

Samuel⁴ and Abigail (Sprague) Call of Charlestown, Massachusetts, and Nova Scotia

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For at least a century, what became of Samuel Call and his wife Abigail Sprague remained elusive to their descendants. Numerous online pedigrees report conflicting information, most likely rooted in one or more of four printed genealogies. The earliest of these was *The Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown* which Thomas Bellows Wyman published in 1879.^[1] Benjamin F. Cummings prepared a typescript for the Utah branch of the family in 1898 titled “The Call Family.”^[2] The next was Simeon T. Call’s *Genealogical History of the Call Family in the United States*, published in 1908.^[3] Lastly, Mary Frances Call published her article, “Call Family,” in 1927 in *The Nebraska and Midwest Genealogical Record*.^[4]

Each publication supplies similar information on the deaths of Samuel and Abigail. The best information is provided by Wyman, quoting Samuel’s 1747 probate, which describes him as “late of Worcester, soldier at Louisburg” and comments that the “State Archives” names the widowed Abigail as the wife of John Hamen in 1748.^[5] Simeon Call notes that Samuel was living in 1745 and reports that the widowed Abigail married in 1748 at Cape Breton, John Hamen, who “deserted her for a former wife.”^[6] Cummings supposes that Samuel died in Leicester, Massachusetts, but is silent on the remarriage and death of Abigail.^[7] Mary Frances Call only states that Samuel died in 1747.^[8] These authors also supply contradictory information on Samuel and Abigail’s children, particularly on proposed children Ebenezer, Joseph, and Benjamin Call. Research presented in the current article offers the evidence needed to validate some of these conclusions, to correct others, and to reveal information — including Abigail’s third marriage and death — lost to the generations.

¹ Thomas Bellows Wyman, *The Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown, In the County of Middlesex and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1629–1818* (Boston: David Clapp and Son, 1879), 166–173; www.archive.org: accessed 20 September 2018.

² B. F. Cummings, “The Call Family,” bound typescript (1898); www.archive.com: accessed 8 September 2017.

³ Simeon T. Call, *Genealogical History of the Call Family in the United States* (Emington, Ill.: Joker Printing Company, 1908).

⁴ Mary Frances Call, “Call Family,” *The Nebraska and Midwest Genealogical Record*, 5:2–3 (April–July 1927), 26–27, 45–48; www.usgennet.org: accessed 20 March 2019.

⁵ Wyman, *Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown* [note 1], 168.

⁶ Call, *Call Family in the United States* [note 3], 1:9–10.

⁷ Cummings, “Call Family” [note 2], 9.

⁸ Call, “Call Family” [note 4], 45.

Births and Marriage of Samuel Call and Abigail Sprague

Samuel Call's birth was recorded in Charlestown as 6 June 1698,^[9] with his baptism occurring on 12 June 1698 in Cambridge, Massachusetts.^[10] Samuel had married Abigail by the birth of their first child, Abigail, on 11 April 1722 in Charlestown.^[11] Wyman identified Mrs. Abigail Call as Abigail Sprague through the will of her father Samuel Sprague.^[12] Abigail was born in Malden, Massachusetts, on 15 November 1702.^[13] On 17 February 1722/3, Samuel was admitted to full communion at the church in Charlestown^[14] and Abigail was admitted shortly after on 24 March 1722/3.^[15] The couple's first four children were born^[16] and baptized in Charlestown between 1722 and 1728.^[17]

Property Records Reveal Migration and Financial Difficulties

Contrary to their father's will, Samuel and his siblings, with their mother, sold a portion of their father's estate to his brother Jonathan Call on 23 March 1719/20.^[18] On 8 July 1737, Abigail (Sprague) Call and the wives of Samuel's brothers deeded their rights to the property to Jonathan Call, noting that the 1719/20 deed did not contain their names.^[19] On 26 August 1733, Samuel — who was then a heel maker residing in Oxford, Massachusetts — and his siblings sold the family home in Charlestown to their brother-in-law John Dimond to aid in caring for their sister Mary Call who was “infirm and unable to maintain herself.”^[20] Just as before, the wives of the Call brothers deeded their rights to this property by a second deed

⁹ Charlestown [Suffolk County, Massachusetts] Town Clerk, Vital Records (1629–1873) and Indexes (1725–1874), 3:113, birth of Samuel Call (1698) [FHL 0,740,995, image 40 of 447].

¹⁰ Thomas W. Baldwin, *Vital Records of Cambridge, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850* (Boston: Wright & Potter, 1914), 115, christening of Samuel Call (1698).

¹¹ Charlestown Town Clerk, Vital Records (1629–1873) and Indexes (1725–1874) [note 9], 3:214, birth of Abigail Call (1722) [FHL 0,740,995, image 65 of 447].

¹² Wyman, *Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown* [note 1], 890.

¹³ Deloraine P. Corey, *Births, Marriages and Deaths in the Town of Malden, Massachusetts, 1649–1850* (Cambridge, Mass.: University Press, 1903), 81, birth of Abigail Sprague (1702).

¹⁴ James Frothingham Hunnewell, ed., *Records of the First Church of Charlestown, Massachusetts, 1632–1789* (Boston: David Clapp and Son, 1880), 28.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Charlestown [Suffolk County, Massachusetts] Town Clerk, Vital Records (1629–1873) and Indexes (1725–1874) [note 9], 3:214, births of Abigail Call (1722), Samuel Call (1723), Joseph Call (1725), and James Call (1728) [FHL 0,740,995, image 65 of 447].

¹⁷ Hunnewell, *First Church of Charlestown* [note 14], 121, 122, 124, 128, baptisms of Abigail Call (1722), Samuel Call (1723), Joseph Call (1725), and James Call (1728).

¹⁸ Middlesex County Deeds, 38:403–404, deed of heirs of John Call to Jonathan Call (1719/20) [FHL 0,554,021, images 590–591 of 762].

