

## **Christopher Bidlake**

A Biographical Sketch By His Sixth Great-Grandson, Russell E. Bidlack

Christopher Bidlake (1661-1740), the progenitor of the Bidlake / Bidlack family in America, was baptized in Dartington, County of Devon England on May 7, 1661. The parish register of the church identifies him as the son of James and Winnifred Bidlack. The name has been spelled many different ways during the 400 years preceding Christopher's birth (Bydelacke, Bydlayke, Byddelake, Bidlocke, Bygkelooke, Budlak, Bydkelake, Bedlacke, Bidlake, etc.) but it was pronounced more nearly as we would pronounce "Biclack" today than as we would pronounce "Bidlake". The spelling was about to become standardized as Bidlake, however, at the time of Christopher's birth, and it is an interesting coincidence that the last time the spelling "Bidlack" was to appear in the Dartington Parish register was in the recording of Christopher's baptism. We know from his signature on deeds many years later that Christopher spelled his own name "Christopher Bidlake", and we shall use that spelling throughout this sketch. Christopher's only son, Benjamin, also consistently used the Bidlake spelling, although when others wrote it they tended to spell it as they heard it pronounced - Bidlack, Bedlack, or Bedlock. In the third generation, some members of the family began using the Bidlack spelling, Benjamin's sons James and John wrote their names with the new spelling while retaining the original pronunciation, while Benjamin's son Benjamin Jr. carefully retained the Bidlake spelling. The descendants of Benjamin Bidlake, Jr., likewise use the Bidlake spelling and pronounce their name as it is spelled. The name is consistently spelled Bidlake in England today.

We may assume that Christopher's birth occurred only a day or two before his baptism - parents in those days felt compelled to have their children baptized quickly.

Christopher's parents, James Bidlake and Winnifred Hed, had been married at Dartington just a year earlier, in May 1660. The exact day of the month cannot be deciphered in the parish register, but the record of the "Banns of Marriage" at Dartington Church reveal that, according to custom, the intended marriage "of James Bidlake of this parish. and Winnefret Hed of Rattery" was announced to the congregation at Dartington on May 13 and May 27, 1660.

Less than two years following Christopher's birth, James and Winnifred (Hed) Bidlake had a second son, James, Jr., who was baptized on January 4, 1663.

James Bidlake, father of Christopher, had been baptized at Dartington on May 17, 1619 (his name was recorded in the register as James Bidlacke) and was thus 42 years old when his son Christopher was born. He had been married previously, however, probably in another parish, to a woman named Mary who had died four years earlier - the Dartington register records her burial on August 17, 1656 (her name was recorded as "Mary wife of James Bidlake"). Winnifred Hed, second wife of James Bidlake, was of Rattery Parish, which borders Dartington Parish. The parents of James Bidlake, according to the Dartington Parish register, were John and Ede (or Yede)(Youlland) Bidlake; they had been married in the same parish on February 11, 1617. This had been a second marriage for John Bidlake; his first wife, Charity Counter, whom he had married probably in 1601, had died in Dartington in either 1614 or 1615 - this page of the register is so faded that the exact date cannot be deciphered. By his first wife, Charity (Counter) Bidlake, John Bidlake had had three sons: Christopher, baptized May 7, 1605, died in 1671; John Jr., baptized November 1, 1607, died in 1657; and George, baptized December 25, 1613. John and Charity also had a daughter, Joan Bidlake, baptized March 10, 1602. It is interesting that Christopher, son of James and Winnifred Bidlake, was baptized on May 7, 1661, just 56 years after his uncle Christopher Bidlake had been baptized in the same parish on May 7, 1605. They were probably born on the same day and Christopher Bidlake, subject of this sketch, was doubtless named for his uncle.

Christopher Bidlake was only seven years old when his father died late in November 1667. James Bidlake was buried in the Dartington Churchyard on November 26, 1667. Less than four years later, Christopher's mother, Willifred (Hed) Bidlake died -the entry for her burial is dated August 27, 1671, and reads, Winifrede Bidlake widow, of Allerton". Allerton was an estate within Dartington Parish about a mile from Rattery which had been her home when she had married James Bidlake in 1660.

