

**Connecting the Dots: Ichabod Bowerman of Dutchess County, New York
and Thomas Bowerman of Falmouth, Massachusetts**

By Jeffrey L. Staley
(Draft only. Not for Publication)

Thomas, Ichabod, and “The Bowerman Family”
of *Pioneer Life on the Bay of Quinte*

The earliest published account connecting the descendants of Ichabod Bowerman (died 1790) of Beekman Patent, Dutchess County, New York with the older, Plymouth Colony family of Thomas Bowerman, is *Pioneer Life on the Bay of Quinte*¹ (hereafter PLBQ), printed probably in 1904. Most beginning Canadian Bowerman genealogists find this volume quite early on in their research and use it as a major resource for establishing their Bowerman roots in the early American colonies. But no one really knows the source of the Bowerman information in the book. Who is responsible for it, what documents were used, and is the information contained therein reliable?² PLBQ does not list its contributors, and up until recently, the source of its Bowerman family history remained a mystery. However, the Merton Yarwood Williams Collection in the Archives at the University of British Columbia contains a letter written by Merton Williams to Mrs. Arthur F. Clubb (Jane) dated 26 July 1956 in which he gives his opinion on the origin of the PLBQ Bowerman family history. Merton writes:

Having returned from Ontario, where I obtained records from my brother, John P. Williams, I am prepared to give your correspondence with him of November 3rd, 1955, the attention which it deserves. I greatly admire the research and work which you have given the Bowerman family history.³

I well remember sixty years ago, my grandfather, Levi V. Bowerman, sixty-five years of age,⁴ rising at 5 a.m., tending the stock and then settling down at his desk to work on the family history before we were up. He had his father's (Vincent Bowerman's) Bible, two of his

¹ (Toronto: Ralph and Clark). It was reprinted in 1999 by Global (Milton, ON), in their Canadiana reprint series (13), with a new introduction by Brian Tackaberry and a new index by R. Arless Flint.

² It begins with a notorious typographical error: “It is learned from Tremon’s History of Cape Cod,” instead of “Freeman’s History of Cape Cod” (see bibliography, below).

³ We most likely do not have a copy of this “History” to which Merton refers. What I do have is a ten-page version of it, which Jane hand-copied in a letter to Cyril E. Bowerman of Detroit Michigan, 18 July 1926 (courtesy of Robert H. Bowerman).

⁴ That is, around 1895.

sisters⁵ and D. B. Bowerman⁶ as helpers. He doubtless made mistakes and my typist has made a number of slips, to which I refer below.

D. B. Bowerman's widow kindly loaned me his notebook which I had copied. However, I have difficulty in interpreting some of the index numbers and I fear copying mistakes occur. The Pioneer Life on the Bay of Quinte was mainly dependent on D.B.B.

. . . And now for your additions and corrections:

You have added much information which requires no comment.

P. 1, par. 1. In my Grand-father Levi Bowerman's manuscript, he wrote four brothers, scratched out four and wrote three over it. I know of no other such reference.⁷ Several families claim to have started from three brothers and I suspect the records became confused.

David Bowerman's "Notes on the Family and Genealogy of Bowerman" which Merton Williams transcribed is also in the Archives at the University of British Columbia. As I shall show below, there is good evidence to support Merton's claim that PLBQ "was mainly dependent" on David's "Notes." On the top of the first page of David's transcribed "Notes on the Family and Genealogy of Bowerman," Merton wrote: "(Obtained by David B. Bowerman, formerly of Bloomfield, Ontario, and copied from his note book by kind permission of his widow, November 1930)."⁸ Merton's typescript of David Bowerman's "Notes" then begins:

"According to the earliest authentic New England records the ancestor of the Bowerman family in America was one Thomas Bowerman, who appeared in Plymouth

⁵ Levi Vincent had four sisters: Sarah Wycott died 21 September 1892; Amy Lear died about 1897; Maturah Hazard died 12 January 1909; and Lydia Hubbs, who died about 1910 (Merton Yarwood Williams, "The Bowerman Family 1379 to the Present" [Unpublished MS, 1959] p. 25). Most likely Maturah and Lydia are the sisters of Levi that Merton has in mind.

⁶ David Bennett Bowerman was the son of Charles Gideon and the grandson of Judah, who was the youngest child of Ichabod Bowerman (PLBQ, pp. 132, 136). David would have been Levi Vincent's second cousin. He was born 25 June 1862 in Bloomfield, Ontario.

