

# The English Ancestry of George Washington.

By T. Pape.

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**A**LTHOUGH it is now rather more than a quarter-of-a-century ago that the English ancestors of the first President of the United States of America were definitely assured, chiefly owing to the indefatigable researches of Mr. Henry F. Waters, yet many points of interest which concern the Washington family are still undecided. Two of the most interesting puzzles are associated with the County of Buckingham and the adjoining counties, and the purpose of this article is to stimulate interest in their solution.

First of all I will briefly indicate what has been definitely proved.

Sir Isaac Heard in 1791 conjectured that John and Lawrence described in the *Heraldic Visitation of Northamptonshire* [1618] as sons of Lawrence Washington of Sulgrave in that County were the emigrants to Virginia in the latter half of the seventeenth century, and that this John Washington was the great grand-father of President George Washington.

This link in the pedigree was accepted by all as authoritative until 1863, when Isaac J. Greenwood, Esq., of New York, suggested that John and Lawrence, the sons of Lawrence Washington of Sulgrave, were too old to have been the emigrants to Virginia. Then Colonel Chester in 1866 proved quite clearly that John, the son of Lawrence Washington of Sulgrave, was Sir John Washington of Thrapston, who never emigrated, and that Lawrence, who was supposed to have emigrated, was a clergyman of the established church, while Lawrence, of Virginia, simply styled himself "gentleman," a most unlikely thing for him to do, if he were in holy orders.

In 1889 Mr. Henry F. Waters published in the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* a most important article entitled "An Examination of the English Ancestry of George Washington, setting forth the evidence to connect him with the Washingtons of Sulgrave and Brington." This was subsequently reprinted but is now unobtainable except second-hand. Mr. Waters definitely proved that John Washington, the emigrant ancestor of the President, was the eldest son of the Rev. Lawrence Washington,

Rector of Purleigh, Essex, from 1633 to 1643, and that this Rev. Lawrence Washington was the fifth son of Lawrence Washington of Sulgrave who was buried at Brington in 1616.

When Colonel Chester broke the link in the pedigree supplied by Sir Isaac Heard various other untrustworthy links were substituted, and even now two broken links are often quoted as genuine.

Albert Welles in 1879 stated that the emigrants to Virginia were Lawrence and John Washington born at Warton, Lancashire, in 1625 and 1627 respectively. Colonel Chester proved that there was no truth in this statement. I have searched the Warton registers and extracted all the Washington entries, and the only children of Leonard Washington [the reputed father of the emigrants] baptised about the period in question are : Robert on Sept. 8th, 1616 ; Jane on Sept. 4th, 1619 ; and Francis on Feb. 4th, 1622. There are no Washington entries whatever for the years 1625 and 1627.

It is quite true that the Washingtons of Sulgrave and Brington are descended from the Washingtons of Warton in the north of Lancashire, but the emigrants to Virginia were not born in Lancashire, Yorkshire, or Northamptonshire.

The other false link is the statement that the emigrant John Washington came from South Cave in Yorkshire. Now the first member of the Washington family mentioned in connection with South Cave was Henry Washington, who by his marriage with Eleanor Harrison in 1689 gained possession of part of the manor.

In South Cave registers are four Washington entries one of which is : " 1694. Susanna, filia Henrici Washington generosus, April 23, sepulta." In 1882, during some alterations in the church vestry, an old black marble tomb stone was discovered. Part of its inscription is : " Here also lyeth the body of Susanna Washington, daughter of Mr. Henry Washington." The stone was placed near the Harrison vault on the floor in the vestry, and the trampling of many feet during the last thirty years has left the inscription only faintly visible. It appears from Henry Washington's will, dated Oct. 6th, 1717, that he had two sons and three daughters, viz., Richard, William, Anne, Mary and Elizabeth ; and in different deeds he is variously described as of Symond's Inn, London, Lincoln's Inn, London, Doncaster, South Cave, and, finally, of *Cookham*, Berkshire. Can any reader give particulars about this local reference ?

