

The Southertons of Aldingbourne

In the 1830s, some English parishes tried to reduce the burden of rural poverty by assisting poor parishioners to emigrate. Aldingbourne was one such parish.

Aldingbourne is a parish about 5 miles to the east of Chichester and north of the adjacent parish of South Bersted. Westergate, Lidsey and Norton were hamlets within Aldingbourne parish although the main area of settlement in the parish is now Westergate.

Sixty emigrants to the United States were financed by the parish of Aldingbourne in 1831-1832 (1). Members of the Southerton family were among the emigrants. The surname Southerton has various spellings in the records, including Sotherton and Sutherton, and Southerin[g]ton.

Thomas Southerton and Lydia Coalman married at the parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Aldingbourne, on 19th April 1786 (2). It seems they lived in other parishes at various times over the ensuing years.

Four children of Thomas and Lydia Southerton were baptised in Aldingbourne (3):

Charles, 11th March 1787

Joseph, 5th April 1789

William, 18th September 1791

Daniel, 25th September 1803.

Three other children of a Thomas and Lydia Southerton/Southerin[g]ton were baptised in Petworth (5) & (6) – a town about 13 or 14 miles further north of Aldingbourne:

Elizabeth, 14th May 1794

George, 23rd July 1798, born 13th February 1798

Richard, 23rd July 1798, born on 15th March 1796.

A further three children, born to a Thomas and Lydia Southerton, were baptised in the parish of South Bersted (4), a neighbouring parish to Aldingbourne:

Thomas, 10th May 1807

Jemima, 25th June 1809

John, 5th January 1812.

Unable to identify any other records for Thomas and Lydia Southerton from Petworth c1790s, is it possible that this Thomas and Lydia Southerin[g]ton are the same as Thomas and Lydia Southerton from Aldingbourne? Most likely, as there was certainly a gap between the baptisms of their children in Aldingbourne and South Bersted between 1791 and 1803.

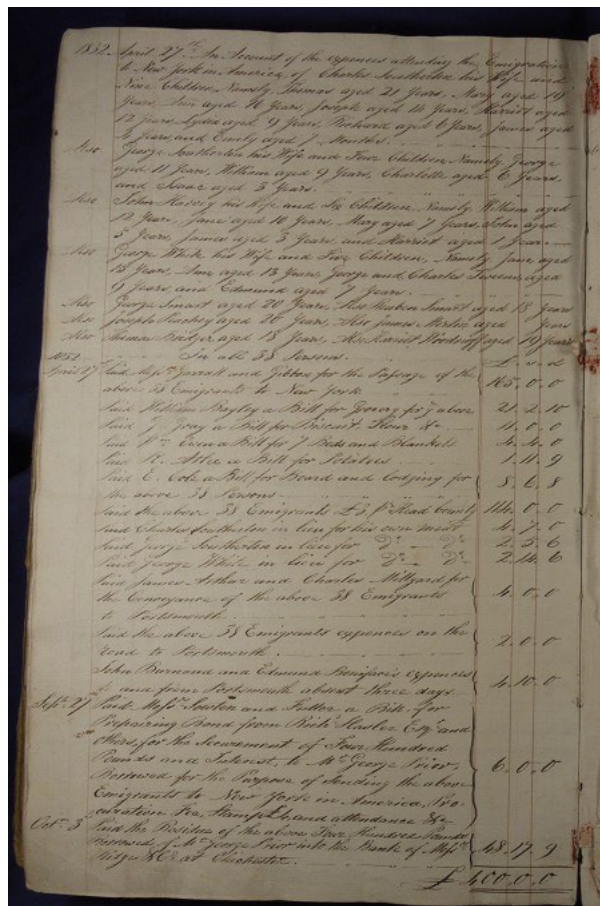


On 27th April 1832, the Aldingbourne Parish Rate Book and Vestry Minute Book (7) recorded "An Account of the expenses attending the Emigration to New York in America, of Charles Southerton his Wife and Nine Children, Namely, Thomas aged 21 Years, Mary aged 19 Years, Ann aged 16 Years, Joseph aged 14 Years, Harriot aged 12 Years, Lydia aged 9 Years, Richard aged 6 Years, James aged 4 Years, and Emely aged 7 Months."

"Also, George Southerton his Wife and Four Children, Namely, George aged 11 Years, William aged 9 Years, Charlotte aged 6 Years, and Isaac aged 3 Years."

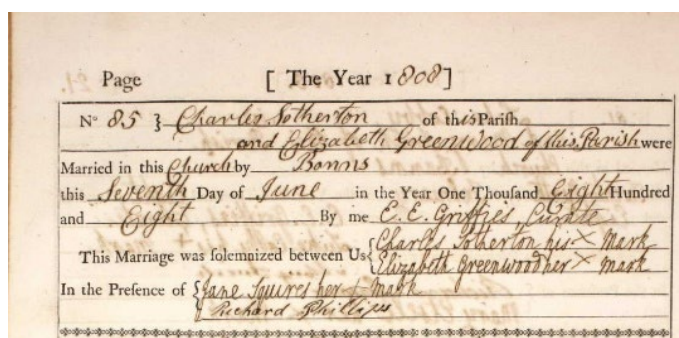
The accounts show that the total cost to the parish to send one group of 38 Aldingbourne emigrants, who sailed together from Portsmouth to New York in 1832, was £400. Payments were made to convey the emigrants from Aldingbourne to Portsmouth, to cover the cost of board and lodging, and for groceries and other sundry expenses. A bounty of £3 per head was also paid to the emigrants, and Charles Southerton, whose family was part of this large group of emigrants, received an additional £4-7s-0d in lieu of his own meat. The parish had even arranged a loan to cover some of these expenses.

WSRO: Par 1/30/1



Charles Southerton, son of Thomas and Lydia

Charles Southerton was baptised at the parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Aldingbourne, on 11th March 1787, the first-born son of Thomas and Lydia Southerton.



Charles Sotherton married Elizabeth Greenwood at Aldingbourne on 7th June 1808 (8); Elizabeth was the daughter of Thomas and Mary Greenwood and had also been baptised in Aldingbourne on 12th September 1790.

