

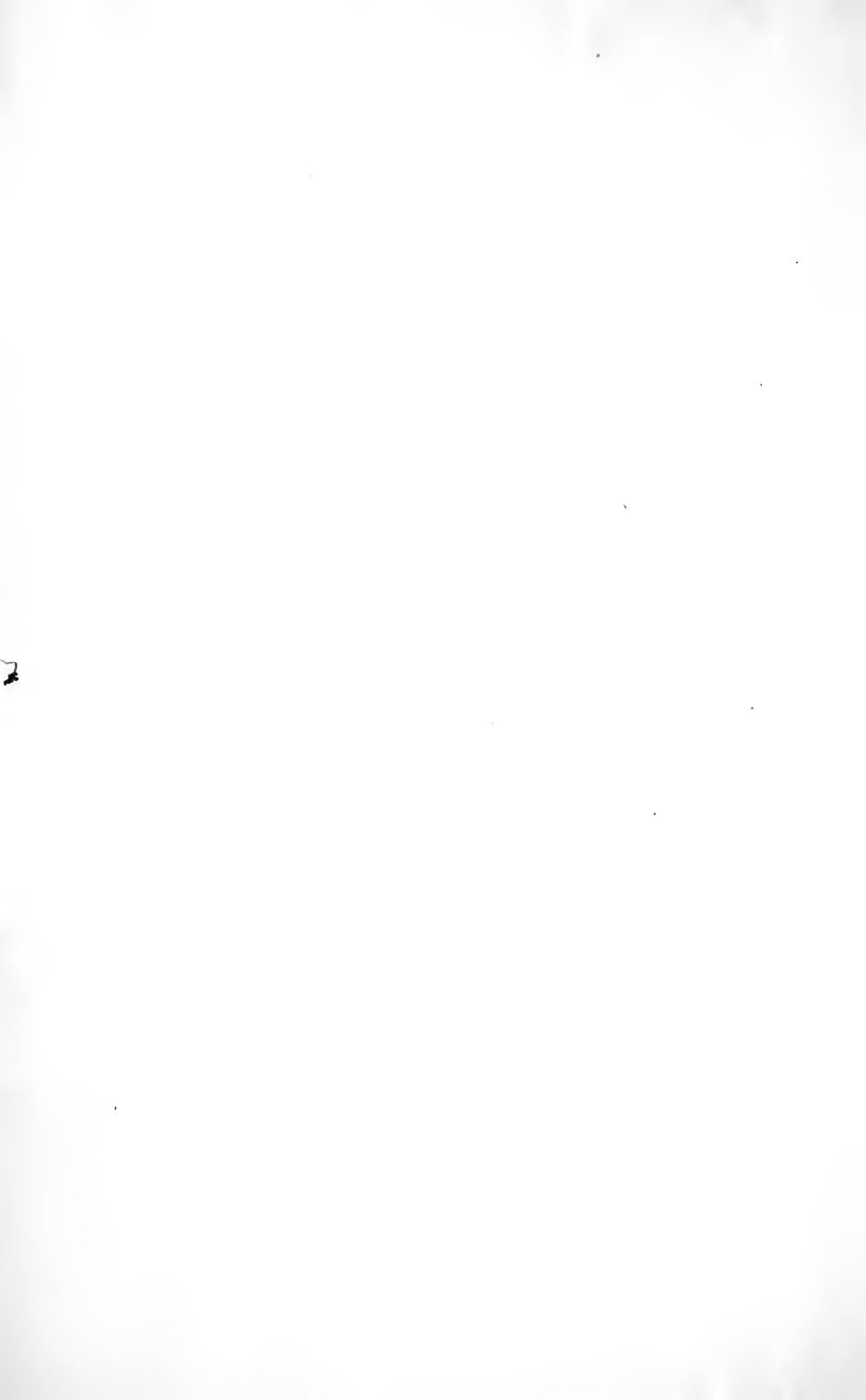
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Stephen M. Wright

ANCESTRAL LINE

OF

☆ STEPHEN MOTT WRIGHT ☆

FROM

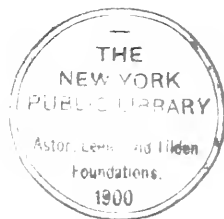
NICHOLAS WRIGHT

THE COLONIAL ANCESTOR

Compiled by

HENRY WHITEMORE





MAY 1900

MAY 1900
NEW YORK
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INTRODUCTION.

