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THE EARLY YEARS OF GOVERNOR EDWARD WINSLOW.

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The Pilgrim Fathers are of peculiar interest in 1920, and it may be timely to present some newly recovered facts about one of the most famous.

Like most of the emigrants from England, Edward Winslow was not of aristocratic lineage. Careful search in all available records carries back his pedigree only a century, and shows the family to have comprised husbandmen, masons, barbers, and yeomen or small farmers. A cousin of Edward married a citizen of Worcester who rose to be alderman, and caused a sumptuous monument to be erected to himself and her in All Saints' Church within that city. The descendant of another cousin rose by 1711 to be a clergyman in the Church of England. A recent monument at Southampton outsteps the truth in styling Edward of ancient and honorable lineage.

The whole kindred lived within fifteen miles of Worcester. Edward's great-grandfather dwelt at Earl's Croome, eight miles down the Severn. His grandfather Kenelm bought a farm at Kerswell, within four miles of

the city, but sold it again and moved into the shadow of the cathedral. Kenelm's son, Edward, broke new ground. He married in London, Magdalen Oliver, at St. Bride's Church, and she evidently left no mean imprint on her children. It may well be that she was of Hueguenot descent, daughter of Peter Oliver from Rouen; the French strain at this time was rejuvenating many stolid English families; Peter's son, Isaac, and his grandson, Peter, became distinguished painters of miniatures.

Edward and Magdalen settled at Droitwich, six miles north of Worcester, where for fifteen hundred years the people had lived by boiling brine and supplying salt over half England. Edward took up this trade, acquiring a little land valued at twenty shillings. He figures on a few tax-rolls, and when the incoming of James from Scotland caused a subsidy to be levied, it appears that he was just important enough to be assessed, at the lowest amount claimed, two shillings and eightpence. Children came rapidly, our Edward on October 19, 1595, John in April, 1597, Eleanor in April, 1598, Kenelm in May, 1599. The christenings were all registered in the ordinary way at St. Peter's Church. But within the next eighteen months some one of the family desired to record not only the date of christening but also the date of birth. The vicar was persuaded to tamper with the entries he had previously made, interpolating the birthday, even at the cost of erasing part of one entry and rewriting it. And he took an even more extraordinary step, for into the list of marriages performed at his church, he foisted an entry of the marriage of Edward and Magdalen in London!

It is difficult to guess why this was done; no similar case has been traced. The mere fact that the entries were altered by the vicar himself shows that there was no antagonism to the system introduced and enforced by Elizabeth. If we ask the question, *Cui bono?* (Who bene-

fits?) we can only answer that it somewhat emphasizes the position of Magdalen, and suggests that she had brought good French gold to the family resources, so desired to impress herself on the neighborhood. It is worth remembering that a French heiress, Heloise, had given her name to the family she founded on the Trent, whence sprang Thomas Helwys, the first man baptized by John Smyth in 1610. A careful scrutiny of the Winslow family Bible with its entries may throw some light on the question.

When Gilbert was born in October, 1600, the parish entry was made in the new form preferred by the family. So also for Elizabeth in March, 1601-2, Magdalen in December, 1604, Josias in February, 1605-6. The family seems to have moved away within a few years, for the only other traces in abundant local records are that the father was consulted by the authorities of the grammar school at Hartlebury, seven miles away, sheltered by the splendid castle where live the bishops of Worcester; and that in 1607 he was appointed on a commission to investigate the school. A little touch that shows his rank in life is that while others are described as esquires and gentlemen, he is not. This is to be emphasized, as Governor Hutchinson in 1769 described him as an esquire, a person of some figure at Droitwich, of a very reputable family. In all these respects he was wrong, though he was quite correct in saying that our Edward was of a very active genius.

At this point the whole family passes away from Droitwich and even from Worcestershire, nor has it been traced for ten years. Young Edward may have had a year or two at Hartlebury, but the early registers do not seem available to follow the career of himself and his brothers. There is no evidence that any of them went to a university, and indeed both Oxford and Cambridge were not in very good repute then among the laity. Gen-

tlemen preferred to send their sons to an Inn of Court in London, as in the case of Thomas Helwys; but it was never claimed for young Edward that he had had this advantage. Yet he certainly spent part of this time in London, and it is conceivable that he came into a circle which included William Shakespeare. For Shakespeare lodged from 1598 till 1604 in Mugwell Street with Christopher Mongoye from Cressy, naturalized on May 27, 1608. Into this family Shakespeare had apparently come by his friendship with Richard Field of Stratford-on-Avon, who had married the widow of Thomas Vantrollier, the famous printer of Blackfriars, and who printed for Shakespeare his *Venus and Adonis* in 1593, *Lucrece* in 1594. And when young Edward Winslow next comes to light, he describes himself as a printer in London.