⁷ This is not quite the whole story. Levi Vincent's original handwritten manuscript, "The Posterity as near as we can ascertain of Ichabod Bowerman" is in the Merton Yarwood Williams Archives at the University of British Columbia, and the details of its discovery are recounted in a letter from John P. Williams to his brother Merton dated 19 May 1952 (see below). Levi Vincent's original "Posterity" actually begins, "He seems to have been one of four brothers that emigrated from Germany in the year ___ to one of the eastern states where he married Lydia Mott for his first wife and had six children. . . ."

Merton Yarwood Williams' typescript of Levi's "Posterity" from "about 1904" begins "He [Ichabod] seems to have been a *descendant* of one of three brothers that emigrated from *England*. . . ." (my emphasis). The changes to "descendant" and "England" are certainly significant, but are not mentioned by Merton. Now there are *two generations* and a *different country of origin* from what Levi first wrote. Why did Levi make these changes? I suspect that they were the result of input from David B. Bowerman, who, sometime after Levi wrote his first draft of his own "Family Records," convinced Levi of the family's English origins (i.e. the Thomas Bowerman III connection). At some later date Levi went back to his manuscript and wrote above his original lines: "a descendant," "three," and "England."

⁸ David Bowerman married Hannah Marie Cooper, 10 Sept 1891, and after she died 5 Jul 1917 in Glendale, CA, he married Clara E. (maiden name unknown). Since David Bowerman died 4 Sept 1930 in Glendale, CA, Merton must have made his copy of David's "Notebook" around the time of David's funeral, in September 1930.

(Mass.) in the year 1633 and in Barnstable (Cape Cod) 1643, where he married Hannah Annable. . . .”⁹

How David Bowerman Connects the Dots Between Ichabod
and Thomas Bowerman

After this introduction, David names some of his sources (see “Appendix,” below), and then lists the children of Thomas I and Hannah Annable. Next he tries to unravel the family of Thomas II and III. He begins with the following observations and argument:

There is no recorded issue of any members of the family of Thomas Bowerman and Mary Harper except that of the second son (3) Thomas, who married Jane (neither full name nor dates being given) and left the subjoined issue, viz.:

Ichabod

Judah

David

Joseph

Sarah

Jane

Eliza

Peace

Deborah¹⁰

In 1688 lands were laid out to Thos. Bowerman, and in 1690, all the remaining undivided land in that section was ordered to be laid out, and Thomas Bowerman was one of two appointed to the task.

In 1702, Thos. Bowerman and another man were chosen by town meeting to settle with the dismissed teacher and preacher. Foreman’s “History of Cape Cod”¹¹ says: “In 1834, April 11th, Mr. Jeremiah Bowman died. He was descended from Thomas Bowman (sometimes written Bourman, Burman, and Bowerman), who was early in Barnstable and

⁹ If this is from David B. Bowerman’s records, it is interesting that David claimed German ancestry in the 1871 and 1881 Canadian censuses, as did Levi and Vincent Bowerman.

¹⁰ Freeman, Vol. 2, p. 484 n. 2. For updated data on the children of Thomas Bowerman III and Jane Clifton, see <http://bowermangenealogy.net/html/p5.htm#i108>.

¹¹ This must be a typographical error for “Freeman’s” (see bibliography below).

whose posterity were in Falmouth where David was born, who married (1) Ruth Dillingham, dau. of Jeremiah Dillingham, and (2) Hannah Wing, dau. of Zaccheus Wing, and had (issue) Jeremiah, Thomas, Peace.”

“Jeremiah married Deborah, dau. of Zacchaeus Wing and sister of his father’s second wife, and removed, as did also his father, to Sidney, Maine, but returned to this town (Sandwich, Cape Cod) 1788.

His children were as follows:

Charlotte,

David, who married Sarah Allen

Ruth, who married Benjamin Swift,

Abner,

Asa, 1786

The mother died 12 Feb’y 1816.”¹²

Whether David Bowman, who married Ruth Dillingham, was a brother of Ichabod Bowerman, who married (1) Lydia Mott and (2) Jane Richmond is not positively settled but it is yet considered probable from the following calculation.

Thomas Bowerman and Mary Harper were married 9th April 1678. Their son Thomas was probably born about 1681. About 1720 Ichabod Bowerman was born. This would be about the 40th year of Thomas’ age. Again, as Ichabod was born about 1720, allowing 1723 for Judah and 1725 for David’s birth, we can calculate the probable age of Jeremiah who died in 1834 and show that it is not improbable that David of Falmouth and Ichabod, subsequently of Dutchess Co., NY were of the same family.