Let us now see what is known about the Rev. Lawrence Washington, M.A., sometime Rector of Purleigh, Essex.

His father was Lawrence Washington of Sulgrave, Brington and Wicken, who married on 3rd August, 1588, Margaret the eldest daughter of William Butler of Tighes, Sussex, and he died in December, 1616.

The Rev. Lawrence Washington entered Brasenose College, Oxford, in 1619, matriculated 1621, was elected Fellow of his College 1624, Lecturer 1627 and Proctor of the University 1631. His brothers Sir William and Sir John Washington were frequent visitors at Althorp, the Earl of Spencer's mansion, and in 1623 he accompanied Sir John thither. In 1630, Sir Richard Anderson of Pendley Manor, Tring, Herts, in his will bequeathed "to my cousin Larance Washington of Brasenose, and to Mr. Dagnall of Pembroke College, to each of them forty shillings." In March, 1632-3, he obtained the living of Purleigh in Essex on the presentation of Mrs. Jane Horsemanden and resigned his Fellowship in the latter year, apparently because of his marriage with one Amphillis, whose surname is unknown. At Purleigh he remained Rector until deprived of the benefice under the Commonwealth, 1643, because he was a Royalist. In all probability he became a preacher at Little Braxted in Essex and was buried, January 21st, 1652, at Maldon, Co. Essex, only three miles from Purleigh.

Mr. Waters proved that the Rev. Lawrence Washington had friends and relatives in Buckinghamshire and round Luton and Tring, and in his endeavour to discover the surname of the Rector of Purleigh's bride he made a mistake, quite a pardonable one when all the evidence is taken into consideration, but unfortunately the conjecture has usually been accepted as fact. He assumed that the maiden surname of Amphillis Washington was Roades. His reason for this assumption was on the evidence of a most important will, which Mr. Waters quoted. This is an abstract of it:—

Andrew Knowling of Tring in the County of Hertford 13<sup>\*</sup> January, 1649, proved 29 January, 1649. To the poor of the town of Tring and the upper "Hamblettes" 20 shillings: to the poor of Willsterne within the parish of Tring 20 shillings: to the poor of Wigginton, Herts, 10 shillings. To "Lawrance Washington the younger (my godsonne) All my freehold Landes and Tenem<sup>tes</sup> whatsoeu<sup>r</sup> lying and being within the p'ish of Tring aforesaid or else where within the Realme of England." To "Amphilis Washington daughter in lawe (and mother of the said Lawrance) the some of Three score poundes of Curr<sup>t</sup> mony of England." To "Elizabeth ffitzherbert one other of my daughters in Lawe," £40. To "Wil-

liam Roades my sonne in Lawe," £10. To "the Two daughters of my late daughter in Lawe Susann Billing deceased begotten of her body by her late husband John Billing of Lillington in the County of Buck, Tallowe Chaundler, Tenn poundes apeece." To "John Washington, William Washington, Elizabeth Washington, Margarett Washington and Martha Washington (children of the said Amphilis Washington my daughter in Lawe)" £28 each. To "Susan Emmerton of Tring" widow, 50 shillings. To "W<sup>m</sup>. Knowling beau<sup>r</sup> maker in old Bridewell Lond' the some of fower pounds to buy him a Ring."

The residue to "Lawrance Washington the young<sup>r</sup> my Godsonne whome I make sole and wholle executo<sup>r</sup> of this my last Will and Testam<sup>t</sup>." John Dagnall of Grove within the parish of Tring, yeoman, John Lake of Willsterne, Gent., William Roades and Elizabeth ffitzherbert to administer "my goodes and Chattles" during the minority of Lawrance Washington, who was about 14 years of age. Witnesses, John ffitzherbert, Thomas Norman, William Dagnalle and James Benning.

