

JOHN HOWLAND, Thirteenth Signer.

There is no possible position that can be taken in regard to John Howland, that proof is not brought forward in exact opposition to it.

The statement that the Howlands are all traceable to Essex County, England, gives a very satisfactory point to work from.

In fact, John Howland is just where he should be, with the record we trust behind him of his youth spent with those whom, knowing all, have learned to honor.

There were five John Howlands in Essex, any one of whom might have been our Pilgrim's father. However, all of this makes very little difference, for in 1646, Humphrey Howland, "citizen and draper of London," left his brothers "Arthur, John and Henry, respectively, £8, £4, £4 out of a debt due from Mr. Ruck, of New England," which seemed sufficient proof to identify him in this relationship with those Howlands, who belonged to us from the start.

A gift of money is a crucial test of a man's connection with the donor.

I had sent my dove from the ark, content in the feeling that the branch he would secure from the receding floods, would place me safely and surely. It brought back the above history, and in a peaceful frame of mind I prepared to follow the fortunes of John Howland.

But the spirit was soon ruffled by a letter from one whose name and location entitled him, not only to a hearing, but a respectful desire to admit his claim.

He tells me that "as a matter of authentic record the above identification has never been made, and there is not the least evidence of the relationship. Much research was made to demonstrate it, and the belief survived failure to prove it and, indeed, considerable evidence that Arthur and Henry were in no way related to John the Pilgrim."

Whatever the Howlands lack, they are certainly persistent, and those who have accepted the "three brothers," will still adhere to their own opinion until the proofs are definite to the contrary.

LINCOLNSHIRE.

In writing the personal history of the Pilgrims, taking Lincoln, in Lincolnshire, for the text, does much toward proving the great centralization of interests in Leyden, and the transporting of them to the colony in New England.

Granting the truth of the record in the "Old Bible," which gives John Carver as "sonne of James Carver, Lincolnshire, Yeoman," and that in Boston in the same county Brewster and Bradford were imprisoned, then all know that the original patent to the colonists was issued in the name of John Wincomb, a member of the Earl of Lincoln's household, and the strong binding together becomes a local certainty.

"The See of Lincoln comprehended certain counties, and Abbots, Aston and Winslow. John White, Prebendary, of Winchester, and Warden of Rickham's College, there was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln."

This continues the story:

Here, too, in Lincolnshire are Robinsons, one named John; and in those times the

perpetuating of Christian names was part of the family history of a place.

Another point: William Fuller held this See, and here are found Turners and Warrens high in position.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

The conviction is forced upon one by search that much of the strong history of the world was made during Queen Elizabeth's reign. She had her vagaries, but the working of them out involved the civilized nations of the earth.

One point for our purpose is that she gave the Howlands their grant of coat-armour in 1584, which is now used by that family, authenticated from the Herald's College, London, that started with Bishop Howland.

A striking matter of consideration to which I wished to lead is that this same Bishop Howland performed the obsequies of Mary, Queen of Scots.

This proves at least a connection with Elder Brewster, for he was secretary to Ambassador Davison at that time, and perhaps they consulted together over the arrangements.

As these items narrow in to a few people a historian gathers much valuable data to work upon; and a hope of the possibilities they desire; it makes it easy to imagine Brewster in this spirit extending from love of his family much care and interest to John Howland.

CARVER'S SERVANT.

According to English law John Howland came out as Gov. Carver's servant, or indentured assistant. The use of this term has been hard for the Howlands to grasp; applied to others, they accepted it, but not for their own progenitor.

Time has solved the misconstruing of the term, and a fragment of Bradford's journal when he tells of the mishap which befell him on the journey over the Mayflower, places him as he belongs.

"In a mighty storm John Howland, a Passenger (!) a stout young man, by a keel of ye ship was thrown into ye sea. But it pleased God, He caught hold of ye Top-sail Hauliards we hung overboard, and run out ye length, yet He kept his hold the several Fathoms under water, till He was drawn up by ye Rope to ye surface and by a Boat Hook and other means got into ye ship: and tho' somew't ill upon it, liv'd many years, and became a useful member both in church and Commonwealth."

A needed member of Gov. Carver's household, "he was one of the leading men in the colony, and a partaker of their hazardous undertakings, and eminent for his devotion to its interests, both in civil and religious matters."