No record has been found to reveal where Christopher Bidlake was reared following his mother's death. The only record that has been discovered in Dartington which may refer to him reads as follows: "10 Men. 1683/9 Not to grant license of marriage to Sara Coming of Broadhempston, widow to marry Henry Mann of same or any other person without first calling Christopher Bidlake of same, Clothier who claims a contract of marriage with her".

Broadhempston is a village considerably larger than Dartington located about two miles north. The records of the parish of Broadhempston have been searched, but no further reference to Christopher Bidlake has been found. The record of the marriage of Henry Mann to Sarah Comins did take place, however, in April 1689. A marriage record found at Broadhempston probably relates to Christopher's brother, James Bidlake, Jr.; this reads: "James Bedlake & Agniss Stephens married 15 December 1687".

While we are confident that further records pertaining to Christopher Bidlake will eventually be found in Devon, we next find him in America in the town of Ipswich, Massachusetts in 1692. The earliest reference yet found in Ipswich pertaining to Christopher is that of the death of his wife, Anna Bidlake, on December 13 1692. At this writing (1978) there has been no opportunity to search the Ipswich town records that exist in manuscript form. When that opportunity presents itself, we are confident that more will be learned. At this point we can say only that Christopher Bidlake appears to have come from England, probably sailing from Plymouth to Ipswich sometime before-December 1692. He was probably accompanied by his wife, Anna. Whether he had children by this wife Anna, is not known.

Sometime in 1693, Christopher Bidlake was married a second time to Sarah, widow of Nathaniel Hovey of Ipswich. She was a daughter of John and Elizabeth (Emerson) Fuller. We do not have a record of Sarah's date of birth but when she died in Windham, Connecticut, on November 25, 1739, her age was given in the town record as 74 - if correct, this would mean that she was born in 1665 and was four years younger than Christopher. Sarah had been married to Nathaniel Hovey in November 1679 and by him she had had five children: Sarah, Elizabeth, Abigail, Margaret, and Nathaniel. The latter (born June 29, 1691) was less than a year old when his father, Nathaniel Hovey, Sr.,

died in Ipswich on March 24, 1692. Thus, when Christopher Bidlake married the widow, Sarah (Fuller) Hovey, in 1693, he acquired five step-children ranging in age from 13 to one year.

On August 15, 1694, according to the published vital records of Ipswich, a daughter was born to Christopher and Sarah whom they named Mary. No other children are mentioned in this printed volume of Ipswich vital records, although we know from subsequent records that Christopher had a son named Benjamin and a daughter named Bethia. (There may have been another daughter named Bathsheba, although it is probable that Bethia and Bathsheba were the same person.) There is also a reference in the church records of Canada Parish in Windham, Connecticut, where Christopher lived after 1715, to "Elese Bidlock" in 1734. This may be an abbreviation for Elizabeth and it is possible that she also was a daughter of Christopher Bidlake. Whether Benjamin, Bethia (and possibly Elizabeth) were children of the first or second marriage cannot be proven at this time, although, based on Benjamin's and Bethia's ages at the time of their marriages, it would appear that their mother was Sarah rather than Anna.

An Ipswich historian named Abraham Hammatt, writing in 1854 (The Hammatt Papers, No. 1, "The Early Inhabitants of Ipswich, Mass., 1633-1700") stated (page 30): "BIDLAKE, Christopher, and Sarah had a daughter born Aug. 15, 1694, named Mary. Had a seat assigned to him in the meeting house, 1700, when his name is spelled Bedlock".

A record found during a limited search of a microfilm in 1971 of a portion of the Ipswich town records revealed that on September 7, 1710, Christopher Bidlake held a seat in the meeting house. There were thirteen "Long Seats" to which a committee assigned individuals on the basis of age and property, as well as their station in the community. Christopher was assigned to the 12th "Long Seat" along with John Dyar, William Jones, Richard Roberts (or Roberds), William Stockwell, and John Lambert. His name was written "Christopher Bedlock", which probably was very similar to how his name was then pronounced in Ipswich.

Like other New England "towns", which in the western states in later years would have been called "townships", Ipswich extended much beyond the village itself. Communities grow up within the town which eventually became separate towns, with their own church and meeting house. It was in one such community, called "The Hamlet", that Christopher Bidlake resided when a petition was prepared in 1712 which bears his name. Perhaps he lived in The Hamlet from the time of his arrival in America. (Since 1793). The Hamlet has been a separate, incorporated town called Hamilton ) The petition, which Christopher signed with 65 other men on May 1 1712, claimed that some 40 families then lived in The Hamlet and because of their distance from the meeting house in the village of Ipswich, they were forced to worship on many Sundays with the congregation in Wenham, which was nearer than Ipswich. It was the "request of these petitioners that their community be set aside as a new precinct with the privilege of building its own church. The petition was granted, a church was built, and the Rev. Samuel Wigglesworth was chosen as The Hamlet's first pastor.

