



Portrait of a woman in 16th-century attire, wearing a dark hood and a large, ornate lace collar over a dark bodice and puffed sleeves.



## GENEALOGY OF THE RAWSON FAMILY.

---

1. EDWARD RAWSON<sup>1</sup>, so far as has been ascertained, was the progenitor of all bearing the name of Rawson in the United States, with these two exceptions: The first, James Rawson, A. M., M.D., a Methodist Episcopal clergyman, who came to this country from England in 1832, and is supposed to have d. in Va., Aug. 26, 1854. His ancestors fled from France to England in consequence of the revocation of the "Edict of Nantes," Oct. 18, 1685, by Louis XIV.

The second came to the United States about 1840, and settled at Utica, N. Y. His grand parents still reside in England, and have no knowledge of being immediately connected with our honored Secretary, who was born in Gillingham, Dorsetshire, England, April 16, 1615. He was married in England to Rachel Perne, daughter of Thomas Perne, and grand-daughter of that John Hooker, whose wife was a Grindal, sister of Edmund Grindal, "the most worthily renowned Archbishop of Canterbury" \* in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

The family relation which existed between that excellent man, Edmund Grindal, and the earliest ancestor of the Rawsons, in England, of whom much is known, may render a few words respecting him not uninteresting. His high place in the Church affords the best evidence of his eminence as a divine. He was the successor of Bonner in the bishopric of London. Not willing to proceed to extremities against the Puritans, he involved himself in dissensions with Parker, the then Primate of England. His friend and patron Cecil, foreseeing that trouble might ensue, gladly seized the occasion of withdrawing him from the controversy, by transferring him to the bishopric of York, in 1570. "For his own repose," it is said, "Grindal ought never to have quitted this sphere of unmolested usefulness." But Parker died, and in 1575 the primacy was offered to Grindal, and he accepted it. The prejudices of Queen Elizabeth against the Puritans and

\* See Appendix.

their meetings, called "Prophesyings," held at that time by the clergy, are well known. She issued orders for their suppression, and expressed to Grindal her displeasure at the number of preachers licensed in his Province; "urging that it was good for the world to have few preachers; that three or four might suffice for a county, and that the reading of the homilies to the people was enough." Against this the venerable prelate remonstrated in decided terms, and, in conclusion, exhorted her to remember that she was a mortal creature, and accountable to God for the exercise of her power. An order of the star-chamber followed, and the Archbishop was sequestered from the exercise of his jurisdiction, and confined to his house for six months. On points of professional duty, he was courageous and inflexible. He contributed largely to Fox's "Acts and Monuments," and was revered for the primitive virtues of probity, sincerity and godly zeal. It was these characteristics which caused him to be celebrated in Spenser's "Shepherd's Calendar," in which he is designated by the name of Algrind. Four or five years after his suspension, the Queen's anger abated, in a measure, and she removed the sequestration, but did not restore him to favor. Old and blind, he was on the point of resigning when he died, in 1583, aged 63. Hollingshed says, "He was so studious that his book was his bride, and his study his bride-chamber, in which he spent his eyesight, his strength and his health."

John Hooker, grandfather of Rachel Perne, or, as her Christian name was written in her day, *Ratiel*, was uncle to the celebrated and able divine, Rev. Thomas Hooker, who came to Boston in 1633, was for a time settled in Cambridge, and removed thence to Hartford in Connecticut, where he was settled in the ministry.

Rev. John Wilson, first minister in Boston, was uncle to Edward Rawson. Cotton Mather, in his biography of Wilson, speaks of him as "having for his mother a niece of Doct. Edmund Grindal, the most worthy and renowned Archbishop of Canterbury," and he refers to Rawson in connection with Wilson, in the same work, as follows: "But from a like humility it was, that a good kinsman of his, who deserveth to live in the same story, as he now lives in the same heaven with him, namely, Mr. Edward Rawson, the honored Secretary of the Massachusetts Colony," &c.

