

JAMES¹ COLE OF PLYMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS, AND HIS
DESCENDANTS HUGH² COLE OF PLYMOUTH AND SWANSEA,
MASSACHUSETTS, AND BENJAMIN³ COLE OF SWANSEA

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1. JAMES¹ COLE

Birth: England, perhaps Devon(shire), by say 1600
Death: Plymouth, Massachusetts, between 8 March 1679/80 and 1 March 1683/4
Migration: Plymouth, 1633
Occupation: Innkeeper, shoemaker
Religion: No evidence of affiliation with Plymouth church

Spouse: MARY TIBBES/TYBBS

Baptism: Barnstaple, Devon, 15 June 1598
Death: Plymouth, after 2 March 1668/9, probably after 20 May 1678
Father: John TIBBS/TYBBS (d. 1609)
Mother: Margaret HARRIS (1573→1614)
Marriage: Barnstaple, 8 (not 1) May 1625
Children: i. James Cole (c1626/7–1709). ii. **Hugh Cole (c1628–1699/1700)**. iii. John Cole (1637?–1676). iv. Mary Cole (1639–c1679/80)

Notes for JAMES COLE

The claim that James¹ Cole came from the London suburb of Highgate was discredited when it was established that his father-in-law was not Mathieu Lobel, who died there in 1616. Since the publication in 1995 of indisputable evidence of James's marriage in Barnstaple, the search for his origin has focused on and near that parish (see Robert Charles Anderson, *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England, 1620–1633*, 3 vols. [Boston], 1:xiv, 422–23 [marriage date misstated as 1 May 1625], citing Thomas Wainwright, ed., *Barnstaple Parish Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538 A.D. to 1812 A.D.*, 3 vols. in 1 [Exeter, 1903], 1:68, 70, 2:21 [marriage date 8 May 1625]). James, son of John “Cowell,” was baptized in Barnstaple on 8 August 1599 but, as the “son of John Cowle,” was buried there on 5 August 1603. To date, no other baptismal record of a James Cole/Cowle/etc. has been found in Devon or elsewhere for the period in question. (In 1942, German bombing destroyed all pre-1858 wills proved at Barnstaple and stored in Exeter, thereby eliminating probate records as a research option.)

It has long been said that James had arrived at Plymouth after living at Saco, Maine, in 1632. James Cole of Saco, however, was of nearby Falmouth 1636–1640 and thus could not be the Plymouth man of that name.

On Plymouth Colony's earliest extant freeman's list, James “Coale” is listed between those admitted freemen on 1 January 1633/4 and those accepted on 1 January 1634/5. The Plymouth tax list of 27 March 1634 shows that James Cole was assessed nine shillings. The conclusion that he arrived at Plymouth in that year is based on these records.

As a dutiful participant in the civic affairs of Plymouth, James sat many times as a jurymen, was twice elected constable, and served four terms as surveyor [overseer] of highways. James Coale appears on a 1637 list of Plymouth men who, “if they be pressed,” will serve in the war against the Pequots; there is no evidence that he actually did so. On 2 July 1638 and again on 4 September 1638, he served as surety for Richard Clough in a criminal case; the associated records call him *sailor* and *innkeeper*, respectively. As James Cole Sr., he is recorded in the Plymouth section of a 1643 Plymouth Colony list of men able to bear arms. In 1654, “the boate of James Cole, of Plymouth, with seamen to goe in them” was impressed to transport soldiers.

