



William Spencer

1725

COMMENTS: William Spencer appeared on a list of early inhabitants of Cambridge, apparently dated 1632 [CaTR 2].

On 29 November 1638 William Spencer wrote from Hartford to John Winthrop asking why Winthrop had made suggestions regarding arguments to support the union between the Bay and "the plantations here," and yet when men came to treat with him regarding it, many using the very arguments suggested by Winthrop at Spencer's prompting, all were met with "a prejudice in the spirits of some men" and forced to go away unsatisfied [WP 4:74-75].

On 4 July 1648 Aspinwall certified "copies of five letters unto Edmund Angier - 3 letters from John Talcot & John Pratt, one dated 22 May 1640, another August 10th 1640, & another 15th June 1641, a fourth from Anne Spenser dated 2 May 1642 and the fifth from W[illia]m Edw[ards] no date. Also unto a copy of a writing under W[illia]m Spencer's name dated 3 July 1639. Also to a letter [of] attorney from Ed[mund] Angier to Joseph Mayet dated 5 July 1648" [Aspinwall 141]. From the chronology and the persons involved, it would seem that these letters pertained to the estate of William Spencer in England.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE: In 1988 Douglas Richardson ably demonstrated the identity of Agnes Harris, wife of William Spencer [TAG 63:33-45].

FRANCIS SPRAGUE

ORIGIN: Unknown

MIGRATION: 1623 in *Anne*

FIRST RESIDENCE: Plymouth

REMOVES: Duxbury by 1638

OCCUPATION: Innkeeper (1 October 1638: "Francis Sprague is licensed to keep victualling on Duxborrow side" [PCR 1:99]; 3 March 1639/40: "Francis Sprague, of Duxborrow, for drawing & retailing wine at Duxborrow, contrary to the express order of the Court, is fined by the Bench 20s. sterling" [PCR 1:143]; 5 May 1640: "Francis Sprague, of Duxborrow, is prohibited by the Court to draw any wine or strong water until the next General [Court], without special license from the Court so to do" [PCR 1:153]; 2 June 1640 and 1 September 1640: Francis Sprague presented for selling & retailing of wine contrary to order [PCR 1:156, 162]). Licensed 7 July 1646 to draw wine and keep an ordinary at Duxborrow [PCR 2:104]. His license was recalled 5 June 1666 [PCR 4:129].

FREEMAN: Admitted 7 June 1637 [PCR 1:60] (and as a result added to the list of freemen compiled on 7 March 1636/7 [PCR 1:53]). In Dux-

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bury section of 1639, 1658 and 29 May 1670 lists of freemen [PCR 5:275, 8:175, 198].

EDUCATION: Signed his deeds by mark.

OFFICES: Duxbury surveyor of highways, 7 June 1648, 3 June 1657 [PCR 2:124, 3:116]. Constable, 4 June 1653 [PCR 2:153].

In Duxbury section of 1643 Plymouth Colony list of men able to bear arms [PCR 8:190].

ESTATE: In the 1623 Plymouth land division "Francis Spragge" was granted three acres as a passenger on the *Anne* [PCR 12:5]. In the 1627 Plymouth cattle division Francis Sprage, Anna Sprage and Mercye Sprage were the eleventh through thirteenth persons in the sixth company [PCR 12:11].

Assessed 18s. in the Plymouth tax lists of 25 March 1633 and 27 March 1634 [PCR 1:10, 27]. He was one of the purchasers [PCR 2:177].

In 1637 Francis Sprague of Duxbury sold to Mr. Ralph Partridge "all his right and title into so much of the lot of his land lying in Ducksburrow aforesaid as is now enclosed by the said Mr. Partridg" [PCR 12:19]. On 28 March 1642 Francis Sprague sold to Morris Truant "two acres of marsh meadow lying at the Wood Island" [PCR 12:78]. On 1 April 1644 Francis Sprague of Duxbury sold to "Will[ia]m Laurence my son-in-law of the same town ... fifty acres" [PCR 12:138].

On 26 October 1659 Francis Sprague of Duxbury, planter, sold to "his son-in-law Ralph Earle of Road Island in the Jurisdiction of Providence Plantation the one-half of all his share, part or portion of land lying or being at the place or places commonly called by the Indians by the names of Coaksett and Acushena" [MD 14:90-91, citing PCLR 2:2:30a].

On 27 April 1661 "Francis Sprague of Duxburrow ... planter" deeded "unto John Sprague his true and natural son all that his dwelling house and outhouses and buildings scituate in Duxburrow aforesaid, and all and singular the upland and meadow now thereunto belonging, whether obtained by grant or purchased of other persons ... containing in all forty or fifty acres or thereabouts with three acres of meadow" [MD 16:205-07, citing PCLR 2:2:75-76]. On 3 May 1664 "Francis Sprague of Duxburrow ... planter" deeded to "his son John Sprague all that his part, portion and share of land and meadow he hath at or near Namasakett ... which was granted to him and others" on 3 June 1662 [MD 19:107, citing PCLR 3:4; see also PCR 4:19 and MD 34:81, citing PCLR 3:21].

BIRTH: By about 1590 based on estimated date of marriage.

