

## Ancestors of Sarah Spencer Easton

A family tree was given for Sarah Spencer Easton in *Lineage from Joseph Easton to Emily Cleland Maxham* where it was stated that "However, this family tree is presented without any documentation and parts of it are questionable." The appended pages are condensed transcriptions from two articles by Donald Lines Jacobus in *The American Genealogist* regarding four brothers named William, Thomas, Michael and Gerard Spencer who left England to emigrate to America in the 1630's. These four brothers are mentioned in the Sarah Spencer Easton family tree.

The first article is "The Four Spencer Brothers – Their Ancestors and Descendants," by Donald Lines Jacobus, in *The American Genealogist*, Volume 27 (April 1951), pp.79-87. It borrows heavily from a book entitled *The Spencers of Staffordshire* that was published in 1903 by Rev. John Holding that traces records of the early Spencer Families in Stotfold, County Bedford, England. Lines argues that the lineage before John Spencer, the great-grandfather of the four emigrant brothers, is not adequately documented in this book. The lineage to Sarah Spencer Easton therefore begins with this John Spencer.

John Spencer was born around 1500 in Edworth, County Bedford and he was buried there on June 9, 1558. He married a woman named Anne (perhaps Merrill) who was buried in Edworth on June 16, 1560. The couple had three children and all were sons, and their first-born of these sons was named Michael Spencer.

Michael Spencer was probably born between 1530 and 1535. It is not known when he died, but he was still living in 1599. Michael married Agnes Limer in Edworth on January 20, 1555 or 1556. The couple had three children before Agnes died and was buried at Edworth on Feb 23, 1561 or 1562. Michael then married a woman named Elizabeth about 1563, and relocated to Stotfold between 1571 and 1576. The couple had as many as six children before Elizabeth died and was buried in Stotfold on November 18, 1599. Some of these six children could possibly have been from another wife that Michael might have had after Agnes died and before he married Elizabeth. It is known with certainty that Michael and Elizabeth Spencer had a son named Gerard Spencer.

Gerard Spencer was baptized at Stotfold on May 20, 1576 and he died there before 1646. Gerard married Alice Whitbread (or Whitbred) at Upper Gravenhurst, County Bedford on November 10, 1600 and the couple had nine children. It is quite possible that Gerard and his family moved from Stotfold some years before the emigration of four of his sons William, Thomas, Michael and Gerard Spencer to America. It is quite possible that the family had moved to London, where Gerard's brother Richard had become a prosperous haberdasher. We are particularly interested in the son of Gerard and Alice Whitbread Spencer who was named William Spencer.

The second article is "The Four Spencer Brothers – Their Ancestors and Descendants," by Donald Lines Jacobus, in *The American Genealogist*, Volume 27 (October 1951), pp. 161-185 picks up the line of descendants of William Spencer in America. William Spencer was baptized at Stotfold,

on October 11, 1601, and he died at Hartford, CT in 1640. He married Agnes (probably Tucker). The couple had three children and the third was a son named Samuel Spencer.

Samuel Spencer was born about 1638, and he died at Hartford about 1716. He married a woman named Sarah who died April 24, 1706. The couple had eight children and the second-born was a daughter named Sarah Spencer who was born about 1671. It is noted that Sarah married Joseph Easton about 1694 and that the couple had six children. This generally corresponds to information in the *Lineage from Joseph Easton to Emily Cleland Maxham*, where it is stated that Joseph Easton married a woman named Sarah Spencer who was the daughter of Samuel and Sarah Meakins Spencer in 1694, and that the couple had *seven* children. However, it is noted there that their seventh child Lemuel died at a young age.

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October 26, 2015

**Donald Lines Jacobus, "The Four Spencer Brothers – Their Ancestors and Descendants,"**  
*The American Genealogist*, Volume 27 (April 1951), pp.79-87.

Chapter I: Spencer Ancestry in England

In 1903 the Rev. John Holding, M.A., then Vicar of Stotfold, co. Bedford, England, published *The Spencers of Bedfordshire*. ... It is not felt that Mr. Holding established the parentage or origin of John Spencer, great-grandfather of the four emigrant brothers, hence we start our account with him.

...

