



Q: Who are these four Putney men and why are they standing by a giant Sequoia in California with a “Vermont” sign on it?

A: They are the Washburn brothers, raised in Putney during the 1840-50s, major players in opening up Yosemite Valley in the 1870s. They named the tree “Vermont” and posed for this picture in the late 1800s.

This is the opening chapter of a narrative by William B. Darrow tracing the story of the Putney Washburn family.

The Washburn brothers were grandchildren of Asa and Sally (Upham) Washburn, early Putney settlers present for the first United States Census in 1790. For four or five generations members of the family did extraordinary things. It is worth a few pages to trace the family’s history in Vermont.

(1) Asa and Sally Washburn settle in Putney in 1785 and Raise 10 Children

Asa and Sally migrated north from Massachusetts shortly after the American Revolution. The end of the War in 1783 resolved conflicts over control of the area that in 1791 became the State of Vermont. Previously the British Colonies of New York and New Hampshire both made claims to the territory between the Hudson and Connecticut Rivers north of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. After the War, Massachusetts men and women moved to the “Northern Frontier.”

Some of Vermont’s early settlers were veterans of the Revolution seeking a fresh start. Others were young couples from big families wanting to start their own farm. Many Massachusetts towns were getting crowded (by the standard of that time) by the 1780s. Since 1635, six generations of Massachusetts inhabitants had moved slowly outward from Boston seeking to make a living from the soil. Artisans such as blacksmiths, cabinet makers, cobblers, tanners and coopers may have appreciated denser populations. However, aspiring farmers sought acreage. Even the largest farms in 18th century Massachusetts gradually were reduced to small farms as they were divided among succeeding generations.¹

Asa Washburn was one of nine children born to Revolutionary War officer Col. Seth Washburn and his wife Mary Harwood. In moving north, Asa followed his father’s example. Seth, by his mid-20s, had moved from his native Bridgewater, 32 miles south of Boston, to the town of Leicester, 50 miles west of Boston. Seth and Mary married there in 1750. He joined the local militia and, after several years, became a Captain. Six months after the last of Seth and Mary’s children were born in April 1775, British soldiers made their ill-fated trip from Boston through Lexington to Concord to seize an arms cache. In both towns the British force of about 700 troops fired on local men who turned out with muskets, killing about seven in each town. Capt. Washburn and his Leicester militia responded to the area but were too late to catch those troops. Two months later, however, Seth fought in the Battle of Bunker Hill. In 1781, Seth was promoted to Colonel. After the war Col. Washburn worked as a blacksmith and served in the Massachusetts House and Senate. He was one of two Leicester delegates to the Convention which formed the Massachusetts Constitution in 1779.²

Asa Washburn “early removed to Putney, Vermont” where he was “a magistrate and a man of worth and intelligence.”³

Though his father, Seth, was not a farmer, Asa resolved to start a farm in a new land far from the shadow of his celebrated father. He and Sally married in 1780 and had two children in

¹ A good discussion of early Boston area colonists pushing west and north seeking farmland appears in “The Minutemen and Their World,” by Robert A. Gross (Hill and Wang, 1976).

² Dozens of references to Col. Seth Washburn appear in “Historical sketches of the Town of Leicester, Massachusetts, During the First Century from Its Settlement,” by Emory Washburn (Boston, J. Wilson 1860). A detailed description of Seth appears on pp. 249-256.

³ “Historical sketches of the Town of Leicester, Massachusetts,” pp. 256-57.

Leicester before trekking 75 miles northwest to Putney in early 1785. Asa and Sally started a farm and built a house in the eastern part of town, now called East Putney. The house, where Mill Brook Road crosses East Putney Brook, is designated #191 on the map of "Original Town Lines with Houses and Roads in Existence About A.D. 1800," by Clifford E. Cory and Moncure C. Carpenter. The map key identifies #191 as that of "Asa Washburn, 1785." Sally was the oldest one in her family and four younger siblings appear to have followed her to Windham County. Her brother James and sisters Mary, Esther and Elizabeth were in Putney or Westminster by the 1790 Census.



