

**God, Love and Lust:  
The Tale of Four Revolutionary Families in Warwick, MA**

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In the years approaching the American Revolution, one "Elder HIX" arrived in the young town of Warwick, Massachusetts. He was an "itinerant Baptist minister," going from house to house converting people. Apparently a very charismatic individual, he also preached that men and women had spiritual as well as temporal spouses, and when so moved to love another, "there was no criminality in such a connection." The "bubble burst" when HIX absconded with the young daughter of Amzi DOOLITTLE. Another convert, Amos MARSH, ran off with Amzi DOOLITTLE's wife, and Amzi, "to be even with the rest of the family, decamped with Mr. Thomas BARBER's wife."

So began the story shared with me by a fellow family researcher in 2004. Not only was the tale provocative, but "Mr. Thomas Barber's wife" was my husband's ancestress. However, the story ended both woefully incomplete and simply demanding a fuller telling. I have spent the last several years attempting to flesh out this amazing story, understanding the historical context in which the story took place and the outcomes for those involved.

### **Origins of the Story**

We first read of the controversy in a town history drafted 50 years after the events transpired. Long-time Warwick resident, the Honorable Jonathan BLAKE, Jr., initially drafted the history in 1832/3.<sup>1</sup> After Blake's death in 1864,<sup>2</sup> his brother Samuel transcribed and updated the manuscript with the help of one Hervey BARBER; a portion of it appeared in *NEHGS Register* in 1867<sup>3</sup> and was published in its entirety in 1873 as *History of the Town of Warwick*.<sup>4</sup>

Like many town histories written in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Blake's narrative followed the chronological events recorded in the town records. Unfortunately, the town records upon which Blake based the bulk of the rest of his *History* do not document the details of the Hix controversy itself.<sup>5</sup> This might lead serious researchers to question the validity of the story. But the important positions BLAKE held in Warwick and

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<sup>1</sup> *NEHGS Register*, Volume 21, April 1867, p. 124-127. Some pages of his history may have been published as early as 1834 in the *Franklin Mercury*, Greenfield, MA, 1833-34.

<sup>2</sup> Blake's obituary appears in *NEHGS Register*, volume 18, July 1864, p. 296.

<sup>3</sup> *NEHGS Register*, Volume 21, April 1867, p. 124-127.

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Blake, Jr., *History of the Town of Warwick, MA*; Boston, MA, USA: Noyes, Holmes, & Co., 1873; LDS FHL microfilm #1321383, item 4; digital version available on Ancestry.com. Unless otherwise noted, all references to historical items in Warwick are drawn from this source.

<sup>5</sup> [This needs to be double-checked against the actual town records.]

elsewhere lead me to believe that he would not have included the story of Elder HIX had it not been grounded in sufficient fact.<sup>6</sup>

With one exception, later histories appear to rely on Blake's account.<sup>7</sup> The exception is an address given in 1864 by former Warwick town pastor, Preserved SMITH describing the circumstances inherited by his predecessor, the Reverend Samuel REED upon Reed's arrival to Warwick in 1778/9.<sup>8</sup> While recorded later than Blake's initial history, Smith described the events differently than did Blake (as we will later read). Also, Smith was related to one of the protagonists in the story; he was first cousins twice removed from Jerusha SMITH DOOLITTLE.<sup>9</sup>

An even earlier source that others have cited is the diary of William COBB who was a Warwick merchant and postmaster between 1806 and 1860. I have reviewed a transcript of this diary at the Warwick public library, and while it refers to some names mentioned in the controversy, it appears to be dealing with the generation following, not the actual protagonists.<sup>10</sup>

The story of Warwick's controversy begins on page 59 of Blake's *History* and accounts for only three of its 240 total pages; the tale commences just after Blake has described decisions made by the town in the spring and summer of 1778. While Blake's writing leading up to this section is a rather dry rehashing of chronological events, he diverges to a more impassioned narrative:

*To add to the calamities of this (I had almost said ill-fated) town, at the time when the public burdens were the heaviest and most sensibly felt, a powerful religious excitement was produced among the inhabitants, by the preaching and exhortations of one Elder Hix, an itinerant Baptist minister, whose zeal, by what has been related of him, could hardly have been exceeded by St. Paul himself.*

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<sup>6</sup> In the Appendix of his *History*, Blake's various roles were documented by his brother; they included: 15 years as town clerk, 9 years as selectman, 2 years as state senator, 42 years as acting justice of the peace, and much more.

<sup>7</sup> Josiah Gilbert Holland, *History of Western Massachusetts*, Springfield, MA: S. Bowles, 1855; pp. 450-451. See also Charles Morse, *Warwick Massachusetts: Biography of a Town*, Cambridge, MA: Dresser, Chapman & Grimes, 1973, pp. 88-90. See also Louis H. Everts, *History of the Connecticut Valley in Massachusetts, Volume II*, 1879.

<sup>8</sup> Morse, p. 88. Preserved Smith served as Warwick's Unitarian minister 1814-1844.

<sup>9</sup> Jerusha's father Samuel Smith (1705-1799) had a brother named Chileab Smith (1708-1800) who married Sarah Moody. Reverend Preserved Smith was the great-grandson of this Chileab Smith. See Temple, J. H. and Sheldon, G.A., *History of the Town of Northfield*, MA, Albany, N.Y.: J. Munsell, 1875, p. 536-537. See also, Packard, pp. 311-314; and pp. 319-20; Boltwood, pp. 138-9 [need full reference titles].

<sup>10</sup> Cobb's original diaries are in a lockbox in the town hall; a near-complete transcription is available at the Warwick public library and the Warwick Historical Society.

## **It's About God**

Like most colonial towns in Massachusetts, Warwick's creation was grounded in strong Puritan Congregationalist religious sensibilities. Church and state were tightly intertwined, as described in a history of early New England Baptists:

The early settlers... were Puritan. They lived in an age when religious toleration was not widespread... They regarded it as both their right and duty to protect themselves and their children from all error. This led them to take two positions—uniformity in public worship, and the connection of church and state. The first forbade religious toleration, and the second led to the defense and support of religion by legal means... Puritan churches... believed from the very beginning that civil and ecclesiastical cooperation was necessary.<sup>11</sup>

Traditions and practices reflected this close relationship. Only church members could hold civil office. Towns frequently punished and expelled those individuals who held views opposing their own. The establishment of a new town included the hiring of a preacher whose salary was paid through local taxes.

Warwick negotiated for such a preacher as early as 1760—three years prior to its formal incorporation as a town. That preacher, one young, just-ordained, Reverend Lemuel HEDGE, remained in Warwick through his death in 1777—timing and circumstances that may be pertinent to our story, which continues:

*[The Baptist "Elder Hix" and his followers] went from house to house, convincing and converting one another; held their meetings by day and by night, in season and out of season. Their daily and usual occupations were neglected; some of the first characters of the town were subjects of irresistible grace, and exhorted and prayed and admonished each other to flee the ark of safety; and children and boys, unlearned and untaught, could pray with the tongues of men and of angels. Much enthusiasm made them mad, sober reason was discarded, and the town was well nigh turned upside down.*

While Baptist teachings had been present in New England as early as 1644, few established Baptist churches existed in pre-Revolutionary Massachusetts. Therefore, many Baptists ministers traveled (and hence were called "itinerant") and convened their followers in private homes. Early Baptists distinguished themselves from the Puritan/Congregationalists in a few key areas:

- They were against infant baptism, insisting that adults needed to *choose* baptism.
- They were impassioned and full of zeal as compared to the sedate Puritan Congregationalists.

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<sup>11</sup> *Baptists and Religious Liberty in Early Connecticut*, by George W. Grisevich, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute; [www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1980/cthistory/80.ch.03.x.html](http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1980/cthistory/80.ch.03.x.html). In addition, *History of the Connecticut Valley in Massachusetts*, p. 10, also describes the religious intolerance of the Puritans. For more about early Baptists in New England, see also: *History of Baptism in America, volume 2*; by John T. Christian; [http://www.pbministries.org/History/John%20T.%20Christian/vol2/history\\_of\\_the\\_baptist\\_vol2.htm](http://www.pbministries.org/History/John%20T.%20Christian/vol2/history_of_the_baptist_vol2.htm)

- They were early proponents for the separation of church and state for the primary reason that they did not want their taxes paying the salary of infant-baptizing ministers.

