

Thomasine¹ (Clench) Frost of the Great Migration: Her Probable Correct Origins in Colchester, Essex

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On 16 April 1634, “Thomasin Clench” married Edmond Frost in Earls Colne, Essex, and they immigrated to New England the next year. In a 1999 *Register* article, Neil D. Thompson identified Thomasine Clench as the daughter of Robert and Joan (Webbe) Clench, baptized in Bottisham, Cambridgeshire, 16 October 1608.^[1] Thompson’s article was an “examination of the parentage and ancestry of these early New England Settlers,” that he characterized as “still ongoing.” Thompson’s identification of Thomasine (Clench) Frost has been cited in other important and widely-consulted publications.^[2]

By researching other Clenches in Earls Colne, compelling evidence has been found to identify a more probable set of parents for Thomasine (Clench) Frost in Colchester, Essex. However, if Thomasine’s origins are correctly identified below, records in Colchester suggest that she may have been a cousin of some degree to Thomasine Clench of Bottisham.

Doubtful Assumptions

As Thompson noted, Edmond Frost of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and his wife “Thomas-Anne” were identical with Edmond Frost and Thomasine Clench who married in Earls Colne, Essex, on 16 April 1634. If Thomasine was 21 when they married (a usual age at marriage for women), she would have been born about 1613. In response to the potential discrepancy between the 1608 baptismal record that Thompson attributed to her and a projected birth year of 1613, Thompson stated: “Since the eldest daughter [of Robert Clench] married at age 25, Thomasine’s marriage at age 26 is not objectionable . . .”^[3] But with no direct evidence to confirm that it was Robert’s daughter Thomasine who married Edmond Frost, chronological doubt was a concern.

¹ Neil D. Thompson, FASG, “The English Ancestry of Thomasine (Clench) Frost, First Wife of Edmund¹ Frost of Cambridge, Massachusetts,” *Register* 153 (1999):278–290. Although her name was recorded as “Thomasin Clench” at marriage, different spellings were used elsewhere. Through Thompson’s article and other publications, she has become primarily known as Thomasine (Clench) Frost and that spelling is retained for this article’s title. *Thomasine* is a more common English variation of *Thomasina*, a medieval feminine form of *Thomas*. Recognized variants include *Tamsen*, *Tamsin*, *Tamsyn*, *Tamzen*, etc., and other variants are introduced further below.

² Robert Charles Anderson, George F. Sanborn, Jr., and Melinde Lutz Sanborn, *The Great Migration, Immigrants to New England, 1634–1635, Volume II, C–F* (Boston: NEHGS, 2001), 596; Gary Boyd Roberts and Julie Helen Otto, *The Royal Descents of 900 Immigrants to the American Colonies, Quebec, or the United States: Who Were Themselves Notable or Left Descendants Notable in American History*, 2 vols. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2018), 1:680–681.

³ Thompson, “English Ancestry of Thomasine (Clench) Frost” [note 1], *Register* 153:288.

Earls Colne, Essex, lies approximately 33 miles southeast of Bottisham, Cambridgeshire. Marriages often occurred in the parish where the bride resided, so it seems more likely that Thomasine was a resident of Earls Colne or a parish in closer proximity than Bottisham. Thus, geographical doubt was another concern.

Most importantly, Thompson did not make any reference to other Clenches in the parish registers of Earls Colne. This omission was a key concern, and research was undertaken to identify Clenches in the Earls Colne registers and their possible connections to Thomasine (Clench) Frost.

Other Clench Marriages in the Earls Colne Parish Register

When the marriage of Edmond and Thomasine (Frost) Clench is placed in chronological order with the other Clench marriages recorded in Earls Colne, the necessity of explaining how Thomasine was potentially related to any of these other individuals becomes obvious:^[4]

- 3 May 1614: “Daniell Clench and Ellin’r Brewer were married May ye third — 1614”
- 17 March 1617: “Henrie Clench & Jane ye Daughtr of Richard Harlakenden Esquier were married ye seventeenth day of March 1617”
- 16 April 1634: “Edmond Frost & Thomasin Clench were married ye 16 of April 1634”
- 14 August 1638: “John Eleston gentl[eman] & Joane Clench were married ye 14 of August 1638”

Most of the marriages recorded in Earls Colne during this era were in the brief format of “*groom & bride* were married *date*,” with no additional information as to place of birth or residence. In a few cases — including two of those above — individuals of some social status merited designations as such.

Parish registers for Earls Colne begin in 1558 yet no baptisms were recorded there for any of these Clenches or any children thereof. No records have been found to indicate that any of the Clenches who married in Earls Colne were natives of adjacent parishes, but a related record reveals a direct connection to a nearby non-adjacent parish.^[5]

Clench Family Connections between Earls Colne and Colchester

The following marriage license identifies Henry Clench as an apothecary of Colchester, Essex — which lies approximately 10 miles east of Earls Colne:

⁴ Parish Registers of Earls Colne, included in “England, Essex Parish Registers, 1538–1997,” digital images online at FamilySearch.org.

⁵ Earls Colne is encircled clockwise by the parishes of Colne Engain, White Colne, Wakes Colne, Chappel, Great Tey, Feering, Markshall and Halstead. Of these parishes, records for other Clenches have been found in Feering, Halstead, and Markshall. Records for other Clenches have also been found in Great Coggeshall which borders both Feering and Markshall. It is beyond the scope of this article to include records where no direct or probable connection has been found to the primary Clench family documented herein.

