

THE PARSONS FAMILY of Boston

As it respects the origin of the name of Parsons, some have supposed that it was derived from the word parson, a clerical title, given from the fact that a clergyman is a principal person in the church. Hence in law, he is termed *ecclesiæ persona* and has full possession of all the rights of a parochial church. The s is added for euphony's sake, or from the fact that the individual was the parson's son.

Others have derived it from the word parish, as parish-son, meaning the son of some parish, one supported or educated by the parish.

And others again have supposed that the name is the same as Person, Peerson, Pierson, and Pearson, modified in the spelling.

Peirson or Peerson is derived, according to Camden, from the son of Peter or Peterson, the former coming originally from the French word, Pierre.

It does not appear that there has ever been any attempt to collect even the materials for a history of the English family of Parsons, so far as has come to our knowledge, notwithstanding there have been many individuals among them of great distinction; as knights, baronets, and noblemen. Those of the name are and have been for a long period, found in several counties; such as Devonshire, Buckinghamshire, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire, &c.

Prior to 1672, Andrew Parsons, gent., was of Somersetshire, and Philip Parsons, gent., of Worcestershire. But the earliest record we have noticed is in

1290. Walter was then a resident of Mulso in Ireland. How long before this he or his ancestors went there we know not. The name is still extant there, and something above one hundred years ago, Bishop Gibson remarked, (in his edition of Camden's Britannia,) "The honorable family of Parsons has been advanced to the dignity of Viscounts, and more lately, Earls of Ross."

1481. Sir John was Mayor of Hereford, who had for his armorial bearings, Gules, a leopard's head between three crosses patee, fitched in the foot ar.—Crest, a halberd headed az. embued gules.

1546. Robert, afterward the noted Jesuit, was born this year, and died April 18, 1610, a. 64. He appears to have been the first of note of his family. His father lived near Bridgewater, Eng., at a place called Netherstoway. Robert was educated at Balliol College, Oxford, and was early distinguished for his abilities, but being accused of some irregularities he forsook his country and resided for a time at Antwerp, Louvain, Padua, Rome, Paris, and Valladolid. Becoming a convert to the Romish faith, he propagated that doctrine with all his ability and was no small instrument in stirring up the benighted vassals of Philip II. to attempt the conquest of his

How much Father Parsons had to do in circulating the Pope's bulls and inflammatory tracts in England during the period of the Armada can never be known, but from his knowledge of the country, the people,[264] and their language, it is not unlikely that his agency was by no means inconsiderable. Fuller, in speaking of the fierceness of the battle between the fleets observes, that "bullets did not fly about so much at sea, as bastardly libels did by land; so fitly called, because none durst fathers them."

He established an English college at Rome and another at Valladolid, for such of his countrymen as might follow him, or come otherwise into exile. He published several works, but that by which he is best known is entitled "Leicester's Commonwealth," which, though abounding with misstatements, vague rumors, and base insinuations, was nevertheless a work of great ability. And although the pen of Sir Philip Sidney was exercised in its refutation, he is not considered to have completely affected his object. This most singular book of Father Robert was first printed in 1641, and in less than 70 years had become so rare that an edition of it was published, purporting to have been printed from a newly discovered manuscript, and passed current as such without detection, it is believed.

To the original edition is appended a poem, entitled "Leycester's Ghost," a great literary curiosity. An extract from the poem is as follows:

Let no man think I exercised the Ghost
Of this great Peere that sleepeth in the dust,—
Or conjur'd up his spirit to his cost
To press with dispraise or praise unjust,
I am not partial but give him his due,
And to his soule I wish eternal health,
Ne do I think all written tales are true,
That are inserted in his Common-wealth;
What others wrot before I do survive,
But am not like to them incenst with hate,
And as I plainly write, so do I strive
To write the truth, not wronging his estate.
Of whom it may bee said and censur'd well,

Hee both in vice and vertue did excell.

1556. Francis was vicar of Rothwell in Nottinghamshire. There is a wood called Parsons' wood, in the hundred of Nassaburgh, in the same county.

1618. Bartholomew appears as the author of three sermons—"First Fruits of the Gentiles," 4to. In 1616, "Assize Sermon," 4to. 1631, "Dorcas, or a Perfect Pattern of a True Disciple," Sermon, 4to. Oxford.

1634. About this year Thomas Parsons was knighted by Charles I. The foregoing engraving represents his arms, still retained in the family in the United States, and by his descendants in London, among whom were Sir John and Sir Humphrey; the former, Lord Mayor of that city in 1704, the latter, in 1731 and 1740. The same coat of arms is also retained by the branch of the Parsons family now long resident in Barbados.

