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CAPT. OLIVER BESLEY AND DESCENDANTS

Innkeepers, New Rochelle, New York - before 1711

Oliver Besley, a Huguenot, came from the Isle de Ré just off the coast of La Rochelle, France, his birthdate unknown. He died intestate before February 1748, his estate administered on that date in Ulster County, New York by his son Oliver Besley, Jr.. He had married Marie Tauvet in France.

James Besley, son of Oliver and Susan (Mercier) Besley, and grandson of Capt. Oliver Besley, was born in New Rochelle before 1722. He married 13 October 1743 Catherine du Foreest at the Reformed Dutch Church in New York City; the record erroneously giving the husband's name as "James Baley".

James Besley carried on the business of keeping the inn that probably had been his grandfather Capt. Oliver Besley's and his father, another Captain Besley's. It stood on the corner of North Avenue and Huguenot Street in New Rochelle, N.Y. until it was demolished in 1928.

A newspaper article of that time and place stated, "here stands intact though changed in appearance by a later day superstructure, the old inn built before 1711 and kept by (the first) Capt. Oliver Besley, a Justice of the Peace and man of many activities in the first generation of New Rochelle's existence. The old Boston stage changed horses here..."

The Besley Inn, as were most inns, was used as the site of the Town Meetings, trials, a station where horses were changed and weary travelers rested and were refreshed. Family records show that the occupation of innkeeper was continued by Besley descendants in other New York and Pennsylvania towns until as late as the middle of the nineteenth century.

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#72-04

(Abstracted from a 6 page article with 3 pages of references which the author signed at the end, stating that most of the References may be found in the BESLY/BESLEY NOTEBOOK which she completed in May of 1981 and which has been given to various genealogical societies. - Ed.)