

REV. ROBERT PECK.

REV. ROBERT PECK, the brother of Joseph the ancestor, was born at Beccles, Suffolk County, England, in 1580. He was graduated at Magdalen College, Cambridge; the degree of A. B. was conferred upon him in 1599, and that of A. M., in 1603. He was set apart to the ministry, and inducted over the church at Hingham, Norfolk County, England, January 8, 1605, where he remained until 1638, when he fled from the persecutions of the church to this country.

He was a talented and influential clergyman, a zealous preacher, and a nonconformist to the superstitious ceremonies and corruptions of the church, for which he was persecuted and driven from the country. Brooks, in his lives of the puritans, gives many facts of interest in relation to him. In particularizing some of the offences for which he and his followers were persecuted, he says, "for having catechised his family, and sung a psalm in his own house on a Lord's day evening, when some of his neighbors attended, his lordship (Bishop Harsnet) enjoined all who were present to do penance, requiring them to say, I confess my errors," etc.

Those who refused were immediately excommunicated, and required to pay heavy costs. This, Mr. Brooks says, appears from the bishop's manuscripts under his own hands. He says, "he was driven from his flock, deprived of his benefice, and forced to seek his bread in a foreign land."

Cotton Mather in speaking of him says, he was by the good providence of heaven fetched away into New England about the year 1638, when the good people of Hingham did rejoice in the light for a season; but within two or three years, the invitation of his friends of Hingham, England, persuaded him to return to them, where being though great in person for stature, yet greater for spirit, he was greatly serviceable for the good of the church.

He arrived here in 1638. In relation to his arrival, the town clerk at Hingham here says: "Mr. Robert Peck, preacher of the gospel in the Town of Hingham, in the County of Norfolk, old England, with his wife and two children, and two servants, came over

the sea and settled in this town of Hingham, and he was a Teacher of the Church." Mr. Hobart, of Hingham, says in his diary, that he was ordained here teacher of the church, November 28, 1638. His name frequently appears upon the records of the town. He had lands granted him.

His family as seen upon the chart consisted of nine children. His son Joseph and daughter Anne came over with him. He was twice married. His first wife Anne, died at Hingham, England, and was buried there August 30, 1648. His second wife was Mrs. Martha Bacon, widow of James Bacon, Rector of Burgate.

He remained here until the long Parliament, or until the persecutions in England ceased, when he returned and resumed his Rectorship at Hingham.

Mr. Hobart says he returned October 27, 1641; and Mr. Cushing, the town clerk, says his wife and son Joseph returned with him; his daughter Anne remaining here. She married Captain John Mason, "the conqueror of the Pequots." *

He died at Hingham, England, and was buried in his churchyard there. His funeral sermon was preached by Nathaniel Joslin and published. †

His church (St. Andrews) at Hingham was a noble structure with a lofty tower, containing eight musical bells.

The following is a copy of his will:

July the xxiiijth 1651

I Robert Pecke Minister of the word of God at Hingham in the countye of Norff beinge in bodilye health and perfect memory knowinge the unceartainety of mans life, doe dispose of that worldly estate God hath given me in manner and form followinge

Imprimus I give and bequeath unto Thomas my Sonne and Samuel my Sonne and their heirs forever All that my messuage wherein I now dwell situate and lyenge in Hingham a forsaid with all the edifices yards and orchards thereunto belonginge As alsoe the Inclose

* Her children were, Priscilla, Samuel, John, Rachel, Ann, Daniel and Elizabeth. Samuel married for his second wife his second cousin Elizabeth Peck, daughter of Joseph Peck, of Rehoboth, Mass.

† In Bloomfield's History of Norfolk is an allusion to Robert Peck, evidently prejudiced, and as incorrect in other respects as it is in its dates.

and Barnes adioyninge As also one Inclose now devided called The Lady close conteyninge about eight acres be it more or less As also one pightell at the end thereof conteyninge twoe acres and d,d uppon condicons followinge, and for the paiement of such legacies as are herein expressed

First I will and bequeath unto Robert Pecke sonne of my sonne Robert deceased the sume of 20£ at his age of 23 years

Item I give unto John Pecke sonne of the said Robert deceased 10^{l^s} To be paid to him at his age of 22 years

Item I give unto Benjamin Pecke the youngest sonne of the said Robert deceased at his age of 22 years 20^{l^s}

Item I give to the children of Anne Mason my daughter wife of captain John Mason of Seabrooke on the river connecticut in new England the sume of Forty pounds to be devided equally unto them and to be sent to my sonne John Mason to dispose of it for their use within 2 years after my death

Item I give to my sonne Joseph Dureinge his natural life the sume of 14^{l^s} yearlie to be in the hands of my Sonnes Thomas and Samuel as it shall arise out of my houses lands and chattles for his maintenance with necessarie foode and apparrell duringe the terme of his naturall life And I doe wholie comitt my said Sonne Joseph to the care of my twoe sonnes Thomas and Samuell to provide for him in such a way as he may not want things necessary for his livelyhood

Item I give to the children of Thomas and Samuell my sonnes which shall be liveinge at my decease the sume of Five pounds apiece at their severall ages of 21 years

Item I give to my now wife Martha Pecke 40^{l^s} To be paid wthin twoe months after my decease Item I give to the poore of Hingham 5^{l^s} To be destrubted at the discrecon of my Executors Thomas Pecke and Samuel Pecke whome I do ordeyne and make Executors of this my last will and Testament confiding that they will faithfully fulfill and performe this my last will according to my trust reposed in them

All my other goods cattells debts moneys household stufte or whatsoever ells belongeth unto me I give and bequeath to my said Executors toards payeinge of my legacies alrerdy bequeathed and towards the bringinge of my body to buriall which I desire if I depart this life in Hingham may be entered in the church yard near unto Anne my wife deceased

In witness whereof I have written this my last will and testament with my own hand the day and yeare above written

Robt Peck

This will was proved at London before the judges for probate of Wills and granting of Administrations the tenth day of April in the year of our Lord God One thousand six hundred fitye and eight