

Autobiography of William Macy 1786-1867

With preliminary notes by Edmund Robinson.

Thomas Macy
John Tilley
John Macy II
John Macy III
Barachiah Macy
William Macy
Alviah Macy
William Macy
Henderson

William Macy was a direct descendent of Thomas Macy who emigrated from Chilmark, near Salisbury, Wiltshire, England in 1635 and settled at Salsbury, Mass.

He with nine others - Tristram Coffin Sr., Richard Swain, Thomas Barnard, Peter Coffin, Christopher Hussey, Stephen Greenleaf, John Swain and William Pile purchased the Island of Nantucket in 1659 and choosing ten partners or associates, - John Smith, Nathaniel Starbuck, Robert Pike, Thomas Look, Robert Barnard, James Coffin, Tristram Coffin Jr., Thomas Coleman, Edward Starbuck, and Thomas Mayhew, settled on the said island shortly thereafter, being the first white settlers thereon. (See Macy's Genealogy by Sylvanus Macy published in 1868, and "History of Nantucket by Obed Macy and William Macy.")

William Macy (1786) was also a direct descendent, through his mother Lucinda Barnard, of John Howland and Elizabeth Tilley and her father John Tilley who were Mayflower passengers on her first trip, John Howland and Elizabeth Tilley were married after landing.

William Macy died on his farm at Whitelick, Morgan County, Indiana near Moresville, Ind. in 1868. His wife Hannah (Hinshaw) Macy, daughter of William Hinshaw and Margaret (Hunt) Hinshaw died there February 19, 1866.

Their daughter who married Miles Hadley, son of Simon B. Hadley and Sarah (T) Hadley lived with them towards the close of their lives and succeeded to the farm.

His Mayflower descent is briefly indicated as follows:

John Howland, Mayflower passenger, married Elizabeth Tilley who with her father were Mayflower passengers.

Desire Howland, their daughter married John Gorham.

Shubael Gorham, their son, married Puella Hussey.

Deborah Gorham, daughter of Shubael Gorham and Puella (Hussey) Gorham married Beriah Fitch.

Eunice Fitch, their daughter married Benjamin Barnard.

Lucinda Barnard, their daughter married Barachiah Macy.

William Macy, their son married Hannah Hinshaw.

This record has been checked and approved by the Historian of the Descendents of the Mayflower Society, in its more complete form.

The following autobiography, or lines, were written by William Macy (1786) as indicated, and the original manuscript is or was in the possession of his grandson, Alvah M. Hadley, Mooresville, Ind. This copy was made by Edmund Robinson, husband of Maranda (Hadley) a daughter of said William Macy's daughter Mary Ann (Macy) Hadley and her husband Albert Macy, a son of Joshua B. Hadley and his wife Mary (T) Hadley.

Autobiography of William Macy

Morgan County, Ind.
4th Mo. 9th, 1866.

I was born 10th Mo. 4 1786 in North Carolina, Guilford Co. My father's name was Barachiah Macy, and my mother's name was Lucinda Barnard. Their parents John Macy, then a widower and Benjamin Barnard, with his wife, Eunice, and their families, emigrated from Nantucket and settled in Guilford when my parents were quite young. They each had a numerous family of children, that eventually married and settled around them, mostly, altho some of them went to Virginia. My grandfather Macy lived with my father since my first recollection, until his death, which occurred in 1796 when I was just 10 years old. The circumstances made a deep impression on my mind, which never wholly left me. It was the first time I had ever seen death so near home.

Grandmother Macy died comparatively young. She never saw Carolina. Her maiden name was Eunice Coleman, a daughter of Elihu Coleman, a Public Friend. My grandfather Barnard died when I was very young. I can just remember seeing him once or twice. His wife's name was Fitch; they were all Friends, the descendants of Friends, who fled from persecution in England and settled in the Eastern States.

I was brought up in a compact settlement of Friends, a great many of them my uncles and aunts and cousins, until I was 15 years old. When I was 14 years old my father went with his brother-in-law to Tennessee to help him move, and after they got there they bought a farm on Lost Creek, in Jefferson County. It was a comparatively new country, and the next fall my parents determined on sending me out there to raise a crop for them to move to; accordingly I went. I was young and had never been much from home, and when I reflect on it since, it seems like a great risk to send an inexperienced lad of 15, 300 miles across the Alleghany mountains, who did not know a foot of the way nor a single person on the route, to stay there twelve months, and then come back to assist in moving the family out. The worst part of the picture is the danger of such a situation the youth is placed in from surrounding influences, out of reach of his parents, and left to this own impulses. I sometimes shudder when I think of the danger I was exposed to.