¹⁹ Middlesex County Deeds, 38:403, deed of Hannah Call et al. to Jonathan Call (1737), FHL 0,554,021, image 590 of 762].

²⁰ Middlesex County Deeds, 35:182–183, deed of heirs of John Call to John Dimond (1733); FHL 0,554,019, images 382–383 of 618].

also dated 8 July 1737.^[21] Finally, on 16 August 1737, Samuel and his siblings sold their portions of their father's estate to his brother Richard Call.^[22]

The 1798 deposition of Samuel and Abigail's son, also named Samuel, revealed that the family moved from Charlestown to Malden in the fall of 1729 and then to Stoneham, Massachusetts, in the spring of 1730.^[23] The Call family presumably remained in Stoneham through the fall of 1730, as daughter Mary was baptized there on 18 October 1730.^[24] Samuel next appeared in the records as a resident of Leicester, purchasing 60 acres "in the north part of Oxford" from Ebenezer Lamb on 14 October 1731.^[25] Samuel and Abigail likely lived in Oxford the rest of the decade, as the births of four children were recorded there in the 1730s^[26] and the next known deed was dated 14 October 1740, when Samuel purchased an additional 20 acres in Oxford from John Campbell.^[27] In December 1741, Samuel was one of seven men who petitioned to create a new parish from the North Gore and the northern portions of Oxford, but the parish was never created "perhaps on account of the proposal to build the new meetinghouse at a location north of the Plain."^[28]

By the mid-1740s the Call family had fallen into an economic crisis, due — at least in part — to debts Samuel Call incurred through his involvement with the "Land Bank."^[29] Two tracts of Samuel's Oxford land, totaling 45 acres, were transferred on 21 June 1745 to an attorney representing John Jeffries of Boston, Samuel Danforth of Cambridge, and John Chandler of Worcester to cover debts and associated court costs that Samuel owed those men.^[30] A concurrent suit resulted in the transfer of an additional 11.75 acres in Oxford to Ebenezer Lock's attorney on 31 August 1745.^[31] Samuel Call (then living in Uxbridge, Massachusetts) had acknowledged his debt to Ebenezer Lock before the Inferior Court of Common Pleas as early as 8 February 1743/4, but unsuccessfully appealed the court's decision at the

²¹ Middlesex County Deeds, 38:402–403, deed of Mary Call et al. to John Dimond (1737) [FHL 0,554,021, image 590 of 762].

²² Middlesex County Deeds, 39:263, deed of John Call et al. to Richard Call (1737) [FHL 0,554,022, image 146 of 767].

²³ Middlesex County Deeds, 131:154–155, deposition of Samuel Call (1799), [FHL 0,554,077, image 82 of 554].

²⁴ *Vital Records of Stoneham, Massachusetts, to the End of the Year 1849* (Salem, Mass.: Essex Institute, 1918), 18, baptism of Mary Call (1730).

²⁵ Worcester County Deeds, 4:663–664, deed of Ebenezer Lamb to Samuel Call (1731) [FHL 0,843,213, images 238–239 of 603].

²⁶ Oxford, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Town Proceedings, Births, Deaths, and Miscellaneous Records, 1713–1752, 24, births of Mary Call (1730), Martha Call (1734), Nathan Call (1736), and John Call (1739) [FHL 0,859, 252].

²⁷ Worcester County Deeds, 13:253, deed of John Campbell to Samuel Call (1740) [FHL 0,843,218, image 157 of 658].

²⁸ George F. Daniels, *History of the Town of Oxford, Massachusetts, with Genealogies and Notes on Persons and Estates* (Oxford, Mass.: the author, 1892), 53.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 45–46.

³⁰ Worcester County Deeds, 21:59–61, deed of Samuel Call to John Jeffries et al. (1745) [FHL 0,843,166, images 47–48 of 602].

³¹ Worcester County Deeds, 19:447–448, deed of Samuel Call to Ebenezer Lock (1745) [FHL 0,843,165, image 246 of 598].

Superior Court of Judicature on 17 September 1744. By 5 March 1744/5, the deputy sheriff informed the court that neither Samuel nor his estate could be located.^[32] Again, also on 31 August 1745, Israel Whitney's attorney was granted possession of 27 acres of Samuel's Oxford land to pay a debt and court costs.^[33] Just days later, on the 10th or 16th of September 1745, Samuel sold a portion of his 60-acre lot in Oxford to Richard Gleazen for "Three hundred pounds Old Tenor," possibly in a move to liquidate his assets.^[34]

Death, Remarriage, and Divorce

On 12 June 1747, Ebenezer Dike was granted administration rights in Suffolk County, Massachusetts, for the estate of [his father-in-law] Samuel Call, who was "formerly of Worcester in the County of Worcester aforesaid but last a soldier in his Majesty's Garrison at Louisbourg[.]"^[35] Louisbourg on Cape Breton in Nova Scotia was the site of a fortress under British control in 1747, having recently been acquired from the French during the War of Austrian Succession. The description that Samuel was "last a soldier in his Majesty's Garrison at Louisbourg" was an indication he may have died there. Samuel's death place is corroborated by the 31 May 1748 petition from his widow Abigail to Governor William Shirley in which she sought a divorce from her second husband John Hamen.^[36] Abigail's petition reads:

To his Excelency the Governer William
Shirley Esqr. and his Majestys Honourable
Counsell of the Province of the Massachuettis [*sic*]
Bay in New England the petition of the
Subscriber humbly sheweth

That Samuel Call your petitioners Late Husband Listed into his Majestys
Service for Cape Breton and your petitioner then wife to said Samuel Call
went with him and severall of his Children in order to settle their [*sic*]. But
it pleased god who has y^e sovereign Disposal of things in his holy providance
to take away my said husband by sickness and Death from me and the
Circumstances of the place being such that your petitioner thought it

³² Suffolk County [Massachusetts] Court, Suffolk County (Mass.) Court Files, 1629–1797, 368:138, case no. 58273, entry for Samuel Call to Ebenezer Lock (1743/4) [FHL 0,913,887, images 516–517 of 557]; 382:46, case no. 60993, entry for Samuel Call to Ebenezer Lock (1745). [FHL 0,914,446, images 227–228 of 585].

