

Reverend Thomas Larkham of Tavistock, England

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THOMAS LARKHAM was born August 17, 1602 and baptized August 20, 1602 in Lyme Regis, Dorset, England. He died December 20, 1669 in Tavistock, England. He married Patience Wilton, daughter of George and Ann Wilton on Jun 22, 1622¹ in Shobrooke, near Crediton, England. She was born in 1594² in Crediton, Devon, England.

Thomas Larkham and Patience Wilton had the following children:

1. **THOMAS LARKHAM** was baptized 16 March 1622 at Crediton, Devon, England³. He died on Feb 14, 1648⁴ in the East Indies. He married Mary Covert about 1645. She was born about 1623 in London.
2. **JOHN LARKHAM** was baptized Oct 10, 1624 at Sandford, Devon, England⁵. He died Jul 07, 1625.
3. **PATIENCE LARKHAM** was baptized Feb 26, 1625 at Sandford, Devon, England⁶. She married 1) Joseph Miller about 1645, of Rosegarland and Castlestingley, Wexford, Ireland. He died in May 1656 in Wexford, Ireland. She married 2) Mr. Harries, about 1664.⁷
4. **WILLIAM LARKHAM** was baptized June 08, 1628 at Northam, Devon, England^{8, 9}. He died January 25, 1633^{10, 11}.
5. **GEORGE LARKHAM** was born April 20, 1630¹² and baptized May 2, 1630 at Northam, Devon, England¹³. He died Dec 26, 1700. He married Dorothy Fletcher, daughter of Lancelot Fletcher and Mary Waterhouse on Sep 29, 1652 in Tallentire, Cumberland, England¹⁴. She was born on October 30, 1633¹⁵ in Tallentire, Cumberland, England. She died on Aug 12, 1693 in England.
6. **JANE LARKHAM** was baptized February 11, 1631¹⁶ at Northam, Devon, England. She died in August 1671¹⁷ and was buried at Tavistock Parish Church. She married Daniel Condy, son of Edmond Condy on Dec 17, 1652¹⁸ in Tavistock, Devon, England. He was born about 1627 and was of Tavistock, England.
7. **INFANT BOY LARKHAM** was baptized November 10, 1633 at Northam, Devon, England.¹⁹
8. **ANE LARKHAM** was baptized June 14, 1635 at Northam, Devon, England²⁰. She died on Nov 18, 1635.

Referred to varyingly as “one of the stormiest petrels of a stormy era”²¹ and “a Man of great Piety and Sincerity”²², much has been documented of the life of Thomas Larkham of Tavistock, most recently by Susan Hardman Moore in her excellent edition of his diary, *The Diary of Thomas Larkham, 1647-1669*.²³ In the introduction, Hardman Moore writes,

*“Thomas Larkham is long dead, but lives on in Tavistock folklore with a divided reputation. For some, he is a rascal vicar who turned religious life upside down in Cromwell’s time. For others he is something of a hero, founder of the Christian community which today is Tavistock United Reformed Church. ... Up in Cumbria too, Cockermouth URC remembers Larkham and takes pride in its history: a banner over the church gate is emblazoned with the date of its foundation, ‘1651’. The Tavistock and Cockermouth URC congregations are two of only a handful in England which have a continuous history from the ‘parish congregationalism’ of the 1650s. Thomas Larkham pioneered both these local reformations.”*²⁴

The Early Years 1602-1626

Thomas Larkham was born at Lyme Regis, “the Pearl of Dorset”, a small seaport town in West Dorset, England in the final year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. He was the eldest of four children born to Thomas and Jane Larkham. Little is known of Larkham’s early life. He was born into the mercantile class, as his father described himself as a “linen draper”²⁵, a merchant of cloth made of flax and hemp. The Lyme Regis became a major English port during the 16th and 17th centuries, so it’s possible the elder Larkham was engaged in trade in the Mediterranean, West Indies and Americas.²⁶

Thomas Larkham’s parents had means to provide their son with an education, and he entered Cambridge at the age of nineteen, where he took his B.A. from Trinity Hall in 1621-1622.

On June 10, 1622, he married Patience Wilton after the birth of their first child, Thomas, who was baptized at Crediton on March 16, 1622.²⁷ The wedding took place at the Parish Church of Shobrooke. Patience Wilton was the daughter of George Wilton, a well-to-do²⁸ schoolmaster at Crediton. Larkham was not yet 20 years of age and she was six years his senior.²⁹

On September 25, 1625, Larkham was appointed Chaplain of the Sandford Chapel in Crediton, and licensed as preacher throughout the dioceses of Exeter, London, and Bath and Wells.³⁰ Larkham took his M.A. from Cambridge in 1626.

Two more children of Thomas and Patience Larkham were born during this time, a son, John, baptized October 10, 1624 who died in infancy on July 07, 1625, and a daughter, Patience, baptized on February 26, 1625.³¹

Vicar of Northam 1626-1640

Larkham was ordained Vicar of Northam, near Bideford in north Devon, on December 26, 1626, a position he held for the next thirteen years. Five more children were born to Thomas and Patience Larkham at Northam, two of whom survived early childhood. A son named William was baptized on June 08, 1628 and died at 4 ½ years of age on January 25, 1633; son George was born April 20, 1630 and baptized May 2, 1630; daughter Jane was baptized February 11, 1631; an infant son was baptized November 10, 1633 and probably died in infancy; and a daughter, Ane (or Anne) was baptized June 14, 1635 and died in infancy on Nov 18, 1635.³²

