

## BIOGRAPHY OF JOHN BUNNELL

John Bunnell (*Isaac*<sup>5</sup>, *Solomon*<sup>4</sup>, *Benjamin*<sup>3</sup>, *Benjamin*<sup>2</sup>, *William*<sup>1</sup>) was born August 11, 1772 in Middle Smithfield Township, in what is now Monroe Co., PA, one of eight children of Isaac and Eleanor (Barkalow) Bunnell<sup>i</sup>. In 1792, at the age of 20, he inherited land, and a colt, from his granduncle, Jan Barkeloo. Jan's will leaves his nephew John Bonnell [sic] 50 acres at the westernmost end of the plantation, also one born colt. Another nephew, James Vanetter, had use of the plantation until John reaches the age of 21 [which would have been the following year.<sup>ii</sup> So, at the age of 21 he inherited 50 acres in New Jersey. Whether he kept that land for some time period, or sold it to later purchase land in New York is unknown at this time.

He married, about 1795, Hannah Jayne, who was born in 1776 at Middle Smithfield Township, Monroe Co, PA, the daughter of John and Cornelia (Decker) Jayne<sup>iii</sup>. John Bunnell, and probably his wife, relocated to Candor Township, Tioga Co, NY about 1797<sup>iv</sup> from Middle Smithfield Township, in what was at the time Northampton Co., PA.<sup>v</sup> His sister, Mary, and her husband William Bensley may have relocated about the same time as they were in

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<sup>i</sup> a. Source B69: Comm. *Biographical Record of N.E. Pennsylvania*, Beers, 1900, Pg. 407, "Biography of Gersham Bunnell" states that John was born Aug 11, 1772, one of eight children (all named).

b. Source CO1: Letter, from Mrs. Elizabeth Jones, Office of the Registrar-General, , D.A.R., July 16, 1923 to Mr. H.E. Deats states that Deacon John Bunnell, son of Isaac and Eleanor (Barkalow) Bunnell was born 1772 and lists 7 siblings.

c. Source DC4: The death certificate for Henry J. Bunnell, son of John, states that John was born in New Jersey. However, this was probably a family belief/tradition and at the time of death was erroneously provided to the authorities by the family members.

d. Source B49: *The History of Sussex and Warren Counties, New Jersey*, , by James P. Snell, published by Everts & Peck, Philadelphia, 1881 (Reprinted by Howard E. Case, Sussex, NJ, 1971), page 226, states that John's father, Isaac, was born in Hunterdon Co., NJ. Isaac's father relocated from NJ to Middle Smithfield Township, in what is now Monroe Co., PA during the French and Indian War (1754-1763). Isaac would have been approximately 20 years old at the time. If it is assumed that Isaac traveled with his parents, then Isaac's children would have been born in PA, the youngest having been born in 1767.

<sup>ii</sup> Quoted from Source CO3: "vol 37 N.J.Archives Abs. Of Wills vol 8-1781-1795; ...27-Jan Barkeloo, Feb. 28, 1892-of Kingwood, Hunterdon Co.N.J. nephew James Vanetter; 26etc, nephew John Bonnell (son of Lennah Bonnell, dau. Of James Barkeloo) 50 acres at westernmost end of plantation, also one born colt; Codicil-Mar.12, 1792-nephew James Vanetter, furniture, gun etc, and use of whole plantation until John Bonnell is 21. (Handwritten entry says: This John Bunnell was born 1772) Proved May 1, 1792\_Lib.34,p 208-Inv. Apr. 26, 1792" In spite of the misspelling of John's last name, a not uncommon occurrence, this is in all likelihood our John Bunnell. His mother was Eleanor Barkalow / Barkeloo and Snell's, among other sources, verifies that John's parents, Isaac and Eleanor, were from Kingwood, Hunterdon Co., NJ.

<sup>iii</sup> a. The fact that they were married is established in

Source B41: *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785 - 1888*, W.B. Gay & Co., Syracuse, NY, 1887 (Reprint by Tioga County Historical Society, Owego, NY, 1985),. Page 160; page 200.

Source CE1: Gravestones of John and Hannah in the West Newark Churchyard, Newark Valley Township, Tioga Co., NY

Source B67: *William Bunnell and His Descendants*, compiled by Ruth Cost Duncan, pg. 64.

b. The date of their marriage is cited in: Source B67: *William Bunnell and His Descendants*, compiled by Ruth Cost Duncan, pg. 64.

