ABIAH[3] CARPENTER (*WILLIAM*[2–1]) OF REHOBOTH, MASSACHUSETTS, AND WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND

Eugene Cole Zubrinsky, FASG
Ojai, California, 2008
Last revised 29 May 2013

Prepared for *Carpenters' Encyclopedia of Carpenters 2008 Update*

ABIAH[3] CARPENTER (*William*[2] of Rehoboth, *William*[1]) was born at Weymouth, Massachusetts Bay Colony, on 9 2nd month [April] 1643 and died intestate in the Pawtuxet section of Warwick, Colony of Rhode Island and Plymouth Plantations, after 14 December 1687 and probably before 26 December 1689 (certainly before 22 March 169[8/]9). He married by 1667, probably at Rehoboth, Plymouth Colony, **MARY REDWAY**, born there on 27 May 1646 and died probably at Pawtuxet (Warwick) after 1669 and certainly before 7 March 1676/7, daughter of James[1] Redway (TAG 70:200–2; NEHGR 159:55–56; see also DEATH, MARRIAGE, and COMMENTS sections, below). [While the foregoing genealogical data is presented in *Register* style, the embedding, grouping, and severe abbreviating of source citations are conveniences that depart from it. Sources are cited in full in KEY TO SOURCE NOTES, at the end of this sketch. The format below is patterned loosely after that used by Robert Charles Anderson in his *Great Migration* series.]

DEATH: Abiah's record of regularly performed public service (see OFFICES, below) ends abruptly with his grand jury duty at Newport on 13 and 14 December 1687 (RICR 3:233–34). He was presumably deceased when "Rebecka Carpenter Daughter of Abiah Carpenter" was recorded in the "Orphants" section of a list of grantees appended to Major William Bradford's quitclaim deed to the town of Rehoboth, dated 26 December 1689 (Early Rehoboth 1:56–57; see NEHGR 159:56n6 for more-detailed discussion). The earliest record explicitly indicating that Abiah had died is his son Oliver's Warwick deed to Benjamin Smith Jr., dated 22 March 1699, 11 William III [regnal year]—i.e., 22 March 1698/9—which mentions "my honoured Father Abiah Carpenter deceased" (WarLE 1:184; NEHGR 159:56n6). The record of his son Joseph's first marriage, on 18 March 1702/3, refers to the latter's deceased father as having been "of Pautuxet in the township of Warwick" (WarVR 1:2:16).

MARRIAGE(S): At Warwick on 14 September 1667, William and Mary Baker bound out their seven-year-old daughter, Mary, to Abiah Carpenter, so that he and his wife (not named) "may . . . educat & instruct [her] in all things that perteyneth to houswifery" (WarTR1 333–34). That Abiah's wife at that time was Mary Redway is deduced from her father James[1] Redway's will, dated 26 July 1677 and proved 4 June 1684, which instructs that "Rebeckah Carpenter the daughter of Abiah Carpenter" receive twenty acres from the next land division (PCPR 4:2:73; Early Rehoboth 1:129, 132–33).

Redway's will names three others, known to be another daughter's child and two sons-in-law, in the same fashion as it does Rebecca and Abiah; that is, the relationship of each to the testator or any of his daughters is unspecified. With James Redway's other daughters' husbands accounted for, Abiah's wife could only have been Mary.