In Northam, Larkham's religious views on church sacraments and mandatory tithes were considered controversial and they eventually got him into trouble. A petition was circulated against him by his detractors and in 1639 "*delivered into the king's own hand, with 24 terrible articles annexed, importing faction, heresie, witchcraft, rebellion, and treason.*" He claimed he was "*put into Star-chamber and High Commission,*" and was proceeded against in the Consistory Court at Exeter "*under a suit of pretended slander for reproving an atheistical wretch by the name of Atheist.*"³³

It's believed Larkham left with his family for New England before January 19, 1640 when the next Vicar of Northam was appointed. Certainly, he was absent from England by April 1940. His father, whose will was written August 29, 1638, died in early 1640.³⁴ The will was proved April 8, 1640 by Thomas' younger brother Michael Larkham following the "*renunciation of the executorship of Thomas Larkham*".³⁵

New England 1640-1642

In New England, Larkham went first to Massachusetts, "*but not being willing to submit to the discipline of the churches there, came to Dover, a settlement on the river Piscataquis, Maine (now New Hampshire)*".³⁶ Dover was renamed Northam after Larkham's vicarage in England.

During his two years in New England, his ideas were considered controversial and he developed a tempestuous relationship with the local minister, Hansard Knollys, whom he ousted. Larkham "*received all into his Church, even immoral persons, who promised amendment. He baptized any children offered, and introduced the Episcopal service at funerals.*"³⁷ Larkham was outspoken and voiced his opinion on religious and civil matters to which he disagreed. This led to great discontent and even outright physical fighting with Knollys and his followers, as recounted by Belknap:

"... [Knollys] excommunicated Larkham. This bred a riot, in which Larkham laid hands on Knollys, taking away his hat on pretence that he had not paid for it; but he was civil enough afterward to return it. Some of the magistrates joined with Larkham, and forming a court, summoned Underhill, who was of Knollys's party, to appear before them, and answer to a new crime which they had to allege against him. Underhill collected his

adherents: Knollys was armed with a pistol, and another had a bible mounted on an halbert [halberd or pikestaff] for an ensign [banner]. In this ridiculous parade, they marched against Larkham and his party, who prudently declined a combat, and sent down the river to Williams, the governor, at Portsmouth, for assistance. He came up in a boat with an armed party, beset Knollys's house, where Underhill was, guarded it night and day till a court was summoned, and then, Williams sitting as judge, Underhill and his company were found guilty of a riot, and after being fined, were banished the plantation. The new crime which Larkham's party alleged against Underhill was, that he had been secretly endeavoring to persuade the inhabitants to offer themselves to the government of Massachusetts, whose favor he was desirous to purchase, by these means, as he knew that their view was to extend their jurisdiction as far as they imagined their limits reached, whenever they should find a favorable opportunity. The same policy led him with his party to send a petition to Boston, praying for the interposition of the government in their case.”³⁸

Commissioners from Boston were sent to arbitrate and they found both parties at fault. Governor John Winthrop of the Massachusetts Bay Colony was particularly critical of Thomas Larkham and even validated allegations that he fathered an illegitimate child with his housekeeper.³⁹ *(No record of the birth of this child can be found. Some sources state Larkham admitted to be the father, a statement for which there appears to be no verification. Possibly the allegation was politically-motivated.)*⁴⁰

Larkham departed New England for England with his eldest son Thomas on November 14, 1642, leaving behind his wife and three younger children. He later described them “*as dry bones*⁴¹ and *diverse years after; yet did the Lord bring them altogether again here in England.*”^{42, 43}

Return to England 1643-1645

Mrs. G.H. Radford suggests Larkham and his son returned to England “*from Portsmouth, N.E., to Madeira, and there found a ship to bring them to England*”.⁴⁴ In the paper she wrote on Larkham, read at Plymouth July 1892, she states,

“In what ship Larkham and his son embarked is not certain, nor whither she was bound, but it is a curious coincidence that the paragraph after that relating Larkham’s downfall in Governor Winthrop’s History, speaks of the arrival ‘at Boston of a small ship from the Madeiras with wine, sugar, etc., which were presently sold for pipe staves and other commodities of the country, which were returned to the Madeiras, but the merchant himself, one Mr. Parish, staid divers months after.’

*The passage*⁴⁵ *connecting Larkham with the Madeiras is as follows:*

‘With his index expurgatoris (a trick which perchance he learnt of the Jesuites in Medera [sic] when New England was too hot for him), no less than four of our names which subscribed the reply he expungeth at a clap’ etc.”⁴⁶

Larkham is next found in the records at East Greenwich, Kent, on May 31, 1645. The report of the “Committee for Prundred Ministers” records the following complaint about Larkham by the local minister, Mr. Spratt,

*“Whereas the Vicarage of the Parish Church at East Greenwich, in the County of Kent, is and standeth sequestered by order of the Committee, from Dr. Creighton to the use of Thomas Spratt, a godly and orthodox divine, and complaint is made into this Committee that one Thomas Larkham intrudeth himself into the said Church to preach there, against the consent of the said Mr. Spratt and without any order. This Committee doe hereby inhibit the said Mr. Larkham from his said preachinge there as aforesaid, and doe require him to forbear any further to disturbe, molest, or interrupt the s’d Mr. Spratt in the discharge of the duties of the s’d place according to the s’d sequestration.”*⁴⁷

The complaint was resolved by allowing Larkham to preach on Wednesday and Thursday afternoon, and Mr. Spratt would preach in the morning.

