

PEARSALL AND EMBREE: A Short Business Genealogy

MURRAY & PEARSALL (1759)

JOSEPH & THOMAS PEARSALL (1770?-1773)

JOSEPH PEARSALL (1773-1781?)

JOSEPH PEARSALL & EFFINGHAM EMBREE (1781?-1789)

EFFINGHAM EMBREE & COLES (c. 1789)

EFFINGHAM EMBREE (1789-1795)

JOSEPH PEARSALL (1789-1794)

STEPHEN VAN WYCK (1795-1825?)

1759

"Murray & Pearsall—imports materials from London," *The New-York Gazette*, September 10, 1759. Gottesman I: 274.

1770

Joseph & Thomas Pearsall, "Watch-Makers", note move between Beekman and Burling Slips in *The New-York Journal or the General Advertiser*, May 17, 1770. Gottesman I: 155.

1773

Joseph & Thomas Pearsall, partnership dissolved "the first of May last." "Joseph Pearsall, has removed to the House lately occupied by Robert and John Murray, Merchants, between Burling's and Beekman's Slip; where he carries on the business in the Watch and Clock Way as usual" in *The New-York Journal or the General Advertiser*, June 17, 1773. Gottesman I: 155

1774

Joseph Pearsall, advertises move to house lately occupied by Cornelius Clopper, three doors from Rivington. Notes recent imports. *Rivington's New-York Gazette*, May 26, 1774 (ad runs in 1775 too) Gottesman I: 156. See also Scott: 84. Notes house in Hanover Square.

1775

John Pearsall signs petition disapproving of Continental Congress *Rivington's Gazette*, January 19, 1775. Scott: 99.

1781

Pearsall & Embree— "watchmakers" announce move to corner of Beekman's Slip "where they continue to repair Watches as usual." *Royal Gazette* March 28, 1781. Gottesman II: 172.

Thomas Pearsall— noted in *Rivington's Gazette* as a Loyalist refugee, July 4, 1781. Scott: 264. (Note he was a Quaker and one of the wealthiest merchants in New York)

1783

Effingham Embree may have stayed in the city throughout the war. Lawrence Embree of Shrewsbury, NJ, advertised for stolen goods and gave Effingham's city address as a contact: 43 Queen Street. *Rivington's*, September 6, 1783. Scott: 350.

1786

Pearsall & Embree listed in city directory, 43 Queen St. (p. 67)

1787

Pearsall & Embree listed in city directory, 43 Queen St. (p. 29)

1789

Effingham Embree listed in city directory, 185 Queen St (home?) (p. 31)

Embree & Coles, watch and clockmakers, listed in city directory, 185 Queen St. (p. 31)

Joseph Pearsall listed in city directory, 41 Water St. (p. 68)

Pearsall & Embree listed in city directory, 43 Queen St. (p. 68)

1790

Effingham Embree, w+c listed in city directory, 185 Queen St. (p. 37)

Joseph Pearsall, watchmaker, listed in city directory, 36 Queen (p. 78)

1791

Effingham Embree— advertises as clock and watch maker, 185 Queen Street (may be old corner of Queen and Beekman's Slip address) *The Daily Advertiser*, February 23, 1791. Gottesman II: 161.

Pearsall & Embree— ad unclear, but it appears that Gerrit H. Wagenen opens hardware company at the store "formerly occupied by Pearsall and Embree watch makers." (43 Queen St?) *The New-York Daily Advertiser* June 20, 1791. Gottesman II: 173.

1794

Effingham Embree listed in city directory at 275 Pearl Street (p. 60)
The name Pearl Street was extended to cover the whole length of the former Queen Street at this time, so the new address probably does not reflect a move.

Joseph Pearsall listed in city directory as a watch and clock maker at 250 Pearl Street (p. 145) See entry above for note on street name change.

1795

Joseph Pearsall not listed in directory.

1796

Effingham Embree listed in city directory "watch-maker, moved to Flushing, Long-Island" (p. 184)

Joseph Pearsall listed in city directory at 250 Pearl Street, but with no occupation, suggesting he retired in 1794 or 1795. (p. 265)

Stephen van Wyck appears in city directory as a clock and watch maker at 275 Pearl Street. (p. 315)

1797

Stephen van Wyck— "successor to Effingham Embree, No. 275 Pearl Street" *New-York Daily Advertiser* May 26, 1797. Gottesman II: 176-177.

Notes

Effingham Embree, son of John Embree and Elizabeth Lawrence, was born on September 24, 1759 and died December 3, 1817. He married Mary Lawrence, the daughter of John Lawrence and Ann Burling. His descendants claim that during the Revolution Embree served as a member of New York's Committee of Safety and mustered as a minuteman in Captain Egbert's Company, although I have not been able to independently confirm this story. (Blake, *Embrey Episodes*: 10, 100 and *DAR Lineage Book 5*: 300)

1781 as starting date of the partnership with Pearsall fits well with Embree's age. He would have been 22 when the firm moved to corner of Beekman's slip.

