

Elwin, Fountain ^[1]

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by D. E. Fountain Stokes, 1986

1736–January 1833

Fountain Elwin, private secretary to Governor [William Tryon](#) ^[2] and later an attorney, was born at Booton in the north central part of the county of Norfolk, England, where his family had owned various estates for generations. A marriage in 1621 between an Elwin and a daughter of the Fountain family accounts for his unusual first name. Margaret Wake Tryon, wife of Governor Tryon and the daughter of Elizabeth Elwin Wake, was Fountain Elwin's first cousin. In 1764 he accompanied the Tryons to North Carolina where he served as the governor's private secretary until 1767, when he returned to England. In 1808 Elwin was admitted to Grays Inn.

He married Ann Maria Gibson and in 1779 the first of their children was born. They were the parents of [three sons](#) ^[3] and three daughters, all of whom survived childhood, which was remarkable in those days. In 1808 he traveled from Enfield, where he was living, to Yoxford, Suffolk, to visit his cousin Margaret Tryon and while there he helped her make a will. He was one of the numerous beneficiaries of her estate, she having no surviving children. Elwin died at the age of ninety-six and was buried at Dulwich. [A miniature portrait of him as a young man](#) ^[4] and a pencil sketch of him as an old man are in the possession of the Nash family in England, descendants of his daughter Rebecca. His family was related to that of John Rolfe, and the well-known [portrait of Pocahontas](#) ^[5] descended in his family until it was sold in America; the portrait is now in the National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.

References:

Elwin family papers (in possession of D. E. Fountain Stokes, Thompson, Norfolk, England).

[William S. Powell, ed., *The Correspondence of William Tryon and Other Selected Papers* vol. 1 \(1980 \[portrait\]\),](#) ^[4]

Additional Resources:

Cass, Frederick Charles. "Thomas Henry Elwin." *East Barnet*, Part 1. Westminster, U.K.: Nichols and Sons. 1885. 238-239. <http://books.google.com/books?id=deQHAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA238#v=onepage&q&f=false> ^[3] (accessed July 29, 2013).

"The Pocahontas Portrait." *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 35, no. 4 (October 1927). 431-436. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4244174> ^[5] (accessed July 29, 2013).

Cansick, Frederick Teague. *A Collection of Curious and Interesting Epitaphs, Copied from the Existing Monuments of Distinguished and Noted Characters in the Churches and Churchyards of Horsey, Tottenham, Edmonton, Enfield, Friern Barnet, and Hadley, Middlesex*. London: Wertheimer, Lea & Co.. 1875. 159. <http://books.google.com/books?id=iLUEAAAAIAAJ&pg=PA159#v=onepage&q&f=true> ^[6] (accessed July 29, 2013).

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Origin - location:

[Hillsborough](#) ^[10]

From:

[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[11]

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