Massachusetts law prohibited Baptist preaching from 1644 until the passage of a provincial law in 1770 that exempted Baptists from payment of these religious taxes.<sup>12</sup> About this time, a Baptist church was formed in Warwick—in community if not in physical structure. A biography of early Universalist Caleb RICH (who came from a mixed Congregationalist/Baptist family) supports this timing:

In 1771, when he turned 21, [Caleb Rich] left home for Warwick... During the journey, he had a conversion experience... which convinced him to join the *Baptist congregation* which began holding meetings nearby *soon after his arrival...* [my emphases]<sup>13</sup>

Elder HIX probably arrived in the vicinity of Warwick about this time. While Warwick historians do not provide a given name, he was likely related to other Baptist Hix/Hicks individuals from Rehoboth, MA.<sup>14</sup> In fact, the family of the Baptist Deacon Ephraim Hix of Rehoboth was recorded in Richmond, NH records during this time period.<sup>15</sup> Richmond is just north of Warwick. In addition, Rehoboth was the origin of a number of other Warwick citizens, including two key players who will enter our story shortly. Rehoboth was also one of the first Massachusetts towns to establish a Baptist church – in 1732.<sup>16</sup>

Elder HIX or other Baptists were certainly in Warwick by late 1774 when Blake notes:

*In the autumn of 1774 the first appearance of discord on religious matters in this town appears on record. One article in the warrant was as follows: viz., "To see if the town will take into consideration the certificates of the differing societies of those persons that call themselves Baptists in this town; and pass any votes respecting their being taxed to the minister, any or all of them."* (p. 47)

This likely refers to the fact that Baptists in Warwick objected to their taxes being used to pay the salary of an infant-baptizing minister (in this case, Rev. Lemuel HEDGE). It may also reflect Caleb RICH's diversions even from orthodox baptist teachings, which seem to have emerged in this same time period:

Caleb RICH was usually called upon to lead the Baptist meetings when no preacher was available. He took these opportunities to express his difficulties in reconciling the Calvinist doctrines being preached with the simple language of the

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<sup>12</sup> Christian, op cit.

<sup>13</sup> Chris Anderle, "Caleb Rich and the Founding of the Universalist Church in America," [www.andrle.com/chris/rich.htm](http://www.andrle.com/chris/rich.htm); 1998.

<sup>14</sup> Harriet Woodbury Hodge, *Hicks ( Hix ) Families of Rehoboth and Swansea, Massachusetts*, p. 17: "most if not all Hixes from Rehoboth were Baptist."

<sup>15</sup> William Bassett, *History of the Town of Richmond, Cheshire County, New Hampshire: from its first settlement to 1882*, Boston: C.W. Calkins & Co., printers, 1884, p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> Christian, op cit.

bible. As a result of these discussions, he and several others came to believe that sin "originated in the flesh, and ended with the same," and that all men had been saved by Jesus Christ.<sup>17</sup>

...

As soon as they began to attract attention with their new doctrine, steps were taken to prevent its spread. Caleb RICH, his brother Nathaniel and Joseph GOODELL were brought before a church meeting where they were disowned as heretics and forbidden to have contact with believers.

...

In 1773, they organized legally as a new religious society under a colonial law which allowed dissenters to avoid being taxed to support a church in which they did not believe. It took the entire society membership of three to form a committee that was legally allowed to grant certificates of membership in the new society. During 1774, *seven new members were added*. They held meetings in private homes on Sundays until the start of the Revolutionary War.<sup>18</sup>

One can't help but notice the similarities between what this biography describes and Blake's description of Elder Hix's activities. In any case, several key citizens – including some "victims" of the Elder HIX controversy – were either Baptist or had Baptist sympathies. From the same biography of Caleb RICH:

About this time, [RICH] developed an attachment for a young woman who came from a respectable *Baptist* family. She, her parents and her older siblings were opposed to him as a heretic who had been thrown out of the church. He converted *the entire family* and married in January, 1778. [again, my emphases]

The "respectable Baptist family" was that of **Amzi and Jerusha (SMITH) DOOLITTLE**.<sup>19</sup> Electa was their oldest daughter; she married Caleb RICH in Warwick, MA on 22 January 1778.<sup>20</sup> The Doolittle family was deeply involved in the controversy that culminated within a few years of this wedding.

At least some Warwick citizens were from Baptist-friendly Rehoboth, Massachusetts and Cumberland, Rhode Island, including Thomas BARBER and his wife, Hannah MILLER. We'll learn more about them later, but their likely Baptist ties or sympathies shed light on this part of our story.

Another wrinkle in Warwick's religious affairs no doubt contributed to the environment in which all this took place.

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<sup>17</sup> In other words, all men are saved from hell; this was contrary to Baptists' beliefs and formed the beginning of what would become known as Universalism.

<sup>18</sup> Andrie, op cit. This parallels so closely the narrative described by Blake that one can't help but wonder if Elder HIX was also caught up in RICH's preachings. I would love to find the names of those "seven new members" who were added in 1774!

<sup>19</sup> Peter Hughes, "Caleb Rich," Unitarian Universalist Association; [www.uua.org/uuhs/duub/articles/calebrich.html](http://www.uua.org/uuhs/duub/articles/calebrich.html): "Among those he converted to disbelief in endless punishment during the following years were the Doolittle family, whose daughter Electa he married in 1778."

<sup>20</sup> Warwick Vital Records.

As mentioned earlier, the founders of Warwick hired the Reverend Lemuel HEDGE in 1760. Relations seemed to be smooth between the town and this pastor until 1774 when the town supported the Committees of Correspondence's effort to seek independence from England.

Warwick town records indicate that in July 1775, Rev. HEDGE, who had been preaching against the fight for independence, was "disarmed and confined" until he would "pledge not to influence or prejudice the minds of the people against the common cause which the country was engaged in."<sup>21</sup> HEDGE, who never regained the full support of Warwick's residents, died at the age of 44 on 15 October 1777—ironically the same day that British General BURGOYNE surrendered his troops to the Colonists in Saratoga.<sup>22</sup> HEDGE left a wife and several young children.

Warwick remained without a hired Congregational preacher for what would turn out to be a critical two years in our story. The lack of a steady Congregational presence in town may have contributed to the influence others were able to wield.

By 1781, itinerant Baptist preacher Elder HIX had wreaked his havoc upon the town, and most of the involved parties—including Amzi DOOLITTLE, his wife Jerusha and daughter Lavina; and Thomas and Hannah BARBER—had departed Warwick for good—possibly ending any significant presence of Baptists in this town for two decades.<sup>23</sup> Universalist Caleb RICH remained in Warwick; he was ordained as a minister in 1781; after 30 years in Warwick, he and Electa retired to Vermont where they died in 1821 and 1822 respectively.

### **It's about Love and Lust**

The calamities of Warwick were not focused solely on religious expression. Human nature, frailties and passions further compounded the situation. Returning to Jonathan's Blake's *History*, we find:

*When the victims of this delusion (if we may be allowed so mild an expression) were wrought up to the highest pitch, when meek-eyed Charity hoped and believed them to be sincere worshippers of God, the bubble burst, the wolves in sheep's clothing were discovered. Such a scene of infatuation and corruption was brought to light as perhaps never was before witnessed in a Christian land. Who could believe that this monster in sin [referring to Elder Hix], though a pretended servant of the most high God, had long been guilty of conduct that would disgrace a brothel; and, to fill up the measure of his iniquity to the brim, he absconded from the town with a young girl, the miserable dupe of his nefarious wiles, and a deluded proselyte to his pretended religion. **This girl's name was \_\_\_\_\_ Doolittle. As soon as the rookery was broken up by the arch demon's decamping, Mr. Amos Marsh cleared out with Mrs. Doolittle, the girl's mother; and Mr. Amzi***

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<sup>21</sup> Morse's *Warwick, Massachusetts: Biography of a Town* goes into greater detail about Hedge and includes excerpts from correspondence Hedge wrote about his travails with the town.