DEATH: Living 1670 [PCR 5:275] but deceased by 2 March 1679/80 [PCR 7:221].

MARRIAGE: (1) England by about 1614 _____; she died England by 1623.

(2) By about 1630 _____.

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Francis Sprague

1727

CHILDREN:

With first wife

- i ANNA, b. say 1614; m. by 1644 William Lawrence [PCR 12:138].
- ii MERCY, b. say 1617; m. Plymouth 9 November 1637 William Tubbs [PCR 1:68]; William Tubbs was granted a divorce from his wife Mercy, 7 July 1668, at which time she was living in Rhode Island [PCR 4:192].

With second wife

- iii JOHN, b. say 1630; m. by about 1655 Ruth Bassett, daughter of WILLIAM BASSETT (on 8 June 1655 "we present John Sprague and Ruth Bassett, of Duxburrow, for fornication before they were married [PCR 3:82]). (John Sprague is treated in detail by Maclean W. McLean, who estimates his birth as about 1635, whereas we make him slightly older [TAG 41:178-81].)
- iv DORCAS, b. say 1632; m. by 1659 Ralph Earle [MD 14:90-91].

COMMENTS: There are very few dates for this family, and many unanswered questions. The household of Francis Sprague consisted of three persons in 1623 and again in 1627 [PCR 12:5, 11], and we assume here that these three are in both cases Francis, Anna and Mercy. Mercy was clearly the daughter who married in 1637, but opinion is divided as to whether Anna was wife or daughter of Francis.

We know that a daughter of Francis Sprague had married William Lawrence by 1644, but we have no record which gives her Christian name. But to have married by that date, and be born after the cattle division of 1627, she would be seventeen at marriage at most, and perhaps younger. The more likely solution is that the Anna of the cattle division was a second daughter, and Francis did not bring a wife with him to New England.

The other two children of Francis (John and Dorcas) were apparently born in the 1630s, and so fifteen or twenty years younger than Mercy and Anna, with no evidence of any children born in between. This alone suggests that these were children of a second marriage. We postulate, therefore, that Francis Sprague had two wives, the first of whom died in England before 1623, and the second of whom he married in New England about 1630. If our conclusion that Anna Sprague of the 1627 cattle division became wife of William Lawrence is correct, then we do not know the given name of either of the wives of Francis, nor do we have dates of birth, marriage or death for either of them.

On 2 August 1642 Francis Sprague, innholder, of Duxburrow, was accused of selling a fowling piece to an Indian [PCR 2:43].

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1728

The Great Migration Begins

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE: In 1919 Mary Lovering Holman compiled a concise account of the family of Francis Sprague. [Scott Gen 241].

RALPH SPRAGUE

ORIGIN: Fordington St. George, Dorsetshire

MIGRATION: 1629

FIRST RESIDENCE: Charlestown

REMOVES: Malden

OCCUPATION: Fuller.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: "Raph Sprage and Joan his wife admitted to Boston church as members #102 and #103, which would be in early 1631 [BChR 14]. "Raph Sprage and Joan his wife were dismissed to form a church at Charlestown, 14 October 1632 [BChR 15]. "Ralph [and] Jone Sprague" were admitted as founding members of the Charlestown church, 2 November 1632 [ChChR 7].

FREEMAN: Requested 19 October 1630 and admitted 18 May 1631 [MBCR 1:79, 366].

OFFICES: Deputy for Charlestown to Massachusetts Bay General Court, 3 September 1634, 3 March 1635/6, 8 September 1636, 7 December 1636, 2 November 1637, 12 March 1637/8, 2 May 1638, 6 September 1638, 13 March 1638/9, 22 May 1639, 4 September 1639, 13 May 1640, 7 October 1641, 7 March 1643/4, 29 May 1644, 14 May 1645, 12 August 1645, 2 October 1645 [MBCR 1:145, 164, 178, 184, 205, 220, 227, 235, 250, 256, 270, 288, 336, 2:55, 66, 96, 3:1, 9, 39, 44; ChTR 11, 22, 23, 31, 34, 38].

Coroner's jury, 28 September 1630 on the body of Austen Bratcher [MBCR 1:77]. "Umpire" in the matter of the bounds between Dorchester and Roxbury, 7 November 1632 [MBCR 1:102]. Committee with the power to "set out bounds of all towns not yet set out or in difference betwixt any town" [MBCR 1:125]. Committee to rate each town in the plantation, 25 May 1636 [MBCR 1:175, 260]. Chosen to "assist at the particular courts at Newetowne," 17 May 1637 [ChTR 28; MBCR 1:197]. Appointed to view the bridge at Mistick, 6 May 1646 [MBCR 2:149]. Committee to lay out the way to Reading, 26 May 1647 [MBCR 2:192].

Constable of "Charlton," 19 October 1630 [MBCR 1:79]. Selectman, 12 February 1637/8 [ChTR 34]. Committee to lay out lots, 9 January 1633/4 [ChTR 10]. Overseer of highways, 13 January 1634/5 [ChTR 12]. Selectman, 10 February 1634/5, 13 February 1635/6 [ChTR 13, 16]. Committee to stint the common, 17 February 1636/7 [ChTR 25]. Com-

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