[10 March 1617] Henry Clench of St Runwall's [*sic*, St. Runwald], Colchester, apothecary, bachelor, aged about 26, at his own government, and Jane Harlakenden, maiden, of Earls Colne, age about 16, daughter of Richard Harlakenden Esq. of Earl's Colne; at Earl's Colne^[6]

Henry Clench was buried just a few years later in St. Runwald, Colchester, on 2 January 1624[5].^[7] On 2 June 1624, "Henrye Clench" was baptized in St. Runwald, as the son of Thomas and Ann Clench.^[8] That the junior Henry was likely named in honor of his uncle is confirmed by another record that identifies the father of Thomas and the elder Henry. On 29 December 1615, "Thomas Clench, grocer, and Henry Clench, apothecary, both of Colchester, sons of John Clench, deceased," were deed grantees in a "feoffment for a certain sum." One part of the two-part "message or tenement" in St. Runwald's was occupied by "Mary Clench, widow of John Clench, deceased." The feoffees appointed John Marshall "attorney to receive seisin [possession of land by freehold]."^[9]

Thomas and Henry may have been the only adult sons and heirs of John Clench residing in Colchester when the forgoing transaction was executed on 29 December 1615. John Clench had been buried in St. Runwald earlier that year on 22 August.^[10]

Given Henry's profession as an apothecary in Colchester, his father John was probably "John Clench, the apothecary, [also of Colchester who] sat on two fornication juries and served as poor relief collector twice in the late 1580s and early 1590s."^[11] A "John Clenche" served on juries in Colchester again on 27 June 1605 and 9 July 1607.^[12] In both instances, he served with a John Marshall, perhaps the same John Marshall identified in the 1615 transaction.

⁶ Henry F. Waters, "Genealogical Gleanings in England," *Essex Institute Historical Collections*; 28 (1891):87.

⁷ Essex Record Office D/P 177/1/1 includes digital images for St. Runwald Parish from original entries in the Register of Baptisms (1598–1812), Register of Burials (1598–1677), and Register of Marriages (1599–1738). The author's verbatim transcriptions herein were extracted after finding abbreviated transcriptions in "Essex, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriage and Burials, 1538–1812," online at Ancestry.com. The original entry reads: "henry clench buried January . 2. 1624."

⁸ Parish Registers of St. Runwald, Colchester [note 7]: "henrye ye sonne of Thomas & Ann Clench baptized June 2^o 1624."

⁹ The deed is abstracted as follows Message or tenement, divided into two parts, with the cellars, shops, yards, gardens and buildings thereto belonging, situated in the market place in parish of St. Runwald, Colchester, in the several occupations of Thomas Parkinson and Mary Clench, widow of John Clench, deceased, abutting (in part) on tenement of John Garrard on west, West Stockwell Street on east, the market place on south and churchyard of St. Runwald on north. Both portions of the premises to be held to use of Henry Clench and his heirs. Feoffees appoint John Marshall attorney to receive seisin. Recites: (i) that consideration money was paid by John Clench, deceased; (ii) that property was lately purchased by Thomas Clench from George and Anne Hering and others. Witnesses: Roger North, John Freelond, Thomas Greystoke, Nathaniel Joyner, John Woodcocke. Witnesses to livery of seisin: Nathaniel Northie, Thomas Whiting, Robert Raynold. (Essex Record Office, D/Y 37/2/32 [transcription]). Additional details for this transaction are revealed below.

¹⁰ Parish Registers of St. Runwald, Colchester [note 7]: "1615 . . . John Clench buried August 22."

¹¹ Richard Dean Smith, *The Middling Sort and the Politics of Social Reformation: Colchester, 1570–1640* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 132.

¹² *Anglo-American Legal Tradition* (AALT), The O'Quinn Library, University of Houston Law Center: <http://aalt.law.uh.edu/Notes/localcourts/Colchester1608.html>.

Parishes of Colchester, Essex

Colchester “has the longest recorded history of any town in Britain,” and “was the first capital of the Roman province of Britain.”^[13] Unfortunately, surviving parish registers for many of the ancient parishes in Colchester do not begin until during or after the era of interest for this article, and Bishop’s transcripts are not available. These parishes include St. Peter, 1611; Holy Trinity, 1696; St. Giles, 1692; St. Martin, 1622; St. Mary Magdalen, 1702. While the loss of original records is common, it may surprise readers to learn that some of the ancient parishes of Colchester are not defined by a single geographical area; some parishes consist of multiple non-contiguous “islands,” including St. Runwald.^[14]

The Probable Family Group of John and Mary (Marshall) Clench

Parish registers for St. Runwald begin in 1576 and several children were baptized there for John Clench, starting in 1598:^[15]

- 1598: “Elizabeth ye Daughter of John Clenche was baptized ye xvi [16] of Aprill”
- 1600: “An ye Daughter of John Clenche was baptized ye xxixth [29th] Aprill”
- 1603: “Marshall Sonne of John Clenche was Baptized ye vth [5th] Aprill”
- 1605: “Sarah ye Daught^r of John Clenche baptized ye Second of Aprill 1605”
- 1607: “John ye yong^r Sonne of John Clench baptized ye xxv [25] of August 1607”

Thomas and other probable children of John Clench were subsequently married in St. Runwald and their likely years of birth can be estimated from their marriages (as detailed in the Genealogical Summary below):^[16]

- Thomas Clench, b. say 1589.
- Samuell Clench, b. say 1593.
- Marye Clenche, b. say 1595.

