

The Centennial History of the [Town of Dryden](#) 1797 - 1897
Hammond, Thomas and Alice (Stone).

Shortly after the year 1800, presumably in 1803, there removed from Scituate, Providence county, Rhode Island, Thomas Hammond, in time of peace a seaman in the coast towns trade of New Bedford, Providence and New London, and attached to vessels of war during the Revolution. He was born at or near that locality about 1730 and married Alice Stone, the daughter of Peter and Patience Stone, of that place. From them are descended one wing of the Benjamin Wood family, of Western Dryden, and of the Ezra Cornell family of Ithaca.

Thomas, grown too old to longer go before the mast and endure the rigor of the sea, still courted adventure in the haunts of the deer, bear, wolf and Indian, his earlier skirmishes with all of the last named having found more in him, in accord with his tastes, than even the sea fisheries or the comparative quiet of the war vessel. He therefore removed to the far frontier of Chenango Valley, NY, about 1803, taking with him his numerous family and several other friends (he being a man of push and leadership), together with all his earthly belongings.

This was not only a tedious but perilous journey, as it was performed with the proverbial ox team of that day, but on foot for all who could walk. The only entrance to his destination lay via Albany and the Hudson River crossing and the Mohawk and Chenango valleys to Oxford, NY. At the point the state was concentrating some interest by its highway cutting into the more westerly wilds, where the deer, bear, wolf and Indian had to be successfully routed, furnishing the excitement craved by Thomas, and an inducement for work to his grown and industrious children, and other kin of the party.

Of this party were his wife, Alice; his daughter, Amy, and her husband, Nathan Wood; his grandson, Benjamin Wood; his grandson-in-law, Orrin Squire; his son, Daniel Hammond, and his family, all of whom figure conspicuously as pioneers of Western Dryden, and who were clever artisans in brick making, cooperage and weaver's reed making, all essentials in opening new colonies.

There first settlement was made at Oxford, next at Sherburne, next at Quaker Basin near DeRuyter; thence they came to Willow Glen a little later than 1815, and finally reached, about 1820, the south-west quarter of great lot No. 32, better known as Supervisor Lemi Grover's corner, and Woodlawn, next east. Here, after having buried the husband, Thomas, in Chenango Valley, the wife, Alice, lived and died, and is buried beside her daughter Amy (Wood) in the Captain George Robertson cemetery, a few of six generations following hers still clinging near there to-day.

William Wigton, the old hotel-keeper at Willow Glen, where now stands the Moses Rowland residence, became a conspicuous land owner in Western Dryden, with headquarters at this Hammond-Grover corner; and he was succeeded in the ownership of the Willow Glen hotel by Daniel Hammond, and also landlord thereof.

A little later on Daniel also succeeded Major Wigton as owner of the Grover southeast corner of Lot 32 and Woodlawn. Upon this corner Daniel Hammond and his sons, assisted by Orrin Squire and Benjamin Wood, opened the first brickyard of Western Dryden; and from the material furnished, the "eight-square" brick school-house was largely built.

From the pioneer Alice, through her son Thomas, is descended the numerous Hammond family of Virgil; and through George and William and his wife, Polly Tanner, come the now well known law firm of Hammond & Hammond of Seneca Falls, NY.

From pioneer Alice, through her daughter Amy and her husband, Nathan, and their son Benjamin Wood, and his wife, Mary Bonesteel, are descended the conspicuous Wood family, of Western Dryden; and through their daughter Mary Ann, whose husband was Hon. Ezra Cornell, of Cornell University fame, comes Ex-Governor Cornell, Chief Financier Frank C. Cornell, and Chief Civil Engineer O.H. Perry Cornell, nine children in all, only five of whom came to mature age and still survive; and they own the two-hundred-acre farm known as Woodlawn.

[\[Ezra Cornell\]](#) lived from 1807 to 1874. Ezra was an associate of Samuel Morse, and Ezra founded Western Union in 1855 (Western Union was acquired by Jay Gould in 1881). Ezra co-founded Cornell University in 1865. From 1862 to 1867, Ezra served in the New York Assembly and Senate. His eldest son Alonzo was Governor of New York from 1880 to 1882.

According to Wikipedia, “Cornell University was founded on April 27, 1865.... Senator Ezra Cornell offered his farm in Ithaca, New York as a site and \$500,000 of his personal fortune as an initial endowment. Fellow senator and experienced educator Andrew Dickson White agreed to be the first president. During the next three years, White oversaw the construction of the initial two buildings and traveled around the globe to attract students and faculty. The university was inaugurated on October 7, 1868, and 412 men were enrolled the next day.”

