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SAMPSON MASON, THE BAPTIST AND DRAGOON IN OLIVER CROMWELL'S ARMY.

[Communicated by Hon. IRA M. BARTON, A. M., of Worcester, Mass.]

In 1855, the Rev. Abner Morse, A. M., published an interesting volume of genealogies, embracing the families of Adams, Bullard, Holbrook, Phipps, Rockwood, Sanger and Wood. As a supplement, never published, materials were collected with considerable labor and expense for an account of the maternal ancestry of Mrs. Lucy Bullard, widow of Dr. Artemas Bullard, late of Sutton, now eighty-six years of age.

Mrs. Bullard was the daughter of Deacon Jesse White, of Northbridge, by Anna Mason, his wife, the eldest child of Melatiah Mason, of Thompson, Connecticut, who died in 1831, aged more than one hundred years. The early history of this family proved to be of some public as well as private interest. A clue to it was first obtained from the histories of the Baptists by Backus and Benedict, and Baylies's Memorial of the Plymouth Colony, where this family of Masons had its principal seat. The few facts gathered from those works have been much amplified by a reference to more local histories; to the records of the Plymouth Colony, and to the church and municipal records of Rehoboth, Swansea, Taunton, and other towns. It is not supposed that the early history, or, much less, the genealogy of this family is complete; such subjects are never exhausted. It is hoped that the facts here collected may provoke genealogical research in the later generations of this numerous and widely extended family.

Sampson Mason was the American root of this family. Of this fact we have not only the testimony of Backus, in his Church History, whose wife, Susannah Mason, was a descendant of Sampson, in the line of his son, Samuel Mason, but the ancient records of the towns of Rehoboth and Swansea.

By the concurrent authority of tradition, and the history above referred to, Sampson Mason was a soldier, or as Baylies has it in his historical memoir of Plymouth, "a dragoon," in the republican army of Oliver Cromwell. Backus says that he came over to this country upon the turn of times in England. If by this he means the restoration of Charles II, in 1660, Mr. Backus was certainly mistaken, for Sampson Mason came over, at least, ten years before that time. This fact, however, does not at all countervail the evidence that he belonged to the army of Cromwell, who raised his celebrated "Iron-sides" troop of horse, at Cambridge, in 1642. At the battle of Marston-moor, in 1644, he had become Lieut. General of the army of Parliament. And if Sampson Mason was a dragoon, as Baylies asserts, it is not improbable that he belonged to this "troop," which performed such prodigies of valor at the battle referred to.

The earliest notice of Sampson Mason yet discovered in this country is found in the Suffolk record of the settlement of the estate of Edward Bullock, of Dorchester. His will is dated 25-5-1649, (July 25th, 1649); and a debt is specified as "due to Sampson Mason for wife's shoes." [6. N. E. His. & Gen. Register, 356.] The Registry of Deeds

for Suffolk shows that in 1651, Sampson Mason purchased a house and land in Dorchester, of William Betts; that he afterwards sold the same to Jacob Hewins, and removed to Rehoboth. For this reference to the Registry of Deeds, I am indebted to Ebenezer Clapp, Esq., of Boston.

The following extract from the Records of Rehoboth, fixes the period of his removal to that place.

“December 9th, 1657. It was voted that Sampson Mason should have free liberty to sojourn with us, and to buy house, lands or meadow, if he see cause for his settlement, provided that he lives peaceably and quietly.”—*History of Rehoboth, by Leonard Bliss, Jr.*

Anabaptist as he certainly was, this permission to sojourn was all that Sampson Mason could expect from his puritanical friends at Rehoboth. Their records show that Samuel Luther and other Baptists, who afterwards became prominent men in the Old Colony, instead of being admitted as freemen, had accorded to them only the privileges of sojourners. At an early period, however, grants of lands south of Rehoboth were obtained from the Indians, and in 1667, Capt. Thomas Willett, Rev. John Myles, “and others, their neighbors at Wannamoiset and parts adjacent,” were confirmed in their title to those lands, and erected into the township of Swansey, by the General Court at Plymouth. In that town the religious profession of a Baptist never worked any forfeiture of civil rights. The name of Sampson Mason appears as one of the original associates, and Baylies says that he became one of the founders of that town. Those associates were many of them distinguished men. Capt. Thos. Willett was the first English Mayor of the City of New York; the Rev. John Myles was a Baptist clergyman from Swansea, Wales. There were also amongst the associates, James Brown, Nathaniel Paine, Hugh Cole, Samuel Luther, and others, names well known and much respected in that part of the country. James Brown was a magistrate and one of the original members of the first Baptist Church in Swansey. His father, John Brown, was long one of the Assistants at Plymouth; a Commissioner of the United Colonies; and a large proprietor of Wannamoiset, an Indian Country bordering on the Southwesterly part of ancient Rehoboth, and now constituting the Northwesterly part of Barrington and Swansey. Before the incorporation of Swansey, Wannamoiset was regarded as a part of Rehoboth, and John Brown, with his son-in-law, Thomas Willett, resided there. April 7, 1662, Mr. Brown made his will, and died the same year. Sampson Mason was one of the witnesses to the will, a circumstance that renders it probable that he was a neighbor, and resided in the same part of Rehoboth. [6, N. E. His. and Gen. Register, 94.]