The Asa Washburn house in East Putney today. The porch is likely a later addition.

Vermont farms in the late 1700s and early 1800s were largely self-sufficient. Farm families derived subsistence primarily from the farm, marketing only incidental surplus. The family produced its own raw materials and fabricated its own finished products. Fuel for the fire came from the nearby woods, which also furnished timber for the house, barn, and fences. Wagons were repaired on the farm, where horses were shod. Wheat and corn raised on the farm contributed to the family diet, as did "the pig, sheep, and cow, with the game that the farmer might catch."⁴ Thread and cloth were spun and woven. "What little cash the hill-country farmer needed to pay taxes or to buy a few necessities he procured by selling products which

⁴ "The Hill Country of Northern New England; Its Social and Economic History, 1790-1930," Harold Fisher Wilson (Columbia Univ. 1936), p. 17.

could easily be transported.....”⁵ The Washburn Farm in East Putney probably was this type of farm.

Asa and Sally had eight more children in their East Putney house (for a total of 10). In the 1800s, many large families had premature deaths and the Washburns were no exception. Second child, Levi, died at age 10 in 1792, Sally died in 1804 at age 46 (three years after the birth of her youngest child), and in 1815, third child Elizabeth died. Causes of death are unknown. But Tuberculosis, Dysentery and Scarlet Fever killed multitudes of Vermonters in the early 1800s. After losing Sally, in late 1805 Asa, age 47, returned to his native Worcester County Massachusetts and married 45-year-old Persis Boutell. Persis became stepmother of the nine Washburn children. Asa Washburn, while farming and fathering, was a Justice of the Peace and a member of Putney’s Congregational Church.⁶ Persis was also a member of that church, and we assume the couple brought the children there to worship on Sundays. At the time Putney’s Congregational Church was on Westminster Road, near the intersection of Sand Hill Road, about a half-mile north of the village. Coming from East Putney to church on Sundays, the Washburn family would have taken the Sand Hill Road shortcut around Putney village.

Most of Asa and Sally’s eight surviving children either became farmers or married farmers. After Asa and Persis died in the mid-1830s, sixth child, Asa Jr., took over the East Putney farm.⁷ Asa Jr and his wife Eunice (Wellington) were still on the farm at the time of the 1850 Census, but were gone within a few years. It appears that the East Putney farm passed out of the Washburn family in the 1850s.

Two of Asa and Sally Washburn’s children did not become farmers: first-born Reuben was a Vermont State Judge and father of a Vermont Governor, and youngest son Jacob was a General in the Vermont militia. Reuben P. Washburn, born in Leicester in 1781, came to Vermont as a little boy with his parents. For about 15 years he helped cultivate the East Putney farm. Reuben then prepared for and put himself through Dartmouth College, graduating in 1808 and obtaining a Master of Arts degree in 1811.⁸ He apprenticed for the bar and became a Boston lawyer. Returning to Vermont in 1817, Reuben practiced law in Cavendish village before moving to Ludlow in 1825 and becoming a Windsor County Judge.

When Judge Washburn died in 1860 at age 78, his obituary noted an enduring Washburn value: education.⁹ The Judge “gave much time, and his whole influence, to the cause

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Asa is listed as a Justice of the Peace in Putney in 1799 (along with John Campbell and Willard Taft) and in 1810 (along with Theophilis Crawford). The latter names – and the church – will come up later in this history.

⁷ Asa, Sally and Persis are buried in the East Putney Cemetery.

⁸ “The Washingtonian” (Windsor, Vermont), September 9, 1811.

⁹ “The Voice Among the Mountains,” May 17, 1860. During Judge Washburn’s last year, “time ha[d] been making inroads upon his strength, and nature [had] been pressing her demands for the sacrifice. It was hard for him to yield.....Until a few days previous to his death, his strong confidence

of popular education . . . and labored actively to promote and improve common [public] schools.” He faithfully sought “to educate his children, and prepare them for usefulness and honors.”

