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Ordinary Keeper, Warwick, RI 1657, 1664

Stukely Westcott was born about 1592 probably in Devon, England; died in Portsmouth, Rhode Island 12 January 1676/7. He married Julian Marchant at Ilchester, Somerset, England. She died before 1675 in Rhode Island.

Stukely Westcott was 43 years of age when he and his wife with their six children came to Salem 24 June 1635. He was a close friend of Roger Williams and shared his opinions. In 1638 two years after the banishment of Williams, Stukely Westcott and his wife were ordered to leave the colony before the next sitting of the General Court. They joined Williams at Providence on 8 August 1638. Notice of their excommunication was published in the church at Dorchester in January 1639.

In March 1638/9 Roger Williams, Stukely Westcott and ten others founded the first Baptist Church in America, the old First Baptist Church of Providence. In Rhode Island Stukely was active in the civic affairs of the colony; he was elected in 1653 one of the General Assistants to the Governor and served for several years. Stukely Westcott and Robert Potter were cited by the General Assembly in May 1657 to open houses of entertainment in Warwick, "Each one so apoynted (is to) set a convenient sign at ye most conspicuous a place of ye house, hereby to give notice to strangers that it is a house of publick entertainment; and this to be done with all convenient speede." Seven years later, in 1664, Stukely was again authorized to keep an ordinary and to entertain the King's Commissioners when they held Court in Warwick.

During the Indian war of 1675-6, Stukely's oldest son, Robert, was killed. The other sons, Amos and Jeremiah, fled to the island of Providence to raise a crop for the family's support when the Indians burned all but one house in the small, unguarded settlement of Warwick. From Warwick, Stukely now 84 years old

and infirm, was carried to the house of his grandson, Dr. Caleb Arnold of Portsmouth. He made his will 12 January 1677, but was persuaded by Caleb not to sign it until Amos and Jeremiah arrived. Stukely died before the sons reached Portsmouth. Two law suits resulted because of the unsigned will. Eventually Jeremiah, the youngest of the family, but now the oldest living son, put in his claim for a larger share of his father's estate citing the rule of primogeniture.

- Lois Wescott
78-49

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