³³ Worcester County Deeds, 19:449–450, deed of Samuel Call to Israel Whitney. (1745) [FHL 0,843,165, image 247 of 598].

³⁴ Worcester County Deeds, 20:394, deed of Samuel Call to Richard Gleazen. (1745) [FHL 0,843,165, image 512 of 598].

³⁵ Suffolk County [Massachusetts] Probate Court, Massachusetts, Suffolk County, Probate Records, 1636–1894, box 47, case no. 8780, estate of Samuel Call (1747) [FHL DGS 103,265,463, images 1759–1763 of 2526].

³⁶ Massachusetts State Archives, Massachusetts State Archives Collection, Colonial Period, 1622–1788, 9:321–323, entry for Abigail Hamen Petn. for Divorce (1748) [FHL 2,294,419, images 1237–1240 of 1604].

best to marry again and one John Hamen then a soldier at Cape Breton who went from New England a Listed soldier and appeared to be a parson under something of good Circumstance made sute to me and thinking it best to marry I Excepted his offer and was married to him in the manner and Custom of the Church of England and Lived with him their as man and wife for some time and he obtaining a Dismission from y^e service we Thought it best for to return to New England again and y^e said John Hamen Incouraged me and told me he had some Estate to go to and accordingly we shipt our selves as man and wife & our then present Family for New England & when we Came upon the Cost of New England the weather being bad the ship master put into York and when we were in the Harbour the said John Hamen & a servant of his he obtained at Cape Breton went a shore and pretended to your petitioner that he would go and visset some Children he had by a former Wife and Come to me again Ordering me to go in y^e ship to Boston & their apointing to meet me your petitioner being Inosent yet wondering he Carried away some things he took with him but as I said before was Inosent and proceeded on my voyage to Boston and waited for him some time and upon Inquiry was Informed that he Did not go to Hampton falls as he pretended to me but went for Arrendall and I have Suficient **proof** Evidence to prove he their Lives and Cohabets with a nother woman as his wife which is a Breach of his marriage Covenat with me and our blessed Saviour alowes it to be a just Cause of Sepration and according to your wonted goodness you have given releaf in such Cases upon which Consideration your abused & wronged petitioner Desiers your Excelency & Honou^l. to take her Case into your Consideration & in your wisdom and Justice to give me releaf and grant me a bill of Sepration and Divorcement and your petitioner as in Duty bound Shall Ever pray
[signed] Abigail Hamen
May 31st 1748

James Carr and Charles Hough/Huff jointly filed an affidavit on 13 June 1748, that corroborated Abigail's petition. These men, who had "been for many years acquainted with John Haman [*sic*]," stated that before John's marriage to Abigail he had married Sarah Hough and had several children with her in Arundel in York County (now in Maine). Upon John's return from Cape Breton he stayed with Sarah in Arundel from December 1747 to about February or March 1748, but then left her just as he had Abigail. John's whereabouts were unknown, but it was "generally apprehended that [was] not likely to come again to either of the two wives he [had] now living."^[37] The outcome of the case was not recorded, but presumably the divorce was granted, as Abigail married for a third time.

Abigail's petition and the probate record indicate that Samuel Call died sometime before 12 June 1747 at the Fortress of Louisbourg, Cape Breton,

³⁷ Ibid.

Nova Scotia. The Worcester County deeds discussed above demonstrate that Samuel was still a resident of Oxford in mid-September 1745; thus, his death occurred between September 1745 and June 1747. Note that Reverend Stephen Williams, a chaplain to the colonial forces at Louisbourg, recorded in his journal that a man named Daniel Call was buried at Louisbourg on 13 November 1745.^[38] Whether Reverend Williams misidentified Samuel Call as Daniel Call is not known.

Information concerning John Hamen strongly parallels the reported life of John Hamor of Arundel, Maine. In 1996, Dorothy Brewer Erikson published *Descendants of Thomas Brewer, Connecticut to Maine: 1682–1996 with Allied Families*, which included a section on John Hamor drawn from secondary sources. According to Erikson, John Hamor was born in Scotland in 1705 and migrated to New England in about 1718. John married Sarah Huff in 1735 in Arundel and had six children with her between 1736 and 1744. By 19 September 1745, John Hamor was at Cape Breton in Captain Thomas Perkins's Company and John "evidently died in 1746 at Fort Louisbourg."^[39] An 1837 history of Kennebunkport, Maine, reported the marriage of Sarah Huff and John "Hamer" and stated that this Sarah had a brother named Charles Huff.^[40] The parallels between John Hamor of Arundel and Abigail's second husband John Hamen are strong and lead to the supposition that these Johns may have been the same man.

Abigail Sprague's Third Marriage and Death

Unbeknownst to previous researchers, Abigail (Sprague) (Call) Hamen married for a third time. Her last marriage was to Moses Barrett on 17 April 1750 in Woodstock, Windham County, Connecticut.^[41] Evidence that Moses Barrett's wife was the widow of Samuel Call and former spouse of John Hamen is indirect but compelling. The marriage intention, published 23 March 1749/50, indicated that Abigail "Haman" was of Union [Connecticut],^[42] which was where her oldest daughter Abigail (Call) Dike lived with her family.^[43] Abigail Barrett, wife of Moses, was admitted to the church in Woodstock on 10 November 1751, by a letter from the church in

³⁸ Stephen Williams Diary, 1745–1748, entry for 13 November 1745, Francis Parkman Papers, 1565–1893, P-363, reel 11.26, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

³⁹ Dorothy Brewer Erikson, *Descendants of Thomas Brewer, Connecticut to Maine: 1682–1996 With Allied Families* (Boston: NEHGS, 1996), 387–393.