WSRO: Par 1/1/1/4

The Aldingbourne Parish Registers recorded the baptisms of ten children of Charles and Elizabeth (3, 9): Edmund on 11th September 1808; Thomas on 19th August 1810; Mary on 7th June 1812; William on 3rd April 1814; Ann on 25th December 1815; Joseph on 8th February 1818; Harriet on 30th April 1820; Charles on 12th February 1826; James on 14th October, 1827; Emily on 4th September, 1831. According to some of the entries in the parish register, the family was living at Woodgate, Westergate, an area of settlement within the parish of Aldingbourne.

A comparison between the lists of Charles and Elizabeth's children - those baptised at Aldingbourne and those recorded in the Vestry Minutes - show that Edmund, William and Charles were not in the parish list of children accompanying Charles and Elizabeth when they emigrated but there was a Lydia and a Richard listed who were not recorded in the baptisms at Aldingbourne.

Looking at a passenger list available on Ancestry.com (10), the family sailed on the British Brig Westmorland which had arrived in New York on 14th June 1832 from Dundee. The family was listed as Charles Southerton, an Agriculturalist aged 45, wife Elizabeth aged 42, and children Thomas aged 21, Mary aged 20, Ann age 19, Joseph aged 14, Harriet aged 12, Lydia aged 11, James aged 4, Emily aged 1, and 6-year old Richard listed at the end.

So, had they travelled from Portsmouth to Dundee first? Most probably, as a notice in the New York Evening Post, dated 14th June 1832 (11), stated that the Brig Westmoreland had arrived in New York with 92 steerage passengers and it gave Portsmouth as place of origin on 28th April 1832.

Image courtesy of Ancestry.com: New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-

Charles Southerton wrote a letter to his parents which was published by the Poor Law Commissioners in 1834. He was living at Cross Roads, near New Brunswick, New Jersey. It was addressed to Mr. Southerton, "Alingbourn", Sussex, and dated 19th September 1832 (1, p42).

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'Dear Father & Mother,

... I am very happy and I think Providence smiles upon me. I am at work at ditching at present and get a dollar a day ... and when we have done ditching there is plenty of wood cutting. A steady man might hearn 6s. a day [comparable to a laborer's weekly wage in Sussex in 1832] which I have ever since I have been here and sometimes more... If any of you should come (I never will persuade no one) when they do come, bring spades and shovels and handbills, for there is none in this country, and large wooden bottles. Ripe Hooks is but little service for they cradle all their corn hear ... If people knowed what America was, they never (would) stay in old England. We was 7 weeks and I day upon our voyage... we past 5 ice burgs in 1 day, they are as large as any barn... There is plenty of Peach orchards, they 1 dollar a bushel; and plenty of apples, they are 10 cents a bushel...

*Your dutifull and affecte. Son
Chas. Southerton.'*

Chas Southerton was then listed on the 1840 United States Federal Census as residing in South Brunswick, Middlesex, New Jersey (12). Charles must have died sometime before 1855 and his, wife Elizabeth Southerton and daughter Lydia Linsagang [sic] were named as next-of-kin in the 'New York, New York, U.S., Index to Death Certificates, 1862-1948', [certificate number: 14229] (13).

Widow Elizabeth lived in New York with son Joseph's family in 1855 (14) and then later, she lived with daughter Lydia's family in Brooklyn (15, 16). After 50 years in the USA and at the great age of 92, she died of 'Old Age' and 'Peralisis' [sic] on 1st April 1882 in Brooklyn, New York (17); she was buried at Greenwood Cemetery on 2nd April 1882, Brooklyn (18).

Thomas Southerton, son of Charles and Elizabeth

It is difficult to know if the surnames Southerton and Southerington refer to the same person (as occurred in earlier English records). There was a Thomas Southington living in New Haven, Connecticut, with one unnamed female in 1840 (19) and he was listed as a ship's carpenter in a New Haven directory of 1844 (20). The death of Charles, a 2 year old son of Thomas Southington of New Haven, was recorded in 1837 (21).

In 1850, Thos Southington, carpenter, was living in New York with wife Mary A and a 10 year old son, Thomas (22). According to a City directory, he was still a carpenter in New York in 1867-8 (23, 24) but in these directories, Thomas' surname was given as Southerton. In 1870, Thomas Southington is recorded on the census in New York with wife Mary; his occupation is recorded as ship carpenter (transcribed as shop carpenter). The date on the census return is July 1870 (25).

However, Thomas Southington, ship's carpenter, died of consumption (tuberculosis) aged 59 years in New Haven, Connecticut, in May 1870 (26).

Wife Mary A was listed as a widow in the 1877 New York directory and a Thomas Southington, presumably the son, was living at the same address, recorded as a clerk (27)

It is noticeable that the residential addresses changed between New York and New Haven every few years, yet Thomas' occupation was described as ship's carpenter in New Haven and as a ship's carpenter in Brooklyn, New York, in 1870. Were these the same man? No alternative has been identified. However, the 1870 New York census is dated July 1870 whereas Thomas Southington died in New Haven in May 1870.

It is worth pointing out that New Haven, Connecticut, is on the northern shore of the Long Island Sound. It is part of the New York metropolitan area. Travel between New Haven and New York was made easier by the developments of the railroads during the mid-19th century, with steamship connections in the early days.



A significant event for the early anti-slavery movement took place at New Haven in 1839. A trial for mutiny was held in New Haven of some kidnapped tribesmen from Sierra Leone who had revolted as they were being transported on a Spanish slave ship. Eventually, the US Supreme Court ruled that the captives had been acting in self-defence, so granting them the right to mutiny, and they were thus freed and returned to their homelands. A statue of the informal leader of the slaves, Joseph Cinqué, stands outside of New Haven City Hall. The then future President Abraham Lincoln delivered a speech on slavery in New Haven in 1860. (28, 29)

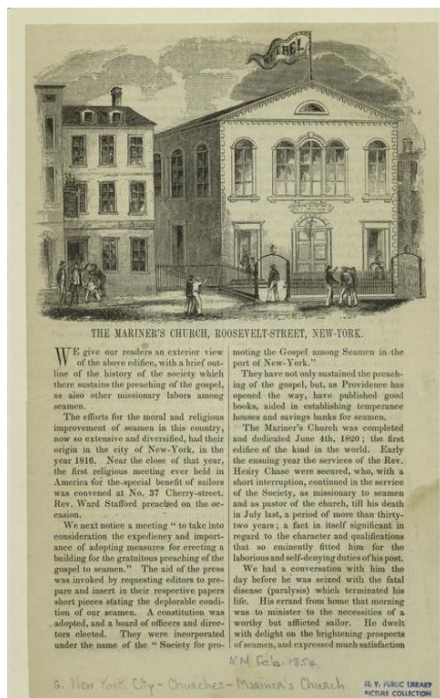
Image courtesy of Wikipedia

Mary Southerton, daughter of Charles Southerton

Mary appears to have married Isaac T Morris, a blacksmith from England. They were living in New York with 6 children in 1850 (30) and in 1855 (31). Four of these children were baptised at the Laight Street Presbyterian Church in New York (32).