That Sampson Mason became a man of substance, is inferable, not only from the part he took in the settlement of Swansey, but also from the fact that he was one of the proprietors of the “North purchase,” since Attleboro’. And amongst those in Rehoboth who made advances in King Philip’s war, his widow is credited £13-5-10; it being among the larger contributions made on that terrific emergency. The credit is given to the widow, as Sampson Mason died just at the close of the war, and she settled whatever estate he had left after the ravages made by the Indians. [Bliss’s History of Rehoboth.]

The above facts induce the belief, that although Sampson Mason was associated as one of the founders of Swansea, and worshipped there with his Baptist brethren, whose meeting house was first erected at Wannamoiset, yet, it is probable that he never actually moved from Rehoboth. His estate was there; the births of nine of his children were recorded there; and we shall find that Rehoboth has faithfully preserved the record of his death, and that of Mary, his wife.

Though there is the usual tradition about the "three brothers emigrating to America," there is no evidence of any connection between the family of Sampson Mason, and the other New England families of that name, noticed by Farmer in his Register. And I am informed by the Hon. James M. Mason, of Winchester, Va., that none of his family ever emigrated to the North of Mason and Dixon's line. His ancestor was Col. George Mason, a member of Parliament from Staffordshire, in the reign of Charles I., and a Colonel of Cavalry at the battle of Worcester, in the army of Charles Stuart, afterwards Charles II. Immediately after this battle, that ruined the fortunes of Charles, Col. Mason left England and landed at Norfolk, Va., before the end of the same year, 1651. This fact, with the tradition that Sampson Mason had belonged to the victorious army of Cromwell, renders it probable that those families were as far separated in the old world as they are in the new.

The period of the birth of Sampson Mason and his wife must be inferred from their history and from the following account of their children. But the period of their deaths appears from the well-preserved records of the ancient town of Rehoboth, as follows:

Sampson Mason, *buried*, Sept. 15, 1676.

Widow Mary Mason, wife of Sampson Mason, Senr., died August 29, 1714.

It appears from the will of Sampson Mason, and an order of Court in relation thereto, a copy whereof is subjoined, that her maiden name was Butterworth. The Colony records show that the Butterworths were a prominent family, and they probably removed to Rehoboth with their brother Mason. The place of burial of Sampson Mason and his wife is not known. It is not improbable that they were buried in the ground of their friends and neighbors, the Browns, on Bullock's Cove. The authority of the State has recently been invoked to prevent the desecration of that public burial ground. (See Commonwealth vs. Viall, 2d vol. of Allen's Reports, p. 512.)

By a collation of facts from the history of Backus, the records of Rehoboth and Swansea, the Colony records, and a transcript from the genealogical registry of the Blackstone Monument Association, kindly furnished me by Ezra Baker, Esq., of Providence, R. I., I am able to give the following corrected tables of the three first generations of the family of Sampson Mason.

1. **SAMPSON¹ MASON.** b. in England, m. Mary Butterworth; *buried* Sept 15, 1676; w. d. Aug. 29, 1714; had 13 children.
- (15) 2. **Noah,**² b. pr. at Dorchester; d. Mar. 2, 1699 or 1700.
3. **Sampson, jr.,**² b. pr. at Dorchester. He was a soldier from Rehoboth in King Philip's war, and belonged to the expedition sent to chastise the Narragansetts in the winter of 1675-6. He was also one of the founders of the 2d Baptist Church in Swansea,

whom Wright, in his history of the six principle Baptists, mistakes for Sampson Mason, senr.