Langley in Buckinghamshire was long a seat of a family of the name, but they seem to have abandoned it about the end of the 17th century for a residence in Nottinghamshire. The first of this family whose descendants we can trace appears to have been

Ralph, of Northampton, who had a son

John, who lived at Boveney, Co. Bucks, had by his wife, dau. of — Cutler, Esq.,

John of Boveney and Langley, who m. Elisabeth, the sole heiress of Sir John Kidderminster, and had,

1. Charles, b. 1625, d. without issue.

2. William, and three daughters.

This William, the only surviving son, m. Elisabeth, dau. and heiress of Sir Lawrence Parsons, by whom he had two sons; one a Colonel, d. without issue, and John, his successor. William Parsons (the father) was made a baronet by Charles II. for his adherence to the cause of his father, Charles I. He was somewhat conspicuous during the interregnum, as may be inferred from his granting a pass to one of the gentlemen of the privy chamber, to proceed to Ireland. The gentleman, however, having been taken by the parliament officers, was, Carte says, put to the rack, "to make him confess." This circumstance is supposed to have given Butler the ground he has taken in these lines in his Hudibras:

"Rack 'em until they do confess,

Impeach of treason whom they please,

And most perfidiously condemn,

Those that engaged their lives for them."

Sir Thomas Parsons of Great Milton in Oxfordshire, (before mentioned,) m. in 1614, Catharine, a dau. of Edward Radcliff of London, son of Alderman Radcliff, by whom he had Robert, Thomas, Richard, Anthony, and six daughters. He was the son of Thomas of the same place, by his first wife, Judith Garbrand of the city of Oxford, who also had a daughter Amy, m. to Richard Alworth of Turford, Buckinghamshire. His second wife was Sarah, dau. of Edmund Waller of Costell, by whom he had three sons, John, Edmund, Francis, and two daughters, Elisabeth, m. Anthony Radcliff of Chalford, Co. Bucks, and Ann, wife of Richard Baldwin of Beaconsfield, in the same county.

The grandfather of Sir Thomas was Thomas of Great Milton, who m. Catharine, dau. of Hester Sydenham, by whom he had Thomas, Hugh, and Richard.

Richard m. Miss — — Pierpont, and had a son John of London, who m. 1. a dau. of Joshua Whistler, by whom he had a daughter Catharine; he m. 2. Mary Gualter of London. Some of these families were among the early emigrants to America.

The first of the name we find in New England is Joseph, Springfield, 1636, where he appears as a witness to the deed from the Indians[266] of the lands of that place and vicinity to William Pynchon and others, on the fifteenth of July. There appear, however, soon after, at the same place, Hugh and Benjamin. And family tradition relates that Joseph and Benjamin were brothers, that they were born in Great Torrington, near Exeter, Devonshire, England, who, with other children, accompanied their father to New England, about the year 1630. It is probable that they came over with Mr. Pynchon.

(1) Joseph Parsons,¹ as has been mentioned, was at Springfield in 1636, where he probably remained until 1655, in which year he removed to Northampton. On the records of the latter town is this entry: "Joseph Parsons did at a Court in Northampton, holden March 1662, testified that he was a witness to a deed of the lands at Springfield, and a bargain between the Indians and Mr. Pynchon, dated July 15, 1636, for 18 fathoms of wampum, 18 coats, 18 hatchets, 18 hoes, 18 knives."

As soon as the town was incorporated he was elected "Townsmen," (or selectman,) though he subsequently paid the town 20 shillings not to elect him to any office during the second year of its incorporation. After that we find him serving the town as a "Townsmen" for seven years. He was a principal founder of Northampton, was extensively engaged in the fur trade, and acquired a large estate.

He m. Mary, dau. of Thomas Bliss of Hartford, (afterward of Northampton,) Nov. 26, 1646. They resided in Northampton till 1679, in which year they returned to Springfield, where they both died. Among the records of deaths of that town we find, "Cornet Joseph Parsons was sick

and died, Oct. 9, 1683." She outlived him near 19 years, dying Jan. 29, 1712. Their children were,

(2)

(11) I. Joseph, 2 b. 1647, m. Elisabeth, dau. of Elder John Strong, whose father was ancestor of the late Caleb Strong, Governor of Massachusetts. He d. Nov. 29, 1729. She was b. at Windsor, Ct., Feb. 24, 1648, d. at Northampton, May 11, 1736, a. 88.

(3) II. John, 2 b. 1649, m. Sarah, dau. of Lieut. — — Clarke, at Northampton, Dec. 23, 1675.

(4)

(21) III. Samuel, 2 b. 1652, settled at Durham, Ct., 1706.

(5) IV. Ebenezer, 2 b. 1655, served against the Indians in Philip's war, and was killed fighting under Capt. Beers at Northfield, Sept. 8, 1675, with his commander and many more. He was the first white child born in Northampton.

(6) V. Jonathan, 2 b. June 6, 1657, d. Oct. 19, 1684.

(7) VI. David, 2 b. April 30, 1659.

(8) VII. Mary, 2 b. June 27, 1661, m. 1. Joseph Ashley of Springfield, Oct. 15, 1685; 2. Joseph Williston, March 2, 1699.

