

JOHN HINCHMAN.

IN the year 1675, a valuation of the estates of persons resident in Flushing, Long Island, made known that John Hinchman was an inhabitant, and the owner of one negro, twenty-five acres of land, two horses, four oxen, four cows, two colts, four hogs and forty sheep. He was then a well-to-do farmer for the times in which he lived, and much in advance of most of his neighbors. In the year 1698, another list was ordered by the proper authorities of the same town (or township.) This shows the nativity of each; and among the *French* settlers occur the names of John Hinchman and Sarah his wife, and of their children, John, James, Mercy, Mary and Sarah, as well as that of one negro slave called Hector, set down as belonging to the said John Hinchman; also the names of Thomas Hinchman and of Miriam his wife, and two children, Thomas and Sarah. Among the names composing the list of freemen, is that of Robert Hinchman. These assessments evince a degree of care not generally looked for at so early a date, and disclose many valuable and interesting facts not to be obtained through any other channel. The liberality of the Legislature of the State of New York in securing, arranging and publishing all the documentary evidence that relates to the early settlement of that state, cannot be too highly commended; it deserves to be followed by every other commonwealth in the Union. To this liberality are all those indebted that would know anything touching the history of the first comers, of their success and their subsequent movements.

Among the inhabitants of Oyster Bay, Southampton, Hempstead, Flushing and other places on Long Island, may be found the names of many who became the heads of families hereabout, and who did much to clear up and develop the virgin soil in this section of the country.

The inducements held out by William Penn, John Fenwick and others, who were interested in the lands in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, made it to their advantage again to break up their homes and remove hither. Among them were the Hinchmans, the Burroughs, the Clements, the Harrisons and others, whose names are now familiar to every inhabitant in this region of country. In fact, these two sections were so closely connected in this regard, that the history of the one is, to a great extent, the history of the other. In ecclesiastical affairs they were nearly identical, for what in church matters agitated the people of one region was equally exciting among the people of the other.

The name was not confined to Long Island, as Edward Hinchman was a resident of Maryland in 1658, and was fined for refusing to bear arms. This person was a merchant, and had business intercourse with Barbadoes in 1672. He was subsequently banished for his Quakerism, and passed through much bodily suffering therefor. There is nothing, however, to indicate any connection between the last named person and the Hinchmans of Long Island, and any search in that direction might prove fruitless.

On the eighteenth day of May, 1699, John Hugg and Priscilla, his wife, conveyed to John Hinchman of Long Island, one thousand acres of land, situated in Newton township, Gloucester county, New Jersey.¹ Part of this tract was given by Francis Collins to his daughter Priscilla, and other parts John Hugg had purchased of various persons. Parcels of this land still remain in the name, but much the larger portion passed out of the family many years since. According to the best data that can be collected from old maps and indefinite descriptions, in ancient deeds, this estate extended from near the head of the south branch of Newton creek (including the

¹ Lib. G3, 279.

Hurley farm on that side), northeasterly toward Haddonfield, taking in the Hinchman estate, the farm of Charles L. Willits and other properties. Much information touching the title to this land may be derived from a re-survey of parts of the tract, made by the third John Hinchman in 1759; which re-survey appears in the records of that year, in the Surveyor-General's office at Burlington. The house of John Hinchman stood on the north side of the stream named, about where the late residence of James S. Hurley, deceased, is erected. Near the house, but on the south side of the water-course, is an ancient burial place, in these days known as "Hurley's" graveyard, but established by the first owner as a place to inter his slaves. Of this kind of property, he was one of the largest holders in the country; their descendants make up many of the families in this region, and these, until a short time since, were buried at the place before spoken of.

Possessing an extensive tract of land, and a large number of slaves, it may be inferred that he was a man of wealth, and lived in somewhat more style than most of those around him. His residence stood near the king's highway, where it crossed King's run, in going from Burlington to Salem; it was a building of some pretension, and one in which a liberal hospitality was dispensed. As a Quaker, his entertainments extended to those traveling Friends who felt it their duty to leave their homes in England to visit the churches in America, at that time scattered over a vast extent of country. The colonies in North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland, to the south, and in East Jersey, Long Island and Connecticut, to the east, were a long distance apart; and the journey to and fro was always attended with many difficulties.

The journals of these missionaries all show that they passed through the same kind of trials, and had the same obstacles to overcome. In his removal from Long Island, John Hinchman doubtless brought with him several slaves, the increase of whom in a few years overcrowded his plantation with laborers, and made a full supply for his children as they settled in life.

Slave property was something more than that of horses or cattle; in the purchase or sale of a slave a deed was executed

and delivered, conveying the estate of the owner, and frequently guaranteeing soundness and tractability. One of these indentures is here given in full, explaining in itself the character of the transaction, and the purposes for which it was made.

“KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that I, John Hugg, of Gloucester county, New Jersey, for and in consideration of the sum of thirty-five pounds to me paid by John Hinchman, of the same place, before the ensealing and delivery of these presents the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged; have bargained, sold, and by these presents do bargain and sell unto the said John Hinchman a certain negro boy named Sambo, aged ten years next March or May, as is said. To have and to hold the said negro boy by these presents bargained and sold unto the said John Hinchman, his heirs, executors, administrators and assigns for ever. And I, the said John Hugg, for myself, my executors and administrators, the said negro boy bargained and sold unto the said John Hinchman, against me the said John Hugg and against all and every other person whatsoever claiming or pretending to claim any right or property thereunto, shall and will warrant and forever defend.

“In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my seal, this the third day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and nine, 1709.

“Sealed and delivered
in presence of
THOMAS SHARP,
JOSEPH COLLINS.”

“JOHN HUGG.

{ L. S. }

Noticeable features in many of the last wills of the first settlers in New Jersey are the number of slaves disposed of thereby, and the high value which was attached to them.

With some owners they were badly used, but among Friends they were generally treated with consideration. The unnatural separation of husband and wife, and of parents and children, soon attracted the attention of the more considerate in the Society; and steps were taken to guard against this cruelty, which eventually led to an open declaration, opposing the institution itself.

These humane influences ultimately extended to the law-making power of the State; an act was passed, under which means were adopted for the gradual extinguishment of slavery within its borders. The operation of this law frequently entailed a burden upon families in which slaves had been held; but it was accepted by the people as just to this unfortunate class, and due to their inability to provide for themselves.

The census of 1860 showed but few slaves in the State of New Jersey; these were too old and infirm at that date to carry a vestige of the institution to the present decade.

John Hinchman dealt somewhat in real estate, and located several surveys in Gloucester county. He does not appear to have meddled in politics, or to have joined in the religious bickerings so prevalent in those days. His wife was Sarah, a daughter of Samuel Harrison, whom he married while a resident of Long Island; where also part of his children were born. He deceased in 1721, leaving a will.² The inventory of his personal property amounted to two hundred and thirty pounds, sterling, which he disposed of with his real estate among his children. They were John, who married Sarah —, and Elizabeth Smith (widow); Joseph, who married Phoebe —; Jacob, who married Abigail Harrison; James, who married Kesiah —; Sarah, who married Thomas Bispham; Jane, who married — Jones; Letitia, who married Thomas Thorne; Ann, who married John Thorne; Abigail, who married John Kaighn and Samuel Harrison; and one child born after the father's decease, named William. John, the oldest son, settled on part of the paternal estate, now mostly owned by Charles L. Willits, Benjamin Cooper, Nathan B. Willits, and others, extending southwardly from an ancient boundary line, west of the old Salem road, to the head of Little Timber creek, adjoining the Jennings's estate. His dwelling house is now part of the residence of Charles L. Willits; it will be remembered by some as a small, hipped-roof, brick building—but now entirely changed in shape and appearance. In its day, it had some pretension to style and comfort, but, at this time, no such claims would be made. In the political affairs of the

² Lib. No. 2, 198.

colony John Hinchman participated, for, in 1705, he was appointed ensign in one of the military departments of the county; in 1722, he was made coroner, and afterwards acted as sheriff. In 1747, he married Elizabeth Smith (a second wife), the widow of Isaac, only child of Sarah Norris and granddaughter of John Kay, who was the first of the name here.³ She survived him, and died the owner of considerable real estate in Haddonfield, situated on Potter's street. By this marriage there was no issue. He died intestate in 1754.⁴ His children were John, who married ———, and died without issue; Hannah, who married Samuel Stokes; Ann, who married ——— Bispham; Amy, who married Joshua Stokes; Elizabeth, who married Joseph Bispham, and, after his decease, John Hatkinson.

Joseph Hinchman was a butcher, and lived on part of the original estate in Newton township.⁵ He died in 1731, leaving a widow and two sons, James, who married Sarah Bircham, and Isaac, who married Letitia Woolston. James settled in Greenwich township, and Isaac, in Newton.⁶ Jacob Hinchman died in 1742, leaving a widow and one child, Mary.⁷ James Hinchman took that part of his father's property now partly owned by the heirs of Jeremiah Willits, deceased, and, formerly, by James S. Hurley, deceased; he lived where the last named person died. In 1733, he received a commission from the King appointing him one of the judges of Gloucester county, in which capacity he appears to have acceptably served. He died in 1750, leaving a widow, but no children.⁸ The estate is now divided into several valuable farms, any one of which is more productive than the whole tract as then managed. Letitia, who married Thomas Thorne, settled with her husband on land which he purchased of Thomas Cole and James Wild, in Delaware township, bordering on the south side of Penisaukin creek; part of this property is now owned by Asa R. Lippincott. Thomas Thorne also came from Long Island, but several years after John Hinchman. He was a man of large estate, and, like his father-in-law, was the owner of numerous slaves,

³ Gloucester Files, 1758.

