

THE LIVES AND ENGLISH ORIGINS OF THE IMMIGRANT THISTLES OF BEVERLY, MASSACHUSETTS

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The Thistle family of Beverly, Massachusetts, hasn't had significant biographical treatment in scholarly publications. This article will focus on Jeffrey Thistle, sometime resident of Marblehead, Massachusetts; his children, Richard Thistle and Joan (Thistle) Hathan of Beverly, and their origins in England. Jeffrey Thistle's will says he lived in Abbotsbury, Dorset, England.^[1] Parish registers for Abbotsbury show that he was baptized there and include his extended family and several generations of antecedents. Richard and Joan Thistle grew up there and became the first generation to settle permanently in New England in the 1670s.

Abbotsbury parish records:^[2]

Baptisms

1575 May xi Hugh the sonne of Hugh Thistell
1575 July xxxi? Leonard? the sonne of Richard Thistell
1575 January 22? Elizabeth the daughter of Thomas Thistell
1577 March [unreadable] Thomas the sonne of Thomas Thistle
1578 July xvi Richard the sonne of Richard Thistle
1579 September [damaged] Elizabeth the daughter of Richard Thistle
1579 February xxviii Joane the daughter of Thomas Thistle
1581 Aprill viii Henry the sonne of Hugh Thistell
1581 March xiii Margaret the daughter of Thomas Thistle
1583 March iiii Jeoffry the sonne of Hugh Thistle
1584 March xxiii Richard the sonne of Hugh Thistle
1586 December ix Thomas the sonne of Thomas Thistle

No Abbotsbury baptism records between June 1587-August 1595

1595 October ii Elizabeth the daughter of Thomas Thistell
1605 January xxvii Richard the sonne of Leonard Thistle

¹ Essex Co., MA, probate vol. 1 (Old Series), 38a-b. His will and inventory were published for the first time in 1860 in *Historical Collections of the Essex Institute [HCEI]*, vol. 2 (Boston: Essex Institute, 1860), 231, so his residence in Abbotsbury has long been known.

² "Dorset, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538-1812," Ancestry.com database online, with images of St. Nicholas parish records, Abbotsbury, Dorset, England. The records listed in this article don't include Thistles in Abbotsbury who don't have a proven connection to Jeffrey's line unless mentioned in the genealogical summary.

1608 October viii John the sonne of Henry Thistle
1610 November i Dorothie the daughter of Henry Thystle
1614 March xxv Walter the sonne of Henry Thystle
1614 December xviii Hugh the sonne of Richard Thistle
1618 December viii Robert the sonne of Richard Thistell
1620 December x Joane the daughter of Henry Thistell
1621 May x Jeffery the sonne of Richard Thistle
1627 Aprill xxii Mary the daughter of Richard Thistell
1633 Aprill xxiv Agnes the daughter of Richard Thistle
1643 October 8 Jeffrey sonne of Jeffry Thystle and Mary his wife
1643 October 8 Roger sonne of Geofery Thystle and Mary his wife
1650 Novem 3 Mary the daughter of Jeffery Thissill

Marriages

1588, 1590 missing

1570 November xvi Thomas Thistle and Edith Rose
1575 November xxvi Robert Motyer and Constance Curtis
1587 January xix Jeffery Motyer and Jane Thistle
1605 May xxvii Leonard Thistle and Agnes Devenise
1607 October xviii Henry Thistle and Joane Brushet
1612 January xvii Richard Thistle and Mary Motyer

Burials

no burial records for Abbotsbury between April 1576 and August 1584

1608 June xiiii Richard Thistle
1611 June xxvii Thomas Thistle
1611 february xxvi Hugh Thistle
1617 July vii Hugh the sonne of Richard Thistle
1619 November xxv Robert the sonne of Richard Thistle
1628 May xii Mary Thistell
1628 June ix Richard Thistell
1670 Decemb 13 Mary the wife of Geoffrey Thistell
1681 Octobe 10 Jone the wife of Richard Thistell

The surname Thistle, with its variant spellings, was relatively uncommon in England in the 17th century. Abbotsbury had one of the few significant clusters, others appearing in Yorkshire and Norfolk.

GENEALOGICAL SUMMARY

There were three Thistle men of about the same generation named Thomas, Richard and Hugh who had children baptized in Abbotsbury between 1575 and 1585. Several also have marriages recorded. They may have been brothers. The Abbotsbury parish registers don't extend back far enough, nor were there any wills found, to confirm this. Hugh was the ancestor of the immigrant Thistles. These are the family groups recorded in Abbotsbury for Thomas and Richard:

*THOMAS THISTLE, m. 16 Nov. 1570, EDITH ROSE. Children: *Elizabeth Thistle*, bap. 22? Jan. 1575/6; *Thomas Thistle*, bap. [?] Mar. 1577/8; *Joan Thistle*, bap. 28 February 1579/80; *Margaret Thistle*, bap. 13 Mar. 1583/4; *Thomas Thistle*, bap. 9 Dec. 1586; *Elizabeth Thistle*, bap. 2 Oct. 1595. *Agnes Thistle*, bur. 18 Dec. 1585, no baptism found.

*RICHARD THISTLE. Children: *Leonard Thistle*, bap. 31? July 1575; *Richard Thistle*, bap. 15 July 1578; *Elizabeth Thistle*, bap. [?] September 1579.