Amos B. Carpenter asserts that about 1668 Abiah removed to Musketa Cove (Oyster Bay), Long Island, with his brother-in-law and sister, Joseph[2] (*William*[1] of Providence) and Hannah (Carpenter) Carpenter, and returned to Pawtuxet (Warwick) after Hannah's death, about 1670 [*sic*] (see Carpenter [1898] 46, 47; Hannah[3] sketch, DEATH [she died by 8 June 1673]). Author Carpenter suspects that Abiah, presumably while at Musketa Cove, "married for his second wife a sister of Ann Wickes [*sic*], second wife of Joseph Carpenter of Mosquito Cove" (see Carpenter [1898] 46). Joseph Carpenter married Ann[2] Weekes (*Francis*[1]) of Oyster Bay (the settlement adjacent to Musketa Cove) by 2 September 1674 (see OBTR 1:412, 2:702; RILE 1:47, 50–51). That Abiah married Ann's sister, however, is highly unlikely. Francis Weekes's will and a codicil thereto, dated 25 June 1687 and 3 February 1688/9, respectively, mention only two daughters—Ann, widow of Joseph Carpenter, deceased, and Elizabeth, wife of Nicholas Simpkins—and imply no others, living or dead (OBTR 1:411–12, 2:702). Abiah, moreover, never lived at Musketa Cove, and his only known visit there, in June 1669, was almost certainly very brief (see RESIDENCES, below). His wife in mid-January 1669/70 (she was then ill at Pawtuxet) was very probably Mary Redway (see WarTR2 32–33; NEHGR 159:57n8 [cont'd.]). In 1933, a pair of respected genealogists named de Forest presented 1668, 1669, and mid-1670 land and court records putting Abiah at Warwick during that period (see RESIDENCES and OFFICES, below) and concluded that "[t]he evidence is against the theory advanced that Abiah Carpenter removed to Long Island" (see Brady Anc 132; NEHGR 159:57n9). That analysis led distinguished genealogist Herbert Seversmith to state in 1939 that "evidently the statements made that [Abiah] married 2, Abigail Wickes [*sic*] . . . are without foundation" (Colonial Fams 2:559). Records subsequent to those examined by the de Forests put Abiah at Warwick virtually continuously for another three and a half years (until early 1674) (see RESIDENCES, below).

It is reasonable to assume that Abiah remarried after Mary's death (see COMMENTS, below)—his children were then quite young and perhaps did not yet include one known to have been his—but evidence of it has not been found.

RESIDENCES: Weymouth; Rehoboth (1644); Pawtuxet (Warwick) (ca. 1662). The area called Pawtuxet is on both sides of the Pawtuxet River, one part in northern Warwick and the other in Cranston (formerly southern Providence).

Abiah was still of Rehoboth on 1 July 1661, when Kekettowicket, chief sachem of Pawtuxet, relinquished to him and three Pawtuxet (Warwick) men his interest in a parcel of land at the latter place (WarTR2 153–54; NEHGR 159:55–56). On 13 July 1663, however, Abiah Carpenter, [brother-in-law] Joseph Carpenter, Benjamin Smith, and Mr. Hen-

ry Reddock were all of "Pautuxett in Warwicke" when they asked that the Warwick Court of Trials transfer their prosecution "concerning a Riot" to the General Court of Trials to be held at Portsmouth (WarCT 230; RICT1 2:22; NEHGR 159:58). Abiah's father had bequeathed him a home lot, meadow, and other land at Pawtuxet and instructed Abiah's mother and brother Samuel to "healp him to build an house" there (MD 14:231–32).

Notwithstanding Amos Carpenter's claim that Abiah resided at Musketa Cove for a few years beginning in 1668 (see MARRIAGE(S), above), Abiah was of Pawtuxet on 30 November of that year, when his brother-in-law Joseph Carpenter deeded him twenty acres and "a fifth parte of three Square Miles [all at Musketa Cove] . . . provided [he] shall cum within three Yeares after, ye date beneith written, & possess ye said Lands with his ffamely" (OBTR 1:42–43). He was also of Pawtuxet on 14 June 1669, when he quit-claimed back to Joseph "my hole, right and titell of Land, at Musketow Cove" (OBTR 1:49); the witnesses to this deed, however, were Oyster Bay men (OBTR 1:4, 43–45, 50, 51–52). Evidently in the week following the expiration of his term as Warwick constable (1 June 1668 to 7 June 1669), Abiah visited Musketa Cove and decided against settling there (see WarTR2 158–59, 166–67). He almost certainly returned soon thereafter to Pawtuxet, where Warwick records locate him in mid-January 1669/70 (see MARRIAGE(S), above). A 1670 entry in Musketa Cove merchant Moses Mudge's account book shows Abiah Carpenter as indebted to him for a half-pint of rum (NYGBR 109:204; NEHGR 159:57n9). Mudge, however, "was in Warwick, R.I., in the period 1668–70 [marriage and birth of son Jarvis], but returned to Long Island by Aug. 1674" (TAG 81:24; NEHGR 161:300). It is therefore likely that the account-book entry refers to a transaction at Warwick rather than Musketa Cove. Warwick townsmen made Abiah a juryman at least annually from April 1670 to November 1673 (on the latter date for the following February) (WarTR2 174, 182–83, 190–91, 191–92, 209).

