

Date: November 14, 1991
Subject: Ancestry of Anna Warner, Mother of Russell King Homer
From: Susan Roylance
To: Elder Richard Clark, Elizabeth Nichols, Brian Homer, Kathy Allen, Bill Homer, Russell Anderson, etc.

This memo will be necessarily long, as the subject matter is very complicated. I would greatly appreciate a response by anyone who takes the time to read it from beginning to end. I approach the subject as the former Russell King Homer Family Organization Research Coordinator. I will be the first to admit that I did not accomplish as much as I would have liked during the years I was in charge of the family research. My major contribution at that time was the solving of a long standing puzzle on the parentage of Jacob Williamson (more commonly known as James Williamson), and Mary Barber. This was achieved through the aid of a researcher, Mr. Fred Bowman, I met while doing family research in New York State. Lillie Mae Pardee and I continued correspondence with Mr. Bowman, and he was instrumental in adding considerable information to the Williamson and Barber lines. Through this success I learned the value of "on site" research.

When my daughter moved to Connecticut about two years ago, I saw this as an opportunity to visit her and use her home as a base to travel to various locations in New England and New York that could possibly add information to the research problems we were having on the Warner line. The first trip produced helpful information on the Williamsons in Spafford, New York, and discovered the History of Westmoreland, which I have read and re-read many times. The little information I gained was passed on to Elizabeth Nichols, who was helping Elder Richard Clark with his Homer/Warner ancestry.

When Brian Homer was elected the Vice President in charge of family research, he assigned Kathy Allen to work with the family on our research problems. Kathy is a good researcher – much better than most. She has proceeded from those points which she feels are "Homer Traditions" from the early research notes of the Homer family. There has not been as much coordination between the work of Elizabeth Nichols and Kathy Allen as there should have been. Much of this is due to the fact that Kathy is a school teacher and can only research during the evening and Saturday hours. Kathy's only tie to the Homer family is through Brian Homer. He performs dental work on Kathy's family, and her payment is in genealogical research for Brian. I have tried to share the information I have received from/with both Kathy and Elizabeth. I hope we can come up with a more coordinated plan for the future.

Over twenty years ago Lillie Mae Pardee coordinated research on the Warner line which placed Anna Warner's parents in New Hampshire. I, for one, am deeply appreciative of the excellent research that was completed at that time. However, I continued to have a nagging suspicion that something was wrong, based on the strong family tradition of Indian ancestry on this line. My father hired researchers to carefully investigate the Warner/Wilbore ancestry in the 1970's. Many histories were gathered, but nothing new was found. We again asked Mr. Bowman to look at this line, and he also confirmed the earlier research. But the nagging questions remained. These questions were again brought to a head with the find, by Sarah Balls, of a paper which appeared to give Ruth Allen as the wife of Joshua Warner. This paper seemed to be in the handwriting of Russell King Homer, as it listed William Warner as "my grandfather". No relationship was given for Ruth Allen, but it raised new questions which initiated some very careful research by Elder Richard Clark, through Elizabeth Nichols.

As the Russell King Homer Family Organization attempted to be helpful in this research effort, I became involved once again. Last summer I suffered from an illness that put me in bed for three weeks. It was during that time I read and re-read the History of Westmoreland I gained a great appreciation for the pioneers of the New Hampshire/Vermont area. Many people died in their effort to gain this new frontier for the United States. Records are sketchy, and many people are missed in the compilations of people who lived in this era. And just when things became settled, and the record keeping improved, our ancestors were off to settle another new frontier.

With this preliminary explanation of my involvement, I will now begin a series of research comments, based on the few things I found, and the new questions raised, on my research trip to the East this past month.

Chronology of the Trip

It has been very difficult to determine how to best report this trip. I brought back over 100 pages of notes, and am still receiving in the mail information which I had asked to be copied and forwarded later. Much of this information may be helpful later, but doesn't seem to add much at this time. I will first give an overview of the entire trip. Perhaps that will help tie together some of the research comments I will make later.

Westmoreland

The first research day was spent with Carol Andrews, of the Westmoreland Historical Society. My original contact with her had been from a referral from the Cheshire County Historical Society (Keene, New Hampshire). This referral was given in an effort to determine the source of the Warner information in the History of Westmoreland. Most of the documentation for information in this book is in the County Historical Society, but the Warner information was lacking documentation – thus the referral to the Westmoreland Historical Society.

When I arrived at Carol's home she provided me with a computer to make notes on, and several books of information on early Westmoreland residents. I soon realized that I would not be able to make notes on everything I wanted, so she agreed to send me copies of the pages I chose to have copied. I am still waiting for that package of material to arrive, so it is a little hard to give a final report on that material at this time. However, I did buy a copy of Ashes to Ashes, Dust to Dust, The Cemetery and Burial Records of the Past and Present in the Town of Westmoreland, New Hampshire. This is an extremely helpful 406 page book. When one drives through the town of Westmoreland today it is hard to believe there are so many cemeteries, and that so many people have lived in this area. Carol said they continue to find new cemeteries tucked away in the woods.