1. **HUGH^B THISTLE** was probably buried in Abbotsbury on 26 February 1610/1. He married (1) an unidentified wife, who probably died in Abbotsbury about 1581-3. He married (2) in Abbotsbury on 13 July 1583 **MARGARET TRIVETT**.

There were Trivett families in Abbotsbury in the mid to late sixteenth century, but there isn't enough evidence to connect Margaret to them specifically. Although there is no proof that Hugh died in 1611, this is the only burial associated with that name that could plausibly be for this Hugh.

Children of Hugh Thistle and an unknown spouse (Abbotsbury records):

- i. HUGH^A THISTLE, bap. 11 May 1575, no further record unless he was the Hugh buried in 1611.
- ii. HENRY THISTLE, bap. 8 Apr. 1581; m. 18 Oct. 1607, JOAN BRUSHETT. Children: 1. *John^C Thistle*, bap. 8 Oct. 1608; 2. *Dorothy Thistle*, bap. 1 Nov. 1610; *Walter Thistle*, bap. 25 Mar. 1614; *Joan Thistle*, bap. 10 Dec. 1620. *Henry Thistle*, bur. 2 Nov. 1620, no baptism found.

Children of Hugh and Margaret (Trivett) Thistle (Abbotsbury records):

- iii. JEFFREY THISTLE, bap. 4 Mar. 1583/4, no further record.
- 2 iv. RICHARD THISTLE, bap. 23 Mar. 1584/5.
Perhaps more children born after June 1587, when there is a gap in baptisms.

2. **RICHARD^A THISTLE** (*Hugh^B*) was baptized in Abbotsbury on 23 March 1584/5 and probably buried in Abbotsbury on 9 June 1628. He married in Abbotsbury on 17 January 1612/3 **MARY MOTYER**. She was probably buried in Abbotsbury on 12 May 1628.

There was a Richard Thistle who married Joan Browning in Melbury Osmond, Dorset, on 15 April 1630. He was one of the few Dorset Thistles who appear outside of Abbotsbury and was most likely the Richard baptized in Abbotsbury in 1605,

son of Leonard and Agnes. Richard and Joan had a daughter Agnes. The only other plausible records for Richard and Mary (Motyer) Thistle are the two burials in 1628 posited above, even more so given how close the dates are. The Abbotsbury burial records for children give the father's name, so the burial for Mary Thistle wasn't for their daughter Mary.

There are only two Motyer couples on record in or near Abbotsbury who could have had Mary: Jeffrey and Jane (Thistle) Motyer and Robert and Constance (Curtis) Motyer. She was likely baptized in the 1587-95 records gap.

Children of Richard and Mary (Motyer) Thistle (Abbotsbury records):

- i. HUGH¹ THISTLE, bap. 18 Dec. 1614; bur. 7 July 1617.
- ii. ROBERT THISTLE, bap. 8 Nov. 1619; bur. 25 Nov. 1619.
- 3 iii. JEFFREY THISTLE, bap. 10 May 1621.
- iv. MARY THISTLE, bap. 22 Apr. 1627, no further record.

3. **JEFFREY¹ THISTLE** (*Richard^A, Hugh^B*) was baptized in Abbotsbury on 10 May 1621 and died probably at sea in Spring 1676. He married in Abbotsbury on 16 November 1642 **MARY FEAVER**. She was buried in Abbotsbury on 13 December 1670.

Although there were Feavers in Abbotsbury in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, obvious parents weren't found for her. It's possible that Jeffrey's wife was Mary, daughter of Augustine Feaver, who was baptized Abbotsbury in 1615. At this time, it was rare for a man to marry a woman six years older than he was for a first marriage. It's far more likely that she was born about 1620-24. Her twins Richard and Roger were baptized eleven months after she married, so this wasn't an obvious case of marrying due to pregnancy. If she was Augustine's daughter, the following summary of Abbotsbury parish records would apply:

AUGUSTINE^B FEAVER, son of George^C, bap. 9 May 1585; m. 23 Jan. 1607/8, ALICE ROBERTS; bur. 25 Jan. 1616/7. Children: *Edith^A Feaver*, bap. 29 Sep. 1608; *George Feaver*, bap. 26 Oct. 1609; *Robert Feaver*, bap. 8 Dec. 1611; *Mary Feaver*, bap. 10 Dec. 1615.

Jeffrey was likely orphaned when he was seven years old. He and his sister Mary may have been taken in by his uncle Henry Thistle and his wife Joan, their only living close relatives. Jeffrey's second daughter on record may have been her namesake, the first named for her mother.

Jeffrey was a seaman. He refers to Abbotsbury as his residence in his will, but his voyages took him to Massachusetts Bay Colony, where he boarded periodically. A petition against imposts was signed by Jeffrey and his son Richard in the Fall of 1668 as residents of Marblehead, Massachusetts.^[3] This was a reaction to the

³ *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1855), 9:82.

introduction of customs taxes on Massachusetts imports, which would have an obvious effect on the international fishing industry.

William Lightfoot, a Marblehead fisherman, accused Jeffrey of “abusing” his wife in May 1669.^[4] The case came up in the Essex County Quarterly Court, at which time Jeffrey was ordered to either present a £100 bond to secure his future court appearance or be taken to jail in Boston. He was able to post the bond with Richard Thistle and Richard’s neighbor Robert Bradford as sureties. Jeffrey was set to appear before the Court of Assistants, which was the Colony-wide court, but the case must have been withdrawn, since it never appeared there. The accusation was based on what Mrs. Lightfoot told her sister Mary Bartholl, who was summoned to testify, but there are no further details as to what the alleged abuse involved.

