

THE PRITCHARDS AND THEIR NAME

The name of Pritchard or Prichard is said to have been of Welsh origin and derived from Ap Richard, meaning "son of Richard". It is found on ancient records in variations of Prichar, Prichert, Prichards, Pritchart, Pritchard and Prichard, of which the last two are the generally accepted forms of today.

The family of Pritchard is said to have been descended from an ancient Welsh line which is given as beginning with Baradoc Vraich Vras, Earl of Hereford and Prince between the Wye & Severn [rivers] in the early sixth century. He was the father of Gloyw, who had Hoyw, who had Bynfarach, who had Byndeg, who had Seithwalch, who had Segid, who had Jangwod, who had Anarawd, who was the father of Gwendwyod, who had Gwengy, who had Hydd Hygan, who had Dryffyn, Prince of Brecon in the tenth century.

Rys Goch ap Dryffyn, Lord of Ystradwy, was the father of Byhellen Yoel, who had Ryhs, who was the father of Bynhyllyn, who had Bynfyn, who had Arthur, who had Howell, who was the father of Griffith, Lord of Penrhos Castle, who was killed in 1282 and was succeeded by his eldest son, David.

David ap Griffith was the father of Howell Gam, who had Howell Johan, who married Gane, daughter of Sir John Norris, and died about 1399, leaving one son, Mauric, who was the father of Sevan, who had Howell, who married the daughter and heiress of the Lord of Llanover and High Sheriff of Brecon in 1554.

William ap Richard (also called William Prichard) was the father, by his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Watkin ap Hugh, of at least four children, Matthew, Charles, Valentine, and Anne. Of these children Matthew was High Sheriff of Monmouthshire in 1596, and left three sons, William, Jenkin or John, and Benjamin. The other sons Charles and Valentine, held the positions, respectively of Vicar of Llanover in 1583 and High Sheriff of Monmouthshire in 1609.

From this ancient Welsh line were also descended the Prichards of London and Lancashire, and the Pritchards of Salop county. These families were, for the most part, of the nobility and landed gentry of England and Wales. Of these later branches of the family one, William Prichard, was living in the parish of Preston, Lancaster county, in the early eighteenth century and is believed to have had a son named William, and one Sir William Prichard was Lord Mayor of London in the year 1705.

Probably the first member of the family to emigrate to America was Hugh Pritchard of Gloucester, Mass., in 1641, who removed at a slightly later date to the town of Roxbury, in the same colony, and is said to have come from Wales. By his wife, Elinor, he had Abigail or Abiel, Zebediah, Phoebe and several others who died young.

One, Roger Pritchard, made his home at Springfield in 1643 and later removed to Milford. By his wife, Frances, who died in 1651, he is believed to have had Alice and Joan. In 1653 he married a second wife the Widow Elizabeth (nee Prudden) Blough and probably had further issue.

Another emigrant of the year 1643 was Richard Pritchard of Yarmouth, who brought with him his wife, Ann, and daughter, Templer. He made his home at Charlestown about 1660 and died in 1669, leaving a widow named Margery and a daughter named Hannah.

William Pritchard of Lynn, Mass., in 1645 removed to Spowick in 1648 and to Brookfield at a slightly later date. His children are believed to have been William, John, Joseph, Elizabeth, and Samuel, and probably several others who died young.

About 1647 one John Prichard emigrated to Dorchester county, Md., and is said to have had at least one son named John, and probably others.

Another William Prichard or Pritchard resided in Maryland as early as 1658 and is said to have left a large family, although the names of his immediate family are not known.

Obediah Prichard of Maryland had issue by his wife, Margaret, whom he married about 1699, of Samuel, Obediah and James.

Griffith Pritchard and his wife, Mary, came from Wales to Pennsylvania about the year 1700 and were the parents of, among others, a son named Anthony, from whom were descended the Ohio Prichards.

Two brothers, William & John Prichard, are said to have been kidnapped and brought to Virginia from Wales about 1740. William is said to have married Dorcas Glover, daughter of Colonel John Glover, and to have had issue by her of James, John, Lewis and Elizabeth. He removed, in the latter part of his life to Kentucky. It is possible that the John Prichard who was living in Virginia prior to the Revolutionary War, and was the father of three sons, one of whom was named William, was the same as the John above mentioned as brother of the emigrant William, but this is not certain.