The history of Nicholas Wright and his descendants, one of whom, Dr. Thomas Wright, bore a conspicuous part in the Colonial and Revolutionary history of the country, was prepared for "The Heroes of the Revolution and their Descendants" by Mr. Henry Whittemore, the author of that work.

As there are some of the present generation connected with this branch of the Wright family who would like to obtain that data, but do not feel justified in purchasing an elaborate work for that purpose, I have deemed it advisable to issue a few copies of that portion relating to the Wright family, for private distribution.

Many facts of historic interest, since obtained, have been added to it in this publication and also corrections and additions of family history, all of which will prove of value to the family as well as to students of American history and genealogy, and is presented with the Compliments of

STEPHEN MOTT WRIGHT.

1123 Broadway,

July 4, 1899.



NICHOLAS WRIGHT, the colonial ancestor of the branch of the Wright family from which Stephen Mott Wright is descended, is a direct descendent of Thomas Wright, living at Norfolk, England, in the reign of Henry VIII. (1509-47), whose son John died seized of the manors of Tendalls and Rowses in Norfolk ; Nicholas, the son of this John, married Anne, daughter of Edmund Beaupre and heir to Beaupre Hall, in Norfolk, and is the grandfather of Nicholas the immigrant who was born in Norfolk, England, in 1609; came to this country and settled in Saugus (now Lynn, Mass.), Plymouth Colony, in the latter part of 1636, the following year removed to Sandwich, Cape Cod, Massachusetts Colony, in the settlement of which Nicholas became an active leader, acquiring lands and holding offices of civil trust while following his avocation as surveyor. In 1653, he, with his two brothers, Peter and Anthony, joined the company led by Rev. William Leveridge, came to the North Shore of Long Island, and with others, purchased a tract of land from the Matinecock tribe of Indians, which included the site of the present village of Oyster Bay, and Nicholas thus became one of the first permanent settlers of this peaceful and beautiful village. The Indian deed, signed by Assiapum or Moheness as Sachem of the tribe, still in existence, shows the consideration to have been "six Indian coats, six kettles, six fathom of wampum, six hoes, six hatchets, three pair of

stockings, thirty awl-blades or muxes, twenty knives, three shirts, and as much Peague as would amount to four pound sterling." This purchase was confirmed in 1677 by Royal patent, granted by Governor Andross. A portion of this land has been owned and occupied by the family ever since, its title passing by descent.

Nicholas at once acquired prominence and influence in the town, holding many public offices, and was a large landholder, was elected Town Schepen (magistrate) in 1673 and continued to reside there until his death, in 1682. He was interred in the Wright burying ground, at Oyster Bay, L. I.

The three brothers were all at an early period active and zealous members of the Society of Friends, and for many years Anthony's house at Oyster Bay was the place for both worship and business. On the "fifteenth of the eighth month, 1672," Anthony conveyed a portion of his land for a "burial place and a meeting house." The "meeting house" was erected on the ground and paid for in "wheat, pease, Indian corn and porke."

In August, 1661, his niece, Lydia Wright, after a long persecution and imprisonment, at the hands of the intolerant governor of Massachusetts, for being of the "Quaker" faith, was stripped to the waist, tied to a cart and lashed on her naked body through the streets of Boston, after which she fled to the home of her uncle at Oyster Bay.

The continuous persecution of the Quakers by the Puritans greatly turned the stream of liberal minded emigrants towards Long Island. Nicholas married Ann ——— in 1630, and had issue a son, *Edmund*.

