

THE GODFREY FAMILY

of ANDOVER.

The career of John (1) Godfrey of Andover, seems to have been a stormy one. He was recorded here in 1648, and was said to be a former resident of Haverhill and Newbury. According to Bailey's "Sketches of Andover", he was a hired man, carpenter, herdsman and Jack of all trades. He was noted for feats of strength, sleight of hand tricks and was a good schemer. In addition, he seems to have been a person unafraid of expressing his convictions, for his name figured more prominently in early Essex Court cases than that of any other man in the county.

In 1649, according to Vol.1;109 Essex Ct. records-- John Godfrey of Andover told lies, and Nathan Parker appeared as a witness.

In 1659 he was in difficulties with persons in Haverhill, who owed him money. They petitioned the Court to arrest him and charged him with witchcraft, declaring that he connived with the devil and that Satan, in the shape of a bear, caused them to suffer personal and property losses and made them ill. This was 43 years before the violent Witchcraft scare rocked Essex County.

The Rev. Mr. Dane aided Godfrey and declared that he doubted the intervention of Satan in John's behalf, and Godfrey was freed of all charges. He however was not through with his accusers, for he turned about and brought suit against them for slander and defamation of character. The wife of Job Tyler was one of those who had accused him.

On July 3, 1670, John Godfrey of Andover, a planter, fixed his X (his mark) to a deed (Ipswich 4:8 ) wherein he granted to Ben Thomas, schoolmaster of Boston, all estates, debts, bonds, money-real and personal property-- this side and beyond the sea, to have and to hold as soon as he died.