Registers for the parish of St. Nicholas, Colchester, begin in 1541 and contain the following records of interest:¹⁷

- 23 April 1587: “John Clenche & Marie Marshall were married ye xxiiith [day of] ye Aprill”

¹³ John Ashdown-Hill, *Mediaeval Colchester's Lost Landmarks* (Derby, Derbyshire: Breedon Books Publishing Co., 2009), 11, 18.

¹⁴ For more information, see FamilySearch.org/mapp/ [*sic*] and “Parish Boundaries” for the Borough of Colchester at british-history.ac.uk/vch/essex/vol9/pp230-233.

¹⁵ Parish Registers of St. Runwald, Colchester [note 7].

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Essex Record Office D/P 176/1/1 includes digital images for St. Nicholas Parish from original entries in the Register of Baptisms (1541-1673), Register of Burials (1541-1639) and Register of Marriages (1541-1669). The author’s verbatim transcriptions herein were extracted after finding abbreviated transcriptions in “Essex, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriage and Burials, 1538-1812,” online at Ancestry.com.

- 29 January 1588/9: “John Clenche ye sonne of John Clenche was baptized ye xxixth of Januarye”
- 3 April 1592: “henrye ye sonne of John Clenche was baptized ye third of Aprill 1592”

It is logical to conclude that Marshall Clench, baptized in St. Runwald in 1603, bore his mother’s maiden surname as his given name. John and Mary (Marshall) Clench were probably the parents of all the Clench children baptized in St. Runwald during that era for a father named John. It is also logical to conclude that Thomas and some of the other children were baptized in one or more of the other ancient parishes of Colchester with registers that begin during or well after the period of interest for this article.

Thomas Clench, the son of John and Mary (Marshall) Clench, was presumably the same Thomas Clench married in St. Runwald on 1 September 1614 to Anne Talcott.^[18] His daughter Mary was baptized in St. Runwald on 5 October 1615^[19] and, as noted above, Henry was baptized there on 2 June 1624 as the son of Thomas and Ann.^[20] Like his parents before him, Thomas probably had other children baptized elsewhere in Colchester between 1615 and 1624.

Surviving registers for the parish of St. Peter, Colchester, do not begin until 1611. The “Thomas Clinche” baptized there on 19 October 1617,^[21] was possibly the second child of Thomas and Anne (Talcott) Clench; if so, he probably died young because Thomas and “An” had a son Thomas baptized in St. Peter on 19 June 1625.^[22] No burial record has been found for the first son named Thomas, but as stated above, Thomas and Anne (Talcott) Clench probably had other children baptized (and perhaps buried) elsewhere in Colchester between 1615 and 1624.

Tomazin Clinche of Colchester: A Probable Match for Thomasin Clench of Earls Colne

The registers of St. Peter, Colchester, reveal yet another probable daughter of John and Mary (Marshall) Clench and — most importantly — she is a probable match for Thomasin (Clench) of Earls Colne. On 1 August 1613, a daughter was baptized in St. Peter for “John Clinche” with a name transcribed as “Tomanye.”^[23] A digital image of the original record revealed that *Tomanye*

¹⁸ Parish Registers of St. Runwald, Colchester [note 7]: “1614 . . . Thomas Clench [and] Anne Tallcott mar^d [married] Sept: i^o [1st].”

¹⁹ Parish Registers of St. Runwald, Colchester [note 7]: “1615 . . . Marye ye Daugh^t of Thomas Clench bapt octob^r ye vth [5th].”

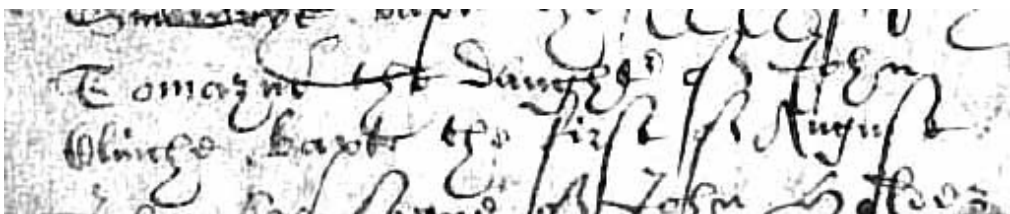
²⁰ Parish Registers of St. Runwald, Colchester [note 7].

²¹ Essex Record Office [ERO] D/P 178/1/1 includes digital images for St. Peter Parish from original entries in the Register of Baptisms (1611–1677), Register of Burials (1611–1652) and Register of Marriages (1611–1647). The author’s verbatim transcriptions herein were extracted after finding abbreviated transcriptions in “Essex, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriage and Burials, 1538–1812,” online at Ancestry.com.

²² Parish Registers of St. Peter, Colchester [note 21].

²³ *Ibid.*

is a transcription error for *Tomazin*, another obvious variation of the more common feminine name, *Thomasine*.^[24]



“1613 Christninge . . . Tomazin the Daught^r of John Clinche bapt the first of August”

Tomazin Clinche was likely the last child born to John and Mary (Marshall) Clench before John died in 1615. Tomazin Clinche would have been nearly 21 years old when Thomasin Clench married Edmond Frost in Earls Colne on 16 April 1634. Consider the sequence of burials recorded in St. Runwald, Colchester, between 1613 and 1634 for probable family members of Tomazin Clinche:

- 1615: John Clench, her probable father.
- 1624: “Marye Clench,” her probable mother.
- 1625: Henry Clench, her probable brother.
- 1626: Thomas Clench, her probable brother.