One of the main objectives of my trip was to personally see the early records of Westmoreland with two goals:

(1) to determine the actual spelling of "New Hampstead", which is given in the History of Westmoreland as the residence of the William Warner who married Hannah Wilbore.

I was disappointed when the woman who could give permission for the viewing of the early church record, which contained this statement, was not available that day. [I called her when I returned home, and she sent me a copy of the record. When you compare the capital "F" used by the clerk in other entries, that are clearer, it is obvious to me that it reads "New Flamstead" — which is the early name of Chester, Vermont.]

(2) to find the missing pages of Westmoreland Town Records, giving Joseph Wilbore family information.

This effort was unsuccessful. These missing pages seem to be truly missing.

Another person to write is Marjorie Hudson, Box 57, Walpole, N.H. 03608. She is an expert on land records in the area, and has compiled books showing a history of the owners of specific pieces of property in Westmoreland. I saw one of the books, but she had the other two with her. They contained the Warner and Wilbore information.

That evening I spent in the Wright Room of the Library in Keene, N.H. It contains a wonderful collection of family histories, town histories, genealogies, etc. I found the original of the "Warner and Allied Families by Mr. Josephine S. Warner" which I find to be well documented, as far as it goes. I also copied pages from the History of Surry, which give a fairly complete listing of Joseph Wilbur's family. It gives Sarah Leonard as Joseph's wife, which may be where that started?? (I could find nothing to substantiate that claim). I also rechecked some of the vital statistics records of Massachusetts towns. That is part of the notes I will refer to later

The next day I traveled to Putney. I was hopeful that early records might shed further light on the Warners that were in the fort on "The Great Meadow". A Joshua Warner and son Daniel is reported by some historians to be in the early fort (1944) and the later fort (1955). This is disputed by others, based on the

age of son Daniel. I had previously contacted the Putney Town Historian to get permission to see the early Congregational Church records. I did view these records, and copied some pages from the town vital statistics records. I saw the handwritten page which gave a diagram of the fort, and the names of families present. That diagram seems consistent with the one on page 13 of the book Putney, 1753 to 1953, which I purchased.

This book states that in 1755: "the fort was built with the assistance of a number of men from Westmoreland, among whom were . . . **Joshua Warner and son, Daniel Warner, wife and son.** . . . At the close of the war they all moved back to Westmoreland. . . ." The diagram in the book shows **Joshua Warner, John Warner, and John Warner's son.** (each area on the diagram represents a *family* dwelling area)

Early Putney records also show residence of a Daniel Warner. On 12 Oct. 1781 the Westmoreland Congregational Church records recommend Daniel Warner to the church in Putney. I copied the pages of the Putney Vital Statistics (which are all typed and indexed) which I thought might be helpful.

While in Putney I learned that a book is being compiled on Putney by Ken Stevens, P.O. Box 118, Walpole, N.H. 03608. I made arrangements to meet with him the next day, but due to a misunderstanding of directions I did not have the opportunity to visit with him personally. I have since talked to him by phone, and will correspond with him. He also has access to Walpole records. I suspect they may be helpful, also. (Walpole is a very progressive farming area today.)

Probably the most helpful piece of information gained while in Putney has *not been investigated*. Laura Heller, of the Putney Historical Society, told me that she recently discovered that the early church records, for those living in the fort, are contained in the Winchester early church records. Also, she said the early land records are in Cumberland County, New York.

Mrs. Heller also explained the probate districts of New Hampshire to me, and suggested I go to Bellows Falls to check probates. She gave me a map and addresses of probate districts — to check Warner probates.

I next traveled to Bellows Falls to check the Westminster District for probates of a Joshua, William, or Daniel Warner. I copied pages from the probate of the estate of a Joshua Warner (1804, Londonderry). The Administrator of the estate was Rhoda Warner. I also gathered some information on the probate of the estates of:

- (1) Priest Wilbur of Hubbardston, Mass. with property in Londonderry, Administrator Barnet Wait. A William Wilbur is the administrator of the estate in Mass. (court in Rockingham).
- (2) Omni Warner of Andover. Mentions a Leonard Simons, Moses Warner, Danl. Warner, Adams Warner and others.
- (3) Israel Warner and wife Mary of Wethersfield. Owns property in common with a Benjamin Warner and wife Anna Warner. Also mentions Betsy Warner and Samuel Warner. (1818)
- (4) Joshua Warner of Ludlow, Vermont (above Chester and Londonderry) - 1831. *Brother, William Warner of Andover*, is administrator. Names Betsy Warner (formerly Read), wife, and children: Charles Patten Warner and Mariette Maria Warner (talks about their guardians).

The remainder of my day in Vermont was spent in Chester. I had originally planned to travel to Londonderry, but my timing was not very good. I had the appointment with Mr. Stevens, back in Walpole, for the evening. I did look at the early Chester records, and was amazed at how much the name "New Flamstead" on the front of the early records looked like "New Hamstead". The Warners seem to leave Chester early on. I had called the Chester Town Historian prior to going to the Town Hall. She said their museum was closed for the winter, but she called the town hall while I was there and told me that a lady in Andover had compiled all of the Warner family records (and had extracted all Warner material from Chester). Her name is Ethel Warner Wright. She has since died, but her records are in the Pioneer Memorial Library in Andover. I was given the name of a Mr. Franklin Stevens, in Andover, who I thought was her son. I thought he might have some of her records. But, upon visiting him, he turned out to be her son-in-law, and didn't have any information. I have the name of a Sandy Walker, Chester, Vt. 05143, and I'm not sure who she is.