- (24) 4. *Samuel*,² b. pr. at Dorchester, ab. 1656, d. Jan. 21, 1743-4.
 5. *John*,² b, pr. at Dorchester, ab. 1657, d. Mar. 18, 1683, a. 26. He did not remove to Rehoboth with the rest of his father's family, but was left at Dorchester, with Mr. John Gurnell, and was there brought up at the tanner's business. Mr. Clapp gave me these facts, and also the following copy of an extract from the Church records of Dorchester.
- "John, son of Sampson Mason, 23 (7) 1660, being about 4 years old when he was baptized, because his father was and is, in his judgment, against the baptizing of infants; yet he being at Seconck (Rehoboth), do permit that brother Gurnell, with whom the child doth dwell, may bring it forth to be baptized." Taken into the watch care of the church, under circumstances of some peculiarity, their subsequent records show that John's walk was not always orderly. However, he so far secured the confidence of the widow of Mr. Gurnell, that, by her will she entailed her real estate upon him, to go to the poor of Dorchester upon his decease without issue. (5 His. and Gen. Register, 400. See, also, ancient epitaphs of Dorchester, 4 His. and Gen. Reg. 167.)
6. *Sarah*,² b. at Rehoboth, Feb. 15, 1658.
 (29) 7. *Mary*,² b. Feb. 7, 1660; m. Rev. Ephraim Wheaton, Jan. 7, 1684.
 8. *James*,² b. Oct. 30, 1661. No further account of him is found, except the statement of Mr. Backus, that he went to Boston.
 (30) 9. *Joseph*,² b. Mar. 6, 1663; d. May 19, 1748.
 10. *Bethia*,² b. Oct. 15, 1665; m. John Wood, May 23, 1688.
 (35) 11. *Isaac*,² b. July 15, 1667; d. Jan. 25, 1742.
 (46) 12. *Pelataiah*,² b. April 1, 1669; d. Mar. 29, 1763.
 (58) 13. *Benjamin*,² b. Oct. 20, 1670; d. in 1740.
 14. *Thankful*,² b. Oct. 27, 1672; m. Thomas Bowen, June 17, 1689.
- (2) 15. **NOAH² MASON**, m. 1st., Martha, d. Feb. 6, 1675; m. 2d, Sarah Fitch, Dec. 6, 1677, d. Mar. 16, 1718, had,
 16. *Noah*,³ b. at Rehoboth, Dec. 17, 1678, d. Aug. 29, 1744.
 17. *John*,³ b. Nov. 28, 1680, d. Aug. 27, 1716.
 18. *Mary*,³ b. Dec. 12, 1682.
 19. *Daniel*,³ b. July 8, 1685.
 20. *Timothy*,³ b. Mar. 17, 1687, d. Dec. 9, 1742.
 21. *Sarah*,³ b. Feb. 7, 1689.
 22. *Hannah*,³ b. Dec. 2, 1690, d. July 14, 1716.
 23. *Martha*,³ b. June 16, 1693, m. Geo. Bristow, Sept. 29, 1715.
- NOAH² MASON** also went into the service from Rehoboth, in King Philip's war. He belonged to the forces of the Plymouth colony, under Major Bradford, and in addition to his personal services, he contributed 15s towards the expenses of the war. (Bliss's History of Rehoboth.)
- (4) 24. **SAMUEL² MASON** m. Elizabeth Miller, Mar. 2, 1681-2, d. Mar. 3, 1717-18. They had

25. *Samuel*,³ b. at Rehoboth, June 9, 1683, d. June 3, 1772.

26. *James*,³ b. Mar. 18, 1684-5.

27. *Elizabeth*,³ b. May 5, 1689, m. Edward Luther, Feb. 12, 1712.

28. *Amos*,³ b. Feb. 18, 1700, d. April 25, 1700.

It appears from the will of Sampson¹ Mason that Samuel² was the son designated with whom his wife was to have a home. His posterity became numerous and respectable. His son Samuel³ had 14 children; amongst them Susannah,⁴ b. at Rehoboth, Jan. 24, 1725, m. Rev. Isaac Backus, of Middleboro', the author of Church History, Nov. 29, 1749, d. Nov. 24, 1800. (His. and Gen. Reg., vii, 243.) Mr. Backus d. in 1806. He used to say of his wife, that "she was the greatest earthly blessing which God ever gave him." (2d vol. Benedict's History of the Baptists, 268.)

- (7) 29. MARY² MASON, m. the Rev. Ephraim Wheaton, Jan. 7, 1684. The records of Rehoboth show, that they had nine children, born between 1685 and 1703. Mr. Wheaton was first settled as the colleague of the Rev. Samuel Luther, pastor of the first Baptist Church in Swansey. Upon the death of Mr. Luther, in 1716, Mr. Wheaton succeeded him as sole pastor of that Church. His ministry was long and eminently successful. He wrote an account of his success to Thomas Hollis, of London, from whom he received a congratulatory letter, and a present of Books. Though he ministered in Swansey, his residence was in a contiguous part of Rehoboth, where he died, April 26, 1734, aged 75. His four sons settled upon their paternal estate, and amongst his lineal descendants are the families of Judge Wheaton, of Norton; Dr. Levi Wheaton, of Providence; Hon. Henry Wheaton, late U. S. Minister at Berlin; the Rev. Dr. Henry Jackson, of Newport, Rev. Josephus Wheaton, formerly of Holliston, &c. [See Discourse of the Rev. Josiah P. Tustin, at the dedication of the Baptist Church in Warren, May 8, 1845.]
- (9) 30. JOSEPH² MASON, m. Lydia — Sept. 4, 1686, had
31. *Joseph*,³ b. at Swansey, April 30, 1687.
32. *Anne*,³ b. Aug. 28, 1688, m. Richard Hail, Jan. 2, 1705-6.
33. *Freelove*,³ b. June 5, 1695, m. Samuel Gorton June 1. 1715.
34. *Lydia*,³ b. Nov. 7, 1704, m. John Brown, Nov. 5, 1724.

Joseph² Mason succeeded Elder Thomas Barnes as minister of the Second Baptist Church in Swansey, July, 1709. In 1737 or 8 he resigned the pastorate, on account of infirmity of body, and not of mind; as the Church record states, and his nephew, elder Job Mason, was chosen in his place.