In commenting upon this will Mr. Waters wrote "I suppose we may reasonably infer the marriage of Mr. Andrew Knowling with the widowed mother of William Roades, Amphilis Washington, Elizabeth Fitzherbert and Susanna Billing." But that is not altogether reasonable because he assumed—(1) that the mother of William Roades survived the father, (2) that Mr. Andrew Knowling meant "step-daughter" and "step-son" whenever the terms "daughter-in-law" and "son-in-law" were used. The first assumption is certainly wrong. John, the father of William Roades, was the steward of Sir Edmund Verney of Middle Claydon, Bucks, and, according to the "Memoirs of the Verney Family," edited by Margaret M. Verney, he survived his wife Anne Roades by eight years. Therefore Anne Roades was never a widow and consequently could not have had Andrew Knowling for her second husband.

The second assumption may be right, but until the contrary is actually proved it is only fair to give Mr. Andrew Knowling credit for saying what he meant and meaning what he said, especially as in the preamble of his will he informs us that though he is "weake of body" he is "of sound and perfect memory." But as far as I can make the terms agree the situation would work out something like this. If William Roades were a son-in-law of Andrew Knowling he married the latter's daughter, Hannah. If Amphilis Washington,

Elizabeth Fitzherbert and Susann Billing were daughters-in-law of Andrew Knowling they must have married sons, or possibly step-sons, of Andrew Knowling. If Lawrence Washington, Edward Fitzherbert and John Billing, the respective husbands of the ladies just mentioned, were the sons of Andrew Knowling their surnames ought to have been Knowling also. If they were his step-sons then Andrew Knowling had at least four wives, three of whom were widows. Part of Mr. Waters' theory seems more reasonable. Andrew Knowling may have had two wives, by the first of whom he may have had a daughter Hannah. For his second wife he may have married a widow, who by her first husband had three daughters Amphilis, Elizabeth and Susan. Until Mr. Andrew Knowling's matrimonial ventures are elucidated I do not think we shall discover the maiden name of Amphilis Washington.

Mr. Waters searched the registers of Middle Claydon, Bucks, and he found that on 4th April, 1668, John Freeman and Esther Roads of Luton were married. Esther Roads was the daughter of William and Hannah Roads, and John Freeman was the one nominated by Mrs. Elizabeth Fitzherbert in her will 1684 as her executor.

In the same register, 28th September, 1657, occurs the burial entry of William Roads.

In 1634 Andrew Knowling was one of the churchwardens at Tring, and except for the information contained in his will and his burial entry on 21st January, 1649, that is all that is known about him.

I think it would be worth while for an expert in palæography to examine the Tring registers before the one which commences in 1634.

In the latter register the following entries are helpful :—

- 1635. June 23, Lawrence son of Lawrence Washington baptised.
- 1636. August 17, Elizabeth daughter of Mr. Lawrence Washington baptised.
- 1641. — 14, William son of Mr. Lawrence Washington baptised.
- 1649. January 21, Andrew Knowling buried.
- 1654. May 3, Edward Fitzherbert buried.
- 1654. January 19, Mrs. Washington buried.
- 1691. August 17, Mr. John Dagnall of the Grove buried.

Mr. Waters admits that he made a very hasty examination of the early Tring registers which were not in good order. The three baptismal entries are of children of the Rev. Lawrence and Amphilis Washington, and Mrs. Amphilis Washington was buried in 1654.

The marriage entry of the Rev. Lawrence Washington and Amphyllis . . . . [?] has not yet been found, nor has the baptismal entry of their eldest son John. The marriage most likely occurred in 1632-3 and the birth of their eldest son in 1633-4.

The Verney family possessed the manor of Pendley, in Tring and Aldbury, for many generations until Sir Francis Verney sold it in 1607 to Sir Richard Anderson. Are there any old registers belonging to Pendley and Aldbury? Their search might be profitable. The following names would all be useful: Washington, Knowing, Billing, Fitzherbert, Dagnall, Roades, Leake, Freeman, Anderson, and Verney.

