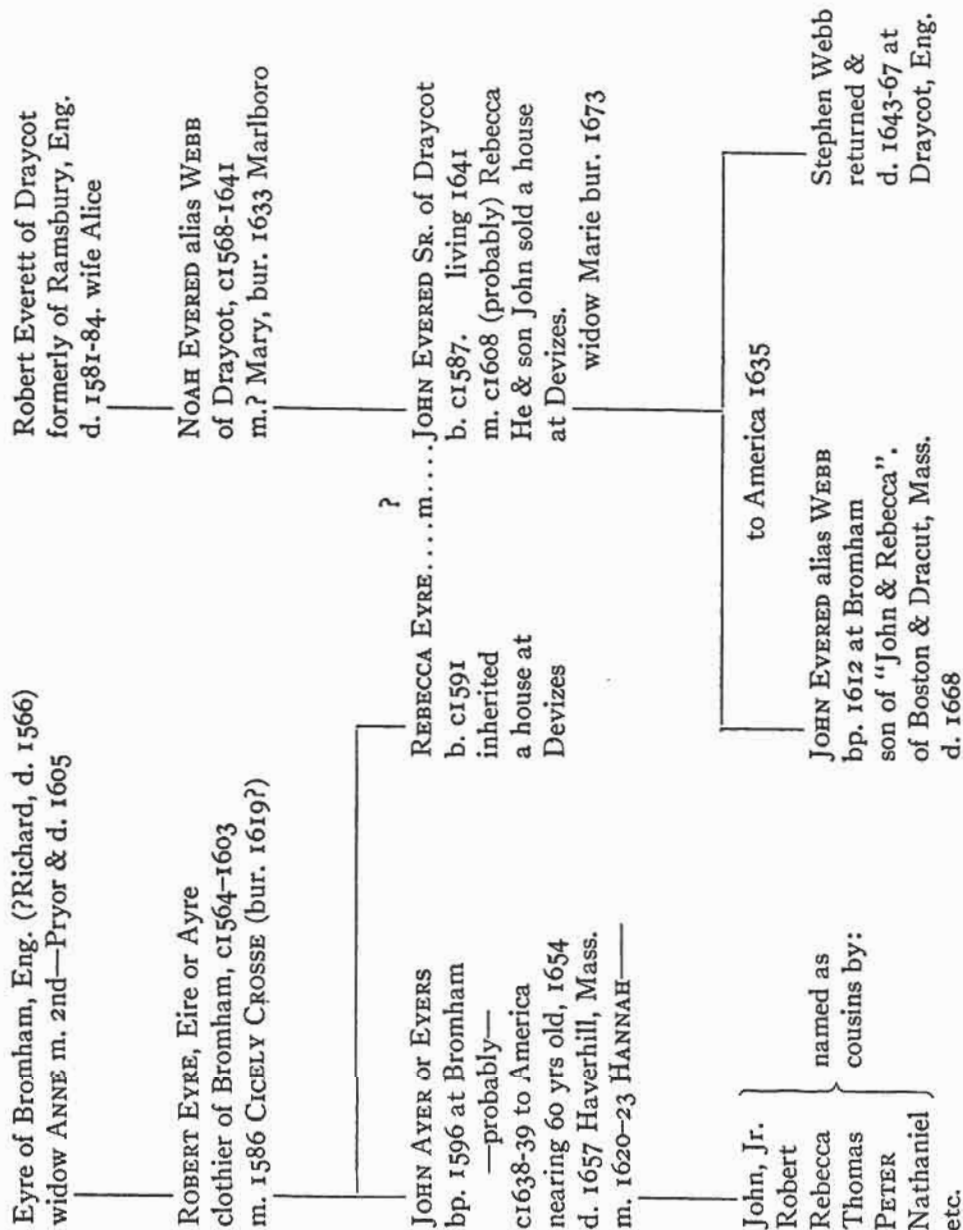


AYER FAMILY  
of Massachusetts and Maine

**EYRE FAMILY IN WILTSHIRE, ENGLAND**  
New Theory of the Ayer-Evered Relationship



CAPITALS denote individuals discussed in the Origin.

## AYER ORIGIN

### *Was John Ayer from Wiltshire's Textile Center?*

THERE IS NO REASON to doubt that the emigrant John Ayer of Haverhill, Massachusetts, who died in 1657, was a Wiltshire man, but did he belong to the Eyre family of Bromham in that English county? Our theory is that he did, but a conclusive answer must wait until a wider search locates the baptisms of his elder children, especially of son Peter, or other proof.

To help the reader, only the prevalent spellings of "Ayer" in the American family and of "Eyre" in the Wiltshire family are used here. Actually this surname had forty-three recognized spellings in England, starting with E, H, A or I, or even with the prefix "Le," and at least seventy-five variants in early New England records. Found as early as 1208, it has its roots in middle English *eyr*, old French *eir*, Anglo-French *heyr* and Latin *heres*, all meaning heir. When surnames were first adopted—perpetuating a characteristic of a person, his origin, parentage or other descriptive term—many individuals were locally known as "the heir," thus giving rise to many unrelated families with this surname.

As a result, the John Eyres of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England were almost as common as John Smiths, and it would be hopeless to tackle directly the English origin of John Ayer of Haverhill, Massachusetts. We must approach this problem, then, through his relative John Evered alias Webb, whose name is far less common and for whom there are direct clues. The term "alias" at that time was the joining symbol between two family names, similar to the hyphen today.

John Evered alias Webb registered as from Marlborough, Wiltshire, on the passenger list of the *James of London* when he and Stephen Evered alias Webb embarked at Southampton about April 5, 1635; they enrolled among "laborers or husbandmen" to conceal

their means. John said he was about 46 years old when testifying in the fourth month of 1659 in the Middlesex County Court of Massachusetts. He was a Boston merchant and spent his last days with wife and servants on the province's frontier at Dracut, or "Drawcutt upon Merrimack" as he put it in his will dated 1665. This he signed with his full double name, though he also appears on Massachusetts records as Webb and as Evered. (His family in Wiltshire likewise used the three forms.) In this will he named as cousins the elder children of our John Ayer.

Wiltshire origin is thus indicated for the Ayer family of Haverhill. Previous genealogists may well have gone astray in assuming that this interfamily relationship was through John Ayer's *wife* Hannah and that her maiden name was Evered alias Webb. Research has disclosed no Hannah in that family at so early a date. Our theory, a new one, is that the relationship was through John Ayer's *sister* Rebecca and that she is to be identified with John Evered Sr.'s wife Rebecca, whose maiden name is not yet known. This theory is summarized on the accompanying chart.

The picturesque map reproduced here shows northern Wiltshire around 1600, the period in which we are interested. On the west border is the famous city of Bath, and inward about a score of miles is Bromham (Brumh'm on the map). The parish register of Bromham contains two baptisms that we have tentatively identified as those of the American emigrants John Ayer of Haverhill and John Evered alias Webb the merchant.

Northwestern Wiltshire is largely watered by the Bristol Avon River, its arms and two royal forests then almost encircling Bromham and two estates of the knighted Baynton family (Spy and Bromham House visited by royalty). Robert Eyre of Bromham was a woolen manufacturer (clothier), and this industry centered around the river's pure waters and power. Four miles or so away, at the woolen manufacturing town of Devizes (the Deuyses), was a wool market—as well as property owned by Robert's daughter Rebecca Eyre and by the John Evered alias Webbs of Draycot Foliat. Robert's widow died near the forest at Seend (Send), and from there an Eyre (who witnessed his will) moved to Lechlade to the north, over the border from Marlborough.

To the south, off the map, is the heart of Wiltshire, the cathedral



Courtesy R. Sandell, Hon. Librarian, Wilts. Archaeological Society,  
photographed 1957 for this book

### Wiltshire Architecture of the Sixteenth Century

The hamlet of Hawkstreet, Bromham parish, where this farm manorhouse stands, is the likely birthplace, in 1596, of John Ayer of Haverhill, Massachusetts. Larger than his own two-story home would have been, the building shows clearly in this rear view the lofts and local style of architecture familiar to him.

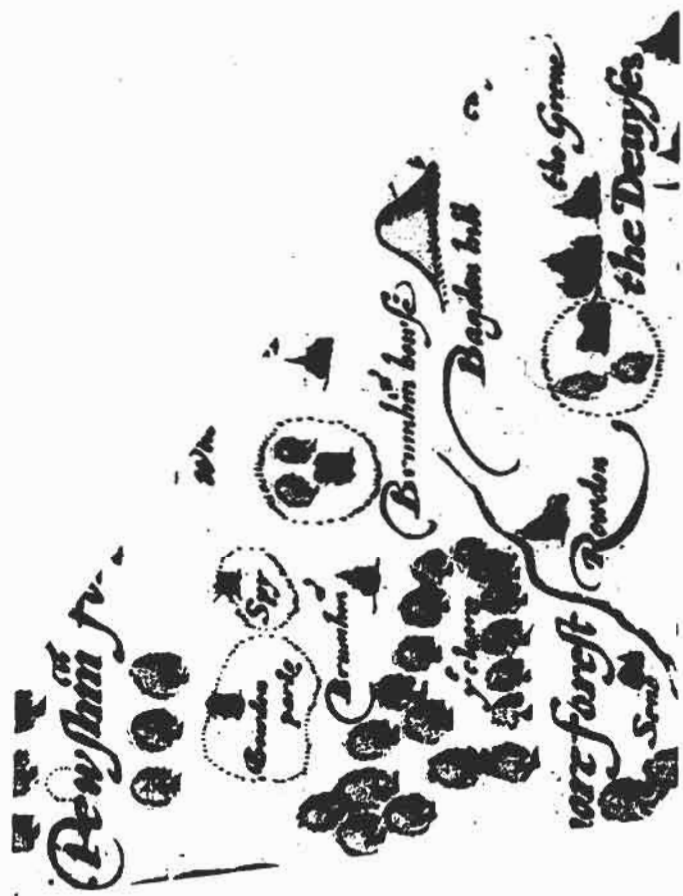


From Saxton's Map of Wiltshire, 1576, courtesy New York Public Library



Map of Northern Wiltshire in the Sixteenth Century and Two Details

The great west road from London to Bath and Bristol entered Wiltshire near Hungerford, at the east, and ran through Ramsbury and Marlborough, or Marlingsboro (right enclosure). Farther on, its lower coach route skirted Bromham House but by-passed Bromham parish church and Devizes, or the Deuysses (left enclosure). The road from the north and the Cotswolds ran south past Chiseldon and Draycot Foliat, or Dricote, through Marlborough to Salisbury, and then on to the port of Southampton. The two details above show (right) the district where the Evered alias Webbs lived and (left) Bromham, or Brumh'm, home of Robert Eyre, with the wool-market town of Devizes to the southeast.



city of Salisbury, which gave its name to Salisbury, Massachusetts, where our John Ayer first settled.

In northeastern Wiltshire lived the Evered alias Webb family, as well as other Eyre families, apparently unrelated (Note 80). The earlier home of the Evered alias Webbs was at Ramsbury near the Earl of Pembroke's manor and six miles from the market town of Marlborough (Marlingesboro). The later one was seven miles north of Marlborough at Draycot Foliat (Dricote) in Chiseldon parish; this was the home of John Evered alias Webb's forebears for three generations and after it he undoubtedly named Dracut, Massachusetts.

These Evered alias Webbs enjoyed a good standing, for "Robert Everard" of Ramsbury was on the subsidy (tax) roll of 1576. Soon after this he settled at Draycot Foliat and was succeeded by his elder son Noah. In the next century some of their descendants resided at Marlborough nearby. In pursuing this double-named family, it developed that Noah's son John preferred the single surname Evered while most of those who lived as late as 1659 changed to the single surname Webb!

Noah's family favored Puritan teachings, for his legacy to son John included *The New Covenant* by Dr. John Preston, the Puritan divine whose Calvinistic sermons were published under that title in 1629. How logical it was that his family should be drawn to Massachusetts!

"John Evered" thus wrote his name in 1640 as witness to the will of his father "Noah Evered alis Webb" of Draycot, and he was still living the next year when referred to (as son "John Webb") in Noah's inventory. This John Evered, the eldest son and born about 1587, left a widow Marie Webb (as she called herself in her will), who was buried in 1673 in Chiseldon parish. Very likely she was his second wife: her death occurred almost a century after his birth and his children were born over a twenty-four-year period. The baptisms in 1609 and 1632 of his eldest and youngest children (both girls, the mothers not named) are the only Evered entries on the scanty bishop's transcripts for this parish. On his property there he paid the ship-money tax of 1635 for the royal navy. In family land transactions he used his double surname, and these are the documentary proof for *this* region that he had a son John:



1616, Aug. 3. Noah Evered alias Webb the elder made a settlement on his son John of half the land in Dracot he had lately bought of Edward Rede, Esq. To be inherited by John the son of said John and then by another son Stephen, both being grandsons of Noah. Said John to pay Noah £220 in installments.

[1635] Easter, 11 Charles I. [Sale, by the customary suit,] of a dwelling, garden and 190 acres in Dracott Foliatt and Swindon by four Evered alias Webbs—Noah Sr., John Sr., John Jr. and Stephen—for £200 sterling.

[1635] Easter, 11 Charles I. [Sale, by the customary suit,] of a dwelling and garden in Devizes by two Evered alias Webbs—John Sr. and John Jr.—for £41 sterling.

The 1616 settlement gives the relationships of the “sellers” in both 1635 sales.

The larger sale links the two younger men to the Massachusetts merchant and his brother; for that very month they emigrated to America from the Marlborough region and would have needed money to obtain a merchant’s stock for the New World. (Stephen returned before 1639.) Both must have passed their twenty-first birthday to give good title to land under English law, so John—the elder of the two—was born by 1613. This agrees with his Massachusetts deposition indicating birth about 1613 and with the 1612 baptism at Bromham.

The smaller 1635 sale eventually served to bring into the family circle the object of our hunt, John Eyre (discussed later). This property at Devizes sold by the Evered alias Webbs was fourteen miles west of Marlborough and not in the usual orbit of their family. However, the region has two earlier “Evered” records important to us: John, Sr.’s brother Richard Evered (surnamed Webb in his 1669 will as a Marlborough linendraper, or seller of uncut cloth) was married in 1625 in St. John the Baptist parish, Devizes. And only four miles from here, in Bromham, a John Evered, son of a John Evered and his wife Rebecca, was baptized on February 9, 1611/12 [see Explanation of Symbols].

Why was this baby baptized so far from the paternal homestead? To us it seems apparent from the foregoing that the baby’s father was that Evered alias Webb who preferred to use the first surname only, so this baptism is primarily important as a clue to the mother.

Who is Rebecca, wife of John Evered? Evered was not a family name in Bromham and was not common in Wiltshire; this little group does not again appear on the Bromham church records, nor does Rebecca (surname Evered, or Webb, or Eyre) again appear in records for the parishes of either region associated with these families. So it is our belief: that John Evered (alias Webb), Sr. of Draycot Foliat in Chiseldon had a first wife Rebecca, presumably buried there long before its parish register begins in 1641; that she was the mother of at least Frances baptized 1609 at Chiseldon and John baptized 1612 at Bromham; and that for the birth of this second child she returned to her childhood home in Bromham to have the loving care of her mother, the widow Cicely Eyre.

If so, the teen-age bride of John Evered was born Rebecca Eyre in Bromham about 1591 (the parish register has a gap, 1589-91), for in the family group she came between her sisters Anne and Bithiah, who were baptized there in August 1589 and August 1593.