Allowing 25 years for the age of David when he married his second wife Hannah Wing, the date of marriage would be 1750 and the birth of his eldest son Jeremiah about 1752, which would give Jeremiah, in 1834, an age of 82 years, quite within the limits of the known family longevity.

Now Jeremiah’s youngest son was born in 1786 and he had 6 children. Allowing 10 years to have elapsed between his marriage and the birth of his last child, the date of marriage would be 1776 and this would give him an age of 24 year at time of marriage.

¹² Freeman, Vol. 2, p. 151 n. 2.

No published records exist of the issue of any except Thomas, the son of Thomas Bowerman and Mary Harper, as already stated, and it seems probable that the above David and Ichabod are of this issue. Of Ichabod little is now known, except that he was born in Mass. and married (1) Lydia Mott and had issue, viz.: . . .”

Some observations on David B. Bowerman’s “Notes on the Family and Genealogy of Bowerman” are in order: 1) David Bowerman’s extended argument trying to tie Jeremiah Bowman’s father, David Bowerman, with Ichabod’s brother, David, appears to be an attempt to approximate the birth date of Ichabod Bowerman. Apparently David B. Bowerman did not have anything documenting Ichabod’s birth date or marriage date, and without those pegs, it would be difficult to convince anyone that the Ichabod Bowerman of Dutchess County was Freeman’s Ichabod Bowerman. 2) Merton Yarwood Williams’ letter to Jane Clubb of 26 July 1956 states that David B. Bowerman’s work was the primary source for PLBQ, and a careful comparison of David’s “Notes” and PLBQ generally seems to confirm this.¹³ 3) There is an obvious tentativeness in David’s arguments as he attempts to confirm the connection of the Dutchess County Ichabod to Thomas III. This tentativeness begins to disappear as more recent Bowerman family historians use David’s work. What for David Bowerman was a *tentative argument* about Ichabod’s connection to Thomas Bowerman III based on Freeman’s History of Cape Cod, will become “confirmed fact” over time. But Bowerman researchers will not have any additional supporting evidence for this connection until much later.¹⁴

¹³ First, the “Bowerman” entry in PLBQ begins with a reference to “Tremon’s [sic. It should read “Freeman’s”] History of Cape Cod,” and this is one of David Bowerman’s main sources for early Bowerman records. Secondly, Merton states in his 1956 letter to Mrs. Arthur F. Clubb how his grandfather, Levi V. Bowerman, worked on the family history with D. B. Bowerman as one of his helpers. Yet Levi Vincent’s “Family Records” do not appear to have been used in the PLBQ account of the Bowerman Family. For example, PLBQ states: “The Bowermans and Blounts were in sympathy with the Royal cause [in the American Revolutionary War] but on account of their religious faith, they took no part in the war” (p. 129). This seems to contradict Vincent’s written account, which speaks of his father, Thomas Bowerman being “attached to the King’s party” (“A Short History of the Life of Thomas Bowerman as related by his son Vincent,” n. d., p. 36). Thirdly, Levi Vincent used his father Vincent’s material in his own “Posterity,” and does not seem to be aware of the Falmouth connection until later. Fourthly, Vincent Bowerman’s children were not included in PLBQ, although other third and fourth generation descendants of Ichabod Bowerman were included. Thus, Levi Vincent’s “Posterity” must not have been a major resource for PLBQ.

Yet there are some notable differences between David Bowerman’s “Records” and PLBQ. For example, David does not delineate the history of Jane Richmond’s family at all, although this is part of PLBQ, and he says nothing about the Bowerman’s Loyalist leanings. Finally, David and Levi Vincent both have the correct birth order of Ichabod’s children. PLBQ does not.

¹⁴ Some of the most important additions to the Ichabod-Thomas III connection will be Jane Clubb’s discovery of Thomas Bowerman III’s marriage to Jane Clifton, and her discovery that Thomas Bowerman III’s wife, Jane Clifton, had an uncle on her Burgess side named Ichabod. The discovery of Levi Vincent’s “Posterity” which gives Ichabod’s age at death as 70, and Ichabod Bowerman’s 1790 probated will in Dutchess County help establish his birth date as ca. 1721.