<sup>iv</sup>In 1797 John Bunnell purchase land in what is now Candor, Tioga Co. Source DE1: DEED TRANSFERRING LAND FROM: Robert Charles Johnston and Samuel Corp [Cook?] & T \_\_\_ Fanning TO: John Bunnell; LOCATION OF ORIGINAL: Tioga County, NY County Clerk Office, Deeds, Book 2, Pages 527 - 528.

<sup>v</sup>a. Source B41: Gay's Gazetteer states (page 160) that John and Hannah moved to Tioga Co. from Pike Co., PA. The land purchase cited above places him in Tioga Co in 1797.

c. Source B70: *Pennsylvania Line: A Research Guide to Pennsylvania Genealogy and Local History*, William L. Iscrupé and Shirley G. M. Iscrupé; Published by Southwest Genealogical Services; 1990; pages 163 - 168, 194: Middle Smithfield Township is in the Northeastern part of what is currently Monroe Co. That portion of the county was originally part of Northampton Co. until 1798, when it was included in the newly formed Wayne Co. In 1820

Barton, NY about 1803.<sup>vi</sup> So it is possible that John and spouse as well as Mary and spouse relocated to Tioga Co. shortly after the county was legally organized and the first settlements began (1797). At least one source alleges that Mary and her husband purchased land from her brother John, but it is more likely that the land was purchased from **his** brother John.<sup>vii</sup> A search of county records did not disclose any land sales from John Bunnell to William Bensley.

The first settlers arrived in Candor in 1793. In January 1797 John purchased 100 acres of land on the west bank of Owego Creek, a part of the Park Settlement, "being in the first section of the Owego Creek in the twelfth township of Watkins and Flints purchase ... known by lot number two ...<sup>viii</sup>". John and Hannah were among the first settlers in Park Settlement and would be the first to clear and farm that land. That piece of land lies on the Owego Creek about 1/3 of mile north of the point at which Tioga and Candor townships meet on the Creek and the Park Settlement Road crosses over the Creek.. On March 4, 1800 John and Hannah sold 1 acre of that land to Elisha Forsythe for a church lot<sup>ix</sup>. In 1801, John sold to a Thomas Park another portion of their 100 acre purchase. This sale consisted of one half acre, bordering the Owego Creek<sup>x</sup>. In May of 1802, John and Hannah Bunnell are shown as charter members of the Baptist Church of West Owego Creek (in Candor), and John served as its first Deacon.<sup>xi</sup>

While it can be established that John and family moved from Candor to Newark Valley Township, a firm date for that relocation has not been established

According to Gay's *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785 - 1888*, John and Hannah relocated to Newark Valley after the birth (1797) of their first son, Isaac, in Candor.<sup>xiii</sup>

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Pike Co. was formed and included Middle Smithfield Township. Finally in 1840 Monroe Co. was formed from parts of Northampton and Pike Co.s and included Middle Smithfield Township. John apparently moved to Tioga Co., NY prior to 1798, and was relocating from Northampton Co, PA. At the time Gay's Gazetteer was written, that area was Pike Co.

<sup>vi</sup> a. Source B41: *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785 - 1888*, W.B. Gay & Co., Syracuse, NY, 1887 (Reprint by Tioga County Historical Society, Owego, NY, 1985) Page 79, states that William Bensley relocated to the Town of Barton, Tioga Co., NY "from Smithfield, Wayne (now Pike) [now, 1997, Monroe] county, Pa. He removed to this town [Barton] May 10, 1803...." He "married Mary, daughter of Isaac Bunnell,...." sister of John Bunnell. Thus, William and Mary and John were from Smithfield Township and relocated to Tioga Co., though John undoubtedly **preceded** his sister by up to 6 years.

b. Source CO3; A letter from Mrs. Horace G. Walters, Dec. 4, 1945 cites *Asbury Church and Its Minisink Influence* by Charles Cafferty, publisher and date unknown, pg. 39: "William Bensley 1769 -m- Mary Bunnell (daughter of Isaac of Monroe Co. Pa) b. Oct 7, 1768-d. Dec. 8, 1828. Both are buried at Barton N.Y."

