

Biographical sketch – William Twinning, Jr

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~paxson/twining/Twinning.index.html#William2>

William Twinning², Jr. was the son of William and Anne (___) Twining, born 25 October 1619 in Gloucestershire, and died 4 November 1703 in Newtown, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. He married in 1652 [Elizabeth DEANE](#), daughter of [Stephen](#) and [Elizabeth \(RING\) Deane](#). Stephen had arrived in the Plymouth Colony in November 1621 on the *Fortune*, the second ship to bring colonists to Plymouth after the *Mayflower*.

As a widow, Elizabeth (Ring) Deane had married 1 September 13 Josiah COOKE. They had moved to Nauset [Eastham] about 1645, the same time the Twinings moved there. In his will, dated 22 September 1673 and proved 29 October that year, Josiah named his [step] son-in-law William Twining and [step] grandson Stephen Twining.

William owned land at Easton Harbor, and had an interest in drift-whales at the end of the Cape. He and his son William were listed among the freemen of Eastham as late as 1695.

William was a deacon of Eastham Church in 1677. In this office he was to "receive the offerings of the Church, gifts given to the Church and to keep the treasury of the Church and therewith to serve the tables . . . as the Lord's table, the table of ministers and of such as are in necessity to whom they are to distribute." It was specified that deacons should not be "double-tongued, nor given much to wine, not given to filthy lucre."

As loyal and active members of the established Puritan church, I have found no record of the Twinings' attitude toward the Quakers who first arrived in Boston as early as July 1656. Ann AUSTIN and Mary FISHER were immediately clapped into the Boston jail and kept under close guard until they could be deported five weeks later. Two days after the authorities had thought themselves rid of this menace, eight more Friends arrived on 7 August in the *Speedwell*. They spent eleven weeks in jail. On 14 October 1656 the Massachusetts General Court published its first anti-Quaker law. Nicholas UPSALL, innkeeper of the Red Lyon, bribed the jailor to allow him to take food and drink to the prisoners. He became their first (and only) convert. Nicholas got permission to move to [Sandwich](#) in the somewhat more tolerant Plymouth Colony during the harsh winter, but was ordered to leave the colony by 1 March. While in Sandwich he, along with Richard KIRBY and his daughter Sarah; Jane, the wife of William LAUNDER; the (unnamed) wife of John NEWLAND; and William ALLEN apparently met for worship at Allen's home. It is unknown if the Twinings met Nicholas while he was there. He moved on (voluntarily or not) to the safety of Rhode Island.

The early history of Friends in Massachusetts is one of the clergy and governor trying through increasingly fierce and barbarous means to crush these challenges to their theological and political supremacy. Although Plymouth was slightly less harsh than the Bay Colony, it

seemed to have the same motivation of attempting by any means to keep itself pure from what was seen as heretical corruption. But not all Plymouth officials toed the official line. Especially in Scituate, where Capt. James CUDWORTH and Isaac ROBINSON, son of the beloved pastor of the Separatists during their sojourn in Leiden, were—while not completely in agreement with Friends—were willing to listen to them and definitely unwilling to persecute them. Occasionally the court in Plymouth would relieve Friends, or sympathizers of Friends, of obvious abuses of power by the over-zealous marshal, George BARLOW. The savage beatings, ear croppings, and executions (four were killed, many more were condemned and ready for the gallows) in the Bay Colony were curtailed with the change of government in England. With the restoration of the monarchy under Charles II in 1660, political expediency required a change of policy in New England. On 2 October 1660 the Plymouth General Court ordered that there no longer be fines for those absent from the established church services. In June 1661 the Bay Colony's Cart and Whip Act (aimed mostly at Quakers) was repealed. But when the British Parliament, seeking revenge against those who had executed the king and established the Commonwealth, passed the Clarendon Code in 1661/2, Massachusetts felt free to reenact the Cart and Whip Act in October 1662. Persecution brought great suffering to Friends until Governor ENDICOTT's death in March 1665. The result of the sufferings was to arouse widespread sympathy for Friends and to increase the number of people drawn to their Religious Society.

A renewed burst of Quaker activity occurred in the 1670s. One catalyst was the visit by George FOX to the colonies in 1672. Starting in Barbadoes he and his companions crossed to Virginia, spent time on the shores of the Chesapeake, and travelled north through the wilderness to New York and on to arrive in Newport on 30 May 1672. Friends held a regional gathering with Fox, which eventually became New England Yearly Meeting. John BURNYEAT, a "gentle spirit and powerful preacher" who had visited Massachusetts in 1666 and 1671, made another visit after that General Meeting. He held a large public meeting in Boston in June that was quite effective in convincing people of the Truth Friends preached. William EDMUNDSON, who had done so much to spread Quaker faith and practice in Ireland, visited what is now Massachusetts in 1672 and 1675. In the Plymouth Colony the towns of Dartmouth and Saconnet (later called Little Compton) became centers of Quaker and Baptist activity, while neither had a Congregational church. Under the more lenient rule of Bay Colony Governors Richard BELLINGHAM (1665-1672) and John LEVERETT (1672-16__) persecution lessened. During the war against the Native Americans, called King Philip's War (1674-75), the Cart and Whip Act was again passed, but not vigorously enforced. In 1677 a new challenge arose for Friends when the General Court passed a law demanding an oath of allegiance, although this had been a tool used against Friends in Plymouth since 4 June 1661. 1677 was the year William Twining was a deacon in the established church in Eastham. Young Mr. Treat was the minister, and during his pastorate the deacons included John Doane, Samuel FREEMAN, Josiah COOKE, Daniel DOANE, William TWINING, John PAINE, and Joseph DOANE. At some point after that William and Elizabeth Twining became Friends.

A chronicler wrote the following opinion nearly a century ago about the Twining's conversion: "The apostasy of Mr. Twining while holding the office of deacon, and his removal with a portion of his respectable family to the banks of the Delaware, in Pennsylvania, to join

the Society of Friends and become the exponent of the peculiar views of George Fox, must have given rise to much comment in the puritanical town. What led to his apostasy, and to his removal to the far-off Quaker settlement, in his old age, when there were others of his belief in Mr. Treat's parish, is, at this distance of time, past conjecture." With a bit more understanding and sympathy for Quaker faith, it is a lot easier to hypothesize why the Twinings might want to leave a place that was full of gossip and ill will.

The Glorious Revolution of 1689 by which William of Orange and Mary Stuart replaced James II on the British throne included a general Act of Toleration. Friends began to leave Boston and Massachusetts to settle in the more congenial cities of Newport, Rhode Island, and Philadelphia. In 1695 the Twinings removed to the Quaker colony of Pennsylvania, to Newtown, in Bucks County. On Third Month (May) 1699 William was added to the 5 Eleventh Month 1687 list of those agreeing not to sell rum to the Indians.

William's will was filed in Philadelphia. His remains were buried 4 Eleventh Month 1703. Elizabeth died 28 December 1708.