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*The Great Migration Begins*

Sketches

PRESERVED PURITAN

## JOHN ENDICOTT

**ORIGIN:** Unknown

**MIGRATION:** Arrived Naumkeag (later Salem) 5 September 1628 on the Abigail

**FIRST RESIDENCE:** Salem

**REMOVES:** Boston 1655

**OCCUPATION:** Magistrate.

**CHURCH MEMBERSHIP:** In list of Salem church members compiled in late 1636 [SChR 5]. Shortly after he relocated, the church pews were altered, and on 11 June 1657 "the seat of Mrs. Endicot being enlarged we agree that Mrs. Hathorne & Mrs. Corwin shall be there seated" [STR 1:201]. The Endicotts maintained their connection to the Salem church until 1664.

**FREEMAN:** Not in any list of freemen, but certainly held that status by virtue of his many offices in the colony, and especially his appointment in 1628 as governor of the Massachusetts Bay Company's settlement at Salem.

**EDUCATION:** Wrote a confident, extroverted hand and a direct but thoughtful prose, as evidenced by many letters preserved by the Winthrops. Overseer of Harvard College, 1642 [Morison 198-99]. When the Jesuit priest Gabriel Druillette was touring New England in the winter of 1650-1, he reported on 9 January that "I went to Salem, to converse with Sieur Indicott, who speaks and understands French well" [The Jesuit Relations and

Allied Documents, Volume XXXVI, Lower Canada, Abenakis, 1650-1651 (Cleveland 1899), pp. 94-95].

**OFFICES:** Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Company's settlement at Salem, 1628-29. Massachusetts Bay Colony Assistant 1630-34, 1636-40, 1645-48; Deputy-Governor 1641-43, 1650, 1654; Governor 1644, 1649, 1651-3, 1655-64 [MA Civil List 11, 20-24].

Commissioner to hold Court at Piscataqua, 10 May 1643 [MBCR 2:37]; Essex County magistrate and Salem selectman repeatedly [EQC and STR passim].

Chosen colonel of the Essex regiment, 13 December 1636 [MBCR 1:187]; Sergeant Major General 1645-6 [MBCR 3:9, 61].

**ESTATE:** "Cp. Endicot" received a grant of 200 acres in the freeman's lands at Salem in 1636 [STR 1:19]. He was granted one acre of marsh on 25 December 1637, with a household of nine [STR 1:103].

He asked for and was granted ten acres of meadow in the great meadow north of Mr. Sharp, 30 July 1637 [STR 1:53]; granted swampland next to Goodman Chickering's, 7 May 1638 [STR 1:96]; granted 20 acres of land in Salem formerly laid to Allen Converse, 13 March 1642/3 [STR 1:117]; granted land at the head of the river excepting the salt marsh, being land formerly granted to Richard Norman and others whose properties Endicott had bought, 5 March 1643/4 [STR 1:124-25].

The Court of Assistants granted him three hundred acres of land north of Salem [later known as "Orchard"], 3 July 1632 [MBCR 1:97]. On 2 November 1637 he was granted "40 or 50 acres of meadow ... where it may not prejudice a plantation" [MBCR 1:206]. On 6 June 1639 at a General Court he was granted five hundred acres of land [MBCR 1:262]. On 5 November 1639 "Mr. John Endecot is granted his 550 acres upon Ipswich River" (this is apparently the two previous grants combined) [MBCR 1:277; see MBCR 1:305, 2:259 for later orders about this grant]. Granted three hundred acres of woodland, provided he set up a copper works within seven years, 14 October 1651 [MBCR 3:256]. Granted Catta Island, about two acres, near Marblehead, 23 May 1655 [MBCR 3:389]. Granted one thousand acres in any place he should choose not prejudicial to other grants in lieu of seventy-five pounds "by him and his wife in the general adventure," 15 May 1657 [MBCR 4:1:304]. Granted one-quarter of Block Island, 19 October 1658 [MBCR 4:1:356].

His written will of 2 May 1659 and his nuncupative will of January 1664/5 were both brought to court.