<sup>vii</sup> Source CO3: Letter from Mrs. Horace G. Walters, Dec. 4, 1945: "Wm. Bensley purchased land from her (Mary Bunnell) brother John Bunnell who married Hannah Jayne. (Late John Biles quoted this latter statement)." This implies that approximately 1803, William and Mary purchased land purchased earlier by John Bunnell. However, Gay's Gazetteer, page 79, says that William's land was first "owned by John Bensley, brother of William." Further, Gays, page 248, says that John "first settled in the Park Settlement, in the southeast corner of Candor..." later moving to Newark Valley. Park Settlement is 12 to 15 miles from Barton and they are separated by Tioga Township, so the probability of John Bunnell owning land that he sold to William is very low. The error may have occurred because William's brother and Mary's brother were both named John.

<sup>viii</sup> Source DE1: DEED TRANSFERRING LAND FROM: Robert Charles Johnston and Samuel Corp [Cook?] & T\_\_\_\_ Fanning TO: John Bunnell; LOCATION OF ORIGINAL: Tioga County, NY County Clerk Office, Deeds, Book 2, Pages 527 - 528.

<sup>ix</sup> a. Source DE2: DEED TRANSFERRING LAND FROM: John & Hannah Bunnell TO: Elisha Forsythe; LOCATION OF ORIGINAL: Tioga County, NY County Clerk Office, Deeds, Book 26, Pages 290 – 291

b. Source B66; An unpublished manuscript of the Bunnell History, compiled by John A. Biles.

<sup>x</sup> Source DE3: DEED TRANSFERRING LAND FROM: John Bunnell TO: Thomas Park; LOCATION OF ORIGINAL: Tioga County, NY County Clerk Office, Deeds Book 8, Pages 67-68.

<sup>xi</sup> Source B41: *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785 - 1888*, W.B. Gay & Co., Syracuse, NY, 1887 (Reprint by Tioga County Historical Society, Owego, NY, 1985) Page 200.

<sup>xiii</sup> Source B41: *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785 - 1888*, W.B. Gay & Co., Syracuse, NY, 1887 (Reprint by Tioga County Historical Society, Owego, NY, 1985), Page 248.

As stated earlier, John and Hannah were in Candor in 1802 based on church records that show them to be founding members of the Baptist Church of West Owego Creek.<sup>xiii</sup>

In March of 1809 they sold their remaining 98 and 1/2 acres to a Lyman Truman<sup>xiv</sup>. That would imply that the family relocated about 1809. However, by that time five more children had been born: John Jr. in 1799, David in 1802, Henry in 1803, Ann in 1806, and Jame (or James) in 1808.

The sale of the Candor land in 1809 is recorded in legal documents, so that has to be accepted as fact. However, John and family could have relocated earlier and rented out the property. The deed for the purchase of land in Newark Valley has not been found so that the date John purchased the land is not known. It may have been prior to 1809.

The data stands out in such stark contrast to the citation in Gay's that there are likely some erroneous data or assumptions operating here. Additionally, Gay's assertion would have John and family relocating the same year they first purchased land in Candor. Therefore it is most probable that the family relocated in 1809 after the sixth child.

John and Hannah purchased approximately one hundred acres along the Owego Creek in the Newark Valley Township. While the purchase deed has not been located, the deed wherein John sold the land to his son Isaac in 1838 is available. The land was located in "lot 260" which places it about 1/3 of a mile north of the intersection of Howard Hill Road and West Creek Road (Co. Rt. 408) on the west side of West Creek Road<sup>xv</sup>. It could be argued that John's son John, Jr. owned the property and later sold the land to Isaac. But, the 1825 census of New York, Town of Newark, shows John Bunnell as having 65 acres and John J. Bunnell with no acreage<sup>xvi</sup> and the property was sold in February 1838, 3 months after the death of John's wife Hannah. Also, in John Sr.'s will it speaks of a mortgage held by him against his son Isaac. This mortgage is probably for that property.

Eleven children of John and Hannah have been accounted for, though at least one source states that they had 14 children<sup>xvii</sup>.

