

CHAPTER 4

THE ANCESTRY OF RUTH PHELPS CASE

First Generation

The genealogy of the Phelps family has been taken from the compilation by Oliver S. Phelps, "**The Phelps Family in America and Their English Ancestors**"^{<1>}. Overall, the reliability of this family history appears to be good, but occasionally there are omissions or statements that are at variance with other documents. Where this occurs, the discrepancy is noted below. Because of the prominence of William Phelps in the early life of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and the Connecticut Colony, there are many references to him in various historical documents or compilations. Only a sampling of these references are included here, and only the direct line of descent from William Phelps to Ruth Phelps is shown.

P1*. William Phelps

- baptized 19 Aug 1599, Tewkesbury Abbey Church, Gloucestershire, England
- married (1) in England to **Anne (?) --?--**,
 - died 1635, Dorchester, Massachusetts.
- married (2) in Windsor, Connecticut, to **Mary Dover**,
 - died 27 Nov 1675, Windsor, Hartford Co., Connecticut.
- William died 14 Jul 1672, Windsor, Hartford Co., Connecticut.

Children of William and his first wife (Anne?):

- i **Richard**, born Tewkesbury, bapt. 26 Dec 1619. He is said to have sailed to the Barbados, unmarried, and nothing more is known of him.
- ii **William**, born England abt 1620, married (1) **Isabel Williamson**, (2) **Sarah Pinney**.
- iii **Sarah**, born England abt 1623, married **William Wade**.
- iv **Samuel**, born England abt 1625, married **Sarah Griswold**.
- v **Nathaniel**, born England abt 1627, married **Elizabeth Copley**.
- P2** vi **Joseph**, born England abt 1629, married (1) **Hannah Newton**, (2) **Mary Salmon**.

Children of William and Mary Dover:

- P3*** vii **Timothy**, born 1 Sep 1637, Windsor, Connecticut
- viii **Mary**, born 2 Mar 1644, Windsor, Connecticut, married **Thomas Barber**. (Grandson Thomas Barber, married Mercy Case, daughter of Samuel Case).

William was a son of William and Dorothy Phelps, There is no record in Tewkesbury of the name of his first wife or the date of their marriage. Soon after

1.. William Phelps is #14 in the Phelps Family compilation. The genealogy of William and his descendants begins on p.72.

the birth of William's son, Richard, (and the death of his father) William probably moved to one of the southern counties, either Somerset or Dorsetshire. "We find no further reference to him in Tewkesbury, nor do we find any record of the birth of his five other children."

William, his family, and brother George, then unmarried, emigrated to New England in a large ship of 400 tons, the *Mary and John*, commanded by Captain Squeb, with one hundred and forty passengers. They sailed from Plymouth, England, 20 Mar 1630. The passenger listings do not include William's sons, Richard and Joseph, but one of them gives his wife's name as Anne, and the four children who accompanied him as William, Sarah, Samuel, and Nathaniel.^{<2><3>} Why Richard and Joseph are not included is not clear.^{<4>} The background, details, and subsequent history of the expedition of which the Phelps were a part is given in the "**History of the Town of Dorchester, Massachusetts**".^{<5>} "The ship...landed at Nantasket, now Hull, Massachusetts., 30 May 1630. After some delay in searching for a safe landing place, the company eventually was set ashore at Dorchester. By late summer, the settlers set about laying out their town-plot and distributing the lots according to direction of the General Court in

