

**THE SIMPLE COBLER
OF AGGAWAM
IN AMERICA**

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The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam in America by Nathaniel Ward

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NATHANIEL WARD

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SIMPLE COBLER

OF
AGGAWAM IN AMERICA.

BY
REV. NATHANIEL WARD.

EDITED BY DAVID PULSIFER.



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NOTICE OF THE AUTHOR.

THE REVEREND NATHANIEL WARD, the writer of the following work, was born at Haverhill, England, in 1570. Of this town his father was a clergyman. He was educated at Cambridge, studied and practised law, travelled on the Continent, afterwards commenced the study of divinity, became a preacher of the Gospel, and was settled at Standon, in Hertfordshire. He was a strong friend of the early settlers of New England before the elder Winthrop's coming over. At a General Court of the Massachusetts Company, held in London, on Wednesday the 25th of November, 1629, "Mr. Whyte did recōmend Mr. Nathaniel Ward of Standon" to be admitted to the freedom of the Company. He was ordered before the Bishop, Dec. 12, 1631, to answer for his non-conformity. Being forbidden to preach, he embarked in April, 1634, for this country. He arrived here in June, and was settled as Pastor of the church at Ipswich, or Aggawam, the same year. By reason of indisposition,

he was, at his own request, in 1636, released from his engagement with the church there. However thus disengaged, he preached often during the time he remained in the colony. The necessities of the infant Commonwealth called for his time, talents, and acquirements. Nor did he refuse. Willing to do the good, which he might, he lent a ready and efficient hand to the formation of our Legal Code. He was appointed by the General Court, March 12, 1638, on a committee to draw up a system of laws, for the consideration of the freemen. The same legislative authority, May 13, 1640, granted him six hundred acres of land for his service, at Pentucket, afterwards called Haverhill. He preached the election sermon, 1641, in which he advanced several things that savored more of liberty, than some of the magistrates were prepared to approve. The same year, Oct. 7, "The Govern^r" and m^r Hawthorne were Desired to speake to m^r Ward, for a copping of the liberties, and of the Capitall lawes to bee transcribed, and sent to the severall townes." He wrote the "Simple Cobler" in 1645. In this year, May 25, he was on a committee to draw up a Body of Liberties, which were published in 1648, being the first printed volume of the kind in this Colony. Though greatly assisted by Joseph Hills and others in the composition and arrangement of so important a work, yet he appears to have been a principal agent in its accomplishment. He sold his interest at Haverhill, Nov. 25, 1646, to John Eaton, for £12,00. Between this date and the 6th of January following, he returned to England. On June 30th, 1647, he preached before the House of Commons, and the same year published the "Simple Cobler." He was after-

wards settled in the ministry at Shenfield, near Brentwood, where he died in 1653, in his eighty-third year.

Fuller, in his "Worthies of England," speaking of him, says, that he, "following the counsel of the poet,

Ridentem dicere verum,
Quis vetat?

What doth forbid but one may smile,
And also tell the truth the while?

hath in a jesting way, in some of his books, delivered much smart truth of the present times." Dr. Mather, in his "Magnalia," remarks of him, "he was the author of many composesures full of wit and sense; among which, that entitled *The Simple Cobler (which demonstrated him to be a subtil statesman)* was most considered." The same author adds, that "some famous persons of old thought it a greater glory to have it enquired; *why such a one had not a statue erected for him?* than to have it enquired *why he had?* If it be enquired, *why this our St. Hilary hath among our Lives no statue erected for him?* let that enquiry go for part of one." And in the "Remarkables" of Increase Mather, he observes, "An hundred witty Speeches of our Celebrated *Ward*, who called himself *The Simple Cobler of Agawam*, [and over whose Mantel-piece in his House, by the way, I have seen those three Words Engraved, SOBRIE, JUSTE, PIE, and a Fourth added, which was LÆTE:] have been reported; but he had one Godly Speech, that was worth 'em all; which was, *I have only Two Comforts to*

Live upon; The one is in the Perfections of CHRIST; The other is in The Imperfections of all CHRISTIANS."

Mr. Ward had several children. Among them, were John, settled in the ministry at Haverhill, Mass., where he died, 1693; James, who practised medicine, and a daughter, married to Gyles Fyrmin. These three last accompanied their father to England.

To illustrate how much Mr. Ward benevolently labored for the public good with but small recompense, we quote another remark of Cotton Mather, as to his son John. It follows: "He was a son most exemplarily *dutiful* unto his *parents*; and having paid some considerable *debts* for his *father*, he would afterwards humbly observe and confess, that God had abundantly *recompenced* this his *dutifulness*." Whether these debts were paid in Old or New England is uncertain.

Thus we have given a sketch of one, who deserves well of New England and of friends to freedom every where, — so that it might be more evident how he and the subsequent work were estimated by his cotemporaries and successors.

D. P.

Boston, March 8, 1843.

NOTE.

THIS work passed through several editions at London in 1647. It was reprinted in Boston in 1713. One of the earlier editions and that of 1713 have been used in preparing the present edition for the press. After his first impression, the author made several additions to succeeding ones, which will be found in this now issued. — The principal of these additions are as follow: "A Word of Love to the Common People of England," "A most humble Heel piece," &c., and "A respective word to the Ministers of England."

ED.