⁴ Lib. No. 7, 497.

⁵ Lib. No. 9, 126.

⁶ Lib. L, 384.

⁷ Lib. No. 4, 366.

⁸ Lib. No. 6, 423.

part, perhaps, the dowry of his wife, and part obtained by purchase. They had three children, namely: Hannah, who married George Turner; Sarah, who married Jacob Burrough, son of Samuel; and Thomas, who married Abigail Burrough, daughter of Samuel. Although the property has not entirely passed out of the blood, yet the name has been lost sight of for many years. Thomas Thorne died in 1757, intestate.⁹

John Thorne, the husband of Ann and brother of Thomas, purchased a tract of land in 1702 of John Reading, lying in Centre township between the south branch of Newton creek and Little Timber creek, including the farm lately owned by J. Stokes Brick, deceased, the estate of John D. Glover, and other properties.¹⁰ By his will, made in 1768, he gave this real estate to his son-in-law, John Glover, in fee.¹¹ His children were Thomas, who deceased before the making of his will; Mary, who married John Glover; and Sarah, who died single in 1769, but after her father.¹² Ann died a few years after her marriage, and John Thorne married Mary, the widow of John Gill and daughter of Richard Heritage. He died in 1769, having removed to Haddonfield several years before that occurrence. He was a man of considerable estate, and was much respected in the community in which he lived. Thomas, his son, died in 1759, leaving a will.¹³ His children were Elizabeth and Abigail, the wife of William Harrison.

William Harrison owned and lived upon the farm south of Mount Ephraim, lately the property of Jesse W. Starr; he was buried in a small family graveyard, near the old brick house—now torn down.

John's last wife survived him six years, as her will was admitted to probate on October 4th, 1775.¹⁴ This instrument of writing puts at rest any doubt of her being the widow of John Gill, and the maternal ancestor of the family of that name in this region. There was no issue by her last marriage. She was in possession of more than a sufficiency of this world's goods, and disposed of them among her children and grandchildren. Of the many articles devised, she gave her son

⁹ Lib. No. 9, 38.

¹⁰ Lib. W, 196.

¹¹ Lib. No. 14, 192.

¹² Lib. No. 17, 132.

¹³ Lib. No. 9, 411.

¹⁴ Lib. No. 17, 241.

John Gill "a pair of gold studs and a silver spoon," *presented to her by Elizabeth EStaugh*; to which she evidently attached much value, considering it an heir-loom worthy of her especial regard. She lived to see several of her granddaughters married, but the surname of her first husband was limited at her death to two persons, her son, and her grandson, John Gill.

Samuel Thorne also purchased land near Gloucester about the same time, and perhaps took up his abode thereon. In 1706, William Thorne (as the deed says, "late of Long Island, but now of Gloucester county, N. J.,") purchased three tracts of land of Mordecai Howell.¹⁵ Part of this land was near the head of the south branch of Cooper's creek, and the north branch of Timber creek. On one of the tributaries of the last named stream, he erected a saw mill, the site of which may yet be seen; this stream is still known as Thorne's mill branch. At this place he probably settled and reared a large family. For many years the name was a prominent one in that section, but latterly it is scarcely known; as attached to any of the original estate, it is almost forgotten, and, but for the ancient deeds, would not in these days be remembered.

Thomas and John Thorne were the sons of Joseph Thorne of Flushing, Long Island; they came to West New Jersey, after the example of John Hinchman, Jacob Clement, and some others, seeking a home among the newly settled Quakers in these parts.¹⁶

John Glover also came from Long Island, where quite a number of that name had settled. He was probably a son of Samuel and Sarah Glover, who were residents of Southold as early as the year 1675. In that year, his personal estate was assessed at one ox, three cows, and one horse; but, eight years after that time, his taxable property amounted to one hundred and four pounds, proving him to be a thrifty man. In 1698, he was still an inhabitant of the same place, and was surrounded by a numerous family. His son Samuel, in 1700, was appointed lieutenant in a company of infantry of that town, he having departed from the example of George Fox, doubtless, much to the chagrin of his parents.

¹⁵ Lib. A, 84.

¹⁶ Lib. Q, 451.

With John Glover came two brothers, William and Richard. William settled in Newton township, the creek dividing his estate from that of John's. He was a man of considerable property, for, by his will, he disposed of legacies amounting to more than one thousand pounds, sterling. He was a bachelor, and deceased in the year 1798. Much of the estate in Newton township still remains in the name, as well as that of John Glover, in Centre township, coming to the present owners from John Thorne, as before named.¹⁷ In 1728, Richard Glover married Rachel Clark, and settled in Burlington county, N. J.