As some have entertained a doubt in regard to this relationship, it may here be stated that Mr. John Ward Dean, of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, has kindly furnished the copy of a communication from Col. Joseph L. Chester of London, England, in which he says, "If the relationship between Edward Rawson, the Secretary of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, and the Rev. John Wilson, the first preacher of Boston, be still only conjectural, it may interest their descendants to know that I am able to prove the fact. Edmund Rawson's mother was Margaret, the sister of Rev. John Wilson." We also print, in the Appendix, a copy of the Rev. John Wilson's Will, in which

he calls him a relative, and makes him one of the overseers of that instrument.

The most remote ancestor of Edward Rawson who has been traced, and for whom he was named, was Sir Edward Rawson, who lived in the reign of one of the Henrys. He is said to have been a man of military skill and experience. ✓✓

Edward Rawson came to New England in the year 1636 or 1637, and became an inhabitant of the town of Newbury, in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay. There, many other English people settled, who were from Hants and Wilts (counties adjoining Dorset), and perhaps knew by reputation, if not personally, our progenitor or his father's family in Old England, their residence being located near the bounds of those two counties, in Gillingham, county of Dorset. This may account for the confidence reposed in him so soon after his arrival. He was a grantee of that town; the second Town Clerk (Public Notary and Register for the town of Newbury), chosen April 19, 1638 (and was annually re-elected until 1647). To this office was added, the same year, that of a Selectman, and also that of Commissioner and Attorney for the trial of small causes in Newbury. He was besides member of each of the various committees to lay out the commons, and also one of the Deputies to represent the town at the May and September sessions of the General Court. Thus speedily, in a few months, was Edward Rawson elevated to civil office. Undoubtedly he must have possessed more than ordinary talent for business, as well as a large share of public spirit, to be so soon honored by his fellow-townsmen, and to have taken his seat, at the age of three-and-twenty, among the legislators of the Colony. His various public acts and employments while he resided there are more fully narrated in Coffin's History of Newbury. A few items taken from the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, published in 1849, may be of interest to those who have not already seen them, and which, no doubt, are perfectly authentic.

In 1639, he again represented the town of Newbury in the General Court, at its three sessions, and at the May session the Colony records inform us that he "is granted 500 acres at Pecoit, so as he go on with the business of powder if the salt Peter come." In 1642, he again appears as a Deputy in the General Court; also in May, 1644, and at the October session, "In answer to a petition <sup>preferred</sup> by Mr. Rawson, for land in reference to his journey to the eastward, this Court grants him 200 acres upon Cochituate River, above Dover bounds, not granted to any others, <sup>provided</sup> that Capt. Pendleton be joyned wth Peter Coffin in laying out the same." In 1645, he was returned to the General Court, which had a very long session, extending from May 14th until Saturday, July 5th. During the last week of this session, the deputies passed the following vote, "Edward Rawson is chosen & appointed *Clark* to the house of Deput<sup>es</sup> for one whole yeere, to Enter all votes passed in both houses, & those also y<sup>t</sup> passe only by them into the book of Records." In 1646, he retained his seat as Deputy and his office as Clerk of the House, and at the November session it was ordered by the Deputies, "y<sup>t</sup> Edward Rawson shall have twenty markes allowed him for his paines, out of y<sup>e</sup> next levy, as Secr<sup>t</sup> to y<sup>e</sup> House of Deput<sup>es</sup>

*for two yeeres past.*" This vote of the Deputies was passed by "both houses," and the Court, subsequently to its passage, entered the following declaration in their Records": "Mr. Edward Rawson having been employed to signe and transcribe all bills that passe in a book, yet being sensible of the great expenses and charge which this Court is at; and difficulty to raise small matters; not doubting of his being sensible with us, therefore; to meet, in that respect, what was allowed him by us for one year's service, viz.: twenty marks, shall be all that shall be allowed him, and paid him out of the next levy for his services done; and he shall do to the end of this Court; conceiving it to be but just in some measure to recompense labours of this kind; which we would not be backward in."

