

Our Putnams

A chronicle of ten generations of Putnams in my line of descent from the immigration about 1640 of the John Putnam family from Buckinghamshire (Bucks), England to New Salem (now Danvers), Massachusetts

Charles Somerby Putnam, Jr.
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Overview of Our American Ancestors

American Ancestors

PUTNAM

JOHN PUTNAM 1580-1662 M.1611 Priscilla Gould
Bucks, Eng. to Salem 1640

THOMAS PUTNAM 1614-1686 M.(2) Mary Veren d. 1694
Bucks to Lynn to Salem 1640 (widow of Nath. Veren)Wealthy
Lt.-- Constable--Grand Jurymen Salem Merchant

JOSEPH PUTNAM 1669-1724 M. 1690 Elizabeth Porter 1673-1690
Danvers, Mass. Opposed Witch Mania
Known as the "Good Putnam"

MAJOR GENERAL ISRAEL PUTNAM 1717-1790 M.(1)1739 Hannah Pope
Lt. Colonel, Conn.,Ranger command in French and Indian War
Major General, Continental Army, Revolutionary War
M.(2)1767 Deborah Lothrop Gardener
Widow of Proprietor of Gardeners Island
, New York

LT.COLONEL ISRAEL PUTNAM JR 1740-1812(Aide to his father, Rev. War)
Moved his entire family to Belpre-Marietta, Ohio in 1795
M. 1764 Sarah Waldo 1739-1808

DAVID PUTNAM SR...1769-1856 M.1798 Elizabeth Perkins 1778-1866
Born Brooklyn, Conn.Yale College, 1793. Studied Law at Plainfield with a Law degree in 1798
With his new wife, Betsey Perkins, came immediately to Marietta.
Served as first Preceptor of Muskingum Academy and was later active in the establishment of Marietta College
Treasurer of first chartered bank of Marietta, he made his career mostly in land management of Ohio
company properties.

DAVID PUTNAM, JR 1808-1892 M.1833 Hannah Munson 1811-1890
Owner of a General Merchandise store
Ardent and active Abolitionist. His home was the first station on the underground railroad which transferred
slaves to the north and freedom

PETER RADCLIFFE PUTNAM 1835-1863 M 1860 Emily Bishop Mixer 1836-1898
Died of dysentery as an Ohio Volunteer in Civil War. His sons Abbott and Israel never knew him.
His widow married George White in 1865 and moved to Winsted, Conn. She was a woman of brilliant mind-- a
graduate of Western Reserve Female Academy 1857

ISRAEL PUTNAM 1862-1942 M. 1883 Florence Madeline Somerby 1863-1954
Harmer-Marietta to Winsted, Conn. in 1865.To Elmira, New York in 1902.
Marietta College, 1882.After Marriage, a Civil Engineer for a short period.
Eventually an Optometrist. He was a practical inventor and his hobby of producing prize chickens led to the
devising of several Poultry appliances useful to the numerous families who in that era kept small flocks. In
1923 he first Marketed a dental adhesive he had compounded and named KLUTCH . He was a gifted merchandiser and
delighted in writing his own adds and placing them successfully.

CHARLES SOMERBY PUTNAM 1894-1986 M.(1)1920 Katherine Louise Dempsey 1892-1952
M.(2)1957 Winona Wombaugh 1899-1994

CHARLES SOMERBY PUTNAM JR. .1925- M 1955 Kathryn Ann Karitas 1932-

CHILDREN

CYNTHIA LOUISE PUTNAM 1956-

MELISSA ANN PUTNAM 1957- M. 1985 William S. Tannenbaum
Lauren Katherine 1989-

CHARLES SOMERBY PUTNAM, III 1959-

James Aukes Putnam 1988-
Cody Burger (Putnam) 1998-

JOSEPH PUTNAM 1960-1982

JOHN DEMPSEY PUTNAM 1964- M.1995 Sophia Vacchiano
Brooklin Dempsey Putnam 1998-
John Pasquale Putnam 2000-
Isabella Kathryn Putnam 2004-

John Putnam, Sr.

John and Priscilla (Gould) Putnam, with their family, emigrated from his ancestral farm in Buckinghamshire (Bucks) county in old England to Salem in New England about 1640. During the preceding 20 years, fully 20,000 others, who like them sought purification of the corrupt Christian Church of England, had joined a Crown-chartered corporation, The Massachusetts Bay Colony, to establish what resembled a theocratic society. All those who were allowed to join the company to come to America were vetted for character and correct belief. The Puritans believed that man was basically evil, having defied God by original sin. Only a few would be among the elect, who by God's grace might be saved from eternal damnation. This amazing grace was a gift not to be earned but freely given by God. Each Puritan lived in dread of sinning in mind as well as deed. Each was to love and help the others to create a shining City on a Hill.

To sustain the families, a male head of household was allotted land for a food crop (usually corn and other grain where suitable), an orchard, a wood-lot, and sufficient meadow for hay and graze. The Selectmen who presided over the distribution had been selected to perform their duties by their fellow citizens and the General Court, which had the supreme authority in the chartered colony. There were few disagreements that trades or other negotiation could not solve. Think of what the immigrants were receiving. In England, land was dear and mostly held by large landowners for whom tenants farmed and paid rent. There were those who had inherited land, but these holdings could not be divided indefinitely. Land was the only true wealth, and suddenly, each immigrant was a freeholder of land—and wealthy by the standards of the day.

John Putnam and his sons Thomas (our ancestor), Nathaniel, and John, Jr., in 1641, each received grants of land in what was to be called Salem Village and which would become Danvers, Massachusetts. These land grants were in a thick belt outward from the original grants that formed the town of Salem. Salem villagers were purely farmers and not involved with the merchants and tradesmen in Salem Town. Still, they were required to pay taxes to the town and attend the Salem Town religious meeting.

John and his three sons gradually built up their holdings so that John, alone, by the time of his death in 1662, owned 800 acres. Each of the sons, Thomas, Nathaniel, and John, Jr., was likewise granted acreage to sustain his family. As a collective family, these brothers were the wealthiest in Salem Village, save for a John Porter. John Porter was a land speculator and merchant who sold his interests in Hingham, a neighboring community, in 1644, and bought large acreage in Salem Town and in Salem Village where it bordered Putnam land. This created a land barrier between the Putnams and the bustling Town (more of the Porters later). Our first-generation ancestor, John, Sr. at the time of his death in 1662, distributed his 800 acres amongst his three sons with Thomas, Sr., our ancestor, receiving a double share of 400 acres (John Porter, who died 14 years later, in 1676, had amassed holdings of nearly 2000 acres!)

The three Putnam men of the second generation (Thomas, Nathaniel, and John, Jr.) were extremely well off by 1687. Although the Putnams made up only 7 percent of the taxpayers, they paid 18 percent of the total taxes levied in the village. With this wealth went status; the brothers served in various civil offices and dominated the religious affairs of Salem Village.

The Putnams and most of the other villagers were active in seeking out a minister for their newly approved village meeting house. The General Court had allowed them to form a congregation in Salem Village, but they were still required to pay fees to the Salem Town meeting. Over the decades and into the next century there was contention and resentment between the village people and the Town of Salem, whose citizens were more affluent and more business-oriented. The villagers remained dependent on farming.

Thomas Putnam, Sr.

Thomas Putnam, Sr., our second-generation ancestor, with his larger acreage, was more affluent than his brothers and was more involved with Salem Town. He served as Grand Jury man in Salem Town in 1648, and in 1655 he was chosen Constable of Salem Town, a position of great authority covering the entire local administration. In 1662, the General Court confirmed his appointment as Lieutenant in the troop of horse (this was a contingent of local cavalry who fought the Indians during the Indian Wars). In 1672, when the General Court of the Bay Company permitted the inhabitants of Salem Farms (Salem Village) to become a separate parish, Lt. Putnam was made chairman of the committee to carry on the affairs of the parish. He later served as one of two deacons through 1681.

Ann Holyoke Putnam, Thomas' wife of 22 years, died in 1665. In 1666, he married **Mary Veren**, the widow of a Salem Town merchant and sea captain. She brought to the marriage her own house in Salem as well as interest in property in the Barbados and Jamaica. This marriage confirmed Thomas' eminence in both Salem Town and Salem Village, although his church affiliation remained with the village parish and meeting house. Our third-generation Putnam, **Joseph**, was born to them in 1667 with a silver spoon in his mouth. It is significant that he was baptized in Salem Town rather than Salem Village.

Thomas continued to be active in village affairs, although his new marriage placed him more firmly in the Town. His new wife owned a house and lot there, and she had strong connections through family with the merchant and shipping class. Mary's status was such that she was seated in the first pew in the Salem Village meeting house (church), the highest social ranking their ethic allowed. Thomas was intimate with Town people, the most influential being Israel Porter, oldest son and heir of the wealthy John Porter. Porter's village lands were contiguous to Thomas' property and partly in Salem Town. Just before his death in 1686, Thomas, with the help of Israel Porter, wrote his will. Thomas left to his sons by his first wife (Thomas, Jr. and Edward) much land, but his home and most fertile acres as well as all his farming equipment, household goods, and his property in Salem Town were to be Joseph's when he became 18. Joseph and Mary Veren Putnam were co-executors, and Israel Porter was appointed advisor and guardian of the estate until Joseph came of age.

Thomas, Jr. and Edward had received allotments of land years before and were confirmed in this as well as in their homesteads. However, they felt they should have had more from their father considering the size of the residual in Thomas' estate. (Thomas, Sr., as the oldest son, had received a double portion from his father John, Sr., as was the custom.) They attempted to break the will but to no avail. Their discontent became resentment over the next decades. They felt the influence of their stepmother, Mary Veren Putnam in this matter, and Thomas, Jr. and his wife, Ann, felt reduced in rank within the Salem community. Thomas, Jr. remained a wealthy man by the

standards of that time, but ever less so than his half-brother, late-comer Joseph, who was 16 years old in 1686.

Joseph Putnam

At age eighteen, Joseph Putnam, our third-generation ancestor, came into his estate, which made him the second wealthiest man in Salem Village. Only Israel Porter, the oldest son of John Porter, exceeded him in the village. It is likely that Israel Porter continued in his advisory role to the neophyte. Joseph was easily absorbed into the Salem Town ranks of privilege and service. Over the years he served as Selectman on numerous occasions while being a part of the commercial life of other men of wealth and business. His greatest step in this ascent was his marriage to Israel Porter's oldest child, Elizabeth. He was 20 and she 16, which was unusually young for both at that time in Salem. The influence of Israel Porter was most certainly a factor. Joseph became part of an inter-family network, common within New England communities. Joseph continued to prosper and remained affluent throughout his life. Not so his half-brothers, who had to provide farms for their sons and diminish their personal wealth. They never forgot the "unfair" distribution of land by their father. They believed that their father, Thomas, Sr., had been manipulated by his second wife, Mary Veren Putnam, to unduly benefit his late-born son, Joseph. They were very likely correct in this belief—Israel Porter wrote the will, and with a shaky hand, Thomas Putnam, Sr. signed it and then died.

Witches

In the early months of 1692, witches were discovered in Salem Village. The genesis of the mania is believed to lie in the discontent of many villagers, particularly some of the Putnams, who felt that they were losing place in the world they knew. The first to be tortured by agents of the devil was the family of Thomas Putnam, Jr., whose daughter Ann was one of several teen-age girls who were afflicted. They screamed in pain induced by spectral torturers. Ann's father, Thomas Putnam, Jr., testified against 12 persons and filed complaints against 24. Daughter Ann testified against at least 21 persons and was the most infamous of the band of "afflicted girls". Others of the extended Thomas Putnam, Jr. family and that of his brother Nathaniel denounced and testified against village people. Ann Sr., Thomas' wife, was afflicted and had relief of her terrible headaches only after a woman she denounced, Rebecca Nurse, was arrested and in jail. Only Joseph, of all the Putnams, dared to speak out against the hysteria. Family lore has it that he kept a horse ready and saddled, as he was determined not to be taken had he been denounced. In accounts of that awful time, Joseph was called "the good Putnam".

As the hysteria spread, witches were discovered, denounced, and arrested throughout the villages and communities adjacent to Salem. The Salem court of jurisdiction consulted clergy and physicians. But as there were no objective tests for the accused, testimony was the only "evidence". Nineteen of the poor souls were executed. Eighteen were hung and one man was pressed to death in the hope that he would admit to witchery and save himself before the stones placed on him crushed the life from his body.

The General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, in Boston, had been alarmed at the events in the Salem jurisdiction, which over the first six months of 1692 had seen hundreds of denunciations and arrests. The trials and executions began in June and continued into September. Witchcraft was part of the ecclesiastic and common belief and was usually dealt with by trial and execution of the afflicting person—who was usually of the lower ranks and with some characteristic that made the person offensive.

The Bay Colony General Court in Boston disliked intervening in local affairs, but the numerous executions and the continuing denunciations forced it to act. The General Court convened in Salem in September, and after discussion with Salem clergy and officials, more than a hundred citizens were released from jail and all trials ceased. The great horror was over. Shame, guilt, and remorse pervaded the rest of the lives of most of those who had been deluded. There were exceptions. Ann Putnam, the wife of Thomas, Jr., whose denunciation of Rebecca Nurse (who had spectrally caused her great pain) led to Rebecca's trial and hanging, is not recorded among the remorseful. Her daughter, Ann, however, when the hysteria abated and she realized the suffering and death of innocents her testimony had brought to her neighbors, publicly begged forgiveness of her church and her community.

Israel Putnam, Sr.

Israel Putnam, our fourth-generation ancestor (born 1718), was the youngest of three boys born to Joseph and Elizabeth Porter Putnam. William Putnam, the oldest son, was born in 1700—18 years before Israel. David was born in 1707 (11 years before Israel). Of the eight daughters of Joseph and Elizabeth Porter Putnam, three married cousins, Putnams all. Oldest son, William, married his cousin Elizabeth Putnam.

Father Joseph Putnam died at age 54 in 1724, when Israel was six years old. Two years later, Joseph's 50-year-old widow, Elizabeth Porter Putnam, married widower Captain Thomas Perley of Boxford. His daughter married David Putnam, Israel's brother, in 1728.

David Putnam became the head of family when William Putnam, the oldest son, died in 1729. (It was to David that Israel sold his birthright (his share of his father Joseph's estate) when he moved to Connecticut in 1740.) David remained prominent about Danvers for more than 50 years. He was a cavalry officer and influential in all public affairs, especially when Danvers, previously Salem Village, became a separate town in 1752. It was David and his descendants who owned the Putnam homestead built by Thomas Putnam, Sr. in 1644 (Israel was born there). The home is a national monument and lies on a clover leaf at Andover Road and Newburyport Turnpike in Danvers, Massachusetts. It is fronted by Putnam's Pantry, which I believe is owned by a Putnam descendant from a collateral line.

Israel Putnam was nine when his mother married John Perley and moved with her younger children to Boxford, a community just north of Salem. As soon as he was able, Israel was expected to perform varied farm chores and enjoyed the vigorous and physically demanding life. He was muscular and quick and a leader in the rough rural sports. His basic schooling was deficient and his writing purely phonetic—a source of some embarrassment to his family, but of little concern to him. He had no doubt as to what he wished to do, and when he came of age (21), he received a portion of his birthright—a parcel of land next to the home in which he had been born. He built a small house there and in 1739 married Hannah Pope. Israel Putnam, Jr., our fifth-generation ancestor was born in 1740 in the small house next to his father's and grandfather's home, the last of our line to be born in Massachusetts. Israel, Jr. was an infant in Hannah's arms when Israel, Sr. moved to Connecticut.

In 1740, the Israel Putnam family moved to Connecticut, and ever after Israel was known as a Connecticut man. He sold his birthright from his father to brother David, now the head of the Salem-Danvers family, and purchased from Connecticut Governor Jonathan Belcher 500 acres of Mortlake Manor, which was near Pomfret, Connecticut and about 100 miles from Salem. Israel was fortunate in finding a large acreage of good land in this rapidly expanding country. Thousands of families—descendants of the Puritan migration (1620-1640)—had moved north, west, and southerly as far as New Jersey and Pennsylvania as New England filled with the explosive growth

of huge families needing land to farm. American population doubled every 25 years, and farming was the primary occupation of 90 percent of the entire population.

