

**EARLY SETTLERS OF
NANTUCKET; THEIR ASSOCIATES
AND DESCENDANTS.
[PHILADELPHIA-1896]**

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Early Settlers of Nantucket; Their Associates and Descendants. [Philadelphia-1896] by Lydia S. Hinchman

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LYDIA S. HINCHMAN

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EARLY SETTLERS OF NANTUCKET.

DEEDS OF PURCHASE AND SETTLEMENT OF THE ISLAND.

BELKNAP, in his Biography of Biron,* says, "An Icelander of the name Herioff and his son Biron * made a voyage every year to different countries for the sake of traffic.

"About the beginning of the eleventh century (1001) their ships were separated by a storm. When Biron * arrived in Norway he heard that his father was gone to Greenland, and he resolved to follow him; but another storm drove him to the southwest, where he discovered a flat country, free from rocks, but covered with thick woods, and an island near the coast."

When on his return to Greenland his discoveries became known, Lief, the son of Eric, Earl of Norway, equipped a vessel, and "taking Biron * for his pilot sailed (1002) in search of the new country."

Belknap says, "Biarne's * description of the coast is very accurate and in the island situate to the eastward (between which and the promontory that stretches to the eastward and northward Lief sailed) we recognize Nantucket. The Ancient Northmen found there many

* Bjorne.

shallows." There is little doubt that Nantucket was visited by Englishmen very early in the seventeenth century (1602).

In the biography of Gosnold, Belknap says, "The shoal water and breach which he calls Tucker's Terror corresponds with the shoal and breakers called Pollock's Rip. . . . To avoid this danger it being late in the day he stood so far out to sea as to overshoot the eastern entrance of what is now called the Vineyard Sound.

"The land which he made in the night was a white cliff on the eastern coast of Nantucket now called Sankoty Head.

"The breach which lay off Gilbert's Point I take to be the Bass Rip and the Pollock Rip with the cross riplings which extend from the southeast extremity of that island.

"Over those riplings there is a depth of water from four to seven fathoms, according to a late map of Nantucket, published by Peleg Coffin, Esq., and others." *

It is difficult to imagine any native of Nantucket who would not be interested in facts relating to its history, whether geographical, historical, geological, or genealogical; but the practical interest for us of the present day dates from 1659, when it was finally settled by sturdy men, ancestors to so many in this broad land that a brief detail of the public services of those pioneers cannot fail to be of value to their descendants.

[Tradition assigns two causes for the sudden departure

* American Biography. By Jeremy Belknap, D.D. With Additions and Notes by F. M. Hubbard. Published by Harper & Brothers in 1848.