<sup>22</sup> Blake, p. 61-62.

<sup>23</sup> Blake, p. 165: "In the history of the West Royalston church, written in 1854, we find the following: 'in May, 1798, twenty-two members of this church signified their intention to form themselves into a church in Warwick.'"

***Doolittle, the father of the girl, went off with Mr. Thomas Barber's wife.***

That's many names and relations. We'll go into greater detail below, but here's the snapshot: The Baptist family of Amzi Doolittle (supposedly recently convinced of Universalism) took the greatest hit: his teenage daughter eloped with Elder Hix, his wife ran off with Amos Marsh, and he himself hooked up with the wife of Thomas Barber.

*The exasperated friends and relations of some of these elopers followed after them, and took Mr. Marsh and Mrs. Doolittle somewhere in the State of New York, brought them back, and committed them to jail in Northampton, where they were tried for the crime of adultery, and found guilty. They were sentenced to sit on the gallows, pay a fine, and he was ever after to wear the letter A, in a large capital form, on his outside garment.*

*Before leaving this disgusting story, I will inform you of one of the methods this famous Elder Hix used to lead astray his credulous hearers, and make them the willing subjects of seduction. He told them that men and women had their spiritual husbands and wives as well as their temporal; and consequently where the spirit led them to love and admire each other in a spiritual sense, there was no criminality in the connection...*

In his 1855 *History of Western Massachusetts*, historian Josiah Gilbert Holland described what Hix was preaching as "the doctrines of spiritual wife-ism, *identical with those of the present day.*"<sup>24</sup> He may have been referring to the Oneida Society which was formed in 1848 as a utopian community that rejected "conventional marriage both as a form of legalism from which Christians should be free and as a selfish institution in which men exerted rights of ownership over women."<sup>25</sup>

The third reverend of Warwick, Preserved SMITH, in an 1864 speech, described his predecessor's challenge this way:

In the early part of Mr. [Samuel] REED's ministry [i.e., about 1779], there were several persons of both sexes of whom I believe were members of his church who became new-light and adopted what *in modern times* is called "free-love doctrine." They reached so great a perfection in their own estimation that they were deluded with the idea that it was lawful to have spiritual husbands and wives, which of course led to the exchange of partners.<sup>26</sup>

In this speech, Smith associated "new-light" people – i.e., those who split off from the orthodox or traditional "old light" church – with "free-love doctrine." However, it is far more likely that in the case of both Holland and Smith, the writers were applying contemporary understandings to events that took place 75 years prior. For

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<sup>24</sup> Holland, pp. 450-451.

<sup>25</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oneida\\_Society](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oneida_Society); see also Spencer Klaw, *Without Sin: The Life and Death of the Oneida Community*, The Penguin Press, 1993, ISBN 0-7139-9091-0; and Charles Nordhoff, "The Perfectionists of Oneida and Wallingford," in *The Communist Societies of the United States*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1875; <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/etas/5/>.

<sup>26</sup> Morse, pp. 89-90.

example, while several histories of 18<sup>th</sup> century New England religion relate "New Lights" with early Baptists, the former's preaching of "fire and brimstone" and its focus on the soul of man would lead one to believe that "New Lights" were hardly likely to engage in "the exchange of partners."<sup>27</sup>

Returning to Blake:

*Thus the peace and happiness of four or five families were completely destroyed, and society received an almost irreparable wound. A solemn warning, this, for all of us to beware of impostors, and not to be led away by infatuated religionists, nor deluded by a mistaken zeal.*

Blake's *History* reports nothing further of the controversy. But what happened to the players? Blake indicated that the peace and happiness of four or five families were completely destroyed. But was that really true?

Strong as well as circumstantial evidence exists that not only did these "victims" ultimately choose their spiritual mates. It also appears that all of the families retained some level of intimacy *with each other*.

### **Four Revolutionary Families**

Blake's *History* names four families involved in the controversy:

*[Hix] absconded from the town with a young girl, the miserable dupe of his nefarious wiles, and a deluded proselyte to his pretended religion. This girl's name was \_\_\_\_\_ Doolittle. As soon as the rookery was broken up by the arch demon's decamping, Mr. Amos **Marsh** cleared out with Mrs. Doolittle, the girl's mother; and Mr. Amzi **Doolittle**, the father of the girl, went off with Mr. Thomas **Barber's** wife.*

First, we have the supposed instigator, "**Elder HIX,**" who according to Blake, ran off with the young daughter of Amzi DOOLITTLE. Neither Blake nor later Warwick or regional historians provide a first name for HIX or his origins. That he was Baptist hints at the possibility that he was from Rehoboth, MA where other Baptists with the same surname were recorded<sup>28</sup> and from where other Warwick residents originated, including Thomas BARBER and his wife, Hannah MILLER.

The historians also do not identify with which Doolittle daughter Hix absconded. Amzi and Jerusha had two daughters who were of an age to be "run off with". Their oldest, Electa, would have been 22 in 1781. But as we know from above, she married Caleb RICH in January 1778, and later records indicate she remained with Rich. With one exception, all other daughters of Amzi and Jerusha would have been 12 years old or younger.

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<sup>27</sup> [This paragraph needs greater support; research the New-Lights a bit more and strengthen or abandon this paragraph.]

<sup>28</sup> Hodge [get full citation], p. 17, indicates that most if not all Hixes of Rehoboth were Baptist.

The exception was **Lavina Doolittle**, born 12 December 1761. And in fact, *The Doolittle Family in America* records that Amzi's daughter Lavina (age 20 at the time of the controversy) m. "\_\_\_\_\_ Hicks," removed to New York, and died there, leaving family.<sup>29</sup>

The answer seems to be found in The *E.E. Brownell Collection*, which records the family of one Jonathan BROWNELL (1792-1875), indicating that he married on 15 September 1811 (in Hoosick, NY) one Azubah HICKS, **the daughter of Moses and Lavina (DOOLITTLE) HICKS**.<sup>30</sup>

E.E. Brownell did not always include sources for all his information, and he did not for the parentage or marriage of Azubah HICKS. But his work is so highly regarded that even the Daughters of the American Revolution accepts it as source documentation for applicants.<sup>31</sup>

Supporting the connection between Lavina DOOLITTLE, Moses HICKS and Azubah HICKS is the following circumstantial evidence:

- Azubah HICKS and Jonathan BROWNELL named two of their children *Lavina* Brownell and *Moses Hicks* Brownell.<sup>32</sup>
- A Moses HICKS of Rehoboth, MA – son and sibling to Baptist preachers and contemporary of Amzi Doolittle and Amos Marsh – lived briefly in Richmond, NH in 1777 with wife Mary GOFF and ten children born between 1755 and 1775.<sup>33</sup> Richmond is just north up the road from Warwick. This Moses Hicks would have been 51 when "Elder Hix" ran off with 20-year-old Lavina DOOLITTLE, and 67 when Azubah HICKS was born in Hoosick, NY in 1796. A stretch, but not impossible. And certainly the age difference might warrant the 19th century description Blake applied to him.
- A Moses HICKS is found in Hoosick, NY in the 1790 census, two lines away from one Amos MARSH.<sup>34</sup> Hoosick is just across the Massachusetts border. One could easily imagine that Elder Hix and his proselyte ended up in the same town shortly after the controversy, especially since the women they'd run off with were mother and daughter to each other.

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<sup>29</sup> William F. Doolittle, *The Doolittle Family in America*, Cleveland: 1901; p. 159.

<sup>30</sup> Elijah Ellsworth Brownell, the *E.E. Brownell Collection*, unpublished multi-volume manuscript filmed by the LDS in 1963, Film #0333573, page 5. Includes compilation made between the 1930s and Brownell's 1963 death everything he could on the descendants of the emigrating Thomas BROWNELL.

<sup>31</sup> Bill Brownell, The Brownell Family Web Site, [http://brownellfamily.rootsweb.com/Brownell\\_Collection.html](http://brownellfamily.rootsweb.com/Brownell_Collection.html).