Jeffrey and Richard were joint purchasers of thirty acres of land in Beverly, Massachusetts, in 1674.^[5] Richard settled there, but Jeffrey did not. When Jeffrey wrote his will in 1676, he says his sea chest [also, in another document, his sea bed] was at “Clem English’s” house in Salem.^[6] This house was close to the water in a fishermen’s hamlet called Cat Cove on Salem Neck.^[7]

Jeffrey’s will:

In the name of God Amen. The last will & testament of Jeffery Thissell of Abbotsbury in the County of Dorset in old England but at present in New England being in perfect health & memory but being bound for sea, not knowing how God may deal by him & take him out of this world & having an estate have given & disposed as followeth

Imprimis I bequeath my soul to God that gave it & my body to the earth to be buried in good Christian like manner

2dly I make Richard Reith & Matthew Clark both of Marblehead New England to be my sole executors to see those things truly & rightly performed as shall be specified & mentioned 3dly I give unto my eldest son Richard Thissell twenty shillings silver, which John Darlin of Salem is indebted to mee & one halfe barrel of oyl of George Tuck & ten shillings in old England money, which I have in one of the executor's hand, Richard Reith, as also all my fishing craft that is in my chest at Clem English house in Salem

Fourthly I give unto my daughter Jone Thissell in Abbetsbury in the County of Dorsett England a bond that is in the hands of John Hedgecock in Abbetsbury of 30 lb principal with the use of it for five year at this date, as alsoe I give unto her

⁴ *Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County [RFQC]*, vol. 4 (Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1914), 159-60.

⁵ Essex Co., MA, deeds, 4:81.

⁶ Essex Co., MA, probate volumes (Old Series), 301:38-9, transcription of will and inventory.

⁷ *Essex Antiquarian*, vol. 9-10, ed. Sidney Perley (Salem: 1905), 122, map facing p. 118.

all that is due unto me from Mr. Henry Feavour as alsoe all my whole propriety that I have in England either in goods or any other thing whatever.

Fifthly I give to my grandchild Jeffrey my son Richard's son twentie pound New England money silver that lieth in Richard Reith's hands, as also I give to him all that is coming to me of the voyage along with John Darlin of Salem, which Ezekiel Waters hath the doing of, as alsoe I give to my said grandchild Jeffrey all my whole venture that I now carry with me this voyage as alsoe what wages may be due to mee as alsoe fifteen acres of land that lieth at Bass river more or less.

Sixthly I give unto my son Richard's daughter Mary ten pounds in silver of New England money which lieth in the hands of Richard Reith.

I also give unto my grandchild Jeffrey my chest & bed that is at Clem English in Salem.

I doe further order what is coming from the voyage of Ezekiel Watters shall be paid to Richard Thissell towards the land for the use of the boy, this is to be paid at the proving of the will & that it may be put into my Executor's hands & that the twentie pounds & the ten pounds that I give unto the children shall be kept in the Executor's hands till they come to age & if either of the children dieth, to goe to that as remains alive & land & all to goe from generation to generation.

Lastly I give unto Richard Reith and Matthew Clark my executors twentie shillings apiece that is in hand and twentie shillings a piece more out of the voyage now in hand which I goe. In witness hereunto I have sett my hand and seale this 29th of October in the year of our Lord 1675

The marke Jeffrey [mark] Thissell

Signed, sealed in the presence of

Samuel Morgan
Edward Humphrey

Joan's mother died in 1670. It's possible she, then perhaps in her early teens in 1670, went to live with Henry "Feavour," named in the will and likely a relative of her mother. The Abbotsbury parish records don't reveal an obvious family connection between Henry and Mary (Feaver) Thistle. After Jeffrey died, Joan came to New England and may have lived with her brother in Beverly until her marriage in 1679.

Jeffrey's fifteen acres in Beverly, given to his namesake grandson in his will, must have been his half of the 1674 purchase of thirty acres. Richard had fifteen acres of homestead land in his estate inventory. Jeffrey,³ his grandfather's beneficiary, evidently died as a child. He didn't join his father and sister Mary in acknowledging the receipt of their bequests from administrator Richard Reith in

1692.^[8] No evidence of him was found after his grandfather's will, so the bequest presumably defaulted to Richard. If it did, subsequent deeds and probate records, all frustratingly vague, for the Thistles and abutting property owners don't provide an obvious answer to what happened to it. Richard may have given it to his son Ebenezer in an unrecorded deed, since he ended up with the rest of the homestead.^[9]

An Inventory of the whole estate of Jeffrey Thissell deceased as it was prised by men whose names are written

Item For the land in the bounds of Beverly [£]30 00 [shillings] 0 [pence]
For money left in Richard Rieth's hand 30 00 0
More, for wages, which is in the hands of Richard Reith, money 7 17 0
For money in Ezekiel Waters hands 9 2 0
For money in Henery Hayman's hand £3 0s 6d in old England money & six shillings in New England 3 6 6
More for cloase [clothes] Chest & a sea bedd 3 13 6
£83 19 0

