

Two Welshmen Named Thomas Prichard

By Vincent Prichard, 23 November 2018

Sources described here indicate that there were at least two men named Thomas Prichard who lived in northern Wales in the late 1600s, one who emigrated to America and one who didn't. I use the surname "Prichard" here for both, although some sources use the more common "Pritchard" spelling variant. The surname derives from a contraction of the Welsh phrase "ap Richard", meaning "son of Richard."¹ The 1698 will of my 6th great-grandfather Thomas Prichard, available from the City of Philadelphia, Will Book A, 419, #181, shows that he used the "Prichard" spelling of his surname.

Author Marion Balderston, in his 1965 article "Pennsylvania's 1683 Ships And Some of Their Passengers,"² described the arrival in Pennsylvania on about 20 November 1683 of the ship *Morning Star* of Liverpool. One passenger was recorded³ as:

"[20 August] THOMAS PRITCHARD: 1 sack, 1 cask, qty. 6 Winchester bushels oatmeal, 3 flitches bacon. [Duty] paid.¹²¹"

The ship had been loaded in Liverpool on 20 August. The note 121 for that entry states:⁴

"THOMAS PRITCHARD of Nant Lleidiog, **yeoman**, a purchaser of 156¼ acres of the Thomas-Jones lands, **is said in Browning, Welsh Settlement, 136, not to have emigrated**. But a warrant was issued for a city lot for a Thomas Pritchard (Prichard) on 23 9m 1683, and another 2 10m 1684, for which see Pennsylvania Archives, 3rd Series, II, 757, 759. By virtue of the last warrant, a lot was laid out at the northeast corner of Broad and Chestnut Sts., for which see Warrants and Surveys, III, 252. **For an account of this man, a cordwainer by trade**, see PGM, XXIII, 113-14; also N. J. Archives, XXI, 649, 665, 674." [emphasis added]

Writing in 1912 about Pennsylvania lands purchased through the Thomas & Jones Company, Charles H. Browning had noted:⁵

"Rees Jones, and his wife, Hannah, also brought the usual certificate of membership and removal, from the Quarterly Meeting, near Dolgelly, dated 4. 2mo. 1684. ..."

"Before coming over, he purchased, by deed dated 16 July, 1684, the original right of **Thomas ap Richard, or Prichard, of Nant Lleidiog**, to his share 156¼ acres, of the Thomas & Jones tract." [emphasis added]

¹ See, "Welsh naming" http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/history/sites/themes/society/family_03_welshnaming.shtml -- "... Patronymics describes the process of giving a child the father's given, or forename, as a surname. This means that a family's name changes in successive generations. The Welsh patronymic system describes family trees in terms of the male line only and records the family association in the 'ap' or 'ab' prefix ('ap' is a contraction of the Welsh word 'mab', which means son). For example, Rhys ap Dafydd translates as 'Rhys, son of David'. Modern Welsh surnames such as Powell, Price and Prichard are the result of this contraction and a progressive tendency to Anglicise Welsh names: under the patronymic system they would have been ap Hywel, ap Rhys and ap Richard." See also, [An Etymological Dictionary of Family and Christian Names](https://books.google.com/books?id=SYEfAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA220) by William Arthur, 1857, page 220, <https://books.google.com/books?id=SYEfAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA220> -- "PRICHARD. (Welsh.) A contraction of Ap Richard, the son of Richard."

² [The Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine](#) (PGM), Vol 24, No 2 (1965), pp 69-102.

³ *Ibid*, p102.

⁴ *Ibid*.

⁵ [Welsh Settlement of Pennsylvania](#), by Charles H. Browning, Philadelphia (1912), p 132.