In 1617, when he was about twenty-two years old, he went yet further afield, and at Leyden met the remarkable church under William Robinson. The origin and early history of this church deserve a digression, as the facts have been thrown out of all true perspective since the discovery of the narrative by William Bradford: the materials for correcting have been accumulated by the care of Henry Martyn Dexter and his son, Morton Dexter.

This church was formed in Amsterdam between July and December, 1608, according to the contemporary statement of John Paget, minister of the English-speaking Reformed Church there, and of John Murton from Gainsborough, who was then in the city with the church headed by John Smyth. The head of the new church was John Robinson, who for some time had been working at Norwich, but had come under Smyth's influence and had separated from the Church of England. A number of Norfolk people came over, so that when Winslow met them, the Norfolk contingent was far the largest, 32 out of 123 whose origin is known. The great majority of the people from Scrooby and the Trent valley were already

members of Smyth's church, and remained so. But two important people cast in their lot with Robinson, Brewster from Scrooby and Bradford from Austerfield, and the unconscious bias of the latter led him to exaggerate the importance of his home. The plain fact is that apart from these two, and the family of Brewster, no one else from that district is known to have come over to the Plymouth colony. The second largest contingent was from London, including Isaac Allerton, a tailor, with his wife (Mary Norris from Newbury) and five children; Sylvanus Arnold, hatmaker, and wife, from Norfolk; Samuel Fuller, once a butcher at Wrinton, now a say-weaver, with a third wife and a sister; Abraham Gray, a cobbler; John Greenwood, studying at the university; Prudence Grindon; Joseph Jennings, a cloth-filler; Michael Knollys; Thomas Otley, cloth-weaver; Edward Pickering, merchant; Degory Priest, hat-maker; John Reynolds, printer; Bartholomew Smith, merchant; Randall Thickins, mirror-maker.

There was a slight Huguenot element in this church, as was natural in Holland. It included a Walloon, Hester Cooke, Philip de la Noye, John de Soete, William Officier, Samuel Terry of Caen, Isaac Chilton with his wife, a daughter of Jean de la Cluse of Rouen. These facts we learn chiefly from Winslow in 1646, when he wished to conciliate the Scotch and English Presbyterians by making the point that the Leyden church received members from the French Reformed Church, and did not differ widely from other Reformed Churches. But while this shows that he and the Leyden church generally were not extreme Separatists, it may also throw some light on his national sympathies: a domestic tie will appear presently.

Winslow was probably invited over as a printer. For Thomas Brewer of Kent was financing a publishing business carried on by William Brewster of Scrooby. About October, 1616, he began with a Latin commentary on

Proverbs by Cartwright, and followed next year with a Latin book by William Ames. For this he of course needed English compositors. We find that on July 28, 1617, John Reynolds, a London printer, was betrothed at Leyden to Prudence Grindon, a London girl, with Jonathan Brewster, Mary Allerton and Mary Brewster as witnesses. Then on April 27, 1618, Edward Winslow, printer, young man, of London in England, accompanied by Jonathan Brewster and Isaac Allerton, was betrothed to Elizabeth Barker from Chattisham, who was accompanied by Jane Hazel, her niece, and Mary Allerton.

For fourteen months more, Winslow was busy at his trade, and probably had a hand in setting up quite a dozen books, of which some were ephemeral pamphlets, but two have some permanent value. John Robinson's *People's Plea for the Exercise of Prophecy* is likely to have readers this year. And Thomas Cartwright's *Confutation of the Rhemist's Translation* was weighty in so exposing the character of the Douay Bible that it soon ceased to be reprinted; modern so-called Douay Bibles are based on drastic revisions beginning with 1749.

When, however, King James secured the seizure of the type and a decision in May, 1620, that it should not be returned, Winslow's occupation was gone. As the question of emigration to Virginia in the wake of Blackwell was now being mooted, he threw himself heartily into the project, and though only 25 years old, became a leading spirit. When Carver and Cushman were negotiating with the merchant adventurers in London, he was one of four to correspond with them. And since it was agreed that the younger and stronger should pioneer, others coming when preparation had been made, he naturally threw himself into the scheme. It would appear that he was fairly well equipped, for when the first houses were built, two men-servants were in his family.

Many more emigrants had been recruited in England, and when the *Mayflower* finally left, she contained 46

people who had had no connection with Leyden, with 56 who had been in Holland. Among the newcomers should be noticed Edward's brother, Gilbert, now twenty years old; among the Leydeners two families deserve notice. William White was a wool-carder, who in 1612 had married Susanna Fuller, sister of Winslow's London friend; they had lost two children, but brought a third, Resolved, and a fourth born in Cape Cod harbor was named Peregrine. Another family also claims attention. Jean de la Cluse was a persevering husband; after burying Catherine de L'Epine, Alice Thickins and Jacqueline May, he married for the fourth time Ann Harris from Hanbury, close to Winslow's birthplace of Droitwich. Susanna, daughter by his first wife, had married another Huguenot, Isaac Chilton, in 1615, and they now embarked with their daughter, Mary.