The present writer has not seen the original petition signed by Christopher Bidlake in 1712 (it may exist only in recorded form), but on the occasion of its being printed many years ago his name was copied as "Christopher Bedlock" - the same spelling of the surname as noted in the 1710 record. In the summer of 1971, the present writer and his wife visited Ipswich and Hamilton (formerly The Hamlet) and called upon a very old lady, a Mrs. George H. Sprague, whose husband had once attended the University of Michigan and had written a brief history of the Hamilton Church. We asked if she had ever heard the name Bidlack (Bidlake, Bedlock, etc.) She said that when she had been a small child, her grand-fattier, whose name was Adams, had owned a farm "along Cutler Road" and that a gate opening on this farm was always referred to as "Bedlock's Gate" (she was not sure of the spelling). Mrs. Sprague said that from that gate there stretched what appeared to be an old graveled path along which there had been several "cellar holes", i.e., spots where houses had once stood. She said that it had always been her theory that this had once been a road between Wenham and Ipswich ("it crossed the river at a spot that could easily be forded") . She assumed that the reason the

gate where the remains of this old road entered her grandfather's farm was called "Bedlock's gate" was because the land had once belonged to someone of that name.

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In 1971 the farm owned by Mrs. Sprague's grandfather was part of an estate called the Appleton Farms of about 1,000 acres. Route A1 passes beside it between Ipswich and Hamilton. Appleton Farms was, in 1971, devoted largely to riding clubs. Mrs. Sprague pointed out that Cutler Road runs parallel to A1, on the opposite side of the Appleton Farms and that we would find a gate with the name on it, but that it is not quite where it was when she was a child. We found that around the estate there were a number of white wooden gates opening onto roads or paths, each of which had a name, apparently in keeping with tradition. One was called "Bedlox Gate", obviously an alternative spelling of "Bedlock's". This must surely be near land on which Christopher Bidlake once lived.

A person doing research on the Adams family of Ipswich has sent the present writer a copy of the will of a Thomas Adams of Ipswich dated March 19, 1750; in this there is a reference to "a tract of Land called Bedlaks". It is hoped that, with further research in the Ipswich town records, more will be learned about the property once owned by Christopher Bidlake.

Christopher Bidlake moved with his family from Ipswich, Massachusetts, to Windham, Connecticut, sometime between May 1, 1712, when he signed the petition regarding The Hamlet (mentioned earlier) and February 26, 1715, when he registered his "ear-mark", i.e., the mark by which he identified his livestock in Windham. A small, coverless booklet is preserved in the county courthouse at Willimantic in which earmarks for Windham residents were recorded until 1725. The clerk apparently divided the pages in the booklet more or less alphabetically as entries were made. On page two appears the following: "Christopher Bedlake mark is a crop on the left Ear & two slits across the under side of the Right Ear February 25 1714/5". Below this, in very small script, written many years later, appears: "Icabod Dewing has taken the above mark 1747".

According to Royal R. Hinman's Catalogue of the Names of the Early Puritan Settlers of the Colony of Connecticut published in 1852 (pp. 208-209) , "Christopher Bidlake purchased land in Windham before 1700". A search of the land records in Windham County by the present writer in 1971 failed to reveal Christopher Bidlake's name before 1715. William L. Weaver, in his History of Ancient Windham, Ct., published in 1864 stated (pp. 99-102) that he had been unable to confirm Hinman's statement, adding that perhaps Christopher Bidlake "inherited the land from some of the earlier proprietors who were non-residents".

