

THE BETTS FAMILY

The 'American' Betts family came from Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire, England. This area is just north of London in the southern part of England. Richard Betts and his wife came to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the mid 1640s and ten years later they moved to Newtown near present day Long Island City in Queens, New York. It was here that his daughter, Joanna, married John Scudder and the two families joined in my lineage.

The very early Betts family was English, but the spelling was Bettys. The early history is a bit sketchy, but I will try and do my best.

EARLY BEATTYS & BETTS FAMILY

The Betts name was spelled in many ways in the very early times. The first record of this Saxon Family was on a deed dated 1272 A.D., which covered 160 acres covering the township of Wortham, Suffolk, England.

The following is from a 1959 *BETTS FAMILY HISTORY* by Warren Robbins:

One Beatys Wryght held these (see above) lands in 1462 and had two sons, John and Richard. John's widow, Alys, mentioned in her will her five grandchildren: John Thomas, Walter, Richard and Alys, `ye children of my daughter, Elizabeth, wife of John Bettys'. This was in the year 1487.

In 1524, the family was represented by a John Bettys and his son, also named John. The latter John had one son named Richard, who by his wife Alice had five children: George, Thomas, John, Elizabeth and another John called John the younger. George, the eldest son of Richard married Agnes Mans and was the father of Richard, Syeth, Bridget, Maryona, George and John.

Descendents of this line were among the first Betts to come to America.

In addition to Richard Betts of Ipswich, my ancestor, there was John Betts of Cambridge, Massachusetts and William Betts of Scituate and Barnstable, Massachusetts. All these families came to America in the 1640s.

As near as I can figure my early Betts line went from Beatys Wright to John and Alys Bettys to John and Elizabeth Bettys to Richard and Alys Bettys to George Betts and Agnes Mans to Richard Betts Senior. At least it is here that I begin.

RICHARD BETTS SR.

I have very little on the senior Richard Betts other than he was the father of Captain Richard Betts who immigrated to America.

Richard Betts was born about 1573 in Hemel Hempstead, Herts in England. We have no information on his wife, but he was married by the early 1600s. I have records of only two children: **Richard Betts**, my lineage and covered in the next section, and **Sarah Betts** who was

born about 1615 and married Joseph Fowler in England.

CAPTAIN RICHARD BETTS

Richard Betts the second, or Captain Richard Betts as he was known, was born about 1613 in Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire, England. He married Joanna Chamberlain, and according to a Mormon record, they were married in Ipswich, Massachusetts on January 27, 1649. They had seven children.

He was shown as being in Ipswich of the Massachusetts Colony in 1648, though he was probably there earlier. He was in Newtown, Long Island, New York in 1652 where he had a large plantation at the 'English Kills'. The earliest permanent settlement of Newtown was in 1652 and he is shown as, '*Richard Betts of Ipswich an original settler.*'

Richard Betts served as a magistrate in Newtown for many years and was also High Sheriff there from 1678 to 1681.

The following is taken from a 1906 *HISTORY OF LONG ISLAND*:

Captain Richard Betts, whose public services appear for fifty years on every page of Newtown's history, came in 1648 to New England, but soon after to Newtown, where he acquired great influence. In the Revolution of 1663 he bore a zealous part, and after the conquest of the New Netherlands by the English, he was a member from Newtown to the Provincial Assembly held at Hempstead in 1665. In 1678, he was commissioned high sheriff of 'Yorkshire upon Long Island', and he retained the position until 1681. He became a bitter opponent to Director Pieter Stuyvesant and the little town of Bushwick, which he had founded. Under leave from the Governor, the English settlers had planted their town, but were refused the usual patent, and in 1656 Richard Betts administered a severe blow to Stuyvesant by purchasing the land for himself and fifty five associates, from the Red Men at the rate of one shilling per acre. The total cost amounted to some 68 pounds which together with the sum of 76 shillings paid to the Sachems, Pomwaukon and Rowerowestco, extinguished the Indian title to Newtown.

For a long series of years, Betts was a magistrate. During this time, he was more than once a member of the High Court of Assize, then the supreme power in the province. He became an extensive landholder at the English Kills. His residence was here, in what is still known as the 'old Betts house.' It is further said that here within sight of his bedroom he dug his own grave, in his one hundredth year. And from the former to the later he was carried in 1713. No headstone marks the grave, but its absence may be accounted for by the fact that his sons had become Quakers and abjured headstones.

Capt. Betts lived to be one hundred years of age. His death on November 18, 1713 was recorded by the Rev. Thomas Poyer, rector of the Episcopal Churches of Newtown, Jamaica and Flushing under Burial Notices: '*Richard Betts of Newtown, age 100 at ye Kills.*'

He had two sons and outlived both of them. He made his will after the death of his son Richard junior in November 1711. The will was undated and was probated on November 26, 1713.

The 1698 Census of Newtown showed Richard Betts Sr. with a family of four, Richard junior family of nine, Thomas Betts family of twelve.

Richard and Joanna Betts had two sons and five daughters. They were:

RICHARD BETTS JR. Married Sarah Hunt about 1680. He died November 4, 1711. His will dated January 26, 1710 listed his wife Sarah and these children: Richard, first born, Robert, Thomas, Sarah, Elizabeth, Johanna, Abigail and Mary.

THOMAS BETTS married Mercy, daughter of Major Daniel Whitehead about the year 1683. He left a will on June 29, 1709 and died in the following month. His widow remarried a Capt. Joseph Sackett. The children of Thomas and Mercy were: Richard, Thomas, Daniel, Mercy wife of Abram Springsteen, Elizabeth wife of Robert Comfort, Deborah wife of Gershom Moore, Joanna and Mary.

JOHANNA BETTS married John Scudder and their lives are detailed in the SCUDDER FAMILY HISTORY, this is my line.

MARY BETTS married Joseph Swazey of Southhold. He died prior to 1717 and Mary died May 14, 1734. They had eight children.

MARTHA BETTS married Philip Ketcham of Newtown, son of John Ketcham of Ipswich. He died July 12, 1734, I do not know when Martha died.

ELIZABETH BETTS married Joseph Sacket of Newtown (1656-1719). Elizabeth died early on and Joseph then married Ann somebody and then he married Mercy Betts, the widow of his brother Thomas Betts.

SARAH BETTS married Edward Hunt, son of Ralph Hunt. After her death, Edward remarried Elizabeth Hazard.