In the hardships of the first winter, Winslow lost his wife, and Susanna her husband; in May, 1621, they married, but the first of their children to grow up was Josiah, born seven years later. The ship *Fortune* brought over Winslow's brother, John, now aged 24, and he afterward married Mary Chilton. The two other brothers, Kenelm and Josiah, joined them before 1632, and then the family was influential enough to found a new town. Miles Standish and John Alden had settled in 1631 at Captain's Hill, where Standish gave the name of his Lancashire home, Duxbury; the Winslows went five miles further on and settled on Green's Harbor, where they gave the name of their grandfather's home, Kerswell. But it is a sign that the Pilgrims were soon outnumbered in their Old Colony by the Puritans, who strictly speaking had no like south of Massachusetts Bay, that the ancestral name was supplanted, and immigrants from Marshfield in Gloucestershire commemorated their own home on the property of the Winslows. This is but one illustration how soon the Leyden element was outnumbered: first and

last it never numbered 82, while even within three years 117 had come from England direct.

Perhaps this new element may partly account for some high-handed behavior of the Pilgrims. Thomas Morton, another Londoner, settled a colony thirty miles north of Plymouth, naming it Merrymount, and chaffing the Pilgrims for their strict mode of life. When he sold rum and gunpowder to the natives, it seemed that all the neighboring English were endangered by his conduct. This was contrary to a proclamation of the king, and though the Plymouth settlers had no sort of legal jurisdiction, it seemed a necessary measure of self-protection to arrest Morton and send him home. Next year a charter was given for traders on the bay, and thenceforward the proceedings at Merrymount were dealt with drastically by the new immigrants.

These new settlers, of both types, were largely due to Winslow. A letter of his in 1621 giving a glowing account of the colony was published next year; and his journal was the principal source of a long *Relation* printed in London, 1622. In September the year after he came home by the *Anne*, and with 1624 appeared his *Good News From New England*. While Captain John Smith was writing about Virginia also, and was emphasizing the value of the fisheries, Winslow concentrated his attention on the settling and planting in New England, with such results as are well known in the organized emigration to Massachusetts Bay.

It may cause some surprise that on the death of Carver, the first governor, Winslow was not chosen to succeed him; but the fact is that he did even more important work as general medium of communication with England, and even as official agent there of the colony, and presently of Massachusetts also. When in America he took no mean share in the explorations, the negotiations, the fighting, the actual settling; but while any able-bodied

young man could do much of this, his talents fitted him peculiarly for the task of dealing at home with the Adventurers who were financing the plantation, with intending new settlers, with the Council of New England. And so while he was Assistant Governor for 21 years he was Governor only thrice, and was thrice sent home on delicate diplomacy.

It is fair to recognize how difficult was the task of a colony which had to deal with a clergyman trying to swamp the original settlers by others who would enforce uniformity in religion, with a "royalist rake" debauching the natives and transplanting questionable manners, with a religious crank despising outward forms of religion and any ministry. But when we find that Winslow's chief political tasks in England were to defend the expulsion of such men, we are sure that his grasp of the principle of religious liberty was not secure. Nor may we forget that when Roger Williams was banished from Salem by the Puritans, Winslow asked him to leave Seekonk also, and quit the Old Colony: This led to Samuel Vassell of Scituate presenting petitions at Plymouth asking for full and free tolerance of religion to all; but Bradford evaded putting the question, and Winslow went to England to oppose Vassall's appeal thither. Such cases show that Winslow had already imbibed the intolerance of the Puritans on the Bay; though he never sank so low as did Bradford, who in the very year that he wrote how in his youth he and his friends had worshiped in their own homes each Sabbath, sanctioned a law forbidding the Baptists of Seekonk to do that very thing; still less did he fall into the depths of John Alden, who signed laws punishing Quakers with disfranchisement, banishment, imprisonment, the stocks, seizing of books, fines, whipping.

Despite the limitations of Winslow, limitations then passed by few except Baptists, he is to be regarded with

respect as a great colonist, administrator and statesman. His later career in the service of the commonwealth shows how he was valued for home and colonial affairs, and how that age gave opportunity for men of but mediocre extraction to prove their worth. It is worth remembering, in these days when the Bradford manuscript is receiving inordinate attention, that in the very year when Bradford was writing that manuscript, Winslow was publishing a somewhat parallel account in England, the fourth work from his pen. Winslow was the literary man of the Pilgrims, and even Nathanael Morton's memorial of 1669 was based on Winslow's journal as well as on the Bradford manuscript. And once again, whereas the Leyden church was chiefly composed of men from Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, London and Kent, Winslow represents a Midland group; whereas the others had been largely moulded by John Robinson, Winslow knew him only three years, and had been bred on different ideals.