

THE SHEPARDSON FAMILY.

A Record of the Early Generations in America.

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SOMETIME in the year 1628-9, from what ship no record remains to tell, Daniel Shepardson landed at Salem, Mass., being one of a numerous company who sought homes in America at that period of English history. A tradition indicates that he was accompanied by his brother, John, who soon died of lockjaw as a result of a dispute in which a spade was thrown at him by his adversary. Some of the immigrants moved to Charlestown where Daniel Shepardson is recorded as a citizen in 1632. He was not one of the wealthy members of the Puritan body, but was a craftsman, a blacksmith by trade.

“Since the birth of time, throughout all ages and nations,
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the people.”

The place of his origin is not known, but members of the family are to be found in Yorkshire, England, now, and, as the name indicates a Scandinavian ancestry, he may have been from that part of the country.

He was not an educated man, but he had so much company in that plight among the early Americans, that it is not specially to his discredit that his will is acknowledged by a cross, with “the marke of Daniell Sheopardson” beneath it. Like most of the Puritans he was intensely superstitious, a believer in signs and omens, and when one day, as he was working at his forge, a stone fell from it and crumbled into powder, he recognized the evil portent and gave to his wife the nails which he was just making, saying, “They will come in handy some day.” The nails were kept, and when he died, in Malden, Mass, 26 July, 1644, they were used in the making of his coffin.

He had a comfortable home with three acres of ground around

it, his blacksmith shop, and fifty acres of pasture and meadow land, scattered here and there, so that his widow, Joanna, who had the use of the property during her lifetime, was quite well fixed for a woman of the day. His family comprised a son, Daniel, and two daughters, Lydia and Joanna.

When the children were ready to marry, Daniel married Elizabeth Call; his sister, Lydia, married Elizabeth's brother, Thomas Call, Jr.; and after the death of their father, their mother, Joanna Shepardson, married the father of the Call children, Thomas Call, Sr., so that the relationship became a little mixed.

An abstract of the will and the inventory of the estate of this pioneer Shepardson have been printed as well as certain orders of the General Court about his property. [In N. E. Gen. Hist. Soc. Reg.]

The second Daniel followed the trade of his father, making his home at Malden, Mass., for some years. His name appears as one of a number who signed a petition to Sir William Phipps, 17 October, 1694, praying to be permitted to establish a settlement in Attleboro, Mass. He seems to have owned land there as early as 1660. He took a prominent part in the town's affairs. With this removal from Malden the Shepardson family found its home in a tract of land called "Rehoboth North Purchase," which included what later became the towns of Cumberland, Rhode Island, and Attleboro, Norton, and Mansfield, Mass., places in which the family has been represented almost continuously for more than two hundred years.

The early records of Attleboro, Rehoboth, and Cumberland seem faulty and there is considerable confusion in the first few generations, but there is every indication that all Americans named Shepardson may be traced back to Attleboro, except a few recent immigrants from England.

The genealogical details so far as known follow:

1. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, blacksmith of Charlestown, Mass., coming from Salem. Admitted to the Church in Charlestown 8 June, 1633. Removed to Malden, where he died 26 July, 1644. His wife was Joanna —, maiden name and date of marriage unknown. She survived her husband and married (2) Thomas Call, Sr. She died 30 January, 1661. Children:

- i. LYDIA SHEPARDSON, bapt. 24 July, 1637; m. (1) Thomas Call, Jr.; (2) Thomas Skinner. Child, Joanna Call, b. March, 1660.
2. ii. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, bapt. 14 June, 1641 (1639?).
- iii. JOANNA SHEPARDSON, bapt. 13 March, 1642; m. November, 1661, Roger Kennicut of Malden, and later removed to Swanzey. Children, Joanna, Lydia and John.