Unfortunately, the will of Henry Clench, Gentleman of St. Runwald,^[25] is the only one of the burials listed above for which a related will has been found.^[26] The key elements of Henry’s will are:

- “Welbeloved” wife Jane named sole Executrix
- Personal residence and property in St. Runwald to wife Jane, as well as additional property in “Westockwell Streete”²⁷ in St. Martin, in “the severall occupations of Thoms [Thomas] Kinnett[,] clarke [clerk;] John Nice & Thomas Wright”
- £100 each to daughters Jane and “Elenore” when age 21; wife Jane “to have a speciall care in the education & bringing upp of my said daughters in the feare & service of god”
- 30s to Mr. Stephen Newcomen, preacher of St. Runwald
- 10s to the poor of St. Runwald

²⁴ From 1600 to 1625, approximately eighty-eight baptisms were recorded in England for other girls named *Tomazin* (multiple historical record sets at FamilySearch.org), including the transcription of the 16 October 1608 baptism of “Tomazine Clinche” in Bottisham.

²⁵ Will of Henry Clench of St. Runwald, Colchester (Essex Record Office D/ACW9/227). A full modernized transcription is online in Alan McFarlane, “Records of an English Village 1375–1854,” online at www.lib.cam.ac.uk/earls_colne/.

²⁶ “Essex County Record Office’s outstanding wills index from early to 1857 consolidates into one single index the county’s wills. Images have been uploaded up to 1720,” (“Essex Probate Records,” Research Wiki online at FamilySearch.org).

²⁷ The current Colchester Town Hall is on West Stockwell Street between its intersections with Saint Runwald Street and High Street (Google Maps).

- Signed as “Henry Clench” on 22 December 1624 and probated 3 February 1624/5
- Witnessed by “Nath: Northie” [Nathaniel Northie], Richard Bulner and John London^[28]

This timeline shows that before Tomazin Clinche was 13, her probable parents and adult brothers in Colchester were all deceased. If the scenario suggested is accurate, where did she reside during the decade between her mother’s death in 1624 and her marriage in 1634? Recall from above the Clench marriages recorded at Earls Colne:^[29]

- 3 May 1614: “Daniell Clench and Ellin’r [*sic*, Eleanor] Brewer . . . ”
- 17 March 1617: “Henrie Clench & Jane ye Daughtr of Richard Harlakenden Esquier . . . ”
- 16 April 1634: “Edmond Frost & Thomasin Clench . . . ”
- 14 August 1638: “John Eleston gentl[eman] & Joane Clench . . . ”

Married in 1614, Daniel Clench was born say 1589, just like Thomasine’s probable brother Thomas, who married Anne Talcott in 1614. If Daniel was another child of John and Mary (Marshall) Clench, he was probably baptized in St. Peter or another Colchester parish for which registers have not survived, also just like Thomas. “Dan Clinch” was buried in Earls Colne 26 May 1639 yet he had no children of his own baptized in the parish. As Thomasine’s possible eldest surviving brother, Daniel Clench may have raised her in Earls Colne.

After Thomasine’s probable brother Henry Clench died, his widow Jane (Harlakenden) Clench “returned to live at Earls Colne Priory Manor House until she married John Elliston in 1638.”^[30] Jane was the “Joane Clench” who married “John Eleston” there in 1638. During her marriage to Henry, 1617–1624, Jane resided in Colchester, next to her widowed mother-in-law Mary (Marshall) Clench.^[31] After Mary died, Jane may have effectively adopted Thomasine.

In any case, whether Thomasine Clench moved to Earls Colne shortly after Mary (Marshall) Clench died in 1624 or she did not arrive there until 1634, there is more than one logical scenario to explain the migration of Thomasine from Colchester to Earls Colne before her migration to New England with Edmond Frost in 1635. This assumes that Mary (Marshall) Clench was the mother of Thomasine (Clench) Frost — which we have been careful to note is only probable.

²⁸ A Nathaniel Northie also witnessed a 1615 transaction discussed above [note 9]; the surname is more frequently spelled Northey in the records of the Essex Record Office.

²⁹ Parish Registers of Earls Colne [note 4].

³⁰ Dolly MacKinnon, *Earls Colne’s Early Modern Landscapes* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 246.

³¹ Essex Record Office D/Y 37/2/32; see note 9.

Origins of John Clench (ca. 1562–1615), Apothecary of Colchester

As noted above, Thomasine (Clench) Frost was probably identical with Tomazin Clinche, baptized in St. Peter, Colchester, on 1 August 1613, as daughter of John Clinche. If so, she was perhaps the last child of John and Mary (Marshall) Clench. John was an apothecary of Colchester, who was buried in St. Runwald in 1615. After his death, his adult sons in Colchester, Thomas and Henry, were the grantees of a property in St. Runwald occupied in part by their widowed mother, Mary (Marshall) Clench. It is significant to note the grantors of that same 1615 transaction were “Thomas Clench of Holbrook, Suffolk, esquire and his son and heir John Clench, gentleman.”^[32] This record suggests that John Clench, apothecary, was related somehow to Thomas Clench (ca. 1557–1624) of Holbrook, the first son of John and Katherine (Almott) Clench, as documented by Thompson in his article.^[33] Thompson asserted that “Judge [John] Clench left no estate record” and that “with one wife he had two living sons named Thomas and two living sons named John” and that both sons named John resided in close proximity to each other northeast of Ipswich, Suffolk.^[34]

- John Clench (ca. 1560–1628), buried Great Bealings, Suffolk; married Joan (Holme) Prettyman.^[35]
- John Clench (ca. 1577–1648/9), buried Culho [*sic*, Culpho], Suffolk; married (1) Mary Harbert, (2) Margaret Burman.^[36]

The custom of giving the same name to two sons, distinguished by “the elder” and “the younger,” was fading but not uncommon in the late sixteenth century and it may have also been used by the Clench–Marshall family.^[37]

Earlier Clench Records in Earls Colne

“Wm Clynche” [William Clench] was “sent from Sudbury” and was buried in Earls Colne on 16 April 1570.^[38] Although Sudbury lies in Suffolk, it is only 10

³² Essex Record Office, D/Y 37/2/32; see note 9. Roger North was the first witness to this 1615 Clench–Clench transaction; perhaps he was identical with or related to Sir Roger North (1577/8–1651), the son-in-law of Thomas Clench of Holbrook, who married Thomas’s daughter, yet another Thomasine Clench (1588/9–1657).