In his will, dated 3 May 1659, "John Endecott Senior late of Salem; now of Boston" bequeathed to his "dear & loving wife Elizabeth Endecott" all his farm called Orchard in Salem with all appurtenances, the moveable goods in Boston, all the cattle and sheep, all his wearing clothes, "all my books whereof she may bestow on my two sons such of them as they are capable to make use of & the rest to be sold to help pay my debts," his houses at Salem and the ground belonging to them, Catta Island near Salem "which the generall Court gave me, during her natural life, & after her decease to my two sons John & Zerobabel or to the longest liver of them"; to "John Endicott my eldest son the farm which I bought of Henry Chickerin of Dedham" on 4 October 1648, lying in Salem; to "my younger son Zerobabel the whole farm called Orchard to be parted indifferently between them after the decease of my said wife," also a farm of three hundred acres on Ipswich river; wife to be sole executrix with Elder Penn and Elder Coleborne as overseers; to "my said wife" the fourth part of Block Island; to "my two sons John & Zerubbabel the two farms I bought, the one of Captain Trask the other of Capt. Hawthorne lying upon Ipswich River next adjoining to my farm"; "the rest of the land belonging to my farm upon the said river which is not disposed of to my two sons John & Zerubabel, my eldest son to have a double portion thereof"; to "John Endecott & Zerubbael all the land which was given me by the two Sachems of Quinebaug my eldest son to have a double portion"; to "my grandchild John Endecott Zerobabel his son" ten pounds at age twenty-one; the longest liver of my sons to enjoy all the land "except the Lord send them children to inherit it after them"; to Mr. Norrice teacher of the Church at Salem 40s. and to Mr. Wilson pastor of Boston 40s. and to Mr. Norton teacher 40s.; to the poor of Boston four pounds; the seal bore arms [EPR 2:38-40, citing SPR Case #385].

Jeremiah Howchin, father of Elizabeth (Howchin) Endicott, wife of the Governor's elder son, took exception to the 1659 will and deposed that when the Governor approached him to permit the marriage of their children, Endicott promised to give his son the Chickering farm and build a barn and leanto, as well as fence the land and provide horse and oxen and cows and sheep, and that his son John and heirs would receive all the farm called Orchard after his death and the death of his wife. With these guarantees, Howchin allowed his daughter to marry young John "without that the match had never been consented unto by this deponent." He further stated that

about 29 January he had spoken with the Governor who told him that he had not finished his will and that his wife had made "great endeavours" regarding it and asked Howchin to write down his true mind, which he did [CSM 20:261-62, citing MA Arch 15B:95].

This nuncupative will, signed by Jeremiah Howchin, claimed to be the mind of the Governor, saying "Tell the magistrates that I am not capable to make my will myself for reasons best known to myself I would willingly live that little time I have to live in peace which is not like to be long[.] I have made no will that I approve of neither have I delivered any in one respect or another as my will to this day and do declare all that be pretended to be my will I say I do renounce and disown and to be of none effect: ... I love my dear wife she have taken pains with me not a little I desire respect may be unto her[.] I desire she may have my orchard farme ... for time of her life only eight acres of salt meadow to be taken from it and laid to my son John ... only what goods were brought by my daughter into the house is my daughter['s] to enjoy and take away ... and I do charge that my son John may have a double portion of all my estate confirmed upon him his heirs and assigns forever Chickerol's farm to be appraised and 8 acres of meadow and Zerubobel's land to be appraised and that at Salim and what my son John's went by estimation to be as much more in value as that I have given to Zerubbobell to be made good to John and his heires and assigns forever he is the son of my strent [strength?] and have taken pains with me and after my wife's decease my two sons to have the orchard farm my son John two-thirds and Zerubbabell one-third ... and my son John to have what books that he desireth for physic and chirurgery" [CSM 20:263, citing MA Arch 15B:96-106].

The resulting conflict between the widow Elizabeth and eldest son John caused the General Court on 23 May 1666 to order that the estate be administered by the widow and sons, guided by the terms of the 1659 will. To protect the interests of son John's wife Elizabeth Howchin, the court provided that the farm called "Chickering's" deeded to her husband and all the property bequeathed to son John in the 1659 will should be hers during her life if she should outlive her husband [MBCR 4:2:289, 311-2; EQC 7:16-17].