Ezra married Mary Ann Wood in Dryden, NY on March 19, 1831. According to Wikipedia, “in 1990, G. David Low, graduate of Cornell University and Space Shuttle astronaut, took with him into outer space a pair of tan silk socks worn by Ezra Cornell on his wedding day in 1831.” Mary Ann lived from 1811 to 1891. Her parents were Benjamin Wood (1807-1881) and Mary Bonasteel. Benjamin was the son of Amy Hammond Wood (1765-1859) and Nathan Wood (1764-1846), and grandson of Thomas Hammond and Alice Stone Hammond.

Ezra was born in Westchester Landing in The Bronx. His ancestor, [Thomas Cornell](#), was granted four square miles in The Bronx in 1646. According to [Wikipedia](#), Thomas Cornell “was probably Puritan at first then a follower of Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson drifting into Quakerism which seems to have been the religion of his descendants.” Ezra’s marriage to Mary Ann resulted in his expulsion from the Quaker church. LJH3]

On 2/24/14, I sent the following e-mail to the Foster, RI, Preservation Society:

I saw a picture of the Colgrove-Hammond House in the [Providence Journal](#). Can you tell me which Hammonds built it, or lived in it?



Colgrove-Hammond House, Foster, RI
Built about 1755, site of the first Town Meeting in 1781

I received the following response:

The house was owned by Thomas Hammond. In 1781 when the Town of Foster was incorporated, the first town meeting was held in this house which was used as a tavern.

Thomas' parents are unknown. He and his sister Mary were raised by the Stone family in Cranston. Thomas married one of their daughters, Patience, and had one son, John, who later built the second Baptist Church which became the Town House.



Foster Town House
The oldest continually operating Town House in the country, c. 1796

Patience died and Thomas married her sister Alice and had 8 more children.

According to Alice Stone's Bible, Thomas and his twin sister Mary, were the children of a sea captain, who left them in the care of the Stone family.

If you care to check out my family tree, it is on Ancestry and is public.

In John Hammond's Revolutionary War pension application, he listed a part of his service as having served in place of his uncle John. This is the only reference I have ever found to his family.

Thomas Hammond was my 6 G-Grandfather and John was my 5th.

Best regards, Ed

Ed Robinson
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I responded,

I think Thomas is also my 6 G-Grandfather. I think I'm descended from the 3rd child of Thomas and Alice, Capt. Joseph Hammond (1767-1848). I think Thomas was the son of Joseph Hammond (1717-1792) and his 2nd wife, Phoebe/Pheobe. Joseph was previously married to Elizabeth Paine. Joseph and Elizabeth had one child, John Arnold Hammond (1729-1781). This may explain why your John had an uncle named John. "Uncle John" was probably Thomas' half-brother (same father, different mother).

In early 2014, I wrote to the New England Historic Genealogical Society:

I'm looking for information about Thomas H. Hammond, born June 5, 1737 in Cranston, Rhode Island, died March 24, 1814 in Sherburne, Chenango, New York. If you can tell me his parents or children, I'd appreciate it.

Lindsay Fulton, a genealogist with the Society, responded:

To determine more information about the parents of Thomas H. Hammond, you should first examine the NEHGS database, [Rhode Island Vital Records, 1636-1850](#). You should search the database for a birth or baptismal record for Thomas H. Hammond that was recorded between the years 1735 and 1740.** Since early New England birth or baptismal records usually provided information about a newborn's parents, specifically providing given names and (less frequently) the mother's maiden surname, it may be possible to determine parentage through a vital record.

***While the State of Rhode Island did not require statewide registration of births, marriages, and deaths until 1853, many early vital records were recorded in local offices, as well as with various religious denominations.*

If you are unable to locate birth information in the above vital record collections, the R. Stanton Avery Special Collections at NEHGS maintains a manuscript entitled, [Hammon bible records](#),** that may provide information about Thomas H. Hammond's parents. According to the NEHGS catalogue, the *Hammon Bible* is a typescript transcription of the original bible records for the family of Thomas Hammon (1737-1814) and Alice Hammon (1738-1826) of Foster, Rhode Island. Because these dates match those provided in your research request, it is possible that this bible record refers to your Hammond ancestors. If so, the manuscript may not only provide information about the parents of Thomas H. Hammond, but his children as well.

***The R. Stanton Avery Special Collections department makes manuscripts available to NEHGS members at the 99-101 Newbury Street location in Boston, Massachusetts.*

Thank you for submitting your question to the NEHGS Ask a Genealogist service.

Best,

Lindsay Fulton