Isaac and Mary were living in New Haven in 1870 (33) and 1880 (34).

Changes in the spellings of names require extra diligence but, by carefully cross-checking all details on the records, it is possible to conclude with some accuracy. On the 1850 census the family name is recorded as Morison instead of Morris but the list of children matches those baptised, although Lydia is called Eda. On the 1855 census, the ink has faded on the document to make reading difficult; both Isaacs, father and son, were transcribed as John but it should have been transcribed as Isac [sic]. In 1880, Isaac was transcribed as Ishac.



Mary and Isaac celebrated their Golden Wedding in 1884, an occasion reported in the local newspaper (35) which summarised their lives together. It confirmed that Mary's maiden name was Southerton. The couple were married by the pastor of the Mariner's Church in New York (36) where they first lived and then they spent 27 years living in New Haven, Connecticut, Isaac working as a Master Blacksmith. Always very active in the church, Isaac was a Deacon. They had 12 children in all, 7 of whom were still alive at the time of their Golden Wedding

Mary died in New Haven in 1888 aged 76 years (37) and is buried in New Haven's Evergreen Cemetery (38) where other members of her family are buried, including her husband, children, mother Elizabeth Southerton and sister Lydia Liesegang. (The New York Index to Death Certificates recorded that Mary Morris's maiden name was Southerton, husband was Isaac and a child was Mary Matilda Erwin which all confirm the correct information – 39).

Courtesy of The New York Public Library. www.nypl.org

Their children had mixed fortunes.

Daughter Elizabeth Ann Morris married a carpenter, Charles Jackson Buckbee. They lived in New Haven, Connecticut raising their family there (40). Charles served in the Civil War, signing-up in 1863 for the Unionists (41). Still in New Haven, Charles was described as a Salesman in a lumber yard in 1880 (42). The findagrave.com website has some splendid photographs of Elizabeth and some other family members (43), including a fine photograph of Charles in a top hat and another of him in military uniform (44); he had been a Captain in the army during the Civil War.



Charles J Buckbee courtesy of Findagrave.com



His wife, Elizabeth Ann Buckbee courtesy of Findagrave.com

Isaac Morris the younger, son of Mary and Isaac, served in the Navy during the Civil War. He married and had children, moving first to Hartford and then Noroton in New Britain, Connecticut. He was a metal worker – iron moulder in 1880 (45), then a polisher in 1900 (46). Only three of their six children were surviving in 1900 and, sadly, one of these, son William, died of tetanus in 1902 aged just 12 (47, 48). According to the 1900 census, Isaac's wife Louisa was only 15 years old when they married! Isaac was also a member of the fire service, played in a musical band and belonged to a number of community organisations. Isaac died on 18th April 1916 and is buried in Fairview Cemetery, Darien, New Britain in Hartford County (49). At the time of his death just his wife, two daughters and two grandchildren survived him (50). His widow received a civil war veteran's pension for Navy invalids and for being a Navy widow (51, 52).

It seems that daughter Mary Matilda Morris might possibly have been married three times, although it is difficult to follow her with certainty. She died on 5th August 1923 of intestinal obstruction and heart disease (53) and is buried in Cypress Hills National Cemetery, Brooklyn (54).

PATENTS.—The following Connecticut patents were issued for the week ending August 28th:
Charles H. Alsop of Middletown, for improved snap hook; William B. Barnard of Waterbury, for improved lamp chimney cleaner; George W. Bishop of Stamford, for improvement in ratchet drills; G. J. Capewell of West Chester, for improvement in machines for grinding and polishing buttons; Horace Hubbell of New Haven, for improvement in hydraulic engines; Isaac Morris and O. M. Morris of Fair Haven, for improvement in wrenches; Thomas Sault of New Haven, for improvement in steam engine slide valves; G. H. Seymour and B. Barnard of Waterbury, for improved button-hole cutter; Thomas E.

Son Charles Mark Morris, born in 1836 (32), followed in his father's footsteps working as a blacksmith (55) and then a carriage smith in 1970 (56). It appears that he and presumably his father took out a patent for their improvements to wrenches in 1866 (57).

He fought for the Union during the Civil War between 1861 and 1864, ranked as a Corporal when mustered out (58). He married Kate McDonald in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1865 (59) but sadly his wife died of apoplexy – probably a stroke - in 1879 (60) aged just

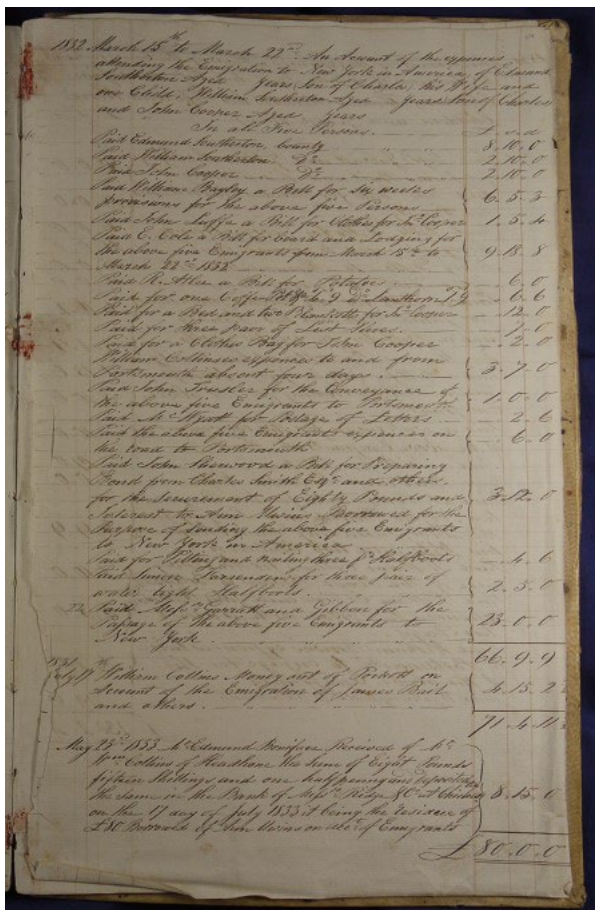
37yrs leaving Charles to raise their three young children. Interestingly, according to the 1880 census (61), Charles gave his occupation then as 'Drives Ice Cart'!