The inventories of Endicott's estate dated 27 April 1665 (taken at Salem) and 31 July 1665 (taken at Boston) totalled £1031 8s. 7d., of which £731 was real estate: the home farm with housing orchards and fences, £551; a one hundred and fifty acre farm on Ipswich River "being part of a farm

given by the country together with the meadow to it," £80; and a house "at the town with three acres of Land to it," £100. An additional undated inventory included other parcels of land whose value was not given: "certain ten acre lots that Mr. Endecott purchased"; "two hundred & fifty acres of upland & meadow part of that farm that lieth in Topsfield undisposed of"; "2 farms in the country purchased of Maj. Harthorne & Capt. Trask"; and "an island called Catta Island" [SPR Case #385].

The funeral was a costly affair, and the widow Endicott was allowed £160 from the country treasury over five years to "discharge the charge of wine, cakes, tomb, and powder expended ... whereof [£60] was in consideration of her expense of seventy pounds in mourning clothes for herself, children, & family," May 1665 [MBCR 4:2:151].

In May of 1671, the General Court "being informed that the widow ... of the late honored Governor, Mr. John Endicott, Esqr., is reduced to a very low condition, w[hi]ch is not honorable for this Court, do therefore order, that the thirty pounds per annum by this Court allowed to her, being expired, shall & is hereby anew granted to her ... during [her] widowhood" [MBCR 4:2:487-88].

**BIRTH:** By about 1600 based on all later activities.

**DEATH:** Boston 15 March 1664/5: "Our honored Governor, Mr. John Endicott, departed this life, - a man of pious and zealous spirit, who had very faithfully endeavored the suppression of a pestilent generation, the troublers of our peace civil and ecclesiastical, called Quakers. He died poor, as most of our rulers do, having more attended the public than their own private interests. It is our shame: though we are indeed a poor people, yet might better maintain our rulers than we do. However, they have a good God to reward them" [Hull 215-16].

**MARRIAGE:** (1) By about 1628 Anne Gower; she died probably not long after Matthew Craddock wrote his letter.

(2) probably Boston 18 August 1630 "\_\_\_\_\_ Gibson" [WJ 1:35;NEHGR 110:271], born about 1607 [NEHGR 43:310] (but deposed 13 April 1674, aged "about sixty years" [EQC 5:323]), the daughter of Philobert Cogan of Chard, Somersetshire, who bequeathed to "daughter Elizabeth Endecott" in his 10

February 1640/1 will, evidently the widow of \_\_\_\_\_ GIBSON [NEHGR 43:309-311]. She died after 13 April 1674.

#### **CHILDREN:**

i JOHN, b. about 1632; m. Boston 9 November 1653 Elizabeth Howchin, b. about 1637 daughter of Jeremiah and Esther (Pigeon) Howchin, who deposed against the Governor's will [BVR 44]. She m. (2) 1668 Rev. James Allen of the First Church, Boston.

ii ZERUBBABEL, b. about 1635; m. (1) about 1654 Mary [Smith]; m. (2) 1677 Elizabeth (Winthrop) Newman, daughter of Gov. JOHN WINTHROP and widow of Rev. Antipas Newman.

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Anne Gower was a "cousin" of Matthew Craddock, governor of Massachusetts Bay Company in England, who wrote 16 February 1628/9 "and to hear my good cousin, your wife were perfectly recovered of her health would be [ac]ceptable news to us all; which God grant in his good time that we may" [MBCR 1:383]; a sample of her needlework was deposited at the Salem East India Marine Society Museum in 1828 [NEHGR 1:203].

Hubbard correctly stated that Roger Ludlow was a brother-in-law of Endicott's, which is supported in the will of Philobert Cogan, who left a legacy to "daughter Mary Ludloe" and by Endicott himself who calls him "my brother Ludlow" in a letter to Winthrop of 22 April 1644 [NEHGR 43:309;WP 4:456].

Several inconsistencies suggest the possibility that Endicott had more than two wives. Nothing is known of the Gibson of whom his second wife was supposedly widow. Endicott's wife was Elizabeth at the end of 1636 when the Salem Church members list was compiled. There is no indication after her name that she either died or removed, whereas after Endicott is noted his removal [SChR 5]. In 1640 when Philobert Cogan wrote his will, his daughter Elizabeth was the wife of Endicott. This Elizabeth was fourteen in 1623 at the time of the Somersetshire Visitation. There is a seven year discrepancy from that age when Elizabeth, the Governor's widow deposes, in 1674 [EQC 5:323]. In any event, the former was undoubtedly the mother of their two sons. It is interesting to note that Endicott's last wife importuned him, according to Jeremiah Howchin, in the matter of his will, and in this acted more the part of a stepmother to the sons than a mother.

