

JOHN EASTLACK.

AMONG the Friends who settled in the island of Bermuda, some of whom were banished by the British authorities, while others followed to be near their families, was one Francis Eastlack, or Eastlake, as sometimes spelled, who appears to have been a prominent man in that place. He was persecuted in like manner by the rulers of the island for the course which he pursued in religious matters, and was frequently imprisoned and sometimes beaten and put in the stocks. In 1660, he was taken from a religious meeting and tied, hand and foot, so that he could not move; in 1666, he was beaten and fined, and, in other ways, maltreated in person, and despoiled of his goods. He was a public Friend, and proclaimed his views and doctrines among the people. This made him obnoxious to those in power, and the object of dislike to such as differed with him in opinion. During his stay at that island he fell into a religious controversy with one Sampson Bond, a leading man in some other persuasion. This ended in the printing of a book on each side, some few copies of which have been preserved by the curiosity-hunters in the literary line, and may be found hidden away in the libraries of such, being shown as typographical wonders though but seldom read. These books made their appearance in the year 1683, and, like all such, were only of interest to those who knew the parties and resided in that particular locality.

The early Quakers were prolific in the production of pamphlets and books in defence of their doctrines and mode of worship; these led to replies from their opponents, and, conse-

quently, added much to the printed matter of those times, and now give a very fair reflex of the controverted points, as well as of the manner of maintaining and rebutting them. The book of which Francis Eastlack was the author bears the title of "The truth in Christ Jesus with the Professors thereof in the Island of Bermuda, (Commonly called Quakers,) cleared from the three ungodly false charges. Charged upon them by Sampson Bond (teacher in said Island); in a Book entitled 'The Quakers in Bermudas tryed,' &c., by a Friend and Lover of the Truth in the same Island, called Francis Eastlacke."

This was printed in London in 1683 and no doubt had considerable circulation in the island, as well as among Friends in London and thereabout. Much pains has been taken of late years to collect and preserve all such publications; which has brought to light many that had been lost sight of and, in the lapse of years, entirely forgotten. About the date last named, Francis Eastlack came to West Jersey and settled in Newton township; but the exact locality of his habitation cannot be discovered, as he does not appear to have been the owner of any real estate. He was probably advanced in years, and did not participate much in the religious or political matters of the colony. Those of his own religious persuasion doubtless sympathized with him in the trials and persecutions through which he had passed, to show the world his attachments to the doctrines which he had espoused. So far as can be discovered, he had four children, namely: John, who married Sarah Thackara, daughter of Thomas; Hepsibah, who married Thomas Thackara; Jemima, who married William Sharp; and Elizabeth, who married Joseph Mickle. Taking this as the starting point, and assuming it to be correct, the surname was confined to one person even in the second generation, and the family, as a whole, limited to but few persons.

The first settlement of John Eastlack was, in all probability, upon fifty acres of land conveyed to him by his brother-in-law, Benjamin Thackara, in 1706, who thus carried out the intentions of the father of his wife, not consummated during his life.¹ This adjoined another tract given to the daughter Han-

¹ Lib. A, 107.

nah, the wife of John Whitall, who, with her husband, had also thereon erected a dwelling. The exact locality of this fifty acres would be difficult to trace at this time, but it lies in the estate late of John C. DaCosta, deceased, near the head of the Fork creek, in old Newton township. The building was doubtless a substantial log cabin, and, with the exception of a few cleared acres for farming purposes, surrounded by the primitive forest. The creek, at that time open to the flow of the tide, provided a means of travel, and a source whence food also could be procured; thus removing all anxiety from the minds of these adventurers in regard to a full supply for the inner man.

Among the many inducements held out by these pioneers to their friends still in the old country, none were made more prominent than the abundant supply of food always at hand in the rivers and forest; and the fact that the danger of starvation could not by any possibility surround them. From Gabriel Thomas to the last correspondent on record, this assurance is faithfully held out and was always found good by such as chose to test it.

Thomas Sharp shows on his map of the lands in Newton township, made in 1700, one hundred acres owned by John *Easty*, being part of Thomas Matthew's survey, afterwards owned by John Haddon,—at this writing held by the heirs of James Stoy, deceased. This title is so obscured by various conveyances and the tautology of English deeds, that no intelligent explanation can be arrived at; and whether John Easty (Eastlack) had an indefeasible estate therein, and disposed of it by the regular channel, is yet to be discovered.