<sup>32</sup> E.E. Brownell, *The Brownell Collection*, LDS Film # 0333573, page 5, in addition to documenting the marriage, lists all the children of Azubah Hix and Jonathan Brownell; many of these are also included in the 1850 census.

<sup>33</sup> Veldon Hix, email of 3 October 2006. Hix and his cousin Gayle Hix have conducted significant and well-documented research of the HIX and HICKS surnames. See also William Bassett, *History of the town of Richmond, Cheshire County, New Hampshire: from its first settlement, to 1882* Boston: C.W. Calkins & Co., printers, 1884.

<sup>34</sup> US Federal Census, 1790, Hoosick, NY.

William Figgins -	3	3	6
Lemuel Haer	1	2	3
Nathan Chase	1	1	3
Edward Mosher	1	1	4
Moses Hicks -	1	2	4
King Chan -	1	1	2
Arthur Mars L	1	2	3
Peter Harrington	3	1	6
John Iguin -	1	2	1
James Shephard	.	1	2
Benjamin Shephard	1	.	2
Daniel Griswold	1	4	3

- Charles Filkins, staff at the Hoosick Historical Society, communicated to me that one Moses HIX owned or at least lived on Hoosick property that was very near to that of William BROWNELL (father of the Jonathan BROWNELL who married Azubah HICKS).<sup>35</sup>
- Possibly the same Moses HICKS is found in Hebron, NY in 1800 with 3 males and 3 females under 16, one male over 45 who could be Moses, and one female 26-44 who could have been a 39-year-old Lavina (DOOLITTLE) HICKS.<sup>36</sup>

NAMES of Town	Names of Heads of Families	FREE WHITE MALES.						FREE WHITE FEMALES.						Slaves, Free Persons, except Indians, not taxed.	SLAVES
		to 20	20 to 10	10 to 20	20 to 30	30 to 45	45 & Gr.	to 20	20 to 30	30 to 45	45 & Gr.				
Town of Hebron	Not brought forward	244	108	85	126	60	252	95	110	108	117		8		
	Samuel Livingston														
	Andrew Lytle						3								
	James McCallan	2					2								
	Moses Hicks	2													
	John Crook's bank	11					2								
	John Kellie	2													
	Samuel Wilson						3								
	Nathan Jackson			2											
	James Watley	2													
	John R. Nelson	2					2								
	Mosher Smith	3													

- One Moses HIX purchased land in Arlington, VT on 24 November 1795 and sold the same land 14 Apr 1797. He then purchased land in nearby Sunderland, VT on 20 Apr 1797 and sold the same plot a few months later.<sup>37</sup> This would have been during the time that Azubah HICKS was born in Hoosick, NY. It's entirely feasible that someone who resided in Hoosick might

<sup>35</sup> Personal correspondence between Jillaine Smith and Charles Filkins, March 2007.

<sup>36</sup> US Federal Census, 1800, Hebron, NY.

<sup>37</sup> Veldon Hix, op cit.

also be buying and selling land in nearby Vermont. According to a history of Bennington County, Vermont, Hoosick was one of a number of towns annexed to the western territory of Vermont in 1781.<sup>38</sup>

- Lastly, Azubah (HICKS) BROWNELL emigrated west to Ashtabula, Ohio about the same time as another child of this controversy moved to the same location. (See below.)

A January 1855 obituary of Simeon HIX, supposed son of Moses and Mary (GOFF) HIX, states that Simeon was the eldest son of a man who had 22 children from two different wives.<sup>39</sup> Mary Goff gave Moses ten children. If one accepts the theory that the Moses Hix of the censuses of Hoosick, NY (1790), Hebron, NY (1800) and Stratford, NY (1810) are one and the same man, with Lavina Doolittle as wife (and the ages on each of said censuses are consistent with such a theory), then Moses and Lavina had at least 10 additional children—two shy of the total described in Simeon Hix's obituary. That said, further documentation regarding the identity of "Elder HIX" is needed to confirm his given name and relation to other Baptist HIX/HICKS families.

We know slightly more about Hix's "proselyte," **Amos MARSH** (1733-abt. 1820). He was the son of Samuel MARSH and Zerviah THOMAS of Rutland, MA and he married **Beulah LEONARD** in July 1757 in Rutland, MA.<sup>40</sup> Beulah gave Amos at least eight children between 1758 and 1775, most in Warwick.<sup>41</sup>

Marsh was an early and active resident of Warwick, listed as owner of lot #24 in 1761.<sup>42</sup> He served on many influential committees including one that drafted the "instructions to the town representative" in 1776. These instructions included the following language that sheds some light on the religious tolerance of the town:

*3rdly that you tolerate all persuasions on account of their religious sentiments, without giving one the advantage of the other, either in their persons or their properties; 4thly that all such laws as in any degree infringe on the liberties of the people be made void.*<sup>43</sup> (p. 53)

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<sup>38</sup> Louis Cass Aldrich (editor), *History of Bennington County, Vt.: with illustrations and biographical sketches of some of its prominent men and pioneers*. Syracuse, N.Y.: D. Mason & Co., 1889, page 108.

<sup>39</sup> Janice Hume, *Obituaries in American Culture*, University Press of Mississippi, 2000; page 59, citing the *New York Daily Times*, 3 February 1855. That this Simeon was son of Moses Hix is stated by researchers Gayle and Veldon Hicks; his birth record is not recorded in the published Rehoboth vital records.

<sup>40</sup> Manning Leonard, *Genealogical, Historical, and Biographical, of Solomon Leonard, 1637, of Duxbury and Bridgewater, MA, and Some of His Descendants*, Auburn, NY: Knapp, Peck & Thomson, 1896; pp 93-94.

<sup>41</sup> Leonard, op cit.

<sup>42</sup> Blake, p. 184.

<sup>43</sup> This language struck me upon first reading and after learning about the struggles of Baptists to establish themselves in Massachusetts, I believe that this language sought to address the presence of Baptists in Warwick.

Marsh served as selectman and town clerk several times before running off at the age of 48 with 40-year-old **Jerusha (SMITH) DOOLITTLE**, wife of Amzi DOOLITTLE. But what happened to him and Jerusha after the controversy? Blake writes that they were apprehended somewhere in New York, tried and convicted in Northampton, which was the county seat at the time. They were fined and punished and Marsh was to wear a large "A" on his outer clothing from that day forward.<sup>44</sup>

When I first heard the story, I was struck by the fact that only the outcome of Amos Marsh was described. Blake did not document the outcome of the others. And why was it that Marsh was gone after and not the others? A strong, but circumstantial clue is the fact that his abandoned wife – Beulah Leonard Marsh – had six brothers in Warwick. It's not at all difficult to imagine the brothers pursuing Amos for abandoning their sister and her eight children.

Charles Morse's history of Warwick claims that Marsh returned to Warwick, lived a "pitiful" existence until late in his life when his friends raised sufficient funds to send him to live with a son. He cites Warwick diarist William Cobb's 18 August 1819 entry.<sup>45</sup> But I have reviewed this entry and all pages leading up to it. Cobb does report that Amos Marsh moved from Warwick at that time, but he is far more likely referring to Amos Marsh Jr (a contemporary of Cobb), not the father. There is nothing in Cobb's diary that describes the specific individuals involved in the controversy.