³³ Thompson, “English Ancestry of Thomasine (Clench) Frost” [note 1], *Register* 153:281.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, *Register* 153:280, 280 n. 22, 281–287, 289.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, *Register* 153:281.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, *Register* 153:282.

³⁷ Robert Charles Anderson, FASG, email correspondence with the editor dated 12 October 2020. The author is grateful to Mr. Anderson for reviewing a draft of this article. Thompson stated “The fact that both sons named John and both sons named Thomas were the product of the same marriage, all surviving, is unusual . . .” (Thompson, “English Ancestry of Thomasine (Clench) Frost” [note 1], *Register* 153:280 n. 22). Anderson’s research suggests that this naming custom, which seems unusual now, was “moderately common in the late sixteenth century but the custom was dying out.” See a potential example in the Genealogical Summary.

³⁸ Essex Record Office D/P 209/1/1 includes digital images for St. Andrew Parish from original entries in the Register of Burials (1558–1588). The author’s verbatim transcriptions herein were extracted after finding a transcription in McFarlane, “Records of an English Village 1375–1854” [note 25].

miles north of Earls Colne and 12 miles northeast of Wethersfield, Essex. John and Joan (Amias) Clench of Wethersfield (parents of Judge John Clench) had a son William, whom Thompson says was born say 1540 and was “probably the William Clinch m. at St. Mary Elms, Ipswich, Suffolk, 4 July 1560, Helen Kimbould.”^[39] However, Ipswich is approximately 33 miles from Wethersfield. Richard Clench, another son attributed to John and Joan (Amias) Clench of Wethersfield, married in Sudbury and had nine children baptized there, including a son “Willm. Clenche” on 28 July 1570.^[40] Perhaps the baby was named in honor of his possible uncle who had died a few months prior.

On 30 September 1611, “Hen Clench” [Henry Clench] was named in meeting minutes for the Earls Colne Manor Court.^[41] As noted above, the Henry Clench who married Jane Harlakenden was a 26-year-old apothecary of Colchester when their marriage license was obtained on 10 March 1617, and he was probably the “Henrye Clenche” baptized in Colchester on 2 April 1592, so he would have only been about 19 in 1611.

Clench Records in Wivenhoe, Essex

Wivenhoe is adjacent to the parish of St. Giles Colchester; it lies southeast of the city’s center. “Thomas Clenche” and “Thomasinge Crofton” were married in Wivenhoe on 20 November 1580.^[42] Children of Thomas Clenche baptized in Wivenhoe were: *Sabian* [Sabina] *Clench*, 6 February 1580/1; *Thomasinge* [Thomasine] *Clench*, 1 July 1582; *Thomas Clench*, 11 October 1584; and *John Clench*, 16 October 1586.^[43] The 1588 will of Sabina Salmon of Wivenhoe reportedly names Thomas Clench and his three children: Thomasine, Thomas, and John.^[44]

Clench Records in Goldhanger, Essex

As noted above, Marshall Clench was baptized in St. Runwald in 1603 and his given name provides strong onomastic evidence that he was the son of John and Mary (Marshall) Clench. On 4 February 1637, Marshall Clench, chandler of Goldhanger, Essex, was documented in a recognizance with his probable brother, Samuel Clench, baker of Colchester.^[45] In 1656 a Marshall Clench was twice identified as a resident of Goldhanger.^[46]

³⁹ Thompson, “English Ancestry of Thomasine (Clench) Frost” [note 1], *Register* 153:279.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ McFarlane, “Records of an English Village 1375–1854,” citing “ERO D/DPr77.” Essex Record Office D/DPr 77 is currently described as “Court roll, manor of Earls Colne, 1604–1631.”

⁴² Parish Registers of Wivenhoe (Essex Record Office D/P 277/1/1).

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Frederick George Emmison, *Essex Wills: The Archdeaconry Courts, 1583–1592* (Essex Record Office LIB/929.3 EMM5), 5:285, courtesy of Clifford L. Stott, CG, FASG. The original will has not been examined by the author.

⁴⁵ Essex Record Office Q/SR 296/54. The Parish of Goldhanger lies in Essex, less than 14 miles southwest of Colchester. When of Goldhanger, Marshall Clench married in Colchester. See the Genealogical Summary below.

⁴⁶ Essex Record Office Q/SR 370/52 and Q/SR 369/34.

