



In the beginning ... William Hallett

In the Beginning...

James Riker, Jr., had the following to say about Halletts in his book *The Annals of Newton, in Queen's County, New York* (1852): "The Halletts, now mostly removed from this town, formerly composed here a very large and prominent family, and their history is closely interwoven with Newtown annals.

William Hallett, their ancestor, was born in Dorsetshire, Eng., in 1616, and emigrating to New-England, joined in the settlement of Greenwich, Ct., whence he removed to Long Island, and acquired a large estate at Hellgate. In the fall of 1655 the Indians destroyed his house and plantation at Hallett's Cove, which induced him to take up his residence at Flushing. Here he was appointed sheriff in 1656, but the same year was deposed by Stuyvesant, fined and imprisoned, for entertaining the Rev. Wm. Wickenden from Rhode Island, allowing him to preach at his house and receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper from his hands. Disgusted at this treatment, Mr. Hallett, on the revolt of Long Island from the Dutch, warmly advocated the claims of Connecticut; and being sent as a delegate to the general court of that colony, he was appointed as a commissioner or justice of the peace for Flushing. Afterwards he again located at Hellgate, where he lived to the age of about 90 yrs. He had two sons, William and Samuel, between whom, in 1688, he divided his property in Hellgate Neck."

This seems to be the earliest information we can find on Halletts who came to America and some of whose descendants came to Canada. There are many of William Hallett's descendants listed in the above mentioned book for anyone wishing to do further research. For now, I have included William because it is highly probable that the descendants of Robert Hallett do come originally from William. As George Hayward says in his biographical sketch of Robert Hallett, "At the time of the Revolution, there were several Hallett families living in the New York City area, descendants of William Hallett who was born in England in 1616, and I have always supposed he belonged to one of them, but I have not been able to establish that as fact." Also, Mr. Hayward has made up charts of descendants of both William and Robert Hallett, and his theory is further substantiated by the fact that "with few exceptions, the names of Robert & Mary's children and Hallett grandchildren can be found among the descendants of William Hallett in New York".

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