2. DANIEL SHEPARDSON (*Daniel*¹) succeeded his father as blacksmith at Malden. He was a freeman of Middlesex County, Mass., 29 May, 1674, and took the oath of fidelity 15 December, 1674. He married, 11 April, 1668, Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Call, Sr., and widow of Mr. Samuel Tingley of Malden. He removed to Attleboro where he had fifty acres about half a mile from "Old Town" on the Bay Road. He lived to an advanced age and was long called "old goodman Daniel Shepardson." He came near losing his property at one time as the Attleboro records indicate. So far as known his children were:

- i. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 11 July, 1669; lieutenant in 9th Mass. Regt. against Canada in 1691 where he died 11 March, 1691. He may have married and had son John, b. 22 July, 1685, d. 15 October, 1685.
3. ii. JOHN SHEPARDSON, bapt. January, 1671.
4. iii. NATHANIEL SHEPARDSON, bapt. 28 October, 1680.
- iv. ELIZABETH SHEPARDSON; m. Robert Fuller, 19 January, 1699.
- v. MARY SHEPARDSON; m. Joseph Ingraham, 11 April, 1700.
- vi. JOANNA SHEPARDSON; m. John Fuller, 22 December, 1701.

3. JOHN SHEPARDSON³ (*Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) lived in Attleboro until about 1697 when he moved to Rehoboth. He married 9 April, 1694, Elizabeth Fuller who was born 12 May, 1678, and baptized 30 May, 1679, daughter of Jonathan and Elizabeth (Wilmarth) Fuller of Attleboro. Children, recorded in Attleboro:

- i. RUTH SHEPARDSON, b. 14 July, 1695; m. Ephraim Lane, son of John and Sarah Lane. Many descendants in Norton, Mass. She d. 1752.
- ii. MEHITABLE SHEPARDSON, b. 31 January, 1696-7.
- iii. SARAH SHEPARDSON, b. 13 February, 1698-9, d. 28 April, 1699.
5. iv. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 16 March, 1699-1700.
6. v. AMOS SHEPARDSON, b. 30 September, 1704.
7. vi. JOHN SHEPARDSON, bapt. 17 April, 1709.

4. NATHANIEL SHEPARDSON (*Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) may have moved from Attleboro, Mass., to Rehoboth, where two of his children were baptized, although all are recorded in Attleboro. His wife was Mary ——. From similarity of names and some other circumstances, he may be the one referred to on page 236 of "Hinman's Connecticut Settlers" as "Nathaniel Shippason, widow Mary, of Hebron, estate £207. He died 1718. Children were Jonathan, Nathaniel, John, Elizabeth, Mary, Mercy, Joanna, and others." Children recorded in Attleboro:

8. i. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON, b. 20 September, 1706.
9. ii. NATHANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 26 March, 1708.
- iii. ELIZABETH SHEPARDSON, } b. 12 May, 1710.
- iv. MARY SHEPARDSON, }
10. v. JOHN SHEPARDSON, b. 25 June, 1712.

5. DANIEL SHEPARDSON (*John*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) married in Attleboro, Mass. (1) Hannah Richardson, 9 December, 1725. She d. 26 September, 1726, leaving a son. He married (2) Mary Washburn, 9 May, 1728. Several of the sons of this family went to Guilford, Vermont. Children, recorded in Attleboro:

11. i. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 5 September, 1726.
12. ii. JOHN SHEPARDSON, b. 16 February, 1729.
- iii. HANNAH SHEPARDSON, b. 29 December, 1730.
13. iv. ZEPHANIAH SHEPARDSON, b. 6 May, 1733.
14. v. STEPHEN SHEPARDSON, b. 11 August, 1735.

6. AMOS SHEPARDSON (*John*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) married Margaret Pidge, 30 March, 1732. He died in Attleboro in his 94th year. The boys of this family followed the sea. Children, recorded in Attleboro:

15. i. AMOS SHEPARDSON, b. 5 May, 1735.
- ii. ZEBEDIAH SHEPARDSON, b. 17 November, 1737, d. Seekonk, Mass.