⁴⁰ Charles Bradbury, *History of Kennebunk Port, From Its First Discovery May 14, 1602, to A.D. 1837* (Kennebunk, Maine: James K. Remick, 1837), 249, 252; www.archive.org: accessed 21 October 2017.

⁴¹ Connecticut Church Records: North Woodstock Congregational Church, 1727–1900 (Hartford, Conn.: Connecticut State Library, 1962), 11, marriage of Moses Barrett and Abigail Haman (1750).

⁴² Woodstock, Windham County, Connecticut, Town Clerk, Records of Births, Marriages, and Deaths, vols. 1–5, 1686–1929, 2:8, marriage intention of Moses Barrett and Abigail Haman (1749) [FHL 1,376,372, image 354 of 798].

⁴³ Scott Andrew Bartley, *Early Vermont Settlers, 1700–1784*, index and images, AmericanAncestors by New England Historic Genealogical Society (www.americanancestors.org: sketch for Ebenezer Dike, Springfield, Hartland, and Woodstock).

Oxford — the Call family’s residence before the move to Cape Breton.^[44] Three Call sons — James, Nathan, and John — were married in Woodstock between 1752 and 1762,^[45] and the births of grandchildren were recorded there as well.^[46] Several Call men served in the French and Indian War between 1757 and 1761 from Woodstock.^[47] James Call witnessed deeds for Moses and Abigail Barrett on 24 November 1753 and 28 August 1758.^[48] During the settlement of Moses Barrett’s estate in 1760, James Call, Nathan Call, and Ebenezer Dike received payments for debts that the estate owed the men.^[49]

Notations in son John Call’s notebook also suggest that his mother Abigail had taken the Barrett surname. Financial notes relating to “Mother Barrett” dated 15 October 1763 and 14 March 1764 contain the phrases “there Remains Due/to mother” and “then Recond with/mother Barret[.]” An undated page references “mothers town rate” and “mothers colony[.]”^[50] Of course, John’s use of the descriptor “mother” was not restricted to his own biological mother — the word could describe really any woman in the community — but the use of the possessive “mother’s” implies he was referencing his own mother or perhaps a mother-in-law.

Additional evidence that Abigail (Sprague) (Call) Hamen was the woman who married Moses Barrett is found in the Plains Cemetery in Hartland, Windsor County, Vermont. Five of Samuel and Abigail (Sprague) Call’s children lived in Windsor County, beginning in the 1760s, including their son Nathan, who died 6 August 1789 and was buried in the Plains Cemetery.^[51] Next to Nathan Call’s marker is a damaged marker with the following inscription:^[52]

⁴⁴ Connecticut Church Records: North Woodstock Congregational Church [note 41], 11, admittance of Abigail Barrett (1751).

⁴⁵ Bartley, *Early Vermont Settlers, 1700–1784* [note 43], sketch for James Call, Springfield, sketch for Nathan Call, Hartland; Woodstock Town Clerk, Records of Births, Marriages, and Deaths [note 42], 2:17, marriage of John Call and Lucy Chaffe (1761) [FHL 1,376,372, image 358 of 798].

⁴⁶ Woodstock Town Clerk, Records of Births, Marriages, and Deaths [note 42], 2:27, 30, 34, births of John Call (1761), Elizabeth Call (1763), and Stephen Call (1765) [FHL 1,376,372, images 282, 284, 286 of 798].

⁴⁷ *Rolls of Connecticut Men in the French and Indian War, 1755–1762*, 2 vols. (Hartford, Conn., Connecticut Historical Society, 1903–1905), 2:62–63, 167–168, 176, 255–257, 373–374.

⁴⁸ Woodstock, Windham County, Connecticut, Town Clerk, Land Records, 1749–1908; General Index, 1749–1867, 2:2–4, deed of Moses and Abigail Barrett to David Barrett (1753), [FHL 0,005,955, images 210–211 of 701]; *ibid.*, 2:362–263, deed of Moses and Abigail Barret to Thomas Chandler (1753), [FHL 0,005,955, image 391 of 701]; *ibid.*, 2:364, deed of Thomas Chandler to Moses Barret (1758) [FHL 0,005,955, image 364 of 701].

⁴⁹ Pomfret District [Connecticut] Probate Court, Probate Files Collection, Early to 1880, no. 317, estate of Moses Barrett (1760) [FHL 1,027,076, images 691, 700, 703, 710 of 1428].

⁵⁰ John Call, “Diary and Account Book,” manuscript, 1762–1808 (Massachusetts), privately held by Gerald L. Pait, Florida, 2013; digital images in possession of the author.

⁵¹ Bartley, *Early Vermont Settlers, 1700–1784* [note 43], sketch for Nathan Call, Hartland.

⁵² Find A Grave.com, photograph of grave marker for Abigail Barrett (1701–1768), Plains Cemetery, Hartland, Windsor County, Vermont, memorial no. 28431226; Howland F. Atwood, “Gravestone Records from the Plains Cemetery, Hartland, Windsor County, Vermont,” *The Mayflower Descendant* 46 (1996), 144.

In Memory of M[r]s
 Abi^gai^l/h widow [of]
 M^r Moses Barre [--]
 di[e]d Dec^r 31st 176[--]
 In [he]r 67th Year
 Blessed are the dead
 That die in the Lord.

The current state of the marker makes it impossible to read the end of the surname or clearly make out the last digit in Abigail's death year, though the top portion of an "8" or "9" is visible. The death of this individual is not recorded in the records of Hartland, and one local historian believed the grave marker was the oldest one in Hartland.^[53] A transcription of the cemetery done in 1990 (supplemented by readings done in 1907 and 1938) decided that the death year was 1768 and that the surname was "Barrett," while acknowledging that some believe the surname was "Barnes."^[54] The contested fourth letter in the surname — the "r" or "n" — is important. When compared with other "r" and "n" inscriptions on the same marker it is my opinion that the contested letter is an "r" because the shoulder of the "r" does not descend low enough to make it an "n." Similarly, a close examination of the marker reveals that the deceased's given name was likely originally engraved as "Abiaih" but modified to read "Abigail" with a superscript "g" between the first "i" and second "a" and with an attempted erasure of the shoulder of the "h" to make the ascender appear as an "l." If Abigail died in 1768, then a death in her 67th year (meaning she was between 66 years and no days and 66 years and 364 days) matches perfectly with the birth of Abigail (Sprague) (Call) Hamen on 15 November 1702.