This Church was constituted in 1693, upon the *six principle plan*, as stated in the 6th chapter of Hebrews, 1, 2. They were connected with the yearly meeting of Six Principle Baptists in Rhode Island; did not allow singing in their public religious services; and in many of their notions they appear to have sympathised with the Friends. But since the American Revolution, they have conformed to the usa-

ges of other sects in the matter of Church Psalmody. Their meeting-house was located three or four miles easterly of Myles's bridge, near which was located the meeting house of the first Church. A section of the second church still exists, that retain their original platform, and their connection with the R. I. yearly meeting. But they have left the meeting house, for some years past, to the brethren known as Christians, or Free Will Baptists. The ancient records of this church are in the hands of Deac. Martin Buffington, near the meeting-house, at Luther's corner. They afford ample proof that the Masons were among the principal founders of this religious society. Joseph Mason was the first minister of that name, but several others of the name of Mason succeeded him.

- (11) 35. ISAAC² MASON m. Hannah — and they had
 36. *Hannah*,³ b. at Rehoboth, Jan. 9, 1694, d. Feb. 26, 1697.
 37. *Mary*,³ b. Jan. 26, 1696; d. Mar. 4, 1697.
 38. *Isaac*,³ b. Dec. 26, 1698.
 39. *Sampson*,³ b. Feb. 24, 1700.
- (62) 40. *Hezekiah*,³ b. June 6, 1704; d. April 4, 1738.
 41. *Nathan*,³ b. May 10, 1705; d. May, 1758.
 42. *Olive*,³ b. at Swansea Aug. 20, 1706.
 43. *Hannah*,³ b. Mar., 1710; m. James Brown, Feb. 19, 1740.
 44. *Benjamin*,³ b. April 10, 1711,
 45. *Mary*,³ b. May 21, 1713.

ISAAC² MASON was the ancestor of Mrs. Bullard. He was the first Deacon of the second Baptist Church in Swansea. Elder Thomas Barnes was ordained as their first pastor, in 1693, and the record finds, that "our beloved brother, Isaac Mason, was chosen and ordained Deacon."

This office he held during his lifetime; and the records of both, the church and the town show, that he died Jan. 25, 1742. He thus held the office of Deacon of this Church, for fifty years, and during the whole of the pastorates of his brother Joseph and Mr. Barnes. It appears that he had much to do with both the Spiritual and the secular affairs of the Church. June 17, 1731, he, with others, "was chosen a Committee to treat with the other Society concerning the ministerial lands in Swansea." His very numerous descendants are found in Mass., N. York, Ohio and other States. In Ohio, they are represented by the Hon. Sampson Mason of Springfield, formerly M. C. from that District.

- (12) 46. PELATIAH² MASON, m. Hepzibah Brooks May 22, 1694; b. 1673; d. Aug. 24, 1727; by whom he had his children, but m. a 2d, 3d, and 4th wife.
 47. *Job*,³ b. at Swansea Feb. 28, 1695; d. July 17, 1775.
 48. *Elihu*,³ b. Jan. 1, 1696; d. April 11, 1719.
 49. *Elisha*,³ b. Jan. 11, 1699; d. July 25, 1760.
 50. *Samuel*,³ b. Jan. 30, 1701; d. 1709.
 51. *Aaron*,³ b. Mar. 8, 1703; d. Dec. 24, 1731.
 52. *Anne*,³ b. June 9, 1705; d. May 26, 1776.
 53. *Elizabeth*,³ b. June 18, 1707; m. John Hail, Oct. 18, 1723; d. 1795.

54. *Hepsibah*,³ b. Dec. 10, 1709; d. Dec. 19, 1731.
 55. *Pelataiah*,³ b. Dec. 16, 1711.
 56. *Russell*,³ b. April 21, 1714; d. Jan. 11, 1799.
 57. *John*,³ b. Oct. 3, 1716.

PELATIAH,² was the head of the clerical branch of the family of Sampson Mason, and its history is well preserved by the public records of Swansea and a private record furnished me by Owen Mason, A. M., of Providence. It results satisfactorily from the records of the town of Woburn, that Hepsibah, the first wife of Pelataiah Mason, was the daughter of Timothy Brooks, by his w. Mary Russell, daughter of Elder John Russell Sen., and not of Rev. John Russell Jr. of Boston, as supposed by Mr. Benedict. Three of the sons of Pelataiah Mason, Job, Russell and John, were successively ministers of the 2d Baptist Church in Swansea, said by Backus and Benedict to be "eminent."

The Rev. Job Mason, was, no doubt, a man of mark with his contemporaries. He was ordained May 26, 1738. The following document given by him to his Church, and entered upon their records, is interesting, not only as indicating his own views, but the views of his Baptist brethren of that day, in relation to ministerial support.

"Having perused the declaration of my predecessors, in the work of the ministry, recorded in the town Book, and finding them grounded in the word of God, in respect to their support, I am willing to comply with the same, judging it to be most agreeable to the mind of God contained in the Scriptures; I declare myself to be fully satisfied with what may be freely and willingly bestowed on me for my labor in the work of the ministry, from them that participate of my labor in dispensing the word of God, and no others. Also denying any support, by way of a tax, as witness my hand this eleventh day of August, Anno Domini 1748."

"JOB MASON."