James was perhaps the first innkeeper in New England. Plymouth Colony records show that his tavern, situated in his home, was a lively place in which behavior, including his own, was not always exemplary. On 7 June 1637, “James Coale of Plymouth” was fined ten shillings “for selling less than a Winchester quart for ijd. [two pence] . . . but not in ignorance.” On 5 May 1640, “James Cole, of Plymouth, is prohibited by the Court to draw any wine or strong water until the next General Court, nor then neither without special license from the Court.” On 2 June 1640, John Kernan deposed that “there was such disorder in James Cole’s house, by throwing stools, & forms, & fire, until within a hour of day, or thereabouts, that they could hardly sleep, and in the morning he found them on sleep by the fire.” On 1 September 1640, James Cole, “for drawing wine without license & contrary to the express prohibition of the Court, & for his contempt & disorders suffered in his house, is fined £5.” A coroner’s inquest of 26 July 1652 found that Robert Willis had been up all night drinking at James Cole’s before he went out fishing and accidentally drowned. On 5 October 1652, James was presented for “entertaining townsmen in his house, contrary to order of the court.” On 5 March 1660/1, James Cole Sr. was fined ten shillings for selling wine to the Indians. He was fined five shillings on 3 October 1665 for allowing Richard Dwelley to be drunk in his house. On 2 March 1668/9, James Cole Sr. and Mary, his wife, were presented at court for selling strong liquors to an Indian and for allowing James Clarke, Phillip Dotterich, Mary Ryder, and Hester Wormall to drink on the Lord’s Day. On 8 March 1670/1, John Sprague was fined for “highly misdemean[ing]” himself at the house of James Cole, including riding his mare into the parlor. Despite such incidents, the Cole establishment was sufficiently important to the town that on 9 June 1653 it was ordered that “James Cole, the ordinary [tavern] keeper of Plymouth,” be paid “for what he expendeth in keeping the ordinary.” On 7 June 1659, the court authorized ten pounds for the “repairing of the house he now liveth in, so as it may be fitted as an ordinary for the entertainment of strangers.”

James seems to have been partial to the intoxicants of which he was the leading purveyor. On 2 January 1637/8, the Plymouth court noted that he had been drinking excessively at the house of Mr. Hopkins. On 5 June 1671, James Cole Sr. was fined “for being found drunk the second time.” On 29 October 1671, when presented for suspicion of being drunk, “he plead[ed] infirmity of body, which may make some think that sometimes he is drunk.”

Plymouth Colony records fail to mention the grant to James of his Plymouth home lot but do document other land acquisitions. On 2 January 1636/7, James Coale was one of four men granted “seven acres apiece, to belong to their several dwelling houses in Plymouth.” On 16 September 1641, James Cole was granted fifty acres of upland at Lakenhame Meadow, and some meadow to be laid out “upon view.” On 27 September 1642, he was granted “an enlargement at the head of his lot.” On 9 September 1661, Samuel Dunham of Plymouth, planter, sold to “James Cole Senior of [Plymouth], shoemaker, all that his part, portion or share of land at Puncckateeset.” (On [blank] March 1668, James Cole Sr. of Plymouth, yeoman, gave his entire right at Puncckateeset to his son-in-law, Mr. John Almey of Portsmouth, Rhode Island.) James was first on the list

when, on 3 June 1662, the court allowed that the “servants and ancient freemen shall have liberty, in case they cannot procure Saconett Necke . . . to look out some other place undisposed of, for their accommodation.” (On 31 October 1673, James Cole Sr. of Plymouth gave his right to land at Saconnet to his son Hugh Cole of Swansea.) On 7 June 1665, he received one share, equivalent to about 30 acres, on the westerly side of Namasskett River.

James Cole is often identified as the person after whom Cole’s Hill—the first Pilgrim burial site, opposite Plymouth Rock—was named. The first recorded reference to Cole’s Hill, however, does not appear until 1698/9. The hill was presumably named after John³ Cole (*James*²⁻¹), who from 1697 to 1725 was the first of the Cole surname to own and occupy land bordering it. The town of Plymouth never relinquished ownership of the land on the top of the hill.