The evidence is strong that Abigail (Sprague) (Call) Hamen was the Abigail Haman who married Moses Barrett in Connecticut in 1750. Mrs. Abigail (Hamen) Barrett and members of the Call family resided in Woodstock, Connecticut, and in the Massachusetts towns of Oxford and Dudley. Moses and Abigail Barrett had associations with the Call family as evidenced by deeds, a probate record, and John Call's notebook. Lastly, the Plains Cemetery in Vermont shows that Moses Barrett's widow Abigail was not only born at about the same time as Abigail (Sprague) (Call) Hamen, but also that she laid to rest next to a child of Samuel and Abigail (Sprague) Call. For these reasons, it is believed that Abigail, widow of Samuel Call and former spouse of John Hamen, married Moses Barrett in Connecticut and, after Moses's death, went with her children to what was then Hertford but renamed Hartland in Windsor County, Vermont, where she died 31 December 1768.

⁵³ Howland Fay Atwood, "History and Family Records of Hartland, Vermont," folder for Barrett surname, grave marker transcription for Abigail Barret (1768) [FHL 0,028,340, images 544–550 of 992].

⁵⁴ Atwood, "Gravestone Records from the Plains Cemetery" [note 52], *The Mayflower Descendant*, 2:144.

Three Purported Children

The births of Samuel and Abigail (Sprague) Call's first four children (Abigail, Samuel, Joseph, and James) were recorded in Charlestown between 1722 and 1728,^[55] and the next four (Mary, Martha, Nathan, and John) were recorded in Oxford between 1730 and 1739.^[56] The Call genealogies referenced at the beginning of this article, as well as online family trees, provide three additional children: Ebenezer (born circa 1740), Joseph (born circa 1742), and Benjamin (born circa 1744). Because the births of these reported children were not recorded in any town records, there has been disagreement on whether the children belonged to the family. Presented below are arguments to include Ebenezer and Joseph as children of Samuel and Abigail (Sprague) Call and evidence that the existence of Benjamin Call was a simple transcription error.

Two First Cousins Named Ebenezer Call

The assignment of Ebenezer Call to the correct parents proved problematic to researchers for generations. Benjamin F. Cummings included Ebenezer as a child of Samuel and Abigail (Sprague) Call in his 1898 history of the family but acknowledged the evidence of that relationship was "circumstantial" and left the "doubt unsolved."^[57] In 1908, Simeon T. Call decided that Ebenezer did not belong to Samuel and Abigail but was their nephew, being the Ebenezer Call born 9 December 1730 in Charlestown to Samuel's brother Richard Call.^[58] In a later edition of the same work, Simeon included a 1910 letter from William S. Mills who ultimately concluded, relying on the memory of Rufus Call (a grandson of Samuel and Abigail), that Ebenezer was a son of Samuel and Abigail whose birth was simply not recorded in town records.^[59] Mary Frances Call, in her 1927 article, excluded Ebenezer as a child without explanation. Presented here is both new analysis of existing evidence and newly uncovered documents that demonstrate there were two contemporary men named Ebenezer Call, one being a son of Samuel Call and the other a son of Richard Call and were, therefore, first cousins.

⁵⁵ Charlestown Town Clerk, Vital Records (1629–1873) and Indexes (1725–1874) [note 9], 3:214, births of Abigail Call (1722), Samuel Call (1723), Joseph Call (1725), and James Call (1728) [FHL 0,740,995, image 65 of 447].

⁵⁶ Oxford Town Clerk, Town Proceedings, Births, Deaths, and Miscellaneous Records, 1713–1752 [note 26], 24, births of Mary Call (1730), Martha Call (1734), Nathan Call (1736), and John Call (1739).

⁵⁷ Cummings, "Call Family" [note 2], 9.

⁵⁸ Call, *Call Family in the United States* [note 3], 8.

⁵⁹ William S. Mills to Simeon T. Call, letter, 31 March 1910, in "Lineages and History of the Call Family Continued with Additions and Corrections." Simeon Call's 1908 *Genealogical History of the Call Family* [note 3], and this 1910 *Lineages and History* are bound in the same volume. The 1910 version was written by William S. Mills (it opens with his letter and closes with his name) and does not have publication information besides the date of the letter and that it was written from Brooklyn, New York. See <https://archive.org/details/genealogicalhist00call/page/n66/mode/2up?view=theater>, pp. 5–7.

Richard and Mary (King) Call had a son named Ebenezer Call born 9 December 1730 in Charlestown.^[60] Ebenezer was included in a list of Richard's children dated 15 June 1758 during the administration of Richard's estate, indicating that Ebenezer was living as late as 1758.^[61] No other document has been uncovered for Ebenezer in the Charlestown area.

If this Ebenezer Call was the man of that name who married Elizabeth Sanderson in Leicester, Massachusetts, on 15 January 1767,^[62] he would have been 37 years old at this marriage — an advanced age for a first marriage (no evidence of a prior marriage has been found) in colonial New England.^[63] The marriage intention noted that Ebenezer was a resident of Hertford (now Hartland), Windsor County, Vermont. Ebenezer and Elizabeth (Sanderson) Call are found in Vermont's and New York's records as late as the 1810 census when Ebenezer was enumerated as a head of household in Luzerne, Washington County, New York.^[64]

In 1853, Rufus and Cyrus Call, sons of Joseph and Mary (Sanderson) Call, swore affidavits concerning the military service of Ebenezer Call in Vermont and New York during the Seven Years War and Revolutionary War to aid Ebenezer's blind grandson Ira in his attempt to receive a pension for Ebenezer's military service.^[65] Both Rufus and Cyrus called Ebenezer "uncle" but did not specify how Ebenezer was an uncle. Ebenezer was certainly an uncle by marriage, as he married Elizabeth Sanderson who was a sister to Rufus's and Cyrus's mother Mary (Sanderson) Call.^[66] But was he also an uncle by blood?