Office sought him from the first, for John Howland, in conscious dignity, never usurped another's place.

On this basis he was "Deputy and Assistant the greater part of his long and useful life."

DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.

This Pilgrim cannot be written of without much discussion and with the strong con-

nections, the traditional history that has become part of the beliefs of every section of this land, it is very hard to give up a recognition of the statements of early writers which were received without a doubt until the finding of the lost journal of Gov. Bradford removed Gov. Carver's daughter from her position as John Howland's wife. The "old Bible in Hartford" places her more naturally as Carver's granddaughter. John Howland's marriage was in 1623 or 1624—one of the earliest weddings in the colony. The Mayflower Society gave it as in 1621. As he was 28 when he arrived in the Mayflower, 1620, and his marriage took place before the land division in 1624, making him, allowing for the unknown months, 32 or nearly so, the supposition has arisen that he might have been a widower, and by his first wife a member of Gov. Carver's family. Gov. Bradford states distinctly, and his record is accepted, that Gov. Carver left no descendants.

I feel with the descendants, and would like to prove that he meant simply none bearing the name of Carver. As early as 1638 there were Carvers in the colony who had a grant of land in Duxbury, and Gov. Bradford may have had some personal reason, perhaps prejudice, against their presuming on any supposed relationship, by virtue of their name, with Gov. Carver.

Tradition, that always has some foundation in truth, has clung with barnacle-like tenacity to every Howland descendant; in regard to this marriage nothing can shake their faith in the teachings of their childhood.

The story has been handed down from grandmother to grandmother, and facing the inevitable does not lessen their own belief; they are silenced, but not convinced. This claim comes constantly, even in the light of the acceptance of Bradford's journal.

HIS MARRIAGE.

Quietly, as he did everything, John Howland "took to wife" Elizabeth, the young daughter of John Tilley, "to have and to hold," and the histories of the times find no fault with the home he provided, or the love he bore her. If her mother could be established as the daughter of Gov. Carver no more would be asked of her, though she simply went on her way, "sorrowing, toiling, rejoicing," the births of her children recorded her daily life, of interest to no one but her own household.

John Howland came into his property at Island Creek Pond and also two small islands in Geer's Harbor. With his possessions followed the feeling that they needed his personal supervision, so for a time he yielded to necessity, but the early love for Plymouth was upon him, and he left Duxbury, returning to his home all the better citizen for his little outing.

In the progression of the times, and a growing consciousness that Plymouth was a barren land, so far as cultivation and yield was concerned, he made his last move to Rocky Nook, in Kingston, before 1665, and remained there until the time of his departure for his final home, which took place

February 22, 1672, when he had reached fourscore years.

"A godly man, and an ancient professor of the ways of Christ, one of the first-comers, and proved a useful instrument of good in the place."

In the height of the Quaker troubles he was dropped from the General Court, probably because he was found to be too liberal for the times. Gov. Prence did not stint his evidences of disapprobation when a man differed from him in his opinion with regard to the Quakers.

There is never any effort made to withdraw one word of praise from this Pilgrim; he had his convictions, and the strength of them, willing always to be placed on record for his acts.

Gov. Bradford's confidence in John Howland was implicit. He called him among the "ten principal men" for the "third exploration," and, as he is credited with having a "military turn," he, with Jonathan Brewster, was appointed to be joined with the Governor, etc., "to assess men toward the charges of soldiers."

Reference to Plymouth records shows that John Howland, in 1627, was associated with Gov. Bradford and six other of the prominent men of the colony in a compact made with London merchants in regard to the relinquishment of claims, upon certain conditions.

Alden and Howland seemed to go into all enterprises side by side, men of similar tastes up to a point, and then far apart.

CHILDREN.

His children, as given in the history of Duxbury, were John, Jabez, who married Bethiah Thatcher, and was a lieutenant in the Indian war under Church against Philip, after the conquest of Mount Hope going to Bristol, where he was allowed to "keep a house of entertainment."

In view of the Quaker interest, if not proclivities of these Howlands, it is interesting to know that his son Jabez was vestryman of St. Michael's Episcopal Parish in 1724.