(9) VIII. Hannah, 2 b. 1663, m. Rev. Pelatiah Glover of Springfield, Jan. 6, 1687.

(10) IX. Abigail, 2 b. Sept. 3, 1666, m. John Colton, Feb. 19, 1689, d. soon after, leaving a dau. who m. Francis Griswold of Windsor, Ct.

[267](11) X. Hester, 2 b. 1672, m. Joseph Smith of Greenwich, Ct.

Joseph, 3 (2) who m. Elisabeth Strong, had,

(12)

(26) I. Joseph, 3 b. June 28, 1671, graduated at H. C. 1697, being the first of the name who had graduated there. He m. Elisabeth, dau. of Dr. Benjamin Thompson of Roxbury, Ms., (who was son of Rev. William Thompson of Braintree, Ms.,) in 1701. He settled in the ministry, 1st, at Lebanon, Ct., 2nd, at Salisbury, Ms., in 1718, where he d. March 13, 1739, a. 69. His wife d. at Kensington, N. H.

(13) II. John, 3 b. Jan. 11, 1674.

- (14) III. Ebenezer,³ b. Dec. 11, 1675, m. Mercy Stebbins, Dec. 15, 1703, d. 1744.
- (15) IV. Elisabeth,³ b. Feb. 3, 1678.
- (16) V. David,³ b. Feb. 1, 1680, at Northampton, grad. H. C. 1705, minister of Malden, 1708, of Leicester, 1721, where he d. 1737, having been dismissed two years before. His son David⁴ graduated at Harvard College in 1729, and was ordained as the first pastor of the church in Amherst, Nov. 6, 1739. He m. Eunice Wells of Wethersfield, Ct., had 9 children, and d. 1781, a. 69. He was the father of the Rev. David⁵ Parsons, D. D., of Amherst, who was b. Jan. 28, 1749, H. C. 1771, settled Oct. 2, 1782, d. 1823, a. 74. Dr. Parsons had eleven children; namely, Ezekiel Williams,⁶ a physician in Colchester, Ct.; David⁶ of Amherst, an artisan; Prudence Stoddard,⁶ m. Rev. Marcus Smith,⁶ Rensselaerville, N. Y.; Thomas,⁶ a merchant, New York city, d. a. 41; Harriet,⁶ m. 1. Rev. Royal Washburn, and 2. Hon. David Mack of Amherst; Francis,⁶ an attorney at Hartford, Ct., and Judge of the Court of Common Pleas; Mary,⁶ m. Rev. William Williams, formerly a clergyman, but now a practising physician at Salem; Caroline,⁶ d. a. 22; Sophia,⁶ m. Rev. Silas Aiken of Boston; William,⁶ a physician of Canaan, Ct., d. a. 27; and James,⁶ a graduate and an instructor of youth at Savannah, Ga., d. a. 29.
- (17) VI. Josiah,³ b. Jan. 2, 1682, m. Sarah Sheldon, June 22, 1710, d. April 12, 1768, a. 86.
- (18) VII. Daniel,³ b. Aug., 1685, at Northampton, m. Abigail Cooley of Springfield, June 17, 1709, resided in Springfield.
- (19) VIII. Moses,³ b. Jan. 15, 1687, at Northampton, m. Abigail Ball of Springfield, Jan. 20, 1710, about which time he removed to Durham, Ct.
- (20) IX. Abigail,³ b. Jan. 1, 1690.
- (21) X. Noah,³ b. Aug. 15, 1692, left descendants.
- Samuel,² (4) who settled in Durham, Ct, had,
- (22) I. Timothy,³ b. 1694, d. Jan. 28, 1772.
- (23) II. Simeon,³ b. 1701, d. Jan. 6, 1784.
- (24) III. Phinehas,³ b. 1703, d. May 6, 1724.
- (25) IV. Aaron.³
- (26) V. Ithamar,³ b. 1707, d. Jan. 21, 1786. He and probably all his brothers left male posterity. David⁴ and Nathan,⁴ sons of Ithamar, were removed to Granville, Ms., about 1760.

David⁴ of Granville, Ms., had a son Joel,⁵ who was father to the Hon. Judge Anson V.⁶ Parsons of Philadelphia.