For a detailed discussion of James¹ Cole’s approximate date of death, see Eugene Cole Zubrinsky, “John² Cole and Family of Plymouth and Swansea, Massachusetts, and Portsmouth, Rhode Island: With Additional Corrections to the Cole Literature,” *The American Genealogist* 81(2006):122–32, 238–45, at 240–41. For court cases involving James Cole, see Robert Charles Anderson, *The Pilgrim Migration: Immigrants to Plymouth Colony, 1620–1633* (Boston, 2004), 122–26 (from which many of these notes are derived), at 125–26.

Notes for MARY TIBBES

The long held but flimsily supported belief that Mary was a daughter of the noted botanist and physician Mathieu Lobel has been refuted by the discovery of the record of her marriage to James Cole in Barnstaple, co. Devon, England. That James and Mary (Tibbes) Cole are identical to the Cole couple of Plymouth is confirmed by the baptisms, also recorded at Barnstaple, of their sons James and Hugh Cole.

James Cole’s wife, Mary, was still living on 2 March 1668/9, when the couple was fined five pounds for her having sold “strong liquors” to an Indian, and three pounds for her having permitted four townspeople to drink “on the Lord’s day, att her house, in the time of publicke worshipp.” On 20 May 1678, when their son James² Cole, Plymouth innholder, conveyed parcels of upland and meadow to Jonathan Shaw, the grantor’s wife Mary Cole “junr” relinquished her interest in the property. The generational identifier given this Mary Cole (née Tilson) indicates the presence in Plymouth at this time of an older Mary Cole, who could only have been the wife of James¹ Cole.

The 21 November 1637 birth date claimed for Mary’s son John² Cole in Ernest Byron Cole’s *Descendants of James Cole of Plymouth, 1633* is undocumented and, but for a single digit, identical with the recorded date of his marriage to Elizabeth Ryder/Rider (21 November 1657); the two events thus appear to have occurred exactly thirty years apart. Given the distinct possibility that this is a sign of confusion rather than coincidence, the birth date’s day and month should be regarded with skepticism. The aforementioned Cole genealogy also presents a birth year of 1639 (day and month not given) for John² Cole’s sister, Mary; this, too, E. B. Cole fails to support. For evidence that these two (Mary in particular) were nevertheless born probably in the respective years stated, see Zubrinsky, “John² Cole and Family . . . ,” *The American Genealogist* (TAG) 81(2006):124, and “More About Mary (Cole) (Almy) Pococke and John Cole, Children of James¹ Cole of Plymouth,” TAG 83(2009):258.

2. HUGH² COLE

Baptism: Barnstaple, Devon, England, 29 June 1628
Death: Swansea, Massachusetts, 26 (not 22) January 1699/1700, aged “about 72 or 73”
Burial: Tyler Point Cemetery, Swansea (now in Barrington, Rhode Island) (no marker)
Migration: Plymouth, Massachusetts, 1633
Removes: Swansea, by 1669/70; Portsmouth, Rhode Island, 1675; Swansea 1676
Occupation: Ship’s carpenter, farmer (yeoman)
Religion: Baptist
Father: James COLE (<1600–c1682)
Mother: Mary TIBBES (1598–>1668/9)

Spouse 1: MARY FOXWELL

Birth: Scituate, Massachusetts, 17 August 1635
Death: Swansea, before 1689
Burial: Tyler Point Cemetery (no marker)
Father: Richard FOXWELL (c1610–1668)
Mother: Ann SHELLEY (1614–<1669)
Marriage: Plymouth, 8 January 1654[/5?]
Children: i. James Cole (1655–1717). ii. Hugh Cole (1658[/9?]-1737/8). iii. John Cole (1660–1748). iv. Martha Cole (1662–1708). v. Anna Cole (1664–1704). vi. Ruth Cole (1666[/7?]-1718). vii. Joseph Cole (b. 1668). viii. Ebenezer Cole (c1671–1719). ix. Mary Cole (1676–1756). x. **Benjamin Cole** (c1678–1748). xi. Mercy Cole (d. c1704/5). xii. Experience Cole (d. by 1711).