John Eastlack was a man of some estate, and dealt in land, even in those early times.² In 1716, he purchased a plantation of one hundred and seventy-five acres, of Benjamin Richards, situated on the north branch of Timber creek, and three years after sold the same to Thomas Smallwood. This probably lay west of Chew's Landing, and parts of it may yet be in the name of the last named grantee. In 1718, he purchased a lot of meadow land of John Wright, in Newton township on

² Lib. A, 109, 118.

Fork creek, near to or adjoining the fifty acres before named. This much enlarged his boundaries thereabout.³

The old documents say that John was a weaver, a worker in wool; which calling occupied his long winter evenings in a useful and commendable manner. Buckskin breeches, with coat and vest to match, supplied in a great measure the demand for cloth; and our worthy ancestors could often have been seen in the gallery of the meeting house, or in the halls of legislation, clad in this array, making a very presentable appearance. Buttons for vests, and buckles for the knees of breeches, were, for several generations, considered an heir-loom; and the son who found himself the possessor thereof was always marked as the favorite of the paternal head of the family. John Whittall, the brother-in-law of John Eastlack, died in 1718, having, by his will, directed his land to be sold. John Eastlack was the executor, and with the widow made a deed for said lands to Isaac Willowby in 1724. Isaac Willowby re-conveyed the same to John Eastlack the same year. These were sixty acres given by Thomas Thackara to John Whittall in 1696 upon his marriage; they adjoined John Eastlack's fifty acres. These two tracts passed to the second John by will, who re-surveyed said lands in 1760.⁴ As before hinted, these tracts lie in the estate late of John C. DaCosta, deceased.

In 1729, John Eastlack purchased another property in Newton township, fronting on Cooper's creek, of which James Whittall died the owner. He conveyed the same to John Estaugh in 1735.⁵ By the will of John Estaugh, all his landed estate passed to his wife, who deeded the said farm to her nephew, Ebenezer Hopkins, in 1747.⁶ John Eastlack bought and sold much other land in Gloucester county, showing himself to have been a business man with an eye to thrift and care taking. He died in 1736, leaving a will by which, after a few legacies, he gave the remainder of his estate to his sons, John and Samuel.⁷ He was a resident of Newton township, but of what part does not appear. An inventory of his personal effects discloses their value to be two hundred and sixty-three pounds. His children

³ Lib. A, 110.

⁴ Lib. H, 484, O. S. G.

⁵ Lib. GG, 09.

⁶ Lib. S6, 124, O. S. G.

⁷ Lib. N6, 5, 131.

were Sarah, who married James Mickle; Samuel, who married Ann Breach; John, who married Mary Bolton and Patience Hugg; Daniel, who married Mary Cheesman; Esther, Elizabeth and Hannah. Samuel died intestate in 1744; Elizabeth remained a single woman and deceased in 1757, also without a will.^{8,9}

James Mickle, the husband of Sarah, deceased in 1736, about four years after his marriage, leaving a will.¹⁰ His wife survived him with two children, Rachel and Jacob.

The husband of Jemima was probably a grandson of Thomas Sharp, the surveyor, and one of the first emigrants to Newton. Of the descendants of this daughter nothing can be at this date discovered.

Daniel Eastlack settled in Greenwich township now Gloucester county, and is the ancestor of the family in that region of country. John Eastlack settled in Newton township on the land by him re-surveyed; part of which came to him in a direct line from his maternal ancestor, Sarah Thackara, and part from Hannah Whitall, the widow of John. He also purchased a tract of land in Newton township of Gabriel Newbie, in 1742. His two sons, John and Samuel, were also grantees with him in the title as joint tenants, and the son John, being the survivor, conveyed the whole to Joseph Mickle in 1752. He became the owner of much other real estate in Gloucester county, some by the will of his father, and some by purchase. None of these acres, now so valuable, have been in the name or family for many years, and, but for the time-stained deeds that carry the title from one purchaser to another, the name would long since have been forgotten. The little increase in the male line will account for the small number of the name now left, and the blood must in a few years be sought for among the female descendants.

⁸ Lib. No. 5, 86. ⁹ Lib. No. 8, 437.

¹⁰ Lib. No. 4, 65.