- iv. ELIJAH SHEPARDSON, b. 8 May, 1741.
- iv. NOAH SHEPARDSON, b. 3 April, 1745.
- v. OLIVE SHEPARDSON, b. 30 June, 1752; m. John Macomber of Rehoboth, 10 April, 1777.
- vi. ARAUNAH SHEPARDSON, b. 7 August, 1756, drowned at sea.

Perhaps also:

- vii. WILLIAM SHEPARDSON, wrecked between Liverpool and Boston.

7. JOHN SHEPARDSON (*John*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) "has descendants in the Lake Champlain region" is the only record, January 1, 1907. Where he located is unknown. There are occasional traces of "northern Vermont Shepardsons."

8. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON (*Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) lived in Attleboro, Mass., in Cumberland, R. I., and finally settled in Templeton, Mass., where he died in 1790. He married, 9 May, 1730, Abigail Fuller, who was born 6 July, 1704, daughter of John and Joanna (Shepardson) Fuller. Joseph Shepardson, who gathered extensive notes about the family, all of which were destroyed by fire before publication, reports that Jonathan's wife, "Merriam, died in 1771 very aged," and says children were Jonathan, born 3 January, 1735, Nathaniel and Joanna. The Attleboro records show no other Jonathan of this generation who might be confused with this line, and show children:

- i. NATHANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 18 June, 1731; lived in Cumberland, R. I.
- ii. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON, b. 21 May, 1732, d. early.
- iii. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON, b. 19 January, 1734; perhaps d. early and name given to son b. 3 January, 1735.
- iv. ABIGAIL SHEPARDSON, b. 17 April, 1736.
- v. MARY SHEPARDSON, b. 10 October, 1743, d. 30 March, 1745.
- vi. MARY SHEPARDSON, b. 1 May, 1746, d. 31 March, 1752.

Perhaps also:

- vii. JOANNA SHEPARDSON; m. 6 December, 1781, John Christianmillar.

9. NATHANIEL SHEPARDSON (*Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) probably lived in Cumberland, R. I., near the boundary line. I find no record of his family except of a son bearing his name. If he had several children this lack of records may make confusion in my later notes. January 1, 1907, I am at sea about this line. There is probability of confusion, too, with Nathaniel, son of Jonathan No. 8.

- 16. i. NATHANIEL SHEPARDSON.

10. JOHN SHEPARDSON (*Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) married Abigail Richardson and moved to Ash Swamp, later called East Haddam, Conn. The order of birth of the children is not known and there may have been others than the ones named.

- i. OTIS SHEPARDSON.
- ii. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, d. without issue.
- iii. WILLIAM SHEPARDSON.
- 17. iv. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON.
- v. ISAAC SHEPARDSON.
- vi. ABIGAIL SHEPARDSON.
- vii. MOLLY SHEPARDSON.
- viii. HEPSIBAH SHEPARDSON.
- ix. ANCEL SHEPARDSON, b. 14 January, 1759.

11. DANIEL SHEPARDSON (*Daniel*,⁴ *John*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) lived in Attleboro for a while at least, the town records containing this entry, "Daniell Shepardson, Jr., and Mary Peck, dau. of Hezekiah Peck, late of Attleboro, were married by me, ye subscriber, 12 November, 1753.—Habijah Weid." Children recorded in Attleboro:

- i. NOAH SHEPARDSON, b. 4 August, 1756.
- ii. OZIAH SHEPARDSON, b. 30 March, 1757; d. 5 February, 1758.
- iii. ENOCH SHEPARDSON, b. 21 April, 1759.
- iv. HANNAH SHEPARDSON, b. 8 May, 1765.

12. JOHN SHEPARDSON (*Daniel,⁴ John,³ Daniel,² Daniel¹*) removed to Guilford, Vt., of which town he was one of the founders. He was very influential in the movement to make Vermont an independent state. He bore the title "Major." He was made Town Clerk in 1772 at the first town meeting of Guilford. He was a member of the Council in Vermont for several years as also Judge of the Supreme Court. He died of consumption 3 January, 1802. His wife, Anna, died of old age 10 (or 11) January, 1817, then 87. They had eleven children according to a court record, but names are unknown. One son died at the age of eighteen. No further record.