Charles died in 1906 and was buried in the Evergreen Cemetery, New Haven, Connecticut (62).

Edmund Southerton, son of Charles and Elizabeth Southerton

Charles and Elizabeth's eldest son, Edmund, had married Ann Skeates in Yapton on 13th November 1830. Ann[e] was the daughter of James and Sarah Skeates and had been baptised at Yapton on 28th July 1811. Their firstborn son, Alfred, was also baptised at Yapton on 29th March 1831.

It appears that Edmund had emigrated to America, too (63) but separately to his parents and most of his siblings.



The Aldingbourne Parish Rate Book and Vestry Minute Book (7) recorded for 12th to 15th March 1832: "An Account of the expenses attending the Emigration to New York in America, of Edmund Southerton...(Son of Charles) his Wife and one Child, William Southerton.....(Son of Charles) and John Cooper...". "In all Five Persons."

The total cost to the parish for sending these 5 parishioners to America was £66-9s-9d and included payments for clothes, shoes, boots, as well as the usual travel expenses, bedding, board and lodgings and food.

According to the passenger list for the Ship Hudson which arrived at the Port of New York on 5th April 1832, available on Ancestry.com (64), Edmd [although the abbreviation could be transcribed as Edwd] Southerton and Ann, his 22 year old wife, 8 year old son Alfred [this age does not tally and it would be highly unlikely that his parents would have had him at 16 and 14 years of age respectively] and Edmund's brother William, aged 18 years, all arrived in America along with fellow passenger John Cooper, aged 17 years.

WSRO: Par 1/30/1

Edmund Southerton, as Edmund Southington, is recorded as living in New Haven, Connecticut, with his family on the 1840 Census (65).

Edmund and Ann had had a first child in Yapton, Sussex; Alfred was baptised on 29th March 1831. Unfortunately, he does not appear in any further records after arriving in New York so it raises the possibility that he died in childhood or that he was known by an alternative name.

Edmund and Ann's second child, Sarah Ann, was born on 19th August 1832 and baptised at the First Presbyterian Church, Cranbury, Middlesex, New Jersey (66) although their surname was given as Southington. A son, James R Southerton, was also baptised at the same church in 1834 (67).

In the 1850 Federal census in August of that year, Edmund was no longer listed with the family (68); we can only surmise that he had died. Ann was then living in New Haven with son, James R Southerton, daughters Elizabeth, Mary and Emily Southerton and one other person. It seems the family was fairly nomadic over the ensuing weeks, months and years.

In the September of 1850 (69), Anna Southington [sic] and daughters Elizabeth, Mary and Emma [sic] Southington, were in Hartford, Connecticut, about 40 miles north east of New Haven, staying with eldest daughter Sarah, her husband James Phelps and baby son. James Phelps was a printer who later worked on editorials for The New York Tribune and Times (70). Baby Charles James (sometimes known as James) Phelps was born 4th April 1850 (71). By October of that year, 1850, James, Sarah and baby Charles were living in Middletown, Middlesex, Connecticut, 16 miles south of Hartford (72); mother Ann was not with them but, confusingly, a Mary Southington aged 25 yrs was with them – this data does not properly match with Sarah's sister Mary.

The Phelps family had returned to New York by 1855 with the census showing that they had two more children, Eliza and Amelia, and were once again living with Sarah's widowed mother, Anna Southerton, and Sarah's sisters, Elizabeth and Mary (73). Sarah's younger sister, Emily, was then living with brother James R Southerton and his new family in Kingston, New York State (74).

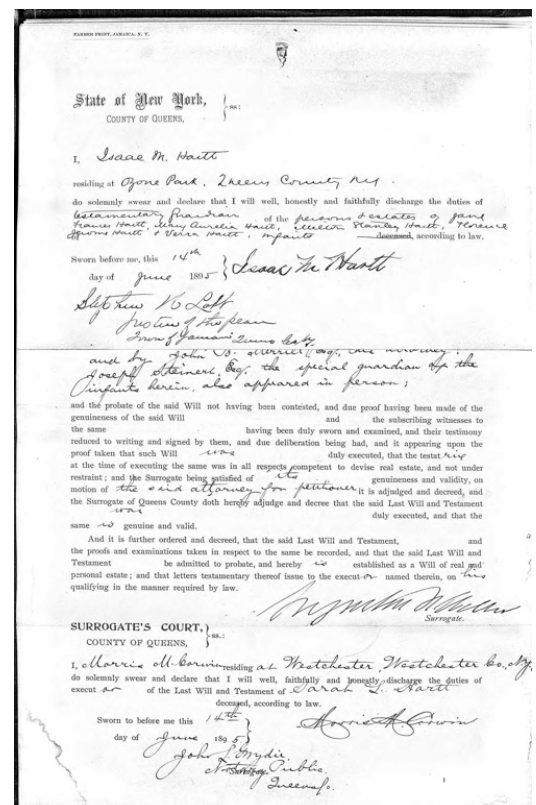
Ann Southerton, widow of Edmund, appears to be living with daughter Elizabeth, by then married, in 1870 but after that she cannot be traced further.