Joseph,³ (12) who m. Elisabeth Thompson had,

(27) I. Joseph,⁴ b. in Salisbury, 1702, grad. H. C. 1720, ordained at Bradford, Ms., June 8, 1726, d. there May 4, 1765, a. 63. His wife was Frances, dau. of John Usher, Lieut. Gov. of New Hampshire, who was the son of Hezekiah Usher, by Elisabeth, dau. of the Rev. Zachariah Symmes of Charlestown, Ms. His publications were an Election Sermon, an Ordination, and an Artillery Election Sermon, 1744. Their children were 1. Frances,⁵ b. 1730, d. at Epping, N. H., Oct. 7, 1808, unmarried, a. 78. 2. Elisabeth,⁵ b. 1731, d. 1733. 3. Joseph,⁵ b. Oct. 5, 1733, minister of Brookfield, Ms., d. Jan. 17, 1771, a. 38. His wife was Sarah, dau. of Rev. Warham Williams of Waltham, Ms., by Abigail, dau. of Col. George Leonard of Norton. Rev. Warham Williams was the son of Rev. John Williams of Deerfield, the "Redeemed Captive," and grandson of Deacon Samuel Williams of Roxbury and Rev. Eleazer Mather of Northampton, great-grandson of Robert Williams and Deacon William Park of Roxbury. 4. Thomas,⁵ b. 1735, who went to Parsonsfield, Me. 5. Samuel,⁵ b. 1737, of Cornville, Me., d. 1807. 6. Dr. John,⁵ b. 1740, of S. Berwick, Me., d. 1775. 7. William,⁵ b. 1741, d. 1742. 8. William,⁵ of Alfred, Me., b. 1743, d. Aug. 4, 1826, a. 83. 9. Sarah,⁵ b. 1745, d. at Parsonsfield, 1800. 10. Edward,⁵ b. 1747, went in the Revolutionary army, as Adjutant in Col. Poor's regiment, and d. 1776.

Rev. Joseph Parsons⁵ of Brookfield left an only dau., who m. Samuel Pitkin, Esq., of E. Hartford, Ct. William,⁵ who d. at Alfred, Me., had nine children, among whom was Usher,⁶ M. D., of Providence, R. I., a professor in Brown University, a surgeon in the war of 1812, and in Perry's fleet at the battle of Lake Erie. He m. Mary, dau. of Rev. Abiel Holmes, D. D., author of "American Annals." Dr. Parsons is himself the author of several medical treatises of great merit.

Thomas⁵ was the proprietor of Parsonsfield, Me., and left a numerous posterity—19 children, by two wives. His first wife was Mary Poor.

(28) II. Samuel,⁴ b. at Salisbury, Ms., 1707, grad. H. C. 1730, ordained at Rye, N. H., Nov. 3, 1736, m. Mary, the only child of Samuel Jones, Esq., of Boston, Oct. 9, 1739, d. Jan. 4, 1789, a. 82, in the 53rd year of his ministry. The grandfather of Mary Jones was Capt. John Adams of Boston, the grandson of Henry of Braintree, was among the first settlers of Massachusetts, and from whom numerous races of the name are descended, including two Presidents of the United States. Gov. Samuel Adams (the patriot) was cousin to Mary who m. Samuel Jones.

Rev. Samuel Parsons⁵ had four children; namely, 1. Mary, m. Rev. John Tucke of Epsom, whose dau. Love M. m. Simeon Drake, late of Concord, N. H. 2. Joseph, M. D., a captain in the Revolutionary army, who d. in Rye, N. H., in 1832, a. 86. 3. Hannah, d. unmarried. 4. Betsey, m.

Lieut. Samuel Wallace of Rye, whose dau. m. the late Isaac Waldron, Esq., of Portsmouth, N. H.

[269](29) III. William, 4 b. at Salisbury, April 21, 1716, grad. H. C. 1735, settled over the church in South Hampton, N. H., 1743, from which he was dismissed after a ministry of about twenty years. He m. Sarah Burnham of Durham, N. H., May 16, 1743. In 1763, he removed to Gilmanton with his family, that town being then a wilderness, though by the end of the year about twenty families had arrived and commenced settlements.[22] Mr. Parsons was employed by the proprietors to preach to the inhabitants. He also instructed the youth of the place and continued these services after his labors as a minister ceased. He d. Jan. 31, 1796, and his wife followed him to the grave, Feb. 28, 1797. His children were Sarah, William, Elisabeth, John, Joseph, and Ebenezer. Elisabeth m. Gen. Joseph Badger, Jr., who was the father of Hon. William Badger of Gilmanton, late Governor of New Hampshire.

(30) IV. Elisabeth, 4 b. 1718, m. Rev Jeremiah Fogg of Kensington, N. H. She d. March 5, 1779, a. 61. He d. Dec. 1, 1789, in the 78th year of his age, and the 52nd of his ministry. A descendant of Rev. Mr. Fogg is the consort of Rev. James Farnsworth of Boxboro', Ms.

(31) V. John, 4 b. Oct. 15, 1725, d. Sophomore in H. C., Oct. 28, 1740.

(1) Benjamin Parsons, 1 younger brother of Cornet Joseph, whose descendants are above traced, was like him among the first settlers of Springfield, and a prominent citizen, a gentleman of exemplary moral character, of great worth and respectability. He was Deacon of the church, and a chief instrument in its formation in Springfield, as appears from his correspondence with the Rev. Dr. Increase Mather. In the civil affairs of the town, no one held more responsible offices, or discharged them with greater fidelity.