Given these associations with Goldhanger, it should be noted that “Jn. Clenche” [John Clench], “Jn. Skynner” [John Skinner] and “Wm. Hanbery” [William Hanbury?] were plaintiffs in a 1574 lawsuit against William Durant regarding property located in Goldhanger and elsewhere; the property was quitclaimed to the plaintiffs and “heirs of Jn. Clenche.”^[47] Other references to these (or same-named) plaintiffs are found in *Feet of Fines for Essex*. In 1625 “Jn. Clench, gent. & w. Kath.” were defendants in another lawsuit pertaining to property partly lying in “Halsted.”^[48] This might have been evidence of kinship between the Clench–Marshall family of Colchester and the family of John and Katherine (Almott) Clench. As noted above, Halstead is a parish adjacent to Earls Colne and records of other Clenches have been found there.^[49]

The Talcott Family of Colchester

As mentioned above, Thomas Clench, a probable brother of Thomasine (Clench) Frost, married Anne Talcott in St. Runwald, Colchester, 1 September 1614.^[50] Great Migration immigrant John Talcott was born “by about 1594”; he was a son of John and Anne (Skinner) Talcott of Braintree, Essex, and a grandson of John Talcott of Colchester.^[51] His sister Rachel became the wife of Great Migration immigrant John Steele in 1622,^[52] and his sister Sarah became the wife of Great Migration immigrant William Wadsworth about 1626.^[53] Like Edmond Frost, Talcott, Steele, and Wadsworth all settled in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

In his 24 September 1606 will, John Talcott of Colchester mentioned several children by name, including a daughter Marie Marshall:^[54]

I John Talcoat of the town of Colch'str, in the county of Essex . . . I give and bequeath unto myn daught'r Marie Marshall, and to her eldest son after her, yf she hath no son then living, to her eldest daught-'r, that my house & tenement . . . situated in the parish of St. Buttolphs . . .

⁴⁷ Essex Society for Archaeology and History, Marc Fitch and Frederick Emmison, eds., *Feet of Fines for Essex, Volume V 1547–1580* (Longsmead, Dorset: Blackmore Press, 1991), 186, citing CP25(2)/260; online as <http://esah1852.org.uk/images/pdf/ffines/F1500000.pdf>.

⁴⁸ *Feet of Fines for Essex* [note 47], 109, citing CP25(2)/127/1625.

⁴⁹ “Willm Clench,” born say 1546 or earlier, had children baptized in Halstead: *Willm Clench*, 5 October 1572; *John Clench*, 8 October 1573; *Joane Clench*, 3 July 1575; and *Willm Clench*, 2 February 1577. “Rychard Clench,” born say 1555 or earlier, had sons baptized in Halstead: *Edward Clench*, 9 July 1581; and *Robert Clench*, 20 March 1585. “Ricardo Clench” was buried there 16 May 1606. On 12 November 1588, a Richard Clench was identified as a tailor of Halstead in an alehouse keeper’s recognizance (Essex Record Office Q/SR 107/35), and in 1592, “Richard Clench the younger of Twinstead” was named in the Michaelmas Session Roll (Essex Record Office Q/SR 122/24). The author has not reviewed the original records.

⁵⁰ Parish Registers of St. Runwald, Colchester [note 7].

⁵¹ Robert Charles Anderson, *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England 1620–1633*, 3 vols. (Boston: NEHGS, 1995), 3:1794–1797 (sketch of John Talcott).

⁵² *Ibid.*, 3:1756–1759 (sketch of John Steele).

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 3:1892–1896 (sketch of William Wadsworth).

⁵⁴ Henry F. Waters, *Genealogical Gleanings in England*, 2 vols. (Boston: NEHGS, 1905), 2:1125–1126; S. V. Talcott, *Talcott Pedigree in England and America from 1558 to 1876* (Albany, N.Y.: Weed, Parsons and Company, 1876), 8–12.

Marie Marshall was also named in the 9 June 1625 will of her mother, Mary/Marie Talcoat.^[55] In *Hale, House, and Related Families*,^[56] Jacobus and Waterman stated that the husband of Marie (Talcott) Marshall was “perhaps John Marshall, gent. of Colchester, Alderman.”^[57] John Marshall, gentlemen, alderman, and woolen draper of Colchester, and his wife Mary were residents of the “Stonehouse” in St. Runwald.^[58] As a resident of St. Runwald, it seems likely that the John Marshall who married Marie Talcott was the same John Marshall who witnessed the 1615 Clench–Clench transaction for property in St. Runwald occupied by Marie (Marshall) Clench, widow of John Clench and probable mother of Thomasine (Clench) Frost.^[59]

Great Migration immigrant John Talcott and Anne (Talcott) Clench were close in age. When the immigrant’s father died young, his 1604 will (and codicil) included children John, Rachel, Anne, Mary, Grace, and Sarah, all under 21.^[60] However, the 1616 will of their maternal grandfather, William Skinner, named only John, Rachel, and Sarah, and these same three were the only ones included in the 1623 will of their stepfather, Moses Wall^[61] and the 1636 will of their mother, Anne (Skinner) (Talcott) Wall.^[62] From these omissions, Jacobus and Waterman concluded that Anne, Mary, and Grace died young.^[63] However, there are at least two other scenarios to consider:

- Following the death of John Talcott in 1604 and their mother’s remarriage, any surviving daughters may have been motivated or liberated to marry younger than they would have otherwise and perhaps some did so prior to 1616.
- Jacobus and Waterman provided no marriage date for John and Anne (Skinner) Talcott nor birth dates for them and their children; John’s children Anne, Mary, and Grace, may have been born to an otherwise unknown first wife.

⁵⁵ Talcott, *Talcott Pedigree* [note 54], 13.

⁵⁶ Donald Lines Jacobus and Edgar Francis Waterman, *Hale, House and Related Families Mainly of the Connecticut River Valley* (Hartford, Conn.: Connecticut Historical Society, 1952), 747.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 747.

