

JOHN KAIGHN.

IN the year 1694, John Kaighn was a resident of Byberry, in Bucks county, Pennsylvania. He was a carpenter, and the husband of Ann, the widow of Walter Forrest and daughter of William Albertson.¹ Walter Forrest came to Burlington in 1678, and very soon purchased a large tract of land in Salem county, bounded by Salem creek; in connection with his brothers, he erected a mill thereon, the first in that section of the State.² Before his decease, however, he had removed to Byberry. This occurred in 1692. By his will he gave considerable property to his widow's brothers, situated in Salem, which they in a few years disposed of.³ There was no issue by this marriage. Ann, the widow, so remained for two years, when she married John Kaighn. By this marriage there was one child, a daughter, who bore the mother's name.

The daughter was born June 24th, 1694, and the mother died July 6th, of the same year. The daughter, who died single in 1715, gave by her will her property to her two half-brothers by the father's second marriage.⁴

In 1696, John Kaighn married Sarah, the widow of Andrew Griscom and sister of John Dole, then a resident of Newton township.

The blood of the Albertsons, therefore, was not connected with this family any longer than till the death of Ann, the daughter

¹ Lib. No. 6, 32, Salem Records.

² Lib. B, 16, Salem Records.

³ Salem Wills, A, 69.

⁴ Lib. No. 2, 262.

of Ann and John in 1715, leading those who wish to follow the maternal line in another direction.

As a carpenter, John found abundant business, for every ship that arrived was crowded with emigrants, whose first purpose, after landing and selecting sites, was the erection of dwellings. These, in most instances, were rude and unpretending, yet the services of a mechanic were necessary in some parts; hence the constant employment of the carpenters of that early period in providing shelter for the new comers.

The nativity of John Kaighn is easily traced through a letter in possession of the New Jersey branch of the family, dated August 26th, 1702, endorsed "To Mr. John Kaighn—Linener, in West New Jersey, nigh on Delaware river side, opposit to Philadelphia city, in America." It was from his mother, Jane Kaighen. It was written from her residence, at that time, in Kirk Andrew, a town in the north of the Isle of Man, where she lived with her daughter and son-in-law, Daniel Lane.

She informs her son that his father died the November previous to her writing; that his sister Ellen, born after he left the Isle, was married and settled in the parish of St. German, on the west coast of the island; that, for a short time after the decease of her husband, she had lived with her son Charles, at Ballacragga, on the south-east coast, but, not being happy there, had removed to Kirk Andrew. On the same sheet of paper, John Kaighn has left an unfinished letter, without date, in reply to his mother, generally of a religious character.

In this she is told that he had "lost two good and loveing wives, in a few years time—and left alone with young babes;" that these were two boys and one girl, "the youngest yet at nurse."

Sarah Dole came with her father's family from Wales, but from what part cannot be traced.

The first purchase of real estate by John Kaighn in Newton township, was on the fourteenth day of ninth month, 1696, when Robert Turner conveyed to him four hundred and fifty-five acres of land, fronting on the Delaware river and extending from Line street to Little Newton creek.⁶

⁶ Lib G3, 127.

Like many of the old English deeds, this discloses the whole of the original title as vested in the grantor, at once valuable and interesting to such as care to push their inquiries thus far.

In 1699, John Dole purchased two hundred and twenty acres of this tract from John Kaighn, and settled thereon.⁶ He was a shoemaker, and came from Long Island, N. Y., where he had married Mary Jessup, of Jericho, in 1688. He died in 1715, and by his will gave this land to his two sons, John and Joseph.⁷ Joseph Dole married Hannah Somers, a sister of Richard, in 1714, and removed to Great Egg Harbor, where he died in 1727, leaving a will.⁸ His children were Hannah, who married Daniel Ingersoll; Sarah, who married John Scull; Rebecca, who married Joshua Garwood; Mary and Servia.

John Dole also removed to Great Egg Harbor, and died in 1748, without a will.⁹ What family he left, if any, is not known.

