

COPY

College Of Arms-London Eng.

Dear MR. Rhodes;

I am writing to let you know that the preliminary searches in your case have come in, but were disappointing inasmuch as they failed to produce evidence of a place called Budgeworth in the County of Salop (Shropshire) or mention a Lady Balgay in about 1800.

It seemed necessary either to elucidate these clues in order-if we are to be successful in tracing back your descent-to get a starting point that the name of Rhodes (with its variations) had occurred in so many of the Counties in England in the 18th century.

The name of Budgeworth (so spelt) was not found in various Gazeteers, Topographical works and-for that matter-to the whole of England.

There is

(He here notes several BaBadgworths etc which are of no importance and the paragraph concludes, "seachers had disclosed that your surname occurred in every one of these Counties")

There was, however, one paragraph, (particular point) on your family charts that was fortunately of interest and that was that Budgeworth was called a TOWN, in Shropshire. (He here follows up with a line of reasoning which led him to that it should be Bridgeworth)

With this in mind I caused a search to be made in a very good manuscript collection we have of marriages in Shropshire in the 18th Century and I was pleased to find that this produced the following entries among a very great number of others:

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1741-Thomas Rodes married | Margaret Harden at St. Leonard's |
| | in Bridgenorth |
| 1741 John Rhodes | " Mary Childs " " |
| 1783 Luke Rhodes | Sarah Billingsley " " |

Thus, we have now, in addition to locating a family of your name living in Bridgenorth at the right time, the Christian name of Thomas, which may, of course, be of some importance.

Although I feel I may well be on the right track, I write to ask you to be kind enough to let me know whether in fact my surmise that the name of the town in England whence your family emigrated was taken from some family document or letter, etc., and was not known merely by word of mouth and later written down, is correct.

Another point I should very much like to get cleared up is that on your family charts, Captain Thomas Rhodes is shown as having married firstly a Miss Mary Wright in 1797 by whom he had four children, Thos. Wright, Sara, Rachel, and Robert, and married secondly a Miss Mary E. Cater, by whom he had issue three children, George Rhodes born 1802, Nathaniel, and Rachel. Miss Carrie Bell Rhodes also states that he (presumably she is speaking of Captain Thos. Rhodes) died ~~in~~ Aged 32 years.

Now apart from the obvious discrepancies shown above, I notice that the date 1775 is shown under Captain Thomas Rhodes.

Can you give me any indication as to whether this is the year he is believed to have been born, or whether it merely refers to the fact that his uncles and aunts came over about 1775.

Thomas is said to have joined his relatives in 1777. Do you know if he was brought over as a child of two years old, or came over by himself as a young man?

The charts do indicate that he married Miss Wright in 1797, so that if he was born in 1775, this would fit in very well with the date of marriage, and of course if he died shortly after his second marriage aged 32, this again brings us to approximately 1775, but then we have the very ordinary statement saying he "joined his relatives etc, etc", and at that time I can hardly think one would speak of a child of about two years in such a casual way.

Is it possible that one of his aunts brought him over as a child? you will also notice that the second

child Rachel has written underneath, 'b.1776'. Could this date refer to one of the aunts?

Your chart is returned herewith so that you can more easily follow this part of my report.

I should also like to know from where the information came that Thomas Rhodes died aged 32 years.

If we know the date he died, or even approximately the date of the marriage of his second wife Miss Gator to Rev. Winborn A. Lawton, this information would help us to arrive at an approximate date of death, and so to his date of birth.

Is it possible that some member of the family would know where he died so that we could possibly obtain full details and perhaps a copy of any gravestone there may be to him.

In the meantime I am of course following up the Bridgenorth family, and shall look forward to hearing from you on the above points in due course.

Yours very truly,

(signed) J. Heaton Armstrong,
Chester Herald.

P.S. I notice in your last letter you say "We have the proper information dating from arrival in America". I should certainly like to have all details you can give me concerning Thomas and his uncles and aunts particularly dates and places of marriages, and ages at death.

(IT seems I was sadly wrong about this, it seems my information is "cross-eyed") (R.C. RHODES)