

TO THE CORNELLS,

GENTLEMEN:

The great number of letters which I have received from persons bearing the name of CORNELL or connected in various ways with some of the numerous families of that name, making enquiries respecting the Genealogical History of the families, have convinced me that others of the name were quite as ignorant as I find myself to be respecting our ancestry, and each desirous of more information on the subject.

This state of fact has led me to make such enquiry as business engagements and casual opportunity would permit, and it has resulted in what *seems* to be evidence of the existence of several families of the name of CORNELL in the United States who have descended from different parental stocks, which must have emigrated from Europe, and if connected, the point of connection is more remote than my researches extend.

This enquiry also stimulates a desire for more knowledge on the subject, and I therefore solicit the co-operation of others who may be interested, hoping that the united contributions of all may serve to fill the broken links in the genealogical chain, and enable each family to trace back with reasonable accuracy to its parental transplanting upon the shores of the American Colonies.

To facilitate this enquiry, I will state a few general facts which I glean from the records respecting the early appearance of the name.

The first I find of the name is JAMES CORNELL, who signed as a witness, the deed from the Indians to the Rev. John Wheelwright, in 1638.

The same year, "Aug. 20, 1638, the good people of the town of Boston, in Mass., decided by a vote at town meeting that THOMAS CORNELL may buy brother William Balstone's house and become an inhabitant."

"At a town meeting the 26th April, 1640, for ye town of Portsmouth, R.I., held at Mr. Marlborough's, the Deputie Governor, he will lend unto Mr. THOMAS CORNELL one goat, and have a piece of meadow."

"At the General Court held at Portsmouth on 6th of August, 1640, by the general consent of this court, Mr. THOMAS CORNELL is admitted freeman of this body politic, fully to enjoy the privilege belonging thereto."

In Hinman's account of the first Puritan settlers of Connecticut, are the names of WILLIAM CORNWELL in 1639, and WILLIAM CORNELL in 1640, -- possible the same person, as I frequently find the name spelled both ways in the same instrument or document.

"WILLIAM CORNWELL, sr. died at Middletown, Conn. in 1677; was old, and had sons, -- John, William, Samuel, Thomas and Jacob; daughters, -- Sarah, Hester and Elizabeth; was a constable in 1664. Had the privilege of woodland, pasturing cows on the common in Hartford, Ct., he having owned lots in 1639."

"JOHN CORNELL died at Dorchester, Mass, July 31, 1675, aged 64 years."

July 26, 1646, "William Keift, Director-General and the council on the behalf of the High and Mighty Lords, the State's General of the United Netherlands, the Prince of Orange, &c., give and grant unto THOMAS CORNELL land on the East River, &c., &c., afterwards known as Cornell's Neck, Westchester Co., N.Y.

RICHARD CORNELL came from England in 1655 to 60, and settled on Long Island. He had five sons and two daughters, as follows: William, Thomas, Jacob, John, Richard, Mary and Sarah.

In 1676, the following grant of land was made by the Governor of New York to JOHN CORNELL. (Possibly this John was the fourth son of Richard above.)

"Upon the petition and request of JOHN CORNELL, that being driven by the Indjans from his habitacon to the eastward, and desireous to live under his Royal Highnesses Government if he may have a competent piece of land assigned him to improve for his subsistance with his wife and five children, I have given and granted unto the said JNO CORNELL the quainty of one hundred acres of improvable land not already taken up and improved, with meadow proporconable if there be so much adjoining, on the west side of Cow Neck, the which the survey'r is hereby required to survey and lay out in order to a farther confirmacon according to law. Given under my hand in New York, this 3rd day of October, 1676."

REBECCA CORNELL conveyed land to her son JOSHUA CORNELL, of Dartmouth, Bristol Co., Mass., Oct. 25, 1663. -- THOMAS CORNELL and JOHN CORNELL signed the deed as witnesses.

JOSHUA CORNELL conveyed land to SAMUEL CORNELL, both of Dartmouth, Mass., dated Nov. 21, 1664.

REBECCA CORNELL, widow of the late THOMAS CORNELL, of Portsmouth, R.I., conveyed land to her loving son, SAMUEL CORNELL, of Dartmouth, Mass., 1669. Witnessed by THOMAS CORNELL.

There is now living at Griggstown, Pa., a gentleman by the name of JOSEPH C. CORNELL, who was born May 4, 1779, the son of CORNELIUS CORNELL, who was born Nov. 29, 1742, the grand-son of JOSEPH CORNELL, whose date of birth I have not obtained.

This gentleman says, "My ancestors came from Holland, while the Dutch held the sway of New York, and settled in New York until the trouble with the Indians, and then moved to Monmouth; from thence they went to the west side of Millstone River, about half way between Blackwell's Mills and Griggstown, settled in the woods and lived and died there."

