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# JOHN PRIDE

m. abt. 1634, maybe England  
d. prob. Fall 1647, Salem, MA Bay Colony

John settled in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1636. He's on a list of Salem grantees covering 26 December 1636 to 12 July 1637, being given 20 acres.<sup>1</sup> On 20 March 1636/37 he was given a half acre "on Winter Harbor by their house" and five acres "on Darbie fort side."<sup>2</sup> 25 December 1637, the town's marsh and meadowland was ordered to be divided,<sup>3</sup> and there is a list of grantees, bound in a different part of the original volume, that was likely the result of the order.<sup>4</sup> John was given three acres. Numbers preceding the name of the head of household were the number of people in the household. John had four.

His first fully datable appearance in records is on 27 Dec 1636, when lawyer Thomas Babb sued him and fellow Salem potter William "Vinson" (or Vincent) for what was likely a debt.<sup>5</sup> The only details given for the case is called:

*John Pride's memorandum, dated Jan.20, 1636[/37]:*

*7 shirts at 4s, 1li. 8s.*

*1 pair worsted hose and garters, 5s. 6d.*

*4 1-2 yds. ribbon, 1s. 3d.*

*for silk, 8d.*

*more ribion, 9d.*

*for an iron potte and left to pay for a halyitt [halyard], 11s.*

*lent in mony, 7 s. 6d.*

*for a pound powder, 2s*

*for Mr. Babb, total, 3li 2d.*

*More to John Prid:*

*Mustkitt rest bandeler and powder and shot, 1li. 10s.*

*for a bible, 5s*

*for a Codd line and 3 hooks, 3s.*

*100 makrill & a qr. 100 Cod fish, 15s.*

*6 yds. fushion, 12s.*

*Total, 3li. 5s.*

*In all, 6li. 5s. 2d.*

Felt's *Annals of Salem* may be the first mention of John making earthenware in 1641.<sup>6</sup> Perley's *History of Salem* says he was a potter and brickmaker.<sup>7</sup> Neither men give sources. It's been repeated like the game of telephone in multiple publications in the century since, and in them John has become a registered brickmaker, and in a confusion of this and an actual verified record, given permission to dig tile clay from the General Court in 1641. Felt's and Perley's statements are supported in the Salem town records or Massachusetts Bay Colony General Court records. That he made earthenware is certain. He's called a potter as early as 25 June 1639,<sup>8</sup> but his connection to another potter, William Vincent, before this suggests he started earlier. He was a defendant when John Leech and William Vincent accused him of slander, but the case was dropped.<sup>9</sup> More cases came along, although with no details: Anthony Buxton sued him for debt, which was heard at the same court;<sup>10</sup> and John Leech sued John for a debt.<sup>11</sup> There are details, although cryptic, in the case of John vs. William "Vinsent."<sup>12</sup> Judgement favored John, who was to have 2s. for a day's work. Attached to this was a:

*Bill in favor of John Pride*

*6 yeds. canvis, 12s.*

*new shirt, 5s.*

*'for about what I stands bound to Mr. Walton,' 10s.*

*left to pay of a debt of 4li. 10s.*

*2 weeks' work with John Leach, 12s.*

*to Mis. Goose, 2s. 9d.*

*1-4 of hundred of lead, 9s.*

*canvis drawers, 2s.*

*Total, 2li. 14s. 9d.*

*'wh. he pd my mothr, 6s.'*

It's unfortunate there's no more information about this, including the mother he referred to. It may have been his mother-in-law, unless his own mother was remarried. I've also found no specific information about when William Vincent started his pottery.

As mentioned above, John has been associated in print with a regulation passed by the Massachusetts Bay General Court in which 'tyle earth' or clay to make sale ware."<sup>13</sup> "Tile earth," as one source says, was a provincial English term for a compact, clay soil.<sup>14</sup> "Sale ware" undoubtedly covers, for legal purposes, the commercial use of the soil. He certainly was affected by this law, but he wasn't, as some books say, given any permissions by the court. When we consider he's called a potter, as well as the 80 dozen pieces of earthenware mentioned below in a court document and his inventory and the pound's worth

of lead and earthenware (earthenware with lead glaze is likely referred to here) also in his inventory, John surely was not a brickmaker.

More suits on record are Thomas Oliver vs. John Pride, debt;<sup>15</sup> and Thomas Pickton vs. John Pride, debt.<sup>16</sup> John was fined for contempt of a warrant on 28 August 1644.<sup>17</sup> p. 72, "John Pride, petitioner, was ordered, with consent of Mr. Adam Ottley, about delivery of 50 doz. of earthen ware to Mr. [Thomas] Ruck, and that a bond from him to Mr. Humphreys be delivered to Ra.[lph] Fogg to be cancelled."<sup>18</sup> This is another specific reference to him in connection with pottery. John was excused from militia training as long as he paid a fine of 5 shillings a year. He was forbidden to fence his 1/2 acre lot on "Winter Neck" on 13 June 1644.<sup>19</sup>

John's estate probate was brought to the "28: 10: 1647" (28 December 1647) session of the Salem Quarterly Court by his widow, who isn't named.<sup>20</sup> Out of his estate, £8 was to go to his son and £4 each to his two daughters, all underage and not named. Aside from her dower, his widow was to be the children's guardian and to be brought up by her. The following is a transcription of his inventory in the same source, said to have been in one of the "wast" books of the court, which don't appear to have survived.