Rebecca was one of the two chief heirs of her uncle, William Crosse—a clothier of St. John the Baptist parish in Devizes—whose will dated February 1604 [1604/5] reads in part:

To Rebecca Aires, daughter of Cicely Aires, the fee simple of my now dwelling house in Devizes—and if she die without issue, to John Aires, her brother, or if he fails, to next of kin.

My sister Cicely Aires of Bromham and her daughter Rebecca Aires to be executors and residuary legatees.

This is the Rebecca who was most likely the first wife of John Evered (alias Webb), Sr. She probably died before April 1635 or she would have then joined her husband and eldest son in the Devizes property sale (cited earlier). For were they not selling her own inheritance from her uncle William Crosse?

And this brings us finally to a John Eyre closely related to the Evered alias Webbs—if our theory is correct. Rebecca Eyre and her two sisters had many brothers, most of whom died as infants. The surviving two are entered in the Bromham parish register as John Eire, baptized March 28, 1596, and Zacharias Eire, baptized August 10, 1600, both sons of Robert. These five youngsters were named in the wills of their grandmother Anne Pryor of Bromham, of their uncle William Crosse, and of their own father.

Their parents, Robert Eire and Cicely Crosse, were married in the Bromham church on November 30, 1586. He was buried August 8, 1603 as Robert Eire of Hawkstreet, in Bromham. And he had probably been born only a year or so before 1566 when the baptismal register there begins. He had both a brother Richard and a baby son Richard, so a guess—very tentative—is that his father may have been the Richard Eire buried January 1, 1566 at Bromham. Robert's mother was Anne, maiden name unknown and first names of both husbands unknown. She was buried at Bromham on June 19, 1605 as Anne Pryor, a widow.

Robert's brother Richard Eyre remained in Bromham, raised a family, and died there in 1636. On the other hand, Robert's widow and youngsters do not appear again on this parish register; apparently they left town.

This family's approach to life is revealed in the wills of Robert Eyre and his mother and in his room-by-room inventory, made in 1603-5. (Documents for him given in Note 79.) Her will is typical of a widow, for she meticulously divided her small possessions among her grandchildren and remembered those who evidently had helped her—servants, schoolteacher and parish clerk. His will is businesslike. He tried to anticipate his wife's problems and his young children's needs and he appointed four men to guide them. As was customary, he left a small legacy to the parish poor.

Robert Eyre's inventory in 1603 totaled £317 (excluding real estate, if any). This was a tidy sum for one who died before his fortieth birthday and in a century when the purchasing power of money was great.

Robert's youngsters—John Eyre, his brother and sisters—were born into easy circumstances though not with the proverbial silver spoon that Uncle Richard bequeathed to each of his children. Their grandmother Pryor's two servants and their father's pewter, table napkins, candlestick, coverlet and cushions suggest comfort and some attention to style. The books owned by their father and their uncle Richard are an intriguing item, for neither could write his name; they were perhaps for the children, since Richard's daughter Mary could write and so could Robert's son John if we are correct in believing that he is the Massachusetts ancestor. Robert in his will

left a sizable bequest for his sons' education and a small legacy to the local schoolmaster.

The house in which Robert Eyre's children were born had two stories, judging from the inventory. It stood in rural Hawkstreet, a hamlet of Bromham parish belonging to a manor of Sir Harry and Sir Edward Baynton. Hence he may have been an hereditary (copyhold) tenant.

His livestock suggests a self-supporting homestead, and his mother's stock of rye, a small farm. Horses—rather than a horse—at first seem surprising, but he undoubtedly used them as pack-horses in his business.

Sheep as the natural wealth of this woolen center figure prominently in the distribution ordered by both Robert and his mother in their wills. Each owned a loom; in their day looms were such a coveted means of livelihood that an anti-monopoly law of 1555 prevented country clothiers from owning more than one.

Robert Eyre called himself a clothier in his will and—not knowing how to write—signed it with a mark that resembled the long-toothed card (comb) used in his industry. He was a textile manufacturer, to use the modern term for clothier. In Tudor and Elizabethan England the woolen industry was the most important in the kingdom, and its industrial heart was in the west country. Here in northwest Wiltshire, clothiers specialized in making undyed broadcloth of fine quality for export. Under a statute of 1552, each broadcloth had to be at least sixty-three inches wide, twenty-six to twenty-eight yards long, and forty-four pounds in weight. These measurements emphasize the size of Robert Eyre's broad loom and of the working space required by his "organization."

Even in that century, a textile manufacturer had to have a talent for organizing, credit proficiency, and capital. In scope, his business could be that of a major industrial capitalist or of a petty capitalist. Robert Eyre's textile business was probably average in size, or somewhat smaller.

A sixteenth-century clothier bought his wool, cleansed it, and "put it out" to be carded, spun and woven by craftsmen, usually in their own cottages. If he had sufficient capital and organization, he might buy fine wool from growers in other counties or from leading merchants. Otherwise he himself raised sheep and bought

more coarse Wiltshire wool from the small broker (brogger) at a local wool market.

Robert Eyre was one of the small-business group, probably buying at Wool Hall in Devizes, but his establishment was large enough to include a separate weaving shed. And his mother may have shared in his business.

A clothier had under his direct control the scouring, fulling and stretching of cloth. Wiltshire clothiers usually omitted the final process of dressing their broadcloth. They transported it in heavy ten-piece packs along the Marlborough road to London and sold it for credit at the cloth market in Blackwell Hall to merchant adventurers who had developed a Central European market for undyed undressed broadcloth.

Robert Eyre would have fullled his cloth in a local water mill. His inventory shows he had one wool loft for supplies and stretching and another for weighing. Apparently he himself took his broadcloth on packhorses to London to negotiate credit sales, often complicated. This aspect of the business he feared, in his will, might be too difficult for his wife and result in unsold stock that would deteriorate. His fear concerned the handicap of a woman in business.

He could have had no premonition, since he died in 1603, that James I would bring disaster on this important industry in 1614 by indulging in one of his caprices. The Continental market thus lost was not regained because of the Thirty Years War. Clothiers were unable to sell their manufactures at the very time that their raw material—wool—rose in price, and their workmen were further exploited, if employed at all, when wages were fixed and food prices were rising. The acute depressions in 1614-17 and 1620-23 are highlighted by the estimate of 3,000 unemployed in Wiltshire in 1616 and by the petition of Bromham weavers in 1622 stating that with forty-four looms idle, over 800 persons were close to starvation in the parish.

How difficult these times must have been for little John Eyre, orphaned in 1603 at the age of seven, and for his younger brother Zacharias and his three sisters. Their widowed mother could scarcely have kept the family business going through the first depression and by the second one she was dead, if she was the widow Cicely Eyre buried October 16, 1619 in Seend parish nearby.

Besides depression, this period brought religious and political strife to Wiltshire. Catholic lined up against Protestant, and Anglican against Puritan, with Puritans here the stronger. Civil war was brewing between royalists and parliamentarians, and dissension within both parties created new tensions and mistrust; the rebels suspected even their own leader, Sir Edward Baynton of Bromham Hall. Caught in this upheaval, many Wiltshire citizens—John Eyre among them?—felt the New World might offer greater opportunity and security.

And how does John Ayer of Haverhill, Massachusetts fit into this picture? Very well. He repeated the names John, Robert and Rebecca for his first three children; even if these names are too common to be significant, there was also a grandson by the rare name Zachariah Ayer. Probably Cicely, his mother's name, was too favored by Cavalier families to be retained by him, a Puritan. His son Thomas may have been named for Thomas Eyre, gentleman, of Bromham who was contingent guardian of the orphaned John and Zacharias Eyre under their father's will.

John Ayer of Haverhill was born shortly after 1594 and had received some education. The English John Eyre was baptized at Bromham in March 1596 and his education was provided for by his father. A boy brought up in a period of depression and unrest would naturally develop the caution and tenacity which John Ayer the man displayed in a less competitive occupation in Massachusetts. His daring was in pulling up stakes and going to the New World, though over forty and encumbered with a family. Here he gradually accumulated farming lands and then painstakingly distributed them by will.

Not far from John Ayer geographically, but further from him economically and socially, was "Mr. John Evered alias Webb" of Boston, Chelmsford, and Dracut, Massachusetts; the then rarely used "Mr." in itself indicates a respected position. In his will he named as chief heirs and "cozens" (cousins) five Ayer men of Haverhill and their sister (children of the deceased John Ayer) and added that "if there be any more Brothers or Sisters of that family of the Eayres," they were to share equally. Obviously he did not know the Ayers intimately. This might be expected of a member of a landed family in another part of Wiltshire who in America

had six servants and several thousand acres. Apparently blood was thicker than water with him, for he omitted from his will his wife's son by her former marriage and remembered his own cousins—the nephews and niece of his mother Rebecca.

By way of summary, let's look again at the chart. Of the two Massachusetts settlers, John Evered alias Webb's origin and his father's family are fully proved and we have built up a good case both for his mother's identity as Rebecca Eyre and—through her—for the origin of John Ayer of Haverhill. To confirm this circumstantial evidence, it is hoped that baptisms of John Ayer's children will be found and that John Evered, Sr.'s wife Rebecca will be located in Draycot or her maiden name determined by some record. Meanwhile, the existence of so many contemporary John Eyres prompts the query again: Did the Haverhill settler come from Bromham in Wiltshire?

*References for Eyre:* 5-6, 29-31, 51, 61, 64-65, 70-74, 78-82, 84, 86-95.

*References for Evered alias Webb:* 5, 27, 49, 51, 70-72, 74-76, 81-84, 87-92, 94.

*References for Crosse and Pryor:* 79, 82, 90, 94.

## AFTER COMING TO AMERICA



AYER FAMILY IN AMERICA  
arrived about 1638-39

- I. JOHN AYER, m. 1620-23 HANNAH—  
|  
II. PETER AYER, m. 1659 Hannah Allen  
|  
III. Samuel Ayer, m. 1693 Elizabeth Tuttle  
|  
IV. EBENEZER AYER, m. 1726 Susanna Kimball  
|  
V. Joseph Ayer, m. 1775 Eunice Clark  
|  
VI. JAMES AYER, Sr., m. 1805 Thirza Mason  
|  
VII. JAMES AYER, JR., m. 1843 MARTHA BOURNE  
|  
VIII. JAMES BOURNE AYER, SR., m. 1877 MARY E. FARWELL  
|  
IX. MARY FARWELL AYER, m. 1910 JOHN E. ROUSMANIERE

CAPITALS denote individuals discussed in the Story.

## THE AYER STORY

IN COLONIAL AMERICA, this Eyre or Ayer family for the most part led the small-town or farming life of New England. After the Revolution, came an unbroken succession of Ayer doctors all named James. The family dwelled in the region between Boston and Portland, not far inland, in present-day Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine. In America, the spelling of their surname eventually became standardized as Ayer.

### I. *John Ayer—Puritan Farmer* (died 1657)

John Ayer, a Wiltshire man, emigrated to America with his wife and half-grown family about 1638 or 1639. Neither his ship nor the date is known (though often printed erroneously). Already in his forties, he was rather old to start life anew, but he intensely desired the security that comes from owning farm, meadows and home. He may already have turned Puritan in England.

Ever since the great Winthrop fleet of 1630, Englishmen in large numbers had been willing to become "voluntary exiles" in New England, often sailing secretly because of permit restrictions or the ecclesiastical courts. Since Puritans followed the Lord's dictates, the King viewed them in his orders of April 30, 1637 as among the "many whose end was to live without the reach of authority." Rushforth, an observer of the scene, also records that the "severe Censures in the Starchamber, the rigorous imposing of [church] Ceremonies, and the silencing of multitudes of Ministers for not reading the Book of Sports on the Lord's Day [a royal proclamation encouraging sports after church], caus'd both Ministers and People to sell their Estates, and set sail for *New England*."

To stop this migration, the King commanded his port officers to prevent "any Subsidy-men or of their value" [those wealthy enough to be taxed] from leaving without a special license and to require from any lesser men not only a certificate from local justices that they had taken the oaths of allegiance and supremacy but also a testimonial of conformity to the Church of England signed by the parish minister. In addition his Majesty "taking notice of . . . the factious Disposition of the People of that Plantation [New England] and how unworthy they were of any Support or Countenance from hence," prohibited merchants, masters and shipowners "to set forth any Ship with Passengers for New England" without a special license. Nevertheless the exodus of colonists continued and among them was John Ayer.

As "John Eyres," he is on the undated list of those granted land in the first division of Colchester, Massachusetts between September 4, 1639 and October 7, 1640, when the town was renamed Salisbury. The subsequent town record of this division called him "John Ayres, Sen." He may well have followed friends or relatives here, for about half of the twelve men who in 1638 obtained permission to "plant" this settlement were of Wiltshire origin. Within a few years he made his permanent home in nearby Haverhill, like Salisbury on the north side of the Merrimack River. In John's time, both towns were in *old* Norfolk County in Massachusetts, which had colonized this region to hold it, despite prior English grants to the New Hampshire proprietors, partly because the latter in Puritan eyes were religious enemies.

Massachusetts Puritans planted their towns with intent to consolidate and expand the Kingdom of Christ for His chosen people. The land was theirs since the Lord had brought them hither; and He made room for them by smiting the Indians with deadly plague and smallpox. Customarily, the Massachusetts General Court issued the initial grant to a few men it judged "of good and honest report" upon condition that a settlement be started within two years; it then incorporated the town and fixed its boundaries. This group had the power to grant lands and town privileges to prospective residents. Such settlers were granted as much meadow and upland "as their present and future stock of cattel and hands [family, and perhaps servants] were like to improve"; turbulent persons were

rejected but the poor were granted lands on the basis of their ability.

In town planning, the group's aim was productive usage of land while maintaining a compact civil and religious settlement, so that "those that had land nearest the place for Sabbath Assembly, had a lesser quantity at home [the home site], and more farther off to improve for corn [grain] of all kinds." When the town had enough residents to maintain a minister, they searched for "a reverend godly man," and on finding him, the True Believers among them joined by Covenant into a church body and he was ordained its *settled* pastor.

Capt. Johnson, a Puritan man of affairs of Woburn, Massachusetts, discussed these practices in a New England history published in London, 1654. He also described John Ayer's home town of Haverhill as it then appeared:

*Of planting the twenty-sixth Church of Christ  
at the Town of Haverhil*

The Town of Haverhil was built much about this time [1640], lying higher up then Salisbury, upon the fair and large river of Merrimeck: the people are wholly bent to improve their labour in tilling the earth, and keeping of cattel, whose yearly encrease encourages them to spend their days in those remote parts. The constant penetrating farther into this Wilderness, hath caused the wild and uncouth woods to be fil'd with frequented wayes, and the large rivers to be over-laid with Bridges passeable, both for horses and foot.

This Town is of a large extent, supposed to be ten miles in length, there being an over-weaning desire in most men after Medow land, which hath caused many towns to grasp more into their hands then they could afterward possibly hold. The people are laborious in gaining the goods of this life, yet are they not unmindful also of the chief end of their coming hither, namely, to be made partakers of the blessed Ordinances of Christ, that their souls might be refreshed with the continual income of his rich grace, to which end they gathered into a Church-body, and called to office the reverend M. Ward [who was born at Haverhill in England].