A. C. Bowerman, and How David Bowerman's Dots Become Solid Lines

In 1916 Albert C. Bowerman wrote his “‘Bowerman’ Family, of Ont. Canada (1633-1916 inclusive) Being the Descendants of Ichabod Bowerman and Lydia Mott.”¹⁵ It begins:

“According to the earliest New England records the ancestor of the Bowerman family was one Thomas Bowerman in the Mass. Colony who appeared in Plymouth Mass. in the year 1633; and in Barnstable, Cape Codd in 1643 where soon after, he married Hannah Annable . . .”

On page 4 A. C. Bowerman lists the children for Thomas Bowerman III and Jane as:

Ichabod . . . born in Mass. 1720-21
Judah
David . . . about 1725-see page . . .and note.
Silas
Joseph
Sarah
Jane
Eliza
Peace
Deborah

A. C. Bowerman continues with the family of Ichabod on page 5, where he writes:

Ichabod Bowerman, (III Thos.) (II Thos.) (I Thos.)

The record of Ichabod, prior to his second marriage is limited to his own testimony, as repeated by his children and corroborated by the records of Stonington Mo. Mtg. (Conn). These records, since destroyed by fire, attested the double marriage of Ichabod and his daughter Jane, the former to Jane Richmond, and the latter to Jane's brother Sylvester Richmond. Jane and Sylvester were children of Cyrus Richmond. (q.v.). Ichabod Bowerman mar. first Lydia Mott in Mass. where they lived and reared a family of six children, as foll. viz. . . .

. . . .

As Ichabod was born in 1720-21 and his daughter Jane born about 1745, it is probable that Ichabod was first married about 1744, at the probable age of about 23. His first wife Lydia Mott died soon after the birth of Sarah; and in 1758 he married Jane dau. of Cyrus Richmond, soon

¹⁵ Albert C. was a descendant of Gideon Bowerman, son of Stephen Bowerman, who was the son of Ichabod (PLBQ, p. 134).

after removing to Dutchess County NY where he died in 1791 aet. 70 years. . . .

(IV). Ichabod Bowerman left the statement that he descended from one of a family of four brothers of English origin; that he was born in Mass. 1720-21.

mar. (1), Lydia Mott and (2) Jane Richmond of Stonington Conn. in 1758; soon after removing with his first family to "Great Nine Partners" in Dutchess Co. N.Y.

This tradition of the four brothers was confirmed by an octogenarian named Stephen Bowerman who resided in Ohio. Although an entire stranger to the Canadian branch of the family, Stephen repeated in 1845, the same tradition of the family lineage which was current among the descendants of Ichabod. But for a further confirmation for this tradition we have only to refer to the family of (II) Thos. and Mary, having besides two daughters the four brothers Samuel-Thomas-Stephen-Benjamin. . . .

On page 7 A. C. Bowerman gives his argument for connecting Ichabod to the family of Thomas Bowerman III:

Note referring to page (4) the family of (III) Thomas and Jane, is seen to consist of five sons and five daughters; the first Ichabod, and the third David, the latter being born presumably about 1725. That this David brother of Ichabod is the David mentioned in Freeman's Hist. of Cape Cod is inferred from the following

"In 1834, April 11th. Mr. Jeremiah Bowman died. He was descended from Thomas Bowman (sometimes written Bourman-Burman-and Bowerman-) who was early in Barnstable; and whose posterity were in Falmouth where David was born who married first Ruth Dillingham daughter of Jeremiah Dillingham; and second, Hannah Wing daughter of Zaccheus Wing and had--(issue)

(V) Jeremiah--

David . . . (mar. Sarah Allen)

Ruth . . . (" Benjamin Swift)

Abner . . .

Asa . . . (Born 1786)

The mother died 12th. Feb. 1816" (Freeman's Hist. Cape Cod).

Now as Asa was born in 1786, Jeremiah was probably married about 1778; and was born about 1753. He died in 1834 probably aged 81 years, quite within the limits of the family longevity.

Jeremiah's father David probably married (2nd) about 1752, and allowing 27 years for his age at his 2nd. marriage, he would have been

born in 1724 which is also the probable date of birth of David the brother of Ichabod the ancestor of the Canadian branch of the Bowerman Family.

From these data it is presumable that Ichabod was born at Falmouth Mass.