Israel was an intelligent and hard-working farmer, introducing the best varieties of fruit trees to his orchards (mostly peach and apple) as well as ornamental native trees to line the roadways of what was to become Brooklyn, Connecticut. (The area remained part of Pomfret for many years.) Much of his acreage was better suited to grazing than grain farming and over the 15 years preceding the French and Indian war he prospered as a cattle and sheep farmer. (He was quite proud of the quality of wool that his carefully selected breed of sheep produced). He joined with others in Pomfret to establish schools in the town and later to form a library association. Israel was a prosperous and respected farmer when an affair with a wolf brought him legendary fame.

Israel Putnam and the Wolf

A wily she-wolf had for several years produced a litter of whelps that with her help reduced the lamb counts of Israel and many of his neighbors. The off-spring could gradually be reduced with dogs and traps and muskets, but the bitch always avoided the traps and hunters. Israel and his like-afflicted neighbors joined one winter to get the old wolf by patrolling their land after a snowfall. She was marked by a deformed foot (the result of escaping a trap). Her track was crossed, the word went out, and she was followed for several miles. She went to ground in a lair amongst rock-tumbled hills in an area about three miles from Pomfret. (I have visited the area, which is in Wolf Den State Park in Connecticut. The opening is almost hidden and low in the rocky hillside.) Israel and his neighbors gathered before the entrance with muskets and dogs and debated what to do. Dogs were sent in but came scampering out in terror, wounded for their effort. The group next tried smoking her out with sulfur fumes, but this had no effect as she lay too far from the entry. The light was fading on this first day of winter. Men and boys from the whole area were gathered about the fire. Putnam, as the most aggrieved of the farmers, suggested that someone must enter the cave and asked his servant if he would do so. The offer was firmly refused and Putnam was left with no alternative—he would do it.

Israel removed his greatcoat, fearful that it might impede his progress in some constricted area, and with bound bundles of birch-bark for a torch, he entered the cave on hands and knees with a rope looped around his ankles. On hands and knees at all times, he made a gradual descent for several feet, leveled off for ten more and then ascended a few more feet where snarls and a pair of red eyes were prominent on a ledge. He dropped his torch, yanked on his leg rope, and was rapidly pulled out of the cave. After a few choice expletives at the rapidity of his extraction (he had multiple cuts and scrapes), he primed his musket after loading with 9 buck-shot, and while his blood was up, entered the cave with torch and musket in a rapid crawl to the cornered wolf. She was moving as if to charge him and was held off by the fire of the torch thrust in front of her. Putnam brought his musket to bear on the snarling mass, fired, and choking on the powder smoke, deafened by the blast, was carefully extracted from the cave to complain, it is assumed, of the slowness of his removal from the smothering gun smoke. On his third entry after an interval to let the smoke clear, he laid his torch on the old wolf's nose to assure her death, and then grasped her ears and pulled her

from a pool of blood to the entry and to his enduring fame. Israel Putnam's fearlessness and aggression marked him. The story of man and wolf in contest is a legendary tale and this one

spread locally, then about the colony, and was even published in the London newspapers as a tale from the colonies. Names were misspelled, and enhancing alterations were added (in one account he killed the wolf with his bare hands); but to the English and the American troops in the Seven Years War he was known as Old Wolf.

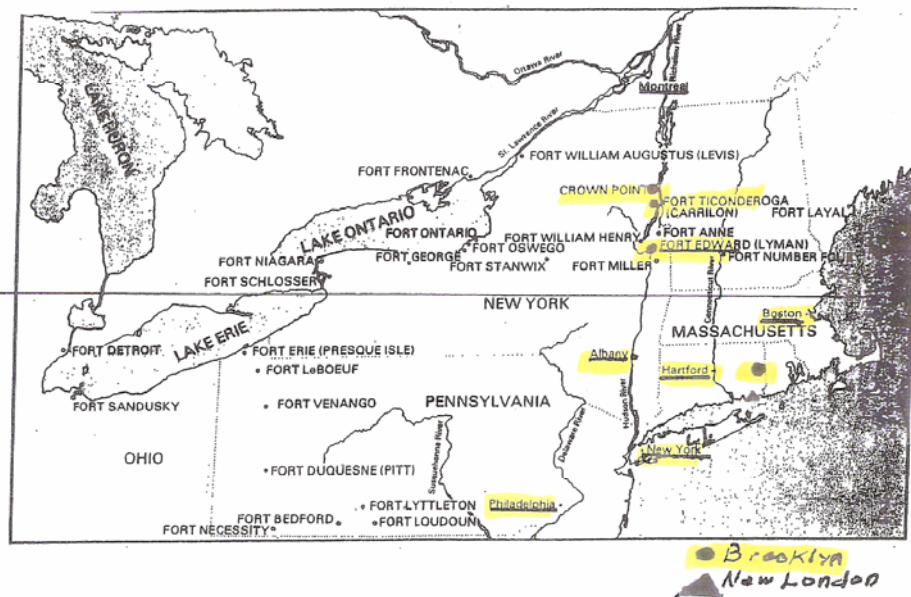
The French and Indian War (Seven Years War)

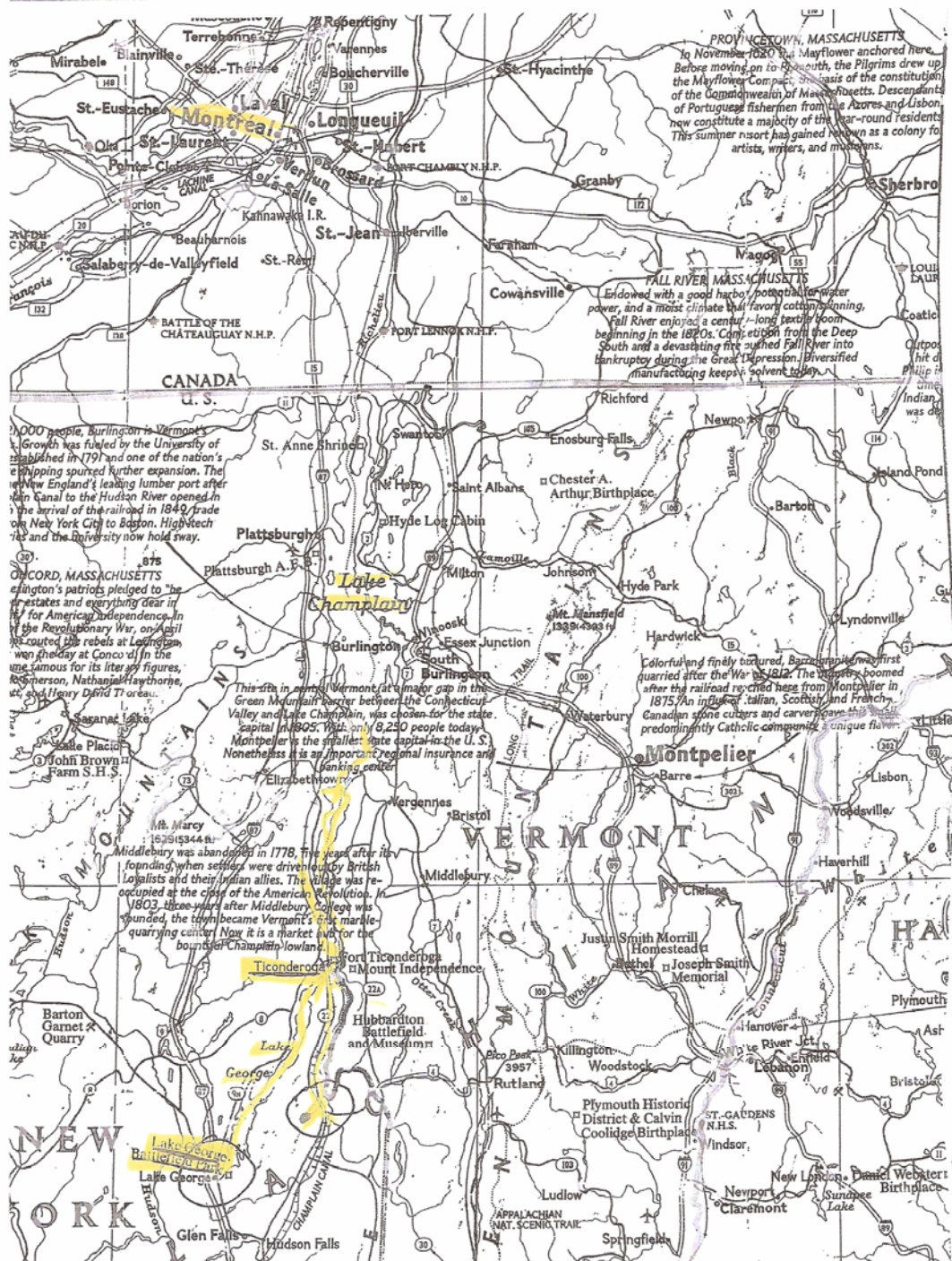
The Seven Years War started in 1755 with British General Braddock's smashing defeat in the wilderness of western Pennsylvania in an attempt to take Fort Duquesne, now Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. Ambushed by an enemy they saw only fleetingly, the British regulars were cut to pieces by arrows and musketry.

To assist in the reduction of the French, the British government ordered the colonies to fill their militia regiments and gather just below Albany, a few miles from the head of navigation on the Hudson. Thirty miles north, a string of waterways—Lake George, Lake Champlain, and the Richelieu River—were a water route north to Montreal and the heart of French Canada. There were only animal and Indian trails alongside most of the lake route, with massive virgin forest and matted undergrowth for much of the nearly two hundred miles.

In June 1755, after spring plowing and with a crop started, Israel bid Hannah farewell for the longest separation he had ever had from his family. There were to be many such for the rest of their lives together. Israel mustered with others from Pomfret in Windham County under Lieutenant Nathan Whiting. Each recruit carried a musket, a hunting knife, a leather pouch for spare flints and shot, and a horn of powder. They were expected to have stout shoes and clothing for the campaign. They carried food for the journey to Greenbush, a gathering point just south of Albany. There they were sworn in and were eligible for pay and sustenance. The First Connecticut regiment was commanded by Colonel Phineas Lyman. An able, convivial lawyer, he had been ranked a Colonel of Connecticut militia and was second in command under Crown-appointed General William Johnson. Putnam and Lyman were to have land interests in common after the French war.

Crown Point was about 20 miles north of the juncture of Lake George and Lake Champlain and the gathering point of French and Indian forces descending to ravage Albany and take control of the Mohawk Trail (many decades later, the route of the Erie Canal) where it commenced and led west to the Great Lakes. The Crown-designated overall commander of provincial forces for this campaign, General William Johnson, arrived at Greenbush with 300 Mohawk Iroquois Indians that he had recruited. He ordered Lyman's regiment to the headwaters of the Hudson and from there to construct a road serviceable to bear the weight of cannon and heavy wagons. Within weeks, supplies, cannon, and other regiments arrived at an area close to the southern entry to Lake George. This was the Great Carrying Place (from the headwaters of the Hudson to Lake George), and Fort Edward was established here. The last 15 miles from the Great Carrying Place to the lake was solid wilderness, which 1000 troops attacked with axes, shovels, and picks. The wagon road these craftsmen and farmers constructed allowed the movement of hundreds of barrels of food and gun powder as well as cannon, bateaus, and flat boats to the water's edge at Lake George. The intent was to move north using the lake, to attack the 3000 French and Indians at Crown Point on Lake Champlain.





Baron Dieskau, commander of the French and Indian force at Crown Point was informed of the provincial and Indian force at Fort Edward. He ordered a rapid movement south using a narrow southerly extension of Lake Champlain named Wood Creek to come within a dozen miles of the Lake George concentration of Mohawks and Americans. Dieskau, upon information that Johnson's force was now at the Lake George shore, moved to cross the new wagon trail at a point four miles from Johnson's force of Continentals and Mohawks. Mohawk scouts had also been active, and informed Johnson of the French approach. Johnson ordered an immediate scout in force by 800 provincials and 200 Mohawks. This action, ever after referred to as "the bloody scout", was led by Massachusetts Colonel Ephraim Williams. He was killed in the first fire. The French had set up a classic wilderness ambush. Colonel Williams, leading his provincial troops and Mohawks (under Chief Brandt), marched unaware of how close they were to the enemy until they received fire from the front and both flanks—any soldier's nightmare. Chief Brandt, the Mohawk chief, was killed and among others that fell in those first fusillades were many company officers. As the Mohawks and American troops fell back in disorder, the following companies came up and steadied them. This was Israel Putnam's first firefight and although not yet commissioned as an officer, he took the role of a commander and steadied the soldiers and Indians who accepted him as such. He (reportedly), in stentorian tones, placed men for effective fire and moved about, ignoring enemy harassment. A perfect example of an aggressive field officer.

The sounds of musketry alerted the troops at the lake and all regiments moved rapidly to the battle, with Colonel Lyman's regiment first and General Johnson in overall command. There was exchange of fire and when the French realized they were outnumbered, they commenced a withdrawal. When all of General Johnson's troops were in place, Colonel Lyman ordered a massive attack across as broad a front as could be managed. Johnson had been wounded and Lyman had taken command. The French and their Indian allies left the field when Baron Dieskau, their commander, was wounded and captured. Scouts informed Colonel Lyman that the remaining French force with boats and supplies was but 12 miles away at Wood Creek. Lyman and his superior force were eager to make the victory total, but Johnson would not order the attack, thereby allowing the French to retreat to Ticonderoga (the northern juncture of Lake George and Lake Champlain) and remain a problem for the following year's campaign.

General Johnson, in his report to London, made no mention of Colonel Lyman. The King and council were so delighted at their first victory (at best a bloody draw) that Johnson was made a Baronet and Parliament awarded him 5000 pounds. The troops felt that Lyman was the true hero and as private Edgar Warner, of the First Connecticut Regiment, in a letter to his brother remarked, "that damn fool Johnson who ought not to be genial at all but instead our Col. Lyman, he (Johnson) was not much in the battle, being shot in the ass which shows what way he was heading whilst we was attacked."

Putnam was appointed Captain of a company in a Connecticut regiment two weeks after his first battle. He also advanced his acquaintance with Major Robert Rodgers (already famous for his wilderness fighting company of Rangers) who picked him and other select provincial officers (John Stark of New Hampshire) to scout out the French position at Crown Point. The provincial commanders deemed it too late for further action that campaign season, and after construction of a permanent fort as a base for supplies at the new Fort Edward the troops returned home for the winter.

For the next seven years, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York, and New Jersey would continue to offer men and resources to assist England in driving the French from North America. Forty per cent of the male population of Connecticut served, and many died from battle or disease.

Israel Putnam had been active in seven campaigns from 1755 to 1762 and had advanced to Lt. Colonel, serving mostly as a commander of Rangers. In 1763, following the French surrender, the British asked for an American force to assist in the taking of Havana as Spain was allied with France and as such fair game for conquest. A rich prize in which all would share. General Lyman commanded 2000 Connecticut troops, and Putnam was appointed Colonel of one of the 1000-man regiments. Havana was taken, but after much misery and death, mostly from disease. The pay was barely adequate, and the share in the plunder was disappointing. Veterans of the Havana campaign met at Hartford in June 1763, and with Lyman as their leader commenced a campaign for bounty lands from the Crown to compensate them for their many years of meagerly rewarded service. Thus began the great land game.

When the peace treaty was signed between France and England, all the continental land ceded to England by France seemed, in the minds of the colonials, to be available for bounty grants (or Crown grants as they were called). Associations of veterans from most of the colonies formed to seek these grants. Nothing of significance ever came of these requests. The vast lands to the west of the Appalachian Mountains were officially closed to the colonists until after independence from Great Britain.