Samuel Morgan
Edw Humphrey

As for the land above sd & the Cloase Chest & bed was prised by us at money silver of New England & it is to be understood that all ye rest is silver
The debts of Jeffrey Thissell as doth appear at present is in silver £17 10s
Richard Reith & Matthew Clark executors gave oath to the truth of the above Inventory & that as far as they know & what shall come to their knowledge afterward to ad to it 27.4.76 [27 June 1676]

Attests Hilliard Veren

The following is a deposition made while Jeffrey was at sea.^[10]

June 27 1676

Witnessed by me Robert White aged 29 years, that this said Jeffrey Thissell being aboard the Waymouth Merchant sayling from Saltitudes being bound for New England was taken sick by the way & I Robert White doth hereby witness & testify that this sayd Jeffrey Thissell being in his death bed called for this sayd Henry Heman, being the last words that ever he spake consarning this matter & desired Henry Heman with me Robert White being a witness to go to his Chaste &

⁸ Essex Co., MA, deed, 9:53.

⁹ In "Beverly in 1700," Sidney Perley gives maps and descriptions of properties. He misinterpreted Jeffrey's will and subsequent family deeds, making the information there unreliable, including the maps on which he drew the Thistle properties. *HCEI*, vol. 56 (Salem: 1920), 103, map facing 104, map facing 209, 215-6.

¹⁰ Essex Co., MA, court file papers, 25:69, Philips Library, Salem, MA. Abstract in *Historical Collections of the Essex Institute [HCEI]*, vol. 2 (Salem: Essex Institute, 1860), 231.

to take out £3 & 6d pence in lawfull money of England & 6s shillings in New England money. This said Henry Heman went to his chest & took this money & when he had told it before this sayd Jeffrey Thissell & mee Robert White he desired him to carry it home & too give it to his dafter with which being his last will & testament I Robert White doth testify that he gave to his dafter.
Witness, Robert White

Sworn in Court this 19.5 mo 1676

Attests Hilliard Veren

Ezekiel Waters, named in the inventory, was Clement English's brother-in-law and was a neighbor at Cat Cove. Robert White and Henry Heman haven't been identified, but Heman may have been based in or near Weymouth, England, if he was expected back there to give Joan Thistle her money. The ship *Weymouth Merchant* is mentioned in Massachusetts Bay Colony records. Governor John Leverett signed a "bill of health" for the ship on 21 September 1674 before it left port^[11] for "Leghorn" (Livorno, Italy). "Saltitudes" refers to Isla la Tortuga off the coast of Venezuela,^[12] a popular place for collecting salt. It was then used for curing cod until it reached port.

“By the late 1670s, 100 English ships and 440 New England boats fished annually in Atlantic waters, each required thousands of pounds of salt to cure their catch. In the 1670s, New Englanders revived raking at Salt Tortuga, which produced the sort of fine-grain salt that was best for the dry-cod fishery. When William Dampier visited Tortuga in 1679, he found the crews of twenty American vessels raking there from April to August, when salt crystallized.”^[13]

A trip to Livorno doesn't support the idea that the *Weymouth Merchant* had a particular involvement in the cod industry, so it can only be speculated why it was at Tortuga. It makes sense that, whatever the vessel, Jeffrey was involved in cod fishing. It was an expansive business that connected the "West Country" of England, including Weymouth, and fishing ports like Marblehead in New England.

These documents infer that when Jeffrey wrote his will, he was about to sail to Tortuga in search of cod and the means to preserve it. He was at sea over the Winter of 1675-6 and was on his way back in June 1676 when he became ill and died.

Children of Jeffrey and Mary (Feaver) Thistle (Abbotsbury records):

4 i. RICHARD² THISTLE (twin), bap. 8 Oct. 1643.

¹¹ *Suffolk Deeds* (Boston:1894), 7:343.

¹² Konrad Andrzej Antczak, "Entangled by Salt: Historical Archaeology of Seafarers and Things in the Venezuelan Caribbean, 1624–1880" (2017), W&M [College of William & Mary] MasterWorks, Dissertations, Theses, and Masters Projects, Paper 1499450060, 108-9.

¹³ Michael J. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade: Bermuda, Bermudians, and the Maritime Atlantic World, 1680-1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 189-90.

- ii. ROGER THISTLE (twin), bap. 8 Oct. 1643, no further record.
- iii. MARY THISTLE, bap. 3 Nov. 1650, no further record.
- 5 iv. JOAN THISTLE, b. say 1658.

4. **JOAN² THISTLE** (*Jeffrey¹, Richard^A, Hugh^B*) was probably born in Abbotsbury in say 1658. She married in Beverly on 19 May 1679 **WILLIAM HATHAN**,^[14] born about 1650.^[15]

William's surname is variously spelled in contemporary records, including Hathan, Hathen, and Hathorn. He was surely the "William Hathord" who deposed that he went with Richard Thistle to Boston in 1684 to sell a barrel of molasses on commission.^[16] This suggests he was a seaman. Aside from this and several birth records for his children, no other record was found for him. He evidently isn't connected to the prominent and well-documented Hathorn family of Salem.