In 1647 and 1648 he continued to represent Newbury in the General Court. In the latter year, he received two grants of land. The first at the May session, of 1,500 acres, jointly with Rev. John Wilson of Boston, "next adjoining to the 3,000 acres granted to Mr. John Winthrop at Paquatuck, near the Narraganset country; but in case Mr. John Winthrop perform not the condition with respect to the time limited, that then the 1,500 acres of the said Mr. Wilson and Mr. Edward Rawson shall be of the said 3,000 acres granted to the said Mr. Winthrop." The second grant is the subject of the following vote of the Court, passed at the October session:

"In answer to the petition of Mr. Edward Rawson, for satisfaction in regard of charges he hath been at & damages which he hath sustayned about pvisions to make gunpowder: It is ord<sup>red</sup> that in Regard of his great forwardnes & Readines to advance so hopeful a designe as the makinge of saltpeter within this Jurisdiction, who for that end & purpose hath disbursed certayne moneyes, to his great Loss & Damage, p<sup>resented</sup> to us at Large in his petition, Delivered into the present Court, have therefore, in consideration of the p<sup>remises</sup> & answer to his s<sup>d</sup> petition, given and graunted unto him & his heires for ever, 500 acres of land, at Pequot, to be Layd out by the appoyntment of this Court, as also five pounds, to be payed him out of the treasury." Edward Rawson was also one of two persons (Mr. Joseph Hills of Malden being the other), who were that same year desired by the Court "to compose the amendments of the book of laws passed and make them as one; one copy to remain in the hands of the committee for the speedy committing them to the press, and the other to remain in the hands of the Secretary, sealed up, till the next Court." In 1649, he represented Newbury, and was re-elected Clerk of the House of Deputies; and at the next annual election, on the 22d of May, 1650, Edward Rawson was raised to the office which Increase Nowell had filled without interruption since the year 1636; and he opened the first page of his new volume of Colonial Records with the following: "At a General Court Eleccons, held at Boston 22<sup>th</sup> of May, 1650, Edward Rawson, gent., was chosen Secretary."

Johnson, in his "Wonder Working Providence," published in London, 1654, uses this language respecting him: "Mr. Edward Rawson, a young man, yet employed in Commonwealth affairs a long time, being well beloved by the inhabitants of Newbury, having had a large hand in her foundation, but of late, he being of a ripe capacity, a good yeoman (penman) and eloquent inditer, hath been chosen Secretary of the Colony."

In 1649, by the records of Newbury, "at a meeting generall of the freemen, March 6th," Edward Rawson was appointed, with others, "to bee a committee about Plum Island." From 1650 he was annually re-elected secretary until the usurpation of the government by Sir Edmund Andross, 1686, when Randolph succeeded him. Elliot remarks of him, that "he was of respectable character, as we may judge from his having this office so long, while there was an annual election."

In 1849, Mr. Joshua Pilsbury lived on the farm which was owned and occupied by Edward Rawson, in Newbury, and which was purchased of the latter by William Pilsbury, the ancestor of the former. It is said he also owned and cultivated another farm in Newbury, near what is called Turkey Hill, so named from its having been the favorite resort of wild turkeys in the early settlement of the town. The meadow, near the hill, still bears the name of "Rawson Meadow." After his removal to Boston, his residence was on "Rawson's Lane," and here he is supposed to have died. This lane bore his name until near 1800, when it was changed to Bromfield Street. Here he owned some acres of land, which bordered on the Common or Training-field, out of which he sold a number of house lots.

He and his wife were members of what was called the First Church, over which the Rev. John Wilson was pastor. After the death of Mr. Wilson, a new pastor was to be chosen, and the Synod of 1662 was divided on the question, "Who are subjects of Baptism?" and this division called forth still another in the First Church, out of which grew the Old South Society of Boston; so popularly known. The record says he was one of twenty-eight disaffected persons of the First Church of Boston, who dissolved connection with that society and formed the 3d or Old South Church, in May, 1669. Thomas Thatcher, their first pastor, was installed February 16th, 1670.

The corporation in England for the propagation of the gospel among the Indians in New England chose Edward Rawson steward or agent "for the receiving and disposing of such goods and commodities" as should be sent to the "United Colonies," and the Commissioners of the Colonies confirmed the choice at a meeting held at New Haven in September, 1651, and appointed him to that trust. It seems that a charge of negligence in the performance of his duties in that capacity, was preferred against him. "The praying Indians complained to Rateliff and Randolph that they could not get the clothes which were allowed them." The charge is believed to have been groundless, as Andross, who removed him from office, and Randolph who succeeded him, had sufficient motives to induce them to excite prejudice against him among the Indians. Soon after this, Andross was seized by the Colonists, and sent to England in irons.