Spouse 2: ELIZABETH (LETTICE) (SHURTLEFF) COOK

Marriage: Plymouth 1 January 1688/9

Spouse 3: MARY (SHELLEY) (HARLOW) MORTON

Marriage: Plymouth 30 January 1693/4

Notes for HUGH COLE

Hugh was baptized in mid-1628, but his birth year is nevertheless uncertain. The Church of England’s sacrament of infant baptism was typically bestowed only days or weeks after birth, which in this case would have been in 1628. His appearance on the 1643 list of Plymouth Colony men able to bear arms (“from xvj. Yeares”), however, implies a birth year no later than 1627. But since his older brother, James, was baptized on 11 February 1726/7 (also in Barnstaple), it is probable that Hugh was born in 1628, not long before his baptism.

Plymouth town records show that on 8 April 1645 (not 1634, as often stated), it was agreed with James Cole that “his sonn Heugh Cole should keepe the Cowes this yeare from the middle of this instant Aprill untill the middle of November following and shall have fifty bushells of corne for his paynes.”

Swansea records of proprietors' grants indicate that "At a Meeting of the Trustees Ordered by the Court at New Plymouth for the Settlement of the Town of Swanszey the Ninth of the 1st month 1668 [9 March 1667/8] . . . [it was] Ordered that Hugh Cole shall have 40 acres of Land lately Bought near Matapoiset." He was nevertheless still "of the Towne of Plymouth" on 1 August 1669, when he purchased of Joseph Turner land in the eastern part of Swansea (now in Somerset). Hugh and his family presumably removed to Swansea (founded in fall 1667 by Baptists from adjacent Rehoboth) not long before he became the sixth admitted inhabitant to sign the town covenant, dated 22 12th month 1669 [22 February 1669/70]. The Coles settled on the aforementioned forty acres, located in Swansea's Touisset section, on the western bank of what is to this day named, after Hugh, Cole [popularly Cole's] River.

Active in civic affairs, Hugh was elected to many terms as Swansea selectman, or town magistrate (the office absorbed that of *townsman*, or councilman, in 1686), and also as deputy from Swansea to the Plymouth Colony General Court, which was both a judicial and legislative body. The town of Plymouth had occasionally used his skills as a surveyor, and in Swansea's early years, the townsmen appointed him to survey the land grants made by the town to its proprietors [those entitled to distributions of common lands]. This and his having been named a surveyor of highways at Plymouth in 1667 (not Barnstable, as frequently said) have led to the oft-repeated assertion that Hugh was a civil engineer. A surveyor of highways, however, was simply responsible for monitoring the condition of main roads and calling on the townsmen to do maintenance when necessary. Except perhaps for Boston, it is doubtful that the role of surveyor, let alone civil engineer, existed as an occupation in seventeenth-century New England. Surveyor was one of several civic offices that, as above, Hugh occupied over the years. Records of Plymouth Colony and Bristol County describe him consistently, across several decades, as a ship's carpenter (also his brother John's occupation).

At Swansea, Hugh became friendly with neighboring native inhabitants, including Metacomet (called King Philip by the English), chief sachem of the Wampanoag confederacy and leader of its Pokanoket tribe. (Metacomet's father, Ousamequin—inaccurately known to most Americans by his title, Massasoit, or Great Sachem—had come with ninety men to the 1621 harvest feast at Plymouth, popularly known as the First Thanksgiving.) The Pokanokets lived nearby on the peninsula of Mount Hope (from *Montaup*, the native name), in present-day Bristol, Rhode Island. Hugh negotiated with sachems such as Metacomet for land that he and others purchased from them. As relations with the Wampanoags, Narragansetts, and other Indian groups deteriorated, Plymouth Colony authorities asked Hugh to report to them on the natives' moods and activities, which he occasionally did.