Glen Hope Cemetery, is located a mile north of Jenksville though often cited as being in Jenksville. Thus, Jenksville is in Newark Valley Township, while the cemetery is in Berkshire Township. A central headstone in that cemetery states that children of John and Hannah Bunnell are buried there. Several smaller headstones cite names and dates of birth and death for those children as follows:

|               |                |                |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Ann Elizabeth | b. 1 Jun 1806  | d. 11 Aug 1817 |
| Jame          | b. 14 Sep 1808 | d. 22 May 1809 |
| Geshem        | b. 9 May 1810  |                |
| Jessie        | b. 17 Feb 1811 | d. 17 Apr 1811 |
| Cornelia      | b. 22 Mar 1817 | d. 1 Jul 1817  |

<sup>xiii</sup> a. Source B71: *History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins, and Schuyler Counties, New York*, Everts & Ensign, Philadelphia; 1879: Page 136.

b. Source B41: *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785 - 1888*, W.B. Gay & Co., Syracuse, NY, 1887 (Reprint by Tioga County Historical Society, Owego, NY, 1985) Page 200.

<sup>xiv</sup> Source DE4: DEED TRANSFERRING LAND FROM: John Bunnell TO: Lyman Truman; LOCATION OF ORIGINAL: Tioga County, NY County Clerk Office, Deeds Book 8, Pages 365-367.

<sup>xv</sup> a. Source DE5: DEED TRANSFERRING LAND FROM: John Bunnell TO: Isaac Bunnell; LOCATION OF ORIGINAL: Tioga County, NY County Clerk Office, Deeds Book 35, Pages 283-284.

b. Source B41: *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785 - 1888*, W.B. Gay & Co., Syracuse, NY, 1887 (Reprint by Tioga County Historical Society, Owego, NY, 1985) Page 248.

<sup>xvi</sup> Source CR4: New York State Census, 1825; Tioga County, Town of Newark.

<sup>xvii</sup> Source B41: *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785 - 1888*, W.B. Gay & Co., Syracuse, NY, 1887 (Reprint by Tioga County Historical Society, Owego, NY, 1985) Page 160 states that Henry J. Bunnell was one of the fourteen children of John Bunnell.

The death certificate for Henry Jayne Bunnell states that his parents were John and Hannah Jayn [sic] Bunnell and he died 5 Feb 1890, age 86 years, 1 month, 13 days. Therefore, following the above format:

Henry J.            b. 23 Dec 1803   d. 5 Feb 1890

On page 248 Gay's lists the children of John and Hannah. Besides listing Ann (spelled Anna), Jame (spelled James), Geshem (spelled Gershom), Jessie (spelled Jesse), Cornelia, and Henry already cited above, it adds the following children:

Isaac                b. Park Settlement, Candor  
David                b. p'haps 4 Aug, 1812  
John, Jr.            b.                    d.  
William             b. about 1818     d.  
Benajah            b. about 1820

Through this combination of sources, 11 children for John and Hannah can be accounted for.

John "was a shoemaker, farmer, and a very successful hunter and trapper of wolves and bears. He caught one bear and several wolves after 1820."<sup>xviii</sup> Another source states that: "John Bunnell was [a] great hunter and trapper, and tradition says he paid for most of his farm from the bounties on wolves and the sale of their hides." Marginalia notes state that he was "called Wolf John."<sup>xix</sup>

Hannah Jayne Bunnell died 7 Nov 1837, probably in Newark Valley.<sup>xx</sup> John then married in 1838 Betsey \_\_\_\_ who may have been born about 1780/90 and probably died or remarried in 1849.<sup>xxi</sup> As mentioned earlier, shortly after the death of Hannah, John apparently sold his property in Newark Valley to his son Isaac. A year later he purchased 39 acres of land from Miles and Sarah Searles. The property was a part of lot 459 in the Township of Richford.<sup>xxii</sup> The lot is on the north side of Anderson Hill Rd between its starting point at Rt. 38 and it's intersection with Davis Road.

John Bunnell died 15 Jan 1840 in Richford. His will was probated March 12, 1840; inventory filed June 8, 1840; and final settlement made Sept 2, 1844.<sup>xxiii</sup> It confirms some data already provided, and provides some additional data.

Isaac Bunnell was the first born son  
Six sons, Isaac, John J., David, Henry, William B, and Benajah, were still alive.  
Benajah was the youngest son, and William B. the next youngest.  
Benajah was a minor at the time of John's death.