Mr. Peter Farrer, Route 1 Box 194A, Chester, VT 05143, has been in contact with me since I returned home. He will copy the pages of Mrs. Wright's records, regarding Warners. I guess there are hundreds of pages, and he wanted to know how much I wanted. When he sends some preliminary work we can determine what else may be needed. I know much of her record is concerning the descendants of Moses Warner, and I do not know if we are connected with them.

I contacted the Londonderry Town Hall by telephone, and they sent me copies of the records on Warners they have in their files. I didn't find anything wonderful, but will compile them for use by others.

Once we have compiled the new information, a letter should be sent to each of the town historians in the area. They are very helpful. I felt that getting to know the town historians in the area was the greatest value of my trip into New Hampshire and Vermont.

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Upon returning to Connecticut, I looked over the material I had gathered, and felt frustrated. I didn't feel that I had gained anything of major importance – to shed new light on a difficult research problem. I decided to fast on Sunday, and carefully read Elizabeth's notes, and the material I had gathered.

After a full day of fasting, and studying the research notes, one paragraph seemed to gain new significance. It is from the "Warner Records of New Hampshire and Vermont" by Everett Warner (prepared 1936):

"First it may be well to pay ones respects to the statement found in Benj. Hall's History of Eastern Vermont, page 109, where it is set down that the William Warner who settled in New Flamstead (afterward Chester, Vermont) came from Woodstock, Conn. and Worcester and Malden Mass."

Although I had originally planned to travel to New York the next day, I changed my travel plans to head for Woodstock, Worcester, and Malden.

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At Woodstock, I copied the early records related to Warners, but did not find a William Warner. The town clerk suggested I travel to the next town of Pomfret, where the early probates were located. I also copied Warner information from a set of books giving the genealogies of Woodstock families. These books may eventually be helpful, as they gave the ancestries, as well as descendants. There are several Warner families in Woodstock, none which have a William. They are:

(1) Samuel Warner, born in Ipswich 1668, died in Pomfret 1752. He has nine children by two wives. One of his daughters, Sarah, marries a Daniel Warner, born in Ipswich 1701/2, d. Pomfret 1766, son of Daniel Warner and Dorcas _____. [Note that this Daniel Warner died in Pomfret only 5 years after William Warner leaves for Vermont. I think this Daniel needs to be examined closely.]

(2) Thomas Warner, born in R.I. about 1800. His children born in Smithfield, R.I. and Woodstock.

(3) Benjamin Warner, born in Providence, R. I., 1805. Son of Asahel Warner and May Kimball

(4) Daniel Warner, born near Providence, R.I., 1808, another son of Asahel Warner and May Kimball. He married Hannah _____ born in N.H. 1810.

(5) Capt. Franklin Warner, born in New Braintree, Mass. 1796. Son of Alpheus Warner and Meribah Hilliard, Married in Barnard, Vt. 1818 to Lydia Clark, born in Barnard Vt. Franklin resided in Ware, Mass., before coming to Woodstock.

(6) Mary Warner of Windham, Conn., perhaps born in Pomfret, 1743, daughter of **John Warner** and Mary Truesdell, married a John Goodell of Woodstock in 1763.

The town clerk in Pomfret was extremely helpful, and she started searching in other books in her office. She found the following statement in a Woodstock town history:

"Woodstock was now losing many of its citizens by emigration. Thomas, youngest son of Captain John Chandler, removed with his family of sons and daughters in 1761, and after a brief sojourn in Walpole, New Hampshire, decided to lay the foundations of a new settlement westward. Jabez

Sergeant, Edward and Isaiah Johnson, Charles May, William Warner and others from Woodstock joined with him in building up the township of Chester, Vermont. John and Noah Payson, William Bartholomew, Seth Hodges, Benjamin Bugbee, John Chamberlain were among the many Woodstock emigrants who went out into the wilderness and aided in settling towns in New Hampshire, Vermont and New York."

While searching the probates in Pomfret I noted a William Warner of Windham, Conn. — the next town to the South. They informed me that the Windham records are in Willamantie. The Town Hall is on 979 Main, the town clerk is Ann Bushey. I did go to Willamantie, but felt like these were different Warners.

I later checked the book on Andrew Warner, and found that his descendants are in Windham, Conn.

(page 124) The William Warner that stands out as probably being the one mentioned in the probate of Thomas Warner in Pomfret is a son of Joseph Warner, born 1729. His children were born in Windham, and he died in Windham.

(page 142) Another William born about 1745 was the son of Jonathan Warner of Hadley, Mass. He lived in Hadley, Mass.

(page 156 and 261) A William listed as an heir of Daniel, born 1747, of Middletown, Conn. Children lived in Middletown. The rest of the Williams who were Andrew's descendants were born too late.

(I will send you a copy of this report when it is complete)