**COMMENTS:** About 1920 Sir Roper Lethbridge published a pamphlet in which he argued that John Endicott had been born at Chagford, Devonshire, about 1589, son of Thomas Endicott, who was in turn son of a John Endicott who left a will dated 9 May 1635 which included a bequest of forty shillings to John Endicott, "the eldest son and heir of his deceased eldest son Thomas" [Sir Roper Lethbridge, *The Devonshire Ancestry and the Early Homes of the Family of John Endecott, Governor of Massachusetts Bay, 1629* (n.p., n.d.), hereafter *Endecott Anc*, p. 22]. Lethbridge bases his claim on two lines of reasoning: first, on 3 September 1639 Governor John Winthrop issued a "life certificate," stating that on that date "John Endicott Esq. one of the council for the jurisdiction aforesaid is blessed be God at this present in full life & health" [Lechford 177] and that this was in support of a Chancery suit entered in 1636 by the grandson of the testator of 1635 [Endecott Anc 26]; and second, that when in 1651 Governor John Endicott sent a plea to England for contributions to the Corporation for Propagating the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England, "the response to this appeal from Chagford Parish was instantaneous" and among the subscribers was a Henry Endecott who would be under this hypothesis cousin of the governor [Endecott Anc 28].

The second of these arguments has little probative value, for we would expect Henry Endecott to be among the subscribers, no matter who had issued the plea, and we do not know whether the alleged rapidity of response by Chagford was significantly different from that of other English parishes.

The first argument has difficulties as well. Most seriously, the complainant in the 1636 Chancery suit calls himself "John Endecott of Stokentynehed" [i.e., Stokeinteighhead, a Devonshire coastal parish about fifteen miles from Chagford] [Endecott Anc 26]. It seems unlikely that John Endicott would have called himself of this parish after eight years residence in New England, and such a misrepresentation would certainly have been grounds for invalidating the complaint.

We do not, therefore, accept the claimed ancestry for John Endicott, but he may well have been a member of this same family of Chagford and vicinity.

Although he had two sons and ten surviving grandchildren, Endicott's most significant legacy to New England genealogy was not his progeny. We sense a sadness in Endicott when he ponders his posterity. Elder son John was sickly and never had children. Younger son Zerubbabel fathered many children, but

seems to have been content to take his substantial education and patrimony and play the role of gentleman planter, entirely lacking his father's Puritan drive and ardor for public service. The Governor indicated that his books be sold, except those his sons "are capable to make use of."

Endicott's most significant genealogical legacy was the hundreds of detailed depositions required to settle the bounds of his Orchard farm many years after his death. When Rev. Mr. Allen deeded his farm to Francis Nurse, Zerubbabel Endicott, the Governor's surviving administrator, stated that the lot layers "although plain hearted honest men yet of little art and skill in mathematical, grammatical or geometrical rules and expressions" had botched the survey, and asked the court to please consider "whether or no Governor Endecot when he had the liberty to take up what land he then pleased there being two creeks which have been always reputed to be the boundaries of his ancient farm ... should suffer any man so to intrench upon him as to divide or to cut in two that part of his farm and to make it like unto a kite's tail the like precedent not being known in the country" [EQC 7:15-21]. It required decades of testimony to settle the question, and many octogenarians as well as younger men came forward to describe early conditions and relationships, providing a gold mine of dependable evidence for an era so lacking in contemporary accounts.

Savage spent a disproportionate amount of space in a specious argument over whether or not Endicott was first Governor of Massachusetts Bay. Endicott deserves serious attention for the direction and guidance he afforded the young colony, regardless of the offices he held in providing it. His concern for the proper evolution of the settlement ranged from the broad picture down to the drums he bought for Salem [STR 1:138].