These last two paragraphs read like a capsule biography of John Ayer. He seems to have limited his outside activities to the minimum burden of service required by the Puritan regime. The town of Haverhill fined him in 1647 for being late to town meet-

ing. He served several times on the Grand Jury of Norfolk County Quarterly Court. He must have served his eight days of annual military training decreed by law since he was not fined for absence and was permanently exempted by the County Court in October 1654—when near the military age limit of sixty.

That he had some feeling of independence as well as education is implied by his signature "John Ayre, Sr." in 1654 on a paper objecting to a witness as unfit to testify in a court case.

He was a Puritan church member and among the elect because he was a freeman: at the Essex County Court held at Ipswich 4th day 9th month 1645, "John Ayres Sr." and John Ayres Jr. of Salisbury were "made free." A freeman was not the opposite of a slave but a citizen with special privileges. A prerequisite of this "freedom" was membership in the local Puritan church, and this was achieved—if at all—only after a rigorous period of questioning and a "publicke notice" to the town.

Boston's one professional lawyer, Thomas Lechford, was never accepted into church membership. He emphasized the legal and civil-rights angle of Puritan citizenship in his book *Plain Dealing* published in London, 1642:

None have voice in elections of Governour, Deputy, and Assistants; none are to be Magistrates, [military] Officers, or Jurymen, grand or petite, but *Freemen*. . . Now the most of the persons at *New-England* are not admitted [as members] of their Church, and therefore are not *Freemen*, and when they come to be tryed there, be it for life or limb, name or estate, or whatsoever, they must be tryed and judged too by those of the Church, who are in a sort their adversaries: how equall that hath been or may be, some by experience doe know, others may judge.

We doubt if John Ayer was concerned with such problems—for himself or on others' behalf—since the records portray him as minding his own business and since as a freeman he was in the favored group.

Ayer was an able pioneer and a cautious, responsible man. His name appears seldom except on local land records. In the late 1640's when Haverhill appraised each man's property, his was estimated at £160, the third highest in the community. At his death a decade later, his inventory totaled £248, and this did not include his sec-

ond house and much of his land. The long and carefully drawn will of "John Eyers ye Elder" divided two houses and many small scattered tracts among his sons, such bequests to be void if sold without first offering them to their brothers at an outsider's price.

He provided his widow Hannah with the use of dwelling, lean-to, barn for hay or corn, orchard, pasture, two meadows, the best cow, and yearly rents from their sons based on the acreage each tilled. "Widdow Ayers" built a house of her own in the early 1670's; but in 1681 she sold about seven acres of her husband's unimproved land because she needed money and earlier an official had charged her in court with the offense of selling cider. She affixed her mark H to documents.

Their modest manner of living is indicated by the inventory of his estate in 1657. Other than dwelling, barn and land, the most valuable item was 4 oxen, £25. He had 4 cows, 2 steers, a calf, 20 swine and 4 pigs but no horse; farming implements included 1 plow, 2 pair of plow irons, 1 harrow, 1 yoke and chain and a cart rope, 2 sickles and a reaphook, etc.; in the house he had pewter worth £1, 3 flock beds and bedding £18, 12 yards of cotton cloth and cotton wool, hemp and flax, 2 [spinning?] wheels, 3 chests and a cupboard £1 3s, kitchen equipment of 2 pots, 3 kettles, 1 skillet, 1 frying pan and also 1 warming pan. Salt, 2 or 3 bushels of it, indicates home-curing. He had 2 muskets and books worth 15s. Debts of £1 were owing him, but he himself had no debts.

*References:* 5-6, 10, 28-32, 34, 36, 43, 50-51, 57, 61, 64-65, 80 esp. b & f, 85.

## II. *Peter Ayer—Puritan Public Servant* (c1632-1698/9)

Peter Ayer, the leading member of this family in its early generations, crossed the ocean as a child with his parents. He may have been educated here by apprenticeship as was his younger brother Nathaniel.

He early learned that the Puritan regime demanded subordination of the individual's will and interests to those of the commonwealth. When he was 21, in 1653-54, a great stir arose because a

neighbor, Lt. Robert Pike, was disenfranchised and fined by Massachusetts' General Court for saying that they who forbade preaching by laymen in the absence of a minister "did breake their oathe to the countrey." Residents of the five frontier towns petitioned to have the sentence revoked, but instead some were punished by the Court for this unreasonable request. Meanwhile Haverhill's thirty-seven signers had prudently acknowledged their offense, among them "Peter Ayre" and his brothers John and Robert (see illustration).

Young Peter, thus subdued, copied his father for the next decade in quietly buying small acreages. His large sale in 1664 (for £75) suggests sudden need of cash, perhaps for his new household. This sale deed, acknowledged by "Peter Eyeris" and "H" (his wife's mark), was for 132 acres of upland he had been granted in the town's third division, 7 acres of meadow and two common-ages—privileges to keep cattle on the common.

The General Court of Massachusetts made Peter a freeman in 1666, shortly after the qualifications were modified by royal order, but undoubtedly he also met the old requirement of church membership as he was active for the Puritan church. He served on Haverhill committees to appoint a minister and to supervise the erection of a new meetinghouse.

Peter Ayer's life shows that he shared as a local leader in the general enthusiasm for the great cause of militant Puritanism and the conscious founding of a Puritan state. He was on Haverhill committees to build a school (1670) and, later, to examine others' rights to common land. He was a Selectman in 1692, then an Assessor, and he represented the town in more important ways mentioned below. He served on both Grand Jury and Trial Jury of Norfolk County Court before 1680, when Haverhill was annexed to Essex County. He administered the estates of neighbors and represented his father-in-law as attorney in a suit. When the town had to support a 99-year-old resident and asked for food, to be repaid out of the next taxes, Peter Ayer offered three pounds of meat and corn.

From the Puritan viewpoint, military activity was that of Soldiers of Christ who must conquer wilderness and enemy while building and defending the Puritan Temple of State, so the settlers

36

John Williams  
 John Williams  
 Thomas Davis  
 Joh: Eyeres  
 James High  
 Dan: Handward  
 Stephen Kent  
 Richard Singlary  
 Henry Malmer  
 Robert Eres  
 George Conley  
 Bartholomew Hath  
 Edw: Clark  
 James Davis  
 Theophilus Sarswell  
 Tho: Whittier  
 Tho: Dow  
 Joseph Davis  
 Peter Ayre  
 Samuel Field



Photographed 1959

### Signature and Gravestone of Peter Ayer

Varying spellings were used by the family in the 17th century.

LEFT: Haverhill signers on this petition to the Massachusetts General Court in 1654 include "Peter Ayre" (next to last) and his brothers "Joh: Eyeres" (near top) and "Robert Eres." On the official list of deputies to that Court in 1685, he appears as "Mr. Peter Heires."

ABOVE: The gravestone of "Peter Ayres of Haverhill" in Boston's famous Granary Burying Ground. Note the design.



were organized into town trainbands and county regiments. And, as Capt. Johnson also wrote:

. . . There are none chosen to office in any of these Bands, but such as are freemen supposed to be indued with faith in Christ Jesus. . . . Their Officers are chosen by the major Vote of the souldiers, being installed into their place by the Major of their Regiment. . . . The Regiments are exercised once a year by turnes; they are also very observant to keep their armes in good order; each souldier is to keep constantly by him powder, bullet, and match. . . . These commanders and souldiers are daily exhorted [that they depend] on the Lord Christ through faith for deliverance and true valour.

Peter Ayer served in the local cavalry, rising to the rank of cornet, the junior officer in a cavalry troop. On various records he is called corporal (1673-84) and cornet (1689-94). The "troop of Salisbury, Haverhill, and Amesbury" met in 1689 to choose their officers, and "Mr. Peter Ayres" lost as cornet by 8 votes to 23 but won as quartermaster by 19 votes to 13; this was reported by their major, Robert Pike, to the General Court which had commissioned him.

Major Pike's troop had been severed in 1680 when most of old Norfolk County was yielded to New Hampshire. In 1684 "In ye behalfe of ye rest of ye Troupe serving on ye northward of Merrimack river," Ayer signed a petition for a larger troop for their three towns, to serve on their side of the river only, except in emergency. The General Court merely reaffirmed its enlistment limit of forty-eight soldiers who were "qualified with ability of body, and sufficient horse & armes." Thus we know Ayer was a strong, active man, though over fifty years old, and—unlike his father—could afford a horse of his own.

Haverhill was a frontier town all Peter's lifetime and often subject to Indian alarms. Undoubtedly he saw active duty as an officer, but the records deal with his civilian efforts for its defense. In 1675 he was on the committee to decide which houses should be garrisoned against possible Indian attack, and in 1690 when cornet he petitioned the General Court to send a force of forty men for daily scouting duty—and soldiers were then ordered to the frontier towns. Haverhill had experienced an especially cruel attack the year before.

Peter's political service in his frontier home town first won him a seat in the Colony's legislature at Boston in 1680/1. The rapidly changing political situation during his years there is described by Mary F. Ayer (the late Mrs. Rousmaniere) in her book on *Boston Common*.

Ever since the first settlement of Boston the home government had allowed the colony of Massachusetts to govern itself. . . . [It] was each year becoming more and more independent. By the middle of the century, therefore, the King began to fear that he would lose the colonies unless their freedom was curtailed. This feeling became so strong in the reign of King Charles II, that in 1684 the colonial charter was annulled, and the right of government was taken away in part from the colonies.

The reign of Charles was brought to a close before he had time to establish a new form of government, and his successor, King James II, allowed matters to remain as they were until 1686. In that year he appointed Colonel Kirk governor, but this appointment falling through, he delegated Joseph Dudley to act as president until the arrival of a governor.

The King, in December of this same year, sent over Edmund Andros to act as governor until a definite form of government could be arranged. Before this result had been effected, however, William of Orange had landed in England, and had driven James from the throne.

The inhabitants of Boston were much dissatisfied with Andros, who made the power of the Crown felt by restricting them in many ways.

When the rumor reached Boston in 1689 that William had arrived in England, without waiting for confirmation of the report, they arose in revolt, and imprisoned Andros and other obnoxious officers of the Crown. On the night of that 18th of April, when the hated representatives of the King's authority were safely locked up in the fort, there was doubtless a noisy celebration. . . .

Increase Mather and the other representatives of the colonies in London tried to prevail upon the new king to give back the old charter, but on this point King William remained firm. He promised to recall Andros for trial, but said that in future the colony must be ruled by a governor appointed by the Crown.

The new charter, which reached Boston in 1692, changed the Colony of Massachusetts Bay into the Province of Massachusetts Bay, and William Phips was the first of the ten royal governors sent over to govern the Province. From the end of this Inter-Charter period until the evacuation of Boston the town was never free to govern itself.

Peter Ayer today would be known as a state legislator, but at that time the title was Deputy to the General Court and responsibilities were also judicial and even administrative. Between 1680/1 and his death he was the representative from Haverhill thirteen times, either at regular or special sessions, though rarely in successive years. He served under the old and new charters and in the inter-charter period before and especially after the Andros regime (Andros did not convene the General Court). In 1689 Haverhill also chose Ayer its delegate to the convention of towns called by the newly formed Council of Safety.

So, in this period of struggle for power and control, Ayer was in the thick of it and apparently among those favoring change. This struggle was not only between Crown and Colony but also between merchants and ministers, for Boston merchants had become so important commercially and socially that they were challenging Puritan theocracy.

Wooden Boston had risen from the ashes of its 1679 fire like the phoenix. By 1690-92, its population—almost doubled—placed it in a class with England's cities; a third of its houses were now of brick and stone, and many of its wharves were enlarged with warehouses. Its ships, fitted with new tall-timber masts for the Boston-Europe-West Indies trade, were supplying and selling for the interior from Newfoundland to Connecticut.

Peter Ayer witnessed this phenomenal growth from the vantage point of the old Town House, the center of the colony's political and mercantile activity, and he shared in it as a Deputy and probably as a merchant. But whether or not he was primarily a merchant (of Haverhill, for he was not of Boston) is not clear. He did possess money scales and sued and was sued by a Boston merchant for 6,000 feet of pine boards and again for 10,000 pine boards.

The witchcraft hysteria that swept the colony about this time struck close to Peter Ayer's home. How soon did rumor reach him about a Widow Mary Parker of Andover? This widow, hanged 1692 in Salem as a witch, was not his sister of that name and village but a distant English-born cousin through the Evered alias Webb connection.

Peter Ayer died in Boston in midwinter, about three weeks after the end of the 1698 legislative term.

His inventory shows he lived in more comfort than his father. He had double the apparel and books. Furnishings included stools, chairs and cushions, cupboards and cupboard cloths, table linen and old sheets. He had pewter worth £5 11s as well as silver, tin, and old brass, a brass kettle and candlestick, earthenware, woodenware, a chafing dish and glass bottles, a pair of steelyards and money scales (which imply a merchant's trade but no merchant's stock is indicated in the inventory).

His livestock consisted of 2 horses worth £4, 4 oxen worth £16, sheep, and many more cattle than his father but fewer swine. Heading these chattels is a negro man, £30. Corn was his chief crop, and the 2 old hop sacks suggest beer brewing.

Living on the far side of the Merrimack, he owned three-fourths of an old boat, sail and tackling, £4, and arms, ammunition, a case of pistols and holsters. His eight tracts in Haverhill and Salisbury, including home property of £150 and 180 acres in the 4th division worth only £18, comprised most of his estate. The inventory totaled £486 8s.

The year of Peter's death, Haverhill Selectmen decided the new meetinghouse had space for eight private pews, to be built at the individual's expense, and allotted one of them to Peter's widow, Hannah Ayer, and son.

At the time of their marriage, Peter Ayer was 27 and Hannah Allen ten years younger. He and his teen-age bride had settled on Silver Hill's sunny slope two miles west of Haverhill's First Meetinghouse. Eventually—about 1675—they built a permanent home there. No doubt he was advised by his father-in-law William Allen, an illiterate builder (house-carpenter) and landowner in nearby Salisbury.

This Ayer homestead was inherited by their only surviving son, Lt. Samuel Ayer, who had a negro slave named Lot. It continued to be owned and occupied by descendants into the twentieth century and is still standing at 621 Washington Street, in the west part of Haverhill.

*References for Peter Ayer:* 5, 11, 18, 28, 30-32, 34, 36-37, 43, 46, 50, 57-59, 63-64.  
*References for Samuel Ayer:* 13, 28, 36.

IV. *Ebenezer Ayer—Frontier Official*  
(1704/5-1762)

Ebenezer Ayer's life echoed the career of his grandfather Peter though with more of his services on the frontier.

As a youth in Haverhill, when an Indian war was terrorizing the northern settlements, Ebenezer joined a company of volunteers under Capt. John Lovewell and Lt. Josiah Farwell, both noted Indian fighters of nearby Dunstable. Their expedition started April 15, 1725 and consisted of thirty-four men when they were ambushed in May near present Fryeburg, Maine. Only eighteen survived the ensuing fight, including Ebenezer who was lightly wounded. That autumn, he served as a "centinel," that is, a scout, in Ensign Moses Hazzen's unit which was posted along the outskirts of Haverhill to give the alarm.

Ayer settled in the new town of Methuen (previously part of Haverhill), building his home about 1730 to serve also as a garrison house. It may have been in garrison duty that he—and his father Samuel before him—acquired the rank of lieutenant, which is on their gravestones.