OCCUPATION: Amos Carpenter calls him a mariner, but the extent of Abiah's land holdings and the nature and frequency of his public service point to his having been a planter (see Carpenter [1898] 46; MD 14:232; WarTR2 43–44; RILE 1:47; OFFICES, below). Not a single seafaring reference is found in records pertaining to Abiah^{3}. The mariner label probably reflects confusion with Abiah^{5} Carpenter (*Oliver*^{4}, *Abiah*^{3}), who died in 1729, apparently in the West Indies, and whose death record calls him captain and mariner (RIVR 2:1[Providence]:263; Brady Anc 138).

FREEMAN: There is no record of Abiah's having been admitted a freeman, but we may be certain that he was. Freemanship was a prerequisite not only to his 1682 election as Warwick deputy to the General Assembly but also to his being named, first in 1665, a juror at the General Court of Trials (see OFFICES, below). At the General Assembly convened at Newport on or about 13 May 1665, the governor presented a list of five "pertickelares" reflecting "his Majestyes will & pleasure." Item two was "[t]hat all men of competante estates and of civill conversation, who acknowledge and are obediante to the civill magistrate, though of differing judgements, may be admitted to be freemen, and

have liberty to choose and be choosen [*sic*] officers both civill and [military]" (RICR 2:108 [date], 110). As this implies, Rhode Island freemanship requirements were considerably less restrictive than those of the other New England colonies at this time. An "Extract from the Report of the King's Commissioners concerning the New England Colonies, made December, 1665" states that in Rhode Island "[t]hey admitt all to be freemen who desire it" (RICR 2:127). On 2 May 1666, the General Assembly considered a list of Warwick men propounded by the town to be freemen: "soe many of them who are not alredy admitted, are now admitted freemen of the Collony" (RICR 2:146 [date], 147 [names not given]). In the spring of 1669, the General Court of Trials fined the town of Warwick for choosing Abiah Carpenter and Job Almy as grand jurors when neither was eligible—Carpenter because he was already serving as constable and Almy because *he was not a freeman* (RICT1 2:76 [date], 78; see also OFFICES, below). In light of the above, it is probable that Abiah was a freeman by 1665.

EDUCATION: Abiah signed his name as a party to a 1667 agreement and a 1669 deed and as witness to a 1677 deed (MARRIAGE, above; WarTR2 113). His father left him two books: "Ursinus Chatichisme and hellens history of the world" (MD 14:233). (Zacharias Ursinus was the primary author of the *Heidelberg Catechism* [1563; rev. 1619].)

OFFICES: Juror, General Court of Trials, 1665, 1667, 1669 (did not serve [see FREEMAN, above]), 1670–1672, 1674, 1675 (fined for nonattendance), 1676–1677, 1678–1679 (fined for nonattendance), 1681, 1687; constable, 1668; juror, Warwick Court of Trials, 1671/2; deputy to General Assembly, 1682 (WarTR1 151–52, 179; RICT1 2:57 [date], 59, 76 [date], 78; RICT2 43, 55, 64, 91; WarTR2 159–340 passim; RICR 3:106–07, 233).