Larkham’s son Thomas possibly met his wife, Mary Covert, during this time in East Greenwich. It’s known from Larkham’s diary that Mary Covert had a brother or cousin, Richard Covert. A Richard Covert is named as son and executor of the will of Richard Covert “*of East Greenwich, Kent, Citizen and Merchant Tailor of London*”, written August 28, 1638 and proved August 30, 1645.⁴⁸

Chaplain in Sir Hardres Waller’s Regiment of the Parliamentary Army 1646-1649

Soon thereafter, Larkham accepted an appointment as chaplain in Sir Hardres Waller's regiment in Cromwell’s Parliamentary Army. The regiment went to Ireland. Hardman Moore suggests “*Larkham’s wife and family may have stayed at Crediton while Larkham (and his son-in-law Miller) served with the parliamentary army. Larkham’s will, 1669, mentioned ‘my mansion house at Crediton’*”.⁴⁹ Larkham’s daughter, Patience, married Lt. Joseph Miller⁵⁰ who also served in the Parliamentary Army. Their son Thomas was born at Crediton on June 9, 1648.⁵¹

Of this appointment, Larkham stated that he was “*chaplain to one of greatest honour in the nation, next unto a king, had his residence among ladies of honour, and was familiar with men of greatest renown in the kingdom, when he had a thousand pounds worth of plate before him.*”⁵²

It was during this time that his eldest son, Thomas died in the East Indies⁵³. In his diary, he wrote,

*“Thomas mine Eldest sonne Died Feb 14th 1648 & left [M]ary his wife ^a widdow^ & one sonne & one daughter viz Thomas & Mary”*⁵⁴

Little is known of Mary Covert. It's assumed that she and her daughter Mary died shortly the death of Larkham's eldest son. The grandson, Thomas "Tom", referred to by Larkham as an orphan, came to live with his grandparents after 1648, and was raised by them. There are many entries in Larkham's diary about his grandson.

Larkham was dismissed from his appointment as chaplain of Waller's regiment on November 15, 1649. In his diary he states he had "*differences about their irreligious carriage.*" It's believed he was dismissed following a court-martial, in which he was found guilty of inciting to insubordination. He appears to have secured another military post, for he wrote of receiving money in 1651 at a "*muster in Carlisle for my men;*" and on June 11, 1652 he received eleven days' pay from Ebthery at Bristol, "*they being about to take ship,*" perhaps for Ireland.⁵⁵

Vicar of Tavistock 1649-1664

Larkham came to Tavistock in April 1647-48 with the Parliamentary Army, where Sir Hardres Waller had his headquarters. The vicarage of Tavistock had been vacant since October 21, 1643 when the prior vicar left for Plymouth. It is presumed that Larkham succeeded to the Tavistock vicarage before 1649 because the report by the commissioners visiting Tavistock on October 18, 1650 noted that Larkham was elected by the inhabitants and presented by the Earl of Bedford, '*who as successor to the abbey held all the great tithes and the right to present.*'

It wasn't long before conflict broke out as a result of Larkham's opinions on tithes and administering of the sacraments. He referred to his critics as '*profane ones*', who '*gnash their teeth to see Christ's ordinances on foot in public, and themselves laid by as reprobate silver; they began to quarrel at my preaching and to join shoulder to shoulder against the new Church (as they were pleased to call us...)*'.⁵⁶

As tension increased with his detractors, in 1651, Larkham departed with his son George, recently graduated from Oxford, on a trip north to Cumberland. The Larkhams were warmly received at Cockermouth where Thomas Larkham was hailed as a '*blessed instrument of God*'. He shepherded the formation of a new church in fall 1651, with George Larkham and George Benson, Vicar of Bridekirk, as founding members.⁵⁷

In 1652, Larkham made his way back to Tavistock having received a letter from more than sixty people from the congregation there pleading for his return. George Larkham stayed at Cumberland. When Larkham arrived back in Devon, he learned his enemies had locked him out of the church.⁵⁸

He wrote in his diary,

"Thus farre the Lord hath holpen me and hath delivered me from all my fears, troubles and dangers. By him I have leaped over many walls and have skipped over many craggy mountains. I remember thy great name in England and thy poor despised handful in Tavistock. This present first of June I write these lines. This day twelve month I had the doors of the parish church shutt up against me by Hawsnorth, a sad trooper in the Kings army, chosen the Saturday before to be

churchwarden, and confirmed by Glanville and others. I have been this year exceedingly persecuted by arrests, in the Committee for plundered ministers, by enditement for a supposed Riott with divers of my brethren to the expense of at least £50 charges. Yet, out of all the Lord hath delivered me; blessed be his name.”⁵⁹

A Full Household

While at Tavistock, there were many diary entries of the concern, love and affection Larkham bore his children and grandchildren. At a time when his children had married and were raising families of their own, tragedy put Larkham in the role of caregiver once again in his 50s.

Larkham’s grandson, Tom Larkham (son of his eldest son Thomas who died in the East Indies in 1648) was living in Tavistock with his grandparents by April 1650, having been orphaned by both parents by this date. Tom Larkham, probably born between 1645 (Larkham and his son arrived in East Greenwich in 1645) and 1647 (his father died February 14, 1648 in the East Indies) was raised by his grandfather. This was not always an easy calling for Larkham.