Judge Reuben Washburn’s son, Peter, graduated from Dartmouth College in 1835 and studied law at Harvard. After apprenticing with his father in Ludlow, Peter moved to Woodstock, Vermont. During the 1840s he was Colonel of the Woodstock Light Infantry, a Vermont Militia regiment. In 1853 and 1854, Peter Washburn represented Woodstock in the Vermont House of Representatives. When the Civil War broke out in 1861 and President Lincoln called up 75,000 volunteers for three months service, Peter Washburn and his entire militia unit volunteered and became Company C of the First Regiment of Vermont Volunteers. Peter was commissioned as a Lt. Colonel in the Union Army.

In the first battle of the Civil War, Lt. Col. Peter Washburn commanded the First Vermont at the 1861 Battle of Big Bethel in Virginia. While Big Bethel was a loss for the Union Army, “the troops in command of Colonel Washburn made the only formidable assault upon the enemy’s works, as they went to the top of the same and poured in so violent and continuous a fire of musketry for some twenty minutes that hardly a man of the enemy ventured to show his head above the works.”¹⁰

Lt. Col. Peter Washburn returned to Vermont somewhat of a war hero. In October 1861, he was elected Vermont’s Adjutant and Inspector-General, the administrator of Vermont’s Civil War effort. As such he was responsible for recruiting, training, provisioning and sending to the field thousands of Vermonters. He was involved in all aspects of these troops’ welfare, including providing hospitals in Vermont and the field. Washburn “was equal to all the emergencies of the great war then in progress, and his efficient service to Vermont troops in the field, and to the people at home, will be long remembered.”¹¹ During the Civil War, Washburn’s Woodstock office was “the nerve center where troops were called, requisitions were made, reports of injuries and deaths were handled, and pleas from loved ones were answered. By the end of the war, with 300 meticulous volumes of bound records under his belt, Washburn had managed logistics for the more than 34,000 Vermonters who served in the Union Army.”¹²

In 1869, Peter Washburn was elected Governor of Vermont. Evidently due to exhaustion he did not last long. When elected Gov. Washburn was President of the Woodstock Railroad

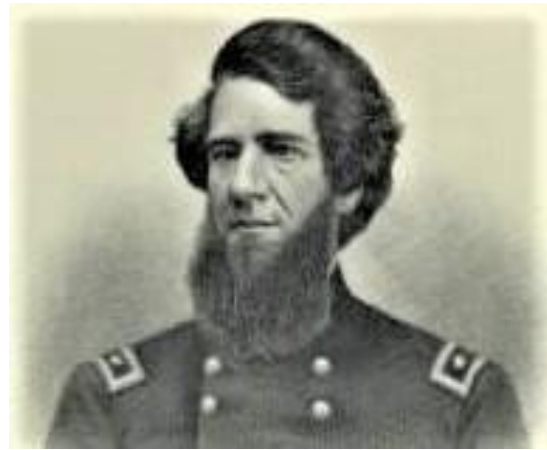
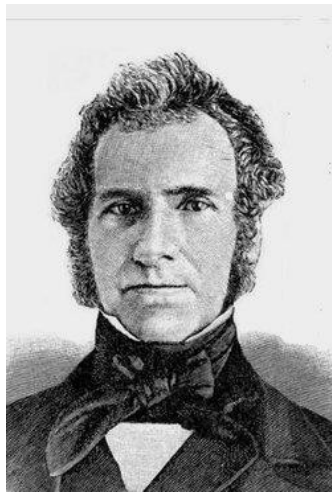
held out persistently for returning health and continuance of usefulness.” Yet, “he said to the writer, ‘I am not afraid to die,’ . . . and his last moments were as quiet as the setting of a summer’s sun.” *Id.*

¹⁰ Benedict, George Grenville, “Vermont in the Civil War” (Burlington: Burlington Free Press Association, 1866).

¹¹ Benedict, *supra*.