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<sup>xviii</sup> Source B41: *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785 - 1888*, W.B. Gay & Co., Syracuse, NY, 1887 (Reprint by Tioga County Historical Society, Owego, NY, 1985) Page 248

<sup>xix</sup> Source B66: Unpublished manuscript of the Bunnell History, compiled by John A. Biles. He collected information on the Bunnell family from the 1870s to the 1920s. Mr. William Austin of Laceyville, PA maintains a copy of his materiel.

<sup>xx</sup> Source CE1: Tombstone for Hannah Bunnell, West Newark Cemetery, West Creek Road, Newark Valley, Tioga Co., NY

<sup>xxi</sup> a. Source: B67: *William Bunnell and His Descendants*, compiled by Ruth Cost Duncan,, 1986: Pg. 64 states that John and Betsey were married in 1838, that she was born about 1780/90 and died about 1849.

b. Source WI-1B: John's will provided property for his "beloved wife, Betsy," so long as she is alive or does not remarry.

c. An exhaustive database of the Bunnell Family built and maintained by Mr. Claude Bunnell states that in 1849 John's wife Betsey died or remarried.

<sup>xxii</sup> Source DE6: DEED TRANSFERRING LAND FROM: Miles and Sarah Searles TO: John Bunnell; LOCATION OF ORIGINAL: Tioga County, NY County Clerk Office, Deeds Book 37, Pages 41-42.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Source WI-1C: Index to Wills, 1800-1936, Surrogate's Office Tioga County, NY Copied by William Austin on Apr 14, 1978.

Compiled by:  
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After the death of Hannah, John had remarried to a woman named Betsey.  
Benajah was placed under the guardianship of a "E. Smith Sweet, Esq," not Betsey.  
Isaac resided in Owego, Tioga Co. NY  
John J resided in Friendship, Alleghaney Co, NY.  
David resided in Caneadea, Alleghaney Co, NY.  
Henry and Benajah resided in Lisle, Broome Co, NY (Henry's farm actually straddled the county and township lines; He seemed to generally use a mailing address of Lisle, rather than Berkshire)  
William B. resided in Tompkins Co., NY

John's worldly possessions consisted of those simple necessities undoubtedly common to the colonial settler/farmer and the division of those goods was undoubtedly more meaningful than would be apparent to us today.

To "my son William B. Bunnell the sum of one hundred dollars...."

To "my eldest son Isaac Bunnell the sum of three hundred dollars to be paid as follows..."

"... to my five sons John J. Bunnell, David Bunnell, Henry Bunnell, William B. Bunnell, and Benajah Bunnell all of said remaining sum of money to be divided equally between them."

To "my two youngest sons William B. Bunnell and Benajah Bunnell two feather beds with sufficient clothing for the same...."

"... to my sons John J. Bunnell and David Bunnell all my wearing apparel to equally divide ...."

To "my beloved wife Betsey Bunnell all my real estate.... during her natural life."

The real estate was also left to the six sons "after the decease of my beloved wife Betsey Bunnell...."

Interestingly enough, John originally wrote his will on May 5, 1839. Then some eight or ten days later he made some alterations to it to include adding the phrase: "Expressly provided that the above bequest to my wife Betsey Bunnell is to be enjoyed by her while she remain my widow and no longer."<sup>xxiv</sup> In other words, if she remarries she loses the property in Richford. It is interesting to speculate whether he had second thoughts about a follow-on husband living in "his" house, or did one of the sons living nearby (Isaac, Henry, or Benajah) talk with him about it.

While writing his will, John evidently forgot the exact lot number of his property in Richford as there is a long space after the words "four hundred" and the space was never filled in with the proper words "fifty nine." As a result some researchers have incorrectly interpreted the will to indicate that John's property was in lot four hundred.