In a typically direct action, Endicott admonished the dissolute revelers at Merry Mount in 1628 [Bradford 206; NEHGR 1:211]. He firmly deported the "schismatists" JOHN and SAMUEL BROWNE in 1630, a decision which earned him some criticism for rigidity in England. His strongly puritanical views moved him to deface the military ensign [flag] for being a symbol of popish idolatry in 1634 [WJ 1:155-6, 158], thus leading to his suspension from office for a year, the only gap in public service in all his years in New England. Still direct and seemingly heedless of consequences, he led the punitive expedition of a hundred men against the Indians in 1636, which undoubtedly did much to cause the Pequot War of 1637.

Endicott sternly persecuted the Quakers and hanged three, including Mary Dyer, actions which earned him much criticism from later historians [MBCR

4:419].

The possibility of Cromwell's accession as king was of some concern to Endicott, who wrote in a 1657 letter to Mr. John Leverett in England "What the end is of that point of State to make the Protector King, I cannot fathom it; unless their proffering and his denial thereof ingratiate him the more in the hearts of the people. The Lord in mercy guide all to his glory, and the good of those commonwealths over whom he hath set him" [NEHGR 1:220].

Ready cash was often a problem in the Endicott household, as many grants by the government testify. When Emmanuel Downing sought to marry his son James to Rebecca Cooper, he reminded Winthrop on 28 January 1640/1 that "to help Mr. Endicott with some present money, you wrote to Mr. Hathorne to put her to Mr. Endicott to board, who thereupon received £40 aforehand for 2 years" [WP 4:305].

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE:** John Endicott merited entries in both the DNB and DAB. A memoir of him was published in the first volume of the Register [NEHGR 1:201-24].

SChR - *The Records of the First Church in Salem, Massachusetts, 1629-1736*, Richard D. Pierce, ed. (Salem 1974)

STR - *Town Records of Salem, Massachusetts, 1634-1691*, 3 volumes (Salem 1868, 1913, 1934)

Morison - Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Founding of Harvard College* (Cambridge 1935) [especially for Appendix B, "English University Men Who Emigrated to New England Before 1646," pp. 359-410]

MA Civil List - William H. Whitmore, *The Massachusetts Civil List for the Colonial and Provincial Periods, 1630-1774* (Albany 1870; rpt. Baltimore 1969)

MBCR - *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, 1628-1686*, Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, ed., 5 volumes in 6 (Boston 1853-1854)

EQC - Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County, Massachusetts, 1636-1686, 9 volumes (Salem 1911-1975)

SPR - Suffolk County, Massachusetts, Probate Records

EPR - The Probate Records of Essex County, Massachusetts, 1635-1681, 3 volumes (Salem 1916-1920; rpt. Newburyport, Massachusetts, 1988). Citations to the unpublished probate records are to case numbers, or to register volumes (which begin with volume 301).

CSM - Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Volume 1 to present (1895+)

MA Arch - "Massachusetts Archives," being bound volumes of loose papers at the Commonwealth Archives of Massachusetts, Boston, Massachusetts

Hull - "Diary of John Hull" in Transactions and Collections of the American Antiquarian Society, Volume 3 (Worcester 1857)

WJ - John Winthrop, The History of New England from 1630 to 1649, James Savage, ed., 2 volumes (Boston 1853). Citations herein refer to the pagination of the 1853 and not the 1826 edition, even though the index to the 1853 edition continues to use the 1826 pagination.

NEHGR - New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Volume 1 through present (1847+)

BVR - Boston Births, Baptisms, Marriages, and Deaths, 1630-1699, Ninth Report of the Boston Record Commissioners (Boston 1883; rpt. Baltimore 1978)

WP - Winthrop Papers, 1498-1654, 6 volumes, various editors (Boston 1925-1992)

Lechford - Note-book Kept by Thomas Lechford, Esq., Lawyer, in Boston, Massachusetts Bay, from June 27, 1638, to July 29, 1641, Edward Everett Hale, Jr., ed. (Cambridge 1885; rpt. Camden, Maine, 1988). Citations herein

refer to the pagination as printed (and not to the manuscript pagination) and will therefore differ from the index entries of the 1885 edition.

Bradford - William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation, 1620-1647*, Samuel Eliot Morison, ed. (New York 1952)

DNB - Dictionary of National Biography

DAB - Dictionary of American Biography