

HUGH CARGILL, A FRIEND OF LIBERTY.

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Hugh Cargill was born in Ballyshannon, Donegal, Ireland, about 1739, and came to Boston in 1774, "in connection with the British troops"—probably a soldier in one of the regiments. Concerning his early life in Boston little is known other than that he soon espoused the cause of the patriots and left the British service. April 19, 1775, found him at Concord, Mass., with the Provincial forces. When the enemy fired the courthouse and endangered the records, Cargill, with one Bullock, assisted in removing them to a place of safety.[26]

The events of that day hastened the recruiting of companies and the formation of regiments. Cargill at once joined Capt. Abisha Brown's company had been raised in the region around Concord and Lexington. His military experience and training made him a valuable man in the newly-organized command, and he was at once made a non-commissioned officer, being the fourth on the list of sergeants of the company.[27]

Captain Brown's company was attached to Colonel Nixon's Middlesex County regiment and was one of the few companies of that command engaged at Bunker Hill.

At the conclusion of his service in the army, Mr. Cargill settled in Boston and engaged in the business of a taverner or innkeeper. In the first Boston Directory (1789) he is described as a "retailer" with a place of business on Cambridge street. After many years of close application to business, and by careful management and economy, he accumulated considerable money.

In 1790 he purchased from David Hyde the estate in which he carried on his business. The property consisted of a two-story house on the westerly side of Cambridge street and bounded southerly on Alden lane. In 1798 at the time of the levy of the direct tax, it was valued at \$3,300.

While in business, Mr. Cargill was active in the affairs of the community and was especially interested in the local fire companies. On April 26, 1786, he was proposed to the selectmen, by Capt. Edward Ridgeway, for membership in his engine company, and "approved." [30] Ridgeway's company was known as No. 6 and was a noted one at that time. Cargill remained with this company for some years, for as late as 1790 we find his name on the list of members returned to the selectmen.

During the early part of the year 1790, Mr. Cargill retired and sold his business to one Smith Coleman, evidently a fellow countryman. In June 1790, we find the latter applying for a license to sell spirituous liquors at the house on Cambridge street "which was licensed last year under the improvement of Hugh Cargill who is removed." [32]

After his retirement from business, Mr. Cargill spent some years in Boston, during which he

invested in lands in Woburn, Westford, Carlisle, and other surrounding towns.

Early in 1796, he took up his residence in historic Concord. There the early days of his life on this side of the Atlantic had been spent; there he saw his first service as an American soldier, and there he was destined to end his days. In April 1797, he purchased an extensive tract of land "near the middle of the town," known as the Stratton farm, and made it his home.[33]

On November 27, 1798, he married Rebecca, daughter of Robert Estabrook, of Concord, the knot being tied by the Rev. Ezra Ripley.[34] Mr. Cargill's wedded life was, unfortunately, brief. Within two weeks after his marriage, he was seized with an illness that ended his life on January 12, 1799.[35]

His will, which is on file in the probate office at Cambridge, Mass., bears the date of December 6, 1798, and was witnessed by Jacob 112Brown, Obadiah Hall, and Paul Adams. The last named married the widow.[36]

By the will, his widow was given the "free use and improvement of all the real estate," that he should die possessed of, during her natural life or so long as she remained his widow. Upon her decease or marriage, he gave the Cambridge street estate to Samuel Chamberlain, providing he pay to Hugh Cargill Maloney, son of Cornelius Maloney of Boston, and Hugh Cargill Barrett, son of Benjamin Barrett of Carlisle, each the sum of three hundred and thirty-three dollars and thirty-three cents. The remainder of the estate, the will continues:

"I give and bequeath to the inhabitants of the town of Concord and successors forever the residue of my real estate that I shall dye seized of in said Commonwealth of Massachusetts; to come into possession of the same at the decease or marriage of my wife above named and not before and the income thereof to be solely applied for the support of the poor of said town of Concord, and my will is that the care of the principal and income of said estate be under the particular direction of the selectmen of Concord for the time being; and that the said income be uniformly and annually delivered by them to the poor of said town to whom they shall think the proper objects of it; the sale of part of said estate if thought best by the inhabitants of Concord when they are in possession and the interest of the money coming by said sale to be applied as above ordered I am content with: But the farm I give to the town, called the Stratton farm, lying in the middle of the town of Concord, I entail the same to be improved as a poor house and the land to be improved by and for the benefit of the poor; and to be under the special direction and care of the overseers of the poor of the town of Concord for the time being for the purposes aforesd for ever."

His widow, Rebecca Cargill, on December 27, 1800, in anticipation of her marriage to Paul Adams (which occurred August 2, 1801), executed releases to the town of all her interest in the estate devised and thus vested the gift.[37] The estate is still used as a poor farm.

Mr. Cargill's remains rest on the westerly slope of the Old Hill burial ground in Concord, close by the grave of his wife, Rebecca Cargill Adams, who died on March 5, 1838. His grave is marked by a 113a slab surmounted by an urn in relief, on which are inscribed the initials of his name.

Beneath is the following inscription:[38]

Here lyes Entered the remains

of Mr. Hugh Cargill late of Boston

who died in Concord on January 12, 1799

in the 60th year of his age

Mr. Cargill was born in Ballyshannon Ireland

came into this country in the year 1774

destitute of the comforts of life but by his

industry & economy he acquired a good estate

and having no Children he at his death devised

his estate to his wife Mrs. Rebecca Cargill

and to a number of his Friends & Relations by

Marriage & Especially a large and Generous

Donation to the Town of Concord for

Benevolent and Charitable purposes.

How strange O God who reigns on high,

That I should come so far to die,

And leave my friends where I was bred,

To lay my bones with strangers dead

But I have hoped when I arise,

To dwell with The in yonder skies.

This is the brief story of a humble Irish emigrant. No diarist has recorded his doings, no writer has extolled his virtues. He lived the quiet life of the ordinary man and performed his duty

faithfully. His character as pictured in the affairs and acts of his life shows the man—true and noble-hearted.