

A REPORT FROM BERWICK-UPON-TWEED, ENGLAND

Your editor will mention the October (post September 11), 2001, trip to, among other places, Berwick-upon-Tweed, which he and his wife made (their second such trip in two successive years to the presumed ancestral place of origin of our Andersons).

While we were there (for approximately four days), there was literally no time, or even desire, to do history research, as such, because there was so much else to see and do. We were greatly impressed with “down town” Berwick (within the walls). It is an interesting old town with a street “layout” not wholly dissimilar from that in the “historic” (down town) Annapolis, Maryland. It is surrounded by a large moat and town wall (located immediately behind the North Sea, upon which it fronts).

The Anglican Church Without a Spire or Tower

Immediately behind the moat and wall, at the Historic Square, are the (Anglican) Holy Trinity Church - which, interestingly, has no spire or tower - and Cemetery. The view of these are somewhat obscured by the large Presbyterian Church - which has a spire and tower - built about a century after the Anglican Church. Across the square and opposite the two Churches is the Historic Berwick Military Barracks (now a British Museum). The Town offices (including the Archives) sit at the rear of the square.

There are numerous very attractive “bed and breakfasts”, one or two better hotels, and quite a few good restaurants and shopping areas. There are many (historic and other) places to visit in the areas close to, but mostly outside of, town.

The present Anglican Holy Trinity Church plays an important part in our Anderson background immediately before the departure for (ultimately) Anne Arundel County, Maryland, of our emigrant ancestor, William (I) Anderson about 1670, give or take a year or two. In that Church (both immediately before and immediately after the restoration of the Stuart dynasty in 1660) two of our collateral Anderson ancestors, who did not survive their early infancies, were baptized: first, Samuel Anderson was baptized on August 30, 1653, by a Puritan clergyman, the Reverend Luke Ogle, during the time when Oliver Cromwell was ruling. (Reverend Ogle turns out to have been a direct ancestor of two later Maryland provincial governors, Samuel and Benjamin Ogle, of Prince George’s and Anne Arundel Counties, Maryland, where some of their Ogle, Marbury, Ridout, and other descendants continue to reside.) Later (on January 6, 1663, after the Restoration), Absolon Anderson was also baptized at Holy Trinity Church at Berwick by, presumably, the Reverend William Coxe (Ogle’s immediate successor). In each case, the father was a William Anderson, and the Berwick records indicate that both of these two infant sons died soon after their respective births.

The reason the present day large stone Holy Trinity Anglican Church at Berwick has no spire or tower is because it was originally constructed as a Puritan Church, replacing an earlier Anglican Church structure on the same site. While in Berwick during October, 2001, we were introduced to the present Rector of Holy Trinity Church and were invited to and did attend a special musical presentation one evening at Holy Trinity Church to and from which we were driven by two Church parishioners who very kindly showed and introduced us around the large Church and at a reception immediately after the concert. We also called upon and visited both the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches located in down town Berwick.

(Appearing in this issue of the *Grassland History Notes* are two photographs of “down town” Berwick¹, one of which shows the Anglican Holy Trinity Church, and the other depicts a view of the square

¹In the December, 2001, issue of *Grassland History Notes*, this editor went a bit “overboard” in comparing the exact same pronunciation of the first name of “Baruch” (as in Baruch Hall, son of Thomas and Ann Duckett (Anderson) Hall) with how the “locals” at Berwick-upon-Tweed pronounce the town’s and shire’s name. In both cases, the pronunciation is as if such name were spelled as “Barrick”. That part is correct. But what is not correct

facing toward the town buildings, including the building which houses the archives.)

The Dispossessed Vicar of Berwick

Interestingly, it was the Reverend Luke Ogle who was in charge when the present day large stone Church was erected as one of only two new Churches in all of the British Isles permitted to be constructed during the Cromwellian period. However, soon after the Restoration, Reverend Ogle (the Puritan) was “dispossessed” of his Church, being replaced by Anglican rectors. The Ogles survived, however, to later become “establishment pillars” in “post Restoration” government and society, both in Northumbria and in Maryland.

At this point, the foregoing is all which is known for a certainty. Research done during 2000 by a Northumbrian genealogist (working at New Castle upon Tyne, which is further South than Berwick) has yielded evidence that during this period of the 1660s and earlier there were several contemporaneous Anderson families at Berwick (who may have been related, however), including, of course, several different ones with the same first name of William. Also, the first and maiden names of the wives of some of them appear in the Berwick records. There does seem to be a strong presence at Berwick of Pratts, Burrells, Parrishes, and other last names that reappear among the early Herring Creek and West River Southern Anne Arundel County, Maryland, settlements.

Guild Records of Freemen to be Searched

The Borough Archivist at Berwick has offered to try to “take up” the Anderson story at Berwick where the New Castle genealogist left it, to see what further might come of all of this. (One of Berwick’s early Mayors was an Anthony Anderson, and examples of his signature exist. Several of the early Berwick Andersons and Pratts served as Aldermen of Berwick.) Berwick is divided between the Town and the adjoining “Berwickshire” on the Northern side of the River Tweed. Berwickshire is still part of Scotland.

In a recent “Fax”, the Borough Archivist at Berwick writes: “I have been thinking about your research on the Anderson family and would suggest that it would be best for me to concentrate on the Guild records to see if I can unravel something about the Andersons who were Freemen. This way, it might be possible to see the connections between the Andersons in the parish registers and other sources.”

The important thing for Anderson descendants in North America to understand about all of this is that it has been written, from studies that have been made on this subject, that of the total numbers of emigrants from the British Isles to America during this early colonial period, the number of families who can successfully trace their origins back to specific areas and/or to families in the British Isles is quite small. (At last report, even some very prominent early American families had not been able to “pin point” their place or family of origin in the British Isles. The Ogle and Ridout families are notable exceptions to the foregoing general rule, however.) That our Anderson family has been able to successfully locate its

(see page 4 of the December, 2001, issue of *Grassland History Notes*) is the inference that because Baruch Hall (a descendant of William (I) Anderson, of Herring Creek) was so named, such is further “proof” that Berwick-upon-Tweed is the place of origin of William (I) Anderson. Upon further analysis, no such inference can be made. Baruch Hall received his first name because he had an uncle named Baruch Hall, and also because he is in direct descent (through Anne Duckett Hall, his grandmother) from Baruch *Williams* (of an old Welsh family). See, among other references, page 134 of Sharon J. Doliant’s *Maryland and Virginia Colonials*, Volume I (Reprinted, Baltimore, Md., 1998). While the “root stem” meaning of both the town and shire name and the first name, Baruch, may both derive back to the same original Celtic word and may even have the same basic original meaning in Celtic, nevertheless the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed and the place of origin (Wales) of the Williams family, above referred to, are separated from each other by many, many miles. This retraction in no way diminishes the overall conclusion that the “place of origin” of our Andersons is (still) Berwick-upon-Tweed in Northeast England and/or its adjoining and still Scottish Berwickshire North of the River Tweed, in Southeast Scotland.

place of origin at a specific location, such as Berwick-upon-Tweed, is almost a miracle, we are told. Therefore, anything else which we ultimately learn about the family will be like icing on the cake, so to speak. As has been written before, we can thank our lucky stars that our Anderson forbearers were Puritans who delighted in naming their son(s) "Absolon".