Some observations on A. C. Bowerman's "Family" are in order: 1) I suspect A.C. Bowerman has access to David Bowerman's "Notes" in some form, since his "Bowerman' Family" begins with a near quote of David Bowerman's "Notes." 2) A. C. Bowerman adds significantly to the details of Ichabod's life in Dutchess County, NY, drawing from early Quaker records there, and adds much to the collateral Annable line. 3) On a number of occasions Albert corrects misspellings in David's "Notes." On page 2, for example, David writes "Foreman's History of Cape Cod," which Albert corrects to "Freeman's" ("Family," p. 7). Elsewhere, Albert gives the correct spelling of "Bailie's Historical Memoirs of the Colony of New Plymouth" which David misspells as "Baylis" ("Notes," p. 1; cf. "Family," p. 1). 4) Albert mentions all of David's bibliographic resources but has more sources than David's "Notes," which suggests that he has *added* to David's work. 5) Albert gives approximate dates for the births of Thomas II and Mary Harper's children, which David leaves blank, and Albert does the same for Ichabod and Lydia's children. 6) David writes of Thomas II, "Thomas (1648) is the only member of the family, so far as we know, who has left issue" ("Notes," p. 2), whereas Albert says "Thomas Bowerman born 1648 is the only member of the family of the ancestor Thomas *whose lineage has been traced*" ("Family," p. 3; my emphasis). 7) Albert names Ichabod's place of birth as "probably Falmouth" and his place of marriage to Lydia Mott as "Massachusetts where he raised six children." David Bowerman does not do either, although it would be the logical assumption to draw from his account. Finally, Albert adds new genealogical resources to David's list, but does not mention David Bowerman's "Notes" anywhere.

The End of a Theory: Or, How Ichabod Bowerman Gets a Lineage and Birthday

Neither Jane Clubb¹⁶ nor Merton Yarwood Williams seem familiar with A. C. Bowerman's 1916 "Family," for it does not appear to be mentioned in any of their correspondence, nor is a copy of A. C. Bowerman's work in the Merton Yarwood Archives at the University of British Columbia. Thus, Jane Clubb also apparently bases her "The Bowerman Family" largely on the work of David B. Bowerman.¹⁷ In a letter to

¹⁶ Jane Clubb was the daughter Bennett Higgins Bowerman, who was the son of Cornelius, the son of Jonathan, son of Ichabod (PLBQ, p. 132; "This is my line- Jane Ann Bowerman," Merton W. Williams Archives, University of British Columbia)

¹⁷ Since both Jane Clubb and A. C. Bowerman are named in PLBQ (pp. 130, 134, 136), it is highly likely that they, too, are responsible for some of the genealogical data in the volume. Since A. C. Bowerman is a descendant of Ichabod's son, Stephen, it is likely that he submitted the data on that family. Jane Clubb is a descendant of Jonathan Bowerman, so it is likely that she submitted data on his family. David B. Bowerman is a descendant of Judah, so it is likely that he submitted his data on that family. The only other son of Ichabod with significant genealogical data in PLBQ is Israel's son, Judah (p. 135). It is logical to assume a member of that family—as of yet unidentified—submitted the genealogical data on that family.

Mr. Cyril E. Bowerman dated 18 July 1926, she copies her “own” research. It begins on page 30 of the letter:

“According to the earliest authentic New England records the ancestor of the Bowerman family in America was one Thomas Bowerman, who appeared in Plymouth (Mass.) in the year 1633 and in Barnstable (Cape Cod) 1643, where he married Hannah Annable. . . .”

On page 33-34 Jane writes:

Whether David Bowman, who married Ruth Dillingham, was a brother of Ichabod Bowerman (who married first Lydia Mott and second Jane Richmond) is not positively settled but it is considered probable from the following calculation.

Thomas Bowerman and Mary Harper were married 9th April 1678. Their son Thomas was probably born about 1681.

His son Ichabod was born 1720

“ “ Judah “ “ 1723

“ “ David “ “ 1725

We can calculate the probable age of Jeremiah who died in 1834 and show that it is not improbable that David of Falmouth and Ichabod, subsequently of Dutchess Co., NY were of the same family, allowing 25 years as the age of David when he married his second wife Hannah Wing, the date of marriage would be 1750, and the birth of his eldest son Jeremiah about 1752, which would give Jeremiah, in 1834, an age of 82 years, quite within the limits of the known family longevity.

Jeremiah’s youngest son was born in 1786 and he had 6 children—allowing 10 years to have elapsed between date of marriage and last child bring him 24 years of age at time of marriage.