Israel had left a large profitable farm, worked by his oldest son Israel, Jr., now in his twenties, with the help of several hired hands. He had a well-furnished, commodious home, and most of all he had Hannah. Hannah, 44 and pregnant, had the help of several daughters; the youngest, Elizabeth, was just seventeen. On his return home on December 1, 1764, he was as usual no worse for wear. On December 31, 1764, his last child, Peter Schuyler Putnam was born—named for the landed Hudson River Colonel who had befriended him when he was a captive of the French. His youngest daughter, Elizabeth, died suddenly on January 24, 1765. Ten weeks later, Hannah died. The two deaths devastated him. For the first time in his life, he sought religious consolation and joined the Congregational church that he had helped to build but infrequently attended. Religious consolation was not enough, and Israel worked harder than ever improving his property. He entered politics and served as a Selectman on several occasions. His associations with the veterans of the recently ended French wars were nourished and extended throughout the colony.

Pre-Revolutionary War Years

Eastern Connecticut, more rural, had been suffering severely from a general post-war depression. Just at this time, the Grenville ministry's tax on molasses (rum, an important staple and trading product, was made from molasses) and the overhaul and extension of the Navigation Acts was adding a tax burden to a fragile economy. The colonials, proud to be Englishmen, felt their liberties under the English Constitution were being infringed. Rumors of a Stamp Act proved true, and in 1765 Parliament passed an act that placed a tax on books, pamphlets, newspapers, and all legal documents. This levy was to be in the form of stamped paper, which would be purchased from the Crown's representatives. Aside from the Royal appointees who would sell the stamps, there was near unanimous outrage. Thus came into being the Sons of Liberty and the first defiant actions against the Crown.

Putnam's military record and popularity throughout the colony made him a natural leader of the other men of local rank and property, who formed a committee of the Sons. He was all about the colony organizing and setting up communication between the groups of Liberty Boys, as they were called. There was a large core of French War veterans amongst the Windham County citizens, and military action was threatened against Royal authority. In Hartford, Connecticut Crown-appointed Governor Fitch was forced to resign. At the next provincial elections, many of the Royalist members were replaced. Putnam was prominent among the newly elected Connecticut Assemblyman in 1765 and served the first of three terms.

The Parliament repealed the Stamp Act in April 1766, one year after its passage. Putnam and other Sons of Liberty remained active. In spite of the repeal, a large minority of colonists believed that it was the Crown's intent to reduce their liberties and drain them of their wealth. The gross mismanagement of mother England eventually turned her once-proud American English into American rebels. In 1776, ten years after the Stamp Act had been repealed, the Declaration of Independence was signed by representatives from each of the colonies now united as a single entity.

Israel Putnam and the twice-widowed Deborah Lothrop Gardiner were married on June 3, 1767. Putnam had known Mrs. Gardiner years before when she had been married to the Reverend Ephraim Avery, whose church was in the parish of Brooklyn near Putnam's farm. Avery died in 1754, and she had married John Gardiner, the owner and proprietor of Gardiner's Island lying off Long Island. The widow Gardiner, well provided for by her late husband, in 1766, returned to Brooklyn and her spacious house on the Brooklyn green, left to her by her first husband the Reverend Avery. Mrs. Putnam had many ties to the religious community through her first husband and to the commercial and landed gentry of New York through her second. Her social activities, when combined with Putnam's circle of former military associates, politicians, merchants, and prosperous farmers were beyond the ample resources of both of them. Always shrewd in business matters, Putnam procured a tavern license and greatly enlarged the already commodious Avery house, establishing a tavern there and adding additional quarters for his family.

Besides Israel and his wife, there were his three unmarried daughters, Mehitable, Mary, and Eunice, his two young sons, Daniel (age 6) and Peter Schuyler (age 3), and Mrs. Putnam's two children by Gardiner, Hannah and Septimus. Israel signed over to his eldest son, Israel Putnam, Jr. (now 27), his house and a large part of his land— fulfilling his duty to his son by providing a home and a farm of his own for Israel, Jr. and his large and increasing family.

The General Wolf Tavern was a huge success as the only accommodation in the county. Its location at the juncture of major roads (Norwich to the south, Hartford to the west, and Boston to the northeast) brought travelers and news from all of those regions of the colony and for those guests (many of them friends of the Putnams), an opportunity to pay for their board and keep. Their always generous and amiable host was already a folk hero and kept friends and guests both informed and entertained. His episode with the wolf was always a good tale as were his exploits as a Ranger in the French war. A tavern was a social and business center for a countywide area, where information was interchanged—more of a club than a tap house.

Israel at age 48 remained remarkably fit and active about his farm and enjoyed his role as host at the General Wolf. He grew the usual corn for a grain crop, which could also provide fodder to supplement the pasture hay. His orchards of apples and peaches were important to him as a source of cider and peach brandy, ever popular beverages of the colonial farmers. He was allowed by law to serve spirits at his tavern, and rum was the universal strong drink for those who imbibed (most Yankees did to some extent). He remained active and well-informed as the events in Boston continued to fray respect for Crown authority. He became more convinced than ever that a corrupt Parliament intended to reduce the colonist's rights and impoverish them.

Following the Boston Tea Party in 1774 (similar acts of defiance and property destruction occurred in other colonies), the Port of Boston was closed and General Gage became the Military Governor of a city and colony under martial law. The livelihood of all classes was disrupted. This very active shipping port ceased commercial activity, bringing very hard times for all and outrage to all the colonies, which could see their own destiny. Putnam gathered more than a hundred sheep and herded them as a gift from Brooklyn parish to the supposedly starving citizens. It had not yet reached that point, but the gesture by a sister colony was appreciated. Putnam was much praised as the "old war hero" and was the house guest of the eminent Joseph Warren, who later was to die at Breed's Hill.

The Revolution

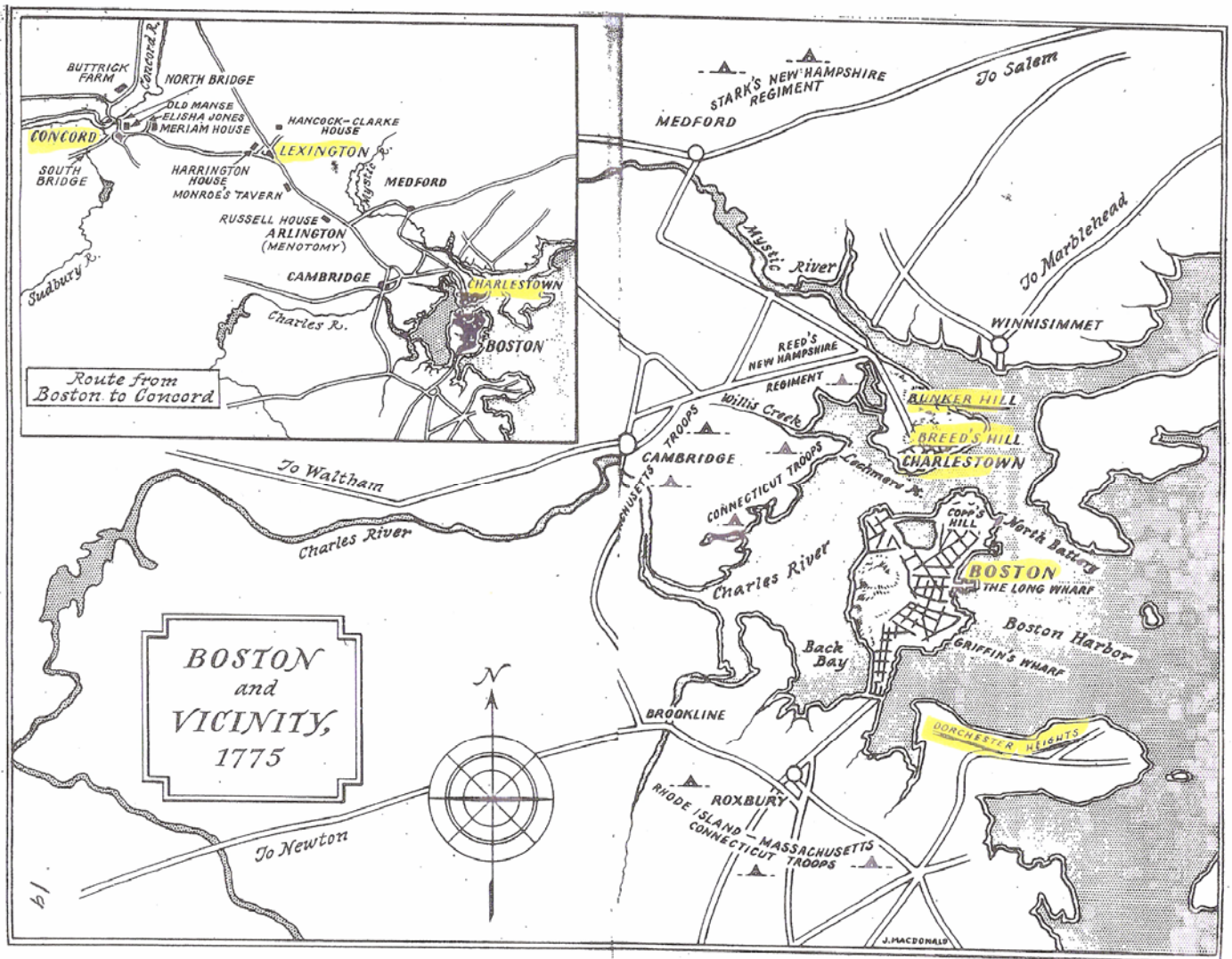
In the fall of 1774, Connecticut Governor Tremble persuaded the assembly to advance the military status of the various militia companies into 22 regiments. Israel Putnam was appointed Lieutenant Colonel of the 11th regiment about the area of Windham County. At 54 years old, he was fat and had one leg an inch shorter than the other due to an imperfectly set leg fracture several years before. In spite of a limp and advancing age, he was strong and active and eager to be part of the fight that he felt to be inevitable. The “Old Wolf” sobriquet of the French wars would soon enough become “Old Put”, which even Washington called him in later years.

At Lexington, Massachusetts, April 19, 1775, in the early morning hours, 77 local militiamen commanded by Captain Parker, mustered on the village green to contest British troops sent to arrest Sam Adams and John Hancock. Hancock’s aunt, at her home there, was providing refuge for the rebel leaders, who had been warned and had departed. Three companies of redcoats under Major Pitcairn had been sent forward to secure the bridges at Concord, the next objective, where a supply of munitions was to be confiscated. Major Pitcairn had to pass over the village green at Lexington to attain the Concord road, and he could not ignore the line of armed men along his path. He brought his troops to battle formation and ordered the militiamen to drop their weapons and disperse (“disperse, you damned rebels, drop your arms and disperse!”). Parker, seeing the futility of a fight ordered his men to leave, but to keep their weapons. They were moving away when a shot rang out and immediately the British soldiers opened fire. No one knows who fired that first shot. It was not ordered by Pitcairn. Seven minutemen were killed. The war of the American Revolution was first blooded.

Within a week, 16,000 troops were congregated about the Boston area. They were variously outfitted with a range of weapons and formed in groups from companies to regiments led at times by elected officers. The French and Indian War veterans were invaluable as a corps of officers with knowledge of organization and discipline although they were never as rigid as the English army. Israel Putnam, Sr. was active and present almost from the first day and had son Israel, Jr. follow him within a day or two. As a Captain and Company Commander, Israel, Jr. marched with the 11th regiment when it moved with all haste 75 miles northeast to Boston from Windham County, Connecticut.

Israel Putnam had the common touch, and his prowess as a hero of the French wars reassured the young and raw troops who needed such a figure to give them heart. They were aware of the British soldiers’ skills and especially of the bayonet. They had no such weapons and many hadn’t a decent musket. Gunpowder was scarce as was artillery of any kind. To keep them busy, Putnam conducted a series of raids. As a provocation to the British forces in Boston, Putnam marched a company of troops across Charlestown neck and out the mile of the Charlestown peninsula to the tip and then back again to Cambridge. It was noted that cannon could be effectively placed to fire on the city of Boston across the Charles River. Putnam was appointed Brigadier General of Connecticut Militia and, in effect, the commander of all Connecticut units about Boston.

Major General Artemus Ward, acknowledged commander of Massachusetts troops and of all the colonial militia regiments that had gathered about Boston, consulted with senior officers of the other colonies. He was unsure of the militia's fighting ability and also properly concerned with the general lack of gun powder. Colonel Prescott, General Putnam, and Seth Pomeroy, from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, respectively, had all had field experience with militias in the French wars and had confidence in the troops if the troops were properly led and positioned. They agreed to occupy the Charlestown peninsula upon receiving information that General Gage was about to place a defensive force there in a few days. They were eager for a confrontation in the belief they could hold the ground and inflict such casualties as to force the Crown to reconsider its punitive stance.



Bunker Hill

One month after the near rout of British troops on their return to Boston from Lexington and Concord, an American force of 1000 men crossed the narrow neck of Charlestown peninsula projecting into Boston harbor. They intended to construct a small fort (a redoubt) on a hill, which would put them in cannon range of Boston just across the Charles River at the tip of the peninsula. They commenced their march at nightfall, 9 p.m., to have a full night to perform the prodigious digging required. The officers were well aware of the fear that several regiments of red-coated, bayonet-bearing troops could have on the raw militia. Brigadier General Israel Putnam, the senior officer present, though not the troop commander (Colonel Prescott with his 800 Massachusetts militiamen and 200 Connecticut troops under Captain Knowlton was the appointed commander of this fatigue party and combat force) put it thus, “The Americans don’t give a damn about their heads, but if they have cover for their legs, they will stand and fight forever.” The dictum to not fire till you see the whites of their eyes could appropriately come from any of the French war veterans as it was well-known advice for the short-range muskets of that day, especially for inexperienced militia on a very short gunpowder ration.

Colonel Prescott led his men through the narrow 30-foot-wide neck of the Charlestown peninsula, which was a little more than one mile long and half that at its widest. The Mystic River lay to the left and the Charles to the right. Boston was across the Charles at about the tip of the peninsula. At Bunker Hill there was a pause to reconsider their order to fortify and defend it. It was taller than the other hills, but not as far out as could be desired. The Field Engineer, Gridley, and Prescott and Putnam discussed the situation and agreed to move farther out to Breed’s Hill, which was smaller but much closer to the British force in Boston. Putnam would, after the Breed’s Hill redoubt was completed, supervise fortifications on Bunker Hill as a fall-back position. The Field Engineer laid the lines of the intended redoubt and 1000 able men worked all night to move 50,000 yards (if accurate, this seems an extraordinary amount) of dirt and rock to form a rectangular earthwork with firing step—without drawing the attention of the British frigate, *Lively*, just below them in the Charles River. With the full light of day, the frigate became aware of erection of the fort. Fire from the frigate did minimal damage to the now six-foot-high rampart, although a lucky round destroyed water casks and one militiaman was decapitated by a cannon ball, which nearly panicked the raw troops. They were ordered by Prescott to bury him immediately, but insisted on a full funeral service first.

With full daylight, Prescott and Putnam saw that their flanks at the redoubt were open for a flanking attack. Captain Knowlton’s Connecticut company of approximately 200 men was assigned the left side, where an old stone wall was reassembled and extended and then manned by them. About 300 men of Prescott’s force in the redoubt, on Putnam’s request, were reluctantly released with their tools to assist with fortification of Bunker Hill. Prescott stated that they would not return and Putnam swore he would have them back. Prescott proved correct and always held Putnam responsible when at a crucial time in the battle, the men refused Putnam’s order to return to the redoubt.

Both Putnam and Prescott had repeatedly requested reinforcements of General Ward, who was reluctant to reduce his forces in Cambridge for fear of a British breakthrough from the peninsula. He eventually released, at about 10 o'clock, Colonel Starke's and Colonel Reed's two regiments of New Hampshire troops (about 800–1000 men), who immediately moved, under fire from British ships, across the Charlestown Neck and to Bunker Hill where Putnam was working on fortifications. Putnam led them to the fence, which they then extended and manned. Stark had noted that the shore of the Mystic lacked fencing and he repaired this vulnerable gap. The fence now extended from the redoubt on its advanced position on Breed's Hill to the Mystic River. The fence rails were stuffed with hay such that at a distance it appeared a formidable barrier. To the scared raw troops it gave a sense of security and a line behind which they would form.