John Dole conveyed his undivided part of the tract of land in Newton township, devised to him by his father, to his brother Joseph, who conveyed part thereof to John Kaighn in 1723,¹⁰ and the remainder to Joseph Cooper in the same year.¹¹

Andrew Griscom was the owner of a tract of land adjoining that of John Kaighn's and part of Samuel Norris's survey; but from whom purchased, and the exact locality of the land, are not known.

Andrew Griscom, by his will in 1694, gave the same to his wife and two children, Tobias and Sarah, and, upon certain contingencies, to John Dole in fee. At the time of John Kaighn's death, he was the owner of this land, but in what manner does not appear.¹²

Tobias Griscom, a son of Andrew, married Deborah Gabitas, at Burlington meeting, in 1711, and settled in Newton township, where he remained until his decease.

He dealt considerably in real estate, and made several locations in his own name under "rights" which he purchased in 1716 and 1717. In the last named year, he purchased of

⁶ Lib. G3, 240.

⁷ Lib. No. 2 of Wills, c8.

⁸ Lib. No. 2 of Wills, 430.

⁹ Lib. No. 6 of Wills, 331.

¹⁰ Lib. D, 52.

¹¹ Lib. D, 436.

¹² Lib. A, 83. Lib. D, 52, 54.

Lib. C, 240. Lib. G3, 240.

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Hugh Sharp, several tracts of land in Gloucester county, near the sea shore, valuable for the cedar swamps, some of which still retain the name of the former owner.¹³ In 1721, and after his death, his widow as executrix of his will, re-conveyed the same properties to the original grantor.

Tobias Griscom deceased in 1719,¹⁴ leaving his widow and the following children: William, who married Sarah Davis, and who was a saddler and lived in Haddonfield; Tobias, who died a minor; Andrew, who married Susanna Hancock, and who was a blacksmith and settled at Tuckahoe; Mary, who married Tobias Halloway; and Samuel, a house and ship carpenter, who resided in Philadelphia. The latter assisted in the erection of Independence Hall, and lived for many years on Arch street between Third and Fourth in that city.

John Kaighn had much to do with the settlement of the estate of Walter Forrest, the deceased husband of his first wife. A large part of the real property was purchased by him, among which was the mill called the "Brothers Forrest," and three hundred acres of land attached. This was conveyed to him in 1701, but he sold it the next year to Isaac Pearson.¹⁵ With this sale his interest ended in that section of West Jersey, but he continued to increase the borders of his land in Newton township until he found himself one of the largest owners in this section.¹⁶ On March 7th, 1708, he became one of the trustees of the Newton meeting with Benjamin Thackara, William Cooper, William Albertson, Thomas Sharp, Joseph Cooper and John Kay. He is thus shown to have been an active member of the religious Society of Friends; and his remains doubtless lie buried within the walls that now surround part of the first estate dedicated to such purposes in this region of country. In 1712, Benjamin Thackara conveyed a small adjoining piece of land to the same trustees for the same use. In 1771, it was discovered that all the trustees had died; and to continue the property in the right channel, Josiah Kay, the heir at law of John Kay, who was the last deceased, made a deed in the same year to John Gill, Joshua Stokes, Nathaniel

¹³ Lib. A, 87, 208.

¹⁴ Lib. No. 2, 132.

¹⁵ Lib. No. 6, 32, Salem Records.

¹⁶ Lib. No. 7, 156.

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Lippincott, James Cooper, John Brown, David Cooper, Joshua Lord, John E. Hopkins, John Evans, Isaac Ballinger, Samuel Webster and John Glover.¹⁷

In 1808 again, the trustees were dead, except Samuel Webster, who, in that year, made title to Joseph Glover, Joseph Burrough, Jr., John Albertson, Abel Nicholson, Josiah Webster, Joseph Kaighn, Joseph Sloan and Benjamin Cooper.