¹² National Park Service Publication, “New Birth of Freedom – A Walk Through the Civil War Home Front in Woodstock, Vermont,” describing Peter Washburn’s Office as the “Center of Vermont’s War Effort,” accessed June, 2021 at <https://www.nps.gov/mabi/planyourvisit/civil-war-home-front-walking-tour.htm>.

Company, a Director of the Rutland & Woodstock Railroad, and a Trustee of the University of Vermont. He died in office in 1870, reportedly having worked himself to death. An obituary described him as “honest, earnest, active, resolute, decisive, and efficient . . . in all public relations.” “The dignity, method and ability with which Governor Washburn administered the Executive Department . . . places him in the highest rank of those . . . in the Office, and as the people of the State he loved and served so well shall bear him to his tomb, full of honors, they may well say: ‘Farewell! good and faithful servant!’” When elected governor, an obituary noted, Washburn had been trying strenuously to get a railroad built into central Vermont and had died a martyr to that cause.¹³



Judge Reuben Washburn (left) and his son Governor Peter T. Washburn (right)

Asa and Sally Washburn’s youngest son, Jacob, married in 1820 at age 23 and settled in Cavendish, Vermont (where Reuben lived in 1817-25). Jacob became a leading figure in the Vermont militia during the 1830s. America’s founding generation “reposed great confidence in [state] militia as an alternative to a standing army that could be used against the liberties of the people it supposedly protected.”¹⁴ In the early and mid-19th century state militias were gradually shrinking. The respective merits of state militias versus the national army were hotly debated.

General Jacob Washburn presided over an 1838 Military Convention in Norwich Vermont to discuss the future of state militias. On July 4, 1838, officers from the militias of Vermont, New Hampshire, New York and adjoining states met in Norwich. Gen. Washburn was elected president *pro tem*. About 300 officials adopted “a series of resolutions . . . pertaining to matters of the greatest importance to the militia of the United States.” Proponents of state

¹³ Rutland Weekly Herald, 10 Feb 1870.

¹⁴ Howe, Daniel Walker, “What Hath God Wrought – The Transformation of America, 1815-1848 (Oxford Univ. 2007), p. 491.

militias – doubtless including Gen. Washburn – were critical of national standing armies. An address at the Norwich convention asserted that:

As to standing armies, it is believed there is but one opinion amongst the people of the United States on the subject. They consider them hostile to civil liberty, and the history of many ages proves them to have been so. They are the necessary appendage of monarchy, and constitute the right arm of tyranny.¹⁵

Gen. Jacob Washburn resigned his commission in 1839 and died in 1855.

(2) Seth Washburn has Eight Sons with Rebecca Paine; After Rebecca's Death he has Seven Sons with Martha "Patty" Campbell; Seth then Dies Prematurely

Asa and Sally Washburn named their fourth child Seth after his grandfather. Born in East Putney in January 1788, Seth grew up on the East Putney farm. He was 16 when his mother died.

In 1810 at age 22, Seth married Rebecca Paine, also 22, in Westminster, Vermont (about seven miles north of East Putney). Seth's maternal aunt, Elizabeth (Upham) Grout, and her family lived in Westminster and Seth may have met Rebecca during a family visit. The couple had two sons in Westminster before moving in 1815 to Randolph Center, about 70 miles north of Putney. Due in part to its location in the center of the state, Randolph Center, from the first years of the 1800s, has been home to regional schools. These included the Orange County Grammar School (also known as Randolph Academy), and later the Randolph Normal School. After the railroad went north up the White River through West Randolph, the latter town developed into a commercial center and became today's Randolph. Randolph Center remains on the hill to the east but is a "center" in name only.¹⁶

The Washburns had relatives in Randolph Center and in 1814 those relatives were connected with a fine available farm (depicted below). Seth purchased the farm and moved there with Rebecca in March 1815. "By great diligence, perseverance and careful management he greatly improved the farm, and secured a competence for his large family. He was considered one of the leading farmers of the town."¹⁷ The farm was on a west-facing hillside

¹⁵ Descriptions of the convention are in the "History of Norwich University 1819-1911," Vol 1 (of three), by Grenville M. Dodge and William A. Ellis (Capital City Press, Montpelier, 1911). President of the University, Capt. Aldren Partridge gave the quoted speech.

