Overton, John Horne, Tho<sup>s</sup> Tandy, and Thomas Higginson.

Proved, at Lichfield, 10 May, 1614.

Christopher Randell and wife Anne *vs.* Robert Higginson and wife Johan. Claim under a will, of divers messuages in Solihull and Knowle, and house and land in Langdon End, in Knowle, late the estate of Richard Walker, father of the plaintiff Anne. (Rr. I. Chancery Suits. Elizabeth.)

1579. Margaret Sadler, widow, and executrix *vs.* Robert Higginson and wife Joan, to compel a grant of a lease, according to agreement, of a tenement and orchard, etc., in Shepe Street in Stratford-upon-Avon. (Chancery Suits.)

The above Robert is evidently the son of Thomas Higginson of Berkeswell. Solihull is close by Berkeswell and about ten miles west of Coventry. The Parish register dates from 1538.

Children:

Thomas, survived his father; only son named in the latter's will. He had son Thomas and probably Robert. The estate of Thomas Higginson the elder, of Berkeswell, tanner, was administered upon by grant to the relict Margery, 31 Oct., 1666. Sureties, Robert Higginson, a son, of Berkeswell, yeoman, and Abraham Mantell, of Coleshull, co. Warwick, yeoman. Inventory, 30 Oct., 1616, by Richard Etherington, Richard Bishop, Henry Twyste, Thomas Laute.

Isabel, m. Guerton.

Alice, m. Thomas Elliott.

Tripartite agreement between Right Hon. Robert, Lord Spencer, Baron of Wormleighton, co. Warwick, Sir Wm.

Monsen of North Carlton, and Dame Dorothy his wife, Anthony Monson of Fisleton, co. Lincoln, Esq., Walter Smith, of Allesley *als.* Awsley, co. Warwick, gent., Thomas Smyth, of Wansley, *als.* Only, Northamptonshire, yeoman, and Elizabeth his wife, Barnaby Holbeche of Fillingley, Warwick, yeo., Walter his son and heir, John Blythe, of Allesly, yeo., and Anne his wife, daughter of said Barnaby Holbeche, John Mayne of Weston under Wetherley *als.* Werely, co. Warwick, yeo., Daniel Wyne, his son and heir apparent, John Tolberde of do., yeo., and Margaret his wife, and Thomas his son and heir apparent, Thomas Medes of do., yeo., and Wm. Westley, of do., laborer, of the first part: John Symth of Grayes Inn, Middlesex, son and heir of Richard Smyth late of Shelfords, co. Warwick, Esq., deceased, of the second part: and John Leicester and Robert Higginson of London, Gentlemen, of the third part, whereby Lord Spencer *et als.* hold reversion of manors, etc., in said John Smyth and his heirs, the said Lord Spencer and others make the said Leicester and Higginson present tenants as said John Smyth the vouchee and the common vouchee may suffer, and convey the manor of Fletchampstead *als.* Nether Fletchampstead, co. Warwick, and the manor house wherein one John Russell doth inhabit, and all those houses, edifices, stables, barns, yards, pastures, commons, wastes, etc., rents, reversions, etc., in Fletchampstead, Allesley, Weston-under-Werely, Stonley, Conndon, Ericklowe, Attlebrough Grafton *als.* Temple Grafton, and Newbold-upon-Avon in co. Warwick, provided the said Leicester and Higginson at or in the walk adjoining to the mayor's parlor in the Cross Cheapinge, in the city of Coventry, on the 24 day of June next, pay the sum of 10000 pounds sterling. Dated 4 Dec., 10 James I (1612); enrolled 12 May, 11 Jas. I. (Close Rolls 11 Jas. I, part 23c, No. 35.)

These places are all in the close vicinity of Coventry, and Allesley adjoins Berkeswell on the east.

The connection of Robert Higginson of Virginia with the

Berkeswell Higginsons is proven by the following and foregoing deeds :

Suit in Chancery, 1 Aug., 1650 (H. 93, No. 41), wherein Thomas Higginson of Berkeswell, in Warwickshire, complains that in July, 1650, Joanna Higginson, widow and relict of Robert Higginson, late citizen and printer stainer of London, deceased, and younger brother of your orator, in consideration of £280 for her better maintenance and the preferment of Lucy Higginson, the only daughter and heiress of said Robert and Joanna, and now living in Virginia, agreed to sell a certain messuage and lands in Berkeswell, now in the joint hands of Roger Roden, John Bird, and John Anstie or their assigns, and now or late in the occupation of the said Thomas Higginson, heretofore in the tenure of his parents (names illegible?), etc. Later it appears that in the 22d year of James (1624/5), a fine was passed enfeoffing Stephen Hales and William Holbech, upon trust, for the benefit of said Thomas Higginson, the elder, and Ann his wife, your orator's father and mother, and afterward for the benefit of the said Joanna Higginson by the name of Joanna Torkesey; and that, about the month of Aug., 1649, the said Robert Higginson died in Virginia, and by virtue of the said fine the said Joanna and her heirs become possessed of the benefits of the said trust. The said Stephen Hales \* \* \* Stephen Hales of Snitterfield, co. Warwick, grandchild and heir of the said Stephen Hales, deceased, and Mary Holbech, grandchild and heir of the said William Holbech, deceased, are subject to the trusts aforesaid. It further appears that Barnabas Holbech was the father of the above mentioned Mary Holbech, and that she is under 16 and not able to give possession of the property, etc. There are other considerations involved, as Robert Higginson died possessed of a good estate and his relict had £500 of it, etc.

The object of the suit is to get possession through an order of the court, the complainant avowing there is a con-



spiracy to keep him out of his purchase and rights. The answer of Joanna Higginson, widow of Robert, is dated same day, who recites that after the fine mentioned and assurances were passed, she and the said Robert were married, and about seven years since did go into parts beyond the seas and did for divers years live in Virginia, and that the said Robert died there on or about Aug., 1649, leaving issue Lucie Higginson. She denies that the estate of said Robert was as much as £500, or that she came into possession of any considerable amount of it, and that the said Robert's estate was largely in debt in Virginia. She states she paid his debts and obtained an order affecting her discharge from the Colony and Council of Virginia, and that she and her daughter were left in a manner destitute, saving for the provision made for them before her marriage. That in July last she came to England to demand her property, etc., and made an agreement with the said Thomas, as he states, and has received the £280, and is content, and is willing that conveyance should be made to him of the property.

Answer of Mary Holbech, through her guardian, Arthur Calley, does not claim any interest or title in the estate.

Capt. Robert Higginson is mentioned in an old manuscript in the Rootes family as from Dublin, and he is said to have been in 1645 the commander at Middle Plantation in Virginia.

His daughter and heiress, Lucy, married Major Lewis Burwell, and had Lewis, afterward major and member of the Council.

She married, second, Col. William Bernard, who seems to have died without issue.

She married, third, Col. Philip Ludwell, and had Philip, also a colonel and of Greenspring. (See "Lee of Virginia," page 127.)

We shall recur to this family later.

## THE COTTON HIGGINSONS.

JOHN HIGGINSON of Cotton, co. Salop, yeoman, son of John, of Berkeswell, and brother of Thomas. From his will dated 25 Oct., 1575; proved at Lichfield, 30 Sept., 1577:

To be buried in parish church of Wem; to Margery Higgen-son nowe my Wyff my dwelling house in Wem and cer-  
tain goods; —

Jane Higgen-son and Margaret Higgen-son two "of my natural daughters."

Margery my wyff executrix.

Witnesses, Tho<sup>s</sup> Bostock, John Higginson Tho<sup>s</sup> Higginson Tho<sup>s</sup>. yemans —

Debts by John Modye, John Newport, Rich<sup>d</sup> Donne, Margaret Tewe, John Anderson, Alan Chynton, Alan Higgin-son, John Wyxytyd, Maude Higgen-son, Jane Higgen-son, W<sup>m</sup> Welch.

Debts to W<sup>m</sup> Menlove, John Hewes.

Inventory by Nouduff Sinkon, Tho<sup>s</sup> Bostocke John Hawes and Robert Sherot.

In assigning this John as the brother of Thomas of Berkeswell, I am led by the belief that the Alan, Jane and Maude Higginson, named in the list of debts, together with per-  
haps others there named, are children of the deceased who have had their portion.

Children :

? Allen, "the clerke." He was buried at Wem 18 Aprill 1597. He is called cousin, i.e. nephew, by Thomas the son of John of Berkeswell. Alan Hickynson, B.A. 18 Jan., 1552/3, as Higgins, fellow Baliol College, Oxford, 1557-60, M.A., July, 1557.

? John }  
? Thomas } witnesses to the will and perhaps sons.

\* John Moody, of Wem, had daughter Dorothy, who m., 1558, Thos. Barnes. Their son Thomas m. Elzb. daughter of Richard Higginson. — *Garbet*.

Jane }  
 ? Maude } mentioned in inventory.

Margery Higginson, widow, was buried at Wem, 20 June, 1586.

Margery Higginson, widow, buried at Wem 16 July, 1597.

Margeret Higginson, widow, buried at Wem, 10 Feb., 1597/8.

Indenture between John Farneham, Esq., one of the gentlemen pensioners of the Queen, and John Higginson, of Cotton, Salop, yeoman, who obtains the free chapell of Lynley and all rights, etc., as the said Farneham had gift of the Queen, 7 March, 19 Elizabeth, to be held of her manor of Eltham in the county of Kent, and not in chief nor by knight's service, and paying yearly two shillings rent, 15 May, 19 Elizabeth (1576). Close Rolls, 19 Elizabeth, part 23.

JOHN HIGGINSON, of Cotton, called the elder, married at Wem, 25th Jan., 1584/5, Mary Hinton. Mary the wife of John Higginson, buried 20 Sept., 1589, and he married second Rose

They had the following children baptized at Wem :

— cell, 28 Jan., 1584/5.

Christopher, 28 March, 1586.

Rendell, 6 March, 1586/7.

William, 20 Aug., 1590; buried 27 Dec., 1590.

Elizabeth, 27 July, 1592.

Rose, 28 March, 1596.

Roland, 30 April, 1598.

William, 5 Sept., 1599: buried 25 Nov., 1599.

Administration on the estate of the above John was granted 13 June, 1608, to Rose Hyggynson, the relict. Inventory the 29 May, 1608, by Allen Hotchkiss, John Bruyon, John Higginson,\* Francis Sault. Bond on file for the tuition of the children John, Rowland, Elisabeth, and Rose.

\* Was he John Higginson, "the younger," of Cotton, who was having children at this period?

GREGORY HYGGINSON, of Great Packington, Warwick, son of John of Berkeswell.

His will, made 2 March, 1555, proved at Lichfield 20 April, 1556, directs that his body shall be buried in church of St. James in Packington; to the box of the poor people fourpence, to the cathedral church at Lichfield one penny; to my child that my wife now goeth with, seven pounds; to Gregory Geyre, to John, son of John Geyre, the elder, to Elizabeth and Agnes Geyre. Rest to Joys, my wife, whom executrix. Overseers Thomas Hyggynson and John Mylys, both of Berkswell, my brethren, who also witness the will. Inventory, 18 April, 1555, by George Rayles and John Ind, £13.

Great Packington is ten miles northeast of Solihull and ten miles northwest of Coventry. Hampton in Arden is between Solihull and Berkeswell.

Child unborn, who to a certainty is Gregorie Hygginson, of Hampton in Arden, who made his will 2 July, 1590, which was proved at Lichfield, 16 June, 1591. To be buried in the churchyard at Hampton; to the poor, to my mother-in-law and then to Joyce, my daughter; son Thomas; wife Anne executrix, and to bring up the children. Overseers and witnesses, Thomas Robinson, Nicholas Williams, Nicholas Tomson, Thomas Barlow. In the list of debts are mentioned John Mills of Berkeswell, mother-in-law Isabel Fuefort, "his own mother," and to Thomas Minor, Nicholas Pratt, Thomas Smith of Bradnock, George Mathew, the elder, of Morcote, John Wayt of Beckwill, John Hopkins. Inventory, 4 July, 1590, by Edward Haward, gent, Thomas Minor, Wm. Whaberley, yeo., and Nicholas Williams, husbandmen. Debts due from James Robinson of Berkeswell, Hewghe Higginson of Berkeswell, Richard Wild of Berkeswell.

(Hugh Higginson is also mentioned in the will of Thomas of Berkeswell. Query, if he is not a son of Nicholas, son of John.)

NICHOLAS HIGGINSON, son of John of Berkeswell, at the time of his father's death living in Wem, and trustee for a small legacy for Agnes Higginson, which his father had received for her benefit from her father.

No trace of Nicholas is found in the parish records of Wem, nor has his will been found. He is mentioned in the will of his brother Thomas, of Berkeswell, in 1573.

It would appear that he left Wem and settled near Berkeswell or in some part of Leicestershire. He probably died in Claybrook in April, 1581.

It is more than probable that he was the father of

Hugh, of Berkeswell

Rev. John, of Claybrook, who named one of his sons Nicholas.

Nicholas, of Leire, who died 1589, and probably others.

Nicholas Higginson, of Leire, is known from his will to have been a brother to Rev. John Higginson, of Claybrook.

The parish register of Claybrook, under date of 11 April, 1581, records the burial of a Nicholas Higginson.

Rev. John Higginson was instituted rector at Claybrook, in 1572. He named two of his sons Nicholas, one of whom died in infancy, but later than 1594. He also had a grandson named Nicholas. As far as observed, the name has not appeared in other branches of the Higginson family.

## ORIGIN OF THE HIGGINSONS OF LEIRE AND FROWLESWORTH.

NICHOLAS HIGGINSON, of Leire, county Leicester, brother of Rev. John Higginson, of Claybrooke, was a yeoman and left a fair estate. His will, undated, was proved by the relict, 1 Oct., 1589, at Leicester. Power was reserved to son John. The will gives all lands, tenements, hereditaments, to his eldest son, John Higginson, and his heirs. Robert Higginson is named as second son. To his two eldest daughters, Alice and Elizabeth Higginson, he gives £30 each, and to Robert and Thomas and daughter Mary he gives £20 at age of twenty-one. The widow and son John are to occupy the farm jointly, and are made executors. Overseers are "my brother Mr. John Higginson and Robert Lord my brother-in-law." To the poor of Leire are bequeathed twelve strikes of barley. John Dowse, a tenant, is mentioned. Witnesses, John Higginson, Alexander Sheppard, with others.

### Children :

John, eldest son.	Of Leire.	
Robert, second son.		} Both under age, 1589.
Thomas.		
Alice.		
Elizabeth.		
Mary,	under age,	1589.

JOHN HIGGINSON, of Frowlesworth, yeoman ; in his will, dated 7 June, 18 Charles II., proved 19 Oct., 1667, he mentions Elizabeth Prat, who lives with him ; Nicholas Higginson and his sister Judeth, five shillings between them ; John, son of James Sheepy, of Frowlesworth, five marks ; wife to be executor. Overseers, William Cook, rector, and "Mr. Higginson," of Frowlesworth. The latter is Humphrey Higginson, whose will is given below.

Elizabeth Higginson, buried 7 March, 1658.

John Higginson, yeoman, buried 12 Oct., 1667. (Frowlesworth Register, — begins with 1638.)

HUMPHREY HIGGINSON, of Frowlesworth, gentleman, will dated 3 Feb., 1673, proved 11 Sept., 1675. He disposes of property in Frowlesworth, Little Ashby, and windmill in Claybrooke. He names wife Christian and three children under age, viz.: John, Staesmore, and Francis. Levi Washington was a witness. He was buried 30 May, 1674, at Frowlesworth.

Children, by wife Christian (Register commences 1638):

John, bapt. Frowlesworth, 25 May, 1666.

Staesmore, bapt. 21 Jan., 1667.

Thomas, bapt. 11 March, 1669.

Francis.

Staesmore Higginson, married 16 May, 1693, Grace Gregor, of Little Glenn, and had children baptized at Frowlesworth. The Staesmore family was a prominent family in Frowlesworth and vicinity. It is quite probable that Christian Higginson was born Staesmore. She, with Andrew Hall and Thomas Townsend, trustees, sold the mill mentioned in the will, in 1675.

See "History and Antiquities of Claybrooke," page 93.

NICHOLAS HIGGINSON, of Leire, died about 1649, as, 25 June, 1649, administration on his estate was granted to his creditor, Robert Lord, innkeeper, of Leicester, who gave bond with Clemment Stratton, of Leare, husbandman.

In 1650 John Higginson, of Leire, the younger, was a defendant in a chancery case.

There are representatives of this family of Higginsons still living in England.

### THE HIGGINSONS OF CLAYBROOKE.

REV. JOHN HIGGINSON, brother of Nicholas, of Leire, and undoubtedly son of Nicholas, was bred at Jesus College, Cambridge; B.A., 1564/5; M.A., 1568.

He was instituted to the perpetual vicarage of Claybrooke, County Leicester, 23 Jan., 1571/2 (Institution books at Public Record Office — *Chester*). The Rev. A. Macauley, in his "History and Antiquities of the Parish of Claybrooke," on page 90, prints the customs belonging to the parishioners of Ullesthorp, Bittesby, Wibtoft, and Wigston Parva, which are comprised in the Easter Roll. "Remembrance of the customs and manners of tything used in the Parish of Claybrooke in the County of Leicester and allowed by Mr. John Higginson, clerke, vicar there now almost two and fifty years together and by the freeholders and inhabitants whose names are subscribed. A.D. 1623."

From the register of the parish of Claybrooke, now in the possession of Lord Bray, it appears that he was buried 10 Feb., 1624.

His will, dated 4 Dec., 1623, was proved 2 April, 1624, by the relict. He directs that Mr. John Picksley,<sup>1</sup> citizen and clothier, of Coventry, shall convey to his wife Elizabeth and such one of his two sons William and Nathaniel as shall be most dutiful, a cottage in Claybrooke, etc. He also names sons John, to whom £5, William, who is to remain with his mother, and Nicholas, to whom 3 sh., and Nathaniel, to whom £20. To grandson Nicholas Higginson £10, and to granddaughter Priscilla Higginson £5.

From the Act Book of the Com. Court of the Bishop of Lincoln in the Archdeaconry of Leicester it appears that probate was allowed on the will of John Higginson, late vicar of Claybrooke, presented by Francis Higginson, of the city of Leicester, and Thomas Coleman, of Stretton Parva.

<sup>1</sup> His will does not mention the Higginsons. It is at Lichfield.



"There is a tradition in the Marlow (England) branch of the family that this venerable clergyman, from whom they are also descended, lived and did his duty as a clergyman till the age of one hundred and four, and was then drowned by the sudden rising of a brook as he was returning from church."—*Col. J. W. Higginson, in "Life of Francis Higginson," page 4.*

Children of Rev. John Higginson :

Nathaniel, who of the children named in his father's will receives by far the largest portion (£20). His baptism is not on record.

The following years are still missing in the register : 1567, 68/9, 70/1, 73/4, 78/9, 81/2, 83/4, 94/7, all beginning with 29 Sept.

John, bapt. 25 April, 1575 ; died in infancy.

Dorothy, bapt. 24 April, 1576 ; married 26 Dec., 1598,  
William Gilbard.

Priscilla, bapt. 22 Sept., 1578.

John, bapt. 14 Dec., 1580 ; buried 26 May, 1585.

John, bapt. 27 Oct., 1585.

Francis, bapt. 6 Aug., 1586 ; emigrated to New England.

William, bapt. 15 May, 1589 ; named in father's will ; married  
28 Oct., 1629, Francis Palmer.

Catherine (Catren), bapt. 18 May 1591 ; married 22 April,  
1619, Thomas Coleman.

Martyn, }  
Mary, } bapt. 4 Feb., 1593.

Nicholas, bapt. 24 March, 1594.

George, bapt. 25 Dec., 1607.

Nicholas, bapt. 19 March, 1608 ; died about 1649 (?).

Grace, bapt. 13 May, 1610.

Elizabeth, bapt. 8 Dec., 1611 ; buried 13 July, 1613.

Judith, bapt. 23 May, 1613 ; died 17 Oct., 1613.

The old MSS. quoted by Colonel Higginson, in "*Life of Francis Higginson*," states that the Rev. John Higginson had children as follows :

John, "a gentleman that kept high company."

Francis.

Nathaniel, "he was owner of a castle in Ireland, but lost in the rebellion."

Nicholas, "he was father of Henry the goldsmith in Liverpool."

William.