From about the year 1797 to 1811, much trouble existed between the trustees of the Newton Meeting house property and James and Joseph Sloan, in relation to the boundaries of the same. James and Joseph Sloan had become the owners of part of Thomas Thackara's estate, which adjoined the Friends' property, and claimed a portion of the land by them occupied, in fact, that portion on which the old meeting house stood. This particular lot, measuring sixty feet in width and forty-five feet in depth, with another lot adjoining, was conveyed by Joseph Sloan to James Sloan in 1810, and by him held until 1819, when he released his interest therein to Samuel Eastlack and others, who had charge of one part of the burial ground.¹⁸ In 1811, Joseph Sloan abandoned his claim by his deed to the trustees of the Haddonfield Monthly Meeting, which extended to the old grave yard within the brick wall, and some adjoining lands.¹⁹ The removal of Friends from the neighborhood, and the erection of other places of worship, gradually decreased the interest of the society in these premises; and the destruction of the old meeting house by fire on the night of December 22d, A. D. 1817,²⁰ was the end of any further assembling upon the spot made memorable by the many associations that surround it. The disputes before named, which at that time were considered a scandal to the church, may be the means of identifying where stood the *old meeting house*, where, at some future day, a suitable monument will be placed in remembrance of its purposes, and to point out its locality.

In 1699, John Kaighn was appointed by the Legislature, one of the judges of the several courts of Gloucester county, and was so continued for three years thereafter. Upon the first

¹⁷ Lib. M, 172, Gloucester Co., Woodbury. ¹⁹ Lib. O, 597, Gloucester Co., Woodbury.

¹⁸ Lib. W, 585, Gloucester Co., Woodbury. ²⁰ Joseph Hinchman's Journal.

entry of his name, the clerk of the joint meeting, spelled it "Cahaen," which doubtless surprised Friend John, when he came to look upon the record and found the orthography of his name so sadly tortured, yet, when pronounced, so near correct.²¹

The duties of the judges of the courts at that day had not been well defined, and the minutes of their proceedings contrast strangely enough with those of the present. In township affairs he, no doubt, took part; but, as Friend Sharp was not authorized to buy a book until 1723, which was near the time of his decease, no record of such transactions has come down to the present generation.

In 1710, he sat as a representative from Gloucester county in the Legislature, only a few years after the surrender of the government by the proprietors to Queen Anne, and in the midst of the most troublesome times of the people.

John Kaighn's will was proved June 12th, 1724, in which he gave a house and lot in Philadelphia, to his wife Elizabeth, and, after a life interest in some other parts of his property, the remainder to his two sons, John and Joseph.²²

These sons were by the second wife, and were born as follows: John, December 30th, 1700, and Joseph, December 4th, 1702, each taking the blood of the Doles, and basing the maternal origin in New Jersey upon the same line as that of the Griscom family.

His third wife was Elizabeth Hill, of Burlington, at the meeting in which place they were married in 1710. By this marriage there was no children.

The inventory of his personal estate amounted to two hundred and thirty-five pounds, sterling, showing him to have been one of the substantial men of his day. The next year after their father's death, Joseph conveyed to John all his interest in the real estate devised to them, consisting of much valuable property, with fisheries and meadows attached;²³ and, soon after, John re-conveyed the entire homestead property to Joseph, who so held the same until his death.

²¹ Leaming & Spicer's Laws.

²² Lib. No. 2, 267.

²³ Lib. C, 29.

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In 1727, Joseph Kaighn married Mary Estaugh, of Philadelphia, a daughter of James and niece of John Estaugh, of Haddonfield. This fact is proved by various expressions used by Elizabeth Estaugh, in her will, wherein she names the children of Mary Kaighn, and places them among her legatees.

Joseph Kaighn was an active man in the affairs of the township. He was initiated therein by his election as one of the surveyors of highways, in 1723. His associates were Jacob Medcalf, Samuel Shivers and Thomas Dennis. What the duties of these officers could have been, may always remain a mystery, as, at that date and for many years after, the roads were simply the widening of the Indian trails, without regard to the shortest distance or the best location; yet these officers were annually elected, and, no doubt, had some important labors to perform. The year of his marriage, he was promoted to the position of overseer of the poor, then the most responsible office of the township. As such officer, he received and disbursed all the funds raised for public purposes, as appears by the annual report spread out on the pages of the township book.

