

## MATTHEW GRISWOLD

MATTHEW. Came to New England 1639 with Edward Griswold and Rev. Ephraim Huit, and eventually arrived in Windsor, Conn., but did not long remain there, having become an agent of Lord Fenwick, removed to Saybrook, Conn. Received a grant of land 1645 which became the foundation of a large fortune.

Matthew was a typical Englishman, hardy and venturesome, and with a lusty desire to accumulate large land holdings and a vigorous method of accomplishing it. Full of energy and was held in high esteem by the early settlers, and he was counsellor and friend to all. He possessed very largely those traits of physique and character, so often met with in men of the Griswold Clan. Large community spirit, genial and easy-going, yet forceful when required. A man of powerful build and used his strength in the combat with the wilderness to found a home and fortune. It is said he was exceedingly kind and gentle in his family.

Old Lyme was first settled in 1664 as East Saybrook, and Matthew was the pioneer and its first settler, which was set off from Saybrook in 1665, and he was one of the signers of the Articles of Separation. This was in an age when distinctions of rank and caste were held in severe respect, and Matthew, by his constant contact with the more aristocratic families, through his association with Lord Fenwick, became more or less embued with this, and the family of Griswold being constantly in the public eye gradually became part of the leading families. However the family were devoted to the public cause and exercised all their powers to build a substantial and lasting community.

Matthew built a log cabin. One of his Negro men occupied it and it became known as "Blackhall" or "Blak's Hall," and doubtless this is the origin of the name Blackhall which has come down to the present time as a name for the ancestral estate.

The early houses built upon Blackhall lands have entirely disappeared. The oldest house now standing was built in 1796 by Matthew fifth. It is an exact reproduction of an earlier house built on the same spot by his grandfather Judge John.

Matthew was a lawyer, but by trade a mason and he furnished the stones for many of the graves of the early settlers. There is

a receipt dated Apr. 1, 1679, registered at Saybrook for 7 pounds sterling "paid M. Griswold in pay't for tombstone of Lady Alice Boteler (Lady Fenwick), late of Saybrook." He also furnished the stone for his father-in-law Henry Wolcott which is almost intact after all these years. That of Lady Fenwick, by reason of its removal from the point where the railroad crosses to its present site has sadly lost its ancient symmetry. And no stone marks his own grave nor do we know exactly where he was buried. There are records which lead us to believe in all probability that he was buried in old Saybrook cemetery. Although he removed to Lyme he retained his connection with Saybrook church as a member until his death, and from the church records we find that he was brought thither for interment. During his lifetime he presented to the church the first silver cup used in the observance of the Lord's Supper. The inscription upon it is: "S.C. ex dono domini Matthai Griswold." The S.C. evidently is the initials of *Sacramentalis Calix*.

Matthew had many views far in advance of his time and concerning the rights of women was one of them.

There is an ancient deed Apr. 23, 1663, Hannah or Anna Griswold, wife of Matthew, has a portion of meadow land in Windsor Great Meadows—"Twelve akers more or less—" this comes to her as part of the portion that fell to her by the last will and testament of her brother Christopher Wolcott out of his estate which was to be divided among his relations, and this parcel of meadow is allowed by her husband Matthew Griswold to be recorded and made over to Anna, his wife, "to remain to her and to her children and her dispose forever."

Matthew served as deputy 1654, 1667, 1678, and 1685; also as J.P. Was trusted with many important affairs of the Colony in its struggle with those matters which always beset the formation of a new community.

He was married Oct. 16, 1646, to ANNA WOLCOTT, daughter of the first Henry Wolcott, of Windsor, who emigrated from England and was the ancestor of the Wolcott family in America; son of John Wolcott of Tolland, England, bapt. 1578. Came in the ship Mary and John and was made a freeman on the first day of the first General Court, Oct. 19, 1630, in Boston. Anna came over with her sister and youngest brother after the family were settled. She was living in Sept. 1700 when she and Abraham

Bronson were summoned before the court at New London as administrators of the estate of Matthew. She probably died before May 1701, when he was summoned alone. We have no record of her death and the place of her burial is unknown. Matthew died at his home Sept. 27, 1698.

The children as named in the family records:

- \*2 SARAH,
- \*3 MATTHEW, b. 1653.
- \*4 JOHN, b. ——. No records. Probably d. unm.
- \*5 ELIZABETH.
- \*6 ANNA.

Records of Lyme and Saybrook, Conn.; Wolcott Mem. Conn. Colony records, Vol. I, 158, 161, 162, 205, 352, 404; Vol. II, 43, 46, 48, 70, 83, 109, 294, 317, 557; Vol. III, 24, 43, 66, 92, 121, 139, 158, 159, 201, 482; Hist. Soc. Coll., Particular court records; Court of Assistants records, Office Secretary of State.

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SARAH<sup>2</sup>, b. Lyme, Conn. (*Matthew*<sup>1</sup>); m. Sept. 11, 1677, Capt. THOMAS COLTON, s. of George and Deborah (Gardiner) Colton, b. Longmeadow, Mass., May 1, 1651. Sarah died Sept. 12, 1690.

Resided in Longmeadow. George Colton, the ancestor, was a prominent man, honored and trusted, public spirited, and was always one of the dependable citizens. Has honorable mention in old records.

Capt. Thomas m. (2) Dec. 17, 1691, HANNAH BLISS, b. May 26, 1665, who d. Nov. 6, 1737.

The town of Springfield voted Nov. 30, 1693, to send Capt. Thomas and Sgt. Luke Hitchcock to the Bay to procure a minister. The Rev. Dr. Williams in a funeral sermon preached a few days after the death of Capt. Thomas spoke of him "as a man of strong character, a man of eminent piety, and as having been eminently useful in the Indian Wars." Capt. Thomas is said to have been much feared by the Indians, both for his daring in attack, and from his apparent invulnerability and supernatural