CHILDREN: The de Forests preface their account of Abiah Carpenter's children thus: "*The Rehoboth Branch of the Carpenter Family* (1898) contains so many obvious inaccuracies and contradictions, especially in the sections concerning the children of Abiah[3] Carpenter, Oliver[4] Carpenter, and Christopher[5] Carpenter, that the present writers have thought it best to construct the family line from other sources" (Brady Anc 135). The following discussion of Abiah's children accordingly uses as its point of departure not the eight children Amos Carpenter attributes to him but the four presented first by Austin and later (in different order) by the de Forests: Oliver (Warwick, North Kingstown); Joseph (North Kingstown, East Greenwich); John (East Greenwich); and Solomon (South Kingstown) (see Carpenter [1898] 58–59; Austin 35–36; Brady Anc 135–36; also Colonial Fams 2:559). (Alden G. Beaman, relying heavily on Carpenter [1898] and Austin, combines their mistakes and ascribes nine children to Abiah; the paragraph he devotes to Abiah himself is similarly replete with errors [see RIGR 20:8].) Even this shorter list, however, proves to be at once too long and yet incomplete.

It has been established that two of the aforementioned four sons attributed to Abiah by Austin and the de Forests were the respective children of two of his brothers: John Carpenter of East Greenwich (c1667–1753) was the son of Joseph[3] and Margaret (Sutton)

Carpenter; Solomon Carpenter of South Kingstown (1677–1750) was the son of Samuel[3] and Sarah (Redway) Carpenter (NEHGR 159:43–47, 58–59, 362; see also Joseph[3] and Samuel[3] sketches, CHILDREN, nos. vi and viii, respectively). Oliver and Joseph Carpenter, on the other hand, generated records naming Abiah as their father (see DEATH, above). To them must be added Rebecca, whose paternity is also a matter of record (see DEATH and MARRIAGE(S), above). Evidence of other children has not been found.

Child i born probably to wife Mary Redway, ii almost certainly so, iii perhaps not; all born probably at Pawtuxet (Warwick):

i. OLIVER[4] CARPENTER, b. probably by 1667 or 1668, d. North Kingstown, R.I., between 4 Oct. 1727 and 20 Nov. 1727; m. (1) say 1690, perhaps SARAH _____, his wife by ca. Sept. 1700 (their son William b. 9 June 1701; of Oliver's approx. 11 children, only 3 births are recorded); m. (2?) Yarmouth (Friends meeting-house), Mass., 6 Nov. 1721 SARAH OKILLEY, b. there 17 Sept. 1689, dau. of Jeremiah[2] and Sarah (_____) Okilley (RIVR 1:1[Warwick]:154; NEHGR 151:137, 141; NKPR 6:251).

On 4 Oct. 1727, Oliver was granted letters of administration on his son Oliver's estate (EGPR 1:71). The elder Oliver's own estate inventory was presented in court and his widow granted letters of administration on 20 Nov. 1727 (NKPR 6:253, 254). For supporting evidence concerning Oliver's approximate birth date and probable mother, see NEHGR 159:59–60. For detailed information about Oliver's son John and his family—of Norwich, Windham, and Stafford, Conn. (not Warwick, R.I.)—see NEHGR 159:43–44, 47–49, 59n24, 362, 362–63. The son Jeremiah whom Amos Carpenter attributes to Oliver[4] in a greatly inflated list of 19 children was in fact Oliver's grandson (b. East Greenwich 18 June 1715) through his son Christopher[5] (see Carpenter [1901] 75–77; NKPR 6:249; RIGR 7:56; RIVR 1:2[East Greenwich]:107). For a more reliable list of Oliver's children, see Brady Anc 136–39 (it, too, contains errors, however—misidentification of son John and misattribution of a son Solomon, for example).

ii. REBECCA CARPENTER, b. after 26 Dec. 1668 and by 7 March 1676/7, living (and under 21) on 26 Dec. 1689 (NEHGR 159:56n6, 56n8, 62n38; DEATH, above); no further record. For a detailed refutation of Amos Carpenter's assertion that she "probably m. *Samuel Wilson* of Norton, Mass.," see NEHGR 159:60–63.

iii. JOSEPH CARPENTER, b. say 1678, living East Greenwich 29 April 1732; m. (1) Warwick, 18 March 1702/3, MARY BROWN, dau. of Beriah and Abigail (Phenix) Brown; m. (2) before 29 April 1732, HANNAH _____ (WarVR 1:2:16; EGLE 4:443–44 [also 513]; Austin 27, 35, 151). In that Joseph's first known marriage occurred twenty-six years after Mary (Redway) Carpenter's omission from her brother James's estate division to his siblings (see COMMENTS, below), it is uncertain that she was his mother.