Upon his death, the inhabitants of the town caused the following entry to be made on their records.

"July 17, 1775. On Monday night last, died of an apoplexy and malignant fever, and on Wednesday were interred the remains of that truly venerable man, Elder Job Mason, in the 81st year of his age. He had faithfully labored in the gospel ministry 47 years, more than 37 of which he was an ordained Elder of the second Baptist Church in Swansea. It may, with truth, be said, that he magnified his office, in that he dispensed the gospel to others, he exhibited in his own life and conversation the most striking proof of its tendency to make men truly, wise, useful and good. The dear bereaved Church may justly sorrow because they shall see his face no more; for he was indeed, a pastor, guide and example to the flock, over which the Holy Ghost had made him an overseer. His family have lost in him all that is included in the idea of a father; and human society, one of the most amiable, benevolent and useful members. He retained until his last sickness, a most uncommon activity and vigor, in both the powers of his body and mind. It was thought, though for sometime before his death he was deprived of his speech, that he retained the exercise of his reason to the last. In broken accents, however, before his lips

were sealed, he said: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day." I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

Elder Nathan Mason, a son of Sampson and grandson of Deacon Isaac Mason, was a contemporary of the three clerical sons of Pelatiah Mason. He gathered a Church in Swansey, and emigrated with them to Sackville, New Brunswick, in 1763. After residing at that place about eight years, he returned to Mass., and settled in what is now Cheshire, Berkshire, Co. Upon the return of the celebrated Elder John Leland, from Virginia to that place, he and this Elder Mason, became colleagues in the ministry. Elder Leland was a native of Grafton, in the county of Worcester; and Mrs. Bullard, recollects that her father and mother used to be much gratified at the occasional visits of this distinguished colleague of their kinsman. Whether Elder Mason co-operated with Mr. Leland, in forwarding the mammoth cheese to Mr. Jefferson, history does not inform us; he enjoyed the utmost confidence and respect of Mr. Leland, who said of him, that "he was a man of peace and godliness; preaching seven days in the week, by his life and conversation."

The name of Elder Russell Mason, is suggestive, if not proof, of the relation between the Mason and Russell families. Among the descendants of Elder Russell Mason, is the Rev. Alanson P. Mason, the minister of the Baptist Church in Chelsea, who is quite competent to speak for his branch of the Mason family.

Elder John Mason, the last of the clerical sons of Pelatiah Mason, was the ancestor of the highly respectable branch of the family in Providence, R. I.

The record of the death of Pelatiah Mason, copied from the town Books of Swansey, is as follows:

"Pelatiah Mason of Swansey, deceased this life March y^e 29 1763, aged 94 years, and the last survivor of six bretheren: the youngest was 70 years of age when he deceased."

For access to this interesting record, I am indebted to the Hon. John Mason, a lineal descendant of this patriarch. He has been clerk of the town of Swansey for about 50 years.

The facts recited in this record, are important in the history of the whole family of Sampson Mason. They settle not only the longevity of the race, but show who the longest livers of his children were.

The youngest son, referred to in the record, was Benjamin; and as he was born in 1670, his death must have occurred in 1740. And as John died in 1683, and Noah in 1699 or 1700, and James, if living, was in Boston or vicinity, the six sons of Sampson Mason, referred to must have been Sampson, Samuel, Joseph, Isaac, Pelatiah and Benjamin. The private record furnished me by Mr. Owen Mason, states that "six brothers settled in Swansey and Rehoboth, and lived until the *youngest* was seventy years of age; when being taken sick, his elder brothers—the oldest being 93 years of age—all assembled at the same time, to take a final leave of him." The imagination could not depict a scene more truly patriarchal; and should the family ever produce a painter, his first duty would be to do justice to the subject.

- (13) 58. BENJAMIN² MASON, m. Ruth —, had :
 59. *Hannah*,³ b. at Swansey, May 11, 1698 ; m. Wm. Slade, Jr.,
 June 23, 1715.
 60. *Christopher*,³ b. July 6, 1702.
 61. *Charles*,³ b. Aug. 16, 1713.

In 1855 I was informed by Wm. Mason, Esq., of Fall River, then 78 years of age, and the nearest living descendant of Sampson Mason, that his grandfather, Christopher,³ m. a daughter of Gov. Jenks of R. I. They lived at Swansey, with eight other children, his father, Christopher,⁴ b. Oct. 12, 1737.

- (40) 62. HEZEKIAH³ MASON, m. Rebeckah Martin, July 23, 1730, had
 (67) 63. *Melatiah*,⁴ b. April 19, 1731 ; m. Rebeckah Miller, Nov. 14,
 1754 ; d. Dec. 17, 1831.
 64. *Hezekiah*,⁴ b. Aug. 11, 1732.
 65. *Jeremiah*,⁴ b. Aug. 11, 1732.
 66. *Phebe*,⁴ b. Dec. 17, 1736.

