

Halfyard, Richard

Your research request of December 11, 1980 asks for information regarding "the origins, emigration and careers of Richard and Nicholas Halfyard of Bovey Tracey, Devon. The first indication in our records of a Richard Halfyard of Bovey Tracey was a planter by that name in the Ochre Pit Cove area of Conception Bay in the 1740's. He was literate, employed fisherman, servants and raised some cattle. He traded in fish and occasionally shipped hides. In 1736, he had married Sarah Woolcot (presumably of Bovey Tracey or the West country). They had a son, Richard, the exact date of birth is not known. We don't even know which side of the Atlantic the son was born since it was the nature of the fishery business for some to commute back and forth at that time.

Richard (the son) was well established in his father's business at Ochre Pit Cove by the 1760's, and in 1772 he married Elizabeth Churchill in an Anglican ceremony at St. John's. Our records suggest she was the daughter of Nicholas (not Samuel) Churchill. In any event, he did marry an Elizabeth Churchill. They returned to Ochre Pit Cove and in 1782 had two children, Samuel and Sarah, baptised there. September 2, 1784 another son, Stephen, was born. Richard carried on in the fishery and livestock business in much the same fashion as his father. He occupied a property in Ochre Pit Cove owned by his wife's family consisting of a house, a flake, two gardens and two meadows and in addition, he owned the adjoining property consisting of one stage, two flakes, four houses, three gardens and two meadows. This adjoining property had been given to him by his father in 1761.

We have no record of Richard Sr. or Sarah's death. They may have returned to Bovey Tracey sometime after the 1760's. Richard Jr. and

Elizabeth may have returned to Bovey Tracey toward the end of the 18th century. A merchant firm (Newman's and Co.) was carrying on correspondence with a Richard Halfyard of Bovey Tracey during the 1794-99. There is also mention of a Richard as owner/occupier of land in Bovey Tracey worth 4s.6d. Tax (1798). Their son, Stephen, stayed in Newfoundland and in 1809 he married Mary King of Bradley's Cove. Both were literate.

There were Halfyards in Ochre Pit Cove throughout the 19th century. William W., son of William, was later a St. John's school teacher and subsequently Vice-president of the Fishermen's Protective Union and member of the House of Assembly.

We have no information on Nicholas Halfyard. Nor is there any information on the Churchill family in this period. There is no way to account for the discrepancy in time: we indicate the 18th century, your client suggests the 17th. There were, undoubtedly, Halfyards in and out of the trade earlier than the 1740's. There were also contemporary fishermen - Halfyards - in the trade from such towns as Brixham, Topsham, St. Mary's Church and Lympstone. They may or may not have been relatives - we would have no way of following this through. The 1675 Census for Conception Bay and Trinity (CO 1/35) lists principal planters by name. At New Perlican, Trinity Bay, there was listed a 'William Heyford' and his wife. He was listed as having 18 servants, 4 boats and a stage. Whether 'Heyford' might be either 'Hayward' or 'Halfyard' (both more recognizable Newfoundland names) I leave for you to ponder.

A possible connection of a Halfyard with the early John Guy settlement would be difficult to establish from here. One transcription of a pamphlet by Guy (1612) mentions 16 names - none include a Halfyard.

John D. Rogers (Vol. V, part IV of C.P. Lucas' *Historical Geography of the Colonies*, 1911) suggests that about forty went out and this number dwindled rapidly. The colony may have gained a few local recruits however, Gilliam Cell's *English Enterprize in Newfoundland, 1577-1600* (U. of Toronto Press, 1969), might give bibliographical sources that could lead to lists of original colonists (they are not in the text).