John Glover had a numerous family, namely: Thomas, who married Mary Stiles (he dying, she married Peter Thompson); John T., who married Elizabeth, widow of Joseph Ridgway and daughter of — Olden; Sarah, who married Peter Hanna; Isaac, who married Phoebe, daughter of John Duel; Rachel who married Isaac Stiles; Samuel, who married Hannah Albertson; Mary, who married Thomas Potter; Joseph, who married Sarah Mickle; and Jacob, who married Mary Branson.

Thomas and Sarah Bispham settled in Philadelphia. His business was that of an "inn keeper," but, in what part of the city, it is not known. Thomas died there in 1771, leaving a will.¹⁸ His wife survived him, and the following children: Joseph; Benjamin, who married Hope Fortinér; Thomas; Hinchman; and Elizabeth, who married James Hartley. They held a number of slaves, and owned land in New Jersey. By each marriage the daughter, Abigail, had issue; her descendants may easily trace the maternal blood.

Joseph Hinchman was a brother of the first John, and came also from Flushing, on Long Island, A. D. 1708. Any doubt of the relationship is put at rest by a single passage in the will of John, in which he devised a tract of land to his son John; in the description of one of the boundaries, he says, "to a corner in the line of my brother Joseph Hinchman's land." He was a man of some estate, as he purchased land of John in that part of the original one thousand acres which lay nearest to Haddonfield. His house stood on the west side of the king's

¹⁷ Lib. No. 37, 413.

¹⁸ Lib. No. 15, 42.

road, a short distance from where it crossed the "shore" road that passed over Atmore's dam, going towards Philadelphia. It was perhaps nothing more than a log cabin, built of the timber that had stood upon the ground where it was erected. He purchased about fifty acres of Joseph Collins, which brought his property to the stream of the main branch of Newton creek, which still continues one of the boundaries thereof. He also added some other adjoining tracts, dying the owner of a large body of valuable land. His will bears date April 5th, 1737. He made his wife Sarah sole executrix, with power to sell land, to discharge debts, and to manage the estate generally.¹⁹

His children were Thomas, who married Sarah Clement, a daughter of James of Long Island, and, after her decease, in 1750, Letitia Mickle, widow of Samuel and daughter of Timothy Matlack; Sarah, who married Edward Collins; Hannah, who married James Gill; Mary, who married — Zane; Deborah; and Emily.

The paternity of Thomas Hinchman's first wife is beyond question, as James Clement names her in his will, dated May 5th, 1724. By this marriage there was no issue.²⁰ By the will of his father, Thomas was seized of all the real estate, and lived thereon. He deceased in 1758, his wife dying seven years before that time, and perhaps upon the birth of his only child, Joseph, to whom the property, as purchased by his grandfather, passed.

Joseph was born February 18th, 1751, in the old log cabin, for his father died before he had finished the erection of the house now occupied by William C. Hinchman,—a house which, for nearly one hundred years, was the only dwelling on the estate. The broad acres and primitive forests that surrounded him in his youth, his manhood and his old age, came to him through a line of ancestry of which he was the only living representative; and he adhered to them with a tenacity that proved his determination never to break in upon the ancient land marks. His knowledge of the titles, and his familiarity with the boundaries, show that his ownership had afforded him a pleasurable study,—

¹⁹ Lib. No. 2, 154.

²⁰ Lib. No. 10, New York Wills, 53.

one of great advantage to himself, and to those who were to follow him. He married Sarah Kain, a daughter of William and Charity, and great-granddaughter of Francis Collins, the first settler in this part of Newton township. Of systematic and industrious habits, a close observer, and of good judgment, he combined the farmer and mechanic in a remarkable degree. He was one of the few persons of his day and generation, who deemed it necessary to make a record of events passing under his notice. His journal, commenced in 1811 and continued to 1827 inclusive, is a curious book, and contains much that is valuable. The record of marriages, births and deaths, is of local interest, and it should be preserved for reference to coming generations; disclosing much that has been already lost sight of, and that, but for such memoranda, could not be restored. Although portions of this book are taken up with his private affairs, yet the larger part refers to matters of increasing value in connection with the families in this region of country; it will be consulted in future days upon important and material subjects.

It is gratifying to know that more regard is manifested towards old manuscripts, and that an increasing interest now prevails to save such from loss. How much of the history of families and of neighborhoods is now hidden in garrets and neglected, out-of-the-way places, where the hands of such as would appreciate their value may never reach them. The time spent, and the ingenuity exercised in solving an intricate question, may add to its interest; but to be unable to establish an acknowledged tradition for want of documentary evidence, thoughtlessly destroyed, reflects sadly upon the want of care in this regard among the people.