

Margaret Harriman Was NOT Margaret Palmer

By Stephen Gauss

Although we find that Rowley town records include the birth records for their children, no one has found a Rowley or Massachusetts record of the marriage of Leonard Harriman to his wife, Margaret, nor any evidence as to her family name. In accounts and genealogies she is often named as Margaret Palmer, but with no sources given. No reliable records have ever been found to back up the assertion of Palmer as her maiden name. Some records, such as the LDS Personal Ancestry Files (PAF), list her parents as Thomas and Anne Palmer of Rowley and even give a birth date for Thomas that would make him eight years old when Margaret was born and ignoring the fact that Thomas and Ann were married only a few years before the birth of Margaret's first son. Further-more, the will of Thomas Palmer names his three sons and his wife, but no daughters. The births of all three Palmer sons are recorded in the Rowley vital records. Several internet accounts of the Palmer maiden name cite sources that do not provide the information attributed to them. For example, some cite *The Hazen family in America: a genealogy* by Tracy Elliot Hazen for Margaret's last name of Palmer. But, in fact, that work does not give her surname. The LDS Personal Ancestry Files frequently cite each other, so a single incorrect entry gets propagated through records year after year.

Another source often cited by inaccurate LDS files is *Seventeenth Century Colonial Ancestors Supplement Number One 1975-1979* published in 1981 by the National Society Colonial Dames XVII Century. However, a 1991 compilation of the original with all supplements by Genealogical Publishing Company did not contain that listing. In a conversation with their genealogist at their headquarters in Washington, D.C., we were told that there were numerous errors in the original book and that early data had been accepted from members with no checking. Their files now refer to our Harriman Family Association publications for the facts.

In 1938, Mary Lovering Holman, a well-known and highly respected genealogist, in *Ancestry of Charles Stinson Pillsbury and John Sargent Pillsbury*, stated that "there seems to be no clue obtainable to the maiden name of his [Leonard's] wife, Margaret. It seems probable that either Leonard or she was connected with the family of Hugh Smith of Rowley, since two of his children chose Leonard for their guardian but it has not been possible to establish this." Lois Thurston in researching for the two publications *Feudalism To Freedom* and *Research in Progress* found no credible records to supply Margaret's family name nor has anything been found by our researchers since that time.

Leonard and Margaret are probably buried in the Rowley Burial Ground, where this association erected a memorial stone in 1992. There are few gravestones from those early days. Even Ezekiel Rogers has no actual marker. The HFA's memorial stone was placed in the Rowley Burial Grounds before the completion of Lois Thurston's English research. The stone records that he was born in Rowley, Yorkshire, England, but we now know they were most probably from Uldale, Cumbria, England.

Their first son was born in 1650 when Leonard was about 28, born about 1622. So he was 18 when Rogers arrived in Massachusetts. Margaret could have been born in New England, but it would have to be before 1635 to have a son in 1650. She could not have been born in Rowley, founded in 1639. But she could have been among the 60+ families that joined Rogers during his winter in Salem.