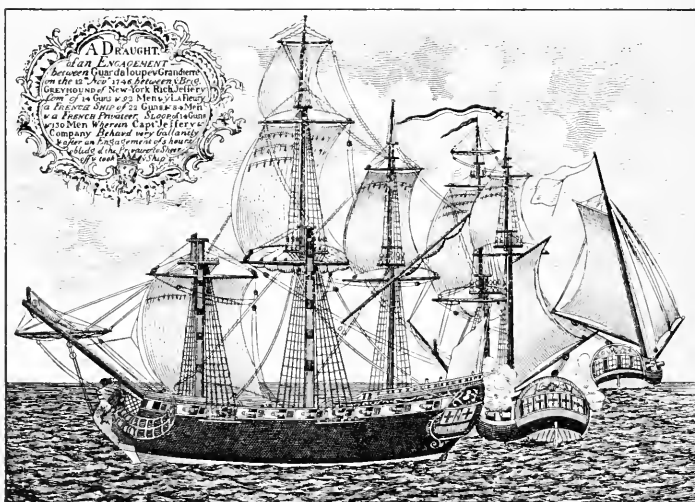
Edmund Wright, son of Nicholas and Ann, was born at Sandwich, Mass., in 1640. He married Sarah Wright, his cousin. He died at Oyster Bay, L. I., in 1703. At the time of his death he was a vestryman of St. George's Church, at Hempstead. He had a son, *Edmund* (2).

Edmund Wright (2), son of Edmund (1) and Sarah Wright, was born in 1670, probably at Oyster Bay, L. I., and died in 1735. He married, in 1695, Sarah Townsend, and had a son, *Thomas*.

But little is known of either of these two men beyond the fact of their being beloved and respected in the community in which they resided as industrious, honorable citizens.

Dr. Thomas Wright, son of Edmund (2) and Sarah (Townsend) Wright, was born at Oyster Bay, L. I., in 1719, and about 1755 he moved to the town of East Chester, in Westchester County, N. Y. He became the most eminent physician and surgeon in that County. He was an active participant in public affairs and an extensive property owner, including the Tide Mill

(run by the ebb and flow of the tide), the remains of which are still standing. He was Trustee of the Public Buildings of the town in 1760, and in 1765 he was made Senior Warden of St. Paul's Episcopal Church and was instrumental in the erection of the church building, which is still occupied by the same congregation.



He was evidently of an adventurous spirit in his younger days, for during King George's War, which lasted from 1744 to 1748, he was surgeon on board the privateer "Greyhound," fitted out from New York by Richard Jeffery. An old engraving (a copy is here reproduced), still in possession of the family, shows the engagement

between the privateer "Greyhound" and the two French vessels.

Referring to this, Lossing says: "For several years after the close of these contests with the Indians, the history of the colonies consists chiefly of the record of warm political disputes by which the growth of republican principles was greatly stimulated. Controversies, sometimes violent and sometimes conciliatory, were carried on between the governors and the representatives of the people, the former contending for prerogatives and salaries which the latter deemed inadmissible. These disputes were suddenly arrested when, late in the spring of 1744, news came that France had declared war against Great Britain. The colonists knew that the evident result would be hostilities between their respective colonies in America, and they prepared for the conflict which is known in our history as "King George's War." It was so called because King George the Second was then on the throne of England, and had espoused the cause of the Empress of Austria, the celebrated Maria Theresa, who fought for the crown of Austria against the Elector of Bavaria. The King of France espoused the cause of his opponent and this led to war. In Europe it was known as "The War of the Austrian Succession."

It afforded the opportunity for adventurous spirits in New York and New England to fit out privateers to prey

on French commerce, and New York merchants grew rich on the spoils of French prizes brought into this port. The inscription shown on the engraving is : “ A Draught of an Engagement between Guardaloupe and Grandterre, on the 12th of November, 1746, between ye Brig Greyhound of New York, Rich. Jeffery, Com’r, of 14 Guns and 92 men, and ye La Fleury, a French ship of 22 Guns and 84 men, and a French Privateer Sloop, of 14 Guns and 130 men. Wherein Capt. Jeffery and Company Behaved very Gallantly, and after an Engagement of 5 hours obliged ye Privateer to Sheer off and took ye Ship.” Subsequent events show that she captured the ship and brought her in as a prize to New York. This was probably her first engagement and is referred to in the New York *Post-Boy* of January 19, 1746 : “ In the Afternoon of Monday last there came into our Harbour with much difficulty thro’ the Ice, the French Prize Ship taken by Capt. Jeffery in the Greyhound Privateer of this Port. Her cargo is not supposed to be very valuable, most of the Stores being taken out by the French Men of War as Occasion demanded. She has about 60 Bales of Wines, 100 Small Arms, a Parcel of Shoes, and some Soldiers’ Cloaths on board. We hear she is to be removed out of the Harbour again without being unloaded on suspicion of her being an infected ship.”

Although advanced in years at the beginning of the struggle for independence, Dr. Wright was an ardent patriot and an active participant in the events connected with the Revolution. While there is no evidence that he was regularly commissioned, yet he served as surgeon and physician to the Continental Army in and about Westchester County, until his capture by the British and incarceration in the Provost jail, where he died from inhuman treatment and his body thrown into the trenches in the rear of the present City Hall, which became known as the "Grave of the Martyrs." These remains subsequently were re-interred in Trinity Churchyard. Dr. Wright's third marriage, to Nancy —— was solemnized in St. Paul's Church, East Chester, N. Y., in October, 1769, but the maiden name of this wife is unknown. By this wife he had a son, *Stephen*.

[One of Dr. Wright's sons, Dr. John G. Wright, served as Surgeon's Mate, in the General Hospital service, from 1777 to the close of the war. His nephew, Jotham Wright, was a Lieutenant in Baldwin's Artillery Company.]

Stephen Wright, son of Dr. Thomas and Nancy Wright, was born at Oyster Bay, L. I., November 25th, 1770. He carried on an extensive business in New York City as a shipwright, being a partner of Charles Browne. Among other vessels constructed by this firm

was the first steamboat, the "Clermont," built for its inventor, Robert Fulton, in 1807. In the War of 1812-15, Mr. Wright assisted in the construction of the earthworks at Fort Greene, Brooklyn, when a descent upon New York by a British fleet was apprehended. He died November 24, 1834, and was interred in the Dodge burying-ground, Jericho, L. I. He was twice married; his second wife was Martha Dodge, daughter of Daniel and Phœbe Dodge of Jericho, L. I., to whom he was married March 28th, 1805. By her he had a son, *Daniel Dodge*.

Daniel Dodge Wright, son of Stephen and Martha (Dodge) Wright, was born in New York City, January 24, 1809. He was for a time in the employ of his father, but having no taste for mechanical occupations, in 1834, in conjunction with his step-brother William, he engaged in the hardware trade. After a few years the partnership was dissolved, William removing to Philadelphia, where he became the proprietor of the far-famed "Wright's Indian Vegetable Pills;" Daniel continued the business, and became one of the most successful hardware merchants in the city. He was a man of strong character, of unimpeachable integrity, just and honest in all his dealings, courteous and affable in his intercourse with his fellow men, yet firm and decided in his convictions. From 1844 to 1860 he was connected with the Veteran Corps of Artillery, and his commission and sword are treasured heirlooms of his

son, Stephen. The latter part of his life was devoted to charitable and benevolent works. His death, caused by an accident, occurred April 29, 1892, in New York City; he was interred in the Dodge burying-ground, at Jericho, L. I. He married, April 14, 1840, Mary Frost Mott, daughter of Stephen and Sarah (Frost) Mott, of Jericho, L. I. They had issue, *Stephen Mott* and Joseph Henry; the latter died in early childhood.

STEPHEN MOTT WRIGHT, eldest son of Daniel Dodge and Mary Frost (Mott) Wright, was born in Jericho, L. I., August 16, 1841. He was educated at the public schools of New York City. He began his business career in his father's employ in 1856, from whom he received a thorough training, and by the time he reached his majority he was fully equipped for the line he had chosen. In 1865 he succeeded his father in the business, which he carried on until 1887, when he retired from active business life. Since then, being favored with a sufficient competence, he has devoted his time and his energies to the promotion of various public and benevolent enterprises. He has been especially identified with material progress of the building industry of New York City. For twelve years he was Secretary and is now the Vice-President of the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen, which has been noted for over a century for

educational and beneficent work, and served the Building Trades Club as Secretary and Treasurer almost from its organization, in recognition of which he was presented, in 1894, with a bronze group, executed by Gaudez, of Paris.

He is an active and influential member of the Mechanics' and Traders' Exchange, of which he was Secretary for a number of years. He was for several years the New York representative in the Board of Directors of the National Association of Builders ; for seven consecutive years has been elected a delegate to represent the Building Industry of New York in the Conventions of the National Association. He is Secretary and Treasurer of Webb's Academy and Home for Shipbuilders, an institution in which he takes the deepest interest, influenced, no doubt, by the fact that his grandfather was a leading shipwright in New York. He was a Trustee of the Dry Dock Savings Bank from 1877 to 1894.

