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QUERY: An article (by Emmerson) in the R&H, Sept. 18, 1958, p. 19, says that one Samuel White, named on a monument in Plymouth, Mass., was the father of Peregrine White and ancestor of James White; but Encyclopedia Americana (29:267) says that Peregrine was the son of William White. Are William and Samuel the same, or is the article wrong?

(probably)

James White's statement:

In his Life Incidents (1868), pp. 9, 10, James White wrote: that his father was "descended from one of the Pilgrims who came to America in the ship May Flower. . . . On board that ship was the father of Peregrine [spelled Perigrine] White, who wore a pair of silver knee-buckles. . . . The knee-buckles worn by this man were afterward given to his son, Peregrine White, who was born on the passage to this country, with the request that they should be handed down in this line of the White family to the eldest son of each successive generation, whose name should be called John. My father had those buckles thirty years. . . . He gave them to my brother John, who passed them down to his son John, a young man of eighteen years."

As reprinted in 1888 in Life Sketches (of James and Ellen White, not her book of that name), pp. 9, 10, it appears in revised form to the extent that James White's brother John is identified as "a Methodist minister in Ohio," and the son John, who had been eighteen in the original account is now called "Prof. John White of Harvard College."

John Williams White of Harvard--See Dictionary Of American Biography. Born 1849. This was the son of Rev. John Whitney White of Ohio, a descendant of John White who settled in Salem in 1638. Graduated from Ohio Wesleyan in 1868; became tutor, asst. professor, and in 1884 professor in Harvard. Article cites: A. L. White, Genealogy of the Descendants of John White of Wenham; Who's Who in America, 1916-17, etc.

John Whitney White (James White's brother)

Methodist minister in Ohio; see A. L. White, Genealogy of the Descendants of John White of Wenham, 2: 501 ff. for this man and his father, Deacon John White, also writeups of James and Ellen White.

John White (James White's ancestor)

See A. L. White, Genealogy of the Descendants of John White of Wenham (4 vols., 1900-09). Volume 1 starts with John White of Wenham (near Salem, Mass.). He is said here to have come from England in 1638, settling at Salem; it is not known by what ship he came over. (There is no mention of any relationship to Peregrine White, who had been born 18 years earlier.) Facing page 16 is an illustration of the silver knee buckles brought over by this John White and now (1900) owned by the Harvard professor John Williams White. See also 2:501 ff.

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Is there any other evidence that straightens out these difficulties?

Did the long line of John Whites inherit the buckles from an original William (or Samuel)? Could John White of Wenham have been an older brother of Peregrine, and that fact remain unknown? Or was James White speaking of his ancestor and the father of Peregrine as two separate men on the same ship? Or is there evidence that the John White Genealogy is wrong, or that the Peregrine White line comes in also somewhere on the maternal side? Or is further information lacking?