COMMENTS: Clerical errors in and misinterpretation of original Weymouth vital records caused that town's published vital-records volume to attribute to William[2] Carpenter a son Abraham and to identify him as Abiah's twin. Amos Carpenter correctly concludes that Abraham did not exist but nevertheless retains the idea that Abiah had a twin—his sister Abigail (see Carpenter [1898] 46). It has since been established, however, that she was several years older than Abiah (see Abigail[3] sketch, par.1). There was neither an Abraham nor a multiple birth in this family (TAG 70:200–3).

Mary (Redway) Carpenter presumably died before 7 March 1676/7, when the Plymouth court ordered that her unmarried brother James[2] Redway's estate be divided among [his brother] John Redway and three unnamed sisters (RVR 1:12; PCPR 3:2:77). Mary's sister Lydia (Mrs. John) Titus had been buried at Rehoboth on 28 October 1676, leaving Redway sisters Sarah (Mrs. Samuel[3]) Carpenter (died [as Sarah Brooks] Rehoboth 15 July 1717 [not 8 January 1717/8]); Martha (Mrs. Preserved[2]) Abell (buried Rehoboth 1 March 1685/6); and Rebecca (Mrs. John[4]) Carpenter (died Woodstock, Mass. [that part now Conn.], 29 December 1702) (RVR 1:54a, 57a, 2:230; WVR 1:11; RVR [pub] 804 has "Sarah Brooks, widow," as "a stranger" who died 8 January 1717/8, but last two items are from adjacent entry in original records). Sarah, Martha, and Rebecca are also the only daughters named in James[1] Redway's will, written in mid-1677 (PCPR 4:2:73).

James[1] Redway's wife has not been identified. Mary Whipple is sometimes mentioned, but she married in 1748, as his second wife, Capt. James[3] Redway (RVR 2:266).

Abiah, saying his wife was not well, declined in January 1669/70 to help neighbor children save their parents from drowning in the icy river nearby; he was not held responsible (WarTR2 32–34).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: Howard Chapin, "Early House Lots in the Town of Warwick," *Rhode Island Historical Society Collections* 12:4(Oct. 1919):129–36; Don D'Amato, "Warwick's Villages & Historic Places: Conimicut Village," links to pts. 2 and 3, online at *www.warwickri.gov/heritage/damatoshistory/main.htm*; Oliver P. Fuller, *The History of Warwick, Rhode Island* (Providence, 1875) (caveat [see below]); *Harris Papers*, Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society, vol. 10 (Providence, 1902). The Fuller volume is useful but contains inaccuracies: Abiah's sister Hannah's mother-in-law, Elizabeth (Arnold) Carpenter, for example, is omitted from an account of the family of William[1] Arnold, to whom is attributed a nonexistent son Thomas (p. 16); William[1] Arnold and William[1] Carpenter of Pawtuxet village, Providence, are mistakenly listed with Robert Coles and Benedict Arnold as residents of the Warwick part of the village (p. 137).

