

THE ROXBURY (MASS.) AND NEW LONDON (CT.)
BRANCH.

1. VALENTINE PRENTICE.* On the records of the First Church in Roxbury, Mass., appears the following: "Valentine Prentise † came to this land, with his wife Alice, in the year 1631, and joined this church in the year 1632. He brought but one child to this land, his son John, and buried another at sea. He lived a godly life, and went through much affliction by bodily infirmity, and died leaving a good safr [savor] of godlyness behind him. Alice, the wife of Valentine Prentise, after her husband's death, was married to John Watson, ‡ of this church." He was made freeman (per Massachusetts General Court records), Aug. 7, 1632, and d. about 1633. Children:

I. JOHN², b. in England.

[2]

II. ———², d. on passage from England, 1631.

2. JOHN² PRENTICE, son of Valentine and Alice, was b. in England, and came over with his parents in 1631. He m. Hester ———, and d. in 1691. He was "Admitted to the Roxbury church, 24 d., 7 mo., 1665" (per records of the First Church, Roxbury, Mass.), and here he carried most of his children to be baptized.§ He was a skil-

* The name in Cambridge, Mass., and Roxbury, Mass., was mostly spelt *Prentice*. After John, the "smith," went to New London, the name there was spelt *Prentis*, and was so continued by his descendants, and the writer so spells it.

† So spelled by Eliot. In the old records the name occurs *Prentis*, *Prentice*, and even *Prentts*; the latter, probably, coming from writing the *t* and *i* alike, and not dotting the *i*. The late Hon. James Savage thought that Valentine Prentice and family came over with Rev. John Eliot, from Nazing, Essex County, England.

‡ There was an Alice Prentice, d. 8 (1). 1643, in Concord, Mass. (New England Historic, Genealogical Register, Vol. X., 1850, p. 273.)

§ Of these baptisms the records of the Roxbury church say: "John, son to John Prentice, baptised 7 mo. 29, 1667; and Joseph, Jonathan, Peter, Steven, Ester, children of John Prentice, baptised 2. 19, 1668." Mr. Edward Prentis, of New London, writes: "He probably went to Roxbury to have his children baptized in those two years, as New London, though not destitute of a minister, had no regularly ordained clergyman, qualified to administer the ordinances, until 1670. (When John Prentis was a member of Mr. Bradstreet's church, which was commenced Oct. 5, 1670. In the ministry tax, 1664, in New London, John Prentis's property was assessed £176, and his name spelt *Prentis*.) The first of his children baptized in New London was Hannah, in 1672." This gentleman, a descendant of the sixth generation, has the original deed from John Prentice, "the smith," dated 1691, conveying a farm to his son Stephen.

ful blacksmith, and on that account was offered, Feb. 28, 1651-52, special privileges as an inducement to settle in New London, Ct. After declining Hadley's invitation, he accepted the invitation, removing to New London in 1652, soon after its settlement, and had granted him a house-lot at the southeast corner of the Parade, where Bank Street now opens, and a shop was built for him. He had a subsequent grant of land at Nahantic, now Waterford; and in 1660 he bought land of John Calkins and Hugh Roberts, who were about removing to Norwich. This land was located on "Robin Hood's Bay," now Jordan Cove. "Here he removed, after following his trade as blacksmith for six or seven years, but in a few years again changed his main pursuit, and entered upon a seafaring life after 1670. His sons also (according to the usual custom of New London) began the business of life upon the sea." He was the third commander of the ship "New London," seventy tons, built in New London, 1666, by Coit & Mould, and employed in the European trade; and in 1678 the same firm built for him a vessel of one hundred tons, which bore the family name of "John and Hester," in which he and his sons made several voyages. One half of this vessel was sold for £222 10s., "payment to be made in N. Y. flour at 15s. per cwt., and pork at 50s. per bbl."

That he was a man of intelligence is shown by his being chosen "Townes Attorney," Oct. 30, 1667, and deputy to the Connecticut General Assembly in 1668. He was assessed in 1667 for £175, one of the thirteen highest valuations in the town. In 1685 the town of New London granted him two hundred acres of land "for the charges and disbursements of many years, particularly in sustaining a course of law with the town of Lyme concerning the west bounds." His will in the Probate records shows his death to have been in 1691.* Simon Bradstreet's journal, of-Jan. 6, 1679 80, has this record of his wife's death: "Goodwife Prentice, aged about 44 or 40, dyed. She was a pious woman, and of a very sweet nature, an excellent neighbor." Children:

- I. JOHN³, b. Aug. 6, 1652. [3]
- II. JOSEPH³, b. April 2, 1655; d. June, 1676.
- III. JONATHAN³, b. July 15, 1657. [4]
- IV. HESTER³, b. July 20, 1660; m. *Ben. Adam Gallop*, † b. 1655.