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2. "**The Winthrop Fleet of 1630, an Account of the Vessels, the Voyage, the Passengers and their English Homes from Original Authorities**", by Charles Edward Banks, publ by Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1976, p.100-105, Appendix B, Passengers of the *Mary and John* in 1630.
A tentative list of passengers was compiled, accounting for 134 out of the 140 passengers on board. George Phelps is listed with no family. William Phelps is listed with 6 in his family. Of the 40 heads of family who came in the ship, 13 remained in Dorchester, 23 removed to Windsor, CT with Warham in the migration of 1635-1636, and 4 settled elsewhere in Massachusetts.
 3. "**The Planters of the Commonwealth**", "**A Study of the Emigrants and Emigration in Colonial Times: to which are added Lists of Passengers to Boston and to the Bay Colony; the Ships which brought them; their English Homes, and the Places of their Settlement in Massachusetts, 1620 - 1640**", by Charles Edward Banks, Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, MD, 1972, p. 87-91, Passengers of the ship "*Mary and John*":
There is not a complete list of the 140 passengers, but people believed to have come in this ship include William Phelps (with his wife and four children), and George Phelps, William's brother.
 4. Richard Phelp's name is included in some documents as being present in Dorchester with no determination of relationship. He is also listed in the **Phelps Family** text as having sailed, unmarried, to Barbados rather than remaining in or going to New England. Richard would have been only 11 at the time his family left England, and it is doubtful that he would not have accompanied them. It is possible that he was indeed with the family on the *Mary and John*, and then sailed on to Barbados from Dorchester or Windsor. If Joseph Phelps was not with the family on the ship, he must have been born after the family arrived in Dorchester in 1630 rather than being born in 1629 as shown by the **Phelps Family** text and as suggested by his age being listed as 55 at the time of his death in 1684.
 5. Clapp, *Op. cit.*, p.1-83.

London. In addition to feeding the cattle they had brought with them on the ship in the salt marshes around Dorchester, the settlers also learned to fish very profitably in the Bay." In this way, they founded Dorchester, Massachusetts, which claims the honor of being the first town in the Massachusetts Colony to organize a town government. Moreover, the Dorchester church had been organized in Plymouth before their embarkation, and consequently was granted seniority among the Bay Churches.

"The Massachusetts Charter being drafted for a trading company, rather than as the basis of an independent government, its provisions applied only to the stockholders, to which class only three of the Dorchester Company, viz. Edward Rosseter, Roger Ludlow, and John Glover are known to have belonged. The principal part of the first settlers having no political rights under the instrument, the Court immediately made arrangements for extending the privileges of freemanship to all suitable persons, and on the first application for this right (19 Oct 1630), among one hundred and eight persons, twenty-four belonged to Dorchester. Besides the right of suffrage, freemen enjoyed advantages in the division of the lands; and before the representative system commenced, they were all members of the General Court." The principal qualification for this privilege seems to have been church membership. William Phelps was among the group of twenty-four first freemen.^{<6>}

William's name is found in a variety of documents in Dorchester during the years from 1630 to 1635. In the latter year his wife died. On 8 Oct 1633, William was among 7 persons elected as the first selectmen of the town, with the duty of meeting every Monday morning to consider business relating to the inhabitants of the town. When a representative form of the General Court was established in May 1634, William Phelps was among 24 persons, along with 2 others from Dorchester, representing eight towns.^{<7>}

When the Rev. Warham moved from Dorchester to settle Windsor, Connecticut (see Introduction to Chapter 3), George Phelps, William's brother, probably accompanied the first group that moved in the fall of 1635. It is likely that William and his family did not move until the main migration took place in the spring of 1636. "At the time of [this migration, Windsor] was to be under the control of the Massachusetts Company, and a commission of seven persons was appointed to govern the new colony, in Connecticut. For one year Mr. William Phelps was one of this commission. The first reference to William in Windsor is in April 1636 when the first session of the General Court was held. The town was called Dorchester at first, it was not until 21 Feb 1636/7 that the Court proclaimed: 'It is ordered ye plantation called Dorchester shall bee called Windsor.' In 1638, it was admitted that the Connecticut colony was out of the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts colony, and on 2 Jan 1639, the people of

6. *Ibid.* p.27.

7. *Ibid.* p.32 - 34, 70 - 71.