HEZEKIAH,³ the son of Deacon Isaac Mason, was the great grandfather of Mrs. Bullard. The following is a copy of the record of his marriage, taken from the records of Rehoboth. Hezekiah Mason and Rebeckah Martin were married 23 July, 1730, by Mr. Ephraim Wheaton, minister of Swansey." She was the daughter of Deacon Melatiah Martin, born Feby. 19, 1708-9. Her father was ordained deacon of the second Baptist Church in Swansey, Oct. 19, 1715, and died Jan. 30, 1761, aged 88. Hence it appears that Isaac Mason and Melatiah Martin were simultaneously deacons of the same church for many years. Deacon Martin had seven children, whose births are recorded in Rehoboth, but his death is recorded in Swansey.

- (63) 67. MELATIAH⁴ MASON, m. Rebeckah Miller, Nov. 14, 1754 ; d. Jan. 17, 1823, they had:
 (80) 68. *Anna*,⁵ b. at Rehoboth, Nov. 4, 1755 ; m. Deac. Jesse White at Uxbridge April 17, 1777 ; d. Aug. 20, 1839.
 69. *Noah*,⁵ b. at Dighton, Nov. 29, 1757 ; d. Feb. 27, 1841.
 70. *Rebeckah*,⁵ b. Feb. 5, 1760 ; d. Mar. 7, 1809.
 71. *Melatiah*,⁵ b. Oct. 16, 1761 ; d. June 30, 1790.
 72. *Abraham*,⁵ b. July 10, 1763 ; d. Sept. 30, 1852.
 73. *Lydia*,⁵ b. Aug. 1, 1765 ; d. Nov. 1, 1765.
 74. *Betsy*,⁵ b. Aug. 10, 1766 ; d. Jan. 15, 1812.
 75. *Mary*,⁵ b. Aug. 16, 1768 ; m. Enos Tucker ; d. July 20, 1851.
 76. *Isaac*,⁵ b. at Uxbridge, Nov. 15, 1772 ; d. Sept. 22, 1826.
 77. *Rhoda*,⁵ b. Dec. 11, 1774 ; m. — Cutler ; d. April 2, 1834.
 78. *Lydia*,⁵ b. Sept. 9, 1776 ; m. Otis Pratt ; d. Sept. 25, 1860.
 79. *Olive*,⁵ b. Feb. 20, 1780 at Killingly, Conn. ; set off to Thompson in 1785 ; m. — Wesson ; d. Jan. 1820.

MELATIAH⁴ MASON, was, by trade, a master mason. The record of his marriage, shows that at that time, he was a resident of Providence, where he was probably at work. In 1770, the year in which John Brown laid the corner stone of the University Hall, Melatiah Mason assisted in the work. After his removal to Uxbridge, he was employed, with a company of hands, to go to Hanover, and erect some of the buildings of Dartmouth College.

- (68) 80. ANNA⁵ MASON, m. Deac. Jesse White April 17, 1777 ; d. at Northbridge, Mar. 2, 1830; they had 11 children:
81. *Lucy*,⁶ b. May 5, 1778 ; m. Dr. Artemas Bullard at Northbridge, Dec. 6, 1798; removed to Sutton in 1805 ; d. there May 6, 1842. Since his death, Mrs. B. has resided with her sons Ebenezer W. and Oliver C., and her sons-in-law, Henry Ward Beecher and your correspondent.
82. *Noah*,⁶ b. Feb. 21, 1780 ; d. Sept. 23, 1830.
83. *Amos*,⁶ b. Sept. 19, 1781 ; d. Mar. 12, 1853.
84. *Jesse*,⁶ b. June 30, 1783.
85. *Alden*,⁶ b. Mar. 21, 1785 ; d. Aug. 16, 1830.
86. *Anna*,⁶ b. Jan. 11, 1787 ; d. Feb. 14, 1795.
87. *Joel*,⁶ b. Jan. 5, 1789 ; d. July 8, 1814.
88. *Eunice*,⁶ b. Mar. 4, 1791 ; m. James Fletcher, son of Col. James F. of Northbridge, Jan. 1, 1817.
89. *Sally*,⁶ b. May 6, 1793 ; d. May 17, 1793.
90. *Mason*,⁶ b. May 4, 1794 ; d. April 15, 1839.
91. *Washington*,⁶ b. May 19, 1796; representative of Northbridge in the G. C. of 1855.

Perhaps I cannot better close this communication than by handing you for republication, a notice of the celebration of the hundredth birthday of Melatiah Mason, the venerable grandfather of Mrs. Bullard. It was first published in the *National Aegis*, at Worcester, May 5, 1830. An amusing error, however, occurred, in celebrating it one year too early. The mistake, no doubt, happened by a reference to the record of his marriage in the family Bible, Nov. 14, 1754.

This record recites that he was then 24, and his wife 19 years of age. The Bible contained no other record of the time of his birth, and it appears to have been assumed that he was 24 the April before his marriage ; but, in fact, he was not, till the April after. Of course he did not become a hundred years old till April 30, 1831; while the event was celebrated April 30, 1830. At first it was thought that there might be a mistake of a year in my copy of the records of Swansea. But upon reference to the original, it is found very plain and full, in the words and figures following:

"Melatiah Mason, the son of Hezekiah Mason and Rebeckah his wife, was born April 19, on the second day of the week, 1731."