Mr. Parsons m. 1st, Sarah, dau. of Richard Vore of Windsor, who was a member of the Rev. John Warham's church in Dorchester, and accompanied him to Windsor in 1635. She d. at Springfield, Jan. 1, 1676. He m. 2nd, Sarah, relict of John Leonard, Feb. 21, 1677. Her father having settled in Springfield in 1639. Deacon Parsons d. August 24, 1689, and his wife in 1690.

His children by his first marriage were,

(2) I. Sarah, 2 b. at Springfield, (as were probably all his children,) Aug. 18, 1656, m. James Dorchester.

(3)

(10) II. Benjamin, 2 b. Sept. 15, 1658, m. Sarah, dau. of John Keep of Springfield, Jan. 17, 1683. He d. at Enfield, Ct., Dec. 28, 1728, a. 60. She d. July 8, 1729. Her mother was Sarah, dau. of John Leonard of Springfield, and her father was killed by the Indians at Long Meadow, 1676; probably on the 26th of March; as on that day, six men were killed at Springfield, three of them near Pecowsick [270]brook, as they were passing from Long Meadow to the town, with an

escort under Capt. Nixon. The circumstance was long perpetuated by the following distich, but with how much truth we pretend not to say. It is this:

"Seven Indians, and one without a gun,

Caused Captain Nixon and forty men to run."

(4) III. Mary, 2 b. Dec. 10, 1660, at Springfield, Jan. 27, 1662.

(5) IV. Abigail, 2 b. Jan. 6, 1662, m. 1. John Mun, Dec. 23, 1680; 2. John Richards, Oct. 7, 1686.

(6)

(14) V. Samuel, 2 b. Oct. 10, 1666, m. Hannah Hitchcock, March 18, 1683, d. in Enfield, Feb., 1736, a. 70.

(7)

(24) VI. Ebenezer, 2 b. Nov. 17, 1668, m. Margaret, dau. of Samuel and Katherine Marshfield of Springfield, and granddaughter of Thomas Marshfield, who came from Exeter, England, with Rev. Mr. Warham, and settled in Windsor, Ct. Mr. Parsons d. at Springfield, Sept. 23, 1752, a. 84. His wife d. June 12, 1758, a. 87, as is to be seen on her tombstone in West Springfield, together with these lines:

The hope of life immortal

bloom, Dispel ye grave's

most hideous gloom

Christ on ye Resurrection

day his Saints with glory shall array.

Mr. Parsons was highly respected, was Deacon of the Congregational church in West Springfield fifty-two years, which terminated at his decease.

(8) VII. Mary, 2 b. Dec. 17, 1670, m. Thomas Richards, Oct. 21, 1691.

(9) VIII. Hezekiah, 2 b. Nov. 24, 1673, m. Hannah, dau. of Eliakim Cooley of Springfield, Feb. 20, 1701. [There is a curious entry on the Springfield records concerning this match.] They resided in Enfield and Suffield, Ct. He d. July 11, 1748.

(10) IX. Joseph, 2 b. Dec., 1675, m. Abigail Phelps, Sept. 15, 1697. He resided in West

Springfield.

Benjamin,² (3) of Enfield, who m. Sarah Keep, had,

(11) I. John,³ b. in Enfield, Nov. 19, 1684, d. there May 9, 1717, a. 33.

(12) II. Benjamin,³ b. March 1, 1688, was of Enfield, Ct., where he d. unmarried, July 4, 1734, a. 46.

(13) III. Christopher,³ b. Jan. 28, 1691, m. Mary Pease of Enfield, April 22, 1714, d. Sept. 10, 1747, a. 56. They had twelve children, born between March 1, 1715, and Dec. 23, 1740; eight sons and four daughters. The sons were John,⁴ Christopher,⁴ Benjamin,⁴ Joseph,⁴ Ebenezer,⁴ Benjamin,⁴ Jabez,⁴ Noah,⁴ John,⁴ m. Ann Colton at Enfield and had John,⁵ Ebenezer,⁵ Jabez,⁵ and Oliver,⁵ who d. at Peekskill in 1777, in the Revolutionary war.

Christopher,⁴ m. Mary, dau. of Samuel Pease, and had among other children, Asahel⁵ and Christopher.⁵

Benjamin,⁴ m. Sophia Pease, and had Simeon,⁵ Mary,⁵ and John.⁵ He lived at Enfield.

Joseph,⁴ m. Rebecca Allen of Enfield, Ct., and had Joseph,⁵ and Jabez,⁵ and three daughters. Joseph⁵ had a large family in Enfield.

(14) V. [271]Sarah,³ of whom we have no account but of her death, July 8, 1729.