Windsor, Wethersfield, and Hartford met in Hartford and adopted a constitution for the Connecticut colony. In the new colony, William Phelps held the office of magistrate from 1639-1643, 1645-1649, and 1656-1662."⁸

William married his second wife, Mary Dover, in 1638. She was an English lady, one of the passengers on the ship, *Mary and John*, and was a member of the Dorchester and Windsor churches. William's will, dated 22 Apr 1660, 12 years before his death, left most of his property to his son Timothy, with specific sums of money to his sons William, Samuel, Nathaniel, and Joseph.⁹

Second Generation

P2 Joseph Phelps Sr

- born England abt 1629, or 1630, Dorchester, Massachusetts¹⁰,
- married (1) 20 Sep 1660 to **Hannah Newton**
 - died 1675, Simsbury, Connecticut,
- married (2) 9 Jan 1676 to **Mary Salmon**,
 - died 16 Jan 1682/3.
- Joseph died 1684, Simsbury, Connecticut.
 - Children of Joseph and Hannah:
 - i **Joseph** born 20 Aug 1667, Windsor, Connecticut, married (1) **Mary Collier**, (2) **Sarah Case** (daughter of John Case), (3) **Mary Case** (a widow and a daughter of Richard Case, John Case's older brother).
 - ii **Hannah**, born 2 Feb 1669, Windsor, Connecticut, died young.
 - iii **William**, born abt 1671, Simsbury, Connecticut, died 8 Oct 1689 (not married).
 - iv **Sarah**, born abt 1673, Simsbury, Connecticut, married **John Hill**.
 - v **Timothy**, born abt 1679, Simsbury, Connecticut, married **Rachel Moore**. Their oldest daughter, Rachel, may have married Jonah Case Sr, (see #5, Chapter 3)¹¹.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

9. *Ibid.* p.83.

10. Joseph is the child of William that is missing from listings of children that accompanied William to the New World. Although he is listed as being 55 years old at the time of his death in 1684, it is more likely that this age was wrong and he was born in Dorchester in 1630, than the age to be right and to have been born in England in 1629.

11.. Timothy is #43 in the Phelps family listing, and Rachel is #145.

The ages of Joseph's children are shown in his will^{<12>} These are in a different order than listed in the book. The order given in the will is used above. In 1666, Joseph was one of the first to receive grants of land in Simsbury and his name is found in a number of Simsbury references until his death.^{<13>}

The **Phelps Family** book remarks that another authority gives the date of 2 Sep 1660 for Hannah's date of birth, but that this may have been the date of publication of banns. Hannah was the daughter of Roger Newton. Joseph's second wife, Mary, was the widow of Thomas Salmon. Joseph and Mary had no children.

P3*. Timothy Phelps,

- born 1 Sep 1639, Windsor, Connecticut,
- married 19 Mar 1661, to **Mary Griswold,**
 - born Windsor, Connecticut, bapt. 13 Oct 1644.
 - died some years before Timothy.
- Timothy died 1719, Windsor, Hartford Co., Connecticut.

Children of Timothy and Mary (all born in Windsor, Connecticut):

- i **Timothy**, born 1 Nov 1663, married **Martha Crow.**
- P4*** ii **Joseph**, born 27 Sep 1666.
- iii **William**, born 4 Feb 1668/9, married (1) **Abigail Mudge**, (2) **Ruth Barber.**
- iv **Cornelius**, born 26 Apr 1671, married **Sarah Mansfield.**
- v **Mary**, born, 14 Aug 1673, d. 23 May 1690.
- vi **Samuel**, born 29 Jan 1674/5, married **Abigail Eno.**
- vii **Nathaniel**, born 7 Jan 1676/7, married (1) **Hannah Bissell**, (2) **Abigail Pinney.**
- viii **Sarah**, born 27 Dec 1679, married **David Marshall.**
- ix **Abigail**, born 3 Jun 1683, married **Samuel Filer.**

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12. (a) "**Probate Records**", vol IV, 1677-1687, p. 347 [Will of]: Phelps, Joseph, Simsbury. Inventory dated 5 Mar 1683/4, by John Terry, Joshua Holcomb & John Case. Widow Mary, and children Joseph age 17, Hannah age 15, William age 13, Sarah age 11, and Timothy age 4.
Court Record p.87, 6 Mar 1683/4: Court grants administration to the Widow, 6 pounds of the personal estate and 1/3 of the Real Estate during her natural life, and to the eldest son 22 pounds, and to the rest of the children 11 pounds each. Timothy Phelps, Thomas Barber and John Terry appointed to be Overseers.