In 1866, Rufus (then in his late nineties) recalled the names of his father (Joseph) and his father's brothers: "Samuel, John, Nathan, James, Ebenezer, and Joseph."^[67] Importantly, Rufus also noted that "Ebenezer m[arried] Elizabeth Sanderson, his cousin."^[68] Elizabeth Sanderson's maternal grandmother was Elizabeth (Sprague) Green who was sister to Abigail

⁶⁰ Charlestown Town Clerk, Vital Records (1629–1873) and Indexes (1725–1874) [note 9], 3:218, birth of Ebenezer Call (1730) [FHL 0,740,995, image 66 of 447].

⁶¹ Middlesex County, Probate Records 1648–1924 (Middlesex County, Massachusetts), Probate Papers 3856–3946, File 3889 for the estate of Richard Call (1756) [FHL 0,386,049]. This list of children included Richard, Ebenezer, William, Mary, Hannah, and Nathaniel, but did not name the brother Nathaniel born in 1735 who presumably died before the later Nathaniel was born in 1745.

⁶² Leicester, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Town and Vital Records, 1714–1887, A:461, 486, marriage intention and marriage for Ebenezer Call and Elizabeth "Saunderson" (1766) [FHL 0,858,549, images 257, 271 of 882]. Town records erroneously dated their marriage as 1766, but context implies it was 1767.

⁶³ Daniel Scott Smith, "The Demographic History of Colonial New England," *The Journal of Economic History*, 32:1 (1972), 177; www.jstor.org; accessed 21 February 2020.

⁶⁴ Bartley, *Early Vermont Settlers, 1700–1784* [note 43], sketch for Ebenezer Call, Hartland and Woodstock.

⁶⁵ Revolutionary War Pensions, images, www.fold3.com, accessed 15 April 2018, Vermont>C>Call>Ebenezer Call>images 4, 5 of 12, depositions of Rufus Call and Cyrus Call (1853).

⁶⁶ Bartley, *Early Vermont Settlers, 1700–1784* [note 43], sketch for Ebenezer Call, Hartland and Woodstock, and sketch for Joseph Call, Hartland and Woodstock.

⁶⁷ Simeon T. Call, *Call Family in the United States* [note 3], part 1, p. 5.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, part 2, p. 6.

(Sprague) Call.^[69] Thus, if Ebenezer was Abigail's son, then he would have been a first cousin once removed from his wife, Elizabeth Sanderson. No such relationships have been found between Elizabeth Sanderson and Richard and Mary (King) Call (parents of the Ebenezer Call born in 1730).

In 1869, Rufus's and Cyrus's brother Cyril Call, with his son Anson, performed proxy baptisms for deceased relatives in the Latter-day Saints temple in Salt Lake City, Utah. Immediately after Cyril was baptized for his father and grandfathers, Anson was baptized for Samuel, Nathan, James, John, and Ebenezer Call, with Anson's relationship to these men recorded as "Grand Nephew."^[70] The first four granduncles (Samuel, Nathan, James, and John) were known children of Samuel and Abigail (Sprague) Call, and the inclusion of Ebenezer in this list implies he was also their son; furthermore, this listing also implies that Cyril's father Joseph was another son in the family. (Anson later specified in his journal that Ebenezer was Joseph's brother.)^[71] The records that these three brothers (Rufus, Cyrus, and Cyril) left consistently imply that Ebenezer Call was a brother to their father Joseph Call.

A key document in determining that there were two men — first cousins — named Ebenezer Call is found in the collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. On 15 January 1762, an Ebenezer Call wrote from Philadelphia to his brother William Call in Boston. The letter is short and is concerned almost exclusively with the transfer of goods, but two key pieces of information are included. First, the Ebenezer Call in Philadelphia had a brother named William Call in Boston. Second, William Call was in "the caer [*sic*] of M^r Joseph Callander [*sic*] Baker in New Boston."^[72] Richard and Mary (King) Call had a son named William Call born in Charlestown 27 February 1732,^[73] who died in 1782 in Boston.^[74] This William Call, like his father, was a baker.^[75] A notice published in the *Boston Gazette* on 4 March 1765 notified the public that "the Co-partnership between Call & Callender, Bakers, expired" on 28 January 1765, which demonstrates that the William Call to whom Ebenezer wrote was not only in "the caer of" Joseph

⁶⁹ Page Sanderson, "Edward Sanderson of Watertown, Mass.," *Register* 127 (1973): 191–192; Wyman, *Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown* [note 1], 168, 439, 890.

⁷⁰ Endowment House [Salt Lake City, Utah], Baptisms for the Dead, 1857–1876; Heir Index, 1855–1876, vol. A, p. 15, proxy baptisms for Joseph Call, John [*sic*] Call, Benjamin Sanderson, Samuel Call, Nathan Call, James Call, John Call, and Ebenezer Call (1869) [FHL 1,149,518].

⁷¹ *The Journal of Anson Call* (n.p.: Ethan L. Call and Christine Shaffer Call, n.d.), 106, 112.

⁷² Ebenezer Call to William Call, letter, 15 January 1762, Gratz Collection, case 16, box 11, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; copy in the possession of the author.

⁷³ Charlestown Town Clerk, "Vital Records (1629–1873) and Indexes (1725–1874), Births, Marriages, Deaths, 1629–1843, 3:225, birth of William Call (1732) [FHL 0,074,995, image 68 of 447].

