

**The Children of Silas and Abigail Hewes Maxham**

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## Introduction

The information given in *Lineage from George Hewes to Abigail Hewes Maxham* concluded that Daniel Hewes was a soldier in the American Revolution who was born in Wrentham, Massachusetts in 1755, died on February 22, 1846, and married Sarah Cushman on December 30, 1778. The couple lived in Attleboro, Massachusetts where their eldest child Abigail was born on November 18, 1779. Daniel and Sarah Cushman Hewes then moved to Tolland, Connecticut around 1783 and then to Springfield, Otsego County, New York around 1798 where both died and are buried. Their daughter Abigail Hewes is the woman who married Silas Maxham and ultimately settled in Chautauqua County, New York after a series of moves that took place after they were married. This particular fact has been formally documented by evidence that was provided in applications for membership to Sons of the American Revolution that show lineage to Daniel Hewes through Silas and Abigail Hewes Maxham's daughter Electa Maxham Hunt. These applications were filed by Electa's descendants Willard Wood Hunt (SAR National Number 55044) and Gilbert Artus Hunt (SAR National Number 84106). The identity of the parents of Abigail Hewes Maxham and the existence of the SAR applications were originally brought to my attention by Peter and Gene Smith.

These SAR applications further state that family records indicate that Silas Maxham and Abigail Hewes were married in Saratoga County, New York between 1800 and 1810. The eldest child of Silas and Abigail Hewes Maxham will be seen to be their daughter Sarah, who was born in 1804. This coincides very well with their marriage between 1800 and 1810. However, Abigail's parents were residing in Otsego County, New York at that time, where Abigail was most likely living with her family before her marriage.

Wherever Silas and Abigail Hewes were married and started out, their first documented appearance was in Orwell, Oswego County, New York. The book *Landmarks of Oswego County New York* (Edited by J. C. Churchill, H. P. Smith & W. S. Child, D. Mason & Company Publishers, Syracuse, NY, 1895) mentions Silas Maxham in its History of Orwell in Chapter 27:

In 1807 Nathaniel Bennett, Sr., and Nathaniel, Jr., settled in the Eastman and Merrill locality, while Capt. George W. Noyes located at what is now Orwell village. The latter soon moved away. In this year, or in 1808, Silas Maxham took up his residence half a mile east of Pekin and Elias Mason became a settler near the falls. About 1809 Timothy Balch came from Sandy Creek, where he had lived two or three years, and erected a log house at "Orwell Corners." He was originally from the Mohawk Valley, and upon his settlement here opened his house as a tavern, the first of the kind in the town. It became a noted stopping place, and dispensed good whisky and comfortable entertainment to the neighboring pioneers.

Settlers came in slowly, or, coming, were dissatisfied with the hills and broken surface of the territory and continued on farther west. About 1811 Millan Aiken built on Salmon River, above the falls, the first saw mill in Orwell. Soon afterward James Hughes placed a triphammer shop in operation on the brook which runs through Pekin, at a point about eighty rods below that hamlet. He made scythes, axes, and other tools and was a very useful man in the settlement.

A similar history from 1877 is given in an Appendix. The quote above states that Silas Maxham was one of the first settlers in the area that was to become Orwell, New York in 1807 or 1808, and that settlers to that area came in slowly and were often dissatisfied with the conditions for farming there and moved farther west. Silas Maxham was apparently one of those settlers in the area who quickly became dissatisfied with conditions and moved on, since he appears to be listed as “S. Maxam” in Oneida County, New York in the 1810 Federal Census, as seen in Figure 1.

Section 2 of the whole number of persons within the township of S. Maxam												
1810		Free White Males.					Free White Females.					Persons Excluded.
Name of County	Names of Heads of Families	Under 10 Years	Years Under 16	Years Under 20	20 & Under 25	25 & Upwards	Under 10 Years	Years Under 16	Years Under 20	20 & Under 25	25 & Upwards	
Oneida	S. Maxam	2	1	1	1	2	2	1				

Figure 1. S. Maxam Listing in 1810 Federal Census.

Every head of household listed in this census report has only an initial reported for their first name. Besides Silas and Abigail being listed as aged 26 to 44, there is one boy under the age of 10 and two girls under the age of 10. Assuming that this our Silas Maxham, the boy would have been Daniel (born in 1807 or 1808) and one of the girls would have been Sarah (born in 1804). It is not known who the other girl might have been. As further evidence of the presence of the family in Oneida County at that time, War of 1812 records show that “Silas Maxum” was associated with a unit from Oneida County in 1814.

Silas Maxham definitely appears in the town of Lee in Oneida County, New York in 1820, as shown in Figure 2.

Name	Free White Males				Free White Females				Total
	Under 10	10 to 15	16 to 20	21 and Upwards	Under 10	10 to 15	16 to 20	21 and Upwards	
Silas Maxham	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2

Figure 2. Silas Maxham Listing in 1820 Federal Census.

The listing registers Silas and Abigail as aged 26 to 44, two boys under 10, one boy aged 10 to 15, two girls under 10 and one girl aged 10 to 15. The two boys under age 10 would have been Valorus (born in 1816) and Otis (born in 1818), and the boy aged 10 to 15 would have been Daniel. The two girls under age 10 would have been Electa (born in 1813) and Orpha (born in 1816), and the girl aged 10 to 15 would have been Sarah.

[illegible]

The listing shows one boy aged 5 to 9 most likely was Otis, the boy aged 15 to 19 would have been Valorus, the male aged 20 to 29 would have been Daniel and the male aged 40 to 49 would have been Silas. The girl aged 10 to 14 would have been Orpha, the girl aged 15 to 19 would have been Electa, and the woman aged 50 to 59 would have been Abigail. Their Daughter Sarah would have been 26 at the time of this census and was probably married by then.

(No. 4.)

**SCHEDULE of the whole number of persons within the division allotted to** *Miss. by Natchez*

NAMES OF HEADS OF FAMILIES.	FREE WHITE PERSONS, INCLUDING HEADS OF FAMILIES.																				FREE COLORED PERSONS.																			
	MALES										FEMALES										MALES					FEMALES														
	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
Total	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

*Miss. Natchez*

The male between 20 and 29 was Otis, since Daniel and Valorus were both listed as heads of household in the 1840 Federal Census in Chautauqua County. The male between 50 and 59 was Silas, the woman between 60 and 69 was Abigail, and the female between 20 and 29 was either Orpha or Electa.



Maxon” does appear in the town of Ellery in Chautauqua County. However, the reported counts of individuals living in the household does not provide a direct match to the information that was recorded in 1840 in Figure 4. But, the family could possibly have moved to Chautauqua County as early as 1835.

Silas Maxham is listed as residing in the town of Ellery, Chautauqua County in the 1845 New York State Census and Silas and Abigail “Maxam” were also listed in the 1850 Federal Census in the town of Chautauqua, in Chautauqua County NY. The 1850 Federal Census was the first one to start registering additional information about all of the residents who were residing in the household at the time, as seen in Figure 5.

**SCHEDULE I.—Free Inhabitants in** Chautauque **in the County of** Chautauque **State of** NY **enumerated by me, on the** 22 **day of** Oct **1850.** J. