

A SHORT ACCOUNT
OF
THE WINTHROP FAMILY.

Privately Printed for Convenient Reference.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE undersigned, being often applied to by relatives and others for particulars concerning the early history of the Winthrop family, has found it convenient to print the following condensed narrative, and has endeavored to compile it in a manner easy to be understood by persons who have never given much attention to genealogical pursuits. To this end he has thought it well to eschew all reference to dubious or exploded traditions, to omit many facts of secondary importance, and not to describe all the branches of the family in detail.

Any readers who may desire further acquaintance with the subject will do well to consult the two volumes of "Life and Letters of John Winthrop," by Hon. Robert C. Winthrop; the four volumes of selections from the "Winthrop Papers," already printed

by the Massachusetts Historical Society;¹ and an earlier pamphlet by the undersigned, entitled "Some Account of the Early Generations of the Winthrop Family in Ireland."

ROBERT C. WINTHROP, JR.

10 WALNUT STREET, BOSTON,
September, 1887.

¹ 4 Mass. Hist. Coll., VI. and VII.; 5 Mass. Hist. Coll., I. and VIII. See also other volumes of the Society's Collections and Proceedings, *passim*. Further selections from the Winthrop Papers are in preparation.

THE WINTHROP FAMILY.

THE family of WINTHROP (anciently WINTHORPE), of Groton Manor, co. Suffolk, England, afterwards of Boston and New London in New England, took its name, by tradition, from the village of Winthorpe, near Newark, in Nottinghamshire; but its earliest ancestor of whom anything is known with certainty is, —

I. ADAM WINTHROP, known to have been living at Lavenham, in Suffolk, in 1498, who had, by his wife Jane Burton, a son, —

II. ADAM WINTHROP, second of that name (born in Lavenham, Oct. 9, 1498; died in Groton, Nov. 9, 1562), who became a wealthy London merchant; acquired the manor of Groton, near Lavenham, in 1544; was inscribed Armiger by Edward VI. in 1548;¹ and in 1551 was Master of the influential Company of Clothworkers.

¹ The arms borne by the second Adam Winthrop were: "Argent, three chevrons Gules crenelés, over all a lion rampant Sable armed and langued azure. Crest: a hare proper, running on a mount vert." They were confirmed to his descendants in 1592; but when or to whom they were originally granted, is uncertain. In later years they were sometimes differenced, and have often been incorrectly engraved.

By his wives, Alice Henny and Agnes Sharpe, he had thirteen children, several of whom died in childhood. His daughter Alice married Sir Thomas Mildmay, and was mother of the distinguished soldier, Sir Henry Mildmay, of Graces, co. Essex.¹ His daughter Bridget married Roger Alabaster, of Hadleigh in Suffolk, and was mother of the poet and dramatist Dr. William Alabaster. Another daughter married Dr. John Cotta, author of a book on Witchcraft. Of his three surviving sons, William, the eldest, was an active supporter of the Reformed Faith; John, the second, eventually removed from Suffolk to the South of Ireland;² while the third, who ultimately came into possession of Groton Manor, was,—

III. ADAM WINTHROP, third of that name (born in London, Aug. 10, 1548; died in Groton, March 28, 1623), a lawyer and county magistrate, who married 1st, Alice, sister of Dr. John Still, Bishop of Bath and Wells; and 2d, Anne, daughter of Henry Browne, of Edwardston, near Groton. For an interesting account of this third Adam Winthrop, see Vol. I. of the “Life and Letters of John Winthrop,” which contains numerous extracts from his diaries and commonplace books. His daughter Lucy married Emmanuel Down-

¹ Sir Thomas Mildmay's father married for his second wife the widow of the second Adam Winthrop.

² Joshua and Adam, sons of William, followed their uncle John to Ireland; and from one or other of them (it is not certain which) descends the existing English family of Winthrop, of whom William Winthrop was high-sheriff of Cork in 1744, and Benjamin Winthrop governor of the Bank of England towards the close of the last century.

ing, and was mother of Sir George Downing, the diplomatist, while his only son was,—

IV. JOHN WINTHROP, of Groton Manor (born in Edwardston, near Groton, Jan. 12, 1587; died in Boston, March 26, 1649), a lawyer and county magistrate, who became a great Puritan leader, and emigrated to New England in 1630 as Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. For a detailed account of the career and writings of this illustrious man, see the two volumes of his "Life and Letters" by his descendant, Hon. Robert C. Winthrop. He married 1st, Mary, heiress of John Forth, of Great Stambridge, co. Essex; 2d, Thomasine, daughter of William Clopton, of Castleins, near Groton; 3d, Margaret, daughter of Sir John Tyndall, of Great Mapleston, co. Essex; 4th, Martha, daughter of Captain William Rainsborough, R. N., and widow of Thomas Coytmore; and had by his first and third wives a numerous family, of whom the only surviving daughter married the eldest son of Gov. Thomas Dudley.

For letters and biographical notices of seven of Governor Winthrop's sons, see Part IV. of the "Winthrop Papers" (Massachusetts Historical Society's Collections, Series 5, Vol. VIII.). The fourth son, STEPHEN, returned to England, was a colonel and member of Parliament under Cromwell, but died in the prime of life, leaving daughters only. From the fifth son, ADAM, descended a branch of the family only recently extinct in the male line, to which belonged Chief-Justice Adam Winthrop (1676-1743); the distinguished astronomer

and Revolutionary patriot, Professor John Winthrop, of Harvard (1714–1779); the late Judge James Winthrop; and others. The youngest son, SAMUEL, married in Holland, became a planter in the West Indies, and was in 1668 Deputy-Governor of Antigua, where his descendants were prominent for several generations, but are now extinct in the male line. Governor Winthrop's oldest son was,—

V. JOHN WINTHROP (born in Groton, Feb. 12, 1606; died in Boston, April 5, 1676), generally styled “John Winthrop the younger” to distinguish him from his father; one of the most accomplished scholars of his time; an early member of the Royal Society; founder of Ipswich, Mass., and New London, Conn.; for nearly twenty years Governor of Connecticut, whose charter he had been instrumental in procuring from Charles II. After helping to build up the Massachusetts Colony, he had obtained, by grant and purchase, large tracts of land in Connecticut and Long Island, and in the intervals of public duty made his home in New London; but he never lost his active interest in Boston, where he died and was buried.¹ He married, 1st, his cousin, Martha Fones, and 2d, Elizabeth, daughter of Edmund Reade, of Wickford, co. Essex, and stepdaughter of

¹ Gov. John Winthrop the elder, at the time he left England, is stated to have had an income equivalent, in our day, to between three and four thousand pounds per annum, and he subsequently received considerable grants of land in Massachusetts; but his great expenditure in furtherance of the Colony, coupled with the dishonesty of his agent, crippled him in later life, and his sons were largely dependent upon their own exertions.

the famous Hugh Peters. By the latter he left issue, two sons and five daughters (Elizabeth, who married 1st, Rev. Antipas Newman, and 2d, Zerubbabel, second son of Gov. John Endicott; Lucy, Mrs. Edward Palmes, of New London; Margaret, Mrs. John Corwin, of Salem; Martha, Mrs. Richard Wharton, of Boston; and Anne, Mrs. John Richards, of Boston).

Of his two sons, the elder resided chiefly in Connecticut, the younger in Massachusetts. The former, JOHN (born in Ipswich, March 14, 1638; died in Boston, Nov. 27, 1707), always known as FITZ-JOHN to distinguish him from his father and grandfather, left Harvard College to accept a commission in the army of General Monk, under whom he served, in Scotland and elsewhere, till his regiment was disbanded at the Restoration. Returning to New England, he figured largely in the Indian wars; was in 1690 Major-General commanding the joint expedition against Canada; subsequently for a number of years Agent of Connecticut at the Court of William III.; and from 1698 till his death, in 1707, Governor of Connecticut. In the latter part of his life he lived much at New London, where he maintained great hospitality; but, like his father and grandfather, he died and was buried in Boston. He married Elizabeth, daughter of George Tongue, by whom he had an only daughter, wife of Col. John Livingston, of Albany; but the greater part of his landed property was inherited by his younger brother,

VI. WAIT STILL WINTHROP, generally known as WAIT WINTHROP (born in Boston, Feb. 27, 1642; died

in Boston, Nov. 7, 1717), a soldier of the Indian wars; for more than thirty years Major-General commanding the Provincial Forces of Massachusetts; Judge of the Superior Court; Judge of Admiralty; and some time Chief-Justice of Massachusetts. Although he had not, like his father, the advantage of a foreign university education, he inherited no small portion of the latter's scientific tastes, particularly for the study of medicine, often practising gratuitously among his poorer neighbors. Judge Sewall, in his Diary, speaks of him as "the great stay and ornament of the Council, a very pious, prudent, courageous New England man." He married, 1st, Mary, daughter of Hon. William Browne, of Salem, and 2d, Katharine, daughter of Capt. Thomas Brattle and widow of John Eyre, of Boston. By the former he left issue a daughter, Anne (wife of Thomas Lechmere, brother of Lord Lechmere), and an only surviving son,—

VII. JOHN WINTHROP, generally distinguished as "John Winthrop, F. R. S." (born in Boston, Aug. 26, 1681; died at Sydenham, near London, Aug. 1, 1747), Harvard College, 1700. He married ^{Anne}~~Katharine~~, one of the daughters of Gov. Joseph Dudley, and, in 1711, removed from Boston to New London, in order to devote himself to the improvement of the family property in Connecticut. The occupation was ill-suited to his tastes and habits, and he gradually became involved in litigation with his tenants and neighbors, as well as in costly mining speculations, which ultimately proved disastrous. Believing him-

self wronged by certain decisions of the Courts and Legislature of Connecticut relative to the distribution of his father's estate, he went to England in 1727 and obtained redress from the Privy Council; but failing to receive the political preferment to which he conceived he had a sort of hereditary claim, he continued to reside abroad until his death, twenty years later, becoming an active member of the Royal Society, one of the volumes of whose Transactions is dedicated to him.¹ His wife survived him, and married Jeremiah Miller, of New London (Yale College, 1709), dying, in 1776, at the great age of ninety-two.

The five surviving daughters of John Winthrop, F. R. S., were: Mary, wife of Gov. Joseph Wanton of Rhode Island; Anne, who never married; Katharine, who married, 1st, Hon. Samuel Browne, of Salem, and 2d, Col. Epes Sargent; Rebecca, wife of Gurdon Saltonstall, son of Governor Saltonstall of Connecticut; and Margaret, wife of Jeremiah Miller, Jr., of New London.

¹ His diary gives an interesting account of his visit to the old family seat at Groton in April, 1728, nearly a hundred years after Gov. John Winthrop the elder left it for New England. The manor-house, built by the second Adam Winthrop in 1551, has since been pulled down; but there is still standing an ancient house known as Groton Place, which by tradition is associated with the family. The church contains the brass of the second Adam Winthrop, and near by is the tomb of his son, the third Adam. There are also modern memorial windows to Gov. John Winthrop and his first and second wives, both of whom were buried in the chancel. Groton, since the decline of the Suffolk cloth-trade, has dwindled to a small agricultural village; but it is within an easy drive of Sudbury, Melford, and Lavenham, — all three places of interest to the antiquarian traveller.

Of the two surviving sons of John Winthrop, F. R. S., the younger, Basil, died unmarried; the elder was, —

VIII. JOHN STILL WINTHROP (born in Boston, Jan. 15, 1720; died in New London, June 6, 1776), Yale College, 1737. In early life he resided for some time in England, and occasionally in Boston; but after his marriage chiefly in New London, where he built the large house (still standing) at the head of Winthrop's Cove, described in Peters's "History of Connecticut," in 1787, as "the best house in the Province," and in which he died at the comparatively early age of fifty-six. He had inherited neither the scientific tastes of his immediate ancestors, nor any ambition to distinguish himself in public life; but, on the other hand, he was an excellent man of business, and succeeded in disentangling his father's estate from the embarrassments resulting from the latter's imprudence.¹

He married, 1st, in 1750, Jane, daughter of Francis Borland, of Boston, and granddaughter of Hon. Timothy Lindall, of Salem; and 2d, in 1761, Elizabeth, daughter of William Shirreff, of Annapolis, Nova Scotia, and widow of Capt. John Hay, 40th Foot. By both marriages he had issue, — in all, fourteen children.

His five married daughters were: Jane, Mrs. Wil-

¹ The well-known Fisher's Island, off New London, which formed part of the original grant to John Winthrop, Jr., in 1640, remained in possession of a branch of the family till 1862.

liam Stewart; Anne, Mrs. David Sears; Mary, Mrs. Richard W. Parkin; Elizabeth, Mrs. Jacob Sebor; and Margaret, Mrs. Adolphus Yates, afterwards Mrs. John Marston.