Isaac, another son, was also an officer of the war settled at Middleboro, "kept an ordinary" there in 1684, and died in 1724. Joseph remained at Plymouth, but he had no diminished head to hide; his services were at the command of his country; he became an officer, and made his mark in the home of his Pilgrim father, increasing his value in the local history by marrying Elizabeth Southworth.

Desire, named for Desire Minter, who was the kind friend of her mother's orphaned girlhood, married Capt. John Gorham in 1643, and may be proud as an ancestress of this descent.

Hope married Elder John Chipman, of Barnstable, and their large family are living through their representatives a broad life, always ready to lend a helping hand to anything that promotes the interests of others and the public good.

Elizabeth married twice, her second husband being John Diegarson. Lydia married James Brown, of Swansey, and Ruth, Thomas Cushman, of Plymouth, November 7, 1664.

Succeeding generations of Howlands have been given to the perpetuating of the names of Desire and Jabez; the female name we can place, but Jabez must come from some

ancestor, who could, if known, make one of the name records.

HOWLAND RELICS.

The intermarriages of "ye olden days" make it difficult to follow the heirlooms, even if they existed, still the very combination narrows them into fewer representatives and tells us that Joanna Howland, a great-granddaughter of the Pilgrim, married Gideon White, a great-grandson of Peregrine White, early in the last century, and her home is referred to by Buckingham in his "Travels in America" as a "remarkable depository of Mayflower relics."

Hannah and Mary White, great-great-granddaughters of "Peregrine the first born," died unmarried, the former in 1843, the latter in 1838, aged 87.

Their sister Joanna married Pelham Winslow.

"It was at the house of these 'ancient maiden sisters' that Buckingham saw the ancient Howland coat-of-arms, published in his 'America,' vol. 2, p. 483."

A long search found that it was in the possession of Rev. T. Howland White, Shelburne, N. S.

The following letter from him explains the matter exactly:

"June 1, 1885.—It was left me by my venerable aunts, Mrs. Winslow, wife of Pelham Winslow, and Miss Hannah White, of Plymouth. The copy which is in my possession is evidently a very ancient one, and the tradition is that it was brought over soon after the arrival of the Pilgrims, if not on the Mayflower herself.

"It is painted in water colors and is highly ornamented. I have no doubt from its appearance that it came from the Herolds' College, as it perfectly agrees with a printed copy since issued."

There is also an old arms in the possession of Mrs. Julia M. Barnes, perhaps copied from this (as she has kept up her intercourse with the relatives in Nova Scotia), in embroidery and water colors, so long in the family that they have no knowledge of a time, even traditionally, when they were without it.

Even the lineage of this family has a choice as to its beginning, so many for reasons unknown being willing to omit the Tilley start, which gives them one generation more to secure their papers, being recorded as descendants of John Howland.

As the line of Bishop Phillips Brooks, of Massachusetts, is not only dear to all of that kin, but goes into a variety of families, and I hope will add through the Phillipses, another claim from Long Island, I give it.

1. John Howland, of the Mayflower.

2. Capt. John Gorham, born 1620; married, 1643, Desire, eldest daughter of John Howland.

3. Col. John Gorham, his second son, born February 20, 1651-2; died, December 9, 1716; married, February 24, 1674-5; Mary Otis, daughter of John Otis and Mary Jacob. He was second in command in the expeditions against the French in 1703 and 1704, under the command of Col. Benjamin Church.

4. Stephen Gorham, eldest son of Col. John, born in Barnstable, June 23, 1683; married, December 25, 1703, Elizabeth Gardner, of Nantucket, daughter of James Gardner and Mary Starbuck.

5. Nathaniel Gorham, of Charlestown, Mass., eldest son of Stephen, born in Barn-

stable, May 3, 1709, died, December 24, 1761, married January 6, 1736, Mary Soley, daughter of John Soley and Dorcas Coffin.

6. Nathaniel Gorham, eldest son of Nathaniel, born in Charlestown, May 27, 1738, was a very distinguished man.

He was a member of the convention which framed the Constitution, and occupied the chair several times at the request of Gen. Washington. He married in 1763, Rebecca Call, eldest daughter of Caleb Call.

7. Lydia Gorham, the youngest child of Nathaniel Gorham, married, December 23, 1798, John Phillips, son of Samuel Phillips and Phebe Foxcroft. She died at Andover, Mass., June 3, 1856, aged 77.

