

PHILEMON WRIGHT was a native of Woburn, Massachusetts, having been born there on September 3, 1760. The Wright family, originally came to America from Kent, England, and settled on farms in Massachusetts.

Philemon Wright married Abigail Wyman at Burlington, Mass., on May 16, 1782. Mr. Wright was ambitious to provide for his numerous sons and daughters, and land was becoming scarce in Massachusetts, so his thoughts turned to the new country to the north, of which a good deal was heard just then. He was 36 years of age when he paid his first visit to Canada in 1796. He reached Montreal, but evidently that part of the country did not appeal to him, so he returned to Woburn. The next year, 1797, he came again to Montreal and explored the St. Lawrence, on both sides, as far as Quebec, and the Grand River, now the Ottawa, as far as the Chaudière.

In 1798 he paid a third visit of exploration, and this time was apparently quite satisfied that the valley of the Ottawa River was the "promised land." He therefore made application to the Government of Lower Canada for a grant of land for himself and his associates.

Once more he returned to Woburn but had difficulty in persuading friends and neighbors to leave their comfortable homes and try their fortunes in the new and unknown country. He finally succeeded in engaging two neighbors to make the trip with him.

They arrived at the Chaudière on October 1, 1799, and spent twenty days exploring the country,