Children of William and Joan (Thistle) Hathan (Beverly birth and marriage records):^[17]

- i. OBADIAH³ HATHAN, b. Beverly, 12 Jan. 16(79/80?);^[18] d. by 15 June 1720, when Hezekiah is called the only brother of William (see next child).
- ii. WILLIAM HATHAN, b. Beverly, 25 June 1685. According to depositions, he went to sea in 1702 or 1703.^[19] His mother received letters from him from New York in 1708. The family heard that he was impressed on a Jamaican man-of-war and not heard from again. Depositions were taken on 15 June 1720 attesting to this. Hezekiah was the only brother and was about to go to New York to see to William's interests. Mentioned as deponents were Joanna Hathen, named as William's mother; Katurah Hathen, named as William's sister; Dorcas Harris and Rebecca Standley. The deposition is from Essex County notarial records, and it may have been in anticipation of an estate settlement, of which no record was found. Also recorded are the birth records of William and Hezekiah, copied from the Beverly records by the town clerk.
- iii. HEZEKIAH HATHAN, b. Beverly, 15 Sep. 1687; bap. Beverly, 11 Nov. 1743.^[20] d. Beverly, 7 Dec. 1743.^[21] He had intentions to marry published in Beverly, 16 Feb.

¹⁴ *Vital records of Beverly, Massachusetts, to the end of year 1849 [BVR]*, vol. 2 (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historical Society, 1907), 60.

¹⁵ See note 16.

¹⁶ *RFQC*, vol. 5 (Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1913), 248. Deposed on 24 June 1684, "about 34" years old.

¹⁷ *BVR*, vol. 1 (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historical Society, 1906), 171-2.

¹⁸ *BVR* says between 1680 and 1690. *Early records of the town of Beverly, Essex County, Mass.*, vol. 1 (Boston: Eben Putnam, 1907), has the verbatim transcription and shows the record is damaged: "Obidiah Hawthorn the sonne of William and Joan --- born on the Twelfth Day of Janiarie Anno." The surrounding entries aren't exactly chronological but are almost all from late 1679 and early 1680, so he surely was the first-born child.

¹⁹ *HCEI*, vol. 44 (Salem: Essex Institute, 1908), 328.

²⁰ *Records of the First Church in Beverly, Massachusetts, 1667-1772* (Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1905), 70. He made a "profession of religion" on his sick bed and was baptized there, but "the Church and congregation...have objected to it."

²¹ *HCEI*, vol. 5, pt. 1 (Salem: Essex Institute, 1863) (record of Col. Robert Hale), 22.

1728/9, to HANNAH HOOD.^[22] She died in Salem Village betw. Sept. 1736 and June 1737.^[23] No further record.

iv. KETURAH HATHAN, bap. Beverly as an adult, 6 Jan. 1716/7;^[24] d. after 15 June 1720, when she deposed (see brother William above). No further record.

5. **RICHARD² THISTLE** (*Jeffrey¹, Richard^A, Hugh^B*) was baptized in Abbotsbury on 8 October 1643 and died in Beverly on 18 October 1715.^[25] He married probably in Beverly about 1671 **ELIZABETH PATCH**, daughter of James and Hannah (Woodbery) Patch.^[26] She was born in Salem, Essex County, Massachusetts Bay Colony, on 16 June 1645^[27] and died probably in Beverly by 24 October 1737, when her will was probated.^[28]

Richard was a mariner, probably sailing out of Weymouth, England, as his father had. In September 1664, when he was 20, he deposed at court on behalf of Richard Ober.^[29] They were both to go on a fishing voyage out of Boston. Thistle mentioned being in Marblehead. Ober was also of Abbotsbury, a small town, and the two young men undoubtedly grew up knowing each other. Among men from Marblehead in late 1668, Richard Thistle and his father signed a petition against imposts, which affected their industry.

Although Jeffrey didn't have a permanent residence in New England, Richard did. He bought a homestead in Marblehead on 28 June 1669 and sold it on 24 October 1670.^[30] It would make sense that he and maybe his father planned to live there while in Marblehead, but something didn't suit, since he soon sold it for slightly less than he bought it. This house is posited to have been about where 26 Franklin Street stands today^[31] The grantor, Ambrose Gale, owned several houses in the neighborhood and lived across the street in a house that still stands. Richard and his father jointly bought a piece of property in Beverly in 1674 with Richard Ober as an abutting owner. This is described as being at Plum Cove. Richard Thistle is named as an abutter, but no deed for this land was found. He was married with one or two children by then, but where they were before 1674, if not at Plum Cove, is a mystery.

²² *BVR*, 2:153.

²³ *BVR*, 2:467 (record of Col. Robert Hale).

²⁴ *Records of the First Church in Beverly*, 151, "upon a publick profession of faith."

²⁵ *BVR*, 2:573.

²⁶ Essex Co., MA, probate 309:312. Richard and Elizabeth are named among the heirs of James.

²⁷ *Vital Records of Salem, Massachusetts, to the year 1849*, vol. 1 (Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1916), 141, taken from the damaged records of annual vital records returns of the Essex County Quarterly Court. The last digit of the year is missing but is likely 5.

²⁸ Essex Co., MA, probate file 27416.

²⁹ *RFQC*, vol. 3 (Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1913), 209. Richard was baptized in Abbotsbury on 21 November 1641.

³⁰ Essex Co., MA, deeds, 3:97.

³¹ *HCEI*, vol. 47 (Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1911), map facing 149. The compiler, Sidney Perley, is referred to as unreliable in another instance (see note 9), but there is far less ambiguity here.