And four daughters, "married to Andrews, Coleman, Gilbert, and Perkins."

If the above record is strictly correct, and it is proven to be very nearly so, then Rev. John named no less than three of his daughters Elizabeth. Such a proceeding at a trifle earlier date was not uncommon, and may have been followed in this case. The parish register of Claybrooke gives the marriage of

Elizabeth Higginson to Edward Androse, 5 Jan., 1607.

Colonel Chester found the will of John Perkins, of Austey, County Warwick, gentleman, dated 1 April, 1618, proved, 2 July, 1618, in which he gives to his brother-in-law and his wife £10, and to each of their children 5 marks.

Another interesting will is that of TIMOTHY HIGGINSON, of Claybrooke, Master of Arts and Fellow of St. John's College at Cambridge. He made his will 20 May, 1604, which was proved 30 Sept., 1606. His sister, Elizabeth Higginson, is made sole heir; his property consisted of a tenement and lands in Claybrooke. (*Leicestershire Wills*.) Of especial interest is the signature of William Gilbarte, as one of the two witnesses, the other being Gabriel Smallwood. "The History of St. John's College," by Baker, shows that Timothy Higginson was admitted to a fellowship on the founder's foundation, 26 March, 1602, and that he was born in Leicestershire.

As we have not the date of the marriage of Elizabeth Perkins, and as neither she nor Timothy appears in the will of the Rev. John Higginson, it may be that this disposition of Timothy's estate provided for one of the children; or it

may be that these two were nephews of Rev. John. A plausible suggestion, if we accept the burial of Nicholas Higginson to be that of the minister's father, as he probably left other children.

William Gilbert, it will be noted, was the name of the husband of Dorothy Higginson.

Colonel Higginson refers to Nicholas' Leicester to show that John, the son "who kept high company," was he who was a freeholder at Leire, an adjoining parish of Claybrooke; but it is more likely that John, of Leire, was a nephew of the parson.

At Frowlesworth, a parish adjoining both Leire and Claybrooke, according to the parish register, was buried 12 Oct., 1667, John Higginson, yeoman. As shown above, there was a marriage between the Higginsons and Staresmores, a gentle family of Frowlesworth.

Other suggestions may be drawn from the notes appended regarding the Higginsons of Ireland.

Claybrooke register also gives :

Nicholas, son of Edmond and Priscilla Higginson, bapt. —.

Blanche Higginson, buried 26 April, 1577.

Thomas Higginson, buried 18 Sept., 1577.

Indenture or recognizance in £40, dated 17 Oct., 10 James I. (1612), from John Higginson, Jr., of Little Clerebrook, County Leicester, yeoman, and John Higginson, Sr., of the same, clerk to Francis Bradgate, of Little Peatlinge, County Leicester, that the said Bradgate shall occupy three yard lands in Ulesthrope and Cleibrooke, bought of Robert Fryer by deed 29 Sept., 7 James I., and also a messuage and tenement, with a backside and close in Ulesthrope, bought of Edward Hudson, and a cottage at the barn, a barn and close occupied by Thomas Paine, all late in occupancy of John Higginson, the younger, without molestation from said John Higginson, Jr., or Sr., or of Robert Fryer, or of John Salisbury. — *Close Rolls, 10 James I., Part 43, No. 130.*

John Higginson, of Claybrooke, brewer, 15 July, 1622 [then in London], one of several witnesses against Capt. Forbes, Rochelle privateer, in favor of the French ambassador. It would appear that the witnesses were needy men who had wasted their means waiting for Forbes, with whom they were in league.— (*Dom. State Papers, Jas. I., Vol. 132, No. 42.*)

Elizabeth Higginson, of "Cleabrooke," spinster, married Robert Ward, of Noborne, Warwickshire, laborer, 15 Sept., 1655.

[The old family record, quoted by Colonel Higginson in his account of the "Life of Francis Higginson," page 4, states that Nathaniel, the third son of the Rev. John Higginson, of Claybrooke, "was owner of a castle in Ireland, but lost in the rebellion."