British Brigadier General Gage, in command of 7000 troops in Boston, had been joined by three other senior officers during the preceding few weeks. They were Lieutenant Generals Howe, Clinton, and Burgoyne, and each would have his day in America. Gage had been aware of American activity from before sun-up, but only after first light did the Generals confer. All agreed that the rebellious rabble of farmers should feel the might of British arms on a battlefield. That they would prevail there was no doubt, and with Lt. General Howe in personal command of elite grenadiers and light infantry, they would sweep the rabble from the field and end the rebellion. Howe landed his troops at Norton's Point, below and to the left of the redoubt. The Americans watched the meticulous forming of rank after rank of red-coated soldiers as they disembarked from the boats. Howe had planned to assault the redoubt with a wide sweep around the left flank of the redoubt, enveloping it on three sides. When he saw the strongly reinforced fence line and the shore line gap now fenced, he changed his plan so as to directly force the fence line with his mass of elite grenadiers and light infantry—he would personally lead them. There would be a feint in force directed at the redoubt. The rebels would run or deal with British bayonets.

The Americans, most new to warfare, watched with awe and dread as the perfectly ordered red lines moved steadily at them to the drumbeat. Where an irregularity or an old fence broke the formation, they reformed and continued their advance. It was a hot June day, and they were wearing full packs as they ascended the slope toward the fence. Putnam knew that Prescott had his 350 men within the redoubt well in hand, and as the only mounted officer, he moved up and down the fence line with encouragement and advice ("Don't fire til you are ordered to; aim for their bellies; pick off the officers;" and, yes, "don't fire til you see the whites of their eyes"). Farther along the fence line, Stark had driven a stake in the ground about 40 long strides, or 40 yards, in front of the fence and ordered no firing before the British reached that point and then only on command. Stark's troops were mostly frontiersmen long used to the muskets they could load rapidly and aim accurately. At the shore, he lined them in groups three-deep so the first man could fire and then fall back to reload while the man behind him stepped into line such that there could be nearly constant fire.

The Royal Welch Fusiliers moved steadily toward the fence at the shore line, halted at the 40-foot mark, and on order brought their muskets to firing position and let loose a volley that went over the heads of the Americans at the fence. Then the slaughter began. The entire line of militiamen behind

the fence opened an almost continuous fire. Huge gaps appeared and the confused regulars fell back amongst the screams and groans of the wounded and dying. Howe's officers rallied and reformed the ranks and once more advanced to meet the fire, stepping over and around fallen soldiers, and then falling back as a much depleted and shaken regiment rested briefly while a grenadier force was brought forward to fill and bolster the depleted ranks. Howe attempted a third attack but could not force the line at the fence. With all his staff dead or wounded and his officer corps greatly depleted, he needed to change tactics if he were to salvage anything, including his reputation.

Howe decided to attack the redoubt directly and gathered his grenadiers (now without their heavy packs) to storm the fort. Meanwhile, British General Clinton was fully aware of the actions just across from Boston as were most of the populace of the city, whose view was only partially obscured by the smoke from burning Charlestown. He brought Colonel Pigot's regiment and Colonel Pitcairn's Marines over the Charles River to a site just next to the burning village. An attack placed the Marines and Pigot's force to the left of center and Howe's troops to the right as they faced up the hill. Both groups met resistance all the way up the long slopes of Breed's Hill to the redoubt, but a few Marines made it along the left (Charles River side) of the rampart when suddenly all firing from the fort ceased. The Americans were out of gunpowder. Prescott ordered the American troops out of the redoubt as they had no defense against the British bayonets overwhelming the fort. Most of Prescott's losses in dead and captured occurred in the redoubt as many of the defenseless Americans were bayoneted before they could exit the small opening in the rear.

The exodus of the American troops back to Boston was steady and unstoppable. Stark's and Reed's regiments at the fence noted the withdrawal of the Massachusetts forces from the redoubt and followed in an orderly manner, giving cover to discourage a follow-up attack by the British. Putnam could find no interest in defending the earthworks he had constructed on Bunker Hill as a fallback position. He personally brought out a brass field cannon to bear on the narrow Charlestown neck should there be any attempt by a British force to attack there. The British had won, but what a victory. Of the 2500 British troops engaged, nearly half were killed or wounded. The Americans had stood their ground and fought. The English became aware that the subjection of this rebellion was to be costly and long.

George Washington took command of all American forces on July 2, 1775. There were vast differences between this wealthy and patrician Virginian and the mass of Yankees who formed his army. Connecticut Brigadier Israel Putnam was obviously very popular with other officers and with the troops. Washington brought with him commissions for a full staff of general officers as appointed by the Continental Congress and Putnam had their unanimous vote as a Major General in this new continental army. Within two days, Washington handed Putnam his commission. He proved a loyal and amiable bridge to the newly appointed officers and indeed to the mass of new recruits replacing the short-term militia men, who went home to tend their farms when their time was up. There was a serious shortage of gunpowder and muskets, and there were very few bayonets. There was no shortage of food, but few units had uniforms. British and Americans each expected another battle but it was several months before a semblance of organization and adequate gunpowder and weapons gave Washington a sense that his 10,000 troops were capable.

After the first heavy snowfall, Henry Knox, Washington's Chief of Artillery, removed the cannon from the captured fort at Ticonderoga and with sleds, ox teams, and muscle moved them several hundred miles to Boston. Washington now had a train of artillery and was eager to place it—but where and how? Dorchester Heights, on his right flank had not yet been fortified. It overlooked Boston and its harbor. The problem was that the frozen ground in this bitter February of 1776 would take days of digging to erect ramparts; the British could and would attack across the frozen bay before any significant barrier could allow for another Bunker Hill manner of defense.

Colonel Rufus Putnam, Israel's cousin, was suggested as a civil engineer who had worked on forts in the French war. Washington interviewed Rufus and posed the problem of constructing fortification to be accomplished in one night—such as had been done at Breed's Hill. Rufus explained that he had limited experience or knowledge of such works, but Washington asked him to reflect on what might be done and report back to him. While discussing the problem with General Heath and other officers, Rufus noticed a book on Heath's table entitled *Muller's Field Engineer*. While paging through the book he saw something that might solve the problem of instant fortification. Heath parted with his new book, and Rufus spent several hours planning fortifications that might be accomplished overnight if the resources could be mustered. The plan was discussed with other staff officers and then Rufus Putnam presented it to General Washington, who ordered immediate action with the offer of all the army's resources.

Rufus Putnam ordered up artisans and carpenters amongst the troops to construct an adequate number of what the book's author called *chandeliers*. These were, in essence, open-sided box frames—ten feet long, five feet high, and five feet wide with an additional upright every five feet. These frames were pegged or joined together over the next few days—all open-sided. One thousand soldiers stripped the apple trees in the many local orchards of their lower branches and tightly bound them into bundles four or five feet long. After nightfall, yokes of oxen hauled the chandeliers into position along Dorchester Heights. The chandeliers were spaced about five feet apart to allow for the placement of Henry Knox's artillery pieces in the open intervals. The tight bundles of limbs were then packed even more tightly into the chandeliers. The soldier-farmers attacked the frozen soil, and what they could displace of icy earth and stone was thrown on top of the five-foot-wide rampart. They were still at it when the British Generals had their first good look at what had happened in just one night. They saw Knox placing and sighting his cannon. They saw that these great guns could range their fire over much of the Boston Harbor and Boston itself. Mostly, they saw what appeared to be—and was—a solid wall to protect against any attacking force.

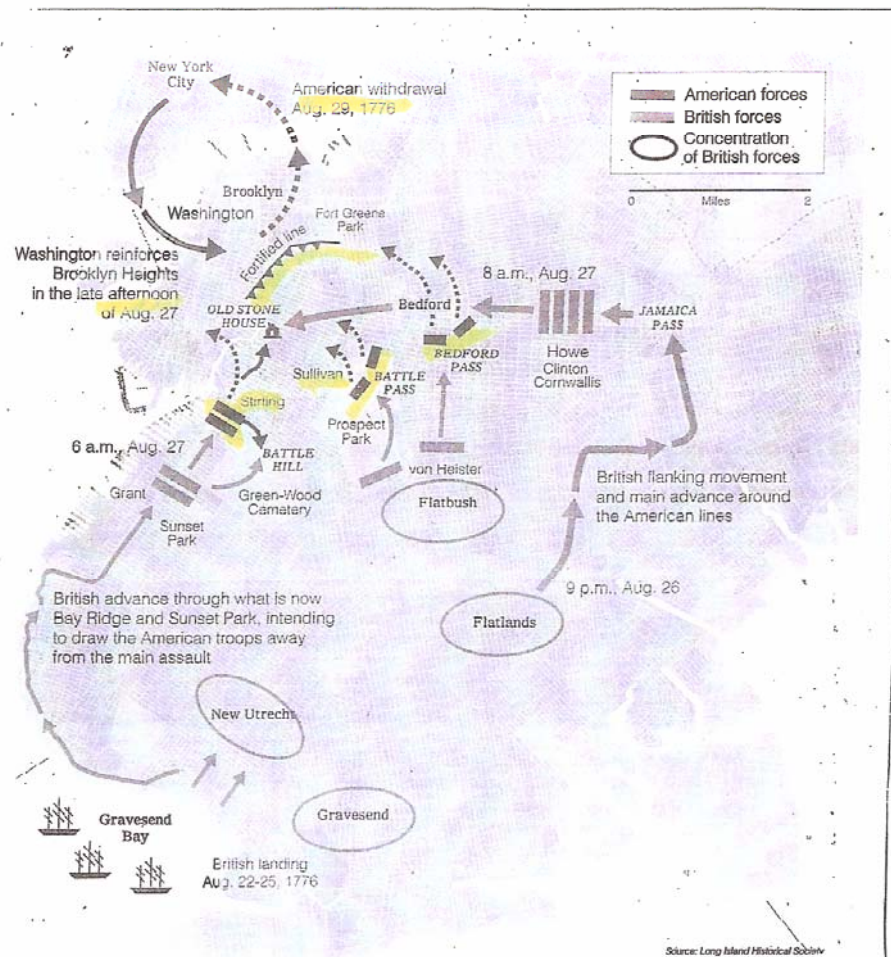
On March 5, the British concluded that they had no choice but to evacuate, and a message was sent that they would not burn the city if not fired upon. Thus ended the siege of Boston. It was not until April 17 that the British flotilla was finally away and at sea. The British sailed to Halifax to regroup, await reinforcements, and plan a massive campaign to take and control New York and the Hudson River.

New York and Brooklyn Heights

Washington understood the importance of New York with its superb harbor and access to the Hudson River. To control this area would split all of New England from the other colonies, providing a major strategic advantage. He had sent his second in command, Lieutenant General Charles Lee, to organize the defense of the city some months before. Lee had been detached to take control of American forces against British General Clinton in the Carolinas, and American General Lord Serling, a New York squire, was placed in command to continue Lee's fortifications.

When Lt. General Howe (now overall commander of British forces in America) finally left Boston for Halifax, Washington wanted a more senior commander in New York and ordered Putnam there to supervise and complete the defenses of that city. Putnam found the key defenses on Brooklyn Heights well advanced as were those on the East River. Little else had been done although Serling's troops had worked hard. There was difficulty with discipline, and little had been done on vital areas of Manhattan. Putnam was aware of what was needed, and as a poor administrator and aware of it, obtained the help of an able aide who transformed his desires into orders and proclamations. Colonel Aaron Burr, after the unsuccessful American campaign against Canada, returned to New York and became Putnam's aide. With his elegant writing of Putnam's orders, he became indispensable to the nearly illiterate Putnam. Israel had no difficulty in reading comprehension, but wrote phonetically with little regard for punctuation.

General Washington took command in New York April 13 and designated Putnam as his executive officer. American General Nathaniel Greene had been chosen to defend Brooklyn Heights on Long Island as this was the key to defense of New York and control of its vast harbor and entry to the eastern heartland of America. The Americans were in awe of the massive number of ships arriving with huge numbers of troops and supplies for a campaign to end the rebellion and punish the rebels. Over several weeks, fleets of vessels arrived delivering in all 25,000 English soldiers and 10,000 Hessians. (The Hessians were regiments of highly trained troops rented out by various German princes.) There were trains of artillery, and there were cavalry units. An earlier arriving force had landed at Staten Island to prepare a proper military camp. The natives were delighted and didn't overcharge. The British troops were delighted with the abundance and amazed that these Americans lived so well—they didn't deserve it. When the last vessels had arrived, they totaled more than 350. Many were fighting ships and included not only frigates and sloops but three "ships of the line." The carefully planned campaign by intelligent and experienced officers would not be a repeat of the Breed's Hill debacle.



title of Brooklyn, one of the Revolution's biggest, Washington's army narrowly escaped capture.

In late August, Washington watched the transfer of nearly half of Howe's force at Staten Island to Brooklyn. Howe meant to reduce the strong and strategic American defenses at Brooklyn Heights, which overlooked Manhattan. General Greene, who had been the designated commander and knew the terrain well, suddenly became seriously ill and totally incapacitated. Washington appointed Major General Putnam to take Greene's place as overall commander, with Brigadier General Sullivan as the battle commander. Both were seasoned and capable officers, but they nor any other commander (other than the incapacitated Greene) in the American force had any idea of the land beyond their immediate planned battlefield. Putnam anticipated the British attack would be from the wooded hills of Guan and ordered Sullivan with a third of his force forward about two miles to meet and blunt the attack. Sullivan would then have full field command. Washington inspected the plan of defense and fully agreed. The British attack came in early morning not only on Sullivan's center but on the right flank as well. Brigadier General Serling, with two regiments, was sent to the Gowanus Heights overlooking Gowanus Bay to address this assault.

Unknown to the Americans, General Howe had, on intelligence from Tory farmers, found a route a few miles inland by which he had the night before circled the American forces with one half of his army. He then came in on the unprotected left flank of the Americans. With the crash of a cannon on their left, the nearly surrounded Americans, now pressed from three sides, stood and fought and died or straggled back to their lines. Of the three thousand involved, fully 2000 were killed, wounded, or captured.

Howe did not press an attack on the American fortifications that afternoon of August 17, 1776. It is probable that the Americans could have been overwhelmed considering the massive number of British troops. Howe did not want another blood bath such as that at Breed's Hill when the lines could be taken at a very cheap rate by regular approaches. After all, the Americans had no place to go.

Washington and his staff realized that they were in a trap. Several days later after sufficient small craft had been gathered, the entire American force evacuated Brooklyn and, without the loss of a man, crossed over the East River to Manhattan in the dead of night. Washington was in the last boat to depart the Brooklyn shore early in the morning of August 20. The entire American army, perhaps 19,000 men of varied capability, was now strung out along Manhattan island. The British forces of 35,000 in Brooklyn and Staten Island were only awaiting orders to land in Manhattan and complete the defeat of the tattered rebel army.

Washington and his staff were aware that Manhattan Island could not be defended. With the concurrence of Congress, they planned a movement to the north to concentrate on high ground at Harlem Heights just above the Harlem River and close to King's Bridge, which was the crossing to the mainland near the juncture of the East River and Long Island Sound. Israel Putnam with his division of 4000 men was to defend against an attack from Staten Island, the primary British base near the tip of Manhattan.

Lord Howe had other plans. General Clinton would command a force of 4000 British and Hessian troops that would be put ashore at Kips Bay, an accessible indentation in the east shore of Manhattan about four miles below the turbulent waters at the juncture of the East River and Long Island Sound. The action was to commence at 10 o'clock September 15 and so it did. Four frigates had silently anchored in line at two hundred yards from shore during the night. The cannonade from 84 guns was unceasing for one full hour after which boatloads of erect soldiers, the Hessians predominant, were ferried to the shore. Howe had ordered bayonets only. The defending American troops, completely demoralized, commenced a retreat in panic as Washington and his staff arrived with reinforcements. The sight of the fleeing troops whom Washington could not stop spread the panic to the reinforcing troops who then joined the rout. Washington was beside himself and enraged at the fleeing soldiers, cursing them and with sword drawn attempting to beat them into order. He was so endangered that his staff had to take the reins and lead him away.

