

The MERRY family was descended from Sir Henry Merry, knighted by James I in 1621.

(DNB)

Information available on the elder Capt. JOHN MERRY, merchant and East India commander, seems so far to be confined to material which refers to his later life.

Between November, 1698, and January, 1700, he commanded the "Fleet Frigate" on a voyage to China with cargo valued at £37,500. (TH)

In July, 1706 (NS), he was elected an Elder Brother of Trinity House and remained one until he died in March, 1729 (NS). (TH)

In November, 1706, he first acquired stock in the Hudson's Bay Company and five days later received the freedom of the Company. (HBC)

In May, 1709, he represented the Company at the negotiations in Holland which preceded the end of the War of Spanish Succession, in which the Company sought compensation for damages sustained in times of peace. (HBC)

In November, 1712, he was elected Deputy Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, which office he held until his death. (HBC)

According to the DNB account of the life of his grandson, Robert Merry, Capt. John Merry sailed in search of the North-West Passage, and discovered and gave his name to Merry's Island, though this does not seem to be mentioned in the archives of the HBC.

The Hudson's Bay Company's Books of Assignments of Stock give his address as Hatton Garden, though in 1724 he was evidently living in Mark Lane. He seems to have been interested in beautiful objects, for a notice in the Daily Post of 31 October, 1724, stated that there was to be an auction "at the dwelling house of Captain John Merry, Merchant, in the middle of Mark Lane, off Fenchurch Street, an excellent collection of choice original pictures by some of the celebrated Italian and Flemish Masters: viz. Rubens, Holbein, Mariode Fiori, and others, also an Italian spinet of silver tone, carved in Cyprus wood and painted by Perin del Vago; and a beautiful portrait of the famous Dutchess of Orleans". (TH)

Captain Merry seems to have married late in life, for the dates given for her seem to indicate that Mrs. HANNAH MERRY was over 30 years younger than her husband. However, they also seem to imply that she was only 12 years old when her eldest son was born, so there has evidently been some mistake.

Capt. JOHN MERRY Junior was also connected with the Hudson's Bay Company. Some of his father's stock in the Company was transferred to him by his mother in 1731, and he was elected, first a Member of the Committee of the Company in November, 1738, and then in May, 1760, Deputy Governor, which he remained until his death. (HBC)

In 1745 he was living in Ormond Street and in 1758 and 1765 in Red Lion Square (HBC)

ROBERT MERRY, another son of Captain John Merry Senior, also received some of his father's stock in the Hudson's Bay Company from his mother in 1735, and Robert's son, CHARLES MERRY, also eventually inherited some stock. (HBC) This Robert Merry seems also to have been a (Deputy?) Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company. (DNB)

Robert Merry's wife, MARGARET MERRY, is stated on the tomb to have been the daughter of Sir John Willers, Lord Chief Justice. They were of an old Warwickshire family. He was able, but indolent and self-seeking. Although he wished for the office of Lord Chancellor, he refused to accept it unless accompanied by a peerage - which was not forthcoming. (DNB)