

**Comparison of Blaisdell Given Names  
in Lancashire County, England, before 1635  
and in America after 1635**

by R. Carter Blaisdell

*[Authority for the compilation and comparison of Blaisdell given and surnames in Lancashire County, England: **Blaisdell Papers**, Vol. IV, No. 8, Nov. 1954, by **Lowell S. Blaisdell**. He had researched the 1559-1888 Parish and Parish Church records of Lancashire County, England, from which the Blaisdell surname originates. He had studied 99 volumes of Parish and Parish Church records, 1538-1888, for Lancashire County, England. He studied the baptismal, marriage and burial records. Twenty-three of 96 records were found to contain 500 entries with 700 first and given names of a Blaisdell (by one of 34 various spellings).*

***R. Carter Blaisdell** in April 2008 and found that 16 male and 12 female first names were listed between 1559 to 1633. He also compiled a list of all the given male and female names of Ralph Bleasdale's descendants in America to the sixth generation, based on his study of **Blaisdell Papers**, *Genealogical Outline – Early Generations of Blaisdells in America, Revised to June 1983, Volume 10, No. 5, Supplement, June 1983, Published by the Blaisdell Family National Association.*]*

Ralph Bleasdale, 1593-1649, is the Blaisdell patriarch. He arrived at Pemaquid Point, ME, August 14, 1635, soon went to York, Maine, and in 1640 became one of the founders of Salisbury, MA.

**34 Ways to Spell Blaisdell**

The thirty-four ways to spell Blaisdell: Blaisdall, Blaisdell, Blasdale, Blasdaile, Blasdall, Blasdell, Blasden, Blasding, Blasedel, Blearsdale, Bleasdaile, Bleasdal, Bleasdale, Bleasdales, Bleasdall, Bleasdalle, Bleasdel, Bleasdele, Bleasdell, Bleasdells, Bleasden, Bleasdale, Bleasdale, Bleasdel, Bleazdale, Bleazdell, Bleesdale, Blesdall, Blesdel, Blesdele, Blesdell, Blesdiel, Bleysdale, Blezard.

**Dominant Male Given Names in England before 1635**

From 1559-1635 the most popular male given names in Lancashire County, England:

John (12 entries), Robert (9), Henry (8), James and Richard (7 ea.), Lawncelet and William (6 ea.), Thomas (5), Gyles (4), Leonard (2) with one entry for Alexander, Anthony, Marcus, Michael, Radi and Ralph.

Only 5 of 16 were Biblical male names: John, James, Thomas, Marcus, Michael.

**Dominant Female Given Names before 1635**

The dominant female given names were Isabell (8), Alice (6), Elizabeth (5), Janet (4), Agnes, Anne, Ellen and Jane (3 ea.), Margaret (2), Grace, Katherine and Mary (1).

Four of the twelve female given names are from Scripture: Elizabeth, Anne, Mary with Grace inspired by Scripture. Isabell is a derivative of Elizabeth; Janet and Jane are a feminine form of John, but were not included in the count of four 4 biblical names.

**Dominant Male Given Name in America after 1635**

In America since 1635 the dominant male given name of Ralph Bleasdale's progeny to the sixth generation were John (18 entries), Daniel, Ebenezer, Jonathan and Samuel (11 ea.), Henry (10), Jacob (9), David (8), Ralph (7), Abner, Ephraim, Stephen and William (6 ea.), Elijah and Enoch (5 ea.), Moses and Thomas (4 ea.), Isaac, Joseph, Nicholas, Philip and Richard (3 ea.), Eliphalet, Ezra, James, Joshua, Nathaniel, Oliver and Spencer (2 ea.), Aaron, Abijah, Christopher, Dummer, Eliot, Ezekiel, Harvey, Hezekiah, Jedediah, Jeremiah, Josiah, Levi, Lewis, Marcus, Micajah, Nehemiah, Parrit, Peter, Robert, Rodolphus, Roger, Sargent, Thomas, Timothy, Wells (1 ea.)

Eleven of these most popular 14 names are Biblical names. Henry, Ralph and William are not.

The dominance of Biblical names reflects a Puritan influence.

#### **Dominant Female Given Names after 1635**

The preferred given names for Ralph's female descendants in America to the sixth generation are Mary (28), Elizabeth/Betty (19), Sarah/Sally (18), Hannah (17), Abigail (11), Anne, Dorothy and Judith (9 ea.), Lydia and Ruth (7 ea.), Molly (6), Martha and Miriam (5 ea.), Susanna and Rhoda (4 ea.), Naomi & Polly (3 ea.), Eleanor, Dinah, Jane, Mehitabel, Nabby and Olive (2 ea.), Margaret, Mercy, Patience, Rachel, Rebecca, Ruhamah and Thankful (1 ea.).

13 of these top 15 female given names are from the Bible. Only Dorothy and Molly are not, though Molly derives its name from Mary. Twenty-two of all 29 women's names are Biblical. Mercy, Patience and Thankful are inspired by Scripture. Dorothy, Eleanor, Margaret, Molly, Nabby, Olive and Polly are not.

*[A condensed version of the above analysis is the **Blaisdell Papers**, Vol. 15, No. 5 (June 2008), p. 395.]*

#### **Earliest Record of Blaisdell in 1559**

The earliest mention of the family name was in a record of the Parish Church of Chipping: John Bleasdale on October 15, 1559 and a baptism that same date of one Henry Bleasdell. The only Blaisdell entry between the years 1559 to 1584 are in the Chipping Parish records.

The hamlet of Bleasdale is in Goosnargh Parish. The first mention of this hamlet in Lancashire County is in the Chipping Parish Church records in 1668. Most of the 500 entries for all of Lancashire County were found in the Chipping (136) and Goosnargh (124) records. The two churches are only 4 miles apart.

#### **Lancashire County: Hotbed of Puritanism**

*[From **Blaisdell Papers**, Vol. 2, No. 8 (Autumn 1944), p. 10, we find the following information about Ralph's name, likely area of residence and occupation:]*

There were no parish records found anywhere in Lancashire County between the years 1633 and 1637. Likely this reflects the turmoil in this county, which was a hotbed of Puritanism, and is where both Rev. **Richard Mather** and Rev. **William Thompson** had preached (in and around Bolton is verified).

Rev. Thompson preached and ministered in York, now Maine, while Ralph Bleasdale was a resident there between 1635-1640. The name Ralph is unique to Bolton. Bolton was considered "The Geneva of England," indicating strong Calvinistic leanings (**John Calvin** of Geneva, **John Knox** of both Geneva and Edinburgh, **Oliver Cromwell** of England).

An influential family in Bolton was the Shuttleworth family. In their accounts is an entry of a "Rauffe" [Ralph] Bleasdale in 1582. The name Ralph was strong in Bolton. In all of the Parish and Parish Church records of Lancashire County between 1559 and 1633 the name Ralph Bleasdale (by any of its 34 variant spellings) was found only once.

-- end --