⁷⁴ Suffolk County Register of Deeds, Records of Deeds, 1639–1885. Indexes to Deeds, 1639–1920, 134:152–153, deed of William Call to Nathaniel Call (1782) [FHL 0,494,610, images 701–702 of 773].

Suffolk County [Massachusetts] Probate Court, Suffolk County (Massachusetts) Probate Records, 1636–1899, 81:747, estate of William Call (1782) [FHL 0,493,887, image 847 of 882].

⁷⁵ Wyman, *Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown* [note 1], 168–169.

Callander but was a baker himself.^[76] These clues lead to the conclusion that the William Call who was a baker in Boston in the 1760s (and was the son of Richard and Mary [King] Call) had a brother named Ebenezer Call who lived in Philadelphia at least as early as 1762.

Ebenezer Call had a presence in Philadelphia from as early as 1753 to as late as 1790. He was married first to Sarah Barber in Philadelphia on 19 February 1753,^[77] and then to Margaret Thompson on 10 June 1756.^[78] Ebenezer was included in tax records from 1754 to 1787,^[79] and was involved with property transactions in 1758, 1761, 1763, and 1772. In 1780, he was involved with the emancipation of an enslaved woman named Flora.^[80] Ebenezer last appeared in Philadelphia when the 1790 census was taken.^[81] During the same period, the Ebenezer Call who married Elizabeth Sanderson in 1767 was listed in Vermont town and property records as well as the 1790 census in Vermont.^[82] Therefore, it can be concluded that these documents pertain to two distinct men, both named Ebenezer Call, who were first cousins: the Ebenezer Call of Philadelphia was the son of Richard and Mary (King) Call while the Ebenezer Call of Vermont who married Elizabeth Sanderson was an unrecorded child of Samuel and Abigail (Sprague) Call.

Two Sons Named Joseph Call

Samuel and Abigail (Sprague) Call certainly had a son Joseph as Benjamin F. Cummings,^[83] Simeon T. Call,^[84] and Mary Frances Call^[85] agreed. The

⁷⁶ "Whereas the Co-partnership," *The Boston [Massachusetts] Gazette and Country Journal*, 4 March 1765, p. 4, col. 2, www.genealogybank.com: accessed 2 February 2019.

⁷⁷ John B. Linn and Wm. H. Egle, eds., *Record of Pennsylvania Marriages Prior to 1810*, 2 vols. (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Clarence M. Busch, State Printer of Pennsylvania: 1896), 2:302, marriage of Ebenezer Call and Sara Barber (1753).

⁷⁸ John B. Linn and Wm. H. Egle, eds., *Record of Pennsylvania Marriages Prior to 1810* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Lane S. Hart, State Printer: 1880), 1:38, marriage of Ebenezer Call and Margaret Thompson (1756).

⁷⁹ *Pennsylvania and New Jersey, Church and Town Records, 1669–2013*, index and images, www.ancestry.com, tax for Ebenezer Caul/Call (1754, 1769, 1774, 1775, 1779, 1782, 1783, 1785, 1786, 1787, Southwark, and Middle, South, and Dock Wards, Philadelphia).

⁸⁰ Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania, Recorder of Deeds, Philadelphia County Deeds, 1683–1886; Index to Deeds, 1683–1916, H10:6–10, deed of Joseph Richardson, et al., to Ebenezer Call (1759) [FHL 0,021,893, images 7–9 of 1073]. Philadelphia County Deeds, H20:189–191, deed of James Bringhurst to Ebenezer Call (1761) [FHL 0,021,898, images 98–99 of 579]. Philadelphia County Deeds, H20:191–192, deed of Richard Farmar to Ebenezer Call (1763) [FHL 0,021,898, images 99–100 of 579]. Philadelphia County Deeds, deed of Ebenezer and Margaret Call to John Keast (1772) [FHL 0,021,904, images 62–63 of 576]. U.S., Quaker Meeting Records, 1681–1935, index and images (www.ancestry.com: accessed 8 March 2018), manumission of Flora, enslaved person of Ebenezer Call (Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, 1780).

⁸¹ 1790 U.S. Census, Southwark, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania, p. 257, Ebenezer Call household.

⁸² Bartley, *Early Vermont Settlers, 1700–1784* [note 43], sketch for Ebenezer Call, Hartland and Woodstock.

⁸³ Cummings, "Call Family" [note 2], 9–10.

⁸⁴ Call, *Call Family in the United States* [note 3], 9.

⁸⁵ Call, "Call Family" [note 4], *Nebraska and Midwest Genealogical Record* 5 (1927), 26–27, 45–48.

son Joseph was born in Charlestown 11 February 1725/6,^[86] but Cummings included a second son named Joseph, born in 1742.^[87] Cummings concluded that the earlier Joseph died young and it was the younger Joseph who married Mary Sanderson in 1766, while the other authors claimed it was the older Joseph who married Mary. The evidence discussed below demonstrates that Cummings was correct in deducing that Samuel and Abigail had two sons named Joseph and that it was the younger of the two who married Mary Sanderson.

Cummings included the second Joseph, and assigned him a birth year of 1742, because of statements from Joseph's grandsons Anson Call (son of Cyril) and Amherst Call (son of Rufus). Anson provided the birth year Cummings chose and Amherst was quoted as stating that his grandfather Joseph Call "lived with father till I was 17 and d[ie]d at 80."^[88] This statement can be interpreted two ways: 1) Joseph moved out of his son Rufus's home when Amherst was 17 and then died later, or 2) Joseph died (while living in Rufus's home) the same year Amherst was 17. Since Amherst was born 24 February 1804,^[89] either Joseph's move or his death occurred (according to Amherst's memory) in about 1821. However, Joseph and Rufus were enumerated on the U.S. Census in separate households in 1820,^[90] suggesting Joseph likely moved out of Rufus's home before dying and before Amherst turned 17, as he recalled. Despite the imprecision in Amherst's memory, it appears that Amherst remembered his grandfather Joseph dying in the 1820s at about age 80, suggesting Joseph was born in the 1740s — which agrees with Anson's statement that Joseph was born in 1742.