On August 18, 1654, Thomas Larkham wrote of his grandson, who was probably between 7 and 9 years of age:

“This very Day August 18th 1654 There was a trial in the court of Tavistocke betweene Thomasin Smith and my grandchild Thomas Larkham for driving and beating her Sow[.] It was God’s pleasure for ends best knowne to his Wisdome to suffer me to be foiled in this action &c[.] With this fatherly Whip beginneth the three & fiftieth yeare of mine age. But my hope is that His holy Majesties s[h]all bringe good out of this affliction and all others which mine unworthy walking have caused his fatherhood to lay uppon me. But the deriding of thy Church, waies and Worship by Everleigh the steward of the court & others O Lord forget not. Hallowed be thy name.”⁶⁰

The husband of Larkham’s daughter, Patience, died in Ireland May 8, 1656. Larkham wrote in his diary,

“Joseph Miller Lieutenant in Ireland Died May the 8th 1656 & left mine eldest daughter Patience ^a widow^ & one son & 3 daughters living viz Thomas, Mary, Jane, and Anne”⁶¹

A month later, he wrote:

“June 21, Saturday My Eldest daughter Patience Miller came to my house at Tavistock from Ireland a widow, D.G / D,M”⁶²

While this initial visit was temporary, by fall 1656, Patience Miller and her two of her children, Thomas and Jane, were living in Tavistock with the Larkhams and their grandson Tom. The two young cousins, Tom Miller and Tom Larkham were close in age and possibly more like brothers. This relationship would factor significantly later in their lives.⁶³ Their grandfather Larkham was likely a key influence in the lives of his two fatherless grandsons as a role model and provider. While Larkham clearly reared young Tom Larkham, his diary ledger indicates that he also contributed significantly to the upbringing and schooling of Thomas Miller.

With a household including himself, his wife, his grandson Tom, his daughter Patience and her children Thomas and Jane, by September 1656, Larkham was anxious about the family members' dependence upon him:

*“And nowe Righteous Father I come unto thee in my greate distresse and troubles. I have A family to care for consistinge of sixe persons with My Daughter Patience and her sonne 2 poore Sisters of Mine expect helpe whom I have often holpen heretofore & would now againe.”*⁶⁴

Scurrilous Pamphlets

By 1657, Larkham's relationship with his religious opponents had escalated and become public. He attacked his adversaries in a tract entitled *‘Naboth, in a Narrative and Complaint of the Church of God at Tavistock, and especially of and concerning Mr. Thomas Larkham.’* The five parishioners on which the tract was targeted responded in *“The Tavistock Naboth proved Nabal: an Answer to a Scandalous Narrative by Thomas Larkham, in the name, but without the consent, of the Church of Tavistocke in Devon, etc.,* by F. G., D. P., W. G., N. W., W. H., etc.’⁶⁵

In their response, the parishioners denounced Larkham's affection for sack (fortified wine) and bowls (a form of lawn bowling), alluded to his published attacks on tithes, and revived the allegation of immorality in New England Larkham. Larkham referred to this as *‘a heape of trash, full fraught with lies and slanders.’* He countered with a pamphlet called *‘Judas Hanging Himself,’* and his enemies countered back with *‘A Strange Metamorphosis in Tavistock, or the Nabal-Naboth improved a Judas’*.⁶⁶

A weekly lecture was established in Tavistock by Larkham's rivals in October 1659, at which nearby ministers officiated. Despite his resistance, the council of state ordered the justices living near Tavistock to continue the lectures, and to question witnesses regarding the alleged crimes and misdemeanors against Larkham. Following the trial on April 17th, Larkham was ordered to allow others to preach in the parish church. The justices met on October 19th to determine whether Larkham had been legally appointed to the vicarage of Tavistock. On Sunday October 21st Larkham resigned the benefice. Despite this, he was arrested on January 18, 1661, and he spent eighty-four days in prison at Exeter.⁶⁷

On this date, he wrote in his diary:

*"I was made a prisoner by Col. Howard and had a guard of six soldiers put into my house, and the Monday following was conveyed by sixty troopers to the Provost Marshall at Exeter, and returned not until April 11th. Eighty four days in all. Divers men and women sent tokens of their love to me, the which I wrote out and cannot now find. The Lord grant that it may be for the furtherance of their profit and abound to their account respectively. Thou Lord knowest them by name and what they did in the way of communicating with mine affliction."*⁶⁸

Following his release from prison, Larkham returned to Tavistock to live with his daughter Jane and son-in-law, Daniel Condy.⁶⁹

The Act of Uniformity and the Great Ejection of 1662

On May 19, 1662, the parliamentary Act of Uniformity was enforced. The act prescribed the form of public prayers, administration of sacraments, and other rites of the Established Church of England, following all the rites and ceremonies and doctrines prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer. More than 2,000 clergymen, including Thomas Larkham and his son George, refused to take the oath and were ousted from the Church of England in what became known as the Great Ejection of 1662. This created the concept of non-conformity, with a substantial section of English society excluded from public affairs for well over a century. Thomas and George Larkham were among the "nonconformists".⁷⁰

On August 18, 1662, the deadline to subscribe to the Act of Uniformity, Larkham wrote in his diary:

1662

August the Eighteene beginneth the one and Sixtieth yeare of mine age

*The saddest weeke that England ever saw
Witnesses slaine by virtue of a Law.
Many fall off in this sad day of trial,
God's cause meets now with many a deniall.
All proved not gold that glister'd and was specious,
All are not found to have that faith that's pretious.
Yesterday ended Godly men's preaching
That do refuse traditions of men's teaching.
Enter the Mattins of Bartholomew
Lord keepe thy poore saints from the bloody crew.
Let not the cruell make it suche a day
as 'twas in 72 O Lord I pray.*