Ebenezer Ayer lived in this dwelling the remainder of his life despite the legal changes of residence indicated by his civic services. He was paid for helping erect the meetinghouse of Methuen's North Parish. The provincial boundary line run in 1741 cut off this parish, which midst local apprehension was transferred to New Hampshire. Ayer served Methuen District, as it was now called, in various ways, both locally and in the New Hampshire House of Representatives, 1747-48. Here he petitioned that the District be formed into a township, and it was incorporated in 1750 as the town of Salem. He served as its Selectman the next year. His last service was in helping to obtain from the New Hampshire proprietors a confirmatory grant to Salem, dated March 8, 1759, in which he is named. The formation of Salem placed his home, later torn down by his grandson, in present Salem Center.

The inventory of his estate was appraised in 1762 for £13,089, a sizable amount.

Ebenezer's minor son Joseph soon followed his older brothers to Maine. A wanderer and a blacksmith, he is mentioned here

chiefly because he brought the name James into this Ayer family line through his marriage to James Clark's daughter.

*References for Ebenezer Ayer:* 46, 53, 54, 55, 60.

*References for Joseph Ayer:* 16, 24-26, 69.

## VI. *James Ayer—Country Doctor* (1781-1834)

This James Ayer was the first of four generations of doctors all named James and the only one who spent his entire life in Maine. Born during the Revolution, he grew up while Maine was still a District of Massachusetts. He was educated in Bethel, and a classical bent is indicated by his horses Cato, Plato and Nero.

He studied medicine under Dr. Timothy Carter of Bethel, a fine physician and noted medical teacher. At that time it was customary to train under a medical practitioner. In 1805 he completed his studies, began practicing, married, and bought the house in Newfield that became the family homestead.

Dr. Ayer was Newfield's first regular practitioner and he became a familiar figure in his high yellow gig as he visited his patients or drove to meetings in Portland. He was a County Commissioner for York County as well as a member of the Maine Medical Society. He taught several students in medicine and enjoyed a successful country practice. Though his income was limited, he got a chaise for his wife (apparently the second one in town), and he found a Latin teacher for his son in a young lawyer who used as office a room in his house.

The Congregational pastor at Newfield had been dismissed in disgrace in 1804 and for the next twenty-one years Dr. Ayer and his neighbors had to rely on itinerant preachers. He gave his active support to these occasional services, held in the schoolhouse, and led the singing. He joined members of different denominations to build a new meetinghouse only a few months before his death, at 52, of erysipelas contracted in his practice.

This first Dr. James Ayer was recalled by his son as especially kind and indulgent, ever willing to labor in behalf of his family. His



Painted 1825 by [John?] Brewster. Reproduced from illustrations in *James Ayer, In Memoriam* (1892)

### Thirza (Mason) Ayer, 1781-1864, and her husband Dr. James Ayer, 1781-1834

These paintings were hanging in his homestead when it burned down in 1947. John Brewster, born 1766 in Hampton, Conn., was a deaf-mute who painted in Boston, Salem, Portland and Buxton, Maine (home of his brother, Dr. Royal Brewster). He painted Rev. Paul Coffin, Buxton's Congregational minister. Note in text Dr. Ayer's associations with Buxton, Portland, and the medical and Congregational fields.

children never forgot "the happy influence of their religious home life."

References: 1, 4, 7-8, 16, 41, 67-68.

## VII. *Dr. James Ayer—Working for a Degree* (1815-1891)

The second Dr. James is the one who brought this Ayer family to Boston. He and his brothers grew up in Newfield, Maine, helping with the chores, riding the horses to the river for water, driving the cows to pasture and caring for their own chickens while their father was busy on his country rounds.

The new school in their part of the town was unfurnished, and he noted later:

Our school seats were planks—very uncomfortable. When ten years old, transferred to Limerick Academy—about 50 pupils. This was four miles away. Boarded there during the week. In winter months attended district school in Newfield and was tutored in Latin—Virgil at 12—and Greek.

In 1831, by outside tutoring, entered Bowdoin College. Started with sophomore class of 40 members. Henry W. Longfellow was professor of modern languages. The college was under the patronage of the Congregational Church.

Ayer was a member of the Peucinian Society, the more select of Bowdoin's two "fraternities," both literary. His college reports read: "Rank, satisfactory; attention to studies, good; deportment, correct." He graduated, B.A., in September 1834 at the age of 18.

At that time the scholastic year was very different. Country boys were needed for farming, so local schools usually had a short winter session only. Academies had summer and fall terms, and young James attended both for five years. Bowdoin College had fall, spring and summer terms, its year beginning and ending in September with the long vacation from Christmastime to mid-February. Tuition was \$24 and room rent \$10. Its students generally taught a district school in the long vacation, and if they were



lucky enough to get a three months' appointment, the college was lenient.

"Ayer always taught school and with eminent success," wrote a classmate. In each town the school committee certified him, as required by Maine law.

But Ayer wanted to be a doctor. Medical standards were changing, and graduate medical study cost money that he did not have after his father's death in 1834. So he alternated studies with teaching at schools and academies. Before taking his third—and last—short medical course, he taught in Centre Lebanon's district school for \$22 a month with board and had private pupils in languages at 2 or 3 shillings a week. Of his medical training, thus prolonged over five years, Ayer merely noted:

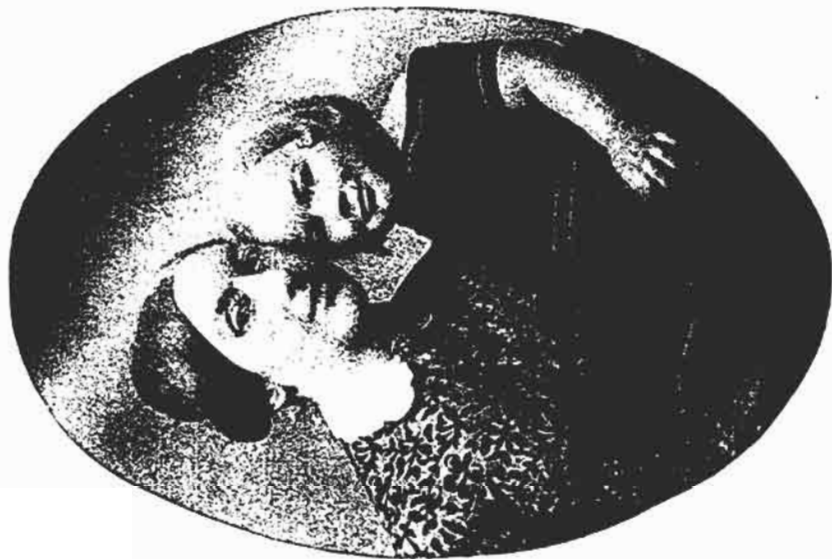
My oldest sister married Dr. Levi Ham of Newfield, and I studied medicine under him for awhile. . . . In 1837 to Dartmouth for some medical lectures. In 1838 returned to Bowdoin for medical lectures and also acted as assistant librarian. Received my M.D. degree there May 1839.

By invitation Ayer first practiced at Centre Lebanon, Maine, though not yet ready for a degree. Viewing his appointment as postmaster as a temporary crutch, a second try there convinced him:

Not much practice here. Moved to Monument on Cape Cod and later to Sandwich where I soon had a good practice. Married Martha Bourne, daughter of leading citizen of Sandwich.

This practice brought him his wife, for she was first his patient. He rode horseback to reach the Cape from Maine and to attend his patients, carrying medicine and instruments in a saddlebag. One of his articles, "Some observations on some 1000 cases of Midwifery on Cape Cod" is a result of his six years' stay which ended unexpectedly:

In 1846, brother Cullen, who was practicing in Boston, fell ill with typhoid and died. . . . I left the Cape and moved to Boston to take over his practice. . . . In 1846 the Back Bay water came up to Charles Street. Rope walks were at one time established there beyond the Common and Public Garden which once had a Botanical Park. The



1851 daguerreotype

Martha (Bourne) Ayer, son James and her husband Dr. James Ayer, 1851-1891



Painted 1854 by Adna Tenney

These and the companion painting of Ayer's wife (not shown) are owned by Dr. James B. Ayer. Adna Tenney, born 1810 in Hanover, N. H., was a farmer who turned to painting after a few weeks' training in Boston in 1844. He was an itinerant artist in New Hampshire, New York and Maryland and about 1856 went west.



By John La Farge and his son Bancel La Farge

Ayer Memorial Window, Mt. Vernon Church, Boston

suburbs were connected with the city by horse-drawn omnibuses called "Hourlies."

Boston, when Dr. Ayer arrived, was being hailed as "The Athens of America." Here, an intellectual curiosity and vigor had been stimulating a native American culture. Emerson with his transcendentalists, Margaret Fuller, Channing—apostle of Unitarianism—Longfellow and Holmes, among others, had already won international recognition. European visitors were charmed by gracious red-brick Boston, especially that part of Beacon Hill where Ayer and later his son would one day have their homes.

Dr. Ayer always had an office in his home. For fifteen years he lived in Boston's old North End at Hanover Street addresses: at first he and a Baptist minister had a new house together. As his patients removed to the city's newer sections, his daily drives became longer. He also moved, but only as far as the then West End near the State House. In the seventeen years here, his home was chiefly at 6 Hancock Street which he bought in 1865 from a doctor.

Martha, his wife, died in her early thirties, and a beautiful tribute to her appeared in the *Congregationalist* for October 19, 1855. She was cheerful, conscientious and ever thoughtful of others, and met remorseless disease with patience and religious faith. In his sorrow, Dr. Ayer had to meet the needs of their six-year-old son. Faced with the problem of little James' upbringing, he persuaded his widowed sister-in-law to keep house for him. Eventually they were married.

Dr. Ayer became a leader in behalf of the Congregational faith when the theological battle between Congregationalists and Unitarians was often heated and bitter. As his minister remarked: "He

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For Dr. Ayer's memorial, his son chose as artist John La Farge (1836-1910), who was prominent in the art world and had won fame for a new method of making stained glass. The sketches for this window, in the 1899 exhibition of the Architectural League of New York, were reviewed as: "An important record in the art of glass. . . . The color scheme is light but beautifully balanced, the composition of line admirable in its thickness for the requirements of the medium. The working drawing shows . . . the deft manner in which the leads are designed to aid the artisan in the technical execution of the window. . . . It is one of a series which has established a distinctive style and has made this art universally appreciated." The theme, appropriate for a physician, is the healing at the pool of Bethesda.

was peaceable and a peacemaker. His religious opinions were well settled and yet he was . . . largeminded to all [people] of different ways of thinking." He had joined the church in his youth at Newfield and then at Lebanon. In Boston he was closely identified first with the Salem Street Church, which he joined under Rev. Edward Beecher, and later with Mt. Vernon Church on Ashburton Place. He was treasurer of the Mt. Vernon Congregational Society for a few years. To Dr. Ayer, religious services were ever a delight, not confined to one day in the week.

Dr. Ayer was a general practitioner before the era of specialists, but midwifery was almost his specialty and he was an officer of the Boston Obstetrical Society. Contagious disease also interested him greatly and he rarely failed to have fresh vaccine on hand for himself and other physicians. He actively fought cholera in 1849 and 1854 and smallpox in 1872. An old friend remarked that he was in every respect "the good physician." Concerning himself, he noted:

Became an active physician from the start. Fees from 50 cents to one dollar. 41 years of active practice. Served on school committee for several years. Consulting Physician of the city for six years; councillor of Massachusetts Medical Society for 38 years. During Civil War served as Visiting Physician to Discharged Soldiers' Home. In 1863 visited hospitals in District of Columbia in behalf of U.S. Sanitary Commission. A trustee of Lying-In Hospital for 23 years. For 30 years interested in the Boston Society for Medical Improvement.

Except for a western trip on his second honeymoon, Dr. Ayer did not find time for an extended vacation until 1878, when he traveled in Europe for a half year. Returning, he resumed practice less actively, leaning on his son. He moved off the Hill to 135 Boylston Street nearer the city's medical center and eventually to hotels. Reading was his chief recreation, professional and, increasingly, biographies and books on travel and old Boston.

His favorite maxims were "Let your moderation be known to all men" and "Never cross a river until you come to it." He liked to quote Holmes to the effect that a man could use science ". . . provided he has common sense."

His college, in its obituary, described him as "without pretence, modest, simple, of great kindness and of unfailing courtesy," and his granddaughter Mary A. Rousmaniere remembered him as a lov-

able man. In his memory his son presented a stained-glass window to the new Mt. Vernon Church on Beacon Street and also wrote the book *James Ayer: In Memoriam*.

References: 1, 4, 8, 19, 21.

VIII. *Dr. James B. Ayer—Seen  
through His Harvard Diary  
(1849-1910)*

James Bourne Ayer of Boston as a boy spent much time in the companionship of his father, whom he revered. Often he helped him by cutting out and scraping "points" from goose quills for use in vaccinations. He lost his mother when not quite seven but never entirely forgot her.

At school he stood well in his classes and received a good-conduct medal. He studied at Eliot and Boston Latin schools and at Harvard, graduating from college in 1869 with honors in modern languages and literature. In a diary his senior year he wrote:

Dec. 2, 1868. Up early, 5.45. Cribbage and physiology in evening.

Dec. 13, Sunday. To Dr. Kirk's [family minister, Mt. Vernon Church] in the morning. Mission School 1.45. Sunday School concert at 6.30.

Dec. 18. Initiated into Pi Eta Society. Not very fearful. The only Society besides the Pudding for our class. Pies, cakes, ale and cider.

Dec. 25. Merry Christmas. I received a watch and a very fine one—price \$135—from Father . . . gloves and handkerchiefs from Mother [stepmother]. . . . Decorated Mission School.

Dec. 29. Think of trying for honors. Dont amount to anything beyond honor of getting them.

Jan. 1, 1869. Sent out 109 bills by mail [for father]. Happy New Year exchange. Gave Washburn a bottle of cologne. Ditto Joe. Cleaned snow 7.30 to 8.45, then took a stunning breakfast—fried pork steaks and buckwheat cakes. Carried out thirty-odd bills and collected \$60. Received from Father \$25 in recognition of my services. Went in to Dr. Stearns with Annie. All played parlour billiards and liked the game.

Jan. 8. To Pi Eta. Played small part in "Captain of the Watch." Adjourned at one o'clock in the morning.

Jan. 14. Politics raging between Pi Eta and Pudding.

Jan. 17 (Sunday). Walked to Mt. Auburn and back. Met crowds of "Irish domestics" going to church [probably recent arrivals]. Attended church. Walked in to meet Father [Sunday custom]. Sunday School concert of "Messiah."

Feb. 20. Again on my velocipede. Felt all tired out at end of half hour. Can ride ten feet without stopping.

Feb. 22. Washington's Birthday. Bells ring. Make up condition in Optics. Read 100 pages of French with Fred Palmer.

Feb. 23. Just got to Prayers. Two minutes to dress.

March 19. New President nominated, 38-year-old Charles W. Eliot of Technological Institute.

May 16. Took Mother to see "Rip Van Winkle" at Boston Theatre. Jefferson acted perfectly without stage bluster.

May 19. Began horseback riding. Commenced a series of five rides with Mosely. \$10 apiece.

June 3. Played croquet with three friends, and sat on steps till 9.30 [other diversions mentioned, whist, euchre, parchesi and walking].

June 4. Had last recitation. . . . Half a dozen examinations only left.

June 7. Sudden impulse: get up spread if Tower and Gallagher will give rooms. They gave two excellent rooms for the evening. Got Lowell and Brett to print 100 invitations. Father and Mother glad.