Samuel,² (6) of Enfield, who m. Hannah, dau. of Luke Hitchcock of Springfield, had,

(15) I. John,³ b. July 23, 1693, m. Thankful Root of Enfield, June 20, 1716. They had seven children, among whom were John,⁴ Moses,⁴ and Thomas.⁴

(16) II. Luke,³ b. Jan. 4, 1696, m. Sarah Osborn, Sept. 13, 1716, at Enfield. They had seven children, one of whom was a son, Luke,⁴ b. April 17, 1724.

(17) III. Hezekiah,³ b. April 13, 1698, m. Rebecca Burt, Nov. 15, 1723, d. 1751. He had, besides other children, Hezekiah,⁴ David,⁴ Eldad,⁴ and Charles.⁴

(18) IV. Hannah,³ b. Aug. 2, 1700, m. Nath'l Horton, March 3, 1720.

(19) V. Nathaniel,³ b. Dec. 28, 1702, m. Mary Pease, Dec. 18, 1725. He had Nathaniel,⁴ Chadwell,⁴ who m. Ruth, dau. of Josiah Ward of Enfield, and Stephen.⁴

(20) VI. Moses,³ b. June 10, 1707, m. Hannah, dau. of Samuel Stebbins of Springfield, Jan. 13, 1736, d. at Enfield, 1786. He had 8 children, 4 sons and 4 daughters. Warham⁴ m. Mary

Pease, and had, besides other children, Martin,⁵ Warham,⁵ and Moses.⁵

(21) VII. Miriam,³ b. April 9, 1710, m. Caleb Jones, Nov. 10, 1730.

(22) VIII. Samuel,³ b. Nov. 23, 1690, (at Springfield) m. Abigail Randall, Dec. 4, 1713, and had sons, Samuel⁴ and Aaron.⁴

(23) IX. Sarah,³ b. Nov. 10, 1704, m. Thomas Jones, June 10, 1742.

(24) X. Daniel, of whom, as yet, nothing appears.

Ebenezer,² (7) of West Springfield, who m. Margaret Marshfield, had,

(25) I. Ebenezer,³ b. at Springfield, Jan. 12, 1691, m. Martha Ely, 1714, d. 1742, leaving 10 children; namely, Martha,⁴ m. John Taylor; Eunice,⁴ m. Daniel H. Phelps of Upper Housatonic; Margaret,⁴ m. Daniel Foot of Colchester; Mary,⁴ m. William Clark of Colchester; Diana⁴; Ebenezer⁴; Naomi,⁴ m. Asaph Leonard; Stephen⁴; Abigail⁴; and Seth.⁴

(26) II. Margaret,³ b. Sept. 19, 1693, m. Rev. Daniel Elmer of Newark, N. J.

(27) III. Jonathan,³ b. July 15, 1695. Drowned, July 1, 1703.

(28) IV. Benjamin,³ b. Dec. 15, 1696, m. Martha Bliss, Aug. 15, 1723; went to Kingston, thence to Palmer, Ms., d. at Swansey, in the house of his son, Aaron.⁴ His wife d. at Palmer, Ms., July 17, 1760, a. 56. They had 12 children. Eleanor,⁴ m. Elizur Fitch of Monson; David⁴ of Palmer, Ms.; Tabitha,⁴ m. Robert McMaster of Palmer, 1766; Moses,⁴ d. at the Havanna in the French war; Israel,⁴ d. in the same war, at Fort Harmer; Aaron⁴ of Swansey; Jonathan,⁴ m. Mary, dau. Deacon Joseph Merrick of Springfield, d. at W. Springfield, May 2, 1810, a. 75. She d. March 15, 1817, a. 84. Joshua,⁴ m. Eleanor Allen, lived in Palmer, Ms. Abigail,⁴ m. Ebenezer Bliss of Belchertown. Martha,⁴ m. Daniel Worthington, Vt.; Benjamin,⁴ d. in the French war.

(29) V. Caleb,³ b. Dec. 27, 1699, m. Miriam Williston, Oct. 4, 1749. She d. at W. Springfield, July 24, 1760, a. 53, leaving one son, Caleb,⁴ b. 1755, d. 1760.

[272](30) VI. Sarah,³ b. Feb. 4, 1703, m. Pelatiah Hitchcock of Brookfield, Ms.

(31)

(33) VII. Jonathan,³ b. at Springfield, Nov. 30, 1705, grad. at Y. C. 1729, studied theology with Rev. Elisha Williams, President of Y. C., and Rev. Jonathan Edwards of Northampton, ordained at Lyme, March 17, 1730, m. Phebe, dau. of John Griswold of Lyme, and sister of Gov. Matthew Griswold.

In March, 1746, Rev. Mr. Parsons was removed to Newburyport, Ms., where he preached until his decease. He d. July 19, 1776, a. 71, and was interred in a tomb under his pulpit, by the side

of Rev. George Whitefield, who had died at his house not long before. His wife d. at Newburyport also, Dec. 26, 1770. He m. 2. Mrs. Lydia Clarkson, widow of Andrew Clarkson, Esq., of Portsmouth, N. H. She survived him, and d. April 30, 1778.