In 1865, James and Sarah Phelps (nee Southerton) were living in Brooklyn, New York State (75); they now had 4 children with them: Amelia, Sarah L, Georgia and a young Charles B Phelps. Sadly, it seems that their first son, Charles James Phelps, must have died some time before and daughter Eliza Lydia died in 1856 aged 4yrs (76). Sarah Ann sadly died on 14th May 1867 aged just 34 years (77). She was buried at the Greenwood Cemetery, Brooklyn. It appears from the censuses that husband, James, then remarried to another Sarah; this certainly appears to be one and the same family but often it can be difficult to prove and coincidences in personal details can, and do, occur.

Daughter, Aurelia Amelia Phelps (sometimes recorded as Aurelia), appears to have married twice – firstly to Charles Chichester (78) and then, after she was widowed, (79) to Andrew Smith (80). She had a daughter, Grace (81), and she also helped to care for her niece, Vera Hart (82), after the premature death of her sister Sarah L Hart[t] nee Phelps. Aurelia had also had another daughter, Kittie, who died aged just 26yrs (83, 84). Aurelia remained in New York, died in 1931 and is buried in Sterling Cemetery, Greenport, New York (85).

The usefulness of Wills and Probate records in providing evidence of relationships is highlighted when looking at Aurelia's sister, Sarah L Phelps. Sometimes known as Sadie, she married Isaac M Hartt (86) and they raised a family in the town of Jamaica, Queens, New York (87). Her youngest daughter, Vera, was born in December 1894 (88) but, sadly, Sarah L died in the following May (89). She left her estate to her 5 children (90, 91, 92); her husband shared guardianship of the children and Sarah appointed her brother-in-law to be sole executor.

Another sister, Georgia Phelps, married a banker/bank clerk, Morris M Corwin, who was named as executor in Sarah L Hartt's 's Will; Georgia and Morris cared for another child of Sarah L Hartt's around the time of Sarah's death. Georgia and Morris raised their 2 children in New York (93), in the Bronx (94) and Mount Vernon, New York (95); she ended her days as an inmate of the Osborn Memorial Home for aged women (96) dying at the grand age of 91 years (97).



New York, Wills and Probate Records, 1659-1999 courtesy of Ancestry.com

Trying to follow the life of Charles B Phelps provides an example for caution. There appears to have been several men named Charles Phelps in New York during the late 1800s and early twentieth century. One of them, a farmer named Charles B Phelps in Orleans, New York, was murdered. The murder, subsequent wrongful conviction of a man, reprieve of death sentence for the convicted man and eventual discussion of the full case, was widely reported (98-101). However, this was not Charles B Phelps, son of James and Sarah Ann (nee Southerton).

Charles B Phelps, son of Mr and Mrs James N Phelps, married Harriot O Brown at the Free Baptist Church in Brooklyn (102). However, Charles is not listed with his wife and their three daughters on the 1900 census (103); Harriet was head of the household and running a boarding house in Livingstone Street, Brooklyn, then. In 1905, Harriet was listed as Orvette Phelps, using her middle name, and was head of household, working as a cashier; the three daughters were still at home with her but not husband Charles (104).

A Brooklyn newspaper reported in August 1900 that a Charles B Phelps, a printer, had attempted suicide by taking Laudanum when his estranged wife refused to return to him. She was living in Livingstone Street so it seems very probable that this was indeed the Harriet O Phelps who had married Charles B Phelps, although she was not a lot younger than her husband, as reported in the newspaper (105).

A Charles B Phelps was then listed as a lodger with a woman in Brooklyn in the 1900 Census; he was a printer born in 1863 but his parents were listed as from Germany (106) and then in 1905 a Charles B Phelps was listed as being in the King's County Penitentiary, but this time his occupation was given as physician (107).

In a 1913 directory, Harriet O Phelps is listed in Ocean Grove, New Jersey, as a widow (108) and in 1914 the announcement of daughter Hazel's marriage only mentions mother Harriet O Phelps – no mention of father Charles (109).

DATE		CHRISTIAN NAME	SURNAME	AGE	PLACE OF BURIAL	MINISTER
1916				Y. M. D.		
February	18	Anna	Ogden	47	St. Jude's - Evergreen	James Howard
"	"	Charles B.	Phelps	54	Farm Col.	A. W. Hilditch
"	20	Perry	Black	36	St. Jude's - Evergreen	James Howard
"	25			30	" - Oakland	James Howard
"	26	Paul L.	Smutsel	45	" - St. Michael's	Joseph M. G. ...
"	"	John	Campbell	45	City Home for aged	W. F. ...
"	"	Amelia	Sedrick	80	"	C. P. ...
"	"	John	R...	81	"	C. P. ...

Episcopal Diocese of New York Church Records, 1767-1970 courtesy of Ancestry.com

A death occurred in New York City in 1916 of a Charles B Phelps (110); he was a printer, son of a James and Sarah; a widower, he died of exposure to cold and alcoholism (111). His residence at the time was given as the New York City Farm Colony, a

poorhouse. It is difficult to prove that this was indeed the son of Sarah Ann Phelps, nee Southerton; it does seem quite likely, although some details on his record for the 1915 Census of Inmates in Almshouses and Poorhouses (112) do not match, notably the mother's maiden name, that he was a widower and that both parents were Irish! However, his occupation was given as compositor which is related to printing. He was buried at the Farm Colony by the City Mission Society. Were some details recorded wrongly for a man in a sorry state, did he give the wrong details, or are these different individuals? It is possible that the details are wrong because of his condition but it should be pointed out that there were a remarkable number of people named Phelps in New York State at that time.

Another daughter of Edmund and Ann Southerton, was Elizabeth Southerton, sister of Sarah Phelps nee Southerton; she married James MacKinney (her maiden name is given on their sons' death certificates – 113 and 114). In 1860, she was living in New York with husband James, a sail-maker, and two sons, William and James C (115); Elizabeth's mother, Ann, was living with them and another child Henry C Sutherton [sic] aged 7 but unfortunately there is no indication of his relationship to any of them on this census. Elizabeth and family had moved to Philadelphia by 1870 (116); Elizabeth's age appears to be wrong on this census. They attended the Port Richmond Methodist Episcopal Church (117) James died of pthisis, also known as pulmonary tuberculosis, on 31st December 1879 (118 and 119).