Israel Putnam had joined in the melee, but had the presence of mind to break off and race down the East River road to join and bring north his 4000 troops guarding against a British attack from the southern tip of Manhattan. Throughout the rest of that day he did what he did best—encouraging and urging along the long train of soldiers as he rode alongside them. His aide, Aaron Burr, a native of New York, knew of a crossover road to the major highway on the Hudson (or North River as it was then called) side of Manhattan; they rerouted, avoiding a confrontation with the British force coming ashore at Kips Bay on the East River. The British plan was for a rendezvous of all their 4000 troops at a staging point midway across the Island of Manhattan where they would form up and then move south. Putnam's division passed within two miles of this site on its way to join Washington's army at Harlem Heights to the north. Neither the British nor the Americans were aware of how close they were to each other that long day. Their arrival at Harlem Heights was greeted with great joy as they had been given up as trapped and lost.

Washington, at his headquarters in the well-fortified Heights, was expecting a British attack and had Colonel Knowlton's Rangers on a reconnaissance scout the night before in the hills above the valley that approached the Brooklyn Heights. A large force of British and Hessians came halloing up the valley with bugles blaring as if on a fox hunt and were attacked by fire from the Rangers who were above them in the woods. While the American's fire held in place the British forces, Washington sent Greene's and Putnam's divisions directly at the English concentration. The British forces were reinforced to a total of 4000 English troops, but they were fought to a standstill and then to a steady retreat which became a rout as the Ranger flank attack hit them. It was with the greatest elation that the Americans watched Hessians and English Light Infantry, the best the British had, running away. Washington did not wish to pursue at that time, nor was Howe interested in a frontal assault in another Bunker Hill style battle. He had in mind a battle of maneuver to gain tactical advantage and thus began a chess game with the material and troop strength giving Howe every advantage.

Israel Putnam was not involved in the American's evacuation of Manhattan Island and the British attempt to flank them at White Plains. Washington was unsure which way Howe would move and divided his forces, sending Putnam with 2300 men across the river to Hackensack, New Jersey to

Fort Lee on the western side of the Hudson. Both Greene and Putnam felt that Fort Washington on the eastern bank of the Hudson could be defended. Washington was dubious, but went with the advice of his two Generals. The 3000 defenders were some of the best Continental troops. Howe attacked two days later with 8000 British troops and after a brisk six-hour battle Fort Washington surrendered. The fortifications were too extensive to be defended by even twice their number. This was the greatest loss suffered by the Americans, in men and material, in any battle of that eight-year war.

British General Howe, with unusual celerity, crossed the Hudson to its west side and in three days was prepared to take Fort Lee. Washington saw the peril and evacuated Fort Lee immediately leaving even the hot food. Washington believed Howe was intent on taking Philadelphia and intended to keep a step ahead of him. He sent Israel Putnam to Philadelphia to prepare its defenses and recruit additional troops. Putnam, upon arriving in Philadelphia, declared martial law, and with the ever-efficient Aaron Burr to administrate, brought a degree of order to a frightened city. Putnam advised Congress to leave for Baltimore, which they promptly did with all their documents and baggage. However, only 800 troops were raised and later in that year 1776, he did not respond to Washington's request for troops when most needed at the American attacks at Trenton and Princeton. He did retrieve some of Washington's confidence by conducting raids on Tory forces and British outposts.

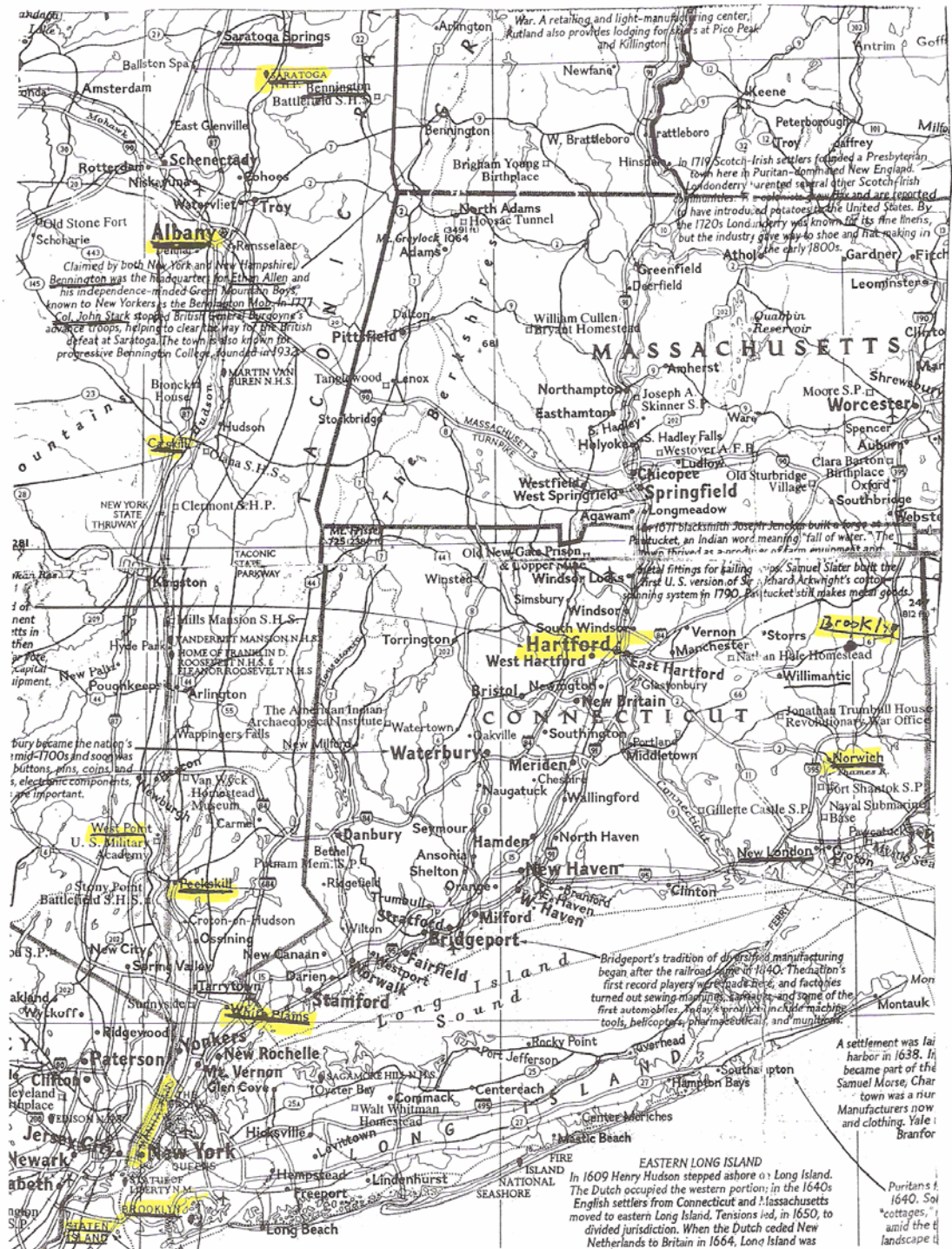
Israel Putnam's Command in the Highlands

In 1777, Washington required a change of command in the highly strategic Hudson Highlands. He offered the command to Benedict Arnold, who refused it, and then appointed Israel Putnam. He would have a force of about 3000 troops of whom 1200 or more would be the frequently rotating militia and the rest Continentals. He would command from Peekskill and be responsible for Forts Clinton and Montgomery on the opposite side of the Hudson. British General Cornwallis' army was slowly descending from Canada, and there was fear that the British General Sir Henry Clinton with 7000 troops in New York would choose to join him at Albany, thereby sealing off New England from the rest of the colonies.

In August of 1777, Lieutenant General Sir Henry Clinton sailed up the Hudson and feigned an attack on Tarrytown, which Putnam thought was a preparation for an attack on his command at Peekskill. However, a force of 2000 British attacked and captured the two lightly garrisoned forts, Montgomery and Clinton, while Putnam (who had moved to Fishkill) was out of position to render assistance. The Clinton campaign was a series of raids throughout the Hudson as far north as Kingston.

Mrs. Putnam had joined Israel earlier in August and brought her son Septimus, about Daniel Putnam's age, with her to be an aide to his stepfather as was Israel's son Daniel. Septimus contracted an illness shortly after his arrival and died suddenly, leaving his mother severely distraught. Not in good health herself, she continued to fail and died just as Clinton departed Peekskill, having destroyed Putnam's headquarters. Putnam arrived in time to bury his wife.

Clinton returned to New York, leaving British Lieutenant General Burgoyne to his fate at Saratoga. A British army was defeated there by the Americans and an English attempt to control the Hudson was thwarted. The American victory at Saratoga was a major turning point in our war for independence, as the French came into our war with a commitment of troops, supplies, and a magnificent fleet to join with the Americans against their common enemy.



Upon General Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga, provincial troops commenced arriving in Putnam's command and he at last had a substantial force to carry out an attack on General Clinton's 7000 man force in New York. Putnam conferred with Washington, who was in New Jersey blocking Philadelphia from Howe's army. Washington thought Putnam's plan feasible and it would at least keep Clinton from reinforcing Howe. As Putnam commenced organizing for his campaign, he did not take into consideration a great change in the situation in New Jersey. Howe had sent his troops to sea and then up the Delaware River to Philadelphia—a bloodless conquest of America's largest city (Congress had long since moved to Baltimore). Sir Henry Clinton was already moving most of his force in New York to join with Howe.

Washington was in desperate need of reinforcement and ordered an expeditious transfer of most of Putnam's troops to his command. Putnam somehow did not see the urgency and hesitated in his compliance. Israel Putnam's slowness to respond to his commander's order, and his loss of the Forts Montgomery and Clinton, were crowned with complaints of his failure to suppress the significant Tory activity in his command. Washington had hoped that Putnam would recognize his declining abilities and seek a well-deserved and honorable retirement. Putnam did not oblige. Upon return from a brief stay at home in March 1778, he found he had been relieved of command and faced a Board of Inquiry for the loss of Forts Montgomery and Clinton.

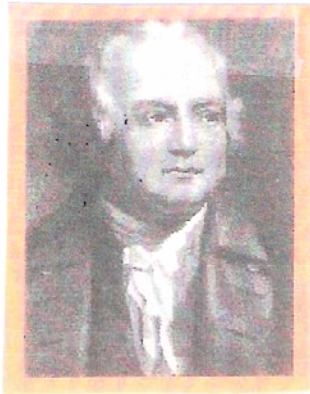
Vindication and Return to Duty

Putnam was vindicated by the Board of Inquiry and by Congress, which confirmed the Board's decision. Putnam was assigned to recruiting duties in Connecticut, a demotion he accepted without complaint. BUT, this was not the finale.

After the battle of Monmouth, Washington cashiered Lieutenant General Charles Lee for his lack of aggressiveness and brought Putnam out of semi-retirement to command a division. In the winter of 1778–1779 Putnam was transferred to a new position that would satisfy his sense of worth and rank, but would not tax him beyond his declining abilities (he had had a series of strokes). He took command of three brigades called the Eastern Division. The division was located near Danbury, Connecticut. Although considered a relatively inactive posting, the British who were wintering in New York engaged in raids and foraging parties, one of which pursued Putnam when he had separated briefly from his troop. He escaped by riding and walking down a series of steps—quite a ride for a fat old man—leading into Greenwich, Connecticut. The dragoons could only have captured him by riding full out down the long and steep-stepped descent. An historical marker is posted at the spot to this day. Israel Putnam's last combat occurred when he led a hastily assembled militia force against William Tryon and 1500 British and Tory troops and drove them from southwestern Connecticut.

Major General Putnam Is Done with War

In December 1779, Israel visited his home in Brooklyn for a few days with orders to join Washington's army at Morristown, New Jersey. Near Hartford, on his return journey, he suffered a stroke that paralyzed his right side. He did regain some strength in right arm and leg, but he was done with war. He remained on the active list as a Major General, but suffered another stroke in 1782 and was thereafter in the care of his loving family in Brooklyn. Although partially paralyzed, he was able, with assistance, to mount his horse, and refused to be housebound. He suffered a severe stroke in May 1790 and died in his home on the green in Brooklyn, Connecticut. Timothy Dwight, later the president of Yale College, had known Israel Putnam while serving as chaplain with Putnam's command in the Highlands. His epitaph was an honest appraisal of a folk hero: "He dared to lead where any dared to follow"—a rough-hewn patriot with the common touch.



The Epitaph of Israel Putnam

The General was buried in the Brooklyn cemetery. A tomb two or three feet high was built of brick, and across the top was placed a marble slab with this epitaph by the Rev. Timothy Dwight, who, five years later, became the President of Yale College, and who had been intimately acquainted with the hero in private and public life :

To the memory
Of
Israel Putnam, Esquire,
Senior Major General in the Armies
Of
The United States of America
Who
Was born at Salem
In the Province of Massachusetts
On the seventh day of January
A.D. 1718:
And died
On the twenty ninth day of May
A.D. 1790:
Passenger
If thou art a Soldier
Drop a Tear over the dust of a Hero
Who
Ever attentive
To the lives and happiness of his Men
Dared to lead
Where any Dared to follow;
If a Patriot
Remember the distinguished and gallant services
Rendered thy Country
By the Patriot who sleeps beneath this Monument;
If thou art Honest, generous & worthy

Render a cheerful tribute of respect
To a Man
Whose generosity was singular
Whose honesty was proverbial
Who
Raised himself to universal esteem
And offices of Eminent distinction
By personal worth
And a
Useful life

Israel Putnam, Jr.

Israel Putnam, Jr. was born in Salem (now Danvers) in 1740 and was an infant in arms when with father and young mother, Hannah Pope Putnam, he was carried to Pomfret, Connecticut that birth year. Over the years, the special bond between a first-born son and a young father was intensified by his participation, as much as able, in the building of a home and the development of a fully functioning farm from what had been virgin land and forest.

In April 1755 when Israel, Jr. was barely 15, his father enlisted in the Connecticut Militia and fought in the first of seven campaigns in what would be called The French and Indian War. His father was home for several months during the winters and early spring, but there was a massive amount of labor on a farm dedicated primarily to raising stock (cattle, swine, sheep, and always horses). Hired help was a necessity. Young Israel's mother could help with advice, but mother and sisters were fully employed in their multitude of chores. Israel, Jr. thrived on the hard work of farming and never considered for himself any other endeavor.

Israel, Jr. married Sarah Waldo of Pomfret in 1764. She was of an eminent family in New England and whether he became an Episcopalian at that time or earlier or later is unclear. This conversion was a radical change for a Congregationalist family in a rural area that knew no other denomination. A wealthy and High Church neighbor had moved to Brooklyn in 1766 from Rhode Island. Godfrey Malbone, Oxford educated, Royalist to the core, established a gentleman's farm estate on a 2000 acre tract of land contiguous to Israel Putnam, Sr.'s holding. When asked to contribute to a new Congregational church, Malbone refused and built instead an Episcopal church for his use and for others who might be inclined to the established Church of England. Brooklyn was not quite the same with the Malbones in residence. Unlike others in the parish, the Putnams got along with their imperious neighbor. In a later generation there was intermarriage between these two prominent Brooklyn families. Daniel Putnam married Malbone's daughter (or niece?) and the Putnam and Malbone holdings were eventually joined. The Putnam-Malbone home still exists in Brooklyn, Connecticut and is close to Malbone's beautifully maintained Episcopal church. Daniel Putnam and his family members are at rest in the cemetery next to the church.

