

## Edwin

The origin of the family name is English

William Edwin was transported by Richard Gerard, Esquire to Maryland in 1633 on the Ark and the Dove. He was aged about 21 when he arrived so he was born circa 1612. According to testimony at Provincial Court (Liber S pp 99-135) he gave his age as about 46 years on July 28, 1658, thus born in 1612. William was literate and the proprietor of an inn, but while the fact remains that he was schooled in letters, an attribute of the gentry, he was addressed in recorded instances as "Goodman" and his wife as "goodwife" which were terms of address used for the middle class.

In 1650 William signed a declaration with other Protestant subjects of Lord Baltimore that he "enjoyed all fitting and convenient freedoms and liberty in the exercise of our religion". By this act he can be placed as a member of the Proprietary Party and not a member of the Puritan forces.

His service (if any) to Ferdinand Poulton who had acquired the land right for Edwin from Gerard (above) was completed by January 1637/38 for at that time he was styled "planter" of St. Mary's Hundred when he gave his proxy to William Lewis at the second General Assembly held at St. Mary's City, the capital on January 25, 1637. When St. Michael's Hundred was created, the part of St. Mary's Hundred that contained his plantation became a part of it.

On March 26, 1637 he appeared at the Assembly to obtain the first license for marriage in Maryland. One author writes of this union as follows "Just four years after the landing of the Pilgrims (1638) there was at least one happy hopeful pair in the colony. William Edwin a sturdy planter loved with an earnest affection Mary Whitehead, spinster (as females of a certain age and position were in those times decorously called), and she returned his regard. The suitor was no light, false-hearted, deceitful popinjay but a single hearted yeoman who believed he had found a woman that would be a helpmate indeed and he could lay his hand on his heart and say he was bound to no other woman. No lawful impediment existed to his marriage with Mary Whitehead. He therefore made application of Secretary Lewger who issued this first marriage license in Maryland. The result was the following entry upon the colonial record, 26 March 1638, Memorandum, that William Edwin planter, acknowledge himself to owe unto the Lord Proprietor one thousand weight of merchantable tobacco to be paid upon demand in case said William hath reconstructed himself to any other woman than Mary Whitehead (spinster) or in case there is any consanguinity, affinity or other lawful impediment to the knowledge of the said William Edwin why he should not be married to the said Mary Whitehead.

William Edwin

William's mode of signing his name was certainly peculiar and shows no great familiarity with the pen, but this should be no discredit especially when it is remembered that half the men in the colony could not sign their names and some who occupied stations of trust and responsibility were obliged to content themselves with making their

mark. What is more to purpose his work was good with the Honorable Secretary who made the following entry in the record book. "March 26<sup>th</sup> a license was granted to William Edwin to marry Mary Whitehead."

Mary was born in 1612 and therefore was 26 when she married. Mary was transported on the ship "Unity" from the Isle of Wight to Maryland as a servant of John Lewger, Secretary of the Colony. She arrived in November 1637.

In 1643 John Neville sued William and his wife for "forcible entry into his dwelling house". In 1644 William and his wife sued widow Whitecliff for slander.

In 1648 (perhaps after his first voyage to England) William applied for land rights by virtue of his government service for 50 acres of land on the west side of St. George's River in St. George's Hundred under the "Conditions of Plymouth". The parcel was bounded on the west by Cooper's Creek and on the north by Packer's Creek. He gave the name "St. William" to his plantation which was to be held under "West St. Mary's Manor" by a warrant signed by Thomas Greene, Esquire. In 1658 William was sworn in as constable of St. George's Hundred about the time he occupied "St. William"

In August 1649 Francis Jarvise, a kinsman, granted William Power of Attorney to recover 500 pounds of tobacco from Francis Brooke, one time wife beater. Jarvise won his case and Brooke delivered a heifer in payment. William registered his cattle marks for his daughters Elizabeth and Mary that year.

The Inn mention earlier is believed to be located at "St. William" since it was nearer the important center of activities that was his earlier home in St. Michael's Hundred. The size of this public Inn can be judged from the record that he lodged 50 servants and their goods for Captain Richard Husbands. Later in June 1653 William sued Miles Cooke. Captain Husband's mate for his trouble and entertainment with houserom and dyett (sic) about 50 servants and storage of goods which came last year in Husband's ship. The suit was for 2000 pounds of tobacco that had been the agreement versus 600 pounds that Cooke had offered in settlement. In 1659 Husband acknowledged in Court that seven years before he "transported divers Scotts into Virginia and from thence into this Province in his sloop" and landed them at the house of William Edwin where they remained for some time. Husband also stated that Edwin arrested his mate while he was out of the Province.

In 1656 Edwin returned to England where he contracted with Captain Samuel Tilghman to transport him on his return voyage to Maryland. In 1658 Tilghman brought suit against Edwin for nonpayment of passage. He declared that he transported Edwin "out of England on the ship Goulden Fortune". Edwin swore in court that he had partly paid the charge and produced a receipt for one small steer weighing 251 pounds that had been signed by John Mochar, Boatswain.

Mary Whitehead Edwin died July 28, 1658 aged 46 and William later married Margerite (last name unknown) who in turn remarried additional husbands after William

died sometime before October 13,1663 when his will was probated. Margarite was transported into Maryland in 1656.

William appointed his wife executrix and bequeathed her his dwelling plantation "St. William" during life. To his eldest son Michael, who settled in Kent County he left personality. One heifer was left to his granddaughter Mary Hall who married Joseph Dawkins and William Guigoe (Grenge?) who was a witness to the will with William Price. Joseph Dawkins wed Mary Hall. Daughter Mary wed James Duke before 1685. (see Dawkins Family).

On September 26,1665 Margarite the widow and relic of Edwin proved her rights to 350 acres of land by assignments from several persons and 100 acres more for herself and her new husband's transport into the Province. The latter 100 acres were possibly due William for his return from England on the "Golden Fortune". Margarite gave her warrant and patent to her son William "orphant of the aforesaid William Edwin". Land Rights were made under the Conditions of London dated July 2,1649. Therefore, the Court ordered a tract of 350 acres be laid out for William Edwin, orphan, on the Eastern Shore on the Pocomoke River adjoining land owned by Captain Harwood called "Golden Lyon". It lay in Somerset County and was to be held of the Manor of Nanticoke.

William chose to settle in Kent County where his stepbrother Michael lived. William received a grant for 240 acres that he called "Edwin's Addition" surveyed August 6, 1689 which lay on the east side of Swann Creek and adjoined the land of John Blackistone. He also possessed 50 acres of "Edwin's Rest" surveyed in 1687. Note: A man named Andrew Edwin was transported into the colony in October 1664 and a man named Thomas Edwin was transported into the colony in 1677. Several persons named Whitehead came into the colony in 1678/79. It has not been determined what relationship the above Edwins or Whiteheads had to William and Mary.

#### References

- The Flowering of the Maryland Palatinate - Newman page 197
- Register of Maryland's Heraldic Families page 135
- Archives of Maryland Volumes 4,10 and 41
- Early Settlers of Maryland - Skordas pages 147,501
- Papers Relating to the Early History of Maryland Sebastian Streeter p 18,63,101.