I had the good fortune to have the company of my cousin and his wife for the first 200 miles, who lived in Tennessee, and who had gone back to Carolina on a visit, and I did very well while with them, but after I left them I had to travel 100 miles by myself, then I felt alone indeed, everything was new and strange, I had a very poor map of the geography of the country in my head. I took the precaution to get a waybill of the route but nevertheless I got lost two or three times before I got there. Suffice it to say, I landed safe and found all well.

Having never tasted limestone water till after leaving my cousins, the use of it seriously affected my health, and I did not get over it for several months, and now came the trial.

I had pious parents, and I esteemed and loved them as such, and now I was clear beyond their control, and I might take my swing as I pleased, but praised be a merciful God, I was preserved from my gross immoralities. Coming into a strange country, amongst strange people, I had to form entirely new associations and it is remarkable to me that I escaped the contamination of evil examples as well as I did, which I am bound reverently to attribute to the watchful care of the unslumbering care of the Sheperd of Israel.

A circumstance occurred the first summer I lived in Tennessee, which made a deep impression on my mind, and I trust will never be effaced while memory lasts. It was the custom of young men and boys on seventh day afternoon, during the hot weather, to go to the river 1-1/2 miles away to bathe. This is a large and heavy running stream. I went with several others one day for that purpose, and when we got there we saw a number in the water near the shore, and went in, aiming to go to them, not knowing the river had risen, and the water ran so rapid, and the waves ran so high, I became strangled and sank, which those on the other side, seeing, started towards me, some on horses, some in canoes, and some in the water, and one young man, more energetic than the rest succeeded in reaching me as I rose the second time, and coming behind me, took me under the arms and held my head above water, until some others came with a canoe, and got me into it and thus saved my life, for certainly in a few seconds more, I would have sunk to rise no more which I take to be a merciful deliverance, and hope I shall be ever thankful for.

It is remarkable how thoughts will fly over time and space; while under the water, I thought of my parents 300 miles off, and thought what distress it would bring on them particularly my mother, to hear that I had sunk in the river, never to be seen again.

After this memorable deliverance, I got along very well through the summer, raised a good crop, and in the fall prepared to go back. I stood it pretty well until I got ready to go back, and then in anticipation of meeting my parents, and brothers and sisters, I became homesick and impatient, and no one knows my feelings but those who have experienced it.

One of my uncles went back with me and one place in the mountains it was 12 miles from one house to another, and night came on before we got through, as it began to grow dark, we heard a panther about a quarter of a mile ahead of us, and about the same distance from the road, and immediately another answered it from the opposite side, and about a minute later the cry was repeated, and it appeared plain they were coming together, and we pushed on to try and escape them and the cry was repeated and answered every time nearer to us, but we succeeded in passing through before they met, and the people where we stayed told us it was their custom to call together at dark for the purpose of hunting, and woe to the animal that crossed their path when they are thus together, and that if they had met us at the road we were in eminent danger; our escape I consider as another remarkable deliverance, which I have had through a long life.

Nothing further occurred until we reached home and found the family in indifferent health. My youngest brother, some 2 years old had been taken from the

family circle, and now I had but one brother about 5 years younger than me, and three sisters left.

Now we began to prepare for moving, my father being but weakly, a great deal of the hardship fell on me, and from circumstances beyond our control, we never started until New Years day 1802. We had a disagreeable time of it through the mountains, sometimes exceedingly cold and we could seldom get in a house at night, and several times our wagon broke down, and my mother became seriously ill, which added to our distress; we made such slow progress, that we were 30 days coming a distance of 300 miles but we landed at last.

When spring came we had plenty of corn to gather to clear the fields for a new crop, and during the summer my father and uncle brought another tract of land adjoining the one we lived on, and divided their interests, and the part that fell to my father had no improvements on it, except some ten acres in cultivation. My father was no part of a mechanic, except sometimes he made shoes, and by this time I had developed into something like manhood, and turned my attention to mechanics, partly from necessity, such as building houses, chimneys, etc., By the aid of a young man my father hired, we built a double log house, and two stone chimneys, and cleared and fenced ten acres of land. (By the by there were no other kind of buildings seen in those days.)

Having fixed the family in a comfortable way to live, I left them to seek my own fortune, knowing that my parents had nothing to give me altho they continued to furnish me with everyday clothes, and I went and lived with my uncle and remained with him most of the time until I was married, sometimes cropping with him, sometimes hired by the day, sometimes by the job, and once by the year; several times driving teams for him I narrowly escaped with my life. I had the liberty while living with him, whenever I could find a profitable job, to go and do it. In the fall of 1807 I bought a tract of land of 200 acres part down, and gave my notes for \$500.00 on time; it was mostly rich land and about 15 acres in cultivation but no buildings. After doing this I made every arrangement I could to meet my liabilities, money became very scarce and stock was no sale, my main resource was mechanical labor.