No published records exist of the issue of any except Thomas, the son of Thomas Bowerman and Mary Harper, as already stated, and it seems probable that the above David and Ichabod are of this issue.

Of Ichabod little is now known, except that he was born in Mass. and married (1) Lydia Mott and had children . . .”

Some observations regarding Jane Clubb’s letter are in order: 1) As with Albert C. Bowerman’s “Family,” Jane’s opening sentence suggests that she has David B. Bowerman’s “Notes” in hand and is copying from it. However, she improves the

beginning of David's "Notes" by starting with the English "Bowermans" of 1379,¹⁸ and later on adds a lengthy genealogy of the collateral Richmond line. Thus, David's "Notes" is much shorter and less developed than is her "Bowerman Family." 2) Jane's account is not nearly as speculative or tenuous as what David writes. For example, David guesses at the ages of Thomas III's sons Ichabod, Judah, and David, based on his tentative argument that Jeremiah Bowman, son of David Bowerman, was the nephew of Ichabod Bowerman. For Jane these dates are no longer guesses. She writes, "Was born." 3) In a number of places Jane improves David's grammar. Finally, nowhere does Jane say that she has access to David B. Bowerman's "Notes." But like Albert C. Bowerman, she apparently uses David's work as the starting place for her own research and then builds upon it.

Based on these observations, I think that Merton Yarwood Williams is correct in saying that David B. Bowerman is primarily responsible for the Bowerman family material in PLBQ. That is to say, he was the person most likely responsible for connecting the Canadian Bowermans to Thomas III of Falmouth. Furthermore, from a careful analysis of the three early Bowerman genealogies described above, I believe that David B. Bowerman is responsible for the theory connecting Ichabod Bowerman with Thomas I, II, and III. Of the three versions quoted above, David's is the *most tentative*. A. C. Bowerman and Jane Clubb who write their Bowerman genealogies after him, turn his tentative connections into "fact" or close to it. But why did David feel it necessary to develop a complex theory for connecting Ichabod of Dutchess County, NY to Freeman's Ichabod and Thomas Bowerman III of Falmouth? As I stated earlier, he apparently did this because he had no evidence for the Dutchess County Ichabod Bowerman's birth date or marriage date. Clearly, he is aware that Freeman's History of Cape Cod actually lists an Ichabod as a child of Thomas Bowerman III and Jane. But without any evidence of a birth date or marriage date for Ichabod of Dutchess County, he has nothing to hang his theory on.

If my reading of these three Bowerman genealogies is correct, then David B. Bowerman was responsible for finding the reference to Ichabod Bowerman in Freeman's History, and connecting that Ichabod to Ichabod of Dutchess County, NY. Levi Vincent's "Posterity" had given Ichabod's age at death as 70 years old.¹⁹ But David seems unaware of this evidence. If he had had this piece of evidence, he might not have needed the elaborate argument connecting Jeremiah Bowman to Thomas Bowerman III. Furthermore, if Ichabod Bowerman of Dutchess County, NY is the Ichabod Bowerman who married Lydia Petty 18 October 1744 in Monmouth, New Jersey,²⁰ then we finally have an established date for constructing Ichabod's life. This marriage date, coupled with the birth date of Ichabod's oldest child, Timothy, on 13 April 1745 (who is also named in Ichabod's will), adds more support to the Dutchess County Ichabod's birth date ca. 1721.

Although we have yet to find any primary evidence to determine the birth year of Ichabod Bowerman of Dutchess County, NY, by the mid-1920s, David Bowerman's

¹⁸ This is found on page 11 of David B. Bowerman's "Notes," sort of as an appendix. The "1379" reference will eventually become part of the title of Merton's unpublished Bowerman genealogy.

¹⁹ P. 11.

²⁰ http://bowermangenealogy.net/images/ichabod/petty_mg1.gif.

theory on the parentage of Ichabod Bowerman had become “fact.” And by the time Merton Yarwood Williams writes his “Bowermans from 1379” (1959), he feels no need to defend Ichabod’s birth date or Ichabod’s connection to Thomas III; nor does W. K. Burr in his Historical Sketches of Prince Edward County.²¹ Williams and Burr simply assume that earlier Bowerman researchers were correct.