Browning continued:⁶

“THOMAS AP RICHARD, or Prichard, a farmer, of Nantlleidiog, bought 156¼ acres of the tract, of which 76¼ acres were laid out in Merion, and balance in Goshen tp. **He did not come over.** By deed, dated 16. 5mo. 1684, he conveyed all his lands to Rees John William, or Rees Jones, of Merion.” **[emphasis added]**

Thomas Allen Glenn wrote in 1911:⁷

"THOMAS AP RICHARD (alias Thomas Prichard), of Nant-lleidiog, par. of Llanfor, co. Mer., yeoman; s. Richard Price of Glanlloidiogin in the par. of Llanfor, husbandman. He had a deed, executed in Wales, 1682, for 156¼ a. ld. in Penna., of which 76½ acres were surveyed to him in Merion. **If Thomas Richard [sic] rmd. to Penna., he did not remain long, and d. in Wales.** He is named as executor in his father's will, provd. at St. Asaph, 1686, but renounced in favour of Edward Nicholas, of Cynlas, a kinsman. In 1684 he sold his Merion lands to Rees John William, who had m. his sister Hannah.” **[emphasis added]**

The “account of this man” mentioned by Balderston, meaning the Thomas Prichard, a cordwainer, who purchased city lots in Philadelphia in 1683 and 1684 appeared in 1963 under the title, “*Philadelphia Business Directory, 1690*”:⁸

“THOMAS PRICHARD, cordwainer, in 1687 was one of ‘ye Inhabitants of ye Caves on the Bank,’ having sold his lot at the Center the previous year to Robert Kent, another cordwainer. Early in 1691 he bought from William Harwood for £30 the small dwelling where Prichard had been living, on the north side of High east of Second Street. He was rated here on an estate assessed at £30 in 1693.”⁸⁷

...
“⁸⁷ *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2nd Series, XIX, 13. In December, 1684, he had surveyed a lot at the Center, at the northeast corner of Broad and Chestnut Streets, which extended north to the ‘back of the Square.’ Warrants and Surveys, III, 252. For the lot bought from William Harwood see Note 64 above; Prichard sold it to Robert Kent, also a cordwainer, in 1686; see Deed Book E-I-5, 203: 2 12m 1685/6, Thomas Prichard to Robert Kent. **Prichard died in 1698, as per Will Book A, 419, #181:1698, incorrectly printed** as the will of *Henry ap Richard* in *PGSP*, III, 18. After the death of his widow Barbara, their eldest son Matthew in 1700 applied to the Philadelphia Meeting for a certificate for himself, brother Benjamin and family to Carolina. *Ibid.*, IV, 263. ...” **[emphasis added]**

Those sources indicate to me that Thomas Prichard, cordwainer, was the man who emigrated to Pennsylvania aboard the ship *Morning Star* of Liverpool in 1683 and whose wife was Barbara. Thomas Prichard, yeoman of Nant Lleidiog in northern Wales, who purchased 156¼ acres of the Thomas-Jones lands in Pennsylvania 1682 did not emigrate and sold those lands in 1684 to Rees Jones.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p 136.

⁷ Glenn, Thomas Allen, *Welsh Founders of Pennsylvania*, Vol. 1, Oxford 1911, p. 206

⁸ *The Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine* (PGM), Vol 23, No 2 (1963), pp 113-14

The only source I've seen indicating the part of Wales from which Thomas Prichard, cordwainer, came consists of notes by Thomas Allen Glenn in 1911, implying that Thomas Prichard came from Denbigh in northern Wales, as some of his children are said to come from there:⁹

“THOMAS AP PRICAHRD, cordwainer; s. Richard --. Rmd. to Philadelphia, Penna., before 1698. D. 1698.

“Wife,--.

“Children (surname Prichard); 1. John; 2. Mathew, of Phila., cordwainer; m. 1699, Sarah Henley; of Phila. ; 3. Benjamin ; 4. Ann ; 5. Jane.

“ANN PRICHARD, of Denbigh Town, or neighbourhood. Kinswoman to John Roberts, who was living in Denbigh, 1710. Rmd. to Penna., abt. 1700. (She was sister to John and Benjamin Prichard).

“BENJAMIN PRICHARD, of Denbigh Town, or neighbourhood, bro. to John, Ann, and Jane Prichard. Rmd. to Penna., abt. 1700.

“JANE PRICHARD, sister to John Benjamin, and Ann Prichard. Rmd. to Penna, abt 1700.

“JOHN PRICHARD, of Denbigh Town, or neighbourhood ; kinsman to John Roberts, who was living in Denbigh, 1710. Rmd. to Penna., abt. 1700.”

The statements that the four named children came to Pennsylvania in about 1700, after the deaths of their parents, seems unlikely but is possible.

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⁹ Glenn, Thomas Allen, Welsh Founders of Pennsylvania, Vol. 1, Oxford 1911, p. 203