Tensions finally exploded in June 1675, when Pokanokets attacked Swansea, destroying the settlement of mostly scattered farms and marking the beginning of King Phillip's War, which engulfed southern New England for the next fourteen months. This was proportionally the bloodiest war in U.S. history: Twelve out of ninety New England towns were destroyed, and many more were damaged; about five percent of the colonists were killed. Suffering far greater losses, the native population of southern New England was reduced by perhaps forty percent—and of those who survived, many were sold into slavery.

In his 1908 Cole genealogy, Ernest Byron Cole relates a fascinating story:

In June 1675, at the commencement of the war with King Phillip, two of Hugh Cole's sons were made prisoners by the Indians and taken to Phillip at Mount Hope. Phillip ordered them set at liberty, because, as he said, Hugh Cole had always been his friend. He sent word to Hugh that he could no longer restrain his warriors, and for him to take his family and immediately remove

to Rhode Island. This he did, and one hour afterward his home was in flames. While he had been on such friendly terms with Phillip, his was the first home burned, and Gershom Cole [elsewhere called Hugh's nephew] was the first person killed.

Although the author fails to name his source, it was undoubtedly Guy M. Fessenden's 1845 history of Warren, Rhode Island, which recounts the identical tale. In an 1827 volume, Samuel Gardner Drake reiterates what Col. Benjamin Cole of Warren, Rhode Island, told him in 1824: "In June 1675, Philip informed [Hugh Cole] that his young men were very eager to go to war against the English; but when he could no longer restrain them he would let him know. Accordingly, on an evening previous to the fatal 24[th], canoes arrived from Mounthope [*sic*] with advise [*sic*] from Philip, that Mr. Cole and family must go over to R.I., as his people would begin the war. They embarked, and the next morning their dwellings were burned." As is evident, this account makes no reference to the capture and release of Hugh Cole's sons. The earliest published depiction of such an episode, presented by respected historian John Callender in 1739, does not name the captives: "[T]here is a constant Tradition among the Posterity of the People, *who lived next to [Philip]*, and were *familiarly conversant* with him, as also with the *Indians* who survived the War, that . . . *Philip* . . . received the News, of the first *English Men* that were killed, with *Grief and Sorrow*, and *wept at the News* ; and that a Day or two before the first Outrages, he had protected an *English Man* the *Indians* had cap[t]ivated, rescued him from them, and *privately sent him home safe*." Similar accounts, by Fessenden (1845) and George Madison Bodge (1906), name the freed man as James Brown (Fessenden, *History of Warren, R.I.*: "Philip performed a similar act of kindness [to that involving Hugh Cole's sons] in protecting the family of Mr. James Brown, one of the constituent members of the Swanzea church"; Bodge, *Soldiers in King Philip's War*: "[W]hen James Brown . . . was sent to Philip to persuade peace, while many of his warriors urged that he be retained as captive, or be put to death, Philip sent him home safely guarded"). It is thus quite possible that both the Drake and Callender narratives are factual, while Fessenden's incorporates a capture-and-release story that actually pertains only to Brown. That Hugh Cole's house and those of others are said to have been in flames only an hour after he and his family fled also seems a bit of an embellishment when compared to the version repeated by Drake. Finally, Hugh Cole did not have a nephew named Gershom Cole, and there was no such person at Swansea. The man of that forename killed at Swansea and buried there on 24 June 1675 was Gershom Cobb.

It is often said that Hugh was a sergeant during King Philip's War, but this is doubtful. At the outset of the war, he had taken his family to Portsmouth (with Newport, the only Rhode Island town spared from attack), where his sister, Mary, and her first husband, John Almy, were already living. Although their brother John Cole was also a Swansea inhabitant (his home lot abutted Hugh's), an inventory of his estate's "moveable goods" was taken at Portsmouth on 15 December 1676. Hugh was present there when "[a]t a Meetinge of the free Inhabitants of the Towne of Portsmouth Held the 12th day of October 1675 . . . [it was] Granted by the Towne that Hugh Cole may have liberty to make use of some of the win[d] falls that is downe for to build a small frame, and to make some wheeles for the use of the Townesmen for their mony." Plymouth Colony records show that Swansea did not have a military company during the war. Eugene Aubrey Stratton's *Plymouth Colony: Its History & People, 1620–1691* states that "Indian raids had made it impossible for colonists to live safely in Dartmouth, Swansea, and Middleborough, which were . . . deserted, and some of their men were undoubtedly recruited from towns to which they had fled." James Browne of Swansea was a lieutenant during the war, but both he and the few men under him were irregulars. Swansea had apparently formed its own trainband by 25 October