(b) 28 Aug 1684: Widow Mary petitions court to the effect that when she married Joseph Phelps, she was a widow, and had been left an estate by her former husband that placed her in comfortable circumstances, and carried some 40-50 pounds of estate with her to her new husband. From her husband Joseph, she has been left only 6 pounds and 1/3 of the Land for life which will not yield more than 1 pounds per year which is not enough to support herself and her child Timothy. Mary requests the Court to allow more to her for the upbringing of the child. [No evidence of the outcome of the plea.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 91. Joseph Phelps Sr is #23 in the Phelps family listing.

- x **Hannah**, born 2 Aug 1684, married **Thomas Phelps**.
- xi **Anne**, born 2 Oct 1686, married **David Porter**.
- xii **Martha**, born 12 Nov 1688, married **Samuel Holcomb**.

Timothy resided in Windsor on the family homestead, on land purchased by his father from the Indians. He was made a freeman 2 May 1664. He was commissioned a Lieutenant of the Trained Band militia in Windsor, May 1690. He served under Col. William Hiting in Capt. Matthew Allyn's Co., in 1697, in the Queen Anne war. His commission was confirmed later by the General Court in 1709.

Timothy's wife, Mary was a daughter of Edward Griswold of Killingworth, Connecticut. Timothy's will, dated 2 Mar 1716/7 mentions all of his children (except Mary who died young), and his grandson Samuel Filer, son of his daughter Abigail.^{<14>}

Third Generation

P4*. Joseph Phelps,

- born 27 Sep 1666, Windsor, Hartford Co., Connecticut,
- married 18 Nov 1686 to **Sarah Hosford**,
 - born Windsor, Hartford Co., Connecticut, 27 Sep 1666.
- Joseph died 30 Aug 1716, probably in Hebron, Connecticut.
- Children of Joseph and Sarah (all born in Windsor, Connecticut):
- i **Sarah**, born 14 Aug 1687
- ii **Mary**, born 8 Jun 1689, married **Matthew Griswold**.
- iii **Joseph**, born 16 Mar 1692/3, married **Susannah Eno**.
- iv **Abigail**, born 15 Oct 1693 (1695?), died young.
- v **Edward**, born 1697, married **Deborah Bissell**.
- vi **Benoni**, born 24 Jun 1699 (not mentioned in his father's will, probably died young).
- vii **John**, born 20 Sep 1703, married (1) **Anna Hosford**, (2) **Mindwell Hosford**.

- P5* viii **Abel**, born 19 Feb 1705,
- ix **Daniel**, born 28 Mar 1707, married **Sarah --?--**
- x **Ichabod**, born 3 Apr 1708, married **Martha Tillotson**.
- xi **Jonathan**, born 1710.
- xii **Abigail**, born Dec 1714.

Joseph settled in Windsor, where his children were all born. He owned a large amount of land in Hebron, and probably removed there late in life, about 1710, where some of his children were living. His will mentions his wife Sarah, and 10 children: Joseph, Daniel, Edward, John, Abel, Ichabod, Jonathan, Mary, Sarah,

14. Phelps, *Op. cit.* p.93. Timothy Phelps is #24 in the Phelps family listing, and referred to there as "Lt. Timothy Phelps.

and Abigail. Sarah was the daughter of John and Philbury (Thrall) Hosford. Her father was a man of large family and considerable property, leaving her at his death 100 pounds.^{<15>}

Fourth Generation

P5*. Abel Phelps,

- born 19 Feb 1704/5, Windsor, Hartford Co., Connecticut,
 - married (1) abt 1730, to **Jerusha --?--**
 - born 1706, Goshen [*sic*], Connecticut
 - died 1 Jan 1735/6, Simsbury, Hartford Co., Connecticut
 - married (2) 6 Jul 1737, (probably) to **Mary Pinnack** of Hebron, Connecticut.
 - Abel died either in Goshen or Norfolk, Litchfield Co., Connecticut.
- Children of Abel and Jerusha (all born in Simsbury, Connecticut):
- i **Abel**, born 8 Mar 1731/2, died 10 Feb 1736.
 - ii **Joel**, born 3 Dec 1733 (Note. The **Phelps Family** genealogy comments that it is possible this Joel was the 1st child of Abel's first cousin Samuel Phelps.)
 - iii **David**, born 8 Jul 1735, married **Triphena Phelps**.

