



Town of Southampton ~ Civil War Veterans

Nathan H. Wright, M.D.

Hometown: Bridgehampton

Wright served in the 20th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiment.

Dr. Wright mustered in to service with the rank of Assistant Surgeon and later became the First Assistant Surgeon of the 10th Connecticut Veteran Regiment.

Wright is buried in the Old Bridgehampton Cemetery.



1861~1865



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We are called upon this week to record the death of one who was known, in private or professional life, to a very large number of our readers. The following brief notice of his life, furnished us by a friend, will be read with mingled feelings of sadness and interest.

Dr. Nathan Hand Wright, elder son of Dr. Levi D. and Amanda Wright, was born in Bridge-Hampton, L. I., Dec. 10, 1811. During his boyhood and youth, he secured a thorough literary education in the schools and academies of Southampton, Sag-Harbor, and his native village. At an early age, he chose the profession of his father, and entered upon the studies of the medical course. He attended the Yale Medical School during two full courses of lectures; and then, that he might secure additional knowledge and skill in professional duties, he spent an equal time in the Berkshire Medical School in Mass., where he was graduated at the early age of twenty, receiving high testimonials as to his skill and thoroughness in the varied departments of medical and surgical study. He was at once called to a responsible post in New-Haven. At the end of one year he attained his majority, and then received (in accordance with law) his diploma as Doctor of Medicine, to which his attainments had entitled him a twelve-month previously.

The Civil War caused by the Secession was then raging fiercely: there was a call for volunteers. Dr. Wright's zeal was fired; his patriotic desires were all aroused; and he abandoned the opportunity of establishing a lucrative practice in a favorable situation in Connecticut, in order to give himself to his needy country. He enlisted, holding a commission as assistant Surgeon in the 26th Conn., a regiment enrolled for nine months. This formed part of the corps which made the celebrated expedition under Gen. Banks, doing such effective service at Port Hudson and other historic points. Having remained in service for some months beyond the enlisted time, the regiment was mustered out, and Dr. Wright resumed the practice of medicine in Hartford; but almost immediately, at the special request of Gov. Buckingham, he again entered the service of his country. He joined the 10th Conn., a veteran regiment enlisted for three years, and ranked as Surgeon. This regiment was ordered to Virginia, and occupied important points there during its time of service. Dr. Wright was active in the care of a large field Brigade Hospital, and remained at his post until he saw Richmond evacuated and the success of the Union cause made sure.

It was during his long service here, that the foundation of his fatal malady was laid. Subject to the rudeness and rigor of field hospital services, and under the malarial influences near the James River, he received the seeds of that disease which ever afterwards affected his health, and which—notwithstanding the skill of able physicians and the care of dearest friends—after a lingering illness, caused his death.

Honorably discharged from his duties in the field, he returned to Hartford; here he followed his chosen profession with much success, manifesting great skill especially in surgical cases. But with the arrival of the Winters, he became painfully aware of the presence in his system of that malady received in the low grounds of Virginia. He hastened to Florida and its mild climate; but the seeds of consumption were too deeply rooted, and the effect of the Southern air was but temporary.

During the years subsequent to this date, Dr. Wright was engaged as far as health would permit, in professional labors in Hartford, Sag-Harbor and Bridge-Hampton. His patriotism, to which he devoted the first years of his manhood, and to which he was at length a martyr, his love of his country and its defenders never diminished; and each returning Decoration Day witnessed the interest with which he prepared for and engaged in its memorial ceremonies.

Dr. Wright was the possessor of special and superior talents. Careful observation, keen discrimination, acute reasoning, logical thought; methodic habits, delicate sensibilities and an instinctive idea of fitness, were marked characteristics. His clear blue eye detected faults in the selection or grouping of colors, as quickly as his ready ear noted a false harmony. His skillful fingers brought music from the flute or organ, while his clear voice (in the days of health) was wont to add its sweetness to duet or chorus. Æsthetic, scientific and philosophical themes often occupied his attention, and in their treatment he was not a stranger.

During the long months of his last illness, his thought often rested on the future, and for its issue he made careful preparation. In answer to his earnest prayer, all doubts seemed to vanish; and that simple and yet sufficient faith which rests on Jesus Christ, dawned and brightened in his heart. Each week saw him firmer in the Christian's hope and anticipation. He desired a peaceful death; and although pain had long been his portion, he was permitted to breathe his last without a sigh or struggle. Possessing all his rational powers until the very last moment, having given many minute directions, having said farewell to those at his bedside, he passed away in perfect peace on Friday morning, March 16th.

The funeral services were held at the residence of Dr. L. D. Wright and at the Presbyterian Church, on Sunday last, at 2 P. M. A severe snow storm had prevailed during the morning and the previous night; but just before the appointed hour the snow ceased, the clouds broke away, the wind was hushed, and the bright sun shone forth and made brilliant a landscape covered with a sheet of unspotted whiteness. It was an appropriate time for the last service for one, who, after hours of pain and weakness, days of distress or darkness, weeks of suffering and months of fatigue, was called to rest, beholding without a cloud the clear shining of the Sun of Righteousness. In the absence of the Pastor, Rev. W. F. Whitaker conducted the services; his words of instruction and consolation were based upon the truth found in 1 Thes. 4: 13, 14. A large congregation was present to attest its sympathy with all the mourners, and especially with the devoted wife and the two daughters, who have so early been called to part with husband and father.

Wm.



Wright, Dr. Nathan H.

Old Bridgehampton Cemetery