Of his nine sons, two died in childhood; two others, JOHN (Harvard College, 1770) and WILLIAM, never married; while the other five, who married and left issue, were: —

1. FRANCIS BAYARD WINTHROP, of New York (born in New London, March 11, 1754; died in New York, May 16, 1817), married, 1st, 1779, Elsie, daughter of Thomas Marston, and 2d, 1790, Phoebe, daughter of John Taylor, both of New York;

2. JOSEPH WINTHROP, of Charleston, South Carolina (born in New London, June 19, 1757; died in Charleston, July 26, 1828), married, 1788, Mary, daughter of Alexander Fraser, of Charleston;

3. THOMAS LINDALL WINTHROP, of Boston (born in New London, March 6, 1760; died in Boston, Feb. 21, 1841), Harvard College, 1780, Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts. Married, 1786, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Temple, Bart., and granddaughter of James Bowdoin, of Boston, Governor of Massachusetts;

4. BENJAMIN WINTHROP, of New York (born in New London, Sept. 17, 1762; died in New York, Jan. 9, 1844), married, 1785, Judith, daughter of Peter Stuyvesant, of New York;

5. ROBERT WINTHROP (born in New London, Dec. 7, 1764; died in Dover, England, May 10, 1832),

Vice-Admiral, R.N. Married, 1804, Sarah, daughter of Thomas Farbrace, of Dover, England.

From the above five brothers (all but one of whom ended by severing their connection with Boston) descend the numerous existing branches of the Winthrop family, now widely scattered in different parts of the United States and Europe. It does not enter into the purpose of this condensed narrative to describe their various generations in detail. It is enough to say that the descendants of the oldest brother have multiplied in a much larger proportion than those of the others, and that, for more than thirty years past, the senior representative of the name, in the eleventh generation of lineal descent, has been Henry Rogers Winthrop, Esq., of New York (born in 1811; Yale College, 1830), who is eldest son of the late John Still Winthrop, of New York, who was eldest son of the above-named Francis Bayard Winthrop, second son of the first John Still Winthrop. Mr. H. R. Winthrop has a son, Buchanan Winthrop (Yale College, 1862), who is married and has issue.¹

For an equally long period the most conspicuous member of the family has been the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, of Boston (born in 1809; Harvard College, 1828), who is the youngest and only surviving son of the above-named Hon. Thomas Lindall Winthrop, fifth son of the first John Still Winthrop. The bulk

¹ The late Major Theodore Winthrop, the novelist, and the late General Frederick Winthrop, who fell at Five Forks, were also grandsons of the above-named Francis Bayard Winthrop.

of the family papers, covering the period from the close of the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, came many years ago into his possession, to be used for historical purposes in the volumes already cited and in others which are in course of preparation.

It may be well to add that the most authentic original portrait of Gov. John Winthrop (attributed to Van Dyck, and known to have been in the Governor's house in Boston at the time of his death) has hung for generations in the Senate Chamber of Massachusetts; that the original portrait of the second Adam Winthrop (attributed to Holbein) is in possession of Robert Winthrop, Esq., of 118 Fifth Avenue, New York, who also possesses originals of Gov. John Winthrop of Connecticut; of Gov. and Mrs. Fitz-John Winthrop and their daughter, Mrs. Livingston; of Gen. Wait Winthrop; of John Winthrop, F. R. S., and his wife Anne Dudley; and others.

NOTE. — The village near Newark to which allusion has been made as the place whence the Suffolk Winthrops traditionally came, is entered in Domesday Book as *Wymondthorpe*, — so called from an adjacent stream, the Wymond, but at a very early period contracted to *Winthorpe*. There has been, however, from time immemorial a wholly distinct village of Winthorpe, on the coast of Lincolnshire, from which it would seem not improbable some other family of the same name might have sprung. Be this as it may, the surname has always been an uncommon one, and I find only three recorded instances of it prior to the first Adam W. The earliest of these is on a roll of the county of York in the year 1200, where figures one "Robert de Winetorp," of whom nothing whatever is known, and who is not likely to have been related to the existing family. Nearly two centuries and a half later there died in Nottinghamshire one "William Wynethorpe, of Wynethorpe," whose will, dated April 13, 1445, mentions

his wife Elizabeth and son Robert, the latter of whom, it is conjectured, may eventually turn out to have been father of the first Adam Winthrop. In these days of extravagant genealogical pretensions, however, I desire to record my belief that the original Winthrops were in all probability Nottinghamshire yeomen, one of whom was attracted to Suffolk by the development of the cloth-trade in the period of tranquillity immediately succeeding the Wars of the Roses.

In modern times the surname has not infrequently been a favorite one with impostors and begging-letter writers. It has also been fancifully assumed by persons who preferred it to their own; and investigation has established at least one instance where it has been borne in good faith by several generations whose original claim to it might have been contested. With all such this narrative has no concern.

I should add that in the neighborhood of Edinburgh and Newcastle-on-Tyne is sometimes found the name "Wintrip," or "Wintrup," of the origin of which nothing appears to be known, but which, it has been suggested, may be a corruption of the Lincolnshire Winthorpe.

R. C. W., JR