¹⁶ Located close to the middle of the State, around 1800 Randolph Center was one of three communities considered by the Vermont Legislature for the seat of government. The "Randolph Center Historic District" was listed on the National Registry of Historic Places in 1974, based upon a nomination form accessible here: https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/74000245_text.

¹⁷ "The Illustrated Historical Souvenir of Randolph," *supra*.

about a mile southwest of Randolph Center on what was then called “South Road.” It had westerly views over the valley and the mountains beyond.¹⁸



William Cushman was first to farm these scenic acres on Fish Hill, building the large square house in 1803. Seth Washburn bought in 1815, and his son, Levi, took over in 1841. The place later passed to George Moulton, to Charles Danyow, and eventually to R.L. Knight. No trace of the buildings remains today.

This is the only known photo of the Washburn farm in Randolph Center. The location is now a field. The above photo and description is from “Early Photographs of Randolph, Vermont, 1855-1948,” by Wes Herwig, (Greenhills Books 1986), p. 111.

Seth and Rebecca had eight sons, two in Westminster and six in Randolph Center: Seth Caswell, born in 1811; William, born in 1813; Levi, born in 1815; Stephen Paine, born in 1816; Lucius, born in 1819; Charles, born in 1822; Asa R., born in 1824; and George Otis, born in 1827. The couple discovered that their first child, Seth Caswell, was hearing impaired. In the 1820s, they enrolled him at what was then called the “Connecticut Asylum for the Education of Deaf and Dumb Persons” in Hartford, Connecticut.¹⁹

In a November 1820 letter from Seth Sr’s youngest sibling Lucretia Washburn, age 19, the Randolph Center Washburns were invited to East Putney for Thanksgiving. Lucretia wrote

¹⁸ The location of the Washburn farm is indicated as “L. Washburn” in mid-19th century maps of Randolph, such as the “Map of Orange County, Vermont” by H.F. Walling (Baker & Tilden, NY 1858), and the “Map of Orange County,” by F. W. Beers & Co. (1877).

¹⁹ The first permanent school for deaf children in the United States, the facility opened in May 1817 with seven students. The school is still in operation as the American School for the Deaf.

that older brothers Reuben and Jacob and their wives were coming, and that she, father Asa Sr, and step-mother, Persis, hoped that Seth and Rebecca would join them. Asa Sr added a paragraph inquiring if Seth could loan him \$300.²⁰ Assuming the planned Thanksgiving dinner took place, Gen. Jacob Washburn, Judge Reuben Washburn, and Seth Washburn Sr must have made a formidable trio.

In April 1828 Rebecca (Paine) Washburn died of Consumption at age 41.²¹ Her eight boys were ages 1 to 16. Five months later oldest son, Seth Jr, died at age 17 of “fever” at the Connecticut asylum in September 1828. A Vermont newspaper reported that two asylum pupils died of fever within three days; first Sarah Cochran, age 16, of New Hampshire, followed by “Seth C. Washburn, 17, of Randolph.”²²

Seth Sr returned to Putney seeking a second wife. An ambitious man, he set his hopes on Martha “Patty” Campbell, the daughter of Putney physician Dr. Alexander Campbell and niece of Putney physician Dr. John Campbell, Alexander’s older brother. Dr. Alexander Campbell bought a large house in the village in 1797 (depicted below) and with his wife Jerusha Wilder raised seven children. First-born John became a physician like his father and his uncle (and namesake). Between Drs John 1 (Patty’s uncle), Alexander (Patty’s father), and John 2 (Patty’s brother), a Dr. Campbell practiced medicine in Putney for nearly a century.²³

Patty’s mother, Jerusha, died of Consumption in 1818 when Patty was age 19. Father Alexander remarried in 1819 to Achsah Richardson, 15 years his junior. That couple had three daughters, two of whom survived childhood: Emma Campbell, born in 1823, and Helen Campbell, born in 1826.