1. John Spencer, born probably within a few years after 1500, buried at Edworth, co. Bedford, 9 June 1558; married Anne, perhaps Merrill, who was buried at Edworth, 16 June 1560. John was called "senior" at burial. The recorder in entering the burial of Ann Spencer, widow, paid her respect by the following tribute: "the good hospitality keeper; and she did give to the township of Edworth ii of her best bease [beasts] to be lett to ii pore folks in the towns for iii s. a cow & the parson & churchwarden to have the letting of them & the distributing of the money to the poor & to se the stock maintained etch of them to have iii d. of the vi s. for the panes to se this truly done acording to her last will." Her will, dated 13 June 1560, proved 21 Apr 1561, calls her Widow, in Edworth, Beds., and names her son Gerard (aged 17); son Michael, to have the chest that was his brother John's; John Spencer, son Michael's child, to have æ20; Elisabeth Lymer, to have æ4 at marriage; Alice Aystin, to have a calf; servants; for the mending of "London Brygge waye," 10 s.; brother Edward's children, to have the æ1 that he borrowed of her, and the barley he gave her sons to his children; Nicholas Merryll and John Merryll his brother, to have the barley their father gave her sons; and the poor of Edworth, to have the gift already mentioned. Michael Spencer was a witness.

From this will we gain the impression that our Spencer family at that period was of the yeoman class, and somewhat better off than the average village family of the time and place. Whether they were in origin a younger branch of an older gentry family, or a more humble clan which by industry and good fortune had improved its lot, we are not in a position to affirm. It would be necessary to prove the parentage and more remote ancestry of John Spencer, Sr., by documentary evidence, before claiming any specific connection with any other Spencer family in England. From the terms of the will, it would seem that Anne's brother was Edward Merryll or Merrill, and that this was her maiden name. A search of Merrill wills might confirm this conjecture.

Children:

2. i. Michael, b. probably 1530-1535.

ii. John, bur. at Edworth, 21 Apr 1560, as son of Ann Spencer, widow.

iii. Gerard, b. ca. 1543; d. at Biggleswade, Beds, ca. 1577; m. at Edworth, 30 Jul 1568, Ellen Whyston.

2. Michael Spencer, born probably 1530-1535, living in 1599; married first, at Edworth, Beds, 20 Jan 1555/6, Agnes Limer, who was buried at Edworth, 23 Feb 1561/2; married second, about 1563, Elizabeth \_\_\_\_, who was buried at Stotfold, Beds, 18 Nov 1599, as wife of Michael Spencer, signifying that he was then alive. The division of Michael's children between the two wives is somewhat different from what might be inferred from the Rev. Mr. Holding's book, because of the discovery of the burial of the first wife, Agnes, early in 1562. The name of the mother is not stated in the Edworth baptisms, but Elizabeth is stated as mother of the two children, Gerard and Richard, who were baptized at Stotfold. We therefore assume that Elizabeth was mother of the other

children who were born after 1562 and before the birth of Gerard in 1576, though it remains possible that there was a second, unknown, wife between Agnes and Elizabeth. The removal of the family from Edworth to Stotfold occurred between 1571 and 1576.

Children by first wife, born at Edworth:

- i. John, bapt. at Edworth, 20 Apr 1557.
- ii. Michael, bapt. at Edworth, 27 May 1558; bur. 15 Apr 1560.
- iii. Anne, bapt. 24 July 1560.

Children, the last two certainly, the others probably, by Elizabeth:

- iv. Joan, bapt. at Edworth, 21 Aug 1564.
- v. Alice, bapt. 30 Aug 1566.
- vi. Catherine, m. \_\_\_\_ Bland, and had daus. Sarah and Anne. Either she or one of her sisters was mother of Elizabeth who m. Edward Terry.
- vii. Thomas, bapt. 12 Mar 1571.
- 5 viii. Gerard, bapt. 20 May 1576; the first of the children baptized at Stotfold, and recorded as "Gerat," but his name is spelled Gerard at the baptisms of his own children.
- ix. Richard, bapt. 9 July 1580; d. at London at the end of May or beginning of June 1646. ....

...