June 16. Was in chorus of Jubilee Concert. Some 25,000 in audience. (Sat. spread, about 140 present.)

After graduation at the age of 20, James B. Ayer took his first long pleasure trip, going west by Erie Canal boat and on to Detroit, Milwaukee, Chicago and St. Louis. He visited relatives at Amboy, Illinois, and returned by train. At Harvard again, he kept a briefer diary:

Sept. 30, 1869. Began study of medicine. Start at 6.30 a.m., but expect to make it 4.30 or 5.

Oct. 5. Have an allowance of \$100 a quarter for everything but medical expenses. Spent \$16 for a pair of pants.

Jan. 6, 1870. Twenty-one years of age. . . . Father gave me a set of Macaulay's "History of England," 5 vols. Mother, "The Traits of Irish Peasantry," 2 vols.

Jan. 20. Have had a laboratory constructed in my room, and partly furnished. Am very proud of my "office."

Dec. 3. First baby case. Got the start of the doctor. Only saw third stage.



Mary E. (Farwell) Ayer, 1845-1915, wife of Dr. James B. Ayer

As a young lady and as a matron.



The year 1872 he served as a House Officer of Massachusetts General Hospital.

For summer holidays he mentioned a two months' fishing trip along the New England coast, where he "caught 650 lbs. cod and Haddock," and a walking trip in the White Mountains. One summer he lived with a German family in Cassel, learning German, and another he spent mountain-climbing with his college friend Ben Mosely in the Alps.

He graduated from Harvard Medical School with an M.D. degree in 1873. The next two years he gave over to advanced study abroad and to travel.

After his return, Dr. Ayer devoted himself to the study and practice of medicine in Boston. He was a member and officer of the Massachusetts and Suffolk District medical societies and a frequent contributor to professional journals. From 1890 to 1893 he served on the Board of Overseers of the Poor and later was on the State Board of Insanity. He was active in charitable endeavors and gave his services freely for years to the Channing Home for tubercular patients. He was a general practitioner with a large practice and active for some thirty-five years.

On a visit to London he met Mary E. Farwell of Boston, who was staying at Brown's Hotel. They were married in 1877 and settled down at 6 Hancock Street, which his father owned and turned over to them for home and joint office. A few years later her father, Nathaniel W. Farwell, gave them a fine old brick house also on Beacon Hill, at 53 Mt. Vernon Street. Here they had one of the first telephones, and every neighbor old or young went to their house to use it. The great excitement of trying to reach New York by phone is still remembered.

Following the trend to the Back Bay, Dr. Ayer built a new house, with office, at 518 Beacon Street; nearby was the new Mt. Vernon Church, which he attended regularly. "I remember how sad I felt at leaving the Hill when I was a young girl," Mary (Ayer) Rousmaniere recalled, "and moving so far away where the Harvard Bridge was not even finished. Father felt, though, that more doctors would be needed in this new development and had the vision to make the move."

Dr. Ayer was always a student, not only of professional sub-

jects but also of local history. In 1888 he took the whole family (including the nursemaid) to Europe so he could attend lecture and clinic courses in Vienna, Jena and Munich. In later years his chief diversion, intensely pursued, was studying early Boston history and collecting books, maps and views pertaining to old Boston. Two of Dr. Ayer's maxims quoted by his daughter were "Keep your interests broad" and "Cultivate an avocation as well as a vocation." The only form of holiday that held charm for him was an occasional trip to Europe, and on one of them he collected chiaroscuro woodcuts.

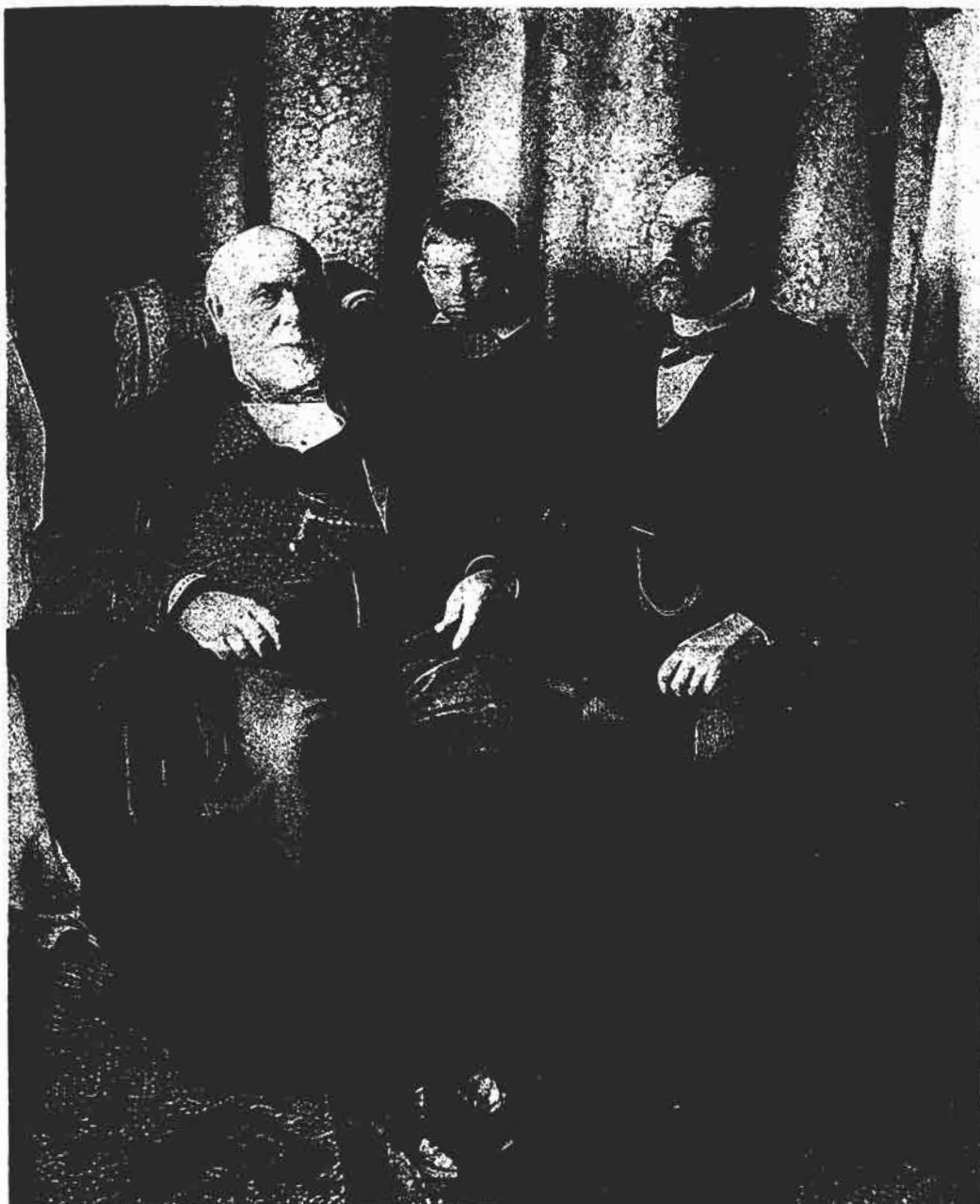
From the time of the emigrant, each generation in this branch of the family had maintained a close relationship with the church. With Dr. Ayer this interest took the form of a study of church expansion in the colonies and led him to collect books of early New England sermons. He chose for subject of his bookplate, used in his library of Americana, the ordination of his ancestor Richard Bourne as minister to the Indians in 1670. It will be illustrated in "The Bourne Story."

The family's long medical tradition is now represented by Dr. Ayer's son, Dr. James B. Ayer of Milton, Massachusetts, Professor Emeritus of Neurology, Harvard Medical School, and by his grandson, Dr. John Palfrey Ayer, Clinical Associate in Pathology, also Harvard Medical School.

*References:* 4, 9, 12, 35, 44.

### IX. *Mary F. Ayer* (1878-1954)

Mary Farwell Ayer joyously shared in the interests of her father, Dr. James B. Ayer, Sr., and joined him in his scholarly avocations. With her own generation, happy summers at the century's turn and the venturesome feel of the new automobile—brother Nat owned one—are glimpsed in a family friend's informal reminiscences (Note 12). Her life, before and after her marriage to John E. Rousmaniere, has been beautifully told in her sister's "Appreciation," which opens this book.



### Three Generations of Ayer Doctors

James Ayer, 1815-1891, his son James B. Ayer, 1849-1910, and his grandson James B. Ayer, Jr., born 1882.

## AYER GENEALOGY

I. *JOHN AYER, SR.* of Salisbury, Mass., and Harverhill, emigrated to New England about 1638-39 and died in Haverhill on March 31, 1657. While American records give no age, birth or birthplace, they contain circumstantial evidence (already cited) that he was from Wiltshire, England and that he was nearing the military age limit of 60 years in October 1654; hence he was born not long after 1594. Further research should identify him with the "John Eire" (or Ayre) baptized March 28, 1596 at Bromham in Wiltshire, as already expounded in "Ayer Origin."

His widow Hannah Ayer did not die until Oct. 8, 1688 at Haverhill. Again no age is given on town records. Nor is there any clue to her maiden name—if our theory is correct that the known English relatives are her husband's. She was the mother of all his children, as is learned from a deposition sworn to Nov. 10, 1694 by Cornet Peter Ayer "aged about sixty & three years" and by Nathaniel Ayer, both of Haverhill:

John Ayer our brother . . . was the Eldest Son of our abovesd father John Ayer and mother hannah ayer as we have herd our abovesd father and mother Say: that he was the first childe that ever they had. . . .

Their son Robert deposed in 1711 that he was aged about 86 years (so born about 1625). Hence John and Hannah were married about 1620-23, abroad.

*References:* 5-6, 29-31, 38, 51, 61-62, 64.

II. *PETER AYER* of Haverhill was the fifth among the nine children of John and Hannah Ayer. He was born about 1632, abroad. Records of his age include two depositions by him for court cases, the one just quoted and another in 1692 that his age was 60. He died "aged about 66 yeares" in Boston the night of Jan. 2-3, 1698/9 (his death there on Jan. 2 was recorded at his home town of Haverhill and his Boston gravestone says Jan. 3). His estate was settled and divided in 1700.

Peter's marriage to Hannah Allen on Nov. 1, 1659 was recorded

at both Salisbury and Haverhill. Their banns or intentions were announced Oct. 8. She was born at Salisbury in 1642 "on the 17th day of the 4th month," which was June (see Explanation of Symbols). She was second of the twelve children of William Allen of Salisbury, whose will was proved in July 1686. Hannah's mother was William's first wife, Ann Goodale, who died there "about ye last of May 1678." Hannah herself died Dec. 22, 1729 at Haverhill, mother of nine children.

Ayer's gravestone in Boston, illustrated earlier, is inscribed:

Peter Ayres of Haverhill aged about 66 yeares dyed January ye 3 1698/9

Hers in Haverhill's Pentucket Cemetery reads:

Here lies buried the body of Mrs. Hannah Ayers the wife of Peter Ayers who died December Ye 22nd 1729 & in the 88 Year of her Age.

*References:* 5, 28, 32, 38, 61, 62, 64.

*III. SAMUEL AYER* of Haverhill was the sixth child and only surviving son of Peter and Hannah Ayer. He was born Sept. 28, 1669 in Haverhill. His tombstone in West Parish Cemetery there reads: "Here lies buried the body of Left. Samuel Ayer who died Janry—" (the date, scaled off, is Jan. 2, 1743/4 on the town record).

Samuel Ayer "junior" and Elizabeth Tuttle were married Nov. 21, 1693 in Haverhill, and she died there Nov. 29, 1752. She was born Nov. 24, 1670 at Ipswich, Mass., daughter of Symon Tuttle of Ipswich, who died in Jan. 1691, and of his second wife Sarah, who died Jan. 24, 1731/2.

*References:* 13, 28, 38-39, 61, 66.

*IV. EBENEZER AYER* of Methuen, Mass. and Salem, N. H. was the fifth of eight children of Samuel and Elizabeth Ayer. Haverhill records give his birth on Feb. 18, 1704/5 and his marriage on March 29, 1726 to Susanna Kimball. She was born in Bradford, Mass. on May 25, 1707, daughter of Robert and Susanna (Atwood) Kimball. Her father's gravestone in Bradford gives his death on Feb. 24, 1743 in his 68th year.

Ebenezer Ayer's wife Susanna died after childbirth on Sept. 19 or 26, 1749 (varying records kept by Salem and Methuen). Ebenezer had more children by a second marriage. He and both wives died at Salem Center, and his tombstone there reads:

Here lies ye body of Lieut. Ebenezer Ayr. He departed this life March ye 3, 1762, aged 57 years.

The next month administration on his estate was renounced by the eldest son who had moved to Maine, and in 1763 a guardian was

appointed, under £2000 bond, for three minor sons over 14 years old, including Joseph.

*References:* 2, 22, 28, 38, 40, 48, 53, 55, 60.

V. *JOSEPH AYER* of Maine was the eleventh of his father's seventeen children, mostly boys. He was born the night of May 22-23, 1746, in Methuen District, N.H.; family record says May 23, birth record reads May 22, a son of Ebenezer and Susanna. Joseph moved to Maine, where he lived in turn at Pearsontown (now Standish), Buxton, Brownfield and Bethel where he presumably died, on Aug. 19, 1814. The Buxton church record of his marriage Oct. 3, 1775 says Joseph Ayer of Pearsontown married Eunice Clark of Little Falls (now Hollis and Dayton).

His wife Eunice, daughter of James and Mary Clark, was born Aug. 12 and was baptized Nov. 13, 1748 in First Church, Biddeford, Me. Her gravestone, near her son's in the old burying ground of Newfield, Me., reads:

In memory of Eunice Ayer, widow of Joseph Ayer, died April 25, 1822, age 73.

They had only six children.

*References:* 3-4, 8, 16-17, 24-26, 48, 52, 55.

VI. *DR. JAMES AYER, SR.* of Newfield, Me. was born Sept. 26, 1781 in Buxton, Me., one of the younger children of Joseph and Eunice (Clark) Ayer. Marriage intentions were registered on Aug. 15, 1805 at Bethel, Me. between "Doct. James Ayer and Miss Thirza Mason, both of Bethel," and the ceremony was performed Nov. 7. His death in Newfield was reported in a regional newspaper; hers occurred Oct. 17, 1864. Both are interred in the old village burying ground near their homestead. His stone reads:

James Ayer M.D. Died January 23rd Anno Domine 1834 Age 52 years.

Thirza was born July 3, 1781 in Dublin, N. H., eldest of the eleven children of Moses Mason, Jr. of Dublin and Bethel. Her mother was Eunice Ayres, born Jan. 17, 1761 at Brookfield, Mass., descendant of an emigrant John Ayres who was a tenant farmer at Ipswich, Mass. in the 1640's.

*References:* 4, 7-8, 14-15, 23, 34, 41-42, 52, 67.

VII. *DR. JAMES AYER, JR.* of Boston, one of eight children of James and Thirza Ayer, was born Oct. 4, 1815 in the family home at

Newfield, Me. He was married at Sandwich, Mass. on Nov. 9, 1843 to Martha, seventh child of Benjamin and Lucinda (Bourne) Bourne of Monument, Mass. (see Bourne account). Martha was born July 14, 1822 and died of tuberculosis on Sept. 29, 1855 in her 34th year. Dr. Ayer then married July 15, 1862 her sister Mrs. Mary Ann Storms, who survived him. He was aged 76 when he died of pneumonia on Dec. 31, 1891 at the Hotel Oxford, Boston. Martha also died in Boston and both are buried in the family lot at Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Mass.