The warrant which was sent to Boston by King Charles II. for the apprehension of the Regicides, Goff, Whalley and Dixwell, was countersigned by Secretary Rawson. His correspondence

with Gov. Leete, of Connecticut, shows that zealous efforts were made to apprehend them, but, as is well known, they were unsuccessful. He is believed to be the author of a book published in 1691, entitled, "The Revolution in New England Justified;" also another, entitled, "The General Laws and Liberties concerning the Inhabitants of the Ms. &c., fol., 1660." Although no extracts from either of these books are at hand, yet, in the Appendix may be found some matters of interest in the way of letters, orders, &c., which originated with him.

It is to be regretted that one, whose character was otherwise so irreproachable as that of the Secretary, should have been led to participate in the persecution of the Quakers. But there is too much proof on record to leave room for doubt, that he was influenced by the fanaticism of the day. This is the only blemish upon his fair fame, and we may hope that his conduct during this excitement—chargeable, perhaps, in a great measure, to his peculiar position—may be counterbalanced by the virtuous deeds of an apparently otherwise irreproachable life.

His salary as Secretary was only £20 per annum at first, but was subsequently increased to £60. To the office of Secretary was soon added, by the General Court, that of Recorder of the County of Suffolk, which he held many years. Several grants of land—one May 6, 1657, of 200 acres, in addition to those previously mentioned—and other allowances were made to him at different times for "extraordinary services." His family Bible, now in possession of R. R. Dodge, of East Sutton, Mass., contains the following certificate, in the hand-writing of his son William: "This may certify whome it may concerne, that Edward Rawson (Secretary) was borne in old England in the yeare of our Lord 1615, April 16th, and departed this life Aug. 27th day, in the year of our Lord 1693, in New England, aged 78 years." This Bible is doubtless more than 200 years old, and is now in the hands of the 6th generation, having descended from Edward to William, his son; from William to his son David; from David to his son David, Jr.; from David, Jr. to his daughter Anna; from Anna to her son, John Rawson Young; and from the latter it has been obtained by Mr. Dodge.

Edmund, Hooker, Grindal, Perne, Wilson and Edward have been much adopted and continue to be prevalent Christian names in the Rawson family.

The oldest child of Edward Rawson, a daughter, was left by him in England, where she was born. To whom she was married is unknown, but he is said to have been an "opulent gentleman." One of his daughters born in this country married the Rev. Samuel Torrey of Weymouth, and another, Thomas Broughton of Boston. His sons, Edward, David and John, went to England and settled. Edward graduated at Harvard College, A. D. 1653. Dr. Calamy, in his history of ejected ministers, says that Edward Rawson was presented to a living in Horsmanden, in Kent, in 1655, and adds that "he was a New England man, a violent

Presbyterian." The business or professions of David and John, in England, are unknown. The families of Mrs. Torrey and of Mrs. Broughton, if any, have not been traced. But two of the five sons of the Secretary settled in this country, William and Grindal, and through these only our record is continued. Edward Rawson and Rachael (Perne) his wife had the following children:

1. A daughter, left in England.
2. EDWARD, grad. H. C. 1653; Entered the ministry and was settled in Horsmanden, county of Kent, England, in 1655.
3. RACHAEL, b. ; m. William Aubrey, a merchant of Boston, Jan. 18, 1653.
4. DAVID, b. May 6, 1644, went to England.
5. MARY PERNE, b. May 14 or 16, 1646; m. Rev. Samuel Torrey, May 15, 1657. She d. Sept. 10, 1692. He d. April 21, 1707.
6. SUSAN, d. in Roxbury, 1654.
- 2.—7. WILLIAM [4], b. May 21, 1651; m. Anne Glover, July 31, 1673.
8. REBECCA, b. Oct. 19, 1654; d. young.
9. REBECCA [25], b. May 23, 1656; m. Thomas Rumsey, July 1, 1679; d. at Port Royal, 1692.
10. ELIZABETH, b. Nov. 12, 1657; m. Thomas Broughton of Boston.
11. JOHN. Went to England and did not return.
- 3.—12. GRINDAL [26], b. Jan. 23, 1659; m. Susanna Wilson; d. Feb. 6, 1715.