5. Gerard Spencer, baptized at Stotfold, co. Bedford, 20 May 1576, died before 1646; married at Upper Gravenhurst, co. Bedford, 10 Nov 1600, Alice Whitbread or Whitbred, who belonged to a family of some prominence. An account of her family is reserved for a later chapter. It seems quite possible that Gerard and his family moved from Stotfold some years before the emigration of his sons to New England; perhaps to London, where his brother Richard had become a prosperous haberdasher.

Children, recorded at Stotfold:

- 6 i. William, bapt. 11 Oct 1601.
- ii. Elizabeth, bapt 31 Oct 1602; m. \_\_\_\_ Tomlins.
- iii. John, bapt. 22 Jan 1603/4; almost certainly d. young or without issue before 1646. ...
- iv. Henry, bapt. 11 Aug 1605; bur. 20 Oct 1607.
- v. Thomas, bapt. 29 Mar 1607.
- vi. Richard, bapt. 11 Dec 1608; bur. 6 May 1614.
- vii. A son, bur. 24 Mar 1609/10.
- viii. Michael, bapt. 5 May 1611.
- ix. Gerard, bapt. 25 Apr 1614.

**Donald Lines Jacobus, "The Four Spencer Brothers – Their Ancestors and Descendants,"**  
*The American Genealogist*, Volume 27 (October 1951), pp. 161-185.

6. William(1) Spencer, baptized at Stotfold, Beds, England, 11 Oct 1601, died at Hartford, Conn., 1640; married Agnes [probably Tucker], who married second, William Edwards, by whom she became ancestress of the noted Tucker family. William's will, 4 May 1640, mentions cousin Matthew Allyn and brother John Pratt. The reason for concluding that his wife Agnes was a Tucker is stated in New York Gen. and Biog. Record, 71:220, and we understand that investigations are now in progress to prove that she was daughter of Richard and Agnes (Wyatt) Tucker, which would make her a relative of Matthew Allyn's Wyatt wife; and she may have been sister of John Pratt's wife, thus explaining the terms used in Spencer's will.

Children:

- i. Elizabeth(2), b. ca. 1633; m. (1) in 1649, William Wellman, who d. at Killingworth, 9 Aug 1671; eight children; m. (2) 23 May 1672, Jacob Joy, who d. 1690, son of Walter and Deborah; four children.
- ii. Sarah, b. ca. 1635; d. at Simsbury, 3 Nov 1691 ae. 55; m. before 17 Aug 1656, John Case, who d. 21 Feb 1703/4; ten children. He m. (2) Elizabeth (Moore) Loomis.
- 10 iii. Samuel, b. ca. 1638; d. ca. 1716.

...

10. Samuel(2) Spencer (William(1)), born about 1638, died at Hartford, Conn., about 1716; married Sarah \_\_\_\_\_, who died 24 Apr 1706.

Children:

- i. Samuel(3), b. ca. 1668; d. 26 Mar 1748.
- ii. Sarah, b. ca. 1671; m. ca. 1694, Joseph Easton of Hartford, who d. between 1728 and 1735; six children.
- iii. Hannah, b. Jul 1674; d. 5 Dec 1702; m. at Hartford, 13 May 1686, Caleb Stanley, Jr., b. 6 Sep 1674, d. 4 Jan 1711/12; no issue.
- iv. Elizabeth, b. (say 1676); m. Lieut. Nathaniel Marsh, of Hartford, who d. (by Aug) 1748; four children.
- v. Rachel, b. (say 1678); m. at Hartford, 8 Oct 1705, Capt. Joseph Cook, of Hartford, who d. (before 1 Dec) 1747; no issue.
- vi. Mary, b. ca. 1681; d. at Hartford, 15 Feb 1756 ae. 75; m. there, 24 May 1705, Capt. Cyprian Nichols, b. ca. 1671, d. 2 Jan 1756 ae. 84; nine children.
- vii. Abigail, b. (say 1684); m. at Hartford, 3 Mar 1708/9, Joseph Symons, who d. Feb 1756; nine children.
- viii. Agnes, bp. 20 Nov 1687; m. (1) at Hartford, 14 Mar 1709, Nathaniel Humphrey, who d. there, Dec 1711; two children; m. (2) Oct 1715, John Hubbard, b. at Hartford, Aug 1691; three or more children.