8. Mary Ann Phillips, daughter of Lydia Gorham and John Phillips, born March 17, 1808, married, September 9, 1833, William Gray Brooks, of Boston, and their son, the late Bishop Phillips Brooks, was born December 13, 1835.

From another section, which will serve for many lines of Mayflower descendants, comes another.

1. John Howland, who came in the Mayflower, married Elizabeth Tilley, daughter of John and ——— Tilley, about 1623.

2. Jabez Howland, son of John and Elizabeth Tilley Howland, married Bethiah Thatcher, daughter of Anthony and Elizabeth (Jones) Thatcher.

3. Jabez Howland, son of Jabez and Bethiah (Thatcher) Howland, born November 15, 1669, married Patience Stafford, daughter of Samuel and Mercy (Westcoat) Stafford, of Warwick, R. I. (date of marriage unknown). Jabez Howland died October 17, 1732. Patience, his wife, died October 23, 1721.

(Austin's Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island.)

(Stafford family, page 387).

4. Bethia Howland, daughter of Jabez and Patience (Stafford) Howland, born December 5, 1702; married, by Rev. John Usher, to Nicholas Bragg, son of Henry and Elizabeth (——) Bragg, of Bristol, R. I., May 19, 1725. Nicholas Bragg died at Surinam, South America, February 8, 1732.

Mrs. Bethia Bragg married a second time Simeon Davis, August 29, 1733. (Bristol records.)

5. Nicholas Bragg, son of Nicholas and Bethia (Howland) Bragg, was baptized at St. Michael's Church, Bristol, R. I., June 2, 1728. He married Sarah Greene, daughter of Benjamin and Anne (Hoxsle) Greene, by Friends' ceremony, at Greenwich, R. I., June 23, 1757. (Records of Greenwich monthly meeting of Friends; also family records, the original marriage certificate still in possession of the family.)

The Benjamin Greene referred to above was a brother of Nathaniel Greene, "the preacher," who was father of Gen. Nathaniel Greene of revolutionary fame.

6. Temperance Bragg, daughter of Nicholas and Sarah (Greene) Bragg, born April 28, 1771; married Ethan Foster, son of John and Ruth (Hoxsle) Foster, of Richmond, R. I., March 12, 1801.

7. Ethan Foster, son of Ethan and Temperance (Bragg) Foster, born in Groton, Conn., June 5, 1808; married Anna A. Wilbur, daughter of John and Lydia (Collins) Wilbur, of Hopkinton, R. I., October 24, 1837.

8. John Barclay Foster, son of Ethan and Anna (Wilbur) Foster, born September 27, 1841; married Elizabeth F. Perry, daughter

of Charles and Temperance (Foster) Perry, of Westerly, R. I., September 16, 1868.

Nos. 6, 7 and 8 can all be proved by the records of South Kingstown monthly meeting of Friends.

Although many of the Howlands were Friends, they certainly were not wholly repressed under their Quaker garb. With them rhyming was an inestimable gift. My correspondent does not tell me that they burst forth in song. As yet that impulse rests with those of the name of Hopkins.

"The late Robert Howland, senior, was always ready with quaint and peculiar rhymes. He was born, I think, about 1765, and his gift has spread through several branches of the family.

"Upon the election of one of his neighbors to the office of 'field driver,' sometimes called 'hog constable,' he gave the following impromptu :

"It seemeth strange to our weak brains,
The town should think it best,
To pass a vote to choose one Shoat
To govern all the rest."

"On another occasion he was expected to take one of three ladies to a ball, whose names were respectively Wing, Soule and House. At that time carriages were in little use, and a lady rode on a pillion behind a gentleman on the same horse.

"Upon being rallied for his want of gallantry, if he took neither lady to the ball, he said:

" 'What mortal man could think that I
Should with one Wing attempt to fly,
Or have another Soule to cross
Or carry a House upon a horse.' "

Few of the Pilgrim families seem to have retained the instincts of the original "old comers" more than the Howlands. Without the inspiration of convivial times they can always sing, "And I Have Loved the Ocean," using this attraction in shipping interests, and when rewarded by the wealth consequent upon their industry and ability they "Sail the ocean blue" in their pleasure craft, content to be "borne upon its bosom, like the bubbles, onward." They ask no more of the world, which to them has been always kind.