The part of Windham County, Connecticut, in which Christopher Bidlake settled is located about 75 miles (as the crow flies) south-west of Ipswich, although to travel from Ipswich to their destination probably involved a much longer journey for the Bidlake family than the distance would seem to suggest today. The first tract of land purchased by Christopher was located in what was known as Joshua's Tract, a bequest from Joshua, third son of the Indian Chief Uncas, to sixteen gentlemen belonging to the town of Norwich, Connecticut, and neighboring towns. These gentlemen, none of whom ever settled on the tract which was "eight miles broad", became the legal owners in 1682. Laid out in 1685 in 48 shares, each comprising 1,000 acres plus a "home-lot" in one of three sites proposed as future villages, Joshua's Tract comprised the territory now included in the towns (or townships) of Windham, Chaplin, Hampton, and Scotland. The first settler, John Gates, arrived in 1688.

On March 7, 1715, Christopher Bidlake (the name is written Bedlake) purchased a tract of 22 1/2 acres from Benjamin Millard (Windham Deed Book E, p. 46). This tract was a "home-lot" and was located in what was known as the "Horseshoe" on the Nachauge River within what is now the town of Willimantic. It was called "the Crotch of the Nachaug River" in the deed and had been the home-lots for seven of the 1,000-acre tracts. (These home-lots had originally been laid out in the valley of the Willimantic River slightly to the west of the "Crotch of the Nachaug", but in 1694, before any of these lots had been "taken up", the proprietors had arranged to exchange them for allotments in the "Horse-shoe". Seven lots were then laid out,

including one for a future minister and another for the church itself. It was then (1694) that Benjamin Millard of Bear Hill, Norwich, Connecticut, purchased a thousand-acre tract and a home-lot from one of the original proprietors, Thomas Leffingwell. A tiny settlement on these home-lots then grew up in the Crotch of the Nachauge which came to be called "The Centre" because it was between the other two groups of home-lots in Joshua's Tract, one of which was called the "Hither-place" (often called the "South-end" and now Windham Center) and the "Ponde-place" (later called the "North-end" and now Mansfield Center) Both the "Hither-place" and the "Ponde-place" which were four miles apart, with the Nachauge River flowing between them had settlers before "The Centre", and there was a long controversy regarding where (in which of the three settlements) the meeting-house and a home for a minister should be built. For a while, because of the location of "The Center" between the two larger settlements, it appeared that it might become truly the principal settlement. The minister's house was built there in 1696 and it was assumed that the meeting-house would be built there also. However, the settlers at the "Hither-place" objected strongly and finally succeeded in getting the meeting-house built at their settlement (completed in 1703) which thus became Windham Green, now called Windham Center. By the time that Christopher Bidlake purchased his 22 1/2 acre lot in the Crotch in 1715, there was no expectation the "The Centre" would become a major village.

While Christopher Bidlake appears not to have owned land in Windham before 1715, there is some reason to believe that he may have come with his family two years earlier. On December 16, 1713, Mary Bidlake, daughter of Christopher and Sarah, was married in Windham to Ebenezer Gennings. She was 19 years old and it seems unlikely that she would have come to Windham from Ipswich without her parents. Ebenezer Gennings, according to his tombstone in Windham Center, was the first male child born in Windham - on February 18, 1691/2. His father, Jonathan Gennings, who lived in Norwich, Connecticut, as early as 1677, is believed to have been the first settler in the town of Windham. It would seem that Mary Bidlake would not, therefore, have known her future husband until she moved to Windham. On this basis,



we may speculate that the Bidlake family moved from Ipswich to the town of Windham in 1713.

There are two entries in the Suffield, Connecticut town records that surely pertain to the family of Christopher Bidlake. Suffield is located in Hartford County, about 50 miles north-west of Windham Center. On December 4, 1715, William King and Bathsheba Bidlake published their intentions to marry in Suffield. On December 14 1715, the banns were "forbidden by the father of Bathsheba" (Suffield Vital Records, Vol. 1, p. 161). On June 27, 1717. Bethia Bidlake and William King were married in Suffield (Vol. 1, Page 161) Unfortunately, the "father of Bahsheba" was not named in the 1715 record, but there can be little doubt that he was Christopher."Bathsheba" and "Bethia" were probably the same person (Bethia may have been a nickname for Bathsheba). William King was born September 29, 1695, at Suffield (Vol. NB1, p. 41 so he would have been 20 years old in 1715. Bathsheba (or Bethia) was doubt less younger, and we can speculate that Christopher considered her to be too young, to marry in 1715. A possible explanation of why Bathsheba (or Bethia) was in Suffield may lie in the fact that her half-sister, Sarah Hovey (born September 19, 1680) had married Jonathan Remington of Rowley. Massachusetts, in 1701 and had moved with her husband to Suffield, Connecticut. Perhaps Bathsheba (or Bethia) Bidlake had gone to visit her half-sister in Suffield in 1715 and there met William King. William King's father was also named William, as was his grandfather. He died at Suffield on January 8 1774 His wife Bethia, died May 21, 1768.

