

Descendants of Noah Webster

Generation No. 1

1. NOAH⁷ WEBSTER (*NOAH⁶, DANIEL⁵, JOHN⁴, ROBERT³, JOHN², MATTHEW¹*)^{1,2} was born Oct 16, 1758 in West Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut², and died May 28, 1843 in New Haven, Connecticut². He married REBECCA GREELEAF². She was born May 27, 1766 in Quincy, Massachusetts², and died Jun 25, 1847 in New Haven, Connecticut².

Notes for NOAH WEBSTER:

Noah Webster can be noted in this report to be my third cousin, five times removed. Noah is the third great grandson of Plymouth Colony Governor William Bradford and Alice Carpenter Bradford. They are my eighth great grandparents. Another family connection can be traced. Miriam Cook is Noah's grandmother through her second marriage, which was to Daniel Webster. Miriam Cook's first husband was Abraham Kellogg, is my fifth great grand uncle. This family line comes through my father's line that goes from Sharpe to Sharp to Kellogg to Steele to Bradford.

Noah is a famous lexicographer. He published his famous Dictionary, the "American Dictionary of the English Language," in 1828, and it has been republished in recent years in its original version, as it contained many definitions that included Biblical nomenclature in the descriptions. Suzanne gave me a copy for Father's Day in 2001, and it is very interesting to browse.

Also of interest is the ancestry of Noah. His third great grandfather is Gov. John Webster, who was the fifth Governor of Connecticut Colony.

This biographical sketch from the Internet below is enlightening:

"Noah Webster was born on October 16, 1758, in the West Division of Hartford. Noah's was an average colonial family. His father farmed and worked as a weaver. His mother worked at home. Noah and his two brothers, Charles and Abraham, helped their father with the farm work. Noah's sisters, Mercy and Jerusha, worked with their mother to keep house and to make food and clothing for the family.

"Few people went to college, but Noah loved to learn so his parents let him go to Yale, Connecticut's only college. He left for New Haven in 1774, when he was 16. Noah's years at Yale coincided with the Revolutionary War. Because New Haven had food shortages during this time, many of Noah's classes were held in Glastonbury.

"Noah graduated in 1778. He wanted to study law, but his parents could not afford to give him more money for school. So, in order to earn a living, Noah taught school in Glastonbury, Hartford and West Hartford. Later he studied law. [Additional fact: in 1784 Connecticut started the first law school in America, which graduated Noah Webster]

"Noah did not like American schools. Sometimes 70 children of all ages were crammed

into one-room schoolhouses with no desks, poor books, and untrained teachers. Their books came from England. Noah thought that Americans should learn from American books, so in 1783, Noah wrote his own textbook: A Grammatical Institute of the English Language. [Additional fact: In 1783 Noah also produced what is considered to be the first dictionary created in the US] Most people called it the "Blue-backed Speller" because of its blue cover.

"For 100 years, Noah's book taught children how to read, spell, and pronounce words. It was the most popular American book of its time. Ben Franklin used Noah's book to teach his granddaughter to read.

"In 1789, Noah married Rebecca Greenleaf. They had eight children. Noah carried raisins and candies in his pockets for the children to enjoy. The Websters lived in New Haven, then moved to Amherst, Massachusetts. There, Noah helped to start Amherst College. Later the family moved back to New Haven. [Additional fact: Dec. 9, 1793 Noah Webster founded New York's first daily newspaper.]

"When Noah was 43, he started writing the first American dictionary. He did this because Americans in different parts of the country spelled, pronounced and used words differently. He thought that all Americans should speak the same way. He also thought that Americans should not speak and spell just like the English. Noah used American spellings like "color" instead of the English "colour" and "music" instead " of "musick". He also added American words that weren't in English dictionaries like "skunk" and "squash." It took him over 27 years to write his book. When finished in 1828, at the age of 70, Noah's dictionary had 70,000 words in it.

"Noah did many things in his life. He worked for copyright laws, wrote textbooks, Americanized the English language, and edited magazines. When Noah Webster died in 1843 he was considered an American hero.

Here is one of his quotes are worth repeating here:

"When you become entitled to exercise the right of voting for public officers, let it be impressed on your mind that God commands you to choose for rulers, 'just men who will rule in the fear of God.' The preservation of [our] government depends on the faithful discharge of this Duty; if the citizens neglect their Duty and place unprincipled men in office, the government will soon be corrupted; laws will be made, not for the public good so much as for selfish or local purposes; corrupt or incompetent men will be appointed to execute the Laws; the public revenues will be squandered on unworthy men; and the rights of the citizen will be violated or disregarded. If [our] government fails to secure public prosperity and happiness, it must be because the citizens neglect the Divine Commands, and elect bad men to make and administer the Laws." -History of United States by Noah Webster.

Source: <http://lexrex.com/bios/nwebster.htm>

Children of NOAH WEBSTER and REBECCA GREELEAF are:

- i. EMILY S.⁸ WEBSTER.
- ii. FRANCESD JULIANA WEBSTER.
- iii. MARY WEBSTER.
- iv. WILLIAM GREENLEAF WEBSTER.

- v. ELIZA STEELE GREENLEAF WEBSTER.
- vi. BRADFORD GREENLEAF WEBSTER, b. Nov 20, 1806, New Haven, Connecticut; d. Nov 20, 1806, New Haven, Connecticut.
- vii. LOUISA GREENLEAF WEBSTER, b. Apr 12, 1808, New Haven, Connecticut.
- viii. HARRIET WEBSTER.

Endnotes

1. Internet, http://newenglandgenealogy.pcplayground.com/f_1c8.htm#80.
2. Internet, http://newenglandgenealogy.pcplayground.com/f_249.htm#82.