*Bury in Christs grave sinnes with his dolours
Reduce poore souls that have fled from their colours
Lord make amend of this sad dismall story,
And let thy praying people see thy glory.⁷¹*

Tavistock Apothecary 1664-66

In 1664 Larkham left the ministry and became a partner with Dr. Peter County, an apothecary and physician in Tavistock. Larkham successfully carried on the practice after Dr. County's death⁷² with the help of his grandson, Thomas Miller, who came to Tavistock on October 26, 1664 to help with the apothecary shop⁷³ and his daughter Patience.⁷⁴

By May 29, 1665, Larkham learned of his excommunication:

“This day it was told me that yesterday the 28th of May yong Preston of Maritavy officiating at Tavestocke pronounced me Excom: by authoritie from yong Fulwood now Ar[ch] Deacon at Totnes. Consider O Lord these fooles and pittie them for they know not what they doe. Suffer not thy greate name to be (SO) taken in vaine.⁷⁵

The Five Mile Act of 1665

In October 1665, the Five Mile Act, or Nonconformists Act 1665, was passed. The act forbade clergymen identified as nonconformists from living within five miles (8 km) of a parish from which they had been expelled, unless they swore an oath never to resist the king, or attempt to alter the government of Church or State.⁷⁶ Once the act was in force, Larkham was prevented from staying in Tavistock. He gave up the apothecary shop on January 18, 1666 (1665/66).⁷⁷

His Final Days 1666-69

According to the Tavistock Congregational Church,

“Mr Larkham was suffered peacefully to preach under the very shadow of the church he had left, protected by the powerful influence of the house of Russell⁷⁸. He was at one time threatened with imprisonment if he went beyond his own house but the threats were never put into execution.”⁷⁹

By this time his grandsons, Tom Larkham and Tom Miller were frequently abroad, involved in trade in the West Indies, Virginia and the Carolinas. When he wrote his will on June 1, 1668, he mentioned that Tom Larkham had recently returned from Barbados. Thomas Miller, was involved in the tobacco trade in Virginia and later in Albemarle, Province of Carolina. In his diary Larkham wrote:

*“Where[a]s I laid out about freeing of Tobacco for T. M. (Thomas Miller) and for charges about bringing it to Tavistocke 13. 17. 04. I have received for Tobacco & the caske in which it was brought from Virginia 141i. 01. 03.”*⁸⁰

In August 1668, Larkham once again moved in with his daughter and son-in-law, Jane and Daniel Condy.

His final entry in his diary, dated November 17, 1669, was for his customary sixpenny trim at the barber, one month before his death on December 20, 1669.⁸¹ His burial on December 23, 1669 was recorded in the Tavistock Register:

*“Burials December 1669. 23 M^r Thomas Larkham buried.”*⁸²

Of his burial Edward Windeatt wrote,

*“It would seem that an attempt was made to prevent his burial in the church; but the steward of the Earl of Bedford interfered, and he was buried in the part of the chancel which belonged to the house of Russell.”*⁸³

Thomas Larkham’s will was written June 1, 1668 and proved March 9, 1669. He names his son George Larkham *“mine only son living late a publique preacher”* to whom he bequeathed *“all my land and right of reversion in them both at Crediton and Tavistock”*; his grandson Thomas Larkham *“son of my eldest son who is lately returned from the Barbados who hath been very chargeable to me from the time of his birth and by the unkindnesses and bad dealing of his mothers relations and his miscarriage which I hope he begineth to see and yet dare not be too confident of him for the time to come”* to whom he bequeathed *“my best silver bowle and my ring which hath my seal in it”*; his grandson Thomas Condy to whom *“if he be a student”* he bequeathed *“at least one third part according to their valuation by indifferent men, of my said books”*; his wife Patience to whom he bequeathed *“the rent of Mills in Dolvin during her life if she lives so long live, but if she outlive them she shall be maintained by the rents of my lands, but if she dies, the lives continuing, the annuity shall be divided between my two daughters Patience and Jane”* and *“Residue to use my wife while she liveth and after to be divided between the children of my children equally everyone a little as far as it will reach, with my blessing on them and it.”*; his daughter Jane; his daughter Patience *“my undone daughter”* to whom he bequeathed *“My apothecary ware and utensills”* provided the bequest *“be managed by George Larkham my son and Daniel Condy my son in law both or either of them for and her use that her husband may not have the wasting of it as he hath of the rest of her estate and I desire my son and son-in-law to be instead of a father friend and husband to her and her poor children that shall be living after my death or such of them as they think fit objects for their help: if any of them prove lewd, let them be cast off”*; and his son-in-law Daniel Condy.⁸⁴

The works of Thomas Larkham include:

1. *'The Wedding Supper,'* 12mo, London, 1652, "with portrait, engraved by T. Cross. Dedicated to the parliament.
2. *'A Discourse of Paying of Tithes by T. L., M.A., Pastour of the Church of Tavistocke,'* 12mo, London, 1656. Dedicated to Oliver Cromwell
3. *'The Attributes of God,'* &c., 4to, London, 1656, with portrait, British Museum. Dedicated to the fellows, masters, and presidents of colleges, &c., at Cambridge.⁸⁵

Notes

¹ "England, Marriages, 1538–1973," index, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/N2LT-XZW> : accessed 05 Sep 2012), Thomas Larckham and Patience Witton, 20 Jun 1622; citing reference , FHL microfilm 916934.

² "England, Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," index, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/J367-5M6> : accessed 05 Sep 2012), Patience Wilton, 14 Apr 1594; citing reference , FHL microfilm 917182.