* Estate settled 1706, his son John his executor.

† Mercy Gallop m. William Denison; Esther Denison m. Jonathan Wheeler; Richard Wheeler m. Silence Burrows; and a Richard Wheeler m., 1st, Anna Gallop, and 2d, Mary Hewitt. Richard A. Wheeler, of Stonington, Ct., judge of probate, is the youngest child of this second marriage, and b. Jan. 29, 1817. (Per Richard A. Wheeler's letter, Stonington, Ct., Aug. 3, 1882.)

- V. PETER³, b. July 31, 1663; d. May 14, 1670.*
- VI. STEPHEN³, b. Dec. 26, 1666. [5]
- VII. MERCY³, b. Dec. 1668; d. 1689,† of the epidemic.
- VIII. HANNAH³, b. June, 1672; bapt. in New London, 1672;
m. *Lieut. John Frink*, of Stonington.
- IX. THOMAS³, { twins, b. Nov. 6, 1675; Elizabeth m., May
X. ELIZABETH³, { 23, 1700, *Daniel Comstock*, and d. Dec.
13, 1770, ae. 95. [6]
- ‡ XI. VALENTINE³, b. about 1680; "of Woodbury, Ct."§ [7]

The church records of June 19, 1685, show contract of marriage between John Prentis and Rebecca, dau. of Ralph Parker, Thomas Barnet, minister of the parish, being one of the witnesses. The issue of this marriage was Ralph, an unfortunate being, long maintained by funds left by his parents for that purpose.

3. JOHN³ PRENTIS, son of John and Hester; m., Nov. 23, 1675, Sarah Jones, dau. of Mrs. Ann Latimer, by her first husband, Matthew Jones, of Boston, Mass. Elizabeth Latimer, her half-sister, m. Jonathan, her husband's brother. John Prentis, like his father, was a seaman, as appears by the following:—

"John Prentice, Jr., upon his petition, had the grant of a permit to sayle from New London to the Island of Barbadoes, in the barke

* The same writer as below gives Peter's death as Aug. 14, 1670.

† "Complaint being made to this court by John Prentice against William Beebe for keeping company with his dau. Mercy, and endeavoring to gain her affections in order to a marriage, without acquainting her parents, which is contrary to law, the said William Beebe is ordered to pay a fine to the County Treasurer of £5."—*Minutes of Cases in County Court*, 1687.

‡ Ten of the children of John and Esther Prentis are recorded on New London records; the eleventh, Valentine, who went about 1700 to Woodbury, is supposed (by a writer of John and Esther's descendants' records) to have been his son by an early marriage, before coming to New London, but the other account of his birth, about 1680, is probably correct. This same writer says, "Elizabeth, relict of Thomas Bowen, of Rehoboth (whose second husband was Samuel Fuller, of Plymouth), calls John Prentis, of New London, blacksmith, 'our brother-in-law,' and gives him power of attorney, April 11, 1663."

§ Savage says, the will of Caleb Nichols, of Stratford, of Aug. 6, 1690, mentions his son-in-law, John Prentiss. If so, this wife may be a second or third one. The deed of John Prentiss, 1689, of "Nahantick Farm," to son Stephen says, "He to pay his 4 sisters £10 each, and Mercy's part (deceased) to dau. Hester."

he was chosen deputy to the General Court, and from 1710 to 1716 was one of the justices of New London, and served for these years as a member of the governor's council. In 1715 he was appointed one of the overseers of the Niantic Indians; and the colonial records give his appointment as justice of the peace for the years 1726 and 1727,* and speak of him in 1735 as having been one of the agents of New London, "but now deceased." He was in 1726 appointed by the General Assembly one of a committee to "receive of the executors of the late Hon^{ble} Governour Saltonstall the arms used in the expedition against Canada." Inventory of his estate, £6,814 9s. 4d. Children:

- I. ELIZABETH⁴, b. June 19, 1692; m., Nov. 24, 1719, *Samuel Edgcombe*, b. 1690, son of John, and grandson of Nicholas E., of Plymouth, Eng. Sir Richard Edgcombe, of Mount Edgcombe (opposite Plymouth), who in 1637 had an extensive grant of land on Casco Bay and Saco River, in Maine, and this Nicholas, are supposed to have been near relatives. (See W. H. Luke's † "History of Plymouth, Eng.," 1873, for more about this family.)
- II. ESTHER⁴, bapt. Feb. 11, 1693-94.
- III. JONATHAN⁴, b. Feb. 26, 1695-96; m., Feb. 23, 1720-21, Widow Mary (Christophers) Gray. He owned a valuable farm at Black Point. Died July 18, 1755, leaving no children. Inventory of estate, £19,150, including eighty-six acres at £70 per acre.
- IV. HANNAH⁴, b. Jan. 5, 1697-98.
- V. ANN⁴, b. Feb. 18, 1699; m., 1st, Nov. 5, 1723, *Thomas Coit*, of New London, Ct., and 2d, *Dr. Ebenezer Gray*, by whom she had children. [9]
- VI. MARY⁴, b. Sept. 27, 1702. [10]
- VII. JOHN⁴, b. 1705. [11]