Israel Putnam, Jr. was totally involved in the management and working of his father's farm. Israel, Sr. had been away much of the time after 1755. He was home usually when not on military duty, but he became increasingly active in business and political affairs after the French war ended and the turbulence of the pre-Revolutionary years absorbed his attention. Upon marrying Mrs. Gardiner in 1767, Israel, Sr. signed over most of his land and his home to Israel, Jr. and after extensive renovations and additions moved his younger sons and unmarried daughters into Mrs. Gardiner's home on the Brooklyn green. Israel Putnam, Sr. farmed his remaining acres as well as those acquired in his marriage to Mrs. Gardiner.

As English oppression increased, Israel, Jr., like his father and many Windham County farmers, became active in the local militia. In 1774, Connecticut's governing council requested the counties to form their militia companies into regiments and Israel Putnam, Jr. was appointed to a Captaincy in the 11th Regiment. (His father became a Lieutenant Colonel in the 11th Connecticut Militia Regiment). The battle at Lexington and Concord brought rapid response from the whole of New England, and Israel Putnam, Jr. and his company arrived in Boston within the week. His father had made the journey from Brooklyn to Cambridge in 24 hours (about 75 miles), leaving his son Daniel to yoke the oxen from the plow and departing as soon as he had confirmed that war had come.

Israel Putnam, Sr. had received his commission as a Major General in the new Continental army from General Washington. Israel, Jr. was appointed his father's aide and was commissioned a Colonel in that army. He retained that rank for the rest of his life. Israel, Jr. served as his father's aide throughout the campaign before Boston and continued as his aide for three years. He retired in 1777 as he was more needed at his home—the Highlands was at that time a relatively quiet area.

The passion and need for good land was always present in New England farmers, and Israel Putnam, Jr., more than most, yearned for better ground. The ten years since his retirement from active service had been the usual hard but rewarding work, which had made him relatively well off as his several sons came to maturity. In a last gasp, in 1787, the Confederation of New States of America, which had functioned only marginally after the revolutionary years and which was about to be replaced with a new Constitution, passed the Northwest Ordinance. This ordinance created a federally owned territory west of the Appalachians involving the Ohio River valley. This vast area was to be opened for orderly settlement, and eventually five new states would emerge.

The Ohio Company, composed of Revolutionary War officers primarily, had Washington's approval and after much maneuvering with the new Congress, was awarded millions of acres to be surveyed and divided into townships. A portion of each major division was to be reserved for educational and community purposes. Brigadier General Rufus Putnam, a cousin of our Putnams, was elected the leader of the pioneering group that would plant the first planned community in the Northwest Territory. Washington appointed Rufus the first Surveyor General of the new United States of America, and the work of laying out ordered sections of this area was under his direction.

Israel Putnam, Jr. and his two oldest sons, Israel Putnam, III (age 22) and Aaron Waldo Putnam (21), joined the Ohio Company pioneers at a site to be called Marietta (to honor the French Queen.) The site was about 75 miles downstream from commencement of the Ohio River at Pittsburgh and at the entry of a large and navigable tributary named the Muskingum River, coming from the northwest to join the Ohio. Fort Harmer was already present, with a small garrison, on the bank of the downstream juncture of the Muskingum and the Ohio. On the upstream juncture, a fortified complex of joined block houses was built to shelter and protect the arriving settlers. This Campus Martius as it was named, was the center of administration and proved effective in protecting settlers and livestock from the depredations of Indians. Rufus Putnam was meticulous in laying out the city, and ancient and huge Indian burial mounds from a long-forgotten era were incorporated in a respectful way into Marietta's development. The area occupied by Fort Harmer was on somewhat higher ground; after the fort was abandoned when peace finally came to the Territory, it became a

residential and commercial area in its own right, connected to Marietta intimately (three generations of our Putnams lived in Harmer).

Israel, Jr. decided on a particularly fertile section of river bottom land a few miles south from Harmer named Belpre. Most of the Belpre settlers were veterans of the War. Israel cleared land and built a relatively rude temporary home to receive his wife and the rest of the family. Israel, III established a farm six miles up the Muskingum at a great bend in that navigable stream. Aaron Waldo established his farm near his father in Belpre. Israel, Jr. returned to Brooklyn, Connecticut in the fall of 1790 with the intention of bringing out his family and household goods the following year for permanent removal to his farmer's Eden in Ohio. Five years of Indian war prevented his return until 1795.

When Israel, Jr. returned to Connecticut in the fall of 1790, the smoldering resentment of the Indian tribes throughout the Northwest Territory burst into a savage war as they attempted to take back the lands that were being settled by immigrants. From the Great Lakes south to beyond Marietta there was killing and burning until a final settlement in 1795. Rufus Putnam's Campus Martius proved itself, and a similar but smaller fort, called the Farmer's Castle, was built at Belpre. For several years the citizens of Marietta lived a garrison life. A blockhouse in the walls of the Campus Martius became a home and office for Rufus Putnam and has been preserved as part of Marietta's Museum of History.

Our Putnams Move to Ohio

The entire Israel Putnam, Jr. family, with the exception of our ancestor, David Putnam, Sr., left Brooklyn, Connecticut in June 1795 with the family of Ephraim Cutler to journey to Marietta. They went by way of Hartford, New Haven and New York to Elizabethtown, New Jersey and thence across Pennsylvania to the Monongahela River (a main tributary to the Ohio). Dr. William Pitt Putnam (25 in 1795), George Washington Putnam (18), and all the daughters of Israel, Jr. (Sarah age 34 and married to Samuel Thornely, Mary age 22, and Elizabeth 15) had joined their father at Elizabethtown, New Jersey, where they had been vaccinated against small pox. The two families upon reaching the Monongahela River boarded a large river flatboat, which Ephraim Cutler had had constructed to carry the people and movables of both families the 75 miles down river to Marietta. The oxen and horses were driven along the river bank to Marietta by Israel's son, Aaron Waldo, who had come up to meet his father. The water in the river was low and the trip arduous at times, with dysentery a common malady. The Cutlers lost an infant son and a daughter entering her teens. The river below Wheeling for the fifty miles to Marietta was a complete wilderness with no signs of any settlements along the river banks. After 31 days on the Ohio they arrived at Marietta on the morning of September 18, 1795.

Israel Putnam, Jr., 55 when he moved all that was dear to him to the western lands of Ohio, fulfilled his dreams. He was relatively wealthy and replaced his crude first home with the finest home in Belpre, which overlooked his fields and orchards extending to the Ohio River. He constantly improved his livestock and introduced several varieties of apples from New England. Israel, Jr. had bought farms for his sons Israel III and Aaron Waldo. Both William Pitt Putnam and George Washington Putnam died in 1800—ages 30 and 23. Both daughters made their homes in Newport, Kentucky. Mary married a Daniel Mayo; I don't have a married name for Elizabeth. Sarah Putnam Thornely, Israel's oldest daughter, lived in the area—a comfort to her mother and father.

David Putnam, Sr.

David Putnam, Sr., our sixth-generation ancestor, had graduated Yale College in the Class of 1793 and had taught school for a term, but was conflicted as to a lifetime career. His father had encouraged the Law, but indulged his ambitious third son and financed David's attempt to find a place in the mercantile world. David commenced a journal upon leaving Brooklyn, Connecticut for New London, Connecticut, and then New York, on Wednesday, April 16, 1794.

"Being duly prepared with purse and script, I sat off from home on horseback with a view and some expectation of finding employment in a store or counting house in New York or Philadelphia."

David quite clearly enjoyed the three or four day sail on a passenger sloop from New London to New York, with its views of farms and blooming orchards all along the shore. He passed through Hell Gate to the Hudson and landing at the lower Hudson, found a boarding house and commenced his quest. He immediately sought out two Yale classmates (Peter Parker, a student of Divinity and Winthrop Saltonstall, a student of Physic who lived at 26 Maiden Lane). Together they saw the town and its wonders. Both David's father and grandfather (Israel, Jr. and Israel, Sr.) were well-acquainted with New York through their military service there, and David called upon several persons who might help him. He was courteously received, but there were no prospects for a place in a counting house or store.

On Thursday the 24th David was off by carriage to Philadelphia as he had letters to several gentlemen there, some of whom would, he thought, most certainly offer him assistance. The responses were all the same: "Mr. P, if I hear of any place for you, I'll inform you of it", a bow, and good-bye. David made the most of his visit to America's largest and most civilized city, now the seat of the new United States government. He attended Episcopal religious services on Sunday, but heard little of the sermon as his gaze was fixed on George Washington, his first president, who was present at the service. He attended several sessions of the Congress and was puzzled as to how the members could follow the debate of legislation while dozing, conversing with their friends, writing letters, or reading newspapers—all at four dollars a day.

Several days of poking about Philadelphia, spending money with no prospects of employment, soured him on the city, and he abruptly left for New York. Upon his return, he sought a situation where he might learn something of bookkeeping and accounting. He eventually took a position with an insurance broker, for lodging and laundry (John Ferraris, No. 103 Water Street). There was little business done and he believed he learned little. With no prospects for a respectable mercantile house and his money running low (he dreaded a return to his father's house having nothing to show for the expense), David signed on as steward of a merchant ship bound for England with a cargo of flour. He went aboard October 2, 1794 and immediately commenced his duties of getting stores aboard; he also drew a month's pay in advance (12 dollars).

The entries in his journal bring to life his experience on board. For a month and more with the brig **Magnolia**, taking on cargo and ship's stores, he finds the irritable Captain has taken a dislike to him and he can do nothing to the bully captain's satisfaction; it is "G--D--- you" for this and the same for that and so it remains for most of the voyage. When ashore he is with his friends Parker and Saltonstall, and too, Mr. Abrams, Secretary of the Masonic Grand Lodge of New York. Mr. Abrams obtains for David a certificate, which is granted when David passes and is raised to the degree of Master Mason in the Holland Lodge. After much refitting of the ship, David Putnam, Sr., sets sail on December 13 for the most miserable experience of his life.

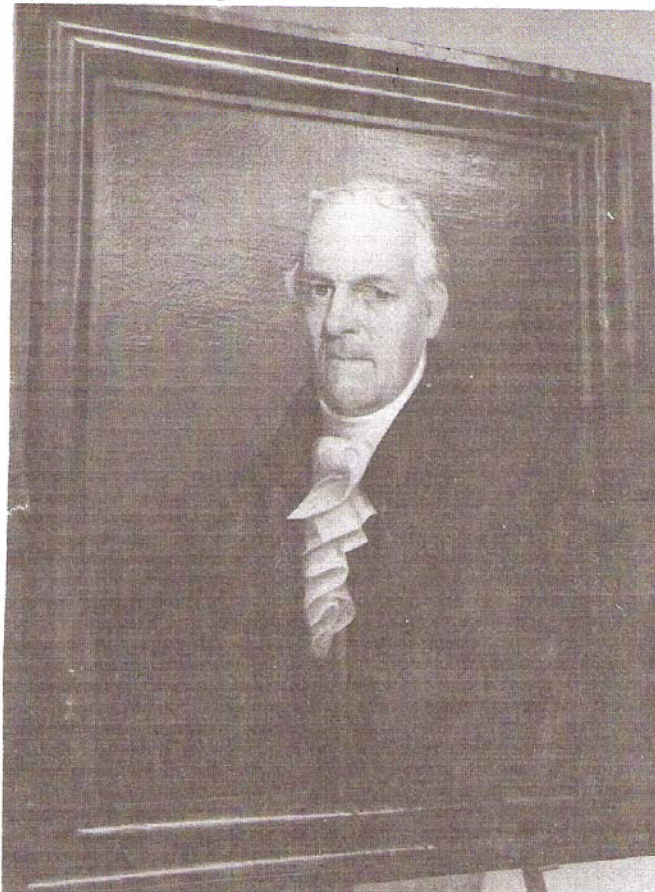
The two-masted *Magnolia* lumbers her way on her winter voyage to London—overloaded with hundreds of casks of flour. David is wretchedly sea-sick for most of the time at sea, although the first ten days are the most severe. On the 37th day at sea, after a full day of labor, he enjoys a pleasant evening, quite calm, and "ate a supper of cold beef and pork and raw onions and vinegar and turned in." This was the last entry in his journal that suggests any degree of comfort. Gale force winds pound the *Marigold* and old cordage breaks, old canvas tears, and the gales continue to force the ship more toward the coast of France instead of more northerly toward England. Soundings reveal they are close to the coast of France.

The last note in the first part of the journal ends on his 56th day at sea, on February 6, 1795. "2 AM Pleasant moonshine and light breeze at W." There is then a hiatus of 28 days to Wednesday, March 4, 1795 in the French port of Nantes. David with the entire crew left the supposedly sinking vessel several weeks before and with the assistance of the French came to Nantes. He was housed with 20 to 30 other of the crew in a filthy, stinking, flea-ridden chamber with two meals a day, paid for by the American consul. Eventually passage was arranged for the sailors to return to America.

David Putnam, Sr. landed in New York July 2, 1795 and immediately sought his friend Parker, who informed him that David's entire family had moved to Ohio from Pomfret (Brooklyn, Connecticut). They had left in June, about one month before, and were still en route at the time. He was surprised, saddened, and then, after consideration, pleased. David taught school in Brooklyn, Connecticut that fall and winter and visited Marietta the following year, 1796. At that visit he sought out advice of father Israel Putnam, Jr. and his cousin (three generations removed), Brigadier General Rufus Putnam, the leader at Marietta of the Ohio Company, as to how he might find a place in this new settlement. David returned to Connecticut and for two years studied law with Honorable Calvin Goddard of Plainfield—what his father had desired for him before he had tried to find a place in the mercantile world.

11, 1971

College Given Portrait



This 140-year-old oil portrait of David Putnam, first preceptor of Muskingum Academy, was recently given to Marietta College by Mr. and Mrs. David Larrabee of Chevy Chase, Md. Mrs. Larrabee, formerly Kate Putnam, is a direct descendant of David Putnam.

David moved to Marietta in 1798 and remained there the rest of his long life. He arrived on horseback with his new wife (Elizabeth “Betsey” Perkins of Plainfield, Connecticut) and his certification as a lawyer. Upon his arrival in Marietta, he was readily accepted into the Washington County establishment and served as Postmaster from 1800 to 1802 and as Town Clerk from 1801 through 1803. His interest in education never waned, and he served as the first preceptor of the newly established Muskingum Academy. This was one of several attempts to provide superior education in Marietta, which eventuated in the establishment of Marietta College in 1835. Both David, Sr. and his son, Douglas, were vital in the development and financing of the college. Douglas, a significant benefactor of the college for many years, in the later 1800s bestowed the diplomas on the graduating seniors. My grandfather, **Israel Putnam** (1862-1942) in 1882 received his diploma from his great-uncle Douglas.

David and Betsey, in 1806, with their young sons, moved into a newly constructed stone house on a bluff overlooking the Muskingum River near its juncture with the Ohio. This was to be both home and office for him the rest of his life. (Our seventh-generation ancestor, David, Jr., was born there in 1808.)

David, Sr. prospered as his legal skills were applied to Ohio Company sales, purchases, and property management, and over the years he developed a large land agency to which he devoted his entire effort. David was the Cashier of the Bank of Marietta, established in 1808, whose offices were in his home. This was the first chartered corporation in Ohio exclusively for banking purposes. Its officers included Rufus Putnam as well as other pioneering founders of Marietta. As the bank's offices were in David's house, the safe (a heavy planked, iron-bound and padlocked chest) was kept in David's basement. The bank continued at David's residence until it was moved to Marietta in 1815.

Those first years must have been exciting and joyous. From 1800 to 1810, Betsey brought forth another boy every two years. They were Benjamin, Charles, Peter Radcliffe, Douglas, David, Jr., and then Murray. The Putnams had always been close as a family. David's father, Israel Putnam, Jr., was prospering. (He was noted for his cheeses, which with other produce had ready market downstream from Belpre on the Ohio). Next oldest brother Waldo, like his father, had introduced especially desirable species of apples and peaches as had Israel III. Waldo was close to his father in Belpre, and Israel III had a thriving farm on bottomland six miles up the Muskingum. David's sisters had married (Mary to Daniel Mayo and Elizabeth to Joel Craig) and both moved downriver to Newport, Kentucky. William Pitt Putnam, fully qualified as a physician, was dissatisfied with the practice of Physic; he bought 100 acres north of Marietta on the Ohio and attempted to hew out a farm for himself and his wife. He died in 1810 after minor success, leaving a young widow, but no children.