³ "England Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," index, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/N591-68L> : accessed 05 Jul 2014), Thomas Larcombe in entry for Thomas Larcombe, 16 Mar 1622; citing CREDITON,DEVON,ENGLAND, reference ; FHL microfilm 917182.

⁴ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, *The Diary of Thomas Larkham: 1647 - 1669.* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011.) 33.

⁵ Parish register transcripts, 1630-1837 Church of England. Parish Church of Sandford (Devon)

⁶ Parish register transcripts, 1630-1837 Church of England. Parish Church of Sandford (Devon)

⁷ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 286, and 286, note 1.

⁸ Transcripts of parish registers and Bishop's transcripts, 1609-1837 Church of England. Parish Church of Highweek.

⁹ Items 2-3 Parish register transcripts, 1538-1836 Church of England. Parish Church of Northam (Devonshire).

¹⁰ Transcripts of parish registers and Bishop's transcripts, 1609-1837 Church of England. Parish Church of Highweek.

¹¹ Items 2-3 Parish register transcripts, 1538-1836 Church of England. Parish Church of Northam (Devonshire).

¹² Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore. 174.

"April 20th I called to mind the birth of my dear son George on this day in the yeare 1630..."

¹³ Parish register transcripts, 1538-1836 Church of England. Parish Church of Northam (Devonshire)

¹⁴ The register of Bridekirk, 1584-1812 Church of England. Parish Church of Bridekirk (Cumberland).

¹⁵ "England, Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," index, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/JWJX-PBZ> : accessed 06 Sep 2012), Dorothea Fletcher, 30 Oct 1633; citing reference , FHL microfilm 0924748 IT 1.

¹⁶ "England, Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," index, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/JWXB-JRZ> : accessed 06 Sep 2012), Larkham, 11 Feb 1631; citing reference , FHL microfilm 917204.

¹⁷ *The Western antiquary*, Volume 8. Editor, William Henry Kearley Wright. Publisher, Latimer & son, 1889. Original from, Princeton University, 171.

¹⁸ Mrs. G.H. Radford, "Thomas Larkham." Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature, and Art. Vol. XXIV. (Plymouth: William Brendon and Son, 1892.), 122.

¹⁹ Parish register transcripts, 1538-1836 Church of England. Parish Church of Northam (Devonshire)

²⁰ Parish register transcripts, 1538-1836

²¹ Charles Knowles Bolton, *The Founders: Portraits of Persons Born Abroad Who Came to the Colonies in North America before the Year 1701.* (S.l.: Boston Athenaeum, 1919.) 787.

²² Edmund Calamy, Samuel Palmer, Thomas Gibbons, James Caldwell, and William Harris, The Nonconformist's Memorial:: Being an Account of the Ministers, Who Were Ejected or Silenced after the Restoration, Particularly by

the Act of Uniformity, Which Took Place on Bartholomew-Day, Aug. 24, 1662. Containing a Concise View of Their Lives and Characters, Their Principles, Sufferings, and Printed Works. (London:: Printed for W. Harris, No. 70, St. Paul's Church-Yard., n.d.) 79.

²³ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore. See Note 4 for full citation.

²⁴ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 29.

²⁵ Grant of Administration, Will, 1640, Thomas Larkham, Linen Draper, /Lyme Regis/Dorset. Wiltshire Council. Probate Records of the Court of the Dean of Salisbury, n.d. Web. 05 July 2014.
<<http://history.wiltshire.gov.uk/heritage/getwill.php?id=109704>>. Reference Number P5/13Reg/221B

²⁶ Larkham's diary infers that he was involved in overseas trade, as was his son Thomas and his grandsons, Tom Larkham and Thomas Miller. Larkham's eldest son, Thomas died while in the East Indies in 1648. Mrs. G.H. Radford speculates he may have been there "*possibly with some Dutch friends on a trading venture*". (Mrs. G.H. Radford, p. 107) Mary Covert, the wife of Thomas Larkham, the son, was likely of Dutch descent (the surname Covert has Dutch origins).

Larkham's grandson, Tom Larkham, travelled to Barbados several times; a few trips were referred to in Larkham's diary and will. Another grandson, Thomas Miller, traded in tobacco in in Virginia and later in Albemarle, Province of Carolina. In his diary Larkham wrote: "*Where[a]s I laid out about freeing of Tobacco for T. M. (Thomas Miller) and for charges about bringing it to Tavistocke 13. 17. 04.*

I have received for Tobacco & the caske in which it was brought from Virginia 141i. 01. 03."

In October 1657, Larkham noted in his diary, "*I was deceived in Tobacco which cost 2[£]-00-0.*" (page 161).

Hardman Moore suggests "Perhaps this was an earlier [trade] venture which went wrong."

²⁷ The parish records of Crediton, Devon, England contain a baptism record of Thomas Larcombe, son of Thomas Larcombe, on March 16, 1622. See note 3.

²⁸ Mrs. G.H. Radford, 96.

²⁹ "England Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," index, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/J367-5M6> : accessed 05 Jul 2014), Patience Wilton, 14 Apr 1594; citing Crediton, Devon, England, reference ; FHL microfilm 917182.

³⁰ "Larkeham, Thomas (1623 - 1641)." *The Clergy of the Church of England Database 1540-1835*. Ed. Arthur Burns, Kenneth Fincham, and Stephen Taylor. King's College London, Strand, London WC2R 2LS, England, United Kingdom. Oct. 1999. Web. 05 July 2014.

<<http://db.theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/persons/CreatePersonFrames.jsp?PersonID=71334>>.