*References:* 4, 8, 21.

*VIII. DR. JAMES BOURNE AYER, SR.* of Boston was the only surviving child of James and Martha Ayer. He was born Jan. 6, 1849 at Boston in their home on Hanover St. He married in her parents' home, 39 Chester Sq., Boston on April 4, 1877, Mary E. Farwell, who was born Aug. 6, 1845, in Waltham, Mass., a daughter of Nathaniel W. and Eliza Farwell (see Farwell account). Both Dr. Ayer and his wife died in Boston, he on May 14, 1910 and she on Feb. 12, 1915, and are buried in the family lot at Mt. Auburn Cemetery.

*References:* 9, 20, 33.

Dr. James B. and Mary E. Ayer had four children, three of whom carried on the line. Their Ayer and Inches descendants are given on the charts that follow, and their Rousmaniere descendants have already been shown on three Rousmaniere charts.

1. *MARY FARWELL AYER*, born April 13, 1878. Discussed below.

2. *Nathaniel Farwell Ayer*, born June 24, 1879 at 6 Hancock St., Boston; died in 1948, unmarried. He was a resident of Boston and a cotton manufacturer, continuing the family business.

3. *Dr. James Bourne Ayer*, born Dec. 28, 1882 at 53 Mt. Vernon St., Boston. He married Hannah Gilbert Palfrey, Nov. 14, 1909. A resident of Boston and Milton, Mass.

4. *Elizabeth Ayer*, born Feb. 10, 1891, at 53 Mt. Vernon St., Boston. She married, in 1920, Henderson Inches, merchant, who died in 1947. Living in Chestnut Hill, Mass.

*References:* 4, 12.

*IX. MARY FARWELL AYER*, eldest child of James B. and Mary E. Ayer, was born April 13, 1878 at home in 6 Hancock St., Boston.

She was married at home, 518 Beacon St., Boston on April 15, 1910 to John E. Rousmaniere. He was born Oct. 14, 1877 at Roxbury, Mass., the son of John L. and Fannie Rousmaniere (see Rousmaniere account). He died Sept. 6, 1944 in a Long Island hospital and she died suddenly Nov. 24, 1954 at her home in the Westbury Hotel, 15 East 69 St., New York City, aged 76 years. Both are buried in the family lot at Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Mass.

*References:* 4, 47, 56.



DESCENDANTS OF JAMES B. AND HANNAH (PALFREY) AYER

*Children*

James Bourne Ayer  
 b. Sept. 24, 1910  
 d. Aug. 15, 1952, Colorado  
 unmarried

Hannah Gilbert Ayer

b. Sept. 14, 1911

m.

Robert Saltonstall

b. May 19, 1910

res. No. Andover, Mass.

*Grandchildren*

Robert Saltonstall, Jr., b. Nov. 27, 1935

m. June 9, 1957

Elizabeth Zopf

Suzannah Saltonstall, b. Dec. 13, 1936

Nathalie Saltonstall, b. July 27, 1940

James Ayer Saltonstall, b. Aug. 11, 1945

John Palfrey Ayer

b. Jan. 26, 1914

m.

Lee Zimmermann

b. Mar. 17, 1918

res. Dedham, Mass.

Nathaniel Farwell Ayer, b. Aug. 16, 1949

John Palfrey Ayer, Jr., b. May 3, 1952

Katharine Fauntleroy Ayer, b. June 25, 1955

*Great-grandchildren*

Joanna Ayer Saltonstall, b. Nov. 1, 1958

William Saltonstall, b. Sept. 25, 1960

DESCENDANTS OF JAMES B. AND HANNAH (PALFREY) AYER (cont.)

*Children*

Suzannah Cazneau Ayer  
 b. May 3, 1915  
 m.  
 John Harleston Parker  
 b. July 2, 1907  
 res. Cambridge, Mass.

*Grandchildren*

John Harleston Parker, Jr., b. Jan. 4, 1943

Penelope Parker, b. Aug. 29, 1944

Suzannah C. Parker, b. June 30, 1952

*Great-grandchildren*

Mary Farwell Ayer  
 b. Sept. 8, 1917  
 m.  
 James Saxton Hartzell  
 b. May 26  
 res. Los Angeles, Cal.

Christopher James Hartzell, b. July 16, 1945

Richard Ayer Hartzell, b. Mar. 30, 1948

Elizabeth Ayer  
 b. Sept. 26, 1921  
 unmarried  
 res. Milton, Mass.

DESCENDANTS OF HENDERSON AND ELIZABETH (AYER) INCHES

*Children*

Elizabeth Inches  
 b. Oct. 10, 1921  
 m. Dec. 17, 1946  
 Harrie Roger Chamberlin  
 b. June 13, 1920  
 res. Chapel Hill, N. Car.

*Grandchildren*

Elizabeth Ayer Chamberlin, b. Feb. 15, 1949  
 Sarah Eden Chamberlin, b. June 12, 1953  
 Ann Farwell Chamberlin, b. Nov. 16, 1955  
 Robert Carey Chamberlin, b. June 13, 1959

*Great-grandchildren*

Henderson Inches, Jr.  
 b. June 1, 1924  
 m. June 26, 1950  
 Mary Joanna Ray  
 b. Mar. 16, 1926  
 res. Wellesley Hills, Mass.

Henderson Inches, III, b. Nov. 5, 1952  
 d. young, June 22, 1957

Susan Brimmer Inches, b. Nov. 27, 1954

Robert Page Inches, b. Oct. 29, 1957

## AYER NOTES AND REFERENCES

Ayer 1892: family book cited below as Note 8.

NEHG: New England Historic Genealogical Society.

Phemia: English material at NEHG cited below in Note 71.

English origin: second half of this bibliography.

1. Artists. *New-York Historical Society's Dictionary of Artists in America, 1564-1860*, by George C. Groce & David H. Wallace (1957), pp. 79, 381, 621. *Architectural Review*, 6 (Boston, 1899): 39. Architectural League, N. Y., *Catalogue of the 14th Annual Exhibition*, 1899, p. 18, pl. 36. *M. and M. Karolik Collection of American Paintings, 1815 to 1865* (1949), pp. 142-43. *Genealogical History of the Quinby Family*, by A. Quinby (1915), opp. pp. 204 & 286, and *A Sermon by Rev. Paul Coffin, D.D., Preached . . . in Buxton, Maine*, ed. C. Woodman (1888), frontispiece (for John Brewster's portraits). We are indebted for advice on these and on Wiltshire architecture to Miss Mary Bartlett Cowdrey, Archives of American Art, and Miss Naomi Street and Norwood Vail, Art and Architecture Div., New York Public Library.

2. Ayer, Ebenezer, "born March 1705 died March 3, 1762" heads the old family record (Ayer 1892, p. 4), presumably destroyed with the homestead at Newfield, Me. in 1947. The difference between this entry and the town's birth record—Feb. 18—is explained by the 11 days dropped when the new calendar was adopted in 1752.

3. Ayer, Eunice (Clark). Her birth Aug. 12, 1749 (Ayer 1892) was presumably misprinted from the above Ayer family record, since Aug. 12, 1748 agrees both with her age on her tombstone and with the Nov. 13, 1748 baptism of the only Eunice Clark located; the latter, as James Clark's daughter, logically brought the name James into this branch of the Ayer family. Accuracy of the baptismal year was kindly verified on the original register of Biddeford Church by Walter G. Davis of Portland. The death date of her husband, Joseph Ayer, Aug. 19, 1814 in Maine, was found only in the chart next cited.

4. Ayer family. Charts, memorabilia, etc., among papers of Mary A. Rousmaniere's estate, including notes by her grandfather James Ayer and her father's Harvard diary.

5. Ayer genealogies are of varying quality. For this line, a summary only had been printed (Ayer 1892), and Miss Bailey now provides proof of its basic accuracy, as well as much new biographical material. For the first two American generations, well-documented accounts are in: *Granberry and Allied Families* by Donald L. Jacobus (1945), pp. 158-60; *Moore and Allied Families* by L. Effingham & Anne L. de Forest (1938), pp. 20-27, 151; *Ancestry of Charles S. and John S. Pillsbury* by Mary Lovering Holman (1938), 2:1075, 1085-88.

6. Ayer, Hannah. The emigrant's widow is the Hannah recorded by Haverhill as dying in 1688. Her Feb. 3, 1681 deed transferring her husband's Salisbury lands

to son Robert, signed by her mark X, was not filed until 1691 and, together with his 1692 sale thereof, was confirmed by quitclaim of Dec. 3 & 27, 1692 by her sons John, Peter and Nathaniel Ayer (Ipswich deeds, 5:384 & 564). These dates after 1688 caused confusion in some Ayer genealogies. She also used a mark H.

There seems to be no clue to her maiden name: for the misleading guess of Evered alias Webb, see Note 74.

7. Ayer, James, 1781-1834, is not on the incomplete Buxton birth records, but his birth there was supplied by grandchildren for reference Notes 8 & 67. The letters M.D., on his tombstone and in these same references, were perhaps the courtesy honor of the period when so many doctors did not have degrees. His name was not found on printed lists of honorary and regular medical degrees awarded by Bowdoin, Dartmouth and Harvard.

He is not to be confused with a possible cousin, Capt. James Ayer also of Newfield, Me., who by wife Nancy was having children in the same period and who was Representative to the General Court in 1820.

8. *Ayer, James, In Memoriam*, by James Bourne Ayer (1892), 58 pages.

9. "Ayer, James Bourne, M.D.," by Mary A. Rousmaniere of Roxbury, in NEHG, 65 (1911):252-54.

10. Ayer, John. Evidence of Puritan recognition as a freeman—the significant basis of his American life—has been found by Miss Bailey and is here presented for the first time; his emigration year and ship, however, are still unknown. See restudy of the records in Notes 34 & 80, b & f.

There is no need to confuse him with his younger contemporary John Ayres, tenant farmer of nearby Ipswich, Mass. and later of Brookfield.

11. Ayer, Peter. A large landowner of Haverhill and a Boston merchant is an unreferenced description of him in some accounts. No record terming him "merchant" was found in a search of various printed tax lists, deeds and court records of both regions. Statements on his house and its erection date (taken from Chamberlain's Ayer MSS at NEHG) were not verified, for we learned too late that the house is still standing.

12. Ayer—Rousmaniere—Inches. *Upon the Road Argilla*, by Sidney N. Shurcliff (1958), pp. 73-80.

13. Ayer, Samuel, 1669-1743/4, was termed "Junior" on Haverhill records to distinguish him from his older first cousin: Capt. Samuel Ayer, 1654-1708, who was more important.

14. *Ayres, Descendants of Capt. John, of Brookfield, Mass.*, by Wm. H. Whitmore (1870), pp. 1-2, 23. This is a different Ayer family, but one from whom Mrs. Mary A. Rousmaniere descends through her ancestress Thirza Mason.

15. Bethel, Maine, marriage intentions in *Putnam's Monthly Historical Magazine*, 2 (1893-94):218.

16. *Bethel . . . , Oxford County, Maine, History of*, Wm. B. Lapham (1891), pp. 69, 164, 465-66, 585. Its genealogical summary on Ayer is incomplete and inaccurate; corrected and amplified by references in Notes 3, 8, 24, 48, 52.

17. Biddeford, Maine. Original records of First Church, at the Maine Historical Society.

18. Boston. *Boston Common in Colonial and Provincial Days*, by Mary Farwell Ayer (1903), pp. 9-11. *Memorial History of Boston*, by Justin Winsor (1881), 1:236-37, 537; 2:xvi. *Cities in the Wilderness*, by Carl Bridenbaugh (1955), pp. 32-34, 40-41, 146.

19. Boston directories, almanacs and business directories. *Sketches and Business Directory of Boston and its Vicinity for 1860 and 1861*, pub. 1860 by Damrell & Moore and George Coolidge.
20. Boston newspaper. *Daily Evening Traveller*, April 6, 1877 (marriage notice).
21. Bowdoin College, *General Catalogue of, and the Medical School of Maine, 1794-1894* (1894), pp. xxxii, xxxix, xlix, liii, lxiv. *History of, and Biographies of Graduates*, by N. Cleaveland (1882), pp. 85, 87, 426, 452. *History of*, by L. C. Hatch (1927), pp. 304-13. *Library Bulletin No. 2*, Aug. 1892 (obit, pp. 84-85).
22. *Bradford, Mass., Vital Records of* (1907).
23. *Brookfield, Mass., Vital Records of* (1909).
24. *Buxton, Maine, Records of the Church of Christ in, during Pastorate of Rev. Paul Coffin, D.D.* (1868), p. 21. Buxton Records in Portland library, copied by Dr. Meservey, give births of Joseph and Eunice Ayer's two elder children, Mary and Samuel.
25. Census of 1790 for Maine.
26. Clark, James. His children were baptized at Biddeford, Me. He lived at nearby Little Falls (now Hollis and Dayton); here in 1778 he and others of Lieut. Edward Smith's militia unit were equipped (*Maine Historical and Genealogical Recorder*, 8 (1895):232). He and other James Clarks of this region were land-owners but none left a will in York County records. See also Note 45.
27. *Dracut, Mass., History of*, by Silas R. Coburn, pp. 425-26.
28. *Essex Antiquarian*, 13 vols. (1897-1909), esp. 1:19-20; 3:139, 172-73; 4:145-50, 154-55 (Colchester's 1st division), 182 (gravestone); 5:95; 8:5; 12:2, 62 (gravestones).
29. Essex Co., Mass., deeds on file at Salem, 22:262 (Robert Ayer's age); series of Ipswich deeds, 5:384, 564.
30. *Essex Co., Mass., Probate Records* (1916), 1:260-63 (inventory, from the files, and will of John "Eyers" Sr., from copy in Norfolk Deeds 1:58); 2:154; unpublished inventory of Peter Ayer (from the files).
31. *Essex Co., Mass., Quarterly Courts of, Records and Files* (1911), 1:v-viii, 86, 336, 343 (paper signed by John "Ayre" Sr.), 369 (excused from military duty); 3:200; 5:409; 7:102 (lumber suit).
32. *Essex Institute Historical Collections*, esp. 40:213 (Wm. Allen's will); 65:450; 66:183-84 (Corporal Peter Ayer); 68:91.
33. *Farwell Family . . .*, by John D. Farwell, Jane H. Abbott & L. M. Wilson (1929).
34. Freeman and church membership. (See NEHG 3:41; Lechford, pp. 59, 89, and Johnson, pp. 66, 141—cited in Note 50). John Ayres Sr. and John Ayres Jr., both of Salisbury, were made freemen by the court held at Ipswich the 4th of 9th mo. (Nov.) 1645; and John Ayres of Ipswich likewise by the same court on 28 March 1654. The original of the first record reads as here italicized, for the final "s" of "Ayres" and the capital in "Sr." have the same form (p. 1 of Ipswich Court book, also called Essex Co. Courts, v. 12, at Salem). We thereby identify for our emigrant and his eldest son this important Puritan recognition. Unfortunately sources in Notes 28 & 31 printed both as Jr.
35. Harvard, Class of 1869 Reports: 1894, 1919.
36. *Haverhill, Mass., History of*, by George W. Chase (1861), pp. 29, 72, 80, 133, 157-58, 174, 204-7, 228-29, 261-64, 661.

