

~~1881~~

GENEALOGY OF LIEUT. ABEL WRIGHT, OF SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

By Rev. STEPHEN WRIGHT, of Glen's Falls, N. Y.

1. Lieut. ABEL WRIGHT¹ was found among the early settlers of Springfield, Massachusetts, in the Connecticut Valley, who spent a mature life of seventy years there, from 1655 to 1725, when he died at the advanced age of ninety-four years. Where he came from or who were his parents, I have been unable to ascertain. There were other Wright settlers in the colonies before him in Eastern Massachusetts,—as Capt. *Richard Wright*, at Lynn, in 1630; *John Wright*, at Woburn, in 1641; *Robert Wright*, at Boston, in 1643, according to Dr. Savage, in his *Genealogical Dictionary*, besides others in various places of a later date than the above named. And at Wethersfield, Conn., below Hartford, there was a *Thomas Wright* as early as 1639, who had quite a family. Also Dea. *Samuel Wright* was an early settler at Springfield about the same year, 1639–40, who had a family of eight children, all named; but no *Abel* among either of these families is given in their records.

It is possible, if not most probable, that these last two settlers, so near each other, were brothers, and from the date of their family records, uncles to *Abel Wright*, who might naturally have followed in the wake of his kinsman to Springfield, at the age of twenty-four years, where he is found in January, 1655. Hence I can safely begin his record at that date, and shall endeavor to follow his line of posterity for several generations, according to authentic information obtained by much labor, from both town and family records.

Although the town had been settled in 1636, it was still in its infancy when our *Abel* appeared on the stage, to claim a place among his fellow men. I give two or three extracts from the town records of Springfield, which I made in November, 1863, that read as follows: "Jan. 2, 1655,—There is granted to *Abell Wright*, a home lot containing three acres in the land next ye Round Hill." And Feb. 13, 1656, again: "It is granted to *Abell Wright* an amount of Twenty (20) acres which had formerly Come into the hand of Rowland Thomas, lying in ye great plain over ye great river, called Chickuppy plain, provided he continues five years in town." And it seems in the sequel that *he came to stay*, as he did for seventy years.

Again says the record: "March 13, 1660,—There is granted to Thomas Bancroft *Abell Wright*, John Lumbard and Richard Sikes, a parcel of land lying on the west side of y^e great river over against y^e long meadow below George Colton's, which land hereby granted, lyeth between two brooks, and it is to run westward from y^e river to a hill about 40 rods westward;—Thos. Bancroft to lie next to the Southermost brook, *Abell Wright* next toward the north, John Lumbard next to him, and Richard Sikes next to him:—They four sharing thereof equally in three-score acres of land, if there be so much there;—or if there be not so much they are to divide the piece equally amongst them, lying as above expressed."—See *Record of Deeds*, vol. i. p. 203. Various other grants of land, to the number of sixteen in all, from 1655 to 1695, as well as several to his sons Joseph and Abel, Jr., are on the town records also. In those primitive times the farming was on a smaller scale than we see now, and hence the few acres allotted to each

* CS 71
 . W95
 1881

settler in these grants. Contemporary with Abel Wright were such men as Col. John Pynchon, Samuel Terry, John Bliss, Thomas Root, Robert Ashley, Hugh Dudley, Thomas Sewall, Obadiah Miller, Eliezer Holyoke, John Holyoke, James Osborne, Nathaniel Pritchard and Thomas Gilbert ; with Deacons Samuel Chapin, Samuel Wright (until 1657, when he removed to Northampton, and died there Oct. 17, 1665, when asleep in his chair), Jonathan Burt, Benjamin Parsons, John Hitchcock and James Wariner, and Rev. PELATIAH GLOVER from 1659 to 1692, and Rev. SAMUEL BREWER from 1694 to 1725, and onwards to 1733, when the last pastor died ; all these in the First Congregational Church.

"Feb. 23, 1662. In the order of Seating persons in church, *Abell Wright* is put in the 'eighth seat' with Mr. — Horton, John Bag, Joshua Riley and Lyman Beaman. And Samuel Terry in the 9th seat with four others." According to the Springfield Records that I saw and handled in 1863, the following facts are shown :

ABEL¹ WRIGHT married Dec. 1, 1659, Martha Kitcherel, daughter of Samuel K. of Hartford, Conn., and had a family of thirteen children, of whom ten married (see names below). He was a citizen of some note, both in the civil and military service of the town. In 1695 he was elected to the "General Court," and in May, 1696, Dea. Burt and Lieut. Abel Wright were chosen to answer a petition of the people on the west side of the river asking to become a separate parish and procure a minister of their own. In 1708, July 26th, Indians came upon the town and despoiled his family, scalping his wife, who died in consequence on the 19th of October following. They also killed an infant of his son Henry, and captured his wife, who died soon after. But this venerable ancestor lived until 1725, for his tombstone record says: "Lieut. ABEL WRIGHT died October 29th, 1725, aged 94 years." His children were as follows :

2. i. JOSEPH, b. Sept. 1, 1660, and m. Sarah Osborne.
- ii. MARTHA, b. Nov. 29, 1662 ; m. Thomas Marlow.
3. iii. ABEL, b. Sept. 25, 1664 ; m. Rebecca Terry, Sept. 16, 1691, and had thirteen children.
4. iv. BENJAMIN, b. March 14, 1667 ; m. Mary Chapin in 1694 ; had three children.
- v. HANNAH, b. July 28, 1669 ; m. Joseph Saxton, Nov. 20, 1690, and had seven children :—*Gershom*,³ b. 1691 ; *Hannah*,³ 1692 ; *Joseph*,³ 1694 ; *Mindwell*,³ 1696 ; *David*,³ 1700 ; *Ezekiel*,³ 1704 ; and *Charles*,³ 1708, at Enfield.
- vi. HENRY, b. May 23, 1671, and d. young.
- vii. SARAH, b. May 8, 1673 ; m. Thomas Chapin, Feb. 15, 1694, and had eleven children. She died July 26, 1770, aged nearly 98.
- viii. MARY, b. March 9, 1675 ; m. Nathaniel Bliss in 1698.
5. ix. HENRY, 2d, b. June 8, 1677 ; m. Hannah Bliss, May 24, 1705.
6. x. SAMUEL, b. June 17, 1679 ; m. Mary Case, of Lebanon, Nov. 27, 1710.
- xi. ELIZABETH, b. Aug. 18, 1682, and d. June 17, 1683.
- xii. JOHN, b. April 21, 1685, and d. soon.
- xiii. ELIZABETH, 2d, b. Aug. 22, 1687 ; m. Ebenezer Dewey, of Lebanon, Nov. 8, 1709, and had *Elizabeth*,³ b. Oct. 7, 1710, and *Ebenezer*,³ Jr., b. Jan. 24, 1712.

2. JOSEPH² WRIGHT (*Abel*¹), b. Sept. 1, 1660, at Springfield ; m. Sarah Osborne, Dec. 29, 1687, and had eight children, born in S., as below. He must have followed his younger brother Abel to Lebanon, Conn., about 1708, as a petition of his to the town authorities is on record there, dated Dec. 13, 1708, asking for a grant of land near Abel Wright's first division, "because the enemy had spoiled and carried away much of his estate" at Springfield ; which was granted him Dec. 17th, 1708. How long he continued at L. we are unable to say. His children, born at S., were :