³¹ Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, Volume 32, 151

³² "England Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," index, Larkham, Northam, Devon, England, Reference; FHL microfilm 917204.

³³ Sydney Lee, ed. *Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, Volume 32*. (New York: McMillan, 1892), 151.

³⁴ Sydney Lee, 151.

³⁵ Mrs. G.H. Radford, 100.

³⁶ Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, Volume 32, 151.

³⁷ Joseph B. Felt, *The Ecclesiastical History of New England Comprising Not Only Religious, but Also Moral, and Other Relations*. (Boston: Congregational Library Association, 1855.) 451.

³⁸ Jeremy Belknap and John Farmer. *The History of New Hampshire*. Dover: S.C. Stevens and Ela & Wadleigh, 1831. Print.

³⁹ John Winthrop, *Winthrop's Journal: "History of New England", 1630-1649*. Ed. James K. Hosmer. (Reprint ed. The University of Michigan: C. Scribner's Sons, 1908.) 88-89.

"Mr. Larkham of Northam, alias Dover, suddenly discovering a purpose to go to England, and fearing to be dissuaded by his people, gave them his faithful promise not to go, but yet soon after he got board, and so departed. It was time for him to be gone, for not long after a widow which kept in his house, being a very handsome woman, and about 50 years of age, proved to be with child, and being examined, at first refused to confess the father, but in the end she laid it to Mr. Larkham. Upon this the church of Dover looked out for another elder, and wrote to the elders to desire their help."

⁴⁰ The likelihood of a 50 year old women conceiving a child seems relatively slim, even today. Ironically, Hansard Knollys was also accused of immorality:

"Mr. Knolles was discovered to be an unclean person, and to have solicited the chastity of two maids, his servants, and to have used filthy dalliance with them, which he acknowledged before the church there, and so was dismissed, and removed from Pascataquack. This sin of his was the more notorious, because the fact, which was first discovered, was the same night after he had been exhorting the people by reasons and from scripture, to proceed against Capt, Underhill for his adultery." John Winthrop, 28.

⁴¹ Mrs. G.H. Radford suggests Larkham is probably referring to the biblical passage of Ezekiel 37:1-14. There are many online interpretations of this passage that is believed to be a metaphor for the nation of Israel which was exiled and scattered “as dry bones”, without hope or faith.

⁴² Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 162.

⁴³ The return from New England was clearly a significant milestone in his life because he referenced the date in several entries in his diary, mostly in gratitude for the blessings he and his family had received since the departure (all entries from Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore. Page numbers in parentheses after entry dates):

August 1650 (46):

*“Nov. 12, 1642 I came from New England
Here followeth an accompt of what God hath allowed me yearly since I came from N. England”*

November 12, 1654 (100):

“I call to mind with a humble and thankful hearte that upon the 12th day of November 1642 I left my house in the morninge and came down to the Mouth of the River Paskataquacke in Newe England to come for England[.] I take special notice of The special Goodnes of the Lord to me & mine for these twelve yeares now fully ended this day November 12th 1654 beinge the Lords day which was on a Saturday that yeare I came from New England.”

November 1655 (120):

“The 12th of this Moneth 1642 I left my house & familie in New England. It is now full 13 yeares agoen, and the 17th day endeth the first quarter of the 54th year of mine age, The day of Queen Elizabeth coming to the crowne & c Greate have thy mercies beene o Lord to this nation and to this poore sinfull worme in particular”

November 12, 1656 (138):

“November. 12th 1656 I call to mind this day, that 14 yeares agoen On this day viz in the yeare 1642 I left mine house in New England which was then on a Saturday Now it is Wednesday my lecture day, on the Munday following Novemb the 14th I set saile and so was brought to England, where I have been protected preserved and provided for and my family of whom I have had mine Eldest son taken away by death whose son is livening with me, My other three (I hope George is livinge)two of them viz Patience a Widdow & Jane married in Tavistocke are living heere in Tavistocke.

November 1657 (162):

Novem. 14th 1642 I came from New England And have beene since marvelously Cared for & holpen by the Lord (My) father, to care for my famelie which (when I left them) were as dry bones, & diverse yeares after; yet did the Lord bring them altogether againe here in England.”

November 1658 (188):

“It is sixteene agoen that I left New England. Greate & marvelous o Lord have thy providences beene over me and mine. I am as full as the moone and ready to burst &c.”

November 14, 1659 (211):

“It is now 17 yeares since I left my family in New England & came with my Eldest Son towards England. O the mercies I have received! O the afflictions I have undergone! O the providences God hath vouchsafed!”

November 12, 1662 (258):

“November 12th 1662 It is full 20 yeares since I left my house in new England and came to the havens mouth at Pascataquak and so tooke shipping & came thence”

⁴⁴ Mrs. G.H. Radford, 105.

⁴⁵ Tract in British Museum, p. 4.

⁴⁶ Mrs. G.H. Radford, 105.

⁴⁷ Mrs. G.H. Radford, 105.

⁴⁸ "Will of Richard Covert, Merchant Tailor of East Greenwich, Kent." The National Archives. The National Archives of the United Kingdom, n.d. Web.

<<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/SearchUI/Details?uri=D858234>>. Written August 28, 1638 and proved August 30, 1645.

⁴⁹ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 178, note 1.

