

WILLIAM CORNWELL

(1615-)

The name Willm. Cornwell first appears on a document dated 20 Novembris, 1635, which states, "Theis under written names are to be transported to the Barbadoes, imbarqued in the *Expedition*, Peter Blackler, Mr. The Men have taken the oaths of Allegiance &:Supremacie: And have been examined by the Minister of the Towne of Gravesend touching their Conformitie to the ordrs & discipline of the Church of England, die et Ao. prd." Willm. Cornwell was shown as age 20, eighth from the bottom of a list of 204 men.

The document is preserved with other manuscripts in the State Paper Department of Her Majesty's Public Record Office, England (London, 1874), and reproduced in a book by John Camden Hotten entitled, *The Original Lists of Persons of Quality; Emigrants; Religious Exiles; Political Rebels; Serving Men Sold for a Term of Years; Apprentices; Children Stolen; Maidens Pressed; and Others Who Went From Great Britain to the American Plantations 1600-1700. With Their Ages, the Localities Where they Formerly Lived in the Mother Country, the Names of the Ships in which They Embarked, and Other Interesting Particulars* (pp. 139-142) (Baltimore: 2002).

William Cornwell's immigration is also documented in *The Complete Book of Emigrants 1607-1660* by Peter Wilson Coldham, Genealogical Publishing Co, Inc., Baltimore 1987, p. 1635, which lists all the immigrants to Barbados and their ages on the *Expedition*.

According to *Genealogies of Virginia Families*, Volume III, page 203, Virginia was often called "Barbadoes," "Bermuda," etc. in the old records. However, the National Society, Sons of the American Revolution, denied this statement and claimed they never had a situation where any person scheduled for Barbadoes, Bermuda, or the Leeward Islands had ever ended up at any place other than the one which was scheduled. However, it was not uncommon for English settlers to immigrate to Barbados, then move on to the American colonies, as when a family got too large to stay on the plantation there.

"Hotten's List" reports that on Oct 24, 1635, William Cornwall, aged 20, was bound to Virginia on board the ship "The Constance."

Mr. Thomas Conwell of Dover Ohio cites the Nov 20, 1635 date, but states the ship was *The Falcon*:

"The surname of Conwell is a variation of Cornwall or Cornwell [which] means 'of Cornwall,' the most southwesterly county of England.

". . . William Conwell, the progenitor of this branch of the family in America was born in Essex County, England, in the year 1615. In the Articles called 'Cavaliers and Pioneers of Virginia' it is found the statement that one 'William Conwell, aged twenty,

and Thomas King, both from London, went to the Barbados, arriving Nov 20th, 1635.' At this time many Cavaliers, disgusted with the democratic state of affairs, fled England, going first to Barbados Island in the West Indies, and later to the Colony of Virginia. It was Capt. John King, of Chester, England, and his good ship *The Falcon* that carried William Conwell, accompanied by his younger brother, John, to Barbados Island. [John is not on the list of passengers in *The Complete Book of Immigrants*.]

"The Conwell brothers are later found in the early Virginia records. First, they appear in York and Princess Anne counties. Later, they took up lands in Westmoreland County, Virginia, where they figure in the early recorded wills and records.

"William Conwell was married in this county, but the name of his wife is not recorded, nor the dates of their deaths. They had several children: Peter, Francis, Hugh, and John. There may have been more than four children, but no records have been found. . . ."

[William Cornwell's name is not found on the Family Tree Maker compact disk, *International Records, English Settlers in Barbados*, which lists baptisms from 1637 to 1800, marriages from 1643-1800, and wills and administrations.]

Until more information comes to light on this William, he is listed only as a possible forebear of our Virginia Cornwell line. However, the next generation, Peter Cornwell, is cited by researchers as being born ca. 1634. Neither an infant Peter nor a female by the name of Cornwell were on William's ship, the *Expedition*. Other ships' passenger manifests of the period listed both women and children; there were no females or younger children listed with the males on board the *Expedition*.

Additionally, there is proof of other Cornwells immigrating to Virginia in the 1600s, ruling out a single Virginia Cornwell forebear. Until descendants of this William Cornwell have been found which link our known Virginia ancestry, claiming him as the first American ancestor of the Virginia Cornwells is perhaps counterproductive to successfully tracing our European forebears.

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