

➤:PREFACE.:➤

The Tilley family in this country covers a period of two hundred and fifty years. As generation after generation has passed away, much of the early history of the first members has been lost or destroyed.

The object of the author has been to preserve all the important facts which could be gathered concerning his remote ancestors, and to give a complete genealogical table of their descendants.

The difficulties which we encounter in collecting the genealogy of a family are briefly stated in the Genealogy of the Greenleaf Family, by Jonathan Greenleaf:—

“Probably no person is aware of the difficulties and perplexities of collecting and arranging the genealogy of a large family, but those who have tried it. Many families keep no records; many others have but a few fragments, while in other cases we find a list of names, but no dates; and, in some instances, dates of birth are withheld. Added to this, is the fact, that but few men are found who take much interest in genealogical researches, unless the possession of some large estate is in prospect; and hence many inquiries are made, and many letters written which are never answered.” The author’s experience has been similar.

We commence the record with William Tilley, who came to this country from England about 1660, although his cousin William, who was older, came over in the Abigail, June 19, 1635, at the age of twenty, but of him we can find no further record and only know that he was a cousin of William Tilley who settled in Boston in 1660, as we find from the record of the latter, wherein he says: “I can find no trace of cousin William who preceded me twenty-five years ago in ye ship Abigail.”

William Tilley was, by occupation, a rope-maker, and was no doubt the second one of his trade who came to this country, as we find from the records of Boston that “The business of rope-making appears to have been set up about 1641 by John Harrison.”

William Tilley, finding that his business would warrant the employment of additional help, sent for the three sons of his uncle, Wm. Tilley of England, William, John and James, who came over and worked with him awhile, but for some reason they soon left Boston, William settling in Newport, John in New York, and James in New London.

The record of the descendants of William (who settled in Newport) we have carefully compiled and bring it down to the present day. Of the others we are unable to find a complete record but their record as we present it is all that can be obtained.

R. HAMMETT TILLEY.

Newport, R. I., December 1st, 1878.

