

the Courts were bound to their course, as the violation of the law against heresy was matter of public scandal, and the law could not retain its authority and bow before "an ancient and venerated authority." The whole proceeding, however, seems to have been inspired by theological zeal, rather than care to preserve credit for law with the people of Massachusetts—a view sustained by the statement, in the appendix of Norton's book, that when Pynchon's book reached Massachusetts, a vessel was just going to sail to England, and the Court therefore hastened its action.\*

Mr. Pynchon made a good selection for the town, of Agawam, of which he was, says "Barber's Historical Collections," the father. The settlers went there in 1635, and began to build a house on the west side; but as the Indians informed them the river overflowed there, they built on the east side, "probably the lot afterwards owned by Mr. Pynchon, and still owned by his descendants." It is supposed they returned to Roxbury in the fall, and came again in the spring of 1636 to Agawam, called in 1640, by town vote, Springfield. The first settlers made an agreement, the second item of which limited the number of families from forty to fifty. The land was fertile, and the location a happy one for trade. Articles could be sent down the river by boat, but the head of navigation was just above, so that we do not wonder that Mr. Pynchon dealt in beaver, and his letters related to trade and wampum as well as to spiritual and civil affairs.

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\* Palfrey's History of New England, Volume 2, page 397.