Mr. Parsons was author of several occasional and other sermons in pamphlet form, and two volumes of sixty sermons in 8vo., advertised as in press at Newburyport, in 1781, by J. Mycall. As extended memoirs have been published of him in several works, it is unnecessary to be more particular at this time.

(32) VIII. Abigail, 3 b. Oct. 21, 1708, m. Thomas Day of Springfield, March 19, 1735.

(33) IX. Katherine, 3 b. Oct. 16, 1715, m. Aaron Taylor of Upper Housatonic.

Rev. Jonathan Parsons (31) of Newburyport had 13 children, 6 of whom d. in infancy. Those who married were,

(34) I. Marshfield, 4 b. Feb. 7, 1733, lived at Lyme, Ct., d. there Jan. 13, 1813, a. 80. He m. 1. Lois, dau. of Richard Wait, Sen., of Lyme. He m. 2. Abigail Marvin, Nov. 20, 1766. She d. Aug. 22, 1782, a. 35. He m. 3. Abigail Waterman of Norwich, Jan. 15, 1783. She d. March 14, 1793, a. 53. He m. 4. Phebe Griffin, Oct. 10, 1793, widow, and dau. of Pardon Taber of Lyme. He had children only with his first wife. His son John m. Joanna, dau. of Joseph Mather of Lyme. By a second wife, Lois, dau. of Richard Wait, Jr., he had 12 children.

(35) II. Jonathan, 4 b. April 25, 1735, m. Hannah, dau. of Samuel Gyles of Salisbury, Aug. 26, 1756. They had 10 children, 4 of whom were sons, and all d. unmarried. Elisabeth m. 1. Samuel Chandler. 2. John Mycall. Hannah m. Abraham Jackson, and had Ellen and Isaac Rand; the latter d. July 27, 1842, at Copenhagen, while U. S. Chargé d'Affaires, a. 37. He m. Louisa C. Carroll of Philadelphia, granddaughter of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Md., one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

(36) III. Samuel Holden, 4 b. May 14, 1737, at Lyme, Ct., grad. H. C. 1756; in 1781 he received an honorary degree from Y. C., studied law at Lyme in the office of his uncle, Gov. Matthew Griswold, admitted to the bar in New London county, 1759, settled at Lyme, was elected Representative to the General Assembly in 1762, and [273] successively for eighteen sessions, which brought him to the year 1774, when he received the appointment of King's Attorney, and removed to New London. In 1775 he was appointed Colonel of the sixth Connecticut regiment, and a Brigadier-General by Congress in 1776, Major-General in 1780. In 1779 he succeeded Gen. Putnam in the command of the Connecticut line of the Continental army and served in the Revolutionary army as Major-General until the close of the war. He was an active member of the Convention of Connecticut in January, 1788, which ratified the Constitution of the United States, and was elected President of the "Society of Cincinnati" of Connecticut. In 1785 he was appointed by Congress a Commissioner to treat with the Indians at

Miami. In 1788 he was appointed and commissioned by President Washington, first Judge of the North West Territory, which included the present States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan; and while holding that office, was, in 1789, appointed by the State of Connecticut a Commissioner to hold a treaty with the Wyandots and other tribes of Indians on Lake Erie, for extinguishing the aboriginal title to the "Connecticut Western Reserve." While returning to his residence at Marietta from this service, he was drowned by the overturning of his boat in descending the rapids of the Big Beaver river, Nov. 17, 1789, a. 52.

Gen. Parsons m. Mehetabel, dau. of Richard Mather of Lyme, (a lineal descendant of Rev. Richard Mather of Dorchester,) Sept. 10, 1761. She was b. in Lyme, March 7, 1743, d. Aug. 7, 1802, and was buried at Middletown, Ct. The children of Gen. Parsons were, 1. William Walter,⁵ b. July 5, 1762, m. Esther, dau. of Thompson Phillips of Middletown, d. Jan. 24, 1801, leaving children, Esther Phillips,⁶ m. to William Hammet of Bangor, and Thomas,⁶ who d. young. 2. Lucia,⁵ b. Nov. 8, 1761, m. Hon. Stephen Titus Hosmer, Chief-Justice of Connecticut. They had 4 sons and 6 daughters. All the sons d. young, except Oliver Ellsworth,⁶ who m. Ann P. Hawes of N. York. 3. Thomas,⁵ who d. young. 4. Enoch,⁵ whose biography was given in the April number of this work. He was b. Nov. 5, 1769, m. 1. Mary Wyley Sullivan, May 19, 1795. She was dau. of John Sullivan of London, and b. in Philadelphia, Nov. 9, 1772, d. at Middletown, July 2, 1807. He m. 2. Mrs. Sarah Rosecrants, dau. of Nehemiah Hubbard of Middletown, by whom he had one son, Henry Ethelbert,⁶ who m. Abby C, dau. of John Welles of Ann Arbor, Michigan; and a dau., Mary Sullivan,⁶ m. James, son of Robert Dickson of London, Eng., d. at Philadelphia, Dec. 15, 1841. The next of the children of Gen. Parsons was, 5. Mehetabel,⁵ b. Dec. 21, 1772. m. William B. Hall, M. D., of Middletown, d. Nov. 1, 1823, a. 51, leaving, 1. William Brenton⁶; 2. Samuel Holden Parsons⁶ of Binghampton, N. Y. 6. Phebe,⁵ b. Jan. 25, 1775. at N. London, m. Samuel [274]Tiffen, had a dau.,⁶ m. to L. T. Clark of Philadelphia. 7. Samuel Holden,⁵ b. Dec. 31, 1777, m. Esther, dau. of Giles Page of Middletown, d. in the West Indies, leaving a dau., Mary Ann,⁶ m. to William C. Hammet of Howland, Me. 8. Margaret Ann,⁵ 9. Margaret,⁵ b. 1785, m. 1. Stephen Hubbard of Middletown, who settled at Champion, N. Y., where he d. 1812. 2. Alfred Lathrop⁶ of Champion and W. Carthage, N. Y.

