



Highlighted Historical Resource - Who Was Jabez Abell?

The answer to the question is another question: Which Jabez Abell? The first Jabez Abell was among the first purchasers of land in Cazenovia at \$1 per acre from John Lincklaen on the first day of land sales, June 1, 1793. This Jabez was born in Norwich, Connecticut in 1759; was a veteran of the Revolutionary War; and whose original ancestor had arrived in Massachusetts from England in the 1600's. He was married to Elizabeth Sanford in 1795 in Connecticut and brought her to Cazenovia where they ultimately would have four surviving children. Jabez initially acquired 47 acres in Lot 10 at the corner of what is now Stone Quarry and Ballina Roads, called then and now, Abell Corners. He served as an overseer of the poor (1804) and school commissioner (1812).

Jabez and Elizabeth's youngest son was Horatio, born in 1802. Horatio married Aurilla Whitney around 1835, and they had a son Jabez Abell born in 1841. Horatio remained on the farm and was one of several in school district #9 who established a local library, and it was kept at his house where it flourished up to the time when the school district library system was established by the state.

Son Jabez, born 1841, married Mary Ann Jones. After his father Horatio's death in 1852, Jabez inherited and worked the farm, which had grown to 95 acres. Around 1870, he built his home, the Italianate structure at the four corners. Mary Ann and Jabez had a son Jabez, born in 1870.

This son Jabez, often called Jabez Jr., lived on the farm until 1929 when he sold it to the Johnson family and moved to the village of Cazenovia, where he built a bungalow-style house at #50 Nelson Street. He lived here with his wife, Sarah Wheeler, until his death in 1954. He had an avid interest in history and photographed many places in Cazenovia of historical and personal interest between 1890 and 1910, though few have survived. He succeeded Dwight Williams as the Town Historian at the end of 1926 and continued in this role through the 1940s. His historical papers were published in the *Cazenovia Republican*, comprising over 3500 inches of text, resulting in the *Republican* being awarded the NYS Historical Association award for "Best Publication of Local History among Weekly Newspapers" for 1939 and 1940. His extensive clippings were put into a scrapbook which was acquired on his death by Harry Brown and donated to the library in 1959. Jabez and Sarah had no children.¹

So, Jabez Abell, the owner of the historic Abell Farmhouse and Barn, was the grandson of an original Cazenovia settler, Jabez Abell, and the father of the Cazenovia's premier historian, Jabez Abell. Got it?

¹ Material extracted from website <http://freepages.rootsweb.com/~nc99usgw/history/index.html> published by Daniel Weiskotten; as well as U.S. Census Records 1800 – 1930, accessed via ancestry.com 10 Dec 2020