During the Washington Centennial celebration in New York, in 1889, Mr. Wright was Secretary of the conference having charge of the civic and industrial division of the parade, and in recognition of his distinguished services in connection with that affair he was publicly presented with a bronze medal. In making the presentation, Gen. Daniel Butterfield, the Grand Marshal of the Industrial parade, said : " Throughout all the detail work connected with these duties, Mr.

Stephen M. Wright has, without any recompense, been indefatigable, and by authorization of the conference of the civic, commercial and industrial bodies of this city, I am to present him with this token of the high appreciation, not only held by myself personally, but also by all who have been connected with the affair, for his most valuable, skillful and efficient aid. * * * Right well you have earned and deserved it. May it ever serve, not only as a memorial to you and others of your faithful services in behalf of this grand celebration, but serve also as a reminder of my undying friendship and respect."

When, in 1891, the builders of New York entertained the convention of the National Association of Builders, Mr. Wright was made Secretary of the Committee of Arrangements, and had entire charge of all the details incident to the entertainment of nearly one thousand persons for a whole week. To prepare for the various details of this affair required nearly a year of his time.

Mr. Wright has been for many years one of the "bright and shining lights" in Freemasonry, guiding weary travelers in their pilgrimage and imparting to them a more perfect knowledge of the beautiful symbols of the Order. He is senior Past Master of Prince of Orange Lodge, No. 16, Free and Accepted Masons; was advanced and exalted as a Royal Arch Mason in Phoenix Chapter

No. 2 : greeted as a Royal and Select Master in Pent-alpha Council, No 36. In the Chivalric Order he was created and dubbed a Knight Templar in Palestine Commandery, No. 18. In the Cerneau Body of the Scottish rite he has advanced to the 33d degree as a Sovereign Grand Inspector's General. He was senior Grand Deacon of the Grand Lodge of New York, 1881-2, and was the representative of the Grand Lodge of Kansas, near the Grand Lodge of New York, from 1878 to 1885. He is a member of the Masonic Veterans and Temple Club of New York City. He was largely instrumental in creating the present Masonic Board of Relief and for a number of years served as its Treasurer.

The patriotism and military ardor of his ancestors has been manifested in Mr. Wright to a marked degree from early life to the present time. He spent nearly ten years of active service in the National Guard, State of New York, enlisting in Battery G, First Regiment Artillery, October 25, 1864 ; promoted Orderly Sergeant, February 15, 1865 ; commissioned Second Lieutenant, August 28, 1866 ; commissioned Regimental Adjutant, May 27, 1868, and on this occasion was presented, by his former associates in Battery G, with a beautiful gold mounted sword, which hangs in his private office, among other interesting relics. Upon the disbandment of the regimental organization, in December, 1869, Lieut. Wright

was rendered Supernumerary, and on February 5, 1870, was assigned by Governor Hoffman to the position of First Lieutenant of Separate Battery Light Artillery, and continued until honorably discharged January 4, 1872, the commander expressing "sincere thanks for the faithful manner in which he performed his duty in the Battery." Lieut. Wright was in command of the Battery during the "Orange Riot," July 12, 1871, and was complimented in general orders by Gen. Shaler on the efficient manner of his handling this important arm of the service on that day.

The Empire State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution was especially fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Wright as Secretary of that organization, to which position he was elected in 1896 and reelected in 1897. He is one of the most enthusiastic and energetic members of the Society and during his term of service his time, as well as the use of his private office, was almost wholly devoted to the furtherance of its objects without any compensation whatever. Few men, among those who are able, possess the self-sacrificing spirit to devote time and money to a work of this character. To Mr. Wright, however, it was a work of love, and in rendering service to his compatriots he experiences the happiness implied in the proverb, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Mr. Wright is possessed of rare executive ability, and this, added to his extensive business

experience, rendered him preëminently the man for the place. It may be truly said of him that he is *sans peur et sans reproche*.