⁵⁸ Essex Record Office D/Y 37/2/17, D/Y 37/2/18, D/Y 37/2/19, D/Y 37/2/20, D/Y 37/2/21, D/Y 37/2/23, D/Y 37/2/24, and D/Y 37/2/25.

⁵⁹ See note 9.

⁶⁰ Jacobus and Waterman, *Hale, House and Related Families* [note 56], 747; Waters, *Genealogical Gleanings in England* [note 54], 2:1125.

⁶¹ William Wyman Fiske, “The Wall Family of Essex, Part Two . . .,” *The American Genealogist* 80 (2005):102–116, at 115.

⁶² Frank Farnsworth Starr, *English Goodwin Family Papers*, 3 vols. (Hartford, Conn.: privately printed, 1921), 1:459–462.

⁶³ Jacobus and Waterman, *Hale, House and Related Families* [note 56], 747. Jacobus and Waterman relied on the *Talcott Pedigree in America from 1558 to 1876* to identify the wives of the immigrant’s grandfather as _____ Wells and Mary Pullen. The immigrant’s grandfather reportedly arrived in Colchester prior to 1558 from Warwickshire; from his will it is evident that he possessed property in Colchester and adjacent parishes. The immigrant’s surname was sometimes recorded as “Taylcott” and his grandfather’s will was recorded as “Taylcot.” The following events from the registers of St. Mary at the Walls in Colchester may or may not have any relevance to this family: John Taylcott, son of John, baptized 4 October 1562; John Taylcott married 27 February 1574, Marye Facon.

Thus, it is possible that Great Migration immigrant John Talcott was closely associated with — but not related by blood to — Thomasine (Clench) Frost in one or even two ways:

- John Talcott's paternal aunt, Marie/Mary (Talcott) Marshall, was possibly a sister-in-law of Marie/Mary (Marshall) Clench — the probable mother of Thomasine.
- John Talcott's sister or half-sister, Anne Talcott, was possibly identical with Anne Talcott, the wife of Thomas Clench — the probable brother of Thomasine.

Genealogical Summary

JOHN^A CLENCH, born say 1562; buried St. Runwald, Colchester, Essex, 22 August 1615; married St. Nicholas, Colchester, 23 April 1587, Marie Marshall [**MARY MARSHALL**], undoubtedly identical with “Marye Clench [widow?],” buried St. Runwald 8 October 1624.

In 1588 a John Clench witnessed the will of Henry Lambe, butcher of Colchester.^[64] In 1596 a John Clench witnessed the will of another butcher of Colchester, Arthur Wilson.^[65] In 1596/7 John Clench was occupying the “capital messuage in St. Runwald, Colchester,” of Henry Harning, vintner of Colchester, according to the latter's will.^[66]

Children of John and Mary (Marshall) Clench; birth order uncertain and estimated from marriage dates; probably all born in Colchester; baptisms recorded with name of father only, unless stated otherwise:

- i. (probably) **JOHN CLENCH**, bp. St. Nicholas 29 Jan. 1587/8 as “Clenche”; possibly living when “John ye yong^r Sonne of John Clench,” was bp. St. Runwald 26 Aug. 1607. See also discussion at note 37.
- ii. (probably) **DANIEL CLENCH**, b. say 1589; bur. Earls Colne 26 May 1639 as “Dan Clinch”; m. Earls Colne 3 May 1614, as “Daniell Clench” to “Ellin^r” Brewer [**ELEANOR BREWER**],^[67] b. say 1593 but no baptism found in Earls Colne, despite many records for other Bruer/Brewer children in the same era. Daniel married just months before his probable brother Thomas married, so Daniel was possibly younger than Thomas or his twin.
- iii. **THOMAS CLENCH**, b. say 1589; probably the Thomas Clench bur. St. Runwald “7br [Sept.] 18. 1626”; m. St. Runwald 1 Sept. 1614, **ANNE TALCOTT**, b. say 1593, perhaps a daughter of John Talcott (see above).

Children of Thomas and Anne (Talcott) Clench:

1. *Mary Clench*, bp. St. Runwald 5 Oct. 1615 as “Marye.”
2. (probably) *Thomas Clench*, bp. St. Peter, Colchester, 19 Oct. 1617 as “Clinch”; probably d. before 19 June 1625.

⁶⁴ Essex Record Office D/ACW 2/288.

⁶⁵ Essex Record Office D/ACW 3/134.

⁶⁶ Essex Record Office D/ABW 19/359.

⁶⁷ Parish Registers of Earls Colne [note 4].

3. *Henry Clench*, bp. St. Runwald 2 June 1624 as “Henrye,” son of Thomas and Ann; undoubtedly identical with “henrye Clynch an ynfant buried June 27 1624” in St. Runwald.
 4. (probably) *Thomas Clench*, bp. St. Peter 19 June 1625 as son of “Thomas and An Clinch”; possibly identical with “Thomas Clench Infant bur^d Octob^r 6 . 1626” in St. Runwald.
- iv. HENRY CLENCH, gentleman, apothecary, bp. St. Nicholas 2 April 1592 as “Henrye Clenche”; d. St. Runwald 24 Dec. 1624; bur. St. Runwald 2 Jan. 1624/5; will made 24 Dec. 1624;^[68] m. as “Henrie Clench,” Earls Colne 17 March 1617, JANE HARLAKENDEN,^[69] daughter of Richard and Margaret (Hubert) Harlakenden of Earls Colne, bp. Earls Colne 4 Feb. 1601.^[70] Jane m. (2) Earls Colne 14 Aug. 1638, JOHN ELLISTON,^[71] son of John Elliston of Black Notley, near Braintree.^[72]