37. Haverhill Public Library. We are indebted to Mrs. Edgar Lindsley, Historical Dep't., for knowledge that Peter Ayer's house is still standing, though somewhat altered. A vain search was made in several institutional collections for its appearance in 1860, mentioned in Chamberlain's Ayer MSS at NEHG.

38. *Haverhill, Mass., Vital Records of* (1910-11).

39. *Ipswich, Mass., Vital Records of* (1910-19). For deeds, see Essex Co.

40. *Kimball Family in America, History of the*, by L. A. Morrison & S. P. Sharples (1897), 1:61.

41. *Maine Democrat* (newspaper pub. in Saco), Jan. 29, 1834 (obit of James Ayer). We are indebted for this item and for information on this region to Miss Sybil Noyes of Saco, authority on families of Saco, Biddeford and vicinity.

42. *Mason, Descendants of Captain Hugh, in America*, by Edna W. Mason (1937), pp. 103-4, 159.

43. *Massachusetts Bay, Records of the Governor and Company of, 1628-1686* (1853-54), 1:237, 271, 305; 4 (pt. 2):582; 5:302, 321, 408, 419, 438, 476, 514. *Acts and Resolves of the Province of, 1692-1780* (1874-1922), 7:180. For General Courts held 1689-1692, see Massachusetts Historical Society, *Collections*, Ser. 3, 4:289-91.

44. Massachusetts General Hospital. *Memorial . . . and Centennial* (1921), p. 286.

45. *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War*, pub. by the Sec. of the Commonwealth, 3:534; 14:383.

46. Massachusetts State Archives. Documents: for 1653-54 in 10:299-300; for 1684 in 70:113; for 1725 in 91:167; and for 1709 in 135:111, No. 125.

47. *Massachusetts, Who's Who in* (1940-41).

48. *Methuen, Mass., Vital Records of* (1909).

49. Middlesex Co., Mass. Probate records at Cambridge (original will No. 7098 signed John Evered alias Webb); Court files 1649 on, 1:100 (his deposition stating age), abstracts by T. B. Wyman at NEHG.

50. New England. [Edward] Johnson's *Wonder-Working Providence* (anonymous, London, 1654), Jameson's ed., 1910, pp. 5-7, 10, 12, 15, 24, 40-41, 66, 79, 141, 189-90, 212-18, 229-31, 234-35. Thomas Lechford's *Plain Dealing* (London, 1642), 1867 ed., pp. 59, 89. See also Pike.

51. New England, emigrants to. Charles E. Banks: *Planters of the Commonwealth* (1930), p. 136; *Topographical Dictionary of 2885 English Emigrants to New England, 1620 to 1650* (1937), pp. 107, 180; original notebooks at Library of Congress, Rare Book Room, kindly searched by Wm. G. Smith. Samuel G. Drake: *Founders of New England* (1860), pp. 47, 56. Charles E. Pope: *Pioneers of Massachusetts* (1900), pp. 25, 159. Some of this material has been misconstrued (see Note 80, a-f).

52. Newfield, Maine. Ayer gravestones in old burying ground, kindly copied by Miss Lucille Moore. Vital records in NEHG, vols. 97-98.

53. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, N. H., files.

54. *New Hampshire, 1623 to 1861, Military History of*, by Charles E. Potter (1866), pp. 40-50, 98.

55. *New Hampshire State Papers Series* (variant titles), 9:744-53; 13:144; 19:532; 28:212; 37:287-88 (Ebenezer Ayer's estate).

56. *New York Tribune*, Nov. 26, 1954.

57. Norfolk Co., Mass., records (see all listings under Essex). *Old Norfolk*

Co., in existence 1643-1680, included John Ayer Sr.'s two home towns of Salisbury and Haverhill, as well as the southern part of New Hampshire (see map in *Essex Antiquarian*, 1:19). These two towns were added to Essex Co. in 1680, and the pre-1680 records for this area are largely printed with Essex Co. records but form separate series at the Essex Co. offices in Salem. Old Norfolk Co. is not to be confused with the present Norfolk Co. south of Boston.

58. Parker, Mary—the witch. The brothers Nathan and Joseph Parker of Andover, Mass. died in 1685 and 1684, each leaving a widow named Mary. Nathan's wife is documentarily identified as the daughter of John Ayer Sr. of Haverhill, Mass. (by Mrs. Holman, see Note 5). However, she was not the witch but "Widow Mary Parker" who died 1695 at Andover, administration 1696. The chief proof that Joseph's widow was the Mary Parker among the witches executed in 1692 is the 1709 petition of their posterity to reverse the attainder, signed among others by Joseph Parker, her son (original in Mass. Archives, 135:111). Apparently the witch was the "Mary Parker my sister White's dau'r. in New England" named in the will of Stephen Everett alias Webbe of Ramsbury, 1670 (Pec. Dean Sarum).

59. Pike, Robert, *The New Puritan . . . Life of*, by James S. Pike (1879), esp. pp. 36, 105-6 (troop votes for Peter Ayer).

60. Salem, N. H., *History of*, by E. Gilbert (1907), pp. 118-19, 186, 192, 397, appx. Salem vital records. For gravestone, see *Essex Antiquarian*, 4:182.

61. Salisbury and Amesbury, Mass., *Old Families of*, by David W. Hoyt (1897), 1:7-9, 31, 36-38, 226, 378.

62. Salisbury, Mass., *Vital Records of* (1915).

63. Suffolk County Court, *Records of, 1671-1680* (Publications of Colonial Society of Mass., vols. 29-30).

64. Superior Court of Judicature files for all counties, Archives of the Supreme Judicial Court, Suffolk Courthouse, Boston: "Suffolk Court Files" No. 274 (John Eyers' will, 1656) and No. 3152 (Clement v. Stevens, 1692-94, includes deposition giving Peter Ayer's age, etc.).

This contemporary copy of John Eyers' will says the original was filed with Norfolk Co. records, with a recording in Ipswich Court records and in the Courthouse at Hampton.

65. Surnames. *A Dictionary of British Surnames*, by P. H. Reaney (1958); *Surnames of the United Kingdom*, by Henry Harrison (1912). List of variant spellings of Ayer in early New England records in Chamberlain's Ayer MSS at NEHG, and similarly in English records at the Society of Genealogists, London.

66. Tuttle. *Descendants of William and Elizabeth Tuttle . . . ; also Some Account of the Descendants of . . . John Tuttle of Ipswich . . .*, by George F. Tuttle (1883), pp. xxxiv-xxxvi.

Symon Tuttle of Ipswich, father of Mrs. Elizabeth Ayer, should not be confused with his contemporary, Simon Tuttle of New Haven.

67. York Co., Maine, *Atlas of* (1872), pub. by Sanford, Everts & Co. (for Dr. James Ayer of Newfield).

68. York Co., Maine, *History of* [by W. W. Clayton] (1880), pp. 347-54.

69. York Co., Maine. Probate and land records at Alfred, Me., examined for Clark and Ayer by Mrs. Henry M. Knight. Deeds, 56:83 (Joseph Ayer of Brownfield, blacksmith, 1792 grantor).



## ENGLISH ORIGIN

Formal documented accounts of the pertinent English Eyres and Evered alias Webbs (from whom descend New England families such as Dix and Parker and evidently White, Kent, Bishop, etc.) await clarification of connecting links.

Additional leads and clues ferreted out by Miss Rosalie F. Bailey seem worthy of future investigation. Her material has been kindly placed at her disposal by Mrs. Gordon in view of the family's decision to minimize English origin in this book.

The current survey, intended to point the direction for further research, achieved progress after Miss Bailey put aside the previous theory and reached a new approach through an isolated record in Phemia (see Note 71). Under her direction, research in England was efficiently conducted by Mrs. Dorothy S. Coleman of Washington, D. C. (for parish records) and by Mrs. V. Heddon of Firl House, Iver, Bucks (primarily for other kinds of records). Special thanks are due to the late Dr. Arthur Adams, founding President of The American Society of Genealogists and recent Librarian of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, for his advice and encouraging approval of her approach to the problem of identifying the Ayer background.

We are greatly indebted to the staffs of the Society of Genealogists, London, the British Museum, and The New York Public Library, as well as the New England Historic Genealogical Society (especially cited in Note 71), all of which have good collections of Wiltshire material, some parish registers, and accounts of English Eyre families.

70. American clues to origin. John Ayer's signature and approximate ages of himself and older children. John Evered alias Webb's passenger-ship listing, age and will dated 1665.

John Evered alias Webb's will included: (1) my wife Mary [but not her son], (2) £30 to my cousin James Brading of Boston, (3) £20 to my brother William Dinsdale of Boston, (4) Ayer cousins [see Origin text for details], and (5) an equal portion with the Ayers in the remainder [hence also related?] to the eldest son of John Bishop now living in Nantucket. While Dinsdale has not been placed, "brother" then had many meanings and, moreover, the testator married a widow whose maiden name is unknown. As both Brading and John Bishop Jr. had Kent relatives (see John Coddington's excellent study of the Kents of Hampshire, in Herbert F. Seversmith's *Colonial Families of Long Island, New York, and Connecticut*, v. 4), a likely tie-in may be through testator's aunt Alice Evered alias Webb who had unmarried Kent daughters.

71. Ayer manuscript notes at the NEHG, given in 1934 by George W. Chamberlain, deceased. Included is one package of Wiltshire and Berkshire genealogical material gathered in 1911-12 by Phemia Smith of London. To our knowledge it is the only previous investigation for the origin of John Ayer of Haverhill, Mass., and we are greatly indebted to the NEHG and to Dr. Adams for permitting its intensive use. This English material—here referred to as Phemia—formed the core of Miss Bailey's research, despite an occasional incorrectly copied record, misleading assumption and faulty deduction.

72. Berkshire. Registers of parishes on the northeast Wiltshire border and especially within 5 miles of Ramsbury (Wiltshire) were searched if in Phemia or at the Berkshire Record Office. A few Evered alias Webb wills, whose dates etc.

seemed to place them outside the Ayer-origin problem, were not covered in Phemia or in the current search.

73. *Devizes, History of the*, by James Waylen (1859), pp. 98, 100, 104-5, 108, 138, 561.

74. Evered alias Webb, Hannah. Hannah is not a name of the Evered alias Webb family of Wiltshire. Wills were found covering three generations of Robert Everett's descendants (other than Noah, Jr.'s, see Note 76) but they do not mention a Hannah as wife, child or other relative earlier than Daniel Webb's child Hannah, who was baptized at Chiseldon in 1641. By this date Mrs. Hannah Ayer was in America with a half dozen children of her own. Hence (despite the paucity of this region's baptismal records and bishop's transcripts), it would seem that the maiden name of John Ayer's wife Hannah was not Evered alias Webb.

The term "cousin" in official 17th century documents varied in meaning from a distant marital connection to the close blood tie now termed nephew and niece. The latter meaning was used so often that one American expert "translated" the "cousins" (Ayer children) of the 1665 will into nephews and niece and it has misled others into guessing that their mother Hannah was born an Evered alias Webb.

75. Evered alias Webb, John. See especially records in Notes 70 and 87. If either John died before 1643, it seems more logical that it was the father, known to be living in 1641; but *Richmond Fam.* says, without giving a reason, that John Evered alias Webb Jr. died apparently before 1643 (Note 84). The younger John was not named in wills of close relatives dated 1640, 1643, and 1673, and under Miss Bailey's theory, he was the man who emigrated in 1635 and drowned 1668 in Massachusetts.

76. Evered alias Webb, Noah. The elder Noah is of importance to the Ayer problem only because his land transactions and will establish both John Evered alias Webbs. Noah is a name common both in this family and in the Richmond alias Webb family, hence a cause for confusion if the single surname Webb is used unaccompanied by wife or other relative. Noah Richmond alias Webb of Chiseldon, 1590-1657, m. in 1607 Margery Mudge, and his wife was still Margery on records of 1638 and 1657 (cited in Note 84). Hence Noah Evered alias Webb, Sr. of Draycot in Chiseldon, c1565-1641, was presumably the husband of Mary who was buried in Marlborough in 1633 (unless she had married his youngest son Noah).

77. Evered and/or Webb wills of this English family of direct concern for this text are officially filed in (a) P.C.C.: Robert Everett, 1584; (b) Arch. Wilts: Noah Evered alias Webb, 1641; Daniel Webb, 1660; Stephen Evered alias Webb, 1667; Marie Webb, 1673; and (c) Sarum Cons.: Richard Webb, 1671.

78. Eyre families of Wiltshire. This is the county in which the surname was most prolific (without regard to spelling variations). The most extensive genealogical coverage was by Rev. Allen S. Hartigan, in his books, his serial articles in *Wilts Notes and Queries*, and his "Eyre Notes and Queries" at the Society of Genealogists, London.

79. Eyre family wills and inventories of direct concern for this text are officially filed in (a) Arch. Wilts: Robert Ayre, 1603; Anne Pryor, 1605; Richard Eyre, 1636; and (b) Sarum Cons.: William Crosse, 1605.

Under the theory developed in this text, the following are the will and inventory of the father of John Ayer of Haverhill, Mass.:

Will [abstract] of Robert Ayre of Bromham, County Wilts, Clothier, made 19 July 1603:

I give and bequeathe to my sons John Ayre & Zacharias Ayre, to each £50, the use of which shall remain to my wife Cicely during her widowhood, unless—seeing women cannot so well deal in the trade of clothing as men—my overseers hereafter named shall find stock decayed, then they shall take the same to use it to & for their bringing up and education.

To my three daughters Anne Ayre, Rebecca Ayre, and Bithiah Ayre, to each £30 at the age of 21 years or on the day of marriage.

I give to my said sons and daughters 20 sheep to be employed for their use.

Also, three legacies of 10 shillings each—to my mother Anne Pryor, to Richard Franklyn [the schoolmaster], and to the poor of Bromham.

Residuary legatee and executrix—Cicely my wife.

Overseers—my loving friends Tho: Ayre & John Ayre; my brother Richard Ayre & and my brother-in-law William Crosse.

Robert Ayre  his marke

Witnesses—Thos. Ayre, John Ayre the father, John Ayre the son, and others. The will was proved 17 Oct. 1603.

Inventory of the goods and chattells of Robert Eire, deceased, taken and praised by Thomas Eire, gent, Richard Eire, William Crosse and John Eire, the 16 Sept. 1603:

*In the halle* [living room]—books, vessels, cupboard, formes, stooles, skillets, tongs, hooks, etc., and cushions.

*In the little buttery* [storeroom]—pewter, barrells, caldrons and furnace, washing bowls, tub, pails, churn, board and cloth, table napkins and candlestick.

*In the lower chamber*—bedstead and truckle and two beds with appurtenances, coffers, etc.

*In the over chamber*—bedstead and truckle with appurtenances, and three coffers.

*In the middle loft*—coffer, bolster, pillows, coverlet, chair, flaskets, scales and weights, etc.

*In the wool loft*—wool and yarn, etc., weaving bar, frame, etc., and a hogshhead, feather beds and bedding.

*In the . . . (?) sheds*—broad loom and implements, wearing apparel; hay, corn, wood, etc.; sheep and calf, horses, pigs; cheese, butter, poultry, clipping shears, etc.

Sum total, £316 16s 2d.