The following mentions of Higginsons in connection with Ireland are found in the Reports of the Historical Commission:

John Higgason, of Sir James Cuffe's company, formerly in garrison at Carrick-on-Shannon, prays for discharge. Is a handicrafts man. 11 June, 1664.— *Appendix, 9th Report, p. 136.*

Nicholas Higginson, M.A., states that after being turned out of house with wife and seven children, he had to travel sixty miles to Dublin with a child on his back, etc. His house was at Bealtirbirt, County Cavan, and he was turned out by the rebels. Dated 23 July, 1641.— *Appendix, 5th Report.*

In 1646 a Nathaniel Higginson was a witness against Birmingham men of acts of delinquency, and the bearer of a letter to the Committee.— *Report of the Committee for the Advance of Money.*

This latter entry does not pertain to Ireland, but is here inserted in connection with the above.

Richard Higginson, as a soldier in Dublin, 1644.

Thomas Higginson, witness, and (probably with wife) the legatee of John Fowke, of Drogheda, 1657.

Nicholas Higginson, soldier in Dublin, 1644.

The Higginsons, of Lisburn, County Antrim, Ireland, are descended from Philip, son of one of the name who accompanied William III. into Ireland. They bear arms; sable, three towers in fess argent, between six trefoils slipped, three in chief, three

in base or. Crest, out of a tower proper a demi-griffin segreant vert armed, and beaked or.]

[HIGGINSON, OF LEIGH AND LIVERPOOL. The mention of Henry Higginson, the goldsmith, of Liverpool, above, leads to the insertion of the following notes in this place :

In spite of the somewhat suggestive names of Francis and Nicholas, in the Liverpool family, it is quite probable that family was an offshoot from the Higginsons of Leigh, a place within twenty miles of Liverpool (Lowton is about fifteen miles distant).

Adam Higginson, of Leigh, was buried 25 Oct., 1569 ; another Adam was buried 29 July, 1584, and his wife (presumably) on the 30 Oct., 1594. Other burials in that century were : James, 24 Dec., 1592 ; Samuel, 29 Nov., 1582 ; wife of Thomas, 26 Dec., 1589 ; William, 6 Mar., 1592/3 ; wife of William, 27 July, 1591 ; William, 26 Oct., 1596.

Francis Higginson was bapt. 16 Nov., 1617 ; buried 3 Feb., 1622/3 ; Henry was bapt. 21 Feb., 1621/2, both of Tildisley. Many other baptisms and marriages occur in the early part of the 17th century, several as of Lowton.

The following are from Colonel Chester's notes :

Commission to William Higginson and William Madock, uncles to Robert, Alice, and Margaret Higginson, children of Francis Higginson, deceased, citizen of Chester, 8 May, 1600. — *Chester Consistory Court*.

William Higginson, of Liverpool, blacksmith, in his will dated 8 May, 1639, proved 21 Sept., 1639, mentions wife Margaret, daughter Margaret, wife of James Foster, sons Edward, John, Ralph, Nicholas, William, daughter Ann. Witnessed by James Higginson. — *Wills at Chester*.

John Higginson married Elizabeth Foster, spinster. License granted 23 Nov., 1621.]

#### HIGGINSONS, GRADUATES OF OXFORD.

ALAN HICKYNSONNE, B.A., 18 Jan., 1552/3, as "Higgins," Fellow of Baliel College, 1557-60. M.A., 1 July, 1557.

(He would seem to be the Allan Higginson so often mentioned in the group of Barkswell wills, "Allan the clerke.")  
RALPH HIGGINSON, B.A., 10 June, 1569.

NICHOLAS HIGGINSON, B.A., from Christ College as Higson, 22 July, 1606. (Is it possible he was of Ireland 1641?)

SAMUEL HIGGINSON, son of William, of Chester, plebeian. Corpus Christi College. Matriculated 20 May, 1642, æt 17.

JOHN HIGGINSON, son of John, of Tilley in Salop, plebeian. Christ College. Matriculated 12 March, 1705/6, æt 17.

THOMAS HIGGINSON, of County Salop, plebian. Queens College. Matriculated 7 Nov., 1600, æt 17.

THOMAS HIGGINSON, admitted Christ College, Cambridge, 9 May, 1645. Scholar of Brazenose College, 1648. B.A. 3 Nov., 1648.

Perhaps vicar of church at Minshull, Chesire; ejected 1662, for conformity.