Children of Henry and Jane (Harlakenden) Clench:

1. *Jane Clench*, b. say 1619; a minor in her father’s 1624 will.^[73]
 2. *Eleanor Clench*, b. say 1621; a minor in her father’s 1624 will.^[74]
 3. *Henry Clench*, b. Earls Colne Priory Manor, Earls Colne, 9 June 1625, bp. Earls Colne 16 June 1625; bur. Earls Colne 26 Nov. 1626; not named in his father’s will because he was born post-humously, according to his maternal grandfather’s account: “my daughter Clench was bought abed of a son the 9.6.1625 at my house her husband being dead at xmas before this son was christened and named Hen.”^[75]
- v. (probably) SAMUEL CLENCH, b. say 1593; probably the Samuel Clench, Baker of Colchester, who made his will 16 Jan. 1662/3;^[76] “Samuell Clenche [and] Marye Halgrave [MARY HALGRAVE] married” St. Runwald 13 April 1618.

Known child of Samuel and Mary (Halgrave) Clench:

1. *Samuel Clench*, b. St. Botolph, Colchester, ca. 1624; admitted to be a free scholar in the Colchester School as “the eldest son of Samuel Clench, baker.”^[77]
- vi. (probably) MARY CLENCH, b. say 1595; “henrye Byebigt [HENRY BYEBIGT?] [and] Marye Clenche married” St. Runwald 7 Jan. 1616.

⁶⁸ Will of Henry Clench [note 25].

⁶⁹ Parish Registers of Earls Colne [note 4].

⁷⁰ Ibid.; “Harlakenden Family,” *Register* 15 (1861):327–329, at 327, “Jane the 3d dau., b. _____, m. 17 March, 1617, Hen. Clench, Gent.” (Sir Anthony Wagner, “A New Harlakenden Line,” *Register* 120 [1966]:243–247, at 246).

⁷¹ Parish Registers of Earls Colne [note 4].

⁷² Henry R. French and Richard W. Hoyle, *The Character of English Rural Society: Earls Colne, 1550–1750* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 98.

⁷³ Will of Henry Clench [note 25].

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Harlakenden Account Book (Essex Record Office Temp.Acc.897), entry fully transcribed in Alan McFarlane, “Records of an English Village 1375–1854” [note 25].

⁷⁶ Essex Record Office D/ACW 16/191.

⁷⁷ J. H. Round, ed., *Register of the Scholars Admitted to Colchester School, 1637–1740* (Colchester: Essex Archaeological Society, 1897), 14.

- vii. (probably) ELIZABETH CLENCH, bp. St. Runwald 16 April 1598 as “Clenche.”
- viii. (probably) ANNE CLENCH, bp. St. Runwald 29 April 1600 as “An Clenche.”
- ix. MARSHALL CLENCH [maiden surname of mother] bp. St. Runwald 5 April 1603 as “Clenche”; probably m. (1) Kelvedon, Essex, 26 July 1627, ELIZABETH BEDINGHAM;^[78] probably m. (2) as “Marshall Clenche” of the Parish of “Goldhang” who m. St. Mary the Virgin at the Walls, Colchester, 24 April 1640, a resident of the parish, “An Webstare” [ANNE WEBSTER].^[79]
- x. (probably) SARAH CLENCH, bp. St. Runwald 2 April 1605 as “Clenchs”; probably m. St. Peter 12 June 1628, Willm Draper [WILLIAM DRAPER], b. say 1603, apparently not identical with William Draper, tailor of “Rumballs in Colchester” [*sic*, St. Runwald], who made a will 20 Jan. 1663 mentioning wife “Mare” and minor son John.^[80]

Child of William and Sarah (Clench) Draper:

- 1. *John Draper*, bp. St. Runwald 2 Mar. 1633, son of “Willm” and “Sarey.”
- xi. (probably) JOHN CLENCH, bp. St. Runwald 26 Aug. 1607 as “John ye yong^r Sonne of John Clench,” which may indicate that John, bp. St. Nicholas 29 Jan. 1587/8 (i. above), was still living. See also discussion at note 37.
- xii. (possibly) BENJAMIN CLENCH, b. say 1611 or earlier; “Benjamyne Clinch buried ye first of Novemb^r i6ii [1 Nov. 1611].”
- xiii. (probably) THOMASINE CLENCH, bp. St. Peter 1 Aug. 1613, as “Tomazin Clinche”;^[81] probably identical with “Thomasin Clench” who m. Earls Colne, Essex 16 April 1634 EDMOND¹ FROST.^[82]

Perry Streeter (perry@streeter.com) is a possible descendant of Edmond and Thomasine (Clench) Frost.

⁷⁸ Parish Registers of Kelvedon, Essex, included in *England, Marriages 1538–1973*, online at FamilySearch.org.

⁷⁹ Essex Record Office D/P 246/1/1 includes digital images for St. Mary at the Walls Parish from original entries in Register of Marriages (1561–1648).

⁸⁰ Essex Record Office D/ACW 18/103.

⁸¹ If John and Mary (Marshall) Clench had two adult sons named John, Thomasine might have been the child of John Clench the elder, who was baptized 29 January 1587/8. However, the lack of records make this suggestion merely speculative. See also discussion at note 37.

⁸² For more information on Edmond and Thomasine (Clench) Frost and their children, see Anderson, Sanborn, and Sanborn, *The Great Migration, Vol. II, C–F* [note 2], 593–597 (sketch of Edmond Frost).