New Dots, New Lines: Some Thoughts on the Future of Ichabod Bowerman Research

Up to this point, I have left out of my analysis the earliest written accounts of Ichabod Bowerman’s family. These are the accounts left by Vincent Bowerman and his son Levi Vincent Bowerman—Merton Yarwood Williams’ great grandfather and grandfather. Merton’s stories about his ancestor, “Thomas Bowerman, UEL” in “Bowermans from 1379” are largely dependent on Vincent’s 1870 “Some Account of the Events of my Father,” his “A Short History of the Life of Thomas Bowerman as related by his son, Vincent,” and Levi Vincent’s “Posterity,” mentioned earlier. These three handwritten manuscripts lay unnoticed in a trunk in the Williams’ attic for over fifty years until Merton’s brother John P. Williams discovered them in early 1952. He describes his discovery in a letter written to his aunt, Rachel Alma Bowerman Williams and her son Gerald,²² which he copied and sent to his brother Merton May 19, 1952.

When I was in the attic this winter I found Vincent Bowerman’s old box of papers with the brass handle. Grandfather’s model of his dump wagon was in it and a history written by Vincent Bowerman. I have had Eleanor cut stencils of it and have made 100 copies. There seem to be many Bowermans scattered about and I wanted to have enough. I am keeping the stencils as Eleanor got very tired typing them along with her other work. I am sending you a copy and will send more if you would like them. I thought I would get Merton to send me a genealogical write up which I would have stenciled and put in as preface.²³

To the best of my knowledge, Vincent Bowerman’s “Some Account of My Father” is the earliest record of the Canadian Bowerman family’s history. But this document only goes back one generation beyond his father, Thomas—to Ichabod and Jane Bowerman. This is particularly surprising since Vincent Bowerman writes in his 1870 “Some Account” that he visited his cousins in Dutchess Co., NY in 1831, 1834/5 and 1848.²⁴ Yet he does not even give his readers the grandfather’s first wife’s surname!

The first and last times Vincent visited Dutchess County, he spent a few days “where his father was brought up,” and in 1848 he went to Dutchess County with his

²¹Picton, Ontario: Picton Gazette, 1971, p. 79. Burr gives no birth date for Ichabod—nor an age at death, but gives a death date of 1791. No source is listed.

²² Williams, “The Bowerman Family,” p. 47).

²³ Merton Yarwood Williams Collection, University of British Columbia.

²⁴ Merton Y. Williams’s transcription, pp. 5-6.

brother Joseph.²⁵ Should we believe that he heard nothing about the Bowerman family origins on these trips? We can't know for sure, but it is interesting that both Vincent and his son Levi Vincent believed that the ethnic roots the Bowerman family were German,²⁶ not English. And Levi Vincent is of the opinion that Ichabod was one of four emigrant brothers who first settled in the east before moving west to New York. Is there any truth to this? There seems to be fairly strong evidence to suggest that David B. Bowerman's English hypothesis is correct: The Ichabod Bowerman of Freeman's History is the Ichabod who later shows up in Dutchess County, NY. Nevertheless, there is a curious twist in Vincent Bowerman's 1870 "Some Account" that has yet to be explained adequately. A concerted group effort by dedicated Bowerman researchers may be able to solve these riddles. I for one, surely hope so!

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ In the 1871 Canadian Census, nearly half (18) of the Ontario, male, head of household Bowermans considered themselves "German" in ancestry. Slightly over half of them (21) considered themselves "English."

APPENDIX

A List of Bibliographic Resources Gleaned from

David B. Bowerman's "Notes"

American Ancestry XII

Bailie, Francis. *Historical Memoirs of the Colony of New Plymouth*

Barber, John Warner. *The History and Antiquities of New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania* (Hartford, 1844).

Freeman, Frederick. *The History of Cape Cod: Annals of thirteen towns of Barnstable County*. Two Volumes. (Boston: W. H. Piper, 1862, 1869). Pp. 2:151 n. 2; 2:484 n. 2.

New England History and Genealogical Register XXXI 281-282

New York Gazeteer 1813

Otis, C. F. *Genealogical Notes of Barnstable Families, Being a reprint of the Amos Otis Papers Originally Published in the Barnstable Patriot*. 2 Vols, (Barnstable: Patriot Press, 1888).

Pope, Charles Henry, *The Pioneers of Massachusetts. A Descriptive List Drawn from Records of the Colonies, Towns and Churches, and Other Contemporaneous Documents* (1900).

Records of New Plymouth

Savage, James. *Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England*. 4 Volumes
Governor Winthrop's History of New England

Spooner Genealogy 1-60, 367

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