*One dwellinge house, one barne and worke house with foure Akers of land adjoyninge to it, 16li.  
marsh and uplande grounde uppon the necke beinge the one halfe of that sometime belonginge to Mr. Holgraue, 8li. 15s.  
one halfe aker of marsh and halfe an aker of upland, 1li. 10s.  
two Cowes and one heighfer of two yeares old, 13li.  
three Calves of this yeare, 3li.  
one hogge and two shotts, 2li. 17s. 6d.  
foure ewe gotes and 2 lambes, 2li.  
one fether bed, one bolster, foure pillowes, one Ruge, one pr. blanketts, 5li.  
two old Rugges, two course beds, one blanket and one bolster, 12s.  
three pr. of sheetes, 1li. 13s. 4d.  
for other smale lenen in the same chest, 1li. 10s.  
bands and capps, 10s.  
wearinge apparrell, 6li.  
one brass kettle, 1 lettle brass pott and one Iron pott, 1li. 4s.  
thirtie and seaven dozzen of earthen ware, 4li. 12s. 6d.  
warminge pann and three pewter cupps, 6s. 8d.  
leade and other earthen ware, 1li. 7s.  
a bible and other books and a glass, 12s.  
two fryinge panns, 7s.  
one Fowlinge peece, one muskett rest and sword, 2li. 10s.  
a pr. of pot hookes and hangers, 7s.  
foure Axes, a spade and a picke Axe, 14s.  
two table boords, two chests, two boxes with chaires and stoole, 1li. 18d.  
one bed steed and a trundle bedsteed, 10s.  
fifteene Akers of Lande on Cape An side, 9li.  
for wheate, barly, Pease and Indian Come, 3li.  
total, 88li. 16s.*

Given how toxic it is to handle lead glazes, this may be why John died as a relatively young man.

children of John Pride:

\***John** b. abt. 1635-37

\*daughter b. abt 1635-37 (In 1900, the author of *Genealogy of the Tapley Family* said she was Mary, who married a "Dutch Governor" named "Bessol," no sources given. This doesn't sound credible, but if it has any kernel of truth, I can't find it)

\*Elizabeth b. abt. 1638-43 (I place her as the youngest child, and therefore b. after the marsh/meadow division of 1637, due to her marriage in 1663.



1. *Town Records of Salem*, vol. 1 (Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1868), 24
2. Ibid, 41.
3. Ibid, 61
4. Ibid, 103
5. *Records and Files of the Essex Quarterly Court* [hereafter EQC] vol. 1 (Salem, MA:The Essex Institute, 1911), 4-5.
6. *Annals of Salem* vol. 2 (Salem, MA:1849), 184.
7. Sidney Perley, *History of Salem* (Salem, MA:1924), 427.
8. EQC, 1:12, "Jno. Pride, pottor" vs. Anthony Buxton; 25 June 1639.
9. Ibid, 1:8, 26 June 1638.
10. Ibid, 9, 25 September 1638.
11. Ibid, 13, 24 September 1639.
12. Ibid, 22, 29 September 1640.
13. Recs of the Gov, 102.
14. Albert Fay, *A Glossary of the Mining and Mineral Industry* (Washington, DC:1920), 686.
15. EQC, 1:32, 21 Jan 1641/42.
16. Ibid, 1:70, 27 Aug 1644.
17. Ibid, 72.
18. Ibid, 96, 30 June 1646.
19. Ibid, 130.
20. Ibid, 131. Original mss at MA State Archives, vol. 1638-1648, 225.

"Redware refers to a utilitarian style of earthenware pottery using clay with a high iron content, which turns reddish-brown when fired. Though mass-produced redware was made in Europe, the form became especially popular in the American colonies, as the clay was abundant and redware products were

affordable. However, redware was also brittle and easily damaged, adding to its rarity today. Before the Revolutionary War, it was illegal for British colonists to make their own goods and offer them for sale, as they were obligated to send raw materials to England, thus generating taxed exports for big businesses like the East India Company. In fact, Americans supplied the Crown with clay, but they also surreptitiously produced their own redware pieces. John Pride, who lived in Salem, Massachusetts, during the mid-17th century, is the first American redware potter known by name. Because redware is very porous, it needs to be waterproofed to be useful for cooking and food storage, and since glazes were typically lead-based, redware vessels would have made any acidic food or beverages quite toxic. For potters who handled the glaze daily, it was frequently deadly."

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