The census records from 1790 through 1810 also do not support Morse's claim that Amos Marsh Sr returned (for long, anyway) to Warwick:

- Amos' abandoned wife, Beulah MARSH, was head of household in Warwick in 1790 with one male over 16 and 2 females. If Amos had been there, he would have been named head of household, not his wife. Amos' son Jonas Marsh was also in Warwick in 1790, enumerated twice, but in each case, with only one male listed over 16.<sup>46</sup>

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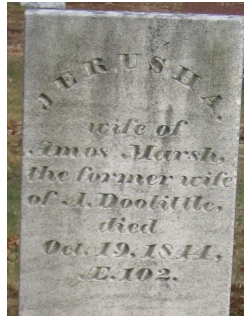
<sup>44</sup> Research conducted by Joel S. Berson indicates that this case was heard in Northampton by the Massachusetts Superior Court of Judicature, supposedly on April 24, 1781, and should be found at the Massachusetts Archives, film reel for 1781-1782, page 41 recto and verso. The case was apparently also cited by George Elliott Howard in *A History of Matrimonial Institutions, Chiefly in England and the United States...* (1904), vol 2, pp 175-176; Thomas A. Foster, *Sex and the Eighteenth Century Man: Massachusetts and the History of Sexuality in America* (2006), page 46, alleges a case of adultery in 1781 at Northampton. He cites only the *Independent Chronicle* for May 10, 1781. Berson independently found two other articles telling the same story, in the *Massachusetts Spy* for May 4, 1781 (thus 6 days earlier) and the *Salem Gazette* for Jan. 17, 1782 (reporting a letter from Philadelphia dated June 6 [1781]). The last two articles do not name the defendants.

<sup>45</sup> Morse, p. 90.

<sup>46</sup> US Federal Census, Warwick, MA, 1790.

- The 1800 census finds an Amos MARSH in Warwick, but the right age to be the *son*, not the father.<sup>47</sup> (This son married Esther BARBER, daughter of Zachariah BARBER, unrelated to Thomas BARBER of this story.<sup>48</sup>)
- Another Amos MARSH is in Deerfield, MA in 1800, right age to be the father.<sup>49</sup>
- In 1810, an Amos MARSH, "Jr." is enumerated in Sunderland, MA along with Moses LEONARD—possible brother or nephew of Beulah (Leonard) Marsh.<sup>50</sup> (Is Beulah with them?) Likely this same Amos Marsh is he still in Sunderland, but without suffix, in 1820 and 1830.<sup>51</sup>
- We find an older Amos MARSH in Amherst, MA in 1820.<sup>52</sup>
- Most convincing, however, is the Amos MARSH living in Hoosick, NY (where Moses HICKS also was for some of this time), just across the border from Massachusetts, from 1790 through 1820.<sup>53</sup>

Despite this confusion, we have some evidence that Amos MARSH ended up with his "spiritual" mate, at least for a time. Jerusha (SMITH) DOOLITTLE is buried next to her son, Amzi DOOLITTLE, Jr. in Winchester, NH. Her gravestone reads "Jerusha A., wife of Amos Marsh, former wife of A. Doolittle."<sup>54</sup> She is quite likely the female, age 90-100, enumerated with her son Amzi Doolittle, Jr., in the 1840 census in Winchester, NH. But where was she between 1781 when she left Warwick, MA with Amos MARSH, and 1840 when she joins her son in Winchester (by which time, her first husband, Amzi DOOLITTLE is deceased)?



Evergreen Cemetery, Winchester, NH:  
Jerusha A., wife of Amos Marsh,  
the former wife of A. Doolittle,  
died Oct. 19, 1844, AE. 102

The most likely scenario is that she and Amos followed Hicks and her daughter to Hoosick, NY and remained there, and that Amos died between 1820 and 1840, after

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<sup>47</sup> US Federal Census, Warwick, MA, 1800.

<sup>48</sup> Warwick Vital Records.

<sup>49</sup> US Federal Census, Deerfield, MA, 1800.

<sup>50</sup> US Federal Census, Sunderland, MA 1810.

<sup>51</sup> US Federal Census, Sunderland, 1820, 1830.

<sup>52</sup> US Federal Census, Amherst, MA, 1820.

<sup>53</sup> US Federal Census, Hoosick, NY, 1800-1820.

<sup>54</sup> Evergreen Cemetery, Winchester, Cheshire Co., NH; visited by author, May 2004.

which Jerusha returned to her children in Winchester NH where she lived until she died.

A less likely scenario is that historian Charles Morse was correct, and Amos Marsh did return to Warwick and live out a pitiful existence until his old age, and then Jerusha re-connected with him for a late-in-life marriage. She would have been 78 in 1820 and he would have been 87! But the precedent was there: Jerusha's first mother-in-law, Lydia Todd Doolittle, married (for the third time) when she was 79.<sup>55</sup>

Both *The Doolittle Family of America* and *History of the Town of Northfield, MA* mention a family legend that Jerusha abandoned her family when her infant was five months old in order to join the Dorrellites. Her last Doolittle child was born 21 August 1777. Five months later would be January 1778. But William DORRELL did not start his sect (which included a variation of spiritual wife-ism) until at least 1786 and as late as 1794, depending on which source you believe.<sup>56</sup> More likely, the family legend is confusing her abandoning her family for Amos Marsh, which I estimate to have occurred in 1781, based on court records of her adultery.

But is it possible that there might be some truth to the DORRELLITE theory?

William DORREL was preaching his own brand of spiritual wife-ism in Jerusha's home town of Northfield in the mid 1780s, several years after the Warwick controversy. While Jerusha's mother had died in 1767, her father, Deacon Samuel SMITH, still lived in Northfield at the climax of the Warwick controversy and through Dorrel's preaching. Jerusha's sister Sarah was also there, married to Amzi's brother and tavern keeper, Lucius DOOLITTLE.<sup>57</sup> With these strong family ties, it's not impossible that Jerusha heard William DORRELL preach his own flavor of spiritual wife-ism.

The *History of Northfield* reports that William DORRELL resided in Northfield in 1784, but removed to Leyden, MA by 1794. He may also have been in Warwick for a time. The same *History* indicates that Dorrell was denounced and lost his followers by 1800. Jerusha would have been 58 by 1800; her father had died in 1799.

As of this writing, we do not know where she was until the 1840 census, where we find a woman age 90-100 living with Amzi Doolittle, Jr. in Winchester, NH. Jerusha lived until 1844 and the ripe old age of 102! She is buried next to her son in the Winchester cemetery.

We know most about the remaining two families involved in Warwick's spiritual wife-ism controversy—the DOOLITTLES and the BARBERS.

Blake indicates that Amzi DOOLITTLE ran off with the wife of **Thomas BARBER** (born 30 Dec 1742 Rehoboth<sup>58</sup>). Thomas and **Hannah MILLER** (born 24 May

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<sup>55</sup> *History of the Town of Northfield, MA*, pp. 420-421.

<sup>56</sup> Find at least two conflicting sources on this topic.

<sup>57</sup> Townshend, VT records indicate the presence of Lucius (with a tavern!) in or nearby early Townshend—is it possible that Lucius with his Smith wife (and perhaps her sister Jerusha?) lived for a time in Townshend, VT, too?

<sup>58</sup> *Vital Records of Rehoboth*, page 528.

1748<sup>59</sup>) were married in Cumberland, RI in 1768.<sup>60</sup> At their August wedding, Hannah was six months pregnant with their first child, Esther, who was born in Rehoboth, MA in November of the same year.<sup>61</sup> They moved to Warwick by the 1770 birth and baptism of their second child.<sup>62</sup> It is likely that Thomas and Hannah came with their respective siblings—Joseph BARBER and Lydia MILLER who had married each other in 1766 in Cumberland.<sup>63</sup>

Thomas appears not to have been active in Warwick politics. At least in the town records described by Blake, Barber was not found in Warwick town meeting notes, nor was he elected to any office, nor did he appear to participate in any military matters. Evidence that Thomas and/or Hannah may have been Baptist include:

- The marriage of Thomas and Hannah was officiated by "Elder Daniel Miller"-- father of Hannah, and by his title, a likely Baptist.
- Thomas descended on his maternal side from immigrants of Ilston, Glamorganshire, Wales,<sup>64</sup> home of the Baptist origins in the British Isles.<sup>65</sup>
- While Hannah would give birth to four more children through the summer of 1777, her remaining Warwick children were not recorded in the Warwick church records, supporting the theory that the Barbers may have been Baptists, refusing to baptize their infants.

The last of the four families involved was that of the Doolittles. **Amzi DOOLITTLE** (1737-1830) was one of Warwick's earliest residents, originating from nearby Northfield, MA and son of Rev. Benjamin DOOLITTLE and Lydia TODD.<sup>66</sup> Amzi's wife, **Jerusha SMITH** (1742-1844), herself descended of preachers,<sup>67</sup> gave Amzi nine children between 1760 and 1777 before she ran off with Amos MARSH.

