

By John D. McCallum

Note: Phebe Ester (Thompson) is the 3x great-grandmother of John D. McCallum

Written at the request of the Minnesota Society – Sons of the American Revolution

Phebe Ester (Thompson) Huntsinger
1803 -1884
A True Daughter of the American Revolution

Phebe Ester Thompson was born on November 24, 1803, in New Haven, Connecticut to Stephen and Patience Thompson. She was the fourth daughter and one of eleven children.

Her father, Stephen Thompson (1759 -1835) served for six years (1777 – 1783) as a Private in the Connecticut Line, participating in numerous battles including; Brandywine Creek, Germantown, Fort Mifflin, Monmouth Court House, and Quaker Hill, He also wintered at Valley Forge, and Camp Redding. Stephen Thompson is believed to have been part of General Lafayette's advance party leading to the Siege and Battle of Yorktown, and may have been a participant in the taking of Redoubt #10. He received the Badge of Distinction for his six years of service. About 1785, Stephen Thompson married Patience, in New Haven, Connecticut.

Only a year after Phebe's birth, Stephen and Patience Thompson moved their family from New Haven, Connecticut to Onondaga, New York. Phebe would spend her childhood and early adult years in Onondaga, and the patriotism of the family would be continued, with Phebe's older brother, Adonijah Thompson serving in the War of 1812.

On November 24, 1825, Phebe Thompson married Sylvanus Hunstinger in Camillus, New York. During the next six years, Phebe and Sylvanus would make their home in Camillus, and would see two daughters born, Emeleine and Charity, In 1831, Phebe and Sylvanus moved their family to Oswego, New York, with Sylvanus continuing his trade as a carpenter, and the couple raising their family, which would grow to eight children, with the birth of Angeline, Arthur, Elizabeth, Albert, Frances, and Camilla.

In the early 1850's, several of the older, married children of Phebe and Sylvanus Huntsinger moved from New York to the area of Berlin and Ripon, Wisconsin. In 1854, Phebe and Sylvanus moved the remainder of their family to Sacramento, Wisconsin, then a growing town, a short distance northeast of Berlin, along the south bank of the Fox River. Sylvanus continued his trade as a carpenter. Phebe enjoyed her grandchildren, and seeing her daughters married to successful businessman and farmers; Emiline & Samuel Wilson / Captain David Mapes, (founder of Ripon and Ripon College), Elizabeth & Norman Mason of Ripon, Angeline & Rossiter Willard, of Berlin, Charity & Cornelius Spoor of Berlin, Her sons would marry and become farmers: Albert & Susanna (Eastman) close by in Berlin Twp and Arthur & Sarah (Hammond) in Wautoma. All would be successful and influential in their communities, and many would play a significant part of the political landscape of the area.

In the early 1860's, Phebe's children, Arthur and his family, Francis and her husband, and Camilla would move to Pine Island, Minnesota, where Camilla would marry Benjamin Franklin Swarthout. Phebe and Sylvanus would also add to their household, by caring for the father of Sylvanus. Peter Philander Huntsinger was a widower, blind, and in his late eighties.

In 1869, Peter Philander Huntsinger died at the age of 96 and in 1873, Phebe's husband, Sylvanus Huntsinger passed away. Both are buried side by side in Sacramento Cemetery. With the loss of her husband, Phebe moved to live with her youngest daughter Camilla and her husband Benjamin Swarthout in Pine Island, Minnesota.

In Pine Island, Phebe would continue to enjoy life, visiting neighbors and entertaining her grandchildren by singing them songs, almost up to her very last day. After being ill for about twenty four hours, Phebe Ester (Thompson) Huntsinger passed away on February 23, 1884, and is buried in Pine Island Cemetery in Pine Island, Minnesota.

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Other Interested Parties:
Berlin Historical Society
Ripon Historical Society
Pine Island Historical Society
Aurora Township Board



Phebe Ester (Thompson) Huntsinger ca. 1870



Gravestone of Phebe Ester (Thompson) Huntsinger, Pine Island Cemetery