⁵⁰ An interesting fact is that while Larkham was in New England, he conveyed land to a man named Joseph Miller. It's not known if this is the same Joseph Miller who married Larkham's daughter. *History of the Town of Durham, New Hampshire* provides the following,:

“The next lot northeasterly of John Martin's was originally granted by the town to the Rev. Thomas Larkham, between 1639 and 1642, who conveyed the same to Joseph Miller. On the 21st of September

1647, Joseph Miller conveyed to John Goddard the "house where Miller now liveth and five acres of land," also twenty acres given by the inhabitants of Dover, alias Northam to Thomas Larkham, "lying on the west side of Backe River," also thirty acres of meadow ground lying "on the westerlie side of the greate baye neere unto a cove called the greate Cove," excepting ten acres given unto John Ault by the said Thomas Larkham, also one hundred acres on the easterly side of the said marsh ground given by Dover to said Larkham."

See: Everett Schermerhorn Stackpole, and Lucien Thompson, *History of the Town of Durham, New Hampshire : (Oyster River Plantation) with Genealogical Notes [Volume 1]*. (Durham: Published by Vote of the Town, 1913), 33.

⁵¹ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 178.

"On this day also 1648. My poore daughter Miller was safely delivered of her son Thomas at my house at Crediton alias Kirton"

"Blessed be my God"

⁵² Sydney Lee, 151.

⁵³ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 162.

⁵⁴ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 33.

⁵⁵ Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, Volume 32

⁵⁶ Susan Hardman Moore. *Pilgrims: New World Settlers & the Call of Home*. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale UP, 2007), 131.

⁵⁷ Susan Hardman Moore, 131.

⁵⁸ Susan Hardman Moore, 132.

⁵⁹ Tavistock Congregational Church. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 Sept. 2012. <<http://www.tavistockcurc.org/page19.html>>.

⁶⁰ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 96.

⁶¹ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 33.

⁶² Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 131.

⁶³ In the late 1660s, Larkham's grandson Thomas Miller went to Albemarle, Province of Carolina, where he exported tobacco to England and served as customs collector. He became (acting) Governor of Albemarle, Province of Carolina in 1677 until his government was overthrown in Culpeper's Rebellion. After his return to England, he was appointed customs collector of Poole and later of Weymouth. By May 14, 1684 Miller had been removed from office and imprisoned for mishandling funds. His cousin, Tom Larkham, posted bond as surety for his cousin. When Thomas Miller died in prison, probably before June 21, 1685, Tom Larkham was arrested and imprisoned for the debt owed by his cousin Miller. Tragically, Tom Larkham also died in prison, sometime between June 21, 1685 when he wrote his will and October 16, 1685 when his widow made her first petition to the Customs Commissioners to be discharged of the bond given by her late husband as surety for Thomas Miller. This is documented through a series of petitions by Hannah Larkham, widow of Thomas Larkham (grandson of Rev. Thomas Larkham) from 1685-1688. In her petition, Hannah Larkham stated that her late husband, Thomas Larkham, had provided a surety bond to Thomas Miller *"after his escape from the rebels in Carolina, having obtained an order for restitution which was prevented by the Earl of Shaftesbury, and being impoverished thereby ran in arrear to the King as customer of Poole and Weymouth, was arrested and died in prison..."* Because Thomas Larkham posted bond for his cousin, he *"was arrested for some arrears due by Miller and died in prison and that his goods were seized and praying that she [Hannah Larkham] may enjoy her goods, being all she has left, and proceedings be suspended till Miller's plantations in Carolina can be regained for satisfying the King's debt."*

For a more through overview and references, see:

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~sallycox/thomasmiller.html>

⁶⁴ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 136.

⁶⁵ Sydney Lee, 151.

⁶⁶ Sydney Lee, 151.

⁶⁷ Sydney Lee, 151.

⁶⁸ Tavistock Congregational Church. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 Sept. 2012. <<http://www.tavistockcurc.org/page19.html>>.

⁶⁹ Sydney Lee, 151.

⁷⁰ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Act_of_Uniformity_1662 and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Ejection

⁷¹ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 258.

⁷² Sydney Lee, 151.

⁷³ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 268.

"Octob. 26th. T. Miller my Grandchild came to me.

*My father shew what with him I shall do,
And still shew me the way that I shall go."*

⁷⁴ Apparently the marriage was not a success. In his bequest to his daughter Patience, he states, "My apothecary ware & utensils ...

⁷⁵ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 280.

⁷⁶ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five_Mile_Act_1665

⁷⁷ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 290, Note 2.

Fo. 47v gives a picture of Larkham's fortunes after the Five Mile Act (October 1665) came into force. Under the act, a nonconformist like Larkham risked a fine of £40 if he came within five miles of his former parish. The Diocese of Exeter's Episcopal Return in 1665 for Tavistock had already listed

⁷⁸ The Earls of Bedford were of the House of Russell and Members of Parliament for Tavistock. See:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Russell,_1st_Duke_of_Bedford and

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Russell,_Lord_Russell

⁷⁹ Tavistock Congregational Church. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 Sept. 2012. <<http://www.tavistockurc.org/page19.html>>.

⁸⁰ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 304.

⁸¹ Thomas Larkham and Susan Hardman Moore, 305.

⁸² Tavistock Parish Register.

⁸³ Edward Windeatt, "Early Nonconformity in Tavistock." *Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature, and Art. Vol. 21.* (Plymouth: W. Brendon & Son, George Street, 1889.) 108.

⁸⁴ Thomas Lloyd Bush and Louise Hornbrook Bush, "Transcript of the Will of Thomas Larkham, 1 June 1668", *The times of the Hornbrooks: Tracing a Family Tradition.* (Cincinnati: T.L. Bush, 1977.) 55-57.

⁸⁵ Sydney Lee, 151.

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