I have copied this scrap of history, furnished by Mr. JOSEPH C. CORNELL, as it may afford a link that will possibly connect this family with the THOMAS CORNELL of Cornell's Neck, Westchester Co., N.Y., who received a grant of land as above stated from the Dutch Government July 26, 1646.

The above land descended to the daughter of THOMAS CORNELL, who became the wife of Charles Bridges. This circumstance has led to the belief that THOMAS CORNELL of Cornell's Neck, left no male heirs. The fact, however, that THOMAS CORNELL was driven from this land by the Indians, (as is disclosed by the evidence in legal proceedings instituted by Charles Bridges and his wife, for the recovery of the land at a later period), and the reference made by JOSEPH C. CORNELL to the "trouble with the Indians," which led to the removal of his ancestors from New York to Monmouth during the early period of his grandfather's life, are circumstances which may direct enquiry, and inspire hope that this gap may yet be filled and the broken chain restored.

I would suggest that information is to be sought for in family records, the town records of births, marriages and deaths, the like records of religious societies, the records of title deeds in County Clerks offices and Register offices, and in the records of courts, &c., &c.

It is desirable that with any information communicated, the source, from whence it is obtained should also be mentioned, as this will facilitate any confirmatory examination that may be desired, and will give the greater confidence in the authenticity of the information.

Persons who have old documents of interest, such as marriage certificates, deeds of property, indentures, and papers of like character, which from their age or other circumstances possess a historic value, may rely upon their preservation and return with the strictest care, if they will forward them to me for inspection or to be copied.

Persons in giving an account of their own families, should give their own name in full, the full maiden name of their wife, with the names of the parents of each, the date of birth, marriage, and death, names of children in the order of their age, with the date and place of birth, with full particulars respecting each.

As a convenient form for a guide, and for the information of those who may desire it, I will give my own family record, as follows:

EZRA CORNELL, son of ELIJAH CORNELL and Eunice Barnard, born Jan. 11, 1807 at Westchester, Westchester Co., N.Y. Married to Mary Ann, daughter of Benjamin Wood and Mary Bonesteel, late of Dryden, Tompkins Co., N.Y., March 19, 1831. Mary Ann was born at DeRuyter, Madison Co., N.Y., April 25, 1811. Their children are

Alonzo B.,	b. at	Ithaca,	Tompkins Co.,	N.Y.,	Jan. 22, 1832.
Charles Carrol,	b. at	"	"	"	Aug. 5, 1833.
died May 29, 1837 at		"	"	"	
Elizabeth Percival,	b. at	"	"	"	Sept. 27, 1835.
died Nov. 9, 1849, at		"	"	"	
Franklin Cuthbert,	b. at	"	"	"	Aug. 28, 1837.
Charles Carrol,	b. at	"	"	"	Sept. 22, 1839.
died Feb. 9, 1841, at		"	"	"	
Oliver H. Perry,	b. at	"	"	"	Feb. 5, 1842.
Mary Emily,	b. at	"	"	"	Nov. 21, 1847.
Ezra Clayton,	b. at	"	"	"	Aug. 21, 1849.
died Dec. 1851, at		"	"	"	
Emma Pettit,	b. at	"	"	"	April 21, 1852.

Alonzo B. married Ellen Augusta, daughter of George Covert and Esther P. Basset, at Ithaca, N.Y., Nov. 9, 1852. Their children are --

Charles Ezra, b, Dec. 29, 1855, in the city of New York.

Edwin M., b. at Ithaca, April 14, 1862.

Henry W., b. at " Oct. 31, 1866.

Franklin Cuthbert married Susan D., daughter of John T. Pettegrove and Pamela P. Jones, Jan. 16, 1862. Their children are --

Eunice, b. at Ithaca, Dec. 23, 1862.

Ezra, b. at Ithaca, July 25, 1864.

Franklin, b. at Ithaca, Nov. 24, 1866.

Oliver H. Perry married Mary Louise, daughter of Nathan Conklin and Elmira Hammond, Dec. 8, 1861. Their children are

Arthur Leland, b. in Danby, N.Y., Nov. 15, 1862

In giving an account of parents, grand parents and great-grand parents, as full particulars as is possible should be given of name, whos son or daughter they are, the time and place of birth, marriage and death; with all other facts that will assist in connecting the genealogical chain; give as many facts, and as little guessing as possible.

The evil deeds of ourselves and parents we are likely to conceal, of this I shall not complain, but there is no reason why deeds of a noble or commendable character should be thus lost to posterity, and I hope I may have the pleasure of receiving many historic incidents and sketches that will tend to illustrate and enoble the name.

Please address EZRA CORNELL, Ithaca, N.Y. Persons who possess photographs or other pictures of their ancestors, will confer a special favor by forwarding copies of the same to me; and I shall be equally pleased with photographs of themselves, for which I will reciprocate by a return of my own when desired.

Very Respectfully,
Ithaca, N.Y., August 12, 1867.

EZRA CORNELL

Source:
Rare and Manuscript Collections
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