Other records show that Joseph died likely between 22 November 1823^[91] and 30 April 1825.^[92] Again, if Amherst's memory was correct regarding Joseph's age at death, it can be supposed that Joseph was born between about 1743 and 1745. If grandfather Joseph was the Joseph Call born in 1725/6, then he would have been approaching one hundred in the early to mid-1820s — a fact Amherst likely would have recalled. Similarly, in an 1856 letter to his brother Cyrus Call, Rufus spoke (as summarized by the letter's owner in 1924) "of his father [Joseph] & several broth ^uncles^ having died between the ages of 80 & 81."^[93] If Rufus believed his father was born in the 1720s, then he probably would have stated that Joseph died closer to the age of 100.

⁸⁶ Charlestown Town Clerk [note 9], Vital Records (1629-1873) and Indexes (1725-1874), 3:214, birth of Joseph Call (1725) [FHL 0,740,995, image 65 of 447].

⁸⁷ Cummings, "Call Family" [note 2], 9–10, 17–18.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 9–10.

⁸⁹ Brookfield, Orange County, Vermont, Town Clerk, Vital Records, 1799–1997; Index to Vital Records, 1796–1996; Index to Family Records, 1779–1855, 1: 29A, birth of Amherst Call (1804) [FHL 0,027,925, image 26 of 343].

⁹⁰ 1820 U.S. Census of Perry, Geauga County, Ohio, p. 115, Rufus Call and Joseph Call households.

⁹¹ Bartley, *Early Vermont Settlers, 1700–1784* [note 43], sketch for Joseph Call, Hartland and Woodstock.

⁹² *Ibid.*, sketch for James Call, Springfield.

⁹³ Supporting Documentation from Natalie Thompson Tuttle (national no. 31055) for Joseph Call (ancestor no. A018349), National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, Washington, D.C.; copy in possession of Robert M. Call, Braymer, Missouri.

Furthermore, when Cyril Call, Joseph's youngest child, performed a proxy Latter-day Saints baptism for Joseph in 1869, he reported that Joseph was born in 1742 in Oxford, Massachusetts, and died in 1823.^[94] This suggests that Joseph was approximately 80 or 81 when he died; this agrees with the Amherst Call and Rufus Call statements. Cyril's report that Joseph was born in Oxford in 1742 is also important because it suggests, in four ways, that his father Joseph was distinct from the Joseph born in 1725/6 in Charlestown. First, the birth years and places are significantly different. Second, a birth in Oxford in the 1740s fits well the Samuel and Abigail (Sprague) Call family chronology. Third, Samuel and Abigail's family was the only Call family in Oxford in the 1730s and 1740s, indicating that Samuel and Abigail were the best parental candidates for Cyril's father Joseph. Lastly, a birth for Joseph in about 1742 places him at the end of Samuel and Abigail's children, rather than the beginning, which aligns well with Rufus's record naming Joseph last in his list of the Call brothers.^[95]

Regarding Joseph Call's marriage, Scott Andrew Bartley demonstrates that the father of Rufus Call and Cyril Call (among other children) was the Joseph Call who married Mary Sanderson in Leicester, Massachusetts, on 22 October 1766.^[96] No earlier marriage has been found for this man. It is statistically more likely for Joseph to have first entered marriage at about 24 than age 40,^[97] which adds credibility to the argument that the husband of Mary Sanderson was born closer to 1742 than 1725/6. Therefore, this marriage strengthens the circumstantial case that Samuel and Abigail (Sprague) Call were the parents of two children named Joseph.

Because of these statements concerning Joseph Call's birth year and place, his birth position in the family, and his age at death, as well as the year of his marriage to Mary Sanderson, it is believed that he was born in (or near) 1742. Therefore, Cummings was correct in stating that Samuel and Abigail (Sprague) Call were the parents of two sons named Joseph — one born in 1725/6 and the other in about 1742.

Disproving Proposed Child Benjamin Call

Benjamin F. Cummings included an eleventh child in the family of Samuel and Abigail (Sprague) Call named Benjamin Call, who was reportedly born about 1744.^[98] This proposed child is included in many online family trees. Cummings likely obtained his information from the journal of Anson Call where he recorded that he performed a Latter-day Saints proxy baptism for Benjamin Call in 1869.^[99] However, Anson's record was a simple

⁹⁴ Endowment House [Salt Lake City, Utah], Baptisms for the Dead, 1857–1876; Heir Index, 1855–1876, A:15, proxy baptism for Joseph Call (1869) [FHL 1,149,518].

⁹⁵ Call, *Call Family in the United States* [note 3], part 1, pp. 4–5; part 2, pp. 6–7.

⁹⁶ Bartley, *Early Vermont Settlers, 1700–1784* [note 43], sketch for Joseph Call, Hartland and Woodstock.

⁹⁷ Smith, “Demographic History of Colonial New England” [note 63], *Journal of Economic History*, 32:177.

⁹⁸ Cummings, “Call Family” [note 2], pp. 9–10.

⁹⁹ *The Journal of Anson Call* [note 71], 86–87.

transcription error. When the original temple records are consulted, it becomes apparent that this proxy baptism was for Benjamin Sanderson, Anson's great-grandfather — not a fictitious great-uncle Benjamin Call.^[100]

(to be continued)

Robert M. Call, AG (robert.michael.call@gmail.com), is a Research Team Manager at Legacy Tree Genealogists. He is descended from Samuel Call and Abigail Sprague through their son Joseph.

¹⁰⁰ Endowment House [Salt Lake City, Utah], Baptisms for the Dead, 1857–1876; Heir Index, 1855–1876, vol. A, p. 15, proxy baptism for Benjamin Sanderson (1869) [FHL 1,149,518].