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<sup>59</sup> Obtained from EBLusk; seeking source for this date.

<sup>60</sup> Their marriage is recorded in both Rehoboth, MA and Cumberland, RI. See: James Newell Arnold, *Vital Records of Rehoboth, 1642-1896: Marriages, intentions, births, deaths*. Providence, RI: Narragansett Historical Publishing Company, 1897, p 422. See also: James Newell Arnold, *Vital Records of Rhode Island 1636-1850*. Providence, RI: Narragansett Historical Publishing Company, 1891; volume 1, p 38.

<sup>61</sup> Rehoboth Vital Records, volume 3, page 171.

<sup>62</sup> Warwick Vital Records.

<sup>63</sup> Rhode Island Vital Records, volume 1, p 36.

<sup>64</sup> *Insert citation linking the Barber lineage to Glamorganshire.*

<sup>65</sup> Christian, op. cit.

<sup>66</sup> *The Doolittle Family of America*, p. 137.

<sup>67</sup> *History of Northfield, MA*, p. 536-537. Her ancestor, Reverend Henry Smith is given (dubious) credit for stirring up his own religious controversy, resulting in a removal from Wethersfield, Conn. to Hadley, Mass. See *History of Hadley* by Sylvester Judd or *Genealogies of Hadley Families* by Lucius M Boltwood for further documentation of the many early Smiths.

Both Amzi DOOLITTLE and Amos MARSH were "some of the first characters of the town" of Warwick, both actively involved in its establishment and maintenance. Certainly, they knew each other well. Amzi was first recorded in Warwick in May 1760, age 23, part of a committee formed to negotiate a contract with Reverend Lemuel Hedge. He owned lot #37 in 1761.<sup>68</sup> Amzi may have been drawn to Warwick by the promise of 30 pounds that the founders awarded new settlers. Amzi DOOLITTLE was selected treasurer at the 1777 annual town meeting; he also served as selectman and minuteman.<sup>69</sup>

Caleb RICH's biography indicates that the DOOLITTLE family was a leading Baptist family by the mid 1770s. The biography also indicates that RICH converted the Doolittles to his Universalist beliefs by his January 1778 marriage to their daughter Electa. Amzi was 44 when he ran off with Mr. Thomas BARBER's 33-year-old wife, Hannah, about three years after that wedding.

One might easily imagine that the DOOLITTLES and the BARBERs went their separate ways after the Warwick controversy that broke up their marriages. But apparently, not so, not so at all!

After her "spiritual connection" with Amzi DOOLITTLE, Hannah (MILLER) BARBER did return to Thomas BARBER. Both the Barbers and the Doolittles left Warwick, MA and settled in Townshend, VT. *It is important to note that from 1777 until 1791, Vermont was an independent republic.*<sup>70</sup> *This may have played a role in the choice of location to which the Barbers and Doolittles escaped.* The vital records there indicate that Hannah gave Thomas three more children between 1781 (their likely arrival) and 1785.<sup>71</sup>

Meanwhile, *The Doolittle Family of America* claims that Amzi DOOLITTLE moved to Townshend, VT by 1777.<sup>72</sup> But this appears to be too early. Land deed records in Franklin County indicate that Amzi sold his Warwick property in June and August of 1780.<sup>73</sup> The earliest I have confirmed his presence in Townshend, VT, is September 1782 when he appears on the payroll of Capt. Josiah Fish's Company in General Fletcher's Brigade, Col. Bradley's regiment.<sup>74</sup> (Or was this his son, Amzi Doolittle,

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<sup>68</sup> Blake, p. 184.

<sup>69</sup> Morse, p. 82.

<sup>70</sup> [Citation needed.]

<sup>71</sup> Vital Records of Townshend, VT, volume B, page 9.

<sup>72</sup> *The Doolittle Family of America*, p. 137.

<sup>73</sup> Franklin County Register of Deeds (abstracted from Hampshire County Deeds), Book 4, p. 451 and Book 8, p. 29.

<sup>74</sup> Phelps, p. 100-101.

Jr.?) In October 1782, Amzi Doolittle purchased 350 acres of land.<sup>75</sup> DOOLITTLE and Thomas BARBER sold land to each other over the next ten years or more.<sup>76 77</sup>

*In the Townshend land deed books, among the recorded deeds, the town clerk, in 1783, found reason to list on a single page, the make-up of each of the two families.<sup>78</sup> The list of both families was clearly made at one sitting and is dated March 1, 1783. At this time, Hannah Miller Barber was pregnant with a son who would be born in August. (She would have one more child in 1785.)*

I only found this page by accident while looking at the land deeds. The town's vital records are kept in a separate ledger. This list appears to have been made in order to distinguish the two families from each other. And for good reason as we will shortly see. A photocopy of this page of the land-deed record may be viewed on the next page. A transcription follows:

*Electa Doolittle Daughter to Amzi Doolittle and Jerusha his wife Born Augt. 12<sup>th</sup> 1760.  
Levina Doolittle Daughter to Amzi Doolittle and Jerusha his wife Born December 12<sup>th</sup>,  
1761.  
Luther Doolittle Son to Amzi Amzi [sic] Doolittle and Jerusha his wife Born January 14<sup>th</sup>  
1764.  
Lucy Doolittle Daughter to Amzi Doolittle and Jerusha his wife Born December 13<sup>th</sup>  
1765.  
Amzi Doolittle Son to Amzi Doolittle and Jerusha his wife Born February 24, 1768.  
Junia Doolittle Son to Amzi Doolittle and Jerusha his wife Born May 4-5<sup>th</sup> 1770.  
Origin Doolittle Son to Amzi Doolittle and Jerusha his wife Born January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1773.  
Rosil Doolittle Son to Amzi Doolittle and Jerusha his wife Born July 4, 1775.  
Jerusha Doolittle Daughter to Amzi Doolittle and Jerusha his wife Born Augt 21 1777.  
Recorded March 1, 1783, Dr.[?] Tho. Amsdin, Town Clerk*

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*Esther Barber Daughter to Tho. Barber and Hannah his wife Born November 14<sup>th</sup> 1768.  
Thomas Barber Son to Tho. Barber and Hannah his wife Born September 18<sup>th</sup> 1770.  
Benjamin Barber Son to Tho. Barber and Hannah his wife Born February 26, 1773.  
Sibbel and Hannah Barber Twins and Daughters to Tho. Barber and Hanah his wife Born  
May 28<sup>th</sup> 1775  
Daniel Miller Barber Son to Tho. Barber and Hannah his wife Born July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1777.  
Sally Barber Daughter to Tho. Barber and Hannah his wife Born December 11<sup>th</sup> 1781.  
Recorded Townshend March 1, 1783. Dr. [?] Tho. Amsden, Town Clerk,*

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<sup>75</sup> *Townsend Proprietor's book*, page 13; October 8, 1782. See also James H. Phelps, *Collections relating to the History and Inhabitants of the Town of Townsend, Vermont*, Brattleboro: Geo. E. Selleck; 1877, page 75.

<sup>76</sup> *Land Deeds of Townsend, VT*, volume 1, p. 238; and volume 2, p. 256, p. 337.

<sup>77</sup> Today there is a Barber Hill at the line between Townshend and Wardsboro, and Barber road, and one Barber family remaining on that road. Are they descendants of Thomas?

<sup>78</sup> *Land Deeds of Townsend, VT*, volume 1, p. 4.