Seth probably knew Patty from Putney’s Congregational Church. Certainly, his father, Asa, and step-mother, Persis, knew her. In January 1829, the Putney Congregational Church (then called the Church of Christ) convened an “Ecclesiastical Council” to “settle certain [undisclosed] difficulties.” The Council’s resolution is signed by (among others) Council members Elisha Andrews (Minister of the Church), Asa Washburn, Persis Boutell, and “Patty

²⁰ Vermont Historical Society, MSA 538:03, Morse Family Papers, Washburn Family. In the same letter Lucretia asked if Seth had heard from their sister Amity, who had left Putney early that year and had not been heard from since.

²¹ The Vermont Historical Gazetteer, Vol. 2, states that Rebecca died “in the same way” as her parents and siblings (of Consumption). Consumption refers to the infectious lung disease now called Tuberculosis. The older name was based on weight loss associated with the disease.

²² Vermont Chronicle (Bellows Falls, Vermont), Oct 10, 1828. “Fever” may refer to Yellow Fever, Scarlett Fever, or Typhoid Fever, each of which killed many New Englanders in the 1800s. Seth is buried in Hartford’s Old North Cemetery as “S. Caswell.” The fever probably killed him before his father – overwhelmed at the time (recently widowed with six young children) – could be notified and travel 178 miles from Randolph Center to Hartford by horse and wagon/stage.

²³ “Vermont Historical Gazetteer,” Compiled and Edited by Abbie M. Hemenway (Burlington, Vt

1891), Vol 5, "The Dr. Campbells of Putney."

Campbell.”²⁴ Patty’s older sister also signed the resolution, using her married name, Nancy Crawford. In the spring of 1829, Patty Campbell was 30 years old. Most of her siblings had married and started families.



The Campbell House on Main Street in Putney, owned by Dr. Alexander Campbell from 1797 to 1839. Patty (Campbell) Washburn grew up in this house. The year her father died (1839) it was sold to John Noyes, Sr. During the 1840s the house became a center for John Humphrey Noyes’s inner circle. The house was razed in the early 1960’s to make room for Putney’s current U.S. Post Office.

In early 1829, Patty Campbell probably was living in the above depicted house with her father Alexander, age 60, his second wife Achsah, and their two young daughters, Emma and Helen (ages six and three).

Three of Patty’s older siblings married into the Crawford family. Patriarch Theophilis Crawford built a large brick house two miles north of the village in about 1808. He farmed around 500 acres and held numerous public offices, including membership on the Governor’s Council (1816-19); Sheriff of Windham County (1819); delegate to the State Constitutional Convention (1822); and representative of Putney in the Vermont Assembly (1823). In 1822 Nancy Campbell married Theophilis’s son David Crawford. David Crawford – who would become guardian to the Washburn brothers – was a soldier in the War of 1812, promoted to Captain by the end of the war; a Justice of the Peace for 25 years; a State Senator in 1840-41;

²⁴ A copy of the document is in the possession of the Putney Historical Society.

and Deacon of Putney's Congregational Church. In 1831, Patty's brother, Dr. John Campbell, married Lydia Crawford, and that same year Patty's sister Elizabeth Maria Campbell married Theophilus Crawford Jr. The three Campbell-Crawford unions produced 24 children during the 1820s-40s.



The Theophilus Crawford house in Putney, about two miles north of the village. David Crawford, uncle and guardian of the fatherless Washburn Brothers, grew up in this house.

Patty was undaunted by the fact that Seth Washburn lived in Randolph, had seven sons under the age of 18, and was 11 years her senior. On June 2, 1829, the couple married in Putney's Congregational Church with Reverend Elisha D. Andrews officiating.