By correcting the style, which should always be done in the case of records previous to the year 1752, we have, as the true date of his birth, new style, April 30, 1731 ; and his hundredth birth day, therefore, occurred April 30, 1831, a year after it was celebrated. However he lived till Dec. 27, 1831, and thus became fully entitled to the distinction of being a centenarian.

WILL OF SAMPSON MASON.

The 22nd day of October in the year of our Lord according to the English account one thousand six hundred seaventy and two, Know all men by these presents that I Sampson Mason of Rehoboth in the Collonie of New Plymouth in New England Cordwinder being sicke in body, but through the Grace of my God of Good and p'fect memory Doe make and declare my last will and Testament, in manor and form following ; That is to say first I give and bequeath my whole estate as well Beall as p'sonall; to Mary my beloved wife; to have and to hold the same and every pte

therof To the use of her the said Mary during her widdowhood ; only excepting such Gifts and Legacies ; as are heerin and heerafter bequeathed ; Item I give and bequeath unto my eldest son Noah ; either my house which is shortly to be built in Swansey ; or that house wherin I doe now dwell ; that is to say that house which his mother my said wife shall order him to take ; and an equall proportion with his other bretherin in all my lands within the severall Townships of Rehoboth and Swansey ; and on the north syde of the Town Reho[bo]th, when hee shall attaine to one and twenty yeers of age ; to the use of him and his heeres and assignes for ever.

Item I bequeath unto my second son Sampson fifty acres of land which is shortly to be layed out as my Lott on the north syde of the Town of Rehoboth ; To have and to hold the said fifty acres ; from the time that hee shall attaine to one and twenty yeers of age ; To him and his heeres and assignes for ever ; Item I give and bequeath unto my son Samuel that house which my said wife shall choose for her owne particular use ; with five and twenty acres of Land where my said wif- and the overseers of this my will heerafter named shall see convenient ; To have and to hold the said house and land from and after my said wifes decease. To him and his heeres and assignes for ever ; Item I give and bequeath unto my other six sonnes an equall right, to and proportion of, all my lands not already bequeathed within the severall Townships of Rehoboth and Swansey ; and on the north syde of the Towne of Rehoboth ; whether the same or any p'te thereof be divided or undivided ; as it is or shall be layed out to the use of mee mine heeres or assignes att any time heerafter ; to have and to hold To them my said six sonnes, and every of them respectively, when they shall attaine to one and twenty yeers of age ; and after the second marriage of my said wife or her decease ; to their severall and Respective uses of them and to the severall and respective uses of their heeres and assignes for ever, provided nevertheless that whensoever every of my last mentioned six sons shall possesse and enjoy an equall proportionall of lands with my said sonnes Noah and Samuel ; that the remaining lands shall be att my wifes dispose and of my said overseers heerafter mentioned, Item I do heerby declare that it is my last will and Testament, that every of my four daughters, shall have such a portion of my estate both Reall and p'sonall as my said wife and the said overseers shall see meet and to be payed to every of them according to the order of my said Wife and overseers ; Item I doe heerby nominate my said dear wife Mary to be executrix of this my last will and Testament ; and my beloved Frinds Mr. John Myles, Mr. James Brown and my brother John Butterworth to be overseers therof ; desiring that they Doe see the same accomplished and p'formed according to the true intent and meaning therof ; In witness wherof I have heerunto putt my hand and Seale the day and yeer first above written.

Signed & Sealed in the presence of

JONATHAN FULLER,
JONATHAN WILLMOTH,

SAMPSON MASON, & a (seale),

Jonathan Fuller & Jonathan Willmoth took their oath to the truth of this will and Testament the 17th of November 1676 before mee.

JAMES BROWN, Assistant,

Plymouth ss. May 3d, 1862. The foregoing is a true copy from the Plymouth Colony Records Book of wills, vol. 2d, Part 2d, Page 49.

Attest, Wm. S. RUSSELL,

Keeper of said Records.

Extract from the printed Records of Plymouth Colony, vol. 5, pp. 213 and 221.

1676, Nov. 1, Mr. Brown is appointed by the Court to give oath unto the witnesses of the will of Sampson Mason, and to administer an oath unto Mary Mason for the truth of the Inventory.

In reference to the will of Sampson Mason, tendered unto the court ; whereas it doth appear that some p'sells of land have been purchased since his will was made, that are not yet paid for ; this Court hath ordered that his widow, Mary Mason shall have liberty from the Court to make sale of some p'te of the said land to make payment

for the rest, and that what remains be improved for the bringing up of his children.

And Mr. Browne, Mr. Daniel Smith and her Brother Butterworth are deputed by the Court to be helpfull to her in the disposing of the said Estate.

THE MAN OF A HUNDRED YEARS.

"I scarce remember, in my observation, to have met with many old men, or with such who, (to use our own English phrase), *wear well*, that had not at least a certain indolence in their humor, if not a more than ordinary gaiety and cheerfulness of heart."

