

SAMUEL BRADLEY (1681-1757)
 ABIGAIL ATWATER (1684-1743)

"Samuel was the fifth child of Joseph and Silence (Brockett) Bradley (7-77), born 3 Jan. 1680/1 at New Haven, Conn. where he grew to manhood and married, 25 Dec. 1705, Abigail Atwater daughter of David and Joanna Atwater (7-82). Like both the parents, Samuel and Abigail remained in New Haven. Abigail died Jan. 28, 1742/3 and Samuel married (2) Anna, daughter of Daniel and Deborah (Peck) Sperry, widow of John Wolcott." 1

Samuel died between April and June 1757 at New Haven. All of his children were by his first wife Abigail:

- "1. Lieut. Samuel Bradley, b. 21 Mar. 1707; md. 16 Dec. 1732, Eunice, dau. of Thomas Munson and Mary Wilcoxon
2. Abigail Bradley, b. 18 Nov. 1708; md. 18 Dec. 1729, Stephen Atwater; d. 3 Feb. 1795.
3. Jonathan Bradley b. 13 May, 1711; died 17 Nov. 1760
4. Lydia Bradley, b. 26 Mar. 1715; md. (1) Johathan Austin (7-66), md. (2) Ebenezer Darrow
5. Mary Bradley, b. 8 Oct. 1717; md. 8 Dec. 1737, John Grannis; died 22 Feb. 1812 at Claremont, N.H.
6. Ruth Bradley, b. 1 Mar. 1719/20; md. 19 Dec. 1745, Abraham Gilbert; died 11 Sept. 1799
7. Martha Bradley, b. 11 Sept. 1722; md. about 1756, David Sperry; died 10 Sept. 1805
8. Desire Bradley, b. 4 May 1724/5; dsp. 1796
9. David Bradley, b. 25 Aug. 1728; md. (1) 27 May 1756, Elizabeth, dau. of Abel and Miriam (Hotchkiss) Sperry; md. (2) 20 Apr. 1768, Hannah, dau. of Nathaniel Hitchcock and Elizabeth Mansfield; died 21 Nov. 1789" 2

Samuel and Abigail (Atwater) Bradley are the last Bradley ancestors who fall into this study since it was their daughter, Lydia who married Jonathan Austin and became the grandmother of Lydia Bishop who married William Babbitt (7-5). These connections link many lines of kin to the Babbitts who migrated from the Taunton area to the western outposts of New England and where some few of them overcame the formidable barrier, the Appalachian Mountains, to settle areas to the west, even to the Rocky Mountains.

The mountain ranges were not the only barriers to any efforts to colonize the west. The competitive motives of the French and British to gain an Empire in America was being felt even in Samuel Bradley's time, the mid 1700s, when the French and Indian wars were being fought.

The New England Frontier, which was still under the jurisdiction of the British, was among the earliest areas in America to be brought in contact with the ambitious French to the west and north. At the close of the year 1750 the French claimed possession of all of the lower Mississippi, the Miami's, Illinois and Ohio portions. The fondest dreams of La Salle were fully realized. By 1753 all of what was then Canada was a French held realm.

The great object of the campaign of 1759 was the reduction of Canada. The French were pushing into the areas claimed by the English settlers in Massachusetts, the colonies to the north of Connecticut. General Wolfe was to lay siege to Quebec - he made his memorable ascent to the Plains of Abraham, outside

Quebec, where he defeated Montcalm. Both Montcalm and Wolfe lost their lives in the battle. DeLevi, Montcalm's successor marched to Sillery, three miles above the city, with the purpose of defeating the English and there on April was fought one of the bloodiest battles of the French and Indian War. It resulted in the defeat of the French, and the fall of Montreal. The Governor signed a capitulation by which the whole of Canada was surrendered to the English.

The final treaties were signed in 1763, six years following the death of Samuel Bradley at 76 years of age. Under the provisions of the treaty, at that time, all the country east of the Mississippi and north of the Iberville River in Louisiana were ceded to England. At the same time Spain ceded Florida to Great Britain. The Northwest Territory was now under English rule. In 1762, France, by a secret treaty, ceded Louisiana to Spain, to prevent it falling into the hands of the English, who were becoming masters of the entire west. In 1803 Louisiana was ceded back to France, and by France was sold to the United States. At the breaking out of the Revolutionary War, the British held every post of importance in the West.