Richard was eventually a ship's captain. This is inferred in 1683, when he was sued for wages due from a voyage.^[32] He was certainly the master of a ketch sailing from "St. Christopher" in 1684. He sued to recoup a passage and cargo fee, the passenger shipping three barrels of molasses.^[33] It was one of these barrels that he and William "Hathord" took to Boston to sell for the plaintiff, as mentioned above. St. Christopher or Christopher's Island, better known by the nickname St. Kitts, became a major producer of sugar cane and byproducts such as molasses starting in the 1640s.^[34]

After attempts by "evil minded persons to set fire in the town of Boston and other places," the General Court of Massachusetts, at its October 1677 session, ordered all men in the colony to take an oath of fidelity who hadn't previously. Richard is on the Beverly list, dated 3 December 1677.^[35] Surely after his retiring from sea, he performed some civic duties in Beverly. In 1688 he was chosen to serve on a committee to prevent people from illegally cutting wood on the town's common land.^[36] A large part of the commons were adjacent to the north of his property. He was also a surveyor of highways in 1695^[37] and a tythingman in 1701.^[38]

Richard started to dispose of his real estate in 1707. On 4 August of that year, he gave and sold some to Richard, Jr., his oldest surviving son.^[39] This was surely instigated by the fact that Richard, Jr., was starting his own family. For the "good will & natural affection which I have & bear to my son...for his encouragement & advancement being towards his portion which I intend for him" and an additional £72, 2 shillings, he was given three pieces of upland and meadow. The first was about six acres in Beverly with a house and barn, formerly the homestead of Robert Bradford. The second was about ten acres of "rocky pasture." The third was about seven acres of meadow in Wenham bounded in part by Longham Bridge. The latter is where Longham Brook crosses Dodges Row. A note with the deed says that Elizabeth (Patch) Thistle gave up her dower rights to these lands on 15 June 1715. Probably as a confirmation, she had a deed with Richard, Jr., in December of that year, after Richard, Sr., died, saying her son gave her £70 for those dower rights.^[40]

³² Salem Town Records, 177; *RFQC* 5:393, 419.

³³ *RFQC*, 5:247-8. Writ dated 26 May 1684.

³⁴ "St. Christopher Island Colony (St. Kitts)," article at <https://www.britishempire.co.uk/-maproom/stchristopher.htm>.

³⁵ *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England*, vol. 5 (Boston: 1854), 154; *RFQC*, vol. 6:401.

³⁶ "Massachusetts, U.S., Town and Vital Records, 1620-1988," Ancestry.com database online (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011), Beverly, Town Records, image 113.

³⁷ 19 March 1694/5, "Massachusetts, U.S., Town and Vital Records, 1620-1988," image 261, almost unreadable, see *Municipal Documents of the City of Beverly, Massachusetts* (Beverly: 1899), 411.

³⁸ 22 March 1710/1 (Richard, Sr.), "Massachusetts, U.S., Town and Vital Records, 1620-1988," image 259.

³⁹ Essex Co., MA, deed, 20:43.

⁴⁰ Essex Co., MA, deed, 27:253.

Ebenezer was given his share of his father's estate on 18 December 1714.^[41] For the "natural affection & good will which I have & bear to my son...& in consideration of ye payments he is obleiged by obligation to pay to his sisters" he was given about fifteen acres of land his father bought from "Widow Lemmon." This was the 1674 purchase. Ebenezer was also given about twenty rods of land his father bought from Samuel Morgan; about eighty poles of land he bought from Richard Ober, and a piece he bought from the town "with all ye fences & trees." Ebenezer was also given the "upright part of the house after mine & my wives decease & ye leantow & land forthwith." Also "all my looms & utensils belonging to a weaver as alsoe ye loope boards about ye house."

The gift of the homestead to Ebenezer was a life lease, and this related to the "obligation" mentioned in the deed. Signed on the same day as the deed,^[42] the obligation was based on his willingness to let his parents live in the "upright" part of the house and let them continue to use the land, and then after the death of either, continue with a half share until the other parent died. If he wasn't willing, he would pay his sisters Elizabeth and Sarah £20 each.

In this context, a house with a "lean-to" is in the "salt box" style, consisting of two and a half stories and an extended back roof that sloped down to the first floor to create a "lean-to" area at the back. This kind of house was relatively large for the late 17th century. It's reasonable to think Ebenezer's parents continued to live there, Richard for only ten more months until he died, and Elizabeth to her death in 1737 when she was 92.

Hannah (Thistle) Pride and her husband Peter were given some of her father's real estate on 18 February 1714/5.^[43] This was three and a quarter acres near her parents' homestead. Richard included the proviso that if she and her husband decided to sell the land, her brothers and sisters had first refusal to buy it.

The last recorded gift was to Sarah (Thistle) Cole and her husband Benjamin. This was an acre near the homestead on 26 April 1715.^[44] Unlike the Pride deed, her mother Elizabeth also signed and the proviso was that only Sarah's brothers had first refusal if the property was sold.

There is no deed of gift recorded to Richard's daughters Mary (Thistle) Sallows or Elizabeth Thistle. In separate deeds, the Thistle children agreed not to claim a right to their father's real estate given to Ebenezer or their mother's dower.^[45] Robert Sallows signed off on behalf of his four daughters born to his wife Mary, who had died.

Although Richard is described in deeds as a mariner and later a yeoman, he had other vocations. Richard took on Elias Pickworth as a cooper's apprentice, whose contract was dated 9 May 1672. On 28 October 1678, Pickworth sued Richard for

⁴¹ Essex Co., MA, deed, 27:89.