This remark of the Spectator was forcibly suggested to me, on attending the celebration of the hundredth birth day of MELATIAH MASON at Thompson, Conn., on the 30th ult. I never before had seen a person a hundred years old. This singular novelty, created an interest, not less singular, much heightened, no doubt, by the circumstance that this old man and my little boy who was with me, constituted the extremes of five generations. The occasion called together quite a concourse of the old gentleman's posterity, friends, neighbors and townsmen; and appropriate religious services were had at the Baptist Church in Thompson. Elder Grow preached from 2 Timothy 3, 6, 7 and 8: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand," &c. The preacher stated that the old gentleman had, for three score years and ten, been a professor of religion; that the number of his surviving children was six; grand-children, fifty-three; great-grand-children, about one hundred and fifty; besides quite a number of great-great-grand-children. Several branches of the old gentleman's family are settled in this commonwealth. Amongst others, is the large family of White in North-bridge, and the family of Dr. Bullard of Sutton.

After the religious exercises of the occasion were over, I endeavored to ascertain by what means, under God, in whom he had so early put his trust, this man of a hundred years had managed to live so long in the world. He informed me that he was born at Rehoboth; that he was brought up to the trade of a mason, and continued to work at it more or less till he was eighty years old. That when young, he married a "worthy woman" by the name of Rebeckah Miller, by whom he had twelve children, and whom he buried but a few years ago. He said he always worked hard; had frequently walked ten miles in the morning, and then done his day's work. Upon being questioned as to his mode of living, he modestly said he always aimed to be temperate. That when he used to work hard, he drank

little spirit, but never used tobacco habitually in any way; once in a while smoked a little *for amusement, but never a pipe full at a time*. He is a person small in stature, thick set, and has to this day a good head of hair, and a fine bright eye. The most striking characteristic of his mind, was that of equanimity and cheerfulness. And herein, undoubtedly, consists the main secret by which the subtle machinery of life has been so long kept in motion. So predominant were the kindly feelings of his nature, that through all the wars in which his country had been involved during his long life, he never, on but one

occasion, to use his own words, "took his gun in hand for the purpose of hurting anybody," and that was upon the alarm that the Regulars were making a descent upon Lexington and Concord. That was too much for the old gentleman's pacific nature. He resolutely took his gun, and nothing but his distance from the scene of action prevented him from shedding man's blood. During the Revolutionary war, he prayed ardently for the success of the good cause, but he could not overcome the conscientious scruples of his heart in regard to bearing arms as a profession, and did not therefore enter the service.

At the close of the religious services of the occasion, a contribution was taken up of about forty dollars, as well for the purpose of ministering to the few remaining wants of the patriarch, as to testify the filial regard of his posterity, and the respect of his neighbors and townsmen. It would be altogether superfluous to speak of the moral character of one who could draw forth such an unequivocal expression of esteem, from those who were best acquainted with him, and it is an affecting exemplification of the benign policy of Heaven towards men, that he who had spent a long life in acts of kindness and charity to others, should, after the tardy lapse of a century of years, find an ample reward in being himself placed in a community and amongst friends, by whom virtue is appreciated and age respected.

Oxford, May 3, 1830. B.

SKETCH OF THE WEAVER FAMILY, OF SWANZEY, MASS.

[Communicated by Gen. EBENEZER WEAVER PEIRCE, of Freetown, Mass.]

1. BENJAMIN¹ WEAVER, of Swanzev, had children : (2) Capt. *Benjamin*,² m. Nov. 4, 1753, Joanna Barnaby, of Freetown, and was drowned in 1756 or 1757 ; (3) *Samuel*,² m. Jan. 9, 1761, Wait Reed, of Freetown ; (4) *Parker*;² (5) *Ann*,² m. Nov. 29, 1745, David Evans, jr., of Freetown ; (6) *Ruth*,² m. Mr. Potter ; (7) *Eunice*,² m. Lieut. Jonathan Reed, of Freetown ; (8) *Elizabeth*,² m. Mr. Look.

2. CAPT. BENJAMIN² WEAVER jr. was a master mariner, and commanded a vessel trading between New England and the West Indies. By his wife Joanna, he had one child ; (9) Col. *Benjamin*,³ b. June 25, 1755, m. Amy, dau. of Joseph Brownell, Esq., of Portsmouth, R. I. and d. April 23, 1838. His wife Amy d. May 20, 1804.

8. Col. BENJAMIN³ WEAVER was an officer of the Revolution, treasurer of the town of Freetown 29 years, assessor 5 years, and selectman 1 year. By wife Amy, he had ch. : (10) *Gardner*,⁴ b. Oct. 24, 1784 ; m. Betsey Douglass, of Freetown ; was coroner for Bristol county, and d. Jan. 14, 1810 ; (11) *Joanna*,⁴ b. May 8, 1786 ; m. April 24, 1803, Ebenezer Peirce, Esq., of Freetown, and d. Jan. 6, 1859 ; (12) Major *Joseph*,⁴ b. Sept. 17, 1787, commissioned as captain June 24, 1811, as major April, 1812, and d. Dec. 26, 1814 ; (13) *Amy*,⁴ b. Oct. 7, 1793, d. Oct. 30, 1808.