KEY TO SOURCE NOTES:

Austin	John Osborne Austin, *The Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island*, rev. ed. (Baltimore, 1969)
Brady Anc	L. Effingham de Forest and Anne Lawrence de Forest, *James Cox Brady and His Ancestry* (New York, 1933)
Carpenter [1898]	Amos B. Carpenter, *A Genealogical History of the Rehoboth Branch of the Carpenter Family in America* [informal title: *Carpenter Memorial*] (Amherst, Mass., 1898)

Carpenter [1901]	Daniel Hoogland Carpenter, *History and Genealogy of the Carpenter Family in America, from the Settlement at Providence, R.I., 1637–1901* (Jamaica, N.Y., 1901)
Colonial Fams	Herbert F. Seversmith, *Colonial Families of Long Island, New York and Connecticut*, 5 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1939–1958)
Early Rehoboth	Richard LeBaron Bowen, *Early Rehoboth: Documented Historical Studies of Families and Events in This Plymouth Colony Township*, 4 vols. (Concord, N.H., 1945–50)
EGLE	East Greenwich, Rhode Island, Land Evidence [Family History Library (FHL), Salt Lake City, film #926,787]
EGPR	East Greenwich, Rhode Island Probate Records [FHL film #926,804, item 3]
MD	*The Mayflower Descendant*, vol. 1 through present (1899–1937, 1985–)
NEHGR	*The New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, vol. 1 (1847) through present
NKPR	North Kingstown, Rhode Island, Probate and Town Council Records [FHL film #930,972, item 3]
NYGBR	*The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*, vol. 1 (1869) through present
OBTR	*Oyster Bay Town Records*, 8 vols., ed. John Cox (New York, 1916–1940); vol. 1 (digital images online at *http://books.google.com*) includes Musketa Cove Proprietors' Book
PCPR	Plymouth Colony Probate Records [Wills and Inventories, 1633–1686], vols. 1–4 [FHL film #567,794]
RICR	*Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England*, 10 vols., ed. John Russell Bartlett (Providence, 1856–1865)

RICT1	*Rhode Island Court Records: Records of the Court of Trials of the Colony of Providence Plantations, 1647–1670*, 2 vols. (Providence, 1920–1922)
RICT2	*Rhode Island General Court of Trials, 1671–1704*, transcr. Jane Fletcher Fisk (Boxford, Mass., 1998)
RIGR	*Rhode Island Genealogical Register*, vol. 1 (1978) through present
RILE	*Rhode Island Land Evidences, Volume I, 1648–1696* (Providence, 1921)
RIVR	James N. Arnold, *Vital Record of Rhode Island, 1636–1850*, 21 vols. (Providence, 1891–1912)
RVR	Rehoboth, Massachusetts, Vital Records, vol. 1 [FHL film #562,559 (personal copy; no longer cataloged), item 3], vol. 2 [FHL #562,558 (old loan copy; no longer cataloged), item 5]
RVR [pub]	James N. Arnold, *Vital Record of Rehoboth, 1642–1896* (Providence, 1897)
TAG	*The American Genealogist*, vol. 9 (1932) through present
WarCT	*Records of the Court of Trials of the Town of Warwick, R.I., 1659–1674,* transcr. Helen Capwell, (Providence, R.I., 1922), reprinted as appendix to *Rhode Island General Court of Trials, 1671–1704*, transcr. Jane Fletcher Fiske (Boxford, Mass., 1998)
WarLE	Warwick, Rhode Island, Land Evidences, 1669–1711 [FHL film #22,500]
WarTR1	*The Early Records of the Town of Warwick* (Providence, 1926)
WarTR2	*More Early Records of the Town of Warwick, Rhode Island*, ed. Cherry Fletcher Bamburg and Jane Fletcher Fiske (Boston, 2001)

WarVR	Warwick, Rhode Island, Vital Records [FHL film #925,490, item 2]
WVR	Woodstock Vital [and Town] Records, vols. 1–4 (Book 1 has early town meeting records at back of volume, upside down; Book 3 includes vital records transcribed from Book 1 and elsewhere by town clerk Elisha Childs [1724/5–1798]) [FHL film #1,376,372]

Thanks to Jim Bullock (Littleton, Colo.), John R. Carpenter (La Mesa, Calif.), Terry L. Carpenter (Germantown, Md.), and John F. Chandler (Harvard, Mass.) for reviewing the original sketch.

Gene Zubrinsky (GeneZub@aol.com) *has contributed many articles, including four Carpenter pieces, to the leading genealogical journals and local-history magazines.*