(37) IV. Thomas,⁴ b. April 28, 1739, m. 1. Mary Gibson, and had one son, Jonathan G.,⁵ who d. without issue. He m. 2. Sarah Sawyer of Newbury, and had, 1. Sarah,⁵ m. to Gorham Parsons, late a merchant of Boston, whose father was brother to the late Judge Theophilus Parsons of Boston, descended from that branch of the family settled at Gloucester, Ms., the ancestor of which was Jeffrey Parsons, whose pedigree we propose to trace hereafter; 2. Ann,⁵ m. Fitz-William Sargent of Gloucester, Ms.; 3. Mary,⁵ m. Ignatins Sargent; 4. —, ⁵ m. Samuel Torrey of Boston.

(38) V. Phebe,⁴ b. at Newburyport, March 6, 1748, m. Capt. Ebenezer Lane of Boston, had no children, d. 1781.

(39) VI. Lucia, 4 b. at Newburyport, Dec. 23, 1752, m. Capt. Joseph Tappan of that place, d. there in 1815, a. 63, leaving 7 children; 1. Thomas P. 5; 2. Phebe Griswold 5; 3. Sarah 5; 4. John Pike 5; 5. Richard 5; 6. Joseph 5; and 7. Thomas Parsons. 5

(40) VII. Lydia, 4 b. April 3, 1755, m. Moses, son of Hon. Jonathan Greenleaf of Newburyport, Sept. 17, 1776, and had children. 1. Moses, 5 2. Clarina Parsons, 5 3. Ebenezer, 5 4. Simon, 5 b. Dec. 5, 1783, the distinguished attorney and professor of law in Il. C., 5. Jonathan, 5 a clergyman of Brooklyn, N. Y. and author of a memoir of Rev. Jonathan Parsons in the American Quarterly Register, also of Ecclesiastical Sketches of Maine.

Hugh Parsons appears on the town records of Springfield, 27. 8, (27 Oct.) 1645. How long before that he was resident there does not appear, though it is quite probable he was among the first inhabitants. Whether Hugh were a brother of Benjamin and Joseph, or what relationship he may have borne to them, nothing has yet come to our knowledge to enable us to determine; yet he was probably the older brother of those, and so we shall consider him until we are otherwise assured. Mr. Parsons married Mary Lewis on the date above mentioned, by whom he had,

I. Samuel, b. Oct. 4, 1648, d. Oct. 4, 1649.

II. Joshua, b. Oct. 26, 1650, d. June 4, 1651.

About this point of time began the troubles and trials of this devoted family, and here, on the Springfield town records stands the following sad entry:

"Joshua Parsons, son of Hugh was killed by Mary Parsons his wife, 4. 1. 1651."

Singular as it may now seem, and notwithstanding the above entry, fair and legible at this day upon the records, an attempt was soon after made to throw the cause of the death of the son upon the father, and [275] that he had effected it by witchcraft! We will not now enlarge on this subject, as we propose to publish at some future time an article on witchcraft in our country, and its unhappy effects.

P. S. We originally intended to have given in this number the genealogy of the branch of the family of Parsons settled at Gloucester, but for want of room, and some materials, are obliged to defer it to a future one; meanwhile we hope the descendants of Jeffrey Parsons, (the progenitor of this branch,) will forward us all the facts they possess concerning it, that it may be rendered as complete as possible. For the information of those concerned, it may be proper to state, that we have a copy of the pedigree which was in the possession of the late William Parsons, Esq., of Boston, which, though extensive as it respects the names of the descendants, is very defective in dates and names of places. In these particulars we especially want information.

Source: N. E. Historical Register, No. 1, No. 3, July 1847