Elizabeth McKinney and son James, a pedlar, were still living together in Philadelphia in 1880 (120); Elizabeth's occupation is given as 'Turning Store'. Her other son William E, a sailmaker like his father, had married by this time (121). In 1900, Elizabeth and James were still living together but James was recorded as a 'Preacher' (122).

Elizabeth McKinney died on 24th February 1907 and was buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Philadelphia (123, 124).

Mary Southerton (sometimes written as Southington and mis-transcribed as Louterton), another daughter of Edmund and Ann Southerton, had been living with her sister, Sarah Phelps, and then it appears that she married George W McCullough in New York in 1858 (125). They continued to live in Brooklyn (126, 127) and had a daughter; George was variously a car conductor and truckman. A record of the death of Mary Jane McCoullough (marked as Mary Jane Southerton on Ancestry.com) who died in Brooklyn in 1900, however, gives her parents' names as Richard and Anne (128). She was widowed and died of apoplexy and paralysis, probably a stroke. It is not possible to know whether the name of her father was just an error or if the record relates to a different person.

James R Southerton, another son of Edmund and Ann, was born on 15th January 1834 and was also baptised at the First Presbyterian Church, Cranbury, Middlesex, New Jersey, on 8th February 1834 (129). According to the 1850 census, James R Southerton was living in New Haven, Connecticut, working as a carpenter (68). He was living with his mother, Ann, and three sisters – Elizabeth, 15, Mary, 11, Emily, 7. Edmund, the father, was missing from the census but there was an Irish girl living with the family, a Catharine Rebie.

By 1855, James R was living in Kingston, New York, with a wife, Melvina, who was from Orange County and a 2 year old daughter, Clara N, also born in Orange County; he was working as a gas-fitter. His sister, 13 years old Emily, was living with them (130). James was still living in Kingston in 1859 (131) working as a gas-fitter.

Sadly, James R Southerton died on 26th April 1860, aged just 27 years and was buried at Wiltwyck cemetery, Kingston (132); his grave-stone records that a son called Edmund R died on 9th March aged just 8 months and a daughter, Florine, died on 22 January, 1861, aged 5 years and 6 months; wife Melvina died in 1905 having lived with various children over the years, sometimes working as a tailoress. (However, please see notes regarding her probate, below).

On the 1860 census (133), Malvina was living in Kingston with three young children: Carry N [Clara], aged 7 years; Florence, aged 5 years – presumably the Florina on the gravestone; Walter I, only 1 year old. The census was dated 16th June 1860 – 2 months after James R had died.

However, despite such difficult circumstances, it seems some of these Southerton descendants flourished.

US Passport Applications, 1795-1925 courtesy of Ancestry.com

United States of America.

Passport No. 2742

Issued JUN 22 1898

Walter I. Southerton

Kingston, New York

Notary Public

379 Fulton St
Kingston, N.Y.

Walter Irving Southerton, son of James R Southerton and Melvina, qualified as a dentist, graduating from the Michigan State University in 1882. He practiced in Syracuse, New York State, for about 12 years but was also very involved in religious work. He was ordained as a Minister in the First Baptist Church in Syracuse, although in 1898, he had applied for a passport giving his occupation as musician! (134) Walter had married Flora Sortore of New York State and they had two daughters, one became a teacher and the other became a Social Worker (135). He died in the Higgins Memorial Hospital, Olean in New York State, on the 23rd September 1936, (136, 137) and was buried at Forest Hills Cemetery, Belmont in New York State (138).

Although there has to be a limit when researching individual members of large families, more modern records can provide an indication of the achievements of the descendants. In the case of one of Walter's daughters, Jessie, she applied for a passport in 1922 (139) - at that time, she was a 35 years old unmarried teacher - stating she intended to travel to Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, France and other places arriving back in New York from Le Havre after a 3 month tour; she appears to have travelled widely. She married in 1934.

Walter's older sister, Clarra [Clara] N Sutherland, had been born in Gloucester, Massachusetts, on 29th May, 1853 (140). She married Erastus C Marvin and had a son. In 1880, her mother Malvin [sic], is living with the young couple in Newburgh, Orange County, New York State (141). Clara was very involved in matters of the Church, her husband having been church sexton (142) and she was the oldest, longest member of the Newburgh First Baptist Church when she died in 1935 (143).

One interesting finding was that probate was granted to Walter I Southerton for his mother's estate but her name was given as Melvina Blackwell. Daughter Clara N Marvin was also named in the administration papers which verifies that it is the correct person (144, 145). Yet Melvina's name is Southerton on her gravestone (146). No record of another marriage has been found.

Edmund and Ann's daughter Elizabeth, married and moved to Philadelphia; she had a small family but was widowed in middle-age.

William Southerton son of Charles and Elizabeth Southerton

After arriving in America with brother Edmund, William became a blacksmith. He married a young English widow and took on her children; the couple then had children of their own, born in Pennsylvania according to the 1855 census (147). The census return indicates that William had been living at their address in Kings, Brooklyn, New York, for just one month. The census also records that William was able to read and write but his wife, Sarah, could not.

By 1860, the family had moved back to New Haven, Connecticut (148) but by 1870, William and one son had returned to New York - wife Sarah was not with them (149).

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS		MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH	
PLACED OF DEATH Chelsea (No. Soldiers' Home St. Ward)		DATE OF DEATH July 2, 1911 (Month Day Year)	
FULL NAME Sperling, William H. (If married or divorced woman or widow give maiden name, also name of husband.) RESIDENCE Northampton, Mass. Registered No. 399.		I HEREBY CERTIFY that I attended deceased from April 26, 1911 to July 2, 1911; that I last saw him alive on July 2, 1911, and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at 7:25 P.M.	
SEX Male COLOR OR RACE White MARRIAGE Married		CAUSE OF DEATH as follows: Arterio-sclerosis	
DATE OF BIRTH April 10, 1840 (Month Day Year)		CONTRIBUTORY (Duration) yrs. mos. ds.	
AGE 71 yrs. 2 mos. 22 ds.		RESIDENT (Signed) George H. Maxfield, M.D. July 2, 1911 (Address) Chelsea	
OCCUPATION Painter		LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (FOR HOSPITALS, INSTITUTIONS, TRANSPORTS, OR FERRY RESIDENTS) At place of death in the State yrs. mos. ds.	
BIRTHPLACE (State or country) New Jersey		PLACE OF BIRTH (State or country) England	
NAME OF FATHER Jediah Sperling		PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL Forest Dale	
BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or country) New Jersey		DATE OF BURIAL July 5, 1911	
MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER Sarah Farr		ADDRESS Chelsea.	
BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or country) England		SUBSCRIBERS S.B. Douglass & Son	
THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE (Signature) Charles H. Reed		REGISTERED	