# Electa Doolittle Daughter to Amzi Doolittle and Serapha  
 his wife Born Aug<sup>r</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> 1760  
 Levina Doolittle Daughter to Amzi Doolittle and Serapha  
 his wife Born Dumber 12<sup>th</sup> 1761  
 Luther Doolittle Son to Amzi Doolittle and Serapha  
 his wife Born January 14<sup>th</sup> 1764  
 Lucy Doolittle Daughter to Amzi Doolittle and Serapha  
 his wife Born Dumber 13<sup>th</sup> 1765  
 Amzi Doolittle Son to Amzi Doolittle and Serapha  
 his wife Born February 24<sup>th</sup> 1768  
 Junia Doolittle Son to Amzi Doolittle and Serapha his  
 wife Born May 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> 1770  
 Origin Doolittle Son to Amzi Doolittle and Serapha  
 his wife Born January 20<sup>th</sup> 1773  
 Majel Doolittle Son to Amzi Doolittle and Serapha  
 his wife Born July 4<sup>th</sup> 1775  
 Serapha Doolittle Daughter to Amzi Doolittle and Serapha  
 his wife Born Aug<sup>r</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> 1777. Married March 1<sup>st</sup> 1783  
 At The Amfsten Town Clerk  
 Esther Barber Daughter to Tho Barber and Hannah  
 his wife Born November 14<sup>th</sup> 1768  
 Thomas Barber Son to Tho Barber and Hannah his  
 wife Born September 18<sup>th</sup> 1770  
 Benjamin Barber Son to Tho Barber and Hannah  
 his wife Born February 26 1773  
 Sibbel and Hannah Barber Twins and Daughters to  
 Tho Barber and Hannah his wife Born May 28<sup>th</sup> 1776  
 Daniel Miller Barber Son to Tho Barber and Hannah  
 his wife Born July 2<sup>nd</sup> 1777  
 Sally Barber Daughter to Tho Barber and Hannah  
 his wife Born Dumber 11<sup>th</sup> 1781  
 Married Townsend March 1<sup>st</sup> 1783  
 At The Amfsten Town Clerk  
 Julia Mc Master Daughter to John Mc Master  
 and Dorella his wife was born February the 26<sup>th</sup> 1786

Some researchers have used the above to claim that all the Barber and Doolittle children were born in Townshend—but the list (again, clearly made at one sitting, not as each child was born) was not recorded among Townshend's *vital* records, but in its ledger of *land deeds*. And we know from Warwick vital records that most of the Doolittle children, anyway, were born in Warwick.

As rare as it was at the time, shortly after the 1785 birth of their son Calvin BARBER, Thomas BARBER and Hannah MILLER divorced.<sup>79</sup> While attempts to find an official divorce record from the state have failed, the vital records of Townshend indicate that Amzi DOOLITTLE and Hannah BARBER married on 9 October 1787—about six years after their initial “spiritual connection” back in Warwick, MA. After an additional four years, Thomas BARBER married second, Abigail CHASE in July 1791.<sup>80</sup>

Even after what must have been a controversial event (an 18<sup>th</sup> century New England divorce!), connections between the families continued. Not only was land exchanged between DOOLITTLE and BARBER—sons, daughters and grandchildren were as well:

- ✓ In February 1788, Amzi's son Amzi DOOLITTLE, Jr., married Hannah & Thomas' daughter, Esther BARBER.<sup>81</sup>
- ✓ Ten years later, in 1798, Amzi's son Origin DOOLITTLE married Thomas & Hannah's daughter, Hannah BARBER.<sup>82</sup>
- ✓ Sibbel BARBER, another daughter of Thomas and Hannah, was briefly married to Joseph SHEPHERD. That marriage ended—either in death or divorce—and Amzi Doolittle, Jr. adopted Sibbel's young child, Hiram SHEPERD, who changed his last name to DOOLITTLE, and lived with both his birth mother and adopted parents until their deaths.<sup>83</sup> They are all buried together in Winchester, NH.

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<sup>79</sup> Clarence S. Streeter, *Return to Yesterday: A History of Wardsboro, Vermont*. Canaan, NH: Phoenix Publishing, 1980, p. 197: “A history of Wardsboro would not be complete without an account of the well-known Barber family... Thomas B. Barber divorced his wife Hannah and married second Abigail Chase.”

<sup>80</sup> Townsend, Vermont vital records; Book 1, p. ix; marriages: “Barber, Thomas; Abigail Chase, July 17, 1791.” We have not yet determined which Abigail Chase she is—a divorced wife of Solomon Chase? Or Solomon and Abigail Chase's daughter? On page xii of the same book, “Doolittle, Amzi. \*Hannah Barber. Oct 9, 1787.”

<sup>81</sup> Townsend, Vermont vital records; Book 1, p. xii. Some researchers incorrectly state that Thomas and Hannah's daughter Esther Barber married Amos Marsh, Jr. (Yes, son of the Amos Marsh who ran off with Jerusha Smith Doolittle.) It's more likely that Amos Marsh, Jr.'s wife was the daughter of Zechariah Barber, a different line completely, but also of Warwick, MA.

<sup>82</sup> Townshend VR, p. xii

<sup>83</sup> [Need to find source for a) Sibbel's union with Joseph Sheperd, b) her being the mother of Hiram, and c) Hiram being adopted by Amzi Doolittle, Jr.]



Doolittle Group, Evergreen Cemetery, Winchester, NH;  
L to R: Jerusha (Smith), Amzi (Jr.), Esther (Barber), Sibel (Barber) Shepherd, Hiram (Shepherd) Doolittle, Lucy (Hazelton) Doolittle, Esther D., Harriet D.

Amzi DOOLITTLE was 50 and Hannah (MILLER) BARBER was 42 when they married in 1787.<sup>84</sup> They remained in Townsend until about 1824. Then, along with their respective married children (Amzi Jr. and Esther, Origin and Hannah, along with Sibbel Barber Shepherd and her birth son, Hiram Shepherd Doolittle), they relocated to Winchester, NH and settled just east of town and down the street from the town cemetery.<sup>85</sup>

**Hannah (Miller) Barber Doolittle** died in 1826, age 78. **Amzi Doolittle, Sr.** lived another six years, then died in 1830, age 92. They had 37 years together in marriage, and possibly an additional six before. They are buried side by side in the Winchester, NH "Evergreen" cemetery. I photographed their gravestones in May 2004.



<sup>84</sup> Were they inspired by the late-in-life marriage of Amzi's mother, Lydia TODD DOOLITTLE? At the age of 80, widow Lydia married 82-year-old Japhet CHAPIN in Northfield (per *History of the Town of Northfield*, p. 420-421).

<sup>85</sup> See US Census, years 1830, 1840, 1850 for Winchester, NH and booklet of Winchester maps that show the Doolittle residence.

Many of the Barber and Doolittle children remained in the vicinity of Townshend, VT, including the towns of Wardsboro, Saxton's River and Newfane. Some emigrated west. Hannah's last Barber child, **Calvin BARBER**, b. 1785, remained in Townshend where he had a son that he named **Amzi Doolittle BARBER**.<sup>86</sup> From this I surmise that Calvin, Hannah's youngest Barber son (by record) and only two at the time his mother married Amzi, was likely raised by Amzi Doolittle. Calvin's older brother, Daniel Miller Barber, age ten when his mother married Amzi, named one of *his* children, Junia Doolittle Barber. Clearly, Hannah's Barber children were fond of their step-father.

Ironically, Hannah's grandson, Amzi Doolittle Barber, became a *Congregationalist* minister. He and his wife left Vermont in the mid-1850s and moved west to Ashtabula, OH, the same destination chosen by the supposed grand-daughter of Amzi Doolittle—Azubah Hicks Brownell. Did they know each other? Did the two families move west together?

## **Summary**

From the data I've been able to find so far, I sketch the following landscape of Warwick's "revolutionary" controversy. Like any landscape, it is a rendering based on *visible* evidence. Further research may add greater definition.

Warwick was created at a time when the Baptist denomination was gaining a stronger foothold in Massachusetts. Other challenges to the traditional Puritan expression of Christianity were also on the rise, including Arminianism, New-Light, Universalism and Unitarianism. The more traditional Congregationalist denomination may not have been especially strong in Warwick given that its pastor (Lemuel HEDGE) questioned the country's fight for independence from England, and therefore became highly unpopular with most of the townspeople.

Several of Warwick's prominent citizens, including Amzi DOOLITTLE and Amos MARSH, had adopted the teachings of the Baptists and were part of the formation of a Baptist church in Warwick by 1771 (in community if not in a built structure). Amzi DOOLITTLE may also have been converted to Caleb RICH's Universalism shortly before the "exchange of partners" took place (in early-to-mid 1781).