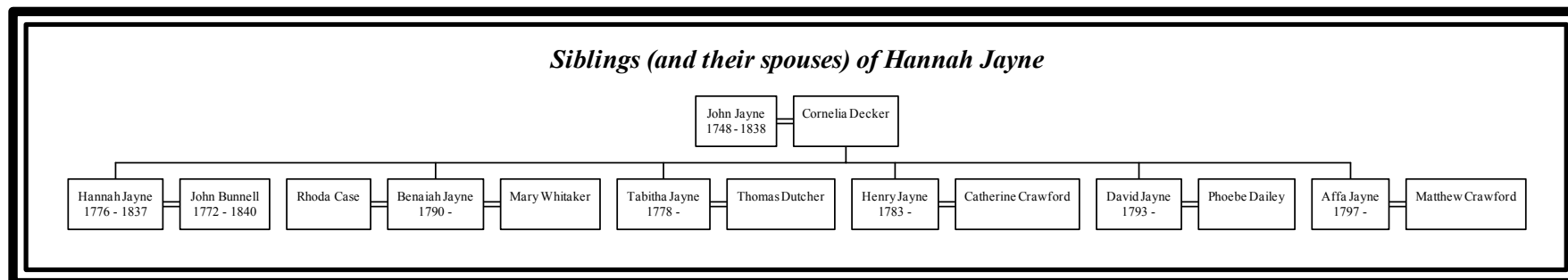
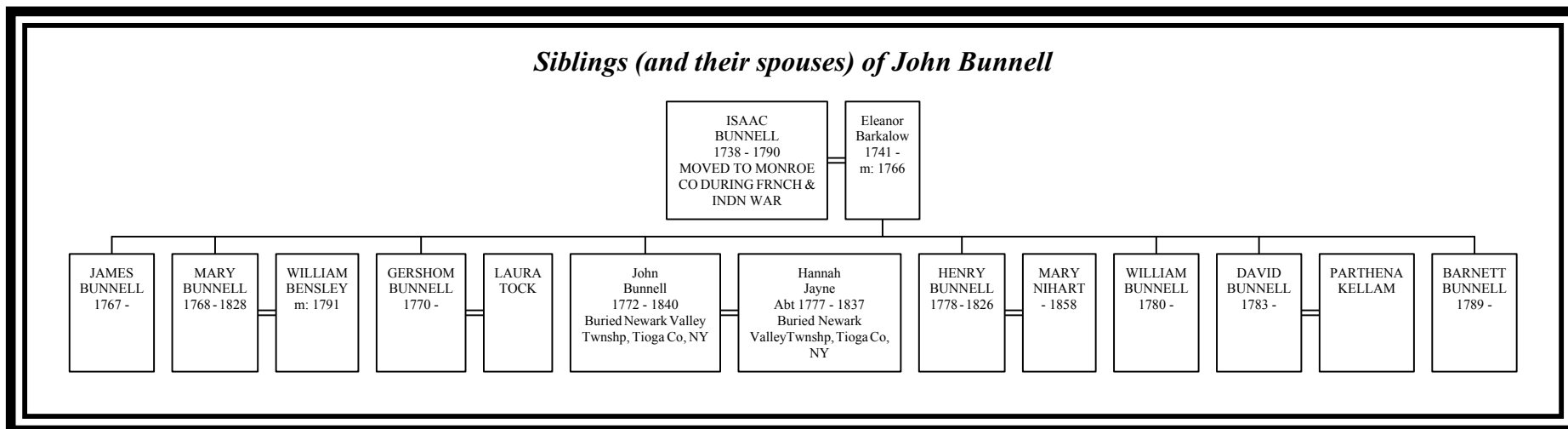
In 1849 David Bunnell sold his share, or future share, of the property inherited by Betsey<sup>xxv</sup>. The deed stipulates that 1/6th of the property rights is being sold, so ownership of the property had not been consolidated at that time. The sale of the property during that year could imply that Betsey had either remarried or died, and some researchers have made that assumption. An alternative possibility is that William Patch, the purchaser, was "buying futures;" obtaining rights of inheritance.

John and Hannah Bunnell are buried in the West Newark Cemetery, Tioga Co, NY. The burial place for Betsey Bunnell has not been located as of this date.

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<sup>xxiv</sup> Source WI-1B; Proof of Will for John Bunnell; Tioga County, NY County Clerk Office, Will Book D, Pages 414-421

<sup>xxv</sup> Source DE7: DEED TRANSFERRING LAND FROM: David Bunnell TO: William J. Patch; LOCATION OF ORIGINAL: Tioga County, NY County Clerk Office, Deeds Book 46, Pages 633-634.



Compiled by:  
Charles E. Bunnell

*Children (and Their Spouses) of John and Hannah (Jayne) Bunnell*