⁴² Essex Co., MA, deed, 27:89.

⁴³ Essex Co., MA, deed, 29:60.

⁴⁴ Essex Co., MA, deed, 27:211.

⁴⁵ Essex Co., MA, deeds, 27:235; 28:85; 29:247, 31:67

not teaching him the agreed skills.^[46] Deposing for a different case, Elias said his master sent him to Thomas Woodberry's with two loads of apples in 1675 and pork and Indian corn in 1675, showing he was also a general servant to Richard.^[47] As a mariner, Richard may also have served, in part, as a ship's cooper. This would have been an important skill for cod storage.

Richard's deed to Ebenezer infers he was also a weaver. According to later deeds, both Richard, Jr., and Ebenezer were weavers and fishermen.^[48] Given the circumstances, they likely learned those skills from their father. They may have woven fishing nets. Research suggests looms weren't used for this in the early 18th century, but the "loop boards" could be a fish-net reference. Loop dowels or rods were used for that craft. Fourteen years later, Ebenezer's estate inventory included "a pair of old looms" and "warping bars." This suggests weaving cloth. The old looms were likely his father's, so they may have weaved a variety of products.

Neither Richard nor his sister had their children baptized. Their daughters were all baptized as adults with the possible exception of Mary (Thistle) Sallows.^[49] Hezekiah Hathan and Ebenezer Thistle chose to be baptized on their death beds.

Richard signed his name "Thistle" on deeds, which was the most common spelling in Dorset with a few variations such as "Thistell." Although the phonetic "Thissel" was used occasionally in the 17th century in Massachusetts, it became more common in the 18th century.

Children of Richard and Elizabeth (Patch) Thistle:

- i. JEFFREY³ THISTLE, b. Beverly, 21 Sept. 1672;^[50] d. prob. by 25 Nov. 1692, when only his father and sister Mary acknowledged payment in full for their inheritance from Jeffrey¹ Thistle.
- ii. MARY THISTLE, b. Beverly abt. 1674; d. Beverly, 6 or 7 May 1714.^[51] She m. Beverly, 14 Dec. 1697, Robert³ Sallows,^[52] son of John² Sallows, bap. Beverly, 29 Oct. 1676;^[53] d. early Feb. 1756.^[54] Children:^[55] *Mary*⁴ *Sallows*, b. 18 Nov. 1700;

⁴⁶ *RFQC*, vol. 7 (Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1919), 114.

⁴⁷ *RFQC*, vol. 6 (Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1917), 146.

⁴⁸ For instance, see note 44.

⁴⁹ Her children and husband (as an adult) were baptized, but there is no such record for Mary.

⁵⁰ *BVR*, 1:321.

⁵¹ "Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1626-2001," familysearch.org database online (Salt Lake City, UT: 1972), Essex, Beverly, Births, marriage intentions, marriages, deaths 1663-1784, image 114, "May the sixth;" *Records of the First Church in Beverly*, 39, "May 7."

⁵² *BVR*, 2:310.

⁵³ *Records of the First Church in Beverly*, 93. Note that the bracketed information in this publication is not from the original records and is sometimes either a guess or incorrect. See also "Sallows-Solas-Sollis-Sollace Family of Mass.," *The American Genealogist*, 72:13.

⁵⁴ *HCEI*, 5:144.

⁵⁵ *BVR*, 2:288. The published Beverly vital records claim that she is called Mercy and Marcy in two different manuscript records, which is evidently wrong. The original record of her birth has "Marcy" with the "a" crossed out and an "e" written over it, evidently at the time it was written,

Elizabeth Sallows, b. 26 Dec. 1704; *Mercy Sallows*, b. 30 Nov 1710; *Experience Sallows*, b. 1 Dec. 1710.

- iii. HANNAH THISTLE, b. Beverly abt. 1678; bap. 7 May 1710; d. Beverly, abt. Nov. 1750.^[56] She m. Beverly, 22 Dec. 1700, Peter³ Pride,^[57] son of John² and Jane (Lovering) Pride.^[58] Children:^[59] *Peter⁴ Pride*, b. 6 Apr. 1702; *Hannah Pride*, b. 22 Jan. 1704/5; *Peter Pride*, b. 3 Sep. 1713
- iv. ELIZABETH THISTLE, b. Beverly abt. 1680-83;^[60] bap. 7 May 1710;^[61] d. Wenham 8 May 1745.^[62] She had m. int. published Beverly, 21 June 1740, to William Paten of Wenham,^[63] who d. Wenham, 21 Feb. 1757.^[64]
- v. RICHARD THISTLE, perhaps a twin, prob. b. Beverly, 20 Feb. 1684/5;^[65] d. Beverly, 17 Mar. 1751/2.^[66] He had m. int. published Beverly, 30 Apr. 1706, to his first cousin Martha⁵ Thorndike,^[67] daughter of Paul⁴ and Mary (Patch) Thorndike,^[68] d. aft. 22 May 1753.^[69] Children:^[70] *Priscilla⁴ Thistle*, b. 21 Oct. 1707; *Martha*

given the style of the “e.” Her baptism record also calls her Mercy (“Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1626-2001,” image 89).

⁵⁶ *HCEI*, 5:95 (records of Col. Robert Hale), widow of Peter, age about 72. This puts her birth after Jeffrey¹ Thistle’s will, which only refers to his grandchildren Jeffrey and Mary.