In the spring of 1809 I married and I had nothing near redeemed my notes; by this movement I brought additional trouble on myself but she proved a real helpmate; I was gone from home a great deal of the time, and left her to manage at home, which she did effectually.

In the spring of 1810 my dear mother died. She was a tender mother to her children, and they all loved her.

In 1812 I was drafted into Jackson's army, and of course I refused to answer, and was fined, and everything I possessed was executed, and it cost me a good deal of money before I got clear of it, which was a heavy drawback under my circumstances.

In the fall of 1814 I revisited my native country for the last time. Great alterations had occurred among the people during my absence. While I was in Carolina my father married his second wife, which proved a happy union.

In the course of the year 1815 I succeeded in liquidating all my debts and turned my attention to improving my land and built me a good house, etc. Meanwhile my family increased until in the spring of 1820 we had 6 children, all

boys but one, besides one we lost in infancy, and I began seriously to reflect on the propriety of moving my family to a free state, my friends with one consent opposed the measure, but the idea of my children marrying slave-holders (which I observed frequently happened) over-ruled every other consideration and in the fourth month I sold out and moved to the State of Indiana, and settled near the head of the West river in Randolph county.

In the spring of 1821, I went with several others, on an exploring expedition westward through the state of Indiana. It was a primeval wilderness, inhabited by Indians and wild beasts, of which we saw an abundance. Here again we had to form new acquaintances and new associations, and as it nearly always happens, the first settlers are mostly of doubtful character, and so it happened with us.

Here we remained until we had raised a large family of children, our four oldest sons died and left large families, all the rest but the youngest married and left that part of the country, and in 1856 we sold out and moved here. Our youngest daughter married shortly after we came here.

And now to conclude my little story, my dear wife for several of the last years of her life became weakly, and gradually grew worse, until the 19th of second month 1866, she quietly passed away, and we doubt not is entered into rest and peace. She gave good counsel to those around her, and frequently expressed toward the close, that all was peace, and love, and she had nothing to do but to die. I have had to pass through many sore trials in the course of a long life, but this bereavement overwhelms me with grief. We lived together in the utmost love and harmony for 57 years wanting 9 days, and partaking together, through the checkered paths of life, each others joys and sorrows and now in my old age and infirm state of health, I am left alone, but I can say truly I believe I was influenced in my choice by an unseen hand. We lived 57 years together in the utmost love and harmony partaking together each others joys and sorrows, tribulations, privations and losses. Again and again has one or the other been prostrated on a bed of sickness, near unto death and the other was there, to administer aid and comfort, and I am bound to believe that a virtuous wife is a gift of God. But now she is gone to reap the reward of a well spent life, and enjoy the presence of her Saviour forever, and left me disconsolate, and I take pleasure in dedicating these lines to her memory.

Many years ago I was taken down with fever, and thought I must die, and then I saw it would not do to make a partial sacrifice, I must give up all. It was an awful time with me, no human being ever knew, or will ever know what I suffered then. I plead hard for a release but it would not do, I then had a dear wife and a family of children, and the thought of parting with them was bitter, but after giving up all without reserve, things were made easy.

As a contrast to this, I will state that several times I have been brought to the brink of the grave, and had no hope of recovery, yet all was peace within. And here let me observe, it is much the best to become reconciled to God while in health, for divers reasons. One is, sometimes, that mind becomes bewildered, and unable to concentrate the thought on any one subject; another is, when the mind is distressed with fears, it has an unfavorable effect on the body, so that those who have no fear for the result, have decidedly the advantage.

I was followed from infancy up with the entreaties of redeeming love, but I was loath to give up, still holding back something I was loath to part with, but now I can truly say I have no will of life that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh

away, Blessed be the name of the Lord, and I trust I shall soon follow her, and hope to meet her where we shall part no more.

And here I lay down my pen.

(signed) William Macy.

Post Script

The Macy lineup to William Macy is as follows:

First Generation - Thomas Macy, Chilmark England, came to America about 1635, died April 19, 1682 aged 74. His wife Sarah Hopcot died at Nantucket 1706 age 94.

Second Generation - John married Deborah Gardner.

Third Generation - John, first of Macys to join Friends Meeting.
Married Judith Worth, 6 girls and 7 boys.

Fourth Generation - John (8th child) married Euncie Coleman, 8 girls and 6 boys.

Fifth Generation - Barachiah, (9th child) married Lucinda Barnard.
(She was the direct descendant of John Howland and Elizabeth Tilly, two Mayflower passengers.)