80. Eyre, John—in England. Many contemporaries bore the same name (phonetic spelling variants must be overlooked). Summarized here are those heretofore suggested for John Ayer of Haverhill, Mass. (born shortly after 1594) and those others found who merit such consideration—except the favored one discussed in the Origin text.

#### London

(a) John Ayres or Eayres, named as brother in wills of James Eayres of London, 1644, and of widow Mary Scriven of London, 1643, the latter adding “if he . . . doe in his own person demand the same.” While this clause implies absence abroad, the other first names in the wills are not in the Haverhill group. Suggested as a possibility by American genealogists before the commonness of the surname

was realized (Banks' *Topographical . . . Emigrants*, p. 107, summarizing printed references).

#### East Anglia

(b) John Eyre of Norwich in Norfolk, grocer, aged 40, examined April 1637 for permit to go to the country (Drake's *Founders of New England*, p. 47). This has been interpreted to refer to New England, and to his sailing thither on the *John and Dorothy* or on the *Mary Ann*—ships mentioned in these abstracts before and after Eyre's group—or to his emigrating in 1637. The full record recently published shows that the Norfolk man had wife Mary and wanted to go to Holland; after joining the church at Rotterdam, they returned and founded the Norwich Congregational Church 1642-44, in England. The names of their children are different. (*Register of St. George of Tombland, Norwich*, pp. 53-63, 204; Norfolk Record Society: *Publications*, 22:3, 4, 9; 25:25.

#### South Wiltshire

The leading Eyres of Salisbury seem too prominent (Hoare's *Modern Wiltshire*, V pt. 2 (1844), p. 107; *Visitation of 1623*, pp. 56, 76; *Wiltshire Notes & Queries*, 5:30, 49-50; Harleian Society *Publications*, 105:61). For details and documents, see Phemia (Note 71), who virtually eliminated the Salisbury groups.

(c) John Eyre baptized Sept. 20, 1582 in St. Thomas Parish, Salisbury, whose brother Thomas, father Thomas and grandfather Robert Eyre were all mayors of Salisbury. This 1582 baby had died before the 1623 Visitation, was not in his brothers' wills, and was undoubtedly the John Eyre son of Thomas buried 1599 in the same parish.

(d, e) A much older man than the Haverhill, Mass. settler seems to be in the two groups below and both may be identical with the John baptized 1567 in Salisbury: (1) John Eyer, "son of my brother William," was residuary legatee in 1598 will of Christopher Eyer of St. Martin's, Salisbury (proved 1602); and (2) John Eyer of St. Edmund's, New Sarum, weaver (will 1621) who with wife Prudence (will 1636) were named in the 1619 will of his mother Joane Windover, widow of New Sarum who had married in 1563 and in 1587. As her only known grandchild was Mrs. Joan Speckenell married 1619-29 (wills of Joane & of Thomas Eyer of New Sarum, P.C.C. 30 Soame and 1631), it is probably not significant that an overseer in her will was kinsman Henry Byle the younger—whose son Henry Biley became in 1638 one of the founders of Salisbury, Mass. (*NEHG*, 52:50. *Wilts. Arch. & Nat. Hist. Mag.*, 49:478).

#### Northeast Wiltshire

(f, g, h) John Ayers, ship *James*, parish Ogbourne St. George, Wiltshire (Banks' *Topographical . . . Emigrants*, p. 180) was merely a grouping of two clues: the often printed 1635 passenger list of the *James* showing (no Ayer but the related) Evered alias Webbs from Marlborough and the county's subsidy lists taxing a John Ayers at nearby Ogbourne St. George parish (Banks' notebook: "Wilts Subsidies," p. 170, see Note 51).

Three contemporary John Ayers (or Eyers etc.) baptized at Ogbourne St. George: (1) on Jan. 30, 1587/8, living in 1611, brother of Thomas bp. 1593, probably the testators of 1657 and 1675 respectively, and both sons of Vincent and Agnes Eaires (wills: P.C.C. 1611 & 1657/8; *Arch. Wilts* 1682); (2) on Jan. 3,

1593/4, brother of Thomas bp. 1596, both sons of John and Edith Ayers; and (3) on July 30, 1594, son of Thomas. In this entire group, only these two male first names are similar to the Haverhill family's names and, despite geographic proximity, no relationship with the Evered alias Webb family was uncovered. The only tie-in found was with the Richmond alias Webb family, of whom Richard and Thomas sold in 1629 a 200-acre farm at Ogbourne St. George to several, including John Eyres, and the latter in his will of 1657 mentioned the transaction and appointed as overseers brother Thomas Eyres and John Richmond alias Webb. In 1620 Thomas Eyres had bought 20 acres there adjoining Noah Richmond alias Webb's. (P.C.C. 17 Wootton; *Richmond Family*, 2:91, 136; land records in Note 87).

(i) John Ayers (born after 1585) named with Thomas and Robert as minor sons, to be brought up by their mother Jane, per 1606 will of Thomas Ayers of Eltome in Wroughton, and presumably Thomas' three sons referred to in the 1609 will of William Aiers, husbandman of Swindon, nearby. See (m) below. The family of another John Eyers, husbandman of Swindon, is eliminated by his will, 1602 (Arch. Wilts: all wills).

(j) John Eyars with his two children, named as a son in the 1607 will of Robert Eyars of . . . (proved 1610 at Marlborough) (?Robert bur. 1607 at Wroughton). This John presumably too old to be the Haverhill, Mass. settler.

(k) John Ayres, termed clerk (minister) on 1618-20 Wanborough baptisms of his children Elizabeth and Anthony, might be the Oxford student born about 1575. John was the father's name of children bp. at Wanborough 1605 and 1610-25. Not even one item fits the Haverhill settler.

(m) John Ayres or Eyres had five children baptized or buried at Lydiard Millicent: John 1625, Robert 1628 (?father Robert of children bp. there 1655-66), Anne 1631, Jane? bur. 1632, and Thomas 1634 (?Thomas m. there 1664 and children bp. 1664-73). This group is the only one found that approximates the older children of the Haverhill, Mass. settler, but it cannot be he if the sons remained in England and it lacks the important name of Peter born within that period. Probably should be identified with (i) above.

(n) John Ayers bp. Feb. 1620 at Wanborough (fragment, father & mother not given) is tantalizing because it could fit the eldest child of the Haverhill, Mass. settler, but so could it fit perhaps some child of (g), (h), (i), (j), (m).

#### *Northwest Wiltshire*

The Eyre families of Bromham had many named John, all except the one in our Origin text seemingly eliminated.

(o, p, q) John Eyer, grandfather in the 1623 Visitation (?John bur. there 1597/8); his (?second) son John bp. there 1568, will 1620; latter's son John bp. there 1603, will 1661, no issue (Arch. Wilts: wills). Head of this family was Thomas Eyer, gentleman, 1566-1636.

(r) John Eyres m. at nearby Rowde 1610 Frances Wilkes and had sons Richard and William bp. 1611-12 at Rowde. Perhaps son of Robert Eyre Sr. of Bromham and Rowde, will 1632 (Arch. Wilts), though not in the will. Seems too old for the Haverhill, Mass. settler.

(s) John Eire of Bromham, named in 1635 will of father Richard and in 1662 will of sister Joane Yerbury; his children bp. there 1625-40 (Arch. Wilts: wills).

(t, u) "John Ayre the father" and "John Ayre the son," witnesses to the 1603

will of our Robert Ayre of Bromham, Clothier, probably refer to: John Eyer, yeoman of Bromham and nearby Seend, will 1609; his son John Eyre, clothier of Seend and of Lechlade, Co. Gloucester, will 1643 (no issue). The same relatives (including John Stokes of Seend) were named in both wills and in such terms as to show that the testators were father and son. (Wills: Arch. Sarum 1610, P.C.C. 1643 & 1647/8; *Wilts Notes & Queries*, 5:458, 461.)

81. Eyre-Webb connections. Many intermarriages were found (especially in the parish registers of the Bromham area), but none involving the Evered alias Webb and the more prominent Richmond alias Webb families. The only tie-in found on the records concerned the last-named family, apparently dealings between adjoining landowners (see Eyre, John, Note 80, h). For the unlikelihood of a Hannah Evered alias Webb of marriageable age about 1620, see Note 74.

82. Money values and status. Thomas Eyre, gentleman, was head of the senior line of this ancient landed family. He and deceased father John (Note 80, o) were the only Eyres at Bromham appearing in the 1623 Visitation of the Herald. Inventory at death for this Thomas in 1636 was £601, for his widowed mother Sisley in 1617, only £17, for his younger brother John (who used a mark for his name and was but a yeoman) in 1620, only £104.

Our Robert Eyre's inventory at death in 1603 was £317 (excluding real estate, if any), his widowed mother Anne Pryor's in 1605 rather high at £35, and his younger brother Richard's in 1635, £372. Noah Evered alias Webb's inventory in 1641 totaled only £290 but the listing of rooms indicates a house befitting the gentry; his family's sales in 1635 realized £200 sterling for dwelling, garden and 190 acres, and £41 sterling for another dwelling and garden.

83. Oxford. *Alumni Oxoniensis*, by Joseph Foster.

84. *Richmond Family Records*, by Henry I. Richmond, v. 2 (1935), pp. 91, 95-97, 136-37 (for John Eyre); pp. 39-40, 97-99, 138-40, 187-88, 205 (for Evered alias Webbs). This book, unusually full of document abstracts, has errors on the Evered alias Webbs, and the relationship therein between them and Richmonds seems based on forced assumptions. See also Notes 75 & 76.

85. Rushworth [John]. *Historical Collections of private passages of State . . . anno 1618* [until 1640]. London (1659), 2 vols. in 3; also 6-vol. ed. to 1648, v. 2 (1706), pp. 311-12.

86. Wiltshire architecture. The title to the house here illustrated has not been investigated, but another view suggests it was larger than that indicated in Robert Eyre's room-by-room inventory dated 1603.

87. Wiltshire land transactions. The 1635 land transfers (CP 25 (2) 510) were by the customary legal suits, whose filing is termed Feet of Fines; they are often the best proof of emigration. If John and Stephen Evered alias Webb boarded their ship on its main embarkation date "about April 5" at Southampton, this was about ten days before the two 1635 suits dated Easter 11 Charles I. Easter in the 11th year of his reign fell on March 29, 1635, so the law court's Easter term ran from April 15 to May 6. But by the 17th century these suits had become semi-fictitious, and the defendant (the seller) relinquishing his title did not need to appear in court. Stephen's return to England is evidenced by a similar method of purchase in 1639 (CP 25 (2) 511).

The 1616 settlement of the Evered alias Webb family was searched for vainly in several years of Feet of Fines, Close Rolls, and Deeds enrolled in the King's Bench and in Common Pleas, and also among collections of original deeds for the

Marlborough area at the Wiltshire Record Office. The Salisbury Town Clerk reported finding merely the earlier purchase bonds in his Merchant Statute Bond Book ending July 1616. This 1616 settlement (given in Phemia & *Richmond* without citing where filed) is condensed in the Origin text into simple American phrases for clear understanding, as it is vital (together with the 1612 baptism) in placing a younger John Evered alias Webb in his exact spot in that family and thereby finding a possible spot for John Ayer.

The existence of this 1616 settlement need not be doubted: (a) the purchase it refers to is filed in 1615 (Easter 12 James I: CP 25 (2) 371), preceded by bonds recorded as above; (b) it (as well as a similar settlement to second son Stephen, not found either) is confirmed in the 1640 will of Noah Evered alias Webb—"my son John shall have that part of the living as by deed and writing made unto him" (Arch. Wilts); and (c) the 1616 settlement stipulated that John pay £140 then and £80 more after Noah's death, while said Noah's will divided this £80 debt between said John and his seven children (named, and not including John Jr. in America).

The probable emigration date of John Ayer of Haverhill, Mass. was the focus of an unsuccessful search in Feet of Fines, 1632-40. For the Eyres of Ogbourne St. George, the acquisition of 1629 was found in Feet of Fines, and others in collections of original deeds for the Marlborough area at the Wiltshire Record Office. The authorization was insufficient to make a fuller or broader search of documents in that office.

88. Wiltshire maps and roads: Saxton, 1576; Speed, 1611; Ogilby, 1675 (at British Museum); John Ogilby's *Britannia* (1698 ed.), plates 20, 22, 35, 85; Andrews & Dury, 1773 (Wilts Arch. & Nat. Hist. Society, Records Branch, *Publication No. 8*). We are indebted to the New York Public Library's Map Division headed by Gerard L. Alexander, and especially to Wiltshire's County Archivist, Mr. Rathbone.

89. Wiltshire marriage licenses, pr. in *The Genealogist*, New Series, vols. 24 (1907) to 28. Analysis indicates that license book No. 4 for Sept. 1622—Jan. 1626/7 was not printed, unknowingly, hence perhaps mislaid then. Current inquiries to the Diocesan Office and to its Archivist have not uncovered it. Additional licenses in *Wilts Notes & Queries*, vols. 6-8.

90. Wiltshire parish registers and bishop's transcripts. The former are still in the individual parish; the latter are contemporary parish reports to the bishop, at the Diocesan Office, Salisbury. A few only are printed. Of great use was Glen-cross' revised listing of the dates that parish registers commence—invaluable compilation at the Society of Genealogists (see also Parish Register Society, vols. 30, 61).

Within the Marlborough—Ramsbury—Chiseldon triangle and to its northeast and northwest in a 5-mile radius, all parishes were covered (except Mildenhall, whose vicar refused), and also some parishes to its south. Chiseldon, so important for this search, has a parish register not starting until 1641, and its bishop's transcripts, very few and very faded, include: (a) 1609? (undated but filed between those for 1608 and 1610 and written by the same priest), "Frances the daughter of John Everitt was bapt. the first day of September"; and (b) 1632, "Elizabeth the daughter of John Evered was bapt. the 10th day of February."

Only a few parishes near Bromham and Devizes were covered before the authorization was exhausted. Both the original Bromham parish register and the British Museum copy were examined.

Salisbury's parishes and those for scattered Wiltshire towns given as the place of residence in Eyre wills of the late 16th and 17th centuries seemed sufficiently covered in Pheミア.

91. Wiltshire Record Office, County Hall, Trowbridge. We are much indebted to Maurice G. Rathbone, County Archivist, concerning the period about 1600 for: the route of London to Bath roads near Bromham; examples of clothiers' homes in Bromham parish; and review of Miss Bailey's evaluation of Robert Eyre's status in England's cloth manufacturing industry.

92. Wiltshire taxes: 1576 subsidy (Wilts Arch. & Nat. Hist. Society, Records Branch, *Publication No. 10*); 1605-28 "Wilts Subsidies" (Banks' notebook, see Note 51); subsidies on scattered dates (Pheミア); 1631 fine (Sir Thos. Phillipps Coll. on Wilts, in British Museum; see also *Wilts Notes & Queries*, 1:50); 1635 ship tax (*Wilts Arch. Magazine*, 50 (1940-44): 153-60).

93. *Wiltshire, Victoria History of*, ed. by R. B. Pugh, v. 7 (1953), chapter on Bromham, pp. 179-86.

94. Wiltshire wills and inventories. Pertinent ones for Evered and Eyre families, cited in Notes 77 and 79. Others are in Pheミア; and Webb wills etc. were searched in the current survey.

95. *Wiltshire Woollen Industry in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, by G. D. Ramsay (1943).



The index and the accounts of the  
Farwell and Bourne families  
will be published later