Sarah's children who were born before she married William Southerton had the surname Sperling. The death certificate of one son, William H Sperling, showed that Sarah's maiden name was Sarah Farr and she was from England (150). Sarah Farr had arrived in America in 1832 and it seems she was born in South Bersted! (See Farr family)

Sadly, aged 62 years on the 1880 US Federal Census (151), William is listed as resident in a Gentleman's Home - the census return has marked him as an 'idiot' and unable to read or write.

He died in his 70th year on 30th July 1891 at Flatbush, a neighbourhood in the New York City borough of Brooklyn (152) and was buried 2nd Aug 1891 at Cypress Hills National Cemetery, Brooklyn

George Southerton son of Thomas and Lydia Southerton

It is difficult to say with certainty where George Southerton was born but there is a record of a baptism in Petworth of a George, son of Thomas and Lydia Southerinton (154). He was born on 13th February 1798 and baptised on 23rd July 1798. On the same day, there was also a baptism of Richard, son of Thomas and Lydia Southerington, who was born on 15th March 1796, and earlier, on the 14th May 1794, there was a baptism of an Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas and Lydia Southerton. Unable to identify any other records for Thomas and Lydia Southerton from Petworth c1790s, is it possible that this Thomas and Lydia Southerin[g]ton are the same as Thomas and Lydia Southerton from Aldingbourne? There was a long gap between the children born in Aldingbourne and then those in South Bersted.

George Southerton married Jane Rewell in Aldingbourne on 7th October 1820 (155). Jane Rewell was baptised in Walberton on 7th December 1800, the daughter of William and Charlotte Rewell. The parish of Walberton is about 3 miles east of Aldingbourne.

George and Jane Southerton's first child, George, was baptised at Aldingbourne on 24th December 1820; the father George was described as a labourer from Westergate.

William Rewell Southerton was baptised on 9th June 1822, in Walberton but his parents were recorded as George and Ann (instead of Jane).

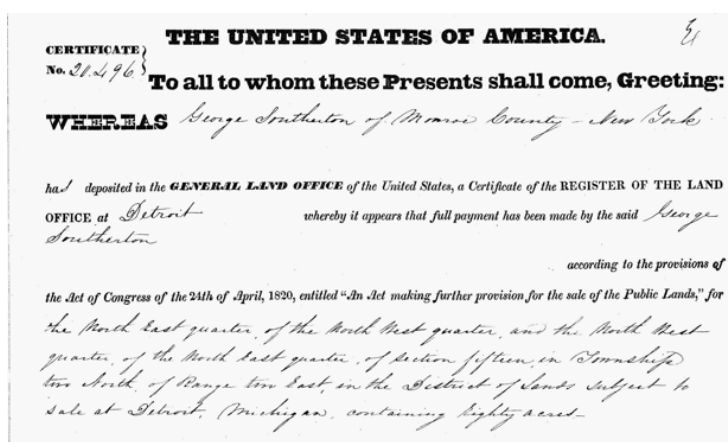
Daughter Charlotte was baptised on 1st January 1826 at the Church of St. Mary Magdalene in South Bersted. The baptism entry in the parish register describes George Southerton as a Labourer from Shripney, which is a hamlet in South Bersted just South of the hamlet of Lidsey in Aldingbourne parish.

Isaac, son of George and Jane Southerton, was baptised at Aldingbourne on 25th December 1828; the father George was recorded as a labourer from Lydsey.

The family are listed on the same passenger list as George's brother, Charles and his family, sailing on the Westmorland (10). George was described as an Agriculturalist aged 35, accompanied by wife Jane aged 34, and their children George aged 12, William aged 11, Charlotte aged 6, and 3 years old Isaac.

In 1839, a George Southerton purchased 80 acres of land in Michigan (156).

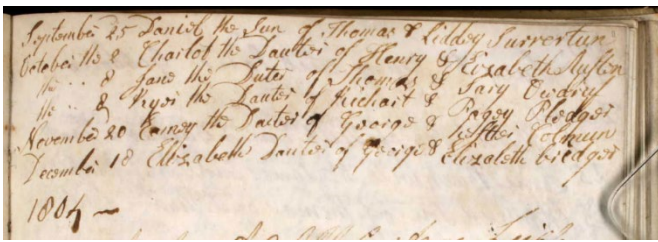
Sadly, wife Jane died on 28th July 1843 and was buried at Stockbridge, Ingham County, Michigan, aged 42-yrs (157). It appears that a George buried with her but there is no indication of whether this was her husband or son (158), although, husband George cannot be traced further.



US General Land Office Records, 1776-2015 courtesy of Ancestry.com

Son George possibly married, had a family and farmed, but records suggest that he too died prematurely. As did William, his brother, who married but sadly died aged just 32 years in 1854 (159). The younger brother, Isaac, was also a farmer; he married and had a family (160). Oddly, the 1880 census describes him as "Intemperate"! (161) He died of cancer of the stomach in Battle Creek, Calhoun, Michigan, in 1886 (162, 163).