A reason for Christopher Bidlake's moving to Windham may he found in the that his step-son, Nathaniel Hovey, moved from Ipswich to Windham in 1711 when he was 20 years old (he was born June 29, 1691). On November 25, 1712, Nathaniel Hovey was married in Windham to Abigail Gennings, sister of Ebenezer Gennings who would subsequently marry Mary Bidlake.

According to Ellen D. Larned's History of Windham County, Connecticut , published in 1874 (Vol. 1, p.94), Nathaniel Hovey was one of the first settlers in the northeast section of the town of Windham which was known originally as Canada Parish and now as the township of Hampton. (It was named for

David Canada of Salem, Massachusetts, who built the first house there.) Canada Parish was opened for settlement in 1712, and Nathaniel Hovey settled there in 1713. The village which grew up there came to be called Windham Village (as opposed to Windham Center) and Nathaniel Hovey, while still in his twenties, became a leading citizen. (His grandfather, Daniel Hovey of Ipswich, had left him a legacy which provided him with his initial capital.)

Earlier mention was made of the purchase by Christopher Bidlake of a home-lot of 22 1/2 acres from Benjamin Millard on March 7, 1715. The tract is described in the deed as follows: "...my thirteenth twenty acre lot lying in the Crotch of the river in sd Windham: abutting northerly on Mansfield line sixty rod Easterly on Comons sixty rod Westerly on Comons or undivided land sixty rods southerly on John Fitches land sixty rod this lot contains twenty two acres & half be it more or less..." Christopher Bidlake paid "foure pounds five shillings current money of New England". John Fitch, who was town clerk and an extensive land owner, along with Ebenezer Gennings, Christopher's son-in-law, served as witnesses to the deed.

Less than a year after purchasing his home-lot in the Crotch of the River, Christopher Bidlake sold it to Nathaniel Skiff on January 21, 1716. He received six pounds whereas a year earlier he had paid Benjamin Millard four pounds, five shillings. As copied in the deed book in Windham County (Book E, p. 120), Christopher signed his name as "Christopher Bedlake". Thomas Huntington, who was a justice of the peace, and his son, Thomas Huntington, Jr., signed as witnesses. Deacon Nathaniel Skiff lived in the town of Mansfield, just over the line from Windham.

Less than a week after selling his home-lot in the Crotch of the River, Christopher Bidlake purchased a tract of 100 acres on January 27, 1716, for 20 pounds of current money. Again, he made his purchase from Benjamin Millard (Hook 11, p. 116). The tract is described in the deed as "being In the northeasterly part of sd. Windham township and is the third lot in the second tear". It was bordered by the highway on the west, on the north by the hundred-acre lot of Joseph Dingly, on the east by the hundred-acre lot of

Daniel Edwards, and on the south by the hundred-acre lot of Benjamin Chaplin. John Fitch, the town clerk, and Nathaniel Rebard witnessed the deed.

The "northeasterly part" of Windham Township was, of course, Canada Parish, now Hampton Township, where Christopher's stepson, Nathaniel Hovey, was already living. Other old friends from Ipswich may also have helped persuade Christopher and Sarah to move from the Crotch of the River to Canada Parish. Larned states (Vol. 1, p. 95): "A few sons of old Windham families like Ebenezer Abbe and Stephen Howard joined in this settlement, but the greater part of the settlers were newcomers from Massachusetts. This circumstance, and their great distance from the place of worship, led these settlers to seek for religious services in their own neighborhood as soon as practicable, and, in 1715, they petitioned the town of Windham for liberty to form a separate religious society." The petition was granted, but it was not until 1722 that they secured a minister, Mr. William Billings. In May 1722, in requesting an abatement of taxes for two years in order to purchase land for Mr. Billings, the settlers stated that they were "but thirty-five little families". (Larned, Vol. 1, p. 98) The meeting-house was completed by June 5, 1723, when Mr. Billings was ordained pastor. The church covenant was signed that day by fifteen members of the church in addition to the Rev. Mr. Billings - the last signature is that of "Benjamin Bidlock", Christopher's only son. Apparently Christopher Bidlake did not become a member of the church - we do not know why.