5. STEPHEN³ PRENTIS, son of John and Hester; m. Elizabeth, dau. of John Rogers, and granddaughter of Matthew Griswold. He

measured with the generous amplitude so common in that day, was twice the size of the original grant. It was of a seven-cornered figure, including the beautiful oval lake. Within the area were hillsides and glens, woodlands and swamps almost impenetrable. This estate was bequeathed by Mrs. Lake to the children of her daughter Gallop, by whom it was sold to the Prentis brothers." — *Caulkins's History of New London*, p. 87.

* Jonathan Prentis was an officer of the first and oldest ecclesiastical society of New London, Jan. 23, 1726-27.

† See also *Stately Houses of England*, by Jewitt & Hall (Boston Public Library, 2465.1).

was deputy to the General Assembly for the years 1712, 1728, 1729, and 1731; one of the selectmen of New London in 1713; and in 1714 is appointed "to be lieutenant of the 4th Company of New London." He probably afterwards became captain, as in 1728 the General Assembly appoint "Captain Stephen Prentis, of New London, and Mr. Thomas Lee, of Lyme, to be overseers of the Indians at Niantick." In 1736 he has this appointment:—

"Whereas this Assembly are now informed that the Nahantick Indians desire their children may be instructed, thereupon it is resolved, that the Colony Treasurer do pay out of the publick treasury unto Messrs. Thomas Lee, of Lyme, and Stephen Prentis, of New London, the sum of 15 pounds; who are appointed to receive the same, and therewith they shall hire some suitable person to instruct the said children to read, and also in the principles of the Christian religion." (Acts of General Assembly.)

He inherited and lived on his father's farm, near Niantic Ferry, now Millstone Point, and here he d. in 1758, ae. 92, having been blind several years. His wife d. April 30, 1737.

The Lake's Pond property, which he and his brother Jonathan purchased together, he left to his son Joseph and grandson Stephen, and the "Bruen's Neck farm, on which I live," to his son John, who also had the old farm running west of Beebe Brook to the sea. Children:

- I. JOHN⁴, b. Dec. 11, 1693. [12]
- II. A child, bapt. Dec. 8, 1695; d. —.
- III. HANNAH⁴, b. Jan. 5, 1696–97; d. single Jan. 7, 1785.
- IV. STEPHEN⁴, b. March 23, 1698–99.* [13]
- V. JOSEPH⁴, b. May 27, 1701. [14]
- VI. ELIZABETH⁴, b. Sept. 7, 1703.
- VII. ESTHER⁴, bapt. Dec. 22, 1706.
- VIII. BENJAMIN⁴, b. Dec. 3, 1707; d. June 8, 1721.
- IX. MERCY⁴, b. Dec. 6, 1710; d. Oct. 20, 1734.

6. THOMAS³ PRENTIS, son of John and Hester; m., Jan. 30, 1704–5, Mary, dau. of James Rogers; she d. Dec. 31, 1720, ae. 42, and he m., 2d, in 1725, Elizabeth Palmes, who d. Nov. 9, 1733, ae. 48; 3d, in 1739, Mrs. Bethiah (Dart) Chapel, widow of William Chapel. She married again, in 1743, Zebediah Comstock. Thomas Prentis had no children. He was justice of the peace for the county of New London from 1733 and 1737–1740; in 1734 he was appointed on a committee to build a battery in New London; and in 1739 the General Assembly appointed him, with John Ledyard and Christopher

* "March, 1740, Stephen Prentis said he had lived near Nahantick Ferry seventy years."

Avery, 2d, a committee to "bring to the battery at said New London 10 great cannon," and to get a sloop of sixteen guns "for the defence of our coast, . . . these to be kept under the charge and care of said Prentis." He d. Feb. 5, 1740-41, ae. 66 years 3 months. His estate was valued at £2,450, and was divided between the widow and seven brothers and sisters, one of whom was Valentine Prentis, of Woodbury, Ct. He traded to Barbadoes, 1695 to 1720. "Hempstead's Diary" says of him: "He had been commander in many voyages to Newfoundland and the West Indies, but for twenty years had followed the seas and attended to husbandry and public affairs. . . . He died lamented. He had three wives, but never had a child"

7. VALENTINE³ PRENTIS, son of John and Hester; removed to Woodbury, Ct., about 1700.* May 12, 1737, he was appointed by the Connecticut General Assembly to be "ensign of the north Co., or trainband, in the town of Woodbury." He married Abigail, dau. of Dea. Zechariah Walker.† Children:

- I. JOHN⁴, bapt. October, 1710; d. April 4, 1716.
- II. ESTHER⁴, b. May 16, 1712; d. young.
- III. JOSEPH⁴, b. Jan. 20, 1715. [15]
- IV. ESTHER⁴, b. May 2, 1717. [16]
- V. JOHN⁴, b. Nov. 1, 1719. [17]
- VI. THOMAS⁴, b. May 9, 1722; d. same year.
- VII. THOMAS⁴, b. June 23, 1723; d. Nov. 1, 1744.
- VIII. CHRISTOPHER⁴, b. April 13, ‡ 1726. [18]
- IX. ABIGAIL⁴, bapt. Nov. 17, 1728; m. *Thomas Warner*, 1749.
- X. PATIENCE⁴, b. July 7, 1731.

8. PATIENCE⁴ PRENTIS, dau. of John and Sarah; m., in 1701, *Rev. John Bulkeley*, of Colchester, Ct., who graduated from Harvard College in 1699. He studied divinity, was ordained pastor of the church in Colchester, Dec. 20, 1703, and took a high rank among the clergy-

* Was of Woodbury in 1706, as in the distribution of his father John's estate, and Valentine, "of Woodbury, Ct.," gives a quitclaim to the executor, "his loving brother, Capt. John Prentice," of New London, March 9, 1745-46, of a small piece land, signed in New London. Valentine, of Woodbury, had, by his brother Thomas, an estate in 1740-41 of one seventh, or £350.

† History of Ancient Woodbury, 1854, has two pages of record of this branch from Valentine. Rev. Charles Prentice, Western New York; David, professor. Geneva College, New York; Curtis, a physician, and Harvey, LL. D., of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, New York, are mentioned in the index to it, Vol. II.

‡ Bible record has 24 April, 1726 (per H. V. Prentice).

12. JOHN⁴ PRENTIS, son of Stephen and Elizabeth; m., Oct. 15, 1771, Sarah Mosier, and d. March 16, 1773. He probably had a former wife and children. Children, as known:

I. PETER⁵, b. Feb. 23, 1773. He inherited the Nahantick (now Millstone Point) farm of his father, and he and his mother sold it, much encumbered with debt, to Elias Perkins, for £675, who also bought the Bruen's Neck farm of Stephen Prentis.

13. STEPHEN⁴ PRENTIS, son of Stephen and Elizabeth; m., May 1, 1723, Phebe Harris.* He d. Dec. 7, 1728, ae. 30. His widow m., in 1731, John Edgerton, of Norwich, Ct. Children:

I. ELIZABETH⁵, bapt. July 12, 1725; m. *John Edgerton*, of Norwich.

II. MARY⁵, bapt. May 24, 1726; m. *William Caulkins*.

III. STEPHEN⁵, bapt. Oct. 28, 1728. [21]

14. JOSEPH⁴ PRENTIS,† son of Stephen and Elizabeth; m., May 2, 1727, Mercy Gilbert, a "doctress," and granddaughter of Earl Gilbert, a Scotch peer (family Bible). Joseph Prentis lived on the "Lake Pond farm." His will was proved Nov. 9, 1773. Inventory, £440. He had a commission as lieutenant, October, 1737, of Fifth Company or train-band of New London. Children:

I. ESTHER⁵, b. May 7, 1728; m. *D. Miner*, of Lyme.

II. ANNA⁵, b. May 4, 1730; m. a *De Wolfe* (or *Witter*), who settled in Nova Scotia.

III. THOMAS⁵, b. March 6, 1731-32; d. about 1761, at Jamaica, W. I., leaving no issue.

IV. JOSEPH⁵, b. Feb. 13, 1733-34, of Butternuts, N. Y. [22]

V. JOHN⁵, b. Sept. 9, 1736; went to Virginia, and d. there.

VI. BENJAMIN⁵, b. Sept. 16, 1738; a soldier in Revolutionary Army, and killed on the Plains of Saratoga or at the taking of Burgoyne.

VII. MERCY⁵, b. Oct. 16, 1740; m. *Ralph Caulkins*.

VIII. STEPHEN⁵, b. Oct. 1, 1743; killed at Bunker Hill.

IX. JONATHAN⁵, b. July 12, 1750. [23]

15. JOSEPH⁴ PRENTIS, son of Valentine and Abigail; m. Abigail —; resided in Woodbury, Ct. Children:

* The church records say, Phebe, relict of John Crank.

† Joseph Prentis was great-grandfather, on the mother's side, of William C. Holgate, Esq., of Defiance, Ohio. (See his letter, June 15, 1882, with records. He had the account of Joseph and family from his cousin Lucy Ashley, of Milton, Vt., who d. November, 1847.)