1677, when town records first refer to Samuel Luther as “Sargeant.” Although Hugh Cole appears with great frequency in town, county, and colony records both before and after the war, the first reference to him as “Sargeant,” “Sarjt,” and other variations thereof is dated 12 November 1680, more than four years after the war’s end; the last, on 23 December 1687, was about twelve years before his death. He likely spent the entirety of King Philip’s War at Portsmouth and almost certainly did not become a sergeant of the Swansea militia until some years after the war.

Hugh had returned to Swansea by 12 October 1676, when it was ordered that “the Selectmen Chosen 1675 shall stand for this year 1676, vizt. . . . Hugh Cole.” Instead of rebuilding his house on the site of the original, he located near Kickemuit River in present-day Warren, Rhode Island, on the western side of Touisset Neck (his original house had been on the eastern side).

Secondary sources sometimes claim that Hugh Cole was made a *freeman* at Plymouth in 1657. (Only freemen enjoyed full rights of colony citizenship, to include eligibility for colony-level office.) The list of that year on which he appears, however, is of those who took the Oath of Fidelity, for men *other than* freemen; the latter affirmed their loyalty to crown and colony by way of the Freeman’s Oath. That Hugh was a freeman at Swansea, however, is recorded in that town’s section of a list of Plymouth Colony freemen dated 29 May 1670.



Next to the well that Hugh Cole sank in 1676 or 1677 is a plaque marred by factual errors but commemorating him as “an honorable and useful citizen of Plymouth Colony.” (Photo by Dr. David S. Weed of Warren, Rhode Island.)

Notes for MARY FOXWELL

Properly written, pre-1752 dates from 1 January through 24 March contain double-dated years to account for the coexistence of Old Style and New Style dating (year beginning 25 March and 1 January, respectively). Both Plymouth Colony records of Hugh Cole's first marriage, however, contain the single year 1654. Although Old Style dating was probably intended, no definitive, independent evidence exists to confirm this. The date is therefore best expressed as recorded (8 January 1654) or as presented above (8 January 1654[5?]).

The name of Hugh Cole's bride is omitted from the aforementioned marriage records, but direct evidence of her identity is found elsewhere: At the Plymouth Colony General Court held on 6 June 1655, the grand jury presented "Hugh Cole, and Mary Foxwell, his now wife, [for] keeping company each with the other in an undecent manner, at an unseasonable time and place, before marriage. Owing the presentment as it lyeth, he is fined 20 [shillings]." If, as is likely, the couple had then been married for five months rather than a year and five months, their year of marriage was 1654 Old Style and 1655 New Style.

3. BENJAMIN³ COLE

Birth: Swansea, Massachusetts, ca. 1677–1678
Death: Swansea, 28 or 29 September 1748, aged 71 or in 71st year
Burial: Kickemuit Cemetery, Swansea (now in Warren, Rhode Island)
Occupation: Farmer (yeoman)
Religion: Baptist
Father: Hugh COLE (1628–1699/1700)
Mother: Mary FOXWELL (1635–<1689)

Spouse: HANNAH EDDY

Birth: Swansea, ca. 1681
Death: Swansea, 15 May 1768, in 88th year
Burial: Kickemuit Cemetery
Religion: Baptist
Father: Caleb EDDY (c1643–1712/13)
Mother: Elizabeth BULLOCK (1650–>1712)
Marriage: Swansea, 27 June 1701
Children: i. Hopedill Cole (1702–1785). ii. Jonathan Cole (1704–c1785). iii. Benjamin Cole (1706–1776). iv. Foxsil [Foxwell] Cole (b. 1708, d. young). v. Israel Cole (1709/10–1787). vi. Ebenezer Cole (1711–1794). vii. Andrew Cole (1714–1787). viii. Hannah Cole (1717–>1762).