When the Appalachian barriers were won from the French, the English colonists began to barge further west. New England had the fortune, or misfortune, of its western frontier becoming a "Gateway to the West," the control of which had been so essential to the interests of both the English and the French.

The extent of the territory that had been under dispute, though expressed in rather vague terms by the British and the French, meant the retention or loss for England of what we now regard as the major section of the United States, second to no other in wealth and desirability. The entire grant, actually, included territory from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River. Of course the term 'Mississippi River' meant nothing very definite at the time to men of England or even to the colonists. But this makes all the more interesting the struggle of the French and Indian Wars; as a matter of fact, the colonists were contending for far more than they understood at the time.

Though Samuel and Abigail (Atwater) Bradley were not a part of the westward movement of New England's frontier, still they lived during the period of time that the problem facing the colonial security was a much talked of consideration. Not only was the contention for nationalistic expansion an issue of the time, but religious fervor was a force of considerable weight in the hearts of the people.

There might be sincere objection to placing undue emphasis upon the years of the French and Indian War but the events relating to New England's Frontier, that of deciding for all time the rights of the British to American territory east of the Mississippi, concerns our study of those who migrated out of New England into New York and even further to the west.

A matter that is somewhat detached from the main story of colonial defense, but closely associated with the motivational forces of the conflict, was the confusing issue of religious differences. No characterization of the New England church at the time of the war would be complete without some reference to the attitude of the people of that section to Roman Catholicism. To them the French people, who had strongly entrenched themselves just to the north in what is now

Canada, as well as to the west towards the Great Lakes region, were known as "Papists". It is not going too far to say that this term had about the same effect upon the early New Englander that the word "fire" would produce on persons living in the vicinity of a powder mill. When we search for motives or for impulse that inspired the people of New England to be more ready to fly at the French or their Indian allies, we find no greater deep-seated reason than that provided by the religious convictions upon which our New England immigrant forefathers had striven to maintain. The fathers of the Congregationalists and other dissenters of the established Church of England had taught their children that all the ills which they had suffered came of "popery" in spirit if not in fact. They had declared that only so far as the Church of England had become imbued with the spirit of Roman Catholicism was it a persecuting church.

There were many sections at this time in the throes of a conflict between the Establishment to which the New England colonies had originally adhered, and the spirit of dissent that became more radically noticeable after the war. It seemed that Protestant churches of many creeds grew out of this dissent and contentions between churches became very pronounced. People were more disposed to think independently and the spirit of dissent was nothing less than rampant in most parts of New England.

This review of conditions as they existed during the lifetime of Samuel and Abigail is given as it contributes to an overall view of the preceding chapters and the two chapters that follow in this study. We are soon to consider these social and religious elements that played a part in a later migration that included a portion of the descendants of this couple. Child (#4), Lydia Bradley, and her husband, Jonathan Austin, (7-66), were the great grandparents of Lorin Whiting Babbitt (7-6) who left Berkshire County, Mass., to join with several others of our more immediate ancestors to cross the plains of the great Western Empire to the west of the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains.

In retrospect this epoch in history concerning the restoration of the Gospel could have settled religious differences that existed at the time. Many found peace and an end to their search while humanity as a whole, given its free agency, continued to struggle in its search. Many denominations of churches grew in increasing numbers and differences continued to exist. Grace Johnson wrote "The Mormon Miracle" in 1950 and in it she speaks of her work in these words: "It does not argue points of historical or theological or try to persuade. It tells the story and lets events speak for themselves." ³

During the lifetime of Samuel Bradley, America had experienced its greatest earthquake (1727), George Washington was born (1732) and the French and Indian Wars had prevailed (1744-1754). The year of Samuel's death (1757) saw General Wolfe triumph on the Plains of Abraham at Quebec, Canada, which resulted in the boundary fixing of that Province and New England.

1. #71 p. 27
2. *ibid* pp. 27, 28
3. #177 Forward p. 3