

The History of Private Willhill A King's Soldier

By Richard Hillard, Scribe



I'll start the telling of me and mine, from that which is written in my father's bible that he copied from his fathers. I am the fifth generation of Willhill's in these colonies to take-up arms and defend home and crown.

William Willhill the first came to Plymouth Colony on the good ship William and Anne in 1635. He was a soldier and carpenter from Wales. Upon arrival he made an agreement with John Bruster, Miles Standish, and John Alden to build the first gristmill on these shores and to run it for three years in exchange for the title to stand the land on which it stood. Not being very devout and chafing under the strict rules he removed from there after five years. Selling the land and heading up north to help Winthrop set up his Massachusetts Bay Colony. He got married to Easter and homesteaded in what is now Hingham Mass. On Liberty Plain.

William the Second is the oldest son of William the first. He was born about 1641 and grew up in Hingham where he married Debra Warren in 1671. He was a well-respected man who became the constable, and clerk of the market. He was also known as the Tithing Man (tax Collector). He is said to have fought in King Phillip's War.

I do not know if it's true but he was said to have been very tough and handy with a tomahawk or knife. I do know that once Indians attacked the houses around " Accord Pond" and burnt out James Whiton and Nathaniel Cubbick, " Old Will" he fought them off and not only saved his house but lost not a cow or chicken. In the 72nd year of his life he died and is buried in little Compton next to Pricilla Alden Peabody the first white born in the colonies. He begat 12 children including William III. Jonathan, and my Grandfather David.

William III did his service on Sir William Phip's Expedition to Canada in 1690. A body of 60 picked men sailed from Plymouth in five sloops. The battle was fought and won at the expense of many lives. Will was sorely wounded and died on the return trip to be buried at sea.

Jonathan bought his commission as Ensign and moved up to be Colonel. My Grandfather David lived in Bristol County Mass. that has become Newport County Rhode Island. He is a large landowner, master carpenter, and owns both Indian and Negro slaves. He has out lived two wives and has raised 17 children. He fought in the Colonial Wars in 1687-1689 and he was captain in the Rhode Island Brigade in the Indian Wars of 1714-1715. Compton Towns Ammunition and weapons were stored in his house.

My father William was born in 1703 and he homesteaded in Stonington Conn. Where he married my mother Prudence Brownin in 1728. Her family having arrived on the mayflower. He was a friend to the Mohawk Indians of the seven tribes and Uncas in particular. He is a bitter enemy of the Iroquois and Peaquats, having been involved in campaigns against them. He is now mostly a farmer and carpenter but also deals in land transactions.

I was born in Conn. In 1732, the second son of four Children. My older brother William is a prentice carpenter. In February 1755 I married to Mary Dennison, daughter of Beebe and Sarah Dennison. Her Grandfather was Captain George Dennison who was given his land holdings by Royal order for his valor in battles while serving the crown. Her father is magistrate and current militia Commander. He has promised to buy my commission upon completion of this enlistment of training.

I was beat into Gordon's Company in May of 1759 at Philadelphia where I was fitted up in splendid order. My grandfather gave me my short sword and dragoon pistol when I enlisted.

My Small Clothes and uniform were made to order from scientific measurements at some additional cost.

I had some skills at carpentry and farming, and can read, write , and cipher but because I am the second son I stand small chance of significant inheritance. So I must make my own way with thither none but those that nature hath endowed me, none by heredity or privilege, but only by my own, may I ever be successful.

I am such at home on the long trail having traveled with the Indians to trade and have been shooting a musket all my life, so campaigning should come naturally. I shall endeavor to become a good soldier, and under these Swiss officers I will learn their army drill and tactics. I shall pattern my life like the gallant cock strutting before the barn door. To be a husband, warrior, and a fine gentleman, crowing the pride and gladness in my heart.

I am most worn out and forgetful by this interrogatory and as I must post soon, so I end. However, I shall dispatch with all possible expedition any developments as they occur.