If Effingham Embree moved to Flushing at age 37, he may have remained in the trade to some extent.

Some of Effingham Embree's partnership references remain a mystery to me. Embree & Coles appears once in the city directories, but Coles' given name is not listed. Some of the Long Island Pearsalls married into the Coles family. Maybe this is an avenue to explore? "Rossals & Embree 3439", repaired in 1803, has me completely stumped (*Bulletin* 28: 488; 31: 347). A single, male "Rossals" appears in the New York 1790 Federal Census, and he lived in Manhattan. But the city directories list no "Rossals" or Embree partnerships, making it doubtful this Rossals was a tradesman. There are, though, quite a few people listed under the surname "Russell". John H. Russell first appears as a gold and silversmith in 1792, at 3 New Street. Starting in 1794, the address changes to 1 New Street. He was apparently active until 1798. Perhaps Embree did outwork for him?

The Embree and Pearsall families appear to have stuck their thumbs in a number of pies—especially trade goods and iron, a trend also seen with others in the watch and clock trade such as the Hawxhursts and Demilts.

1787, Embree & Shotwell, ironmongers, 24 Queen. Nathaniel(?) Embree (1790 Census suggests Lawrence Embree and William Shotwell)

Pearsall & Pell, ironmongers, 205 Queen (1790 Census suggests Thomas Pearsall and Elijah Pell may have been neighbors)

1789, Embree & Lawrence, ironmongers, 196 Queen
Pearsall & Pell, merchants, 205 Queen (Thomas Pearsall, Elijah Pell?)
Thomas Pearsall & son, merchants, 203 Queen

1790, Embree & Lawrence, ironmongers, 195 Queen

1791, Pearsall, Pell, and Whittemore, card manufacturers, 41 Cherry (1790 Census suggests Thomas Pearsall, Elijah Pell)

1804, Thomas Pearsall – advertises imported wool cards, *New-York Evening Post*, December 1, 1804. Gottesman III: 240

The Pearsalls were an old and prosperous Quaker merchant family living on Long Island. Before the Revolution, Thomas Pearsall had risen to the top rung of New York's merchants. After the war, he returned to New York and pushed his business to even greater heights. Thomas the merchant's relationship to the watchmaking Pearsalls remains unknown.

Belden lists Embree in the Ineson-Bissell Collection at Winterthur on a spoon also marked by James Byrne (p. 155). Embree apparently advertised in the *Daily Advertiser* February 23, 1791 and the *Argus*, June 23, 1795. The same mark and information appears in Darling Foundation, which lists him as active 1785-1794. See, page 70.

Embree was elected to SPAAM/SPUA membership. Connection to wool manufacturing, his country retirement, his political views?

Need to explore Whittemore connection to see if I can tie him to John Bliss in New Orleans.

SOURCES

City Directories:

The New-York Directory and Register (1786-1795)

The American Almanack, New York Register, and City Directory (1796)

Newspaper Entries:

Rita Susswein Gottesman, "The Arts and Crafts of New York, 1726-1776: Advertisements and News Items from New York City Newspapers" vol LXIX in *Collections of the New York Historical Society for the Year 1936*. New York: Printed for the New York Historical Society, 1938.

_____, "The Arts and Crafts of New York, 1777-1799: Advertisements and News Items from New York City Newspapers" vol LXXXI in *Collections of the New York Historical Society for the Year 1948*. New York: Printed for the New York Historical Society, 1954.

_____, "The Arts and Crafts of New York, 1800-1804: Advertisements and News Items from New York City Newspapers" vol LXXXII in *Collections of the New York Historical Society for the Year 1949*. New York: Printed for the New York Historical Society, 1965.

Kenneth Scott, "Rivington's New York Newspaper: Excerpts from a Loyalist Press, 1773-1783" vol LXXXIV in *Collections of the New York Historical Society for the Year 1951*. New York: Printed for the New York Historical Society, 1973.

Secondary Works:

Pauline Willey Blake, *Embry Episodes*. Privately Published, 1976.

Jerzy Ganczarczyk, "Stephen Van Wyck and English Cylinder Watches" *NAWCC Bulletin* 40:6 (December 1998): 734-741.

Henry B. Hoff, *Genealogies of Long Island Families From the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*. Vol I. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1987: 353.

Elizabeth Bryant Johnson, *Lineage Book, National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution*. volume 5 (1893-4) Washington, D.C.: DAR, 1898.

Clarence E Pearsall, ed. *History and Genealogy of the The Pearsall Family in England and America*. 3 vols. San Francisco: H.S. Crocker Company, 1928.

Benjamin F. Thompson, *History of Long Island from its Discovery and Settlement to the Present Time*. Vol. III New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1918: 605-607.