- i. JOHN SHEPARDSON, b. 1753, d. 23 August, 1771.

13. ZEPHANIAH SHEPARDSON (*Daniel,⁴ John,³ Daniel,² Daniel¹*) lived in Attleboro until about 1770 when he moved to Guilford, Vermont. He attended the first town meeting there 19 May, 1772, and was made a constable, an overseer of highways and an overseer of the poor. He was called "Lieutenant." He married (1) Ruth Hills (b. 1 July, 1733, d. 16 October, 1782); (2) Demaris, widow of David Church. She d. 28 July, 1787, aged 54; (3) Mrs. Lucinda Chase of Halifax, Vt., 1 June, 1798. She d. in the "Chinee" country, 30 September, 1809. He d. 16 October, 1804. Children:

- i. ZEPHANIAH SHEPARDSON, b. 21 March, 1755.
- ii. WILLIAM SHEPARDSON, b. 25 July, 1756.
- iii. RUTH SHEPARDSON, b. 16 September, 1758; m. John Barney.
- iv. JOSEPH SHEPARDSON, b. 27 October, 1760.
- v. JARED SHEPARDSON, b. 18 July, 1763.
- vi. DEMARIS BILLINGS SHEPARDSON.
- vii. DAVID CHURCH SHEPARDSON.

14. STEPHEN SHEPARDSON (*Daniel,⁴ John,³ Daniel,² Daniel¹*) married Lucy Fisher of Attleboro, Mass., and moved to Guilford, Vt., where he was constable in 1774 and commissioner of highways in 1776. He was captain of a company in the Revolutionary war. All I have about his children follows:

- i. STEPHEN SHEPARDSON, d. 11 April, 1806, aged 46.
- ii. PEDDY SHEPARDSON, b. 15 November, 1771, d. 2 December, 1838; m. Robinson Perkins.

15. AMOS SHEPARDSON (*Amos,⁴ John,³ Daniel,² Daniel¹*) moved from Attleboro, Mass., to Northfield, Mass., in 1793, and to New York state in 1820. He married Rebecca Whitcomb and had children:

- i. AMOS SHEPARDSON, b. 1787, had one son, Charles, of Warwick, Mass.
- ii. ELIJAH SHEPARDSON, b. 1789.
- iii. ARAUNAH SHEPARDSON, b. 1791.
- iv. ZEBEDIAH SHEPARDSON, b. 1793.
- v. OLIVE SHEPARDSON, b. 1795; m. Elijah Kendall, 15 April, 1814.

16. NATHANIEL SHEPARDSON (*Nathaniel,⁴ Nathaniel,³ Daniel,² Daniel¹*) lived at Arnold's Mills in Cumberland, R. I. He married (1) Sarah —, who died after 1771, and (2) Elizabeth —. He was known as "Squire Shepardson." Children:

- i. NATHANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 22 March, 1758.
- ii. MARY SHEPARDSON.
- iii. ELIZABETH SHEPARDSON, b. 18 April, 1762.
- iv. ISAAC SHEPARDSON, b. 25 July, 1764.
- v. LUCY SHEPARDSON, b. 4 February, 1766.

- vi. CHLOE SHEPARDSON, b. 27 April, 1768; m. Otis Jillson, 3 April, 1796.
- vii. OLIVE SHEPARDSON, b. 29 May, 1771.
- viii. SABRA SHEPARDSON, b. 22 July, 1774.
- ix. OTIS SHEPARDSON, b. 20 April, 1776.
- x. HANNAH SHEPARDSON, b. 21 August, 1778.
- xi. NANCY SHEPARDSON, b. 21 August, 1781.

17. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON (*John*,⁴ *Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) has descendants in Smyrna, N. Y. The family moved from Connecticut to New York many years ago. His only son was

- i. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON.

14. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON (*Jonathan*,⁴ *Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) married in Attleboro, Mass., Miriam, daughter of Isaac and Sarah (Carpenter) Follett, who was born 11 February, 1733-4. In 1768 the family moved to Templeton, Mass., having lived a while in Cumberland, R. I. They removed in 1790 to Royalston, Mass. They both died the same day, 3 December, 1804. Children:

- i. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON, b. 23 April, 1758.
- ii. REBECCA SHEPARDSON, b. 30 November, 1759; m. — Pratt.
- iii. MIRIAM SHEPARDSON, b. 1 September, 1761.
- iv. JOANNA SHEPARDSON, b. 22 February, 1765.
- v. RACHEL SHEPARDSON, b. 6 February, 1767.
- vi. BEULAH SHEPARDSON, b. 28 May, 1769.
- vii. ABIGAIL SHEPARDSON, {
- viii. ISAAC SHEPARDSON, { b. June 1, 1771. Abigail m. — Higgins.
- x. JOHN SHEPARDSON, b. 23 October, 1773.
- ix. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 6 October, 1775.

15. ISAAC SHEPARDSON (*Nathaniel*,⁴ *Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) lived in Wrentham, Mass., where he committed suicide by hanging. Children:

- i. NATHANIEL SHEPARDSON, d. Bridgewater, Mass.; one dau.
- ii. SALLY SHEPARDSON; m. — Wood, Seekonk, Mass.; two ch.
- iii. AARON SHEPARDSON, d. Wrentham, Mass.; one dau.
- iv. JAMES SHEPARDSON, d. Franklin, Mass.; four ch.
- v. LUCY SHEPARDSON; m. — Bartlett; three ch.
- vi. JOHN SHEPARDSON; seven children.
- vii. ISAAC SHEPARDSON, d. Wrentham, Mass.; eight ch.
- viii. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON; eight children.
- ix. LYDIA SHEPARDSON; m. — Chamberlain; five ch.

16. ANCEL SHEPARDSON (*John*,⁴ *Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) married, 25 July, 1782, Charlotte Colgrove, who was born 20 February, 1762, and died 23 February, 1850. He died 9 February, 1840. They lived in Middletown, Rutland County, Vt. and in Fairfax, Franklin County. Children:

- i. CLARISSA SHEPARDSON, b. 27 January, 1783, d. August, 1830, in Granville, Ohio.
- ii. ASA SHEPARDSON, b. 12 December, 1784, d. 14 August, 1842, in Delaware Co., Ohio.
- iii. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 27 September, 1787.
- iv. DAVID SHEPARDSON, b. 25 October, 1790, d. 15 December, 1791.
- v. ANCEL SHEPARDSON, b. 10 July, 1793, d. 21 March, 1875, in Fairfax, Vt.
- vi. JOEL SHEPARDSON, b. 28 June, 1796, d. 25 December, 1850, in Vermont.
- vii. LORINDA SHEPARDSON, b. 23 April, 1800.
- viii. CALISTA SHEPARDSON, b. 10 February, 1806, d. 13 August, 1861, in Alexandria, O.

This completes the record of the first five generations of American Shepardsons, so far as I have been able to compile it.

There are several places where it is faulty. In some of the families of the fourth generation there probably were other children born after removal of the family from Attleboro. I have a record running back to an Ezra Shepardson of the fourth generation. I have another running back to Samuel Shepardson, born in Attleboro, 10 February, 1757. I suppose him to be of the family of John Shepardson (fourth generation) whose descendants are found in the Lake Champlain country. In printing the records I have indicated where my information about a line ends. But the facts now known show that it ought not to be difficult to trace out all American Shepardsons and place them properly in order. Any one who has records of births, marriages and deaths of Shepardsons should send them to me for preservation and possible publication at some future day.

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5592 Kimbark Avenue,

February 1, 1907.

Chicago, Illinois.

John Eaton Shepardson, a civil engineer on the Southern and Western R. R. and Albert R. Shepardson, of Reading, Mass., are working with me in this study.