He became a member of the Order of the Founders and Patriots of America, in the very early days of its existence, and is a member of the Council of the New York State Society, while his patriotic instincts made him an active and efficient member of the Patria Club, the Patriotic League, as well as the American Flag Association organized for the purpose of "fostering public sentiment in favor of honoring the flag of our country, and preserving it from desecration." He is also a member of the New England Society in the City of New York.

On his maternal side, as his name indicates, he comes of a line of Long Island Quaker ancestry—the Motts—from whom he inherits the liberality, strong sense of justice and sterling integrity, marked traits in his character, as well as that love of peaceful and quiet home life which Mr. Wright so much enjoys when not engaged in some labor for the benefit of his fellow-men. His grandfather, Stephen Mott, was born March 19, 1793, and during all his life pursued the peaceful occupation of a farmer, cultivating a large tract of land at Jericho, L. I. He was an ardent and influential member of the Society of Friends (Quakers). He died November 23d, 1873, and was interred in the Friends' Burying Ground, Westbury, L. I. James

Mott, his great-grandfather, besides being an extensive farmer at Westbury, L. I., was also a weaver and early invented a loom for the weaving of carpets with figure designs. In addition to the carpet trade, their looms were kept busy supplying the neighbors with household linen and the old-time brides with their wedding outfits of blue and white bed covers, which had such wide reputation and now treasured as valuable heir-looms in many Long Island homes. The Motts were, in many ways, rivals of the "Connecticut Yankees" in their ingenious inventions, among which was a loom for the weaving of fish nets.

Mr. Wright married, May 10, 1866, Kate A. Metzgar, daughter of Christian and Adeline (Lynch) Metzgar. Her father was renowned as a practical shipbuilder, having been the superintendent for William H. Webb throughout his business career. The issue was *Joseph Henry*, born March 14, 1867, *Maria Louise*, born April 16, 1868, both dying in early childhood.

Mrs. Wright is a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The record of her ancestor, Frederick Stymets, shows that he served with commendable zeal in the cause of the patriots during the American Revolution. He was a Sergeant in Capt. Van Zandt's Company, First Battalion of the New York Independents, when it offered itself to the cause of the patriots upon the terms and conditions of the Committee of Safety for the

Province of New York in January, 1776, and in November of the same year was promoted to First Lieutenant. The Battalion was the oldest and largest corps in the colony and composed of young men of respectability and wealth, and when on parade was an attraction in the City.

Lieutenant Stymets, in the absence of the Captain, commanded the Company, and, with the Battalion, participated in the Battle of Long Island, August 27, 1776, being a part of the reinforcements promptly sent by Washington to cover the retreat of the American force after the sanguinary conflict, and gallantly took part in the engagements which followed.

While there is no record of the fact, it is highly probable that Lieutenant Stymets, being possessed of a taste for Military affairs, continued in the service until the close of the War. He was an influential and prominent citizen of New York, largely aiding it in recuperating from the evil effects of the seven years' occupancy of it by British troops ; and largely instrumental in the organization of several benevolent associations, among which was The General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen, still in existence. He died in October, 1795.

In recognition of Mr. Wright's valuable services, the following testimonials, in each case elegantly engrossed and illuminated, were publicly presented to him :

TO MR. STEPHEN M. WRIGHT

Your fellow members in the BUILDING TRADES CLUB of New York City, desire to testify in this enduring form, to the great regret they feel in your withdrawal, at your own request, from the office of SECRETARY and TREASURER, which you have so adequately filled almost from its very organization.

Despite all the pressing claims upon your time in connection with the varied duties you are called upon to perform for so many other bodies, it would seem that no more perfect record could be made than that achieved by you in the fulfillment of the requirements as an official of this Club.

We deeply appreciate the services rendered ; have the highest regard for your personal worth, and trust this record will ever remind you of the respect and esteem in which you are held by your fellow members.

New York, March 10, 1897.

WILLIAM T. RITCH,
FRANCIS N. HOWLAND, } Committee.
HENRY A. MAURER. }

HENRY M. TOSTEVIN, President.
WILLIAM K. FERTIG, Secretary.

