

The Wightman Family.*



HIS old Loyalist family in its earliest history is of Scottish origin, or, at least, seems to have been prominent on the Scottish border in very early times. There is a Scottish crest and coat-of-arms belonging to these original Wightmans, a description of which is on record at the Lion King-of-Arms, Edinburgh. The crest of the Scottish arms of this family is a demi-savage wielding a club, and the motto is: "A Wightman never wanted a weapon." Representatives of this branch of the family are still quite numerous in Scotland, and to some extent in Canada and the United States. The late Hon. Joseph Wightman, for some time speaker of the P. E. I. Legislature, and whose life-size portrait adorns the Legislative Chamber in Charlottetown, was a member of the Scottish branch of the family.

It is, however, the English Wightmans that we are now more particularly considering, since from this branch of the family are descended the United Empire Loyalist Wightmans of New Brunswick. Family tradition states that some members of the Scottish family in very early times, probably the beginning of the sixteenth century, emigrated to Middlesex Co., England, thus laying the foundation of the English line of Wightmans. The earliest records, now in the possession of the family, date about 1552, and pertain to one William Wightman, Esquire.

* References: Rhode Island Genealogical Register, pp. 226-229. Naraganset Historical Register—ten pages. Timlow's History of Southington, Ct. Wightman Memorial, pub. 1890. Heraldic Office, London. Sabine's History of the Loyalists, The Winslow Papers and family documents.