Daniel Edwards was mentioned in the deed of 1716 as owning a 100-acre tract adjoining that of Christopher Bidlake. On January 31, 1716, Christopher purchased from Daniel Edwards for four pounds a 10-acre tract in the Crotch of the River. (Book E, p. 117) John Abbe and Caleb Conant were the witnesses. In this deed, Edwards is identified as "late of Windham...but now a resident of Willimantic River". On October 30, 1718, Christopher Bidlake and Daniel Edwards jointly sold what appears from the description to be the same 10-acre tract in the Crotch to Thomas Hartshorn for four pounds and 15 shillings. Edwards was now a resident of Coventry, the town west of Mansfield. How Christopher Bidlake and Daniel Edwards came to own this tract jointly in 1718 whereas Christopher had purchased it from Edwards in 1715 is not known. Hartshorn was the first white settler in Willimantic and he had built a

mill there in 1706. This deed (Book E, p. 372) of 1715 was witnessed by Daniel Badger and John Fitch. Badger was from Suffield; in 1726 he was one of a group to attempt to manufacture iron on the Willimantic River.

Christopher Bidlake's last involvement in the transfer of land was on October 29, 1722, some six years after his purchase in Canada Parish (Hampton). On August 29, 1722, by which time Christopher was 61 years old, he deeded "my house and land that I now live upon" to Benjamin Bidlake "in consideration of the love and affection that I have and do have to my son". (Book F, p. 42) Benjamin Bidlake in turn, two months later, on October 29, 1722, signed an agreement (Book F, p. 42) "for and in consideration of the Love and affection that I have and the duty that I owe to my honoured father and mother Christopher and Sarah Bidlake" by which he granted "unto my sd. Father & mother full power good right and lawful authority to have hold use occupie, Improve, possess, and Enjoy the whole of It or so much of It as they or Either of them shall see meet during their natural lives..." An entry between these two deaths is that of the death of Christopher's only son Benjamin Bidlake Dyed Feby 3 1740-1"

Thus, Christopher Bidlake lived to see the death of his only son, just 20 days before his own death. Whether they may have died from a common cause is not known. Christopher's wife Sarah died fifteen months before Christopher's death. Their daughter, Mary, who had married Ebenezer Gennings in 1713, had died on June 22, 1725. She left four children: Ebenezer Gennings, Jr., born June 14, 1715; Mary Gennings, born November 24, 1719; Bethia Gennings born March 11, 1720-21; and Jonathan Gennings, born June 20, 1721-22. Christopher's daughter, Bethia, who married William King in 1717, was still living when her father died; her death occurred on May 21, 1760.

In 1971 the present writer and his wife attempted to find the graves of Christopher and Sarah Bidlake and that of their son, Benjamin. We were not successful. There are three cemeteries in or near the village of Hampton where they died. One is called the South Cemetery and is located on Highway 97 just before Route 66 crosses it. There are many old stones, but the names

and dates are not always legible. Persons with names associated with the Bidlakes are buried there - Abbe, Durkee, Farnham, etc. A cemetery located about a mile from the church in Hampton which contains a great many graves has a large number of old stones, many of which can no longer be read. It is located on the sides of a very steep hill and is called the North Cemetery. Again, we could not find the name Bidlake or Bidlack. The oldest cemetery of the community is located on a farm owned in 1971 by a man named Vargas who is not anxious for people to visit it, although he mows it now and then. Very few people seem to know of its existence. One must go through high grass and what would be a bog in wet weather to reach it. It is located on a slight rise and probably contains about 40 stones, a third of which can no longer be read. Among the names noted were Farnham, Durkee, Fox, Fuller, Dodge, Sprague, Church, Litchfield, Eaton, and Butts. Deacon John Durkee's stone can still be read - he died in September 1739. He was born in Ipswich in 1664 and was the grandfather of Mehitable Durkee (born February 10, 1730-1) who married in 1749 Capt. James Bidlack, grandson of Christopher. A pewter tankard which John Durkee gave the church at Hampton in 1734 is preserved there. Of these three possible burial sites for the early members of the Bidlake family, that on the Vargas farm seems most probable. It is possible that a further search of the stones might reveal the name.