The Luton registers, county Bedford, have been searched and have materially helped in proving that although the emigrant John Washington went to Virginia in 1659 his brother Lawrence remained somewhere near Luton until 1666 or 1667, when he also emigrated to Virginia.

It would be interesting to know what ladies named Amphyllis occur in and around Buckinghamshire during the first half of the seventeenth century. The name is an unusual one. In the Visitation of Warwickshire it occurs four times, and once in that of Leicestershire. Three of these instances are connected with the Nevill family. Sir Lawrence Washington, grandson of the first grantee of Sulgrave, was lord of the Manor of Westbury in the extreme north of the county of Buckingham, and he had for a neighbour Sir William Washington, the eldest brother of the Rev. Lawrence Washington, at Leckhamstead. The Rev. R. Ussher, Vicar of Westbury, is keenly interested in the Washington pedigree, and I am indebted to him for much of my local information. From his transcript of the Leckhamstead registers I find that Amphyllis Bagley, daughter of Robert, was baptised on January 22nd, 1625. Unfortunately the date is too late for the Washington connection. In the same register there is an account, March 1st, 1624, of the Enclosure of Leckhamstead, Bucks, wherein are mentioned Sir Edward Tyrrell, Lord of the Lordships of Lymes End and Mart End in the parish of Leckhamstead, Dame Elizabeth his wife, Sir Timothy Tyrrell, and Thomas Tyrrell, brothers of Sir Edward, Anthony Greenoway, Esq., Patron of the said Living and Lord of the Manor of Leckhamstead, and Dame Amphyllis his wife. Is anything else known of Dame Amphyllis Greenoway?

The Editor of "Bedfordshire Notes and Queries" a quarter-of-a-century ago wrote to Mr. Waters that fifteen years before that he

had found the name of Washington of frequent occurrence on some register somewhere not far from Luton, but whether Toddington, Chalgrove or Hockliffe he could not say. As far as I know no search has been made for the names.

The Washington entries in the Much Hadham registers, Herts, are known and have been printed.

There are seventeen entries of Washingham names in the Chesham, Bucks, registers, but their connection with the main branches of George Washington's ancestors is unknown.

At Burnham, Bucks, John Washingtonge and Isabel — were married 18 October, 1562.

At Hedgerley, Bucks, Robert Dod and Love Washington were married 10 October, 1568; and John Washington and Philip [?] Weeden were married 30 January, 1590.

There is one other Washington association with the county of Buckingham which is heraldically very interesting. In the church of Marlow is a mural monument to the memory of William Horsepoole and his wife, Mary Washington, daughter of Lawrence Washington of Maidstone, Registrar of the High Court of Chancery. There are five coats of arms on the monument, four small ones at the sides and a large one, which displays only the Horsepoole arms, above. Two of the side ones show Horsepoole impaling Washington. The top one at the right hand side is the one which has the greatest interest, because I believe it supplies the clue to various other coats of arms which show Washington quartered with a coat that has puzzled many enquirers. The one I refer to on the Horsepoole monument shows—Two bars and three mullets in chief for Washington impaling a saltire between four cinquefoils.

It is much too long a story to attempt to unravel this heraldic puzzle in this article. Those of my readers who are interested and have the leisure to follow it up should note what coats of arms the following families had: Mercury, Manning and Lawrence. Coats of arms where Washington is quartered with the following—*Azure*, a cross flory between four cinquefoils *or*—occur at Hengrave Hall, Suffolk, in Maidstone Parish Church, on a stone formerly in Garsdon Manor House, Wilts, on a monument in Garsdon Church [only on the dexter side: the sinister side is *Lewin*], and at Burton Hall near Loughborough [only on the dexter side: the sinister side is *Light*].

The Washington pedigree as substantiated by Mr. Henry F. Waters will then provide the genealogical clues necessary for the elucidation of this most interesting puzzle.