During the next decade Seth and Patty had seven sons in Randolph: Benjamin Franklin Washburn, born in 1830; Alexander Campbell Washburn, born in 1831; Seth Caswell Washburn Jr, born in 1832; Edward Payson Washburn, born in 1835; Albert Henry Washburn, born in 1836; John Stephen Washburn, born in 1838; and Julius Francis Washburn, born in 1840.

In October 1837, 20-year-old Stephen Paine Washburn was struck by a tree while repairing a fence. He died shortly afterward, due to "inflammation upon the brain" (Vermont Chronicle, Nov 8, 1837) or "brain fever" ("Illustrated Historical Souvenir of Randolph," p. 136). The family buried him in the Randolph Center Cemetery with his mother, Rebecca.

When Stephen died, his older brother William was living in Shelby County, Kentucky. A letter from home informed him of his brother's death. Stephen responded in an emotional letter to his father dated Dec. 1, 1837:

[L]ittle did I know the feelings and grief it would cause me to read an account of the sickness, sufferings and death of a brother . . . when removed far from home among strangers and in a strange land – with no earthly friend or relation to sympathize with me Could I have been present and heard a kind and brotherly farewell . . . it would have been a great consolation..... Still when I read of his patience, resignation, and happy death my mind is comfortable, and the thought that he is now with his Saviour, and Mother and Brother, who have gone before him in heaven gives consolation that this sinful world is incapable of imparting.

I have often fancied in my mind that I could see my Father, Mother and Brothers at home employed as when I was [there] and that when I returned I should find all well and the circle unbroken. But now when I [imagine] my distant home I discover that one of the number that I left there is gone! Yes gone! Not like the seasons and flowers that return at their appointed time – he has gone forever from us while in this world.²⁵

Seth Washburn Sr engaged in civic affairs while farming and tending his many sons. He and his family attended the First Congregational Church in Randolph Center, and the boys attended nearby Randolph Academy. Seth contributed to the building of the (still standing) church and helped pay the pastor's salary. In 1838-39, he represented Randolph in Vermont's General Assembly and was active in Vermont's movement to abolish slavery. In February 1839, a petition was submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives from "Seth Washburn and 350 others, men, and 350 women, of Randolph, in the State of Vermont," opposing admission to the union of any new state allowing slavery.²⁶ Northern New England antislavery advocates at the time "regarded slaveholding as sinful and saw organization and agitation as necessary to gain adherents and promise hope for destroying the institution of slavery."²⁷ When the January, 1839 Annual Meeting of the Vermont Anti-Slavery Society took place in Randolph, Seth Washburn was a member of the "Committee of Arrangements," inviting statewide delegates, identifying guest speakers, and arranging lodging for guests. Planning for the event was discussed in several December 1838 articles in Rutland's *Vermont Union Whig*. Seth's Committee reported that, "Our village is not large, but our hearts are warm with the cause, and

²⁵ Original emphasis; MSA 538:03, Vermont Historical Society, Morse Family Papers, Washburn Family.

²⁶ "Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States," Volume 25, Issue 3 (1839), p. 584.

²⁷ John Myers, "The Beginning of Antislavery Agencies in Vermont, 1832-1836," Vermont History, Summer 1968, p. 127. See also Myers' "The Major Efforts of Anti-Slavery Agents in Vermont, 1836-1838," Vermont History, Autumn 1868.

the public may rest assured that our endeavors will not be wanting to render their sojourn with us agreeable and happy." *Id.*, Dec. 28, 1839.

In the Summer of 1840, the U.S. Census taker found 15 persons living on the Washburn Farm in Randolph Center. Ten were boys under age 20 and included Seth and Patty's seven young sons and some of Seth's six surviving sons with Rebecca. There were also three adults (Seth, Patty and probably one of the older sons of Rebecca), and one female age 15 – 19 (probably a helper).

No one living on the large Washburn farm in Randolph Center in 1840, had any idea that the household was about to end. In early 1841, the premature death of father Seth Washburn caused the family to break-up and disperse. Most of the older sons of Rebecca went west. In 1842, Patty Washburn returned to Putney, a widow with seven boys, ages 1 – 11.

(To be continued)