⁵⁷ *BVR*, 2:299.

⁵⁸ Robert Charles Anderson, George F. Sanborn, Jr., Melinda Lutz Sanborn, *Great Migration: Immigrants to New England, 1634-1635*, vol. 1 (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1999), 514, citing a York Co., ME, deposition in Land Records, 18:253

⁵⁹ *BVR*, 1:269.

⁶⁰ Her year of birth is the most difficult to estimate of all the children. Her brother Ebenezer was born in 1690 when her mother was about 45, so she was probably born before this. The most likely gap among the other children’s births is 1676. Her husband’s first wife was born about 1675.

⁶¹ *Records of the First Church in Beverly*, 48, Hannah, Elizabeth and Sarah, daughters of Richard Thistle, Sr., adults.

⁶² *Vital records of Wenham*, 215.

⁶³ *BVR*, 2:301. Her mother’s will, which includes her, refers to her daughters by first name only. (Essex Co., MA, probate file 27416). She is the only Elizabeth Thistle found who could be the one who married Paten. He was a widower of Elizabeth’s generation, his wife Mary having died in Wenham in 1739 in her 65th year. *Vital records of Wenham, Massachusetts, to the end of year 1849* (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historical Society, 1904), 215.

⁶⁴ *Vital records of Wenham*, 215.

⁶⁵ The Beverly town records call him William, but brother Richard died in 1752, age 67, so born about 1685. There is no other record of a son William, so this may be a clerical error. It’s also possible William and Richard were twins, but the town clerk only named William, who died young. Richard and Martha (Thorndike) Thistle had a son William. Richard² was a twin, and he had twin Cole granddaughters. “Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1626-2001,” familysearch.org database online (Salt Lake City, UT: 1972), Essex, Beverly, “Births, marriages, deaths 1665-1725,” image 65.

⁶⁶ *HCEI*, 5:95 (record of Col. Robert Hale), age 67.

⁶⁷ *BVR*, 2:299.

⁶⁸ Essex Co., MA, probate file 27565. Martha Thorndike signed an agreement as an heir before her marriage. Her father was the only male Thorndike of his generation in Essex County. For the Thorndike ancestry see “Thorndikes of Aby in Greenfield, Lincolnshire,” *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, vol. 154 (Boston: 2000), 460.

⁶⁹ Essex Co., MA, probate file 27440, the day she relinquished administration of Richard’s estate.

⁷⁰ *BVR*, 1:324-5.

- Thistle*, b. 5 Feb. 1710/1; *Anne Thistle*, b. 7 Nov. 1713; *Jeffrey Thistle*, bap. 30 Jan. 1716/7; *William Thistle*, b. 31 May 1723; *Jeffrey Thistle*, bap. 16 June 1728
- vi. ?WILLIAM THISTLE, perhaps a twin, b. Beverly, 20 Feb. 1684/5.
- vii. SARAH THISTLE, b. Beverly abt. 1687; bap. 7 May 1710; d. prob. Beverly by 22 Dec. 1725.^[71] She had m. int. Beverly, 16 Nov. 1710, to Benjamin² Cole,^[72] son of Solomon¹ and Mary (Weeden?) Cole.^[73] Children:^[74] *Mary*⁴ (twin) *Cole*, b. 7 Feb. 1711/2; *Charity* (twin) *Cole*, b. 7 Feb. 1711/2, d. May 1712; *Charity Cole*, b. 12 Nov. 1713; *Sarah Cole*, b. 26 Sep. 1717; *Solomon Cole*, b. 9 Feb. 1717/8; *Hannah Cole*, bap. 21 Aug. 1720; *Nathaniel Cole*, b. 17 July 1722.
- viii. EBENEZER THISTLE, b. Beverly, 8 Nov. 1690;^[75] bap. 10 July 1728; d. Beverly betw. 10 July and 6 Oct. 1728.^[76] He had m. int. published Beverly, 16 Dec. 1716, Hannah² Taylor,^[77] prob. dau. of James¹ and Emma Taylor, b. 26 May 1694,^[78] d. aft. 3 Dec. 1742.^[79] Children:^[80] *Richard*⁴ *Thistle*, b. 18 Mar. 1717/18; *Lydia Thistle*, b. 24 Nov. 1719; *Susannah Thistle*, b. 4 Dec. 1721; *James Thistle*, bap. 27 Oct. 1723; *Hannah Thistle*, bap. 2 Oct. 1726.

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⁷¹ *BVR*, 2:66. Her husband remarried on this date.

⁷² *BVR*, 2:302.

⁷³ *Records of the First Church in Beverly, Massachusetts, 1667-1772* (Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1905), 125. His father is named in the adult baptisms of Benjamin and two of his brothers.

⁷⁴ *BVR*, 1:78, 80-2.

⁷⁵ *BVR*, 1:324-5.

⁷⁶ *Records of the First Church in Beverly*, 61-2, recording his adult baptism on 10 July. Hannah, widow of Ebenezer, was "admitted to the table of the Lord" on 6 October.

⁷⁷ *BVR*, 2:301.

⁷⁸ *BVR*, 1:320, called "Johanna" in her birth record.

⁷⁹ Date of Ebenezer Thissell estate inventory, Essex Co., MA, probate file 27415.

⁸⁰ *BVR*, 1:324-5.