1825

Within the year of 1825, David and Betsey Putnam lost three sons. I have found no reference to an epidemic or any major disaster in the area. It remains a tragic mystery to me and must have had a shattering effect on mother and father. Mary, an infant, also died—shortly after birth. (Two daughters fared little better; Catherine died at age 17 in 1829, and Elizabeth died at age 26 in 1846.)

Benjamin (1800–1825) — Age 25; their first born; cashier of a local bank; possibly being groomed to assist his father

Peter Radcliffe (1804–1825) — Age 21

Murray 2nd (1815–1825) — Age 10; named for Murray 1st (1810–1812)

Mary — Less than one year old

Douglas was called home from his senior year at Yale to assist his father, who was quite overburdened with work and one would suspect a massive portion of grief. Douglas worked as an assistant to his father and gradually took over the management of the land agency his father had established. Douglas expanded the business into other investment and had great success as an astute entrepreneur. His family and descendants have had a prominent place in Marietta to the present time.

David and Betsey had two other sons who survived: Charles and George. Charles was a “Divine”, that is a clergyman, and he was on the Board of Trustees of Marietta College at the same time that Douglas served there. George died in a train wreck. I have no other information about either of them.

David Putnam, Sr. died in 1856, age 87, and his wife in 1866, age 88.

David Putnam, Jr.

David Putnam, Jr. (1808–1892), our seventh-generation ancestor, was Harmer's leading merchant. He was described as "a big framed, broad-shouldered, long-armed son of nature, several inches more than six feet tall, with a heart and a voice as big as his frame, yet with a nature peculiarly tender and sympathetic." He was an ardent abolitionist who assisted slaves from the plantations across the Ohio River in Virginia to their freedom in the northern states. His large home on the river was a first station on the so-called underground railroad, and David was designated a Superintendent. The escaped slave would first be hidden at David's house and then clandestinely moved to the next station by a Conductor on a journey to a safe haven in the north.

The abolitionist movement in these pre Civil War years was especially strong in Marietta amongst the descendants of the New Englanders and was centered around Marietta College. Virginia was just across the river and had plantations that required the cheap labor of the black slaves. The planters were outraged that their "property" was being lured away from them, and they had the sympathy of many Virginians and Ohioans who may not have wished the social order to be disrupted. David's activity was well known and on several occasions mobs assembled at his home to protest his slave "stealing." His daughter, Hannah, was born the night that slave catchers had gathered in front of his home where he was harboring an escaped slave from Mr. Henderson's farm just across the river. This was in 1848. Hannah recalled in later years playing about the 14 room house and in opening a closet, seeing a frightened black man hiding there. She was aware that she was to ignore and forget such occasions and simply closed the door without a word or comment.

On one occasion while on business in Parkersburg, across the Ohio River in Virginia, David was accosted by a man who recognized him; a mob formed. David never carried a weapon and to protect himself moved to the wharf where he was forced into the river. A passing vessel plucked him from the water and saved him from drowning.

With passage of the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850, David's activities were unquestionably illegal, and even before that date those who had been injured by removal of their rightful property could seek its return and damages against the offending slave stealer. David Putnam, Jr., on October 25, 1849, was sued in the federal court in Columbus, Ohio, by George W. Henderson, the Wood County Virginia slave owner living just across the river from Marietta. He sought to recover damages for Putnam's aiding nine slaves to escape. Putnam turned to the best legal mind in Ohio to defend him. Salmon P. Chase, who became Lincoln's Secretary of Treasury and later, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, agreed to accept \$100 as his fee, to be paid as convenient. "I charge fees and expenses to the cause of freedom." A most unusual lawyer. David did pay him.

The suit dragged on for four years until the case was abandoned by the prosecution in April 1853. The Justices ruled that Putnam could recover his court costs of \$28.78 from Henderson. The Fugitive Slave act of 1850 had voided all pending suits prior to its passage (the suit against Putnam had been filed in 1849), and a new suit would have been required for any action. Henderson was already burdened with debt, and the new legal requirements for acceptable testimony would not have supported his case in the opinion of his lawyer.

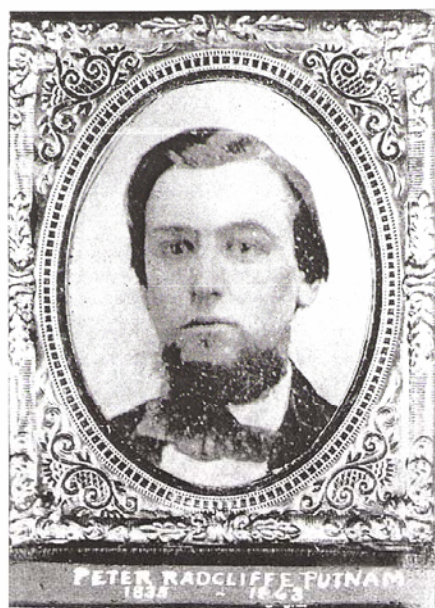
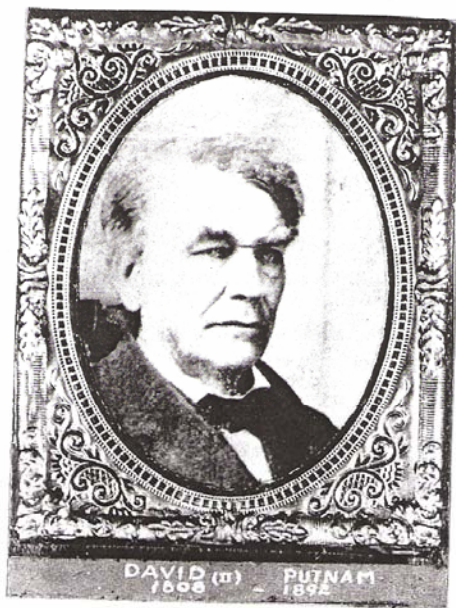
David and Hannah Munson Putnam's first born was **Peter Radcliffe Putnam** (1836–1863). He was our eighth-generation ancestor and my great-grandfather. He was named for David's older brother Peter, who had died in 1825 at age 21. Where the name came from I have always been curious to know; it is a rare departure from the usual Putnam naming.

After Peter, there were girls to keep Peter company. They were Martha (1837–1908), Catherine (1842–1921), and Hannah (1854–1932). A son, Rufus, was born in 1848 and all I know of him is that he died in Boon, Iowa at age 36 in 1884. Another daughter, Elizabeth, was born in 1852 and lived into the next century. A reference is made to her as living in New York and that she contributed letters and, possibly, David, Sr.'s Journals to the Putnam archives in Marietta.

David Putnam, Jr. occupied the large house in Harmer until 1884. He suffered a stroke that partially paralyzed him. For several years he had been quite excitable, especially concerning the years of his anti-slavery activity. With his wife and daughter Hannah, what remained of the David Putnam household moved to a smaller house on Gilman Street. He lived there with his ailing wife and daughter until his death in 1892 at age 84. His wife Hannah preceded him, dying in 1890 at age 79.

Peter Radcliffe Putnam

Peter Radcliffe Putnam (1835–1863), eighth in our ancestral line, is purely a name to me as it must have been for his two sons who were too young to know him when he died. As the oldest child and first son of David Putnam Jr., he must have had a special place in his mother's and father's regard. I think it likely that he worked with his father in his general mercantile store. (The business was known as Putnam and Sons.) That he attracted and married in 1860, an unusually gifted woman is likewise a comment on character. He married, at age 25, Emily Bishop Mixer of Unionville, Ohio. His first child, Abbott, was born in 1861 and his second son, Israel, in 1862. That Peter volunteered to join the Union Army in 1861, at age 27, aware of his family responsibilities, suggests a passion for the cause his father, David Putnam, Jr. had felt so strongly. Peter died of chronic dysentery in 1863, shortly after his medical discharge from the Army.

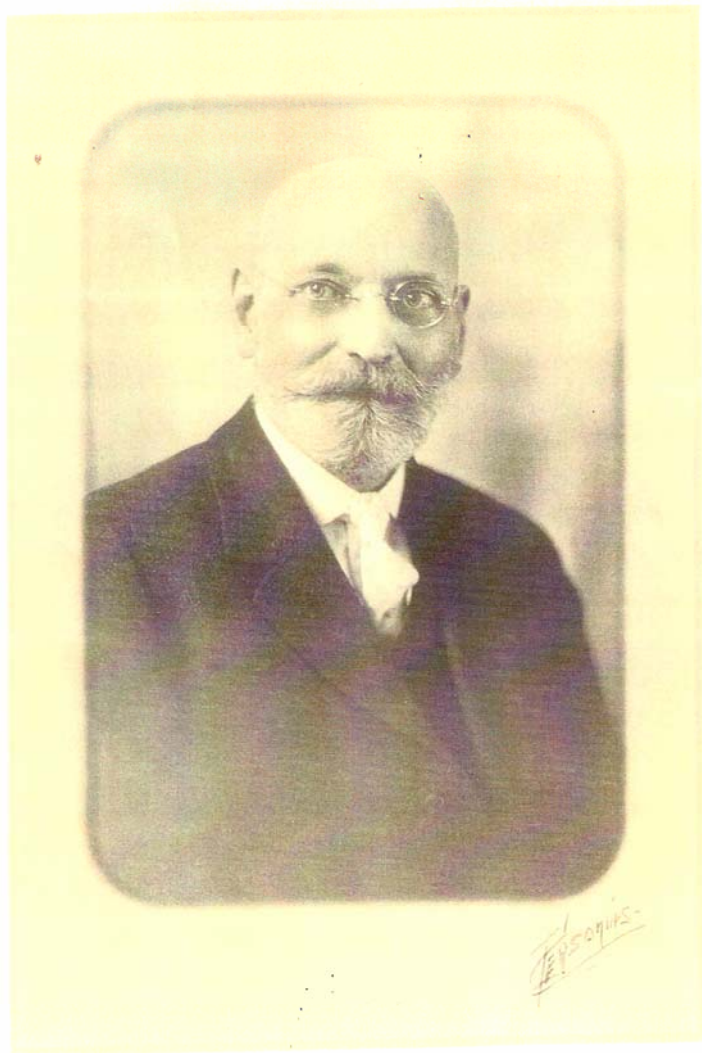




Peter Redcliffe Putnam



Israel Putnam
Born 1862 - Marietta, Ohio



E. J. S.
1923

Israel Putnam

Israel Putnam (1862–1942), ninth in our ancestral line, was born in Marietta, Ohio. He moved to Winsted, Connecticut in 1865 upon his mother's second marriage, to Mr. George White of that manufacturing city in eastern Connecticut. Israel's father had died at age 27, when Israel was but an infant. His mother, Emily Bishop Mixer Putnam, highly educated for her time (Western Reserve Female Seminary, class of 1857), nourished the intellectual gifts she sensed in Israel. Israel and older brother Abbott were joined by two younger brothers born of George White after their mother's marriage and the move to Winsted, Connecticut. They were George White and Peter Radcliffe White.

The White home, Israel's childhood residence, still substantial and intact in 2000, lay on the west side of Winsted, Connecticut. It was about halfway along Meadow Street as it wended its long and increasingly genteel way north from T.C. Richards Hardware factory at Winsted's outskirts to the T.C. Richards home at the northern end of the street. The girl that Israel would marry lived there. Florence Madeline Somerby lived with her uncle T.C. Richards and aunt Ruth Debra (Saxton) Richards from age 12-1/2, after her mother died of tuberculosis in 1875, until she married Israel Putnam in 1883.

My grandmother, Florence Somerby Putnam, had been born to Julia Saxton and Charles P. Somerby on May 16, 1863 in Hoboken, New Jersey. Her parents, Julia and Charles, had married in 1862 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin when Julia was 14 and Charles was 17. Two boys were born to them later—Frank in 1865 and Charles in 1867. Julia and Charles separated shortly after Charles' birth, while they were living in New York City. Both boys were adopted out to families who eventually changed the boys' last names. Julia contracted tuberculosis about this time and lived by the generosity of relatives until her death. My grandmother was never curious about her two brothers, but she did contact her father after she was married and had a rather cold meeting with him in New York where he then lived. She inquired if he had remarried, and he quite formally replied, "I am not alone." I believe that she named my father for her father in hopes he might show some interest in his namesake. Nothing more is known to me of Charles P. Somerby. All I have of him is a certificate of exemption from military service in the Civil War, when he and his wife (my great-grandmother) were living in Milwaukee.

Israel and Florence came to know each other through the Westside Public School, which they both attended though not until she was 12 or 13 as she had moved there in 1875; he had resided in Winsted from near infancy. An event which my grandmother liked to relate was a hay-ride to which Israel had invited her. It was expected that the young lady's escort provide a sweetmeat or candy or such. To her mortification, my grandfather, because he was pinched for money or just didn't know, brought a box of Smith Brothers licorice-flavored cough drops to share. To her credit or because she was interested in Israel, she hid her mortification.

Upon completing eighth grade, Israel had had all that public education provided in that era. He was tutored in Greek and Latin and other prerequisites for college for two years in Winsted. Then at age 16, in 1878, he entered Marietta College where he was the youngest member of his class of 1882. He lived with his grandfather David Putnam, Jr. and grandmother Hannah Morrison Putnam in the large house in Harmer, which had attracted so much attention during the height of the abolitionist movement in pre Civil War years. I am sure that his grandfather's prominence and his great-uncle's wealth and great generosity to Marietta College would have assured his success at Marietta, but he attained his degree on his own merits in June 1882. He was valedictorian of his graduating class, still its youngest scholar at age 20. He received his diploma from his great-uncle Douglas. I have a photo of him at that time; he is dressed dapperly with sideburns and a Delta Upsilon fraternity badge on his right lapel.

Israel and Florence became engaged on his return to Winsted after his graduation from Marietta College. Her aunt and uncle Richards were not too pleased, but they accepted the inevitable and a wedding date was set for June 1884. Her aunt had had other plans for her talented niece, who was studying for the operatic stage and for the past four years had been the soprano in the Quartet Choir at the Congregational Church. Florence received \$200 dollars a year and had so for three or four years—a large sum at that time, especially for a women (according to my Aunt Georgia's memoir).

Israel found employment as a Civil Engineer with the survey gang on the Nickel Plate Railroad, which was being laid out near Akron, Ohio. Apparently Israel became impatient with the long engagement and in November 1883 came home to persuade Florence to marry him right away. Florence's aunt and uncle were away on an extended visit and though reluctant to do so without their blessing, Florence was persuaded. With Florence's cousin George Richards and his fiancée as witnesses, Florence and Israel were married by the Rev. Dr. Gage in Hartford, Connecticut on November 9, 1883.

On returning from their wedding trip, the newlyweds moved into his mother's home; once the dust settled a bit, Florence accompanied him to Akron where he was employed. The Israel Putnams returned to Winsted the following August as their first born was about to arrive. Georgianna Putnam was born August 7, 1884. (Her memoir is the source of most of the knowledge I have of her parents' lives.) Their first home was half of a double house; his brother Abbott lived in the other half with his wife Francis from Marietta.

About this time, Israel decided on a rural peddler's occupation as easy and sufficiently remunerative for his simple needs. He was not averse to making a lot of money, but never was overly acquisitive. He would commence his route early in the week with a covered horse-pulled cart. He traveled along the rural lanes and byways with small goods that the farmers and their wives would otherwise need to travel by horse and wagon many miles to purchase. He became a skillful marketer early on. As an example, if he found an interest in a pot or pan by some farmer's wife, he would leave it with her for trial; on his next visit she could either pay him for it or return it without any charge. He had saved himself effort and time and could cover more territory. What was more

important, he discovered what these rural people wanted. The ingredients of dyes, extracts, and pain relievers were no secret and needed only proper combinations to produce a satisfactory product. Besides, he loved writing the promotional material that might differentiate his product from another.