Thomas and Hannah (MILLER) BARBER were also likely members of this group of early Baptists, having come from Baptist-friendly Rehoboth, MA and Cumberland, RI.

"Elder HIX" was likely associated with the Baptist Hix/Hicks families of Rehoboth and may have arrived in the region about 1769.

As Caleb RICH tested out his Universalist approach to Christianity on the Baptists of Warwick, HIX may have seen an opportunity to sneak in his own variation of "spiritual expression"—what others later called "spiritual wife-ism" or "free-love".

The controversy appears to have culminated by early 1781 since the adultery case against Amos Marsh and Jerusha (Smith) Doolittle is supposedly recorded in April of that year. It may have started as early as the summer of 1778: Amos Marsh was

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<sup>86</sup> Vital records of Townshend, VT.

voted selectman on 30 March of that year, after which he disappears from records of elected office. The new minister arrived in Warwick in December 1778 or 1779.<sup>87</sup>

In an environment rich in religious experimentation, high tension, and the commencement of the colonies' fight for independence, it was no doubt tempting to be taken up by alternatives to tradition, whether those alternatives be in how one expressed one's faith or how one expressed one's love.

The fact that each of these individuals ended up with their "spiritual mates" is some indication that despite its controversial nature, its proponents (or "victims" as historian Jonathan Blake referred to them) were quite serious about their choices; these were not brief affairs of the heart (or loins).

### **Stories Yet to be Written**

While this research answered many questions, just as many remain unanswered. Here are some steps for further research:

- What happened to the family that Amos MARSH abandoned? He married Beulah LEONARD in Rutland, MA on 3 November 1757.<sup>88</sup> They had at least seven children between 1758 and February 1775.<sup>89</sup> What happened to Beulah and her children? Some GEDCOMs on WorldConnect.rootsweb.com indicate marriages for at least two of their children. Beulah, along with most of her siblings, and later her father, Moses LEONARD, settled in Warwick. While many other Leonards remained in Warwick for many decades after the controversy, I last find Beulah there as head of household in 1790.
- What can we find out about the Amos Marsh and Moses Hicks of Hoosick, NY? Are they the cohorts who wreaked such havoc in Warwick?
- When did the other marriages take place? Do church or civil records exist that might document marriages between Amos Marsh and Jerusha (Smith) Doolittle or Hicks and Lavina Doolittle? What about the 1796 birth record of Azubah Hicks in Hoosick? Can we find it and other children?
- Can we find the wills of Amzi DOOLITTLE (possibly in Keene, NH office of probate? Or Townshend, VT?) or of Thomas BARBER (Wardsboro or Townshend, VT?)

Any additional evidence will shed more light on this fascinating piece of American history.

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<sup>87</sup> *Insert citation about Preserved Smith describing his predecessor's arrival to Warwick.*

<sup>88</sup> Bailey, Frederick W., *Early Massachusetts Marriages Prior to 1800*.

<sup>89</sup> Vital records of Warwick, MA.

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## Timeline

- 1732 Baptist church opens in Rehoboth, MA.  
1737 Amzi Doolittle b. Northfield, MA.  
First tracks laid out in future Warwick, MA.  
1742 Thomas Barber b. Rehoboth, MA; Jerusha Smith b. Northfield.  
1744-63 French and Indian War.  
1748 Hannah Miller b. Rehoboth, MA or Cumberland, RI.  
1749 Benj. Doolittle dies, 54, Northfield, MA.  
1757 Amzi Doolittle marries (in Northfield, MA) Jerusha Smith, age 15.  
1760 Amzi Doolittle part of Warwick committee that negotiates contract with new preacher, Lemuel Hedge.  
August: Amzi and Jerusha's first child, Electa Doolittle, born.  
1762 Third child of Amos Marsh and Beulah Leonard born Warwick.  
1763 Warwick formerly created; Amzi Doolittle elected treasurer; Amos Marsh also at first meeting of town.  
1767 Thomas Barber marries (recorded in both Cumberland, RI and Rehoboth, MA) Hannah Miller. She's six months pregnant.  
Amzi Doolittle elected selectman in Warwick.  
1768 First Barber child born and baptized in Rehoboth, MA.  
~1769 Thomas Barber and Hannah arrive in Warwick.  
1770 Second Barber child born and baptized in Warwick.  
1773 Feb: Benjamin Read Barber born (not baptized) in Warwick, MA  
1774 Warwick supports committee of correspondence to seek independent from England. Amzi Doolittle selected as Ensign; Autumn: "first appearance of discord on religious matters" involving those persons that call themselves Baptists in town.  
1775 July: Rev. Lemuel Hedge disarmed and confined for attempting to "influence and prejudice the minds of the people against the common cause which the country was engaged in."  
Last child of Amos and Beulah (Leonard) Marsh b. Warwick.  
1776 May: Instructions to the town include religious tolerance and no laws limiting individual liberties.  
July: all vote for independence.  
1777: Amzi Doolittle selected treasurer; Amos Marsh selectman.  
Oct: Lemuel Hedge dies; British General Burgoyne surrenders at Saratoga same day.  
Dec: Lavina Doolittle turns 16.  
Amzi & Jerusha's last child b. Warwick  
July: Thomas and Hannah's child, Daniel Miller Barber, b. Warwick (last child to them for 4 years).  
One Moses Hicks warned out of Richmond, NH (just north of Warwick).  
1778 January: Electa Doolittle marries Caleb Rich in Warwick.  
March: Amos Marsh elected selectman.  
October: Amzi's widowed mother, Lydia Todd Doolittle Beldin, age 79, marries 81-year-old Japhet Chapin in Northfield or Chicopee, MA, December 1778.  
December: Rev. Samuel Reed arrives Warwick.  
1781 Dec: Sally Barber, d/o Thomas Barber and Hannah, b. Townsend, VT.  
1782 Oct: Amzi Doolittle purchases 350 acres in Townsend, VT.  
1783 Aug: Ebenezer Barber, s/o Thomas and Hannah, b. Townsend, VT.  
1785 June: Calvin Barber, s/o of Thomas and Hannah Barber, b. Townsend, VT.  
1787 Oct: Amzi Doolittle Sr. marries Hannah (Miller) Barber, Townsend, VT  
1788 Feb: Amzi Doolittle, Jr., marries Esther Barber (d/o Thomas and Hannah)  
May: Amzi Doolittle Sr. sells 100 acres to AD, Jr.  
1789 Wm. Dorrell on tax rolls in Northfield, MA.  
1790 May: Thomas Barber sells 21 acres to Amzi D; Amzi D sells land to Thomas Barber.  
One Amos Marsh and Moses Hicks in Hoosick, NY. Beulah Marsh head of household in Warwick, MA.  
1791 Thomas Barber marries Abigail Chase.  
1796 Azubah Hicks b. Hoosick, NY; d/o Moses and Lavina (Doolittle) Hicks.  
1798 Origin Doolittle (s/o Amzi and Jerusha) marries Hannah Barber (d/o Thomas & Hannah).  
1800 One Amos Marsh in Hoosick, NY; Moses Hicks in Hebron, NY.  
1805 Calvin Barber (s/o Thomas and Hannah) marries Polly Brooks Hall, Townsend, VT?  
1810 Nov: Amzi Doolittle Barber, s/o Calvin and Polly, b. Townsend, VT.  
1814-44: Rev. Preserved Smith in Warwick.  
1819 Apr: Thomas Barber dies; buried West Hill cemetery, Wardsboro, VT.  
1824 Doolittle/Barber couples (with respective parents) move to Winchester, NH.  
1826, Hannah Miller Barber Doolittle, age 78, dies; buried Evergreen Cemetery, Winchester, NH  
1830 Amzi Doolittle, Sr., age 92, dies; buried Evergreen Cemetery, Winchester, NH  
1832-33 Jonathan Blake drafts *History of Warwick* (not published until 1873).  
1840 Jerusha (likely) living with her son, Amzi Doolittle, Jr., at Winchester, NH.  
1844 Jerusha Smith Doolittle Marsh dies, age 102; buried in Winchester, NH.

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