

UPDATED FEBRUARY 16, 2010

SAMUEL PUTNAM

Crawford & Sebastian Counties

The first Putnam or Putman in Arkansas was Samuel Putnam of the New England Family, and he was in northwest Arkansas before it became a Territory and was still a part of Missouri.

The first census of Arkansas in 1830 shows him in Crawford County and tax lists during the 1830s show him and his son. Crawford was a large county and it would appear he settled in what is now Sebastian County near Fort Smith. In all cases he was shown as living in Upper Township of Fort Smith and that was first in Pulaski then Crawford and then Sebastian County. He never moved, just had counties changed on him.

In the Goodspeed Book on NORTHWESTERN ARKANSAS, there is a reference on page 1365 that Sam came from Vermont. Another researcher states that he was born in Stow, Massachusetts, a son of Nathan Putnam from Salem. Actually he was born in Sudbury, Massachusetts which abuts Stow.

There is a *Putnam Manuscript* in the State Archives in Nashville, Tennessee that roughly details how Sam has come down from the John Putnam of Salem Village (Danvers) in Massachusetts. It can be shown as follows:

1. John Putnam born in Aston Abbots, Buckinghamshire, England in 1580 and married to Priscilla Gould back in England. He arrived in Massachusetts in about 1644.
2. Nathaniel Putnam born in Aston Abbots October 11, 1619 and died in Salem July 23, 1700. He married Elizabeth Hutchinson in Salem in 1635.
3. John Putnam born in Salem March 26, 1657. He married Hannah Cutler on December 2, 1678. He died in Salem in September, 1722
4. Samuel Putnam born in Salem November 5, 1684. He married Mary Leach on October 19, 1709. He died in Sudbury, Massachusetts on December 20, 1753.
5. John Putnam born in Salem, Massachusetts October 8, 1715. He married Sarah Maverick in Sudbury on April 25, 1737. He died in April 1762 in Sudbury.
6. Nathan Putnam born in Sudbury on July 15, 1749. He married Dorothy Whitney in Sudbury on October 20, 1774. They moved to Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky where he died June 26, 1833. One of his sons, Joseph Washington Putnam remained in Lexington (see the section on KENTUCKY Putmans in this history), one son James went to sea as a sailor in 1819, and the last son, Samuel went to Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Most of the information that I have comes from a descendant, Mary Moore of Fort Smith, and from the three typewritten pages found in Nashville.

Samuel was born in Sudbury, Massachusetts on June 19, 1781. He married Mary Whitman in

Massachusetts on August 15, 1807. He served in the War of 1812 in Washington County, New York. He then seems to have moved with his father, Nathan, to Lexington, Kentucky right after the War and then was in Missouri (of which Arkansas was a part then) around 1814-1816 and in 1819 was given a land grant in Arkansas for his service in the 1812 fighting.

He arrived in Arkansas in 1819 while it was just a territory, but was there earlier (the 1814-16 date). It is stated that he was in Missouri. Prior to 1819 (all of Arkansas was Arkansas County, Missouri then).

Samuel and Mary remained near Fort Smith for the rest of their lives. Mary Whitman Putnam died there in 1846 and Samuel Putnam died there in 1847.

What I know of their children is:

CAROLINE PUTNAM born February 27, 1808. She married John Oliphant. After he died, she returned to Lexington, Kentucky. In 1850, her daughter Mary Oliphant age 14 was living with her brother John Putnam.

SAMUEL PUTNAM JR. born May 22, 1809 and died unmarried January 27, 1831.

MARY PUTNAM born January 17, 1811. She first married a Vincent and then Adam Shields. She died December 31, 1835.

JANE PUTNAM born October 1, 1813. She married Benjamin Thayer, then James Barrington and they moved to Texas where he died. She and their four children returned to Arkansas, and then she married an Adams.

ELIZABETH PUTNAM born December 16, 1815. She married Carborn Howell and then Ridgen Howard and then Alan McDonald.

JEMIMA ANGELINE PUTNAM born January 7, 1818. She married John M. Spaulding, and died March 18, 1837.

JOHN WHITMAN PUTNAM born August 16, 1820. He married Elizabeth Goode Richardson (her second Husband). He died in 1862.

SUSAN PUTNAM born November 26, 1822. She married Edmond Maurice Richardson. She died January 12, 1895. Finally someone in this family lived past their twenties.

NATHAN THOMAS PUTNAM born March 7, 1825. He married Mrs. Emily Meeks. He moved to California during the Gold Rush and died there. Emily married a Dr. Gray out there later. In the 1852 state census of California, he is shown as a farmer in Los Angeles County. I guess the gold rush didn't work out for him.

DOROTHY GATES PUTNAM a twin, born January 27, 1827. She married a Davis and later married George W. Mickle.

LUCY PUTNAM the other twin, born January 27, 1827. She married William Hudspeth and lived in Louisiana.

JOSEPH E. PUTNAM born in 1829 and died February 24, 1831.

Mary Whitman wrote a letter to her mother Jemima Porter Whitman and a sister. The letter was published in *Arkansas Pioneer and Allied Families* by Mrs. Larry P. Clark, 1976, Public Library, Russellville, Arkansas.

January 1, 1826

Dear Mother and Sister:

It being the first day of the year, I take the opportunity to write a few lines after waiting upwards of two years in hopes to receive some more from you, but have not had any only by way of Joseph Putnam. (He was in Lexington, Kentucky.) He wrote us and gave us what information he could of you. I should have written before, but my thoughts have been principally taken up about my future welfare. My inquiry has generally been what should I do to be saved? And I hope it has been the inquiry of you all. I hope that we shall all meet upon the banks of sweet deliverance to join in one perpetual strain of praise to our Redeemer. Though I am situated in the wilderness, you might suppose it was a lonesome situation. We have moved about 10 miles from the river on account of our health. Our nearest neighbor is about four miles distance and the woods are inhabited by bears, buffalo, wolves, panthers, wild cats and various kinds of wild beasts, and the largest kind of venomous snakes. They killed a great many very long rattle snakes last summer about the house.

They have killed a bear within 100 rods of the house. Yet I feel no dread. I am perfectly satisfied and contented.

We are all in perfect health. We have nine children, six daughters and three sons. Our youngest was born March 7, 1825. We call his name Nathan Thomas. Angeline is up at the missionaries upward of 100 miles from here, at school.

My dear Mother - I desire to see you once more, but it is uncertain whether we ever meet on this earth again but I hope we shall meet in a better world never to be parted any more.

May the Lord bless you all abundantly with his grace. Trust in the Lord for he is good, all his ways are pleasantness and his paths are peace.

I remain you affectionate

Sister and Child

Mary Putnam

Mr. Putnam and the children send their best love to you all. Please write soon for I want to hear from you very much. Direct your letters to Arkansas Territory, Crawford County and they will come directly here.