Over time, Israel concentrated more on the manufacture than direct sale of products. The family moved about Winsted to larger rented apartments and houses where he could have space for mixing and packaging his several products, which now also included perfumes and Mixers Magic Mixture, a soothing pain reliever that contained a small quantity of laudanum, which was very commonly used and completely legal at that time.

The Putnam family had been augmented by two girls and a boy. Georgia now had two sisters and a brother: Emily was born in 1886, Ruth Debra (Day) in 1889, and Israel, Jr. in 1890. By 1893, business was so good that for the first time in her married life, Florence could buy good furniture and could shop in Hartford for clothes for herself and her children. Israel turned the day-to-day business over to his half-brother, George White, and was off with friends on three-day fishing trips and anything else that suited a prosperous young man.

Israel went bankrupt in 1895. He wrote a check to pay for some merchandise for his business and it bounced. His half-brother George had been leading the good life, too. It was a family matter and Israel went to his mother, who could not help him. She did change her life insurance to exclude George and leave his portion to Israel. She also swore Israel to secrecy regarding George's theft or gross mismanagement.



Florence M. Sonaby



Israel Putnam

My father, Charles Somerby Putnam, had been born in 1894 and was but a year old when Israel rented for \$6 a month a farm about one and a half miles from Winsted. He moved his family there and bought a flock of chickens. He continued to make and sell some extracts, which brought in some money. There were always surplus eggs, which the girls collected from their individual flocks given them by their father. They then sold the eggs to their mother for a penny apiece (a credit due at Christmas time), and what the family didn't use was sold to a grocer. They never went hungry although there were many eggs and much chicken in their diet. In Georgia's memoir she recalls that plate beef was only a few cents a pound. Israel would occasionally buy three pounds and after it had been pounded and dotted with butter and seared over a hot grill, it was a feast—ready to eat when the butter melted. On Saturday night there were always beans cooked slowly through the day and served with steamed brown bread. On Sunday, Israel presided over two-inch thick codfish cakes fried in deep fat and, of course, always served with currant jelly. Dorothy Putnam, the last child, was born in 1896 and became my father's closest friend in the family.

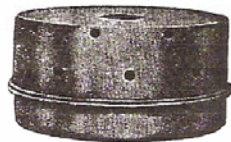
Israel's mother died of an obstructed biliary duct in February 1898. With money from her insurance, Israel bought a cow and a horse and rented a more conveniently located and better appointed farm on Highland Lake. There were flocks of chickens, too, as always. His daughters especially liked the short half-mile walk to the trolley line, which got them to their school and the public library.

Israel had received a letter in 1897 from his wife's cousin, George Richards, who with his fiancé had witnessed Florence's and Israel's marriage 17 years before. George was an optometrist and optician in a jewelry store in Louisville, Kentucky, and offered to supervise Israel's training in that budding profession. Israel left the farm, rented a home on Crescent Street in Winsted for his family, and in 1898 went to Louisville where he learned optometry. Israel's college education had prepared him with many basics and he was qualified to study medicine had he chosen to do so. At that time in Connecticut, he could have apprenticed himself to a qualified physician for two years and become a physician himself. He felt it too long and chose optics instead. Anyone could test for spheres (magnification), but optometrists had learned how to identify and correct for astigmatism, an asymmetry of the lens. Upon Israel's return to his family in Winsted after his year of training, he immediately set up a practice as an itinerant practitioner traveling the old routes he knew. He would set up in a hotel, advertise his services, and examine and prescribe. He would deliver and adjust the spectacles on a return trip.

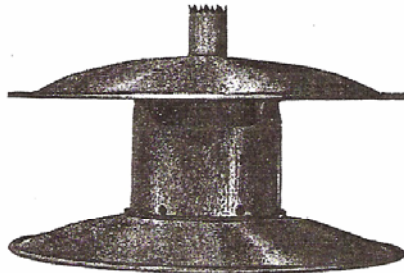
Israel became acquainted with—and a friend of—the owners of the Winchester Optical Company who supplied his lenses. They thought well of him and upon their removal to Elmira, an up-and-coming bustling city in New York State, asked if he would remove to the area to be their dispensing optician. (Actually, the Winchester Optical Company was situated in the town of Horseheads, adjacent to Elmira.) Israel and Florence with their six children arrived in Elmira, New York in the summer of 1902, and Israel opened his office as an optometrist and optician on East Water Street in the heart of the business district. The next year, 1903, Israel was doing well enough

to become independent and remained so until he turned the business over to my father in about 1920. By agreement with the Optometric Board of New York State, Israel supervised both my father Charles Somerby Putnam, Sr. and his older brother Israel, Jr. in their study of optometry such that they passed the State Board examination. Israel Putnam, Jr. took up his practice in Sayre, Pennsylvania, and his son David was a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania School of Optometry. David's daughter is also a graduate of that school, as is her husband. It is probably appropriate to note that my brother-in-law, Dominic Rossi, who married my now deceased sister Katherine, is likewise a graduate of that Optometric school as is his eldest daughter, Adele Rossi Marsh. Enough!!

Israel's experience with poultry—at first a practical matter of feeding his family—attracted his curious mind, and he became an expert poultry man through reading and observation. His inventive mind devised numerous devices to improve and simplify the breeding of household flocks. Israel recognized the commercial value of his poultry devices after constructing and testing them and had the marketing experience for a mail-order business, but he didn't want to put out the cash for patents and other expenses—He was doing well enough as an optometrist and optician. Charles Hart, a close friend and fellow Mason (Israel had taken a great interest in that fraternal order and through study became a 32nd degree Mason) volunteered one hundred dollars and Israel had no reason not to proceed. Hart became a partner in this and other enterprises that Israel would conceive over the next decades. With Israel Putnam's merchandizing and with sound and well-trying merchandise, a highly successful mail-order business commenced out of Putnam's office about 1912. It continued for nearly two decades until easier access to markets by the swelling number of autos made the business less profitable. Israel continued his poultry breeding and consistently won blue ribbons at the State Fair in Syracuse. He took with him to the fairs his two sons, Israel, Jr. and my father Charles, who was known from infancy as Jig. (His mother called him Little Jiggles for his activity in his crib, and his family took it up—Jig he was to be the rest of his life.) The boys were useful to him, but for the boys it was a male bonding and their father may have shown them some more exciting aspects of the fair than just the poultry exhibits.



The Little Putnam Stove holds three pints of oil
and burns a month without attention

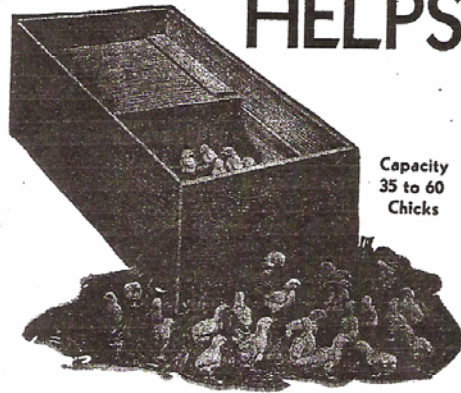


The Putnam Brooder Heater holds a quart of
oil and burns ten days without attention

**NO OTHER BURNER IN THE
WORLD WILL DO THIS**

Printed in U. S. A.

POULTRY HELPS



Capacity
35 to 60
Chicks

CONTAINS PLANS FOR BUILDING
PUTNAM Home-Made BROODER
and
HOME MADE OAT SPROUTER

SEE PLANS FOR NEW MODEL, PAGE 9

I. PUTNAM, Elmira, New York

Israel was basically an irreligious man, although Florence was an active Episcopalian—possibly for an opportunity to sing in the church choir as did her two older daughters. Israel, like many college-educated men of his era, had been greatly influenced by Ralph Emerson and the Transcendental movement in philosophy. (I believe Unitarianism evolved from this movement.) His beliefs regarding the management of men's affairs tended to the Socialistic, and the onset of the first World War pushed him further toward government responsive to its citizen's welfare instead of the nationalistic goals that had led Europe to its near destruction. In the 20s and 30s, between the first and second World Wars, he became interested in the Russian experiment with Communism. Although never a party Communist he was a declared Socialist and subscribed to the Norman Thomas Socialist movement, allowing himself to be named on the local ballot for some offices. As the goals of the Socialists were accepted and expanded in the 1930s and 1940s, the party as such became irrelevant.

Klutch, a dental adhesive, was to be Israel's most lucrative invention. Quite typically, it came about as a challenge. While dining with friends, one of them was embarrassed when his dental plate went skittering across the table. Israel asked the name of the dental powder adhesive he was using and what was in it. He stated to the dinner party, "Hell, I can do better than that." He thought he could come up with something in a few weeks after obtaining the various powdered vegetable gums and perhaps adding some other ingredients. Actually it took years of experiment with varied mixtures before his prime tester, his wife Florence, pronounced a satisfactory product and suggested the name Klutch.

Charles Hart, Israel's close friend and business partner in the poultry devices, insisted that their partnership should include a one-half interest to him in this new venture. Israel eventually gave in to his friend's insistence. Hart and his wife were their closest friends and perhaps Hart would be of use in the business operation. At the time of the incorporation of the Klutch Company, in as much as Florence Putnam had provided ten thousand (?) dollars as capital (from an inheritance), she was to receive a royalty on every container of Klutch produced. This became a considerable source of income to the Putnams over the years and softened the truly unfair take of the Hart family. I. Putnam, Inc. commenced operation early in 1923 with a business and shipping office in a large old mansion on Lake Street in Elmira. The building's appearance was not altered and it fit well into the neighborhood.

From its beginning, Klutch was a family business. My aunt Georgia Putnam Drake and her father Israel were the only ones who knew the formula for the dental adhesive, and Georgia was in charge of the mixture, canning, and packaging of the product at The Drake Manufacturing Company. For years her large double garage was her factory. With time, another similar garage-like building was built by her husband and sons on the lot behind her home. Eventually, in 1940, all operations were combined in a new building on Harris Hill Road, across the road from a home Georgia and Harry Drake arranged for themselves from a greatly enhanced rustic cabin they had bought from their son Ben. Klutch had unusual longevity as a family business—from 1923 until its sale in 1996.

My grandfather Israel was of the last generation of pure Yankee, descendant on both sides from the Puritan Emigration of those thirty- to forty-thousand people from 1620 to 1640. He and his wife had no doubt as to their status, and rich or poor they always knew who they were. Later, as Klutch brought him far more money than he needed, Israel became an astute investor and eventually was receiving more in dividends than his share of profits from his enterprise. He was always generous, with loans to his children as needed and no repayment expected. He would pay for a college education for any grandchild who desired it, and my sister was a beneficiary as were my cousins.

Israel retired in 1940, and his children took over the Putnam half of the business. Each had some position that paid a salary. Israel died in 1942 after several years of an untreatable leukemia for which he received just over 100 transfusions before he and his doctors decided enough. I recall my Grandfather Israel most vividly in the years of 1939 through 1941 when I visited him with my father. As always, he was amiable but not too interested in idle conversation—self-absorbed about what he had been reading in his numerous newspapers and journals amongst which were the New York Times and the Daily Worker. His strong bias against the British for drawing our country into World War I flavored his observations of the war in Europe and England in 1939, and he was strongly opposed to our involvement (“pulling England’s chestnuts out of the fire”, as he called it). The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 changed all that. The sneak attack was totally unexpected by the American people. Germany and Italy declared war on the United States within a week of the attack on Pearl Harbor, and there was compounded anger at Japan, Germany, and Italy. Grandfather Israel slowly drifted to his end only regretting he wouldn’t know how the war turned out.

Florence, my grandmother, did not seem to miss her husband all that much, and I believe, as for most of her married life, she was mostly interested in her children who in turn deeply loved her. She had for many years always come to my father, Jig, for advice although her three daughters were ever ready and eager to care for the mother they so admired. In her last years as she approached her end (at age 91 in 1954), she barely knew who I was, but with my father’s prompting, “haven’t you forgotten something” would toddle over to her desk to pull out a ten dollar bill she always gave to visiting grandchildren. Thanks again, Grandma.

Charles Somerby Putnam, Sr.

My father, Charles Somerby Putnam, Sr., maintained many of the physical and cultural traits of his father and, I assume, of many others of that pure strain of Protestant Yankee predominant in the northeast of the United States. He stood about 5'10" with a long and muscular upper body so that when he sat he appeared taller. A bit shy and fat in his adolescence, he burst forth in his teen years into a time which all of his life he remembered were the best years of his life. He had a talent for football and was an all-state tackle on the high school team, which won every game in 1913. Jig's social and extracurricular activities took precedence over his school work and his frequent non-attendance became primary. His father Israel found out, was furious, and kicked him out of the house. Jig found a job at the Erie Railroad baggage room that paid four dollars a week. He couldn't even support a dissolute life on this wage and found that the man he worked with was paid the same and had been there 20 years.

Jig's mother worked a reconciliation with father Israel, and it was agreed that he could continue to play football, but must attend to his studies and graduate. His father would then bring him into his office and teach him optometry. Jig graduated from high school in 1915, in his 21st year. All of these things came to pass.

Kate Dempsey was two years older than my father and working in an office at the American La France Fire Engine Company where both she and her sister May had been employed since shortly after their father's death in 1908. Jig and Kate had been courting for several years and I know that she wore his high school fraternity pin (Alpha Zeta) in 1917 before he was drafted into the army in that year. He had just completed his optometric studies and was ready to take his board examinations when his number came up. He was always bitter that the Army did not defer him until he could complete the exam. I believe they would have been married several years earlier if he had not been drafted into the Army. In France he served as a private in a hospital unit stationed at La Rochelle. He was ambivalent regarding his military service as he felt the Americans had no business fighting in a European war. He came home early in 1919, the first World War having ended in November 1918. He reviewed for the Optometric Board examination, took it and passed, and practiced in his father's office until Israel turned the practice over to him in 1920.

Katherine Louise Dempsey and Charles Somerby Putnam were married in the vestry of St. Mary's Roman Catholic church in Elmira, New York in November 1920. The marriage of a second-generation Irish-American to an old line Puritan Yankee could have been difficult for the families of either the bride or groom in that era. The generations-old prejudice against Papists and especially the Irish in the latter 19th century, had somewhat modified as the Irish proved capable and useful, but it was still evident in social organizations. The Elmira Country Club did not admit Catholics until the late Twenties. Jews had to wait until the Forties.



Charles (Jr.)
Putnam
Age 81
1975





Mother, Chuck Hornell

Kate Putnam with CSP Jr. (AGE-3 MOS.)
 This is the memory of carry of my
 mother in early childhood. (at her
 Aunt Kate Maki's)
 Hornell, N.Y. (Armory Place)
 1926



Red Cross Center World War I.

Elmira, N.Y. Loretta Bonard Kate Dempsey Margaret DeLong 1918

Religion was never a problem in our household. My father had no church affiliation and explained to me once that he was not an atheist but an agnostic. He also believed that the mother should choose a family's religion and be in charge of any religious instruction. My mother was an ardent Irish Roman Catholic and saw to my sister's and my instruction in that most ancient of the Christian faiths. We two children lived in an amiable loving home and attempted to replicate that ambiance in our own lives and families.

Jig's good life came to a crashing end in December 1952 when Kate had a myocardial infarction. I was home on Christmas vacation from medical school and had visited her in her hospital room. Her sister, May Dempsey, came by to be with her and I left her in a very contented mood. I came home to hear the phone ringing and on answering it had the message that she had just died.

My father was completely lost. He had no idea how dependant he had been on his wife. The next several years were ones of partying with a cluster of women always about him. Eventually he met the second love of his life and married Winona Wombaugh in 1958. They were a great comfort to one another until his death in his 92nd year in 1986. Jig Putnam had been truly fortunate in finding two woman who had loved him well.

This chronicle of the first ten generations of Putnams in my line of descent is unique in that all were part of that Great Puritan Emigration to this country from England in the years 1620 to 1640. Traits of absolute honesty and generosity stand out and seem common to each generation of our Putnams. Our most illustrious fourth-generation ancestor, Major General Israel Putnam, was perhaps the prime exemplar of these traits, which should be as much a cause of our respect for him as his fearlessness and patriotism.