Children of Abel and Mary:

- iv **Abel**, born 5 Jul 1739, married **Lucy Beardsley**.
- v **Mary (Molly)**, born 5 Nov 1740, Goshen, Connecticut, married **Samuel Francis** abt 1760 in Goshen, Connecticut. [Note. Goshen records show Mary's date of birth as 15 Mar 1740]^{<16>}
- P6* vi **? Ruth**, born 1741, Goshen, Connecticut
- vii **Elkanah**, born 3 Feb 1742/3, married **Abigail Phelps**
- viii **Jerusha**, born 28 Jun 1745, married Capt. **Matthew Phelps**
- ix **Elijah**, born 13 Jun 1748, married **Phebe Norton**.
- x **Joseph**, born 7 Dec 1751, married **Huldah Wilcox**.

Abel served in the French war, where he received his military title of Captain. He resided in Simsbury, Connecticut, for a time, and also in Goshen, Connecticut where he was a large real estate owner. He also appears to have resided in Norfolk, Connecticut, where he was selectman in 1755.^{<17>} (Note. The identification of Goshen as Jerusha's place of birth must be in error as Goshen

15. Phelps, *Op. cit.*, p.108. Joseph is #47 in the Phelps family listing.

16. Goshen, CT Township Records:
 15 Mar 1740 Twp1-317 Phelps, Mary born in Goshen, father Abel Phelps, Sr.
 (undated) Phelps, Mary married Samuel Francis
 21 Apr 1798 Francis, Samuel, died age 71, in Goshen.

17. Phelps, *Op. cit.*, p.142. Abel is #166 in the Phelps genealogy. He is referred to there as "Capt" Abel Phelps.

was not established until 1739.) Ruth Phelps is not in the **Phelps Family** record. She is added below.

Fifth Generation

P6*. Ruth Phelps

- born 1741, Goshen, Litchfield Co., Connecticut,
- married 23 Jun 1763, in Goshen, Litchfield Co., Connecticut, to **Jonah Case Jr.** (see #6, Chapter 3) ^{<18>},
 - born abt 1742, Simsbury, Hartford Co., Connecticut,
 - died 15 Feb 1792, Addison Twp., Addison Co., Vermont at age 50.
- Ruth died 24 Oct 1838, Middlebury, Addison Co., Vermont.

The **Phelps Family** genealogy omits any reference to the Ruth Phelps that married Jonah Case Jr, and also omits any Phelps that was presumed to have married Jonah Case Sr. (Chapter 3). The closest reference is to a Ruth Phelps, born 15 Sep 1743, who is shown as having married a "Josiah" Case, settled in Guilford, Connecticut on the southern coast, and later moved to Vermont. ^{<19>}

There are two factors that support Jonah's wife, Ruth, as being a part of Abel's family:

- 1) Abel Phelps is the only member of his generation of the Phelps family who has been identified as living in Goshen, Connecticut during this time.
- 2) Mary Phelps is definitely identified in Goshen township records as being the daughter of Abel Phelps, and is also identified as marrying Samuel Francis. When Samuel died in 1798, his will left property in Goshen to Jonah Case (although the latter had died by the time of Sam's death)(see also Part 3 for references to this will). If Mary was a sister-in-law of Jonah, this legacy is understandable.

- end of chapter 4 -

18.. **Goshen Township Record** T1-376.

19. Phelps, *Op. cit.*, p. 135. This Ruth is shown as #410 in the family genealogy, the 7th child of Lt. David Phelps (#144), and a descendant of William Phelps' son Joseph. While David and his children lived in Simsbury, Connecticut, there is no reference to any of them ever moving to Goshen. The supposed marriage of Ruth Phelps to Josiah Case is not recorded in the Case genealogy from which Chapter 3 has been drawn. The writer's conclusion is that there has been confusion between this Ruth and the Ruth Phelps who lived in Goshen.