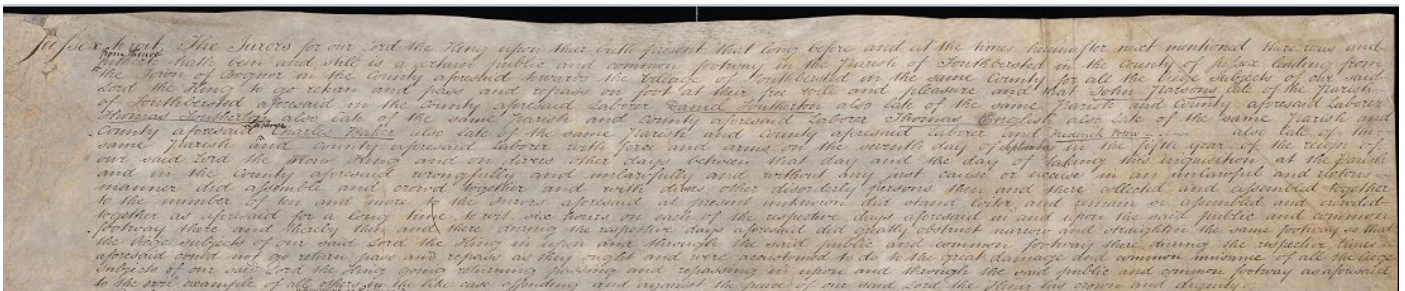
Daniel Southerton son of Thomas and Lydia Southerton



Daniel Surretun (Southerton) was baptised at Aldingbourne on 25th September 1803, son [sic] of Thomas and Liddy Surretun (Thos and Lydia Surrerton in BTs) (3).

Aldingbourne Parish Register, 1780-1812 WSRO ref. Par 1/1/1/3

It appears that Daniel Southerton, along with some others including a Thomas Southerton, appeared before the Quarter Sessions a number of times between 1824 and 1825. Daniel, a labourer from South Bersted at the time, was charged with riotous assembly for six hours on a footpath between South Bersted and Bognor, blocking its use by the public. He pleaded guilty (164-167). At this time, unrest was developing among agricultural workers – as farming was becoming more mechanised and farm labourer's were not able to earn sufficient to feed and house their families, some agricultural workers began to riot. This unrest eventually led to what became known as the 'Swing Riots'.



WSRO: Quarter Session Rolls: QR/W734/127

Sussex to wit: The Jurors full our Lord the king upon their oath present that long before and at the times hereinafter next mentioned there was and from thence hitherto hath been and still is a certain public and common footway in the parish of Southbersted in the County of Sussex leading from the Town of Bognor in the County aforesaid towards the village of South Bersted in the same County for all the liege subjects of our said Lord the King to go return and pass and repass on foot at their free will and pleasure and that ... Daniel Southerton also late of the same parish and County aforesaid Laborer Thomas Southerton also late of the same parish and County aforesaid Laborer ... with force and arms on the seventh day of September in the fifth year of the reign of our said Lord the now King and on divers other days between that day and the day of taking this inquisition at the parish and in the County aforesaid wrongfully and unlawfully and without any just cause or excuse in an unlawful and riotous manner did assemble and crowd together and with divers other disorderly persons then and there collected and assembled together ... did greatly obstruct narrow and straighten the same foot way...

Daniel Southerton married Jane Farr on 10th November 1827 at Westbourne, a parish about 14 miles from Aldingbourne and to the West of Chichester. (Some members of the Farr family also emigrated to America)

They had a son Frederick who was baptised at Aldingbourne on 29th June 1828.

Then, another son arrived, Henry whose baptism appears to have been entered twice into the Aldingbourne Parish Register – on 26th February 1830 and on the 13th June 1830. Both entries give the same names and state that Daniel was a labourer of Westergate. (This might be due to human error, or a second official baptism which can sometimes be recorded as 'welcomed into the Church' following on from a private baptism of a sickly newborn at the time of birth, or it could possibly be a second family with the same names).

On 17th July 1831, the Aldingbourne Parish Rate and Vestry Minute Book (7) recorded "An Account of the expenses attending the Emigration to America of Daniel Southerton his Wife and two Children".

The accounts reveal that Daniel Southerton should have sailed on 1st July 1831 along with some other Aldingbourne parishioners but the ship was full and so the family's passage was delayed by two weeks, the parish having to pay extra board and lodging expenses for those two weeks. The total cost to the parish for the emigration of Daniel and his family was £44-13s and a ha'pence.

Daniel Southerton, wife Jane and their two sons are listed as passengers on the Ship Hudson which arrived at New York on 2nd September 1831 (168).

He appears to be living in Newtown, Queens, New York, in the 1940 US Federal Census (169) but in the 1850 census, Jane Frances Souterton is still living in New York with the two sons, Frederick T Souterton, a 22 year old carpenter, and Henry A Souterton, a 21 year old wheelwright, but Daniel is not on the census (170).

Jane F Southerton is working as a tailoress in 1855, still in New York (171). She is living with son Henry, a carpenter, by then married to Sarah E with an infant son, Daniel Augustus, who had been baptised at St. Andrews Church, Manhattan, on 29 January 1854 (172). The marriage had taken place in 1851 between Henry Southerton and Sarah Corbine at the New York City Second Street Methodist Church witnessed by Joseph Southerton and Jane Southerton. (i73). Jane became a regular member of the United Methodist Church. (174)

Henry remained in New York working as a carpenter and wheelwright. He and Sarah had three more children. He died on 26th March 1906, his wife Sarah Elizabeth had died 4 years earlier. They are both buried at Saint Michaels Cemetery, East Elmhurst, Queens County, New York.

Parents – Thomas and Lydia Southerton from Aldingbourne

So, what ever happened to Charles Southerton's parents? Amazingly, Thomas and Lydia Southerton also emigrated to the United States of America in 1834, at the ages of 70 and 68 respectively, sailing from London on the Ship Hannibal and arriving at the port of New York on 10th July 1834 (175).

Quite an incredible feat.

So, why did the Southerton's leave their homes in Sussex and emigrate to a foreign country far away across the sea? And why did the parish assist them and pay towards the costs?

The labouring poor were experiencing very hard times in England in the early 19th Century; an agricultural labourer's pay could not support his family and when suffering hardships, the poor needed support in the form of poor 'relief'. As new equipment was introduced and new techniques in farming were developed, so agricultural work would have become more scarce and cheaper; work was not guaranteed for all agricultural workers, leaving many at the mercy of the poor relief and with the possibility of the workhouse looming. Perhaps the thought of improving one's 'lot' by emigrating to America was attractive to the downtrodden, working-class poor.

As far as the parish was concerned, it is possible that the prosperous landowners and property-owners, who had to pay the 'poor rates' (or taxes) for the relief to the poor, might have welcomed an opportunity to get rid of some of the poor in their parish – particularly those who were causing trouble and perhaps demanding fairer rights.

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