WHEREAS, Our esteemed Compatriot STEPHEN M. WRIGHT, Secretary of the EMPIRE STATE SOCIETY OF THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, will vacate that office at the Annual Meeting by reason of his positive refusal to accept a re-nomination and consequently his membership in the Board of Management terminates with this meeting ; therefore be it

RESOLVED, By this Board, that we tender to Compatriot WRIGHT our sincere and heartfelt thanks for the matchless manner in which he has performed the duties of his office for the past TWO YEARS ; that we are filled with admiration at the marked skill, sleepless vigilance, and unwearied patience which he has always evinced and that we bid him an affectionate "Good-bye." And be it further

RESOLVED, That this action be entered in full upon the Minutes of the Board and a certified copy be transmitted to the Compatriot under the seal of the Society.

(Signed)

ROBERT B. ROOSEVELT,	}	Committee.
THOMAS WILSON,		
EDWARD PAYSON CONE,		
W. W. J. WARREN.		

Unanimously adopted at a meeting of the Board of Management, February 19, 1898.

At a regular meeting of THE GENERAL SOCIETY OF MECHANICS AND TRADESMEN of the City of New York, held on February 2, 1898, the following Preamble and Resolutions were adopted :

WHEREAS, Our Brother, STEPHEN M. WRIGHT, has served the Society for twelve years as Secretary, (from January 1, 1885 to December 31, 1897,) and it being at his own request that he is relieved, and

WHEREAS, During the years of his service, he has always considered the best interests of our SOCIETY and brought to the discharge of his duties, fidelity, thoroughness and tact, as well as fraternal feeling :

RESOLVED, That we, THE GENERAL SOCIETY OF MECHANICS AND TRADESMEN, desire to put on record our deep appreciation of the long and faithful services rendered by Brother STEPHEN M. WRIGHT :

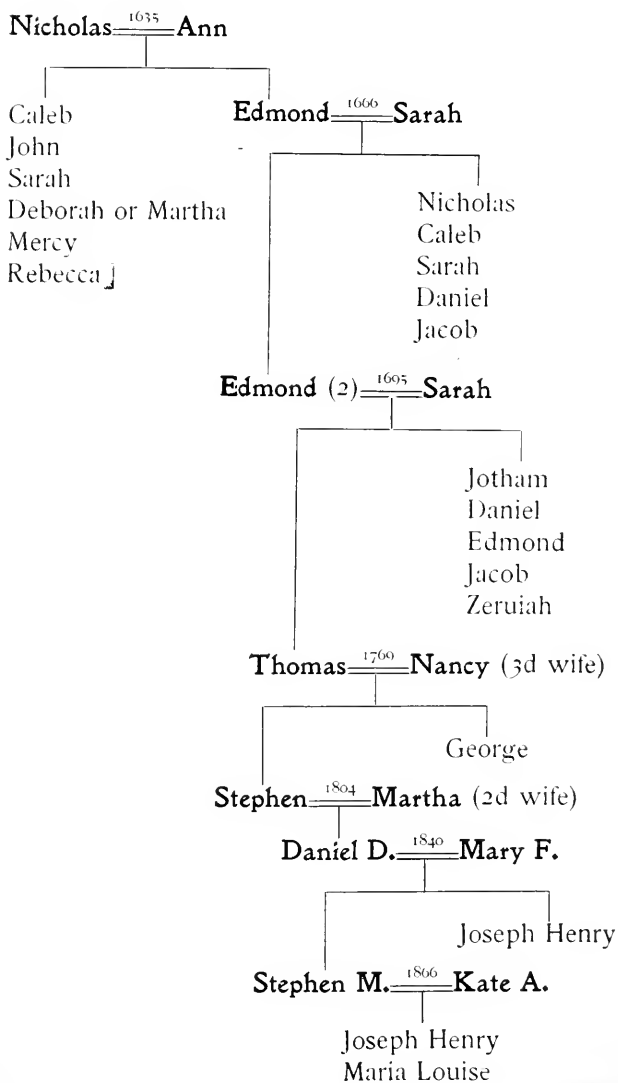
RESOLVED, That as an evidence of our personal regard and esteem of his character as a gentleman, and his enduring devotion to the interests of this Society, a copy of this Preamble and Resolution be engrossed and presented to our esteemed brother.

JOHN L. HAMILTON, }
JOHN BEATTIE, } Committee.

ROBERT CHRISTIE, President.

RICHARD T. DAVIES, Secretary.

THE WRIGHT GENEALOGICAL CHART



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