From the year 1736 until his death (excepting the year 1738), he was assessor, and also held other minor positions among the people. His will bears date May 7th, 1749, in which year he died,²⁴ having carefully described each tract devised to his children by metes and bounds,—a precaution too often neglected when a large real estate is thus to be disposed of.

The old brick house near the Kaighn's Point ferry, was probably the residence of Joseph. It has lost its identity with the past, as the march of improvement has destroyed its proportions, and left but part of the original building.

The box and yew trees, which were planted when the dwelling was being erected, are the only land marks to show where one of the ancestors of the family had his home. The centre building was two stories high, and ornamented by various colored bricks, with a wing on each side built of stone. The site was well chosen, since a good view was had of the river, and of William Penn's "brave town," which, for many years, did not reach as far south as Dock creek.

²⁴ Lib. No. 7, 05.

The farm and meadow land are now traversed by paved streets, and covered by the habitations of a thrifty population, separated only by such political divisions as are incident to all good governments, aiding in every respect the advancement of the people.

Joseph Kaighn's wife survived him, and the following named children: Joseph, who married Prudence Butcher, widow of — Butcher, and daughter of — Rogers; John, a physician who died single, about forty years of age; Isaac, who died in his minority; James, who married Hannah Mason; and Elizabeth, who married Arthur Donaldson.

In 1753, Mary, the widow of Joseph, married Robert Stevens, a resident of Newton township, who died in 1759; and before his last wife. By this marriage there was no issue.

Robert Stevens's first wife was Ann Dent, whom he married in 1739. She was an English lady, and sister of Joseph Cooper's second wife. They came from Yorkshire, the last named being a minister among Friends, a testimony from Haddonfield Monthly Meeting, showing that she was acceptable as such.

At the time of the death of Joseph Kaighn, all his children were minors. The real estate devised to the daughter, was to be hers "if she married with her mother's consent," a restriction mostly disregarded by parents as well as children. Joseph and Prudence Kaighn had four children, William, Mary, John and Joseph. The first three named died in their infancy, and Joseph married Sarah Mickle, in 1795, a daughter of Joseph.

In 1732, John Kaighn married Abigail Hinchman, one of the children of John Hinchman, the first of that name who settled in Gloucester county. He deceased in 1749, leaving a will.²⁵ He was a blacksmith, and followed his business in Haddonfield for several years; but afterwards he removed to a farm on Newton creek, where he died and was buried in the old grave yard at the meeting house near his residence. The property in Haddonfield he gave to his daughter Sarah, subject to the use thereof by the mother during her life. His children

²⁵ Lib. No. 6, 230.

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were Sarah, born 1733; Elizabeth, born 1736; Samuel, born 1737, who married Mary Gerrard; John, born 1740, and Ann, born 1744.

The widow Abigail afterwards married Samuel Harrison, and resided near Gloucester. The issue of this marriage was a daughter, Abigail, born 1751, who married Richard Edwards in 1768. They had ten children, all of whom died single, excepting Samuel, who married Martha Heulings, and Sarah, who married Joseph Collins. Abigail Harrison survived her last husband, and died in 1795, at Taunton iron works, Burlington county, where lived her son-in-law, Richard Edwards.

Like his brother Joseph, John was somewhat of a township politician, for in 1725 he was elected freeholder, and, at different times thereafter, held the same position. His name is found upon the town book almost every year from 1725 to the time of his decease. He acted as clerk from 1732 to 1741, when he was succeeded by Samuel Mickle.

This family name is oftener associated with others of like pronunciation and different spelling than any other in this section; which has frequently led to trouble and difficulty. One family writes the name Cain, another Kain and another Kane, and they are in no wise related to each other.

The descendants of John Kaighn, the subject of this sketch, never became numerous in this part of the State of New Jersey, but some of his descendants have adhered to portions of the original landed property to the present time. The increase in the city of Camden has covered the larger portion with substantial improvements; and another half-century will find the entire estate thus occupied.