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William Tuttell

(1609 -)

No *Mayflower* here; our ship is the *Planter* (Nicholas Travece, master), waiting in Gravesend harbor in the year 1635. If we combine the passenger lists of 2 and 6 April, the people it proposes to take to the New World are:

John Tuttel, a mercer, age 39
 Joan Tuttell, age 42
 John Lawrence, age 17
 William Lawrence, age 12
 Maria Lawrence, age 9
 Abigail Tuttell, age 6
 Symon Tuttell, age 4
 Sara Tuttell, age 2
 John Tuttell, age 1
 Nathan Haford, servant to John Tuttell, age 16
 George Giddings, husbandman, age 25
 Jane Giddings, 20
 Thomas Carter, 25, Michael Williamson, 30, servants to Geo Giddings
Richard Tuttell, husbandman, age 42
 Ann Tuttell, age 41
 Anna Tuttell, age 12
 John Tuttell, age 10
 Rebecca Tuttell, age 6
 Isabella Tuttell (supposed mother of Richard), age 70
William Tuttell, husbandman, age 26
 Elizabeth Tuttell, age 23
 John Tuttle, age 8½
 Anna Tuttle, age 2½
 Thomas Tuttle, age 8 months
 Maria Bill, age 11

But why? Why have these three clusters of Tuttles (or Tuthills; the name meant “lookout hill” in the old language) all signed up to leave home? Probably because, in 1635, home was looking dangerous. Religious animosity ran high, political certainties had become uncertain, and civil war might well be pending. To some, the merely possible dangers seemed preferable to the probable ones.

The ship arrived at Boston after the usual ten weeks’ crossing. The year is still 1635. The three groups of Tutttles took root in different places: John in Ipswich, Richard in Boston, and William eventually in New Haven, where his three children were augmented to twelve. Their descendants would weather a storm worse than the ones from which their parents had fled: the Revolutionary War, which separated the colonies from England.

War has always been the creator of citizenship, and thus did the early Tutttles take their places as citizens of the New World.

There is also money, and from the first they were engaged in business deals. In one, William and John were associated as creditors. Another involved the purchase of land in Massachusetts owned by a future governor of Connecticut. A third proposed to outfit a ship based in Ipswich, to sail to the Indies.

On our way to the ancestor in whom we are chiefly interested, the line of descent runs as follows, beginning with birthdates and places:

1. William, born 26 Dec 1607 in Ringstead, Northampton, England. He was one of the original proprietors of New Haven.

New Haven was founded by a small exploratory party in 1637; they were joined the following year by several hundred Puritans led by the Reverend John Davenport, seeking to create a more consistently Puritan environment for themselves. Also associated with them was the London merchant Theophilus Eaton, who had his eye on the promising harbor. Land was purchased from the Quinnipiac Indians, and by 1640 a town had been laid out on single-religion principles, and physically, on a 3×3 grid plan of eight intersecting streets (from W to E, the present York, College [not named for Yale, which did not appear at this location until 1701], Church, and State; from N to S, the present Grove, Elm, Chapel, and George), with a town square in the center, originally without buildings save for the meeting house:



The area just north of New Haven proper was called Quinnipiac until 1678, when it was renamed Hamden. This New Haven Colony was separate from the Connecticut Colony (at Hartford to the north, further up the Connecticut River). Hartford, like Boston, was religiously open; New Haven was solely and exclusively Puritan.

The troubles with New Haven were two: (1) it had no royal charter, and was thus a wildcat enterprise; and (2) merchants were involved from the start, but it had an inadequate resource base: some agricultural land, plus the Connecticut River to the north, leading to the fur-trapping centers Hartford and Springfield. A first shipment of grain and beaver hides to England (its cargo valued at approximately £5,000) was lost at sea, a setback from which the new enterprise never quite recovered.

There was also (3) the New Haven theocracy. Only members of the church could vote, and only Puritan churches were permitted. The first of the Colony's liabilities was the fatal one: the official Connecticut Colony and the unofficial New Haven Colony were merged by Royal requirement in 1664.

That merger ended the Puritan monopoly in New Haven. One response to that was an exodus: some left in 1666 under the leadership of Robert Treat, to found Newark ("New Ark," or New Temple) New Jersey, in lands earlier acquired by the ambitious New Haven Colony. The Puritans are fine people; they just don't care much for the society of other Christians.

We may now resume our count of the generations after William.

2. Jonathan, born 8 July 1637 in Charlestown, Massachusetts; the fourth of twelve children of William, and the first to be born in the New World.

3. Nathaniel, born 25 Feb 1675 in New Haven; the sixth and last child of Jonathan.

4. Nathaniel, born 29 May 1714 in New Haven; the fourth of seven children of the above Nathaniel. He died on 10 July 1786 in Hamden, Connecticut.

5. Jotham, born May 1752; the seventh of eight children of Second Nathaniel. He served in the Revolution and survived it, dying on 11 May 1817; he is buried in Wallingford, Connecticut.

6. Eli, born 28 Dec 1781 in Hamden just after the Revolution; the first of five children of Jotham. He died on 21 April 1844.

7. Leonard, born 30 September 1810 in Hamden; the second of eight children of Eli. He relocated to the Ohio country, and on 12 Jan 1836 married Hannah Brown of North Hampton, New Hampshire. The 1850 census lists Leonard in Harrisville, in the township of Lodi, Medina County, Ohio. As of 1870, he and his wife were still living there. He died in 1875.

8. Jonathan Brown, born 15 August 1841, in Medina County, Ohio, the second child and only son of Leonard. As we shall presently see, he went north for a career in Alpena and Detroit, Michigan, and ended his days in California.

We have now reached Jonathan Brown Tuttle. But before preceding to the Great War, we may pause to notice some personalities a little off the main line, who had their own starring roles in conflicts of one kind or another.