Notes for BENJAMIN COLE

The often-made assertion that Benjamin became a deacon on 22 May 1718 is false. On that date, when the "brothers and sisters" of the Swansea Baptist Church elected two deacons, Benjamin received a few votes but was not a serious contender. Not until 5 June 1725 was he chosen a deacon, in which position he continued until his death.

Swansea church records indicate that Benjamin died on 28 September 1748, aged 71; the Cole genealogy reports the date as a day later. Benjamin's gravestone has it that he died on 29 December 1748, in his 71st year [aged 70]. Since his will was proved on 4 October 1748, the month on his gravestone cannot be correct.



*Built in 1701, the **Benjamin Cole House** is located on Old Warren Road in Swansea. It contains original woodwork throughout the interior and exterior and a central chimney that feeds six fireplaces. The house has an “Indian Room,” whose exterior walls are constructed with two-inch-thick planks. During Indian attacks, the children were put in the room (now a large closet) to protect them from arrows. (Photo by John Phelan / Wikimedia Commons / CC BY-SA 3.0.)*

Notes for HANNAH EDDY

Neither the date of Hannah's marriage nor her maiden name has been documented. The staple Eddy and Cole genealogies identify Hannah (Mrs. Benjamin) Cole as the daughter of Caleb and Elizabeth (Bullock) Eddy, but neither volume provides supporting evidence or a source. The Eddy compilation cites the Cole book for certain other data and probably obtained this information from it, also. The latter's source for Hannah's maiden name was probably Miss Asenath Wilbur Cole (1834–1903) of Warren, Rhode Island, who resided on inherited Kickemuit River property once occupied by Hugh² Cole. Ernest Byron Cole's *Descendants of James Cole of Plymouth, 1633* (1908) credits her with supplying (from her own research and, presumably, family records in her possession) most of the early Cole data therein.

In refreshing contrast to E. B. Cole's work is that of Almon D. Hodges (held in the Special Collections Dept. at the New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston), which is meticulous in citing sources. Hodges, who also corresponded with Asenath Cole, presents her account of having been told by a great-granddaughter of Benjamin³ Cole's that her mother used to speak of her grandmother Eddy. A fair amount of circumstantial evidence tends to support this. Caleb Eddy's will, dated 18 May 1710, identifies among his legatees a married daughter Hannah, who appears second among the four daughters named therein (first is Elizabeth, born in 1678; Hopestill, whose marriage intentions were declared at Rehoboth on 22 December 1705, is third; and Mary, then a minor, is last). This is consistent with the death data on Hannah Cole's gravestone, from which is calculated a birth year of about 1681. Caleb Eddy also witnessed two of Hugh² Cole's deeds, to the latter's son Hugh in 1687 and to son Benjamin³ in 1699. The names of Benjamin and Hannah Cole's children Hopestill and Israel are the same as those of a sister and half-brother of Hannah Eddy's mother. Hannah Eddy also had a younger sister named Hopestill (see above), and their brother Samuel named a son Israel.

There is significant circumstantial evidence tending to confirm E. B. Cole's claim, which he fails to support, that Hannah Eddy's sister Elizabeth married Nathaniel³ Cole (*John*², *James*¹). And the 1717[/8] marriage of these women's sister Mary to Benjamin's nephew Joseph⁴ Cole (*Hugh*³⁻², *James*¹) is a matter of record. It was not unusual for a pair of families to be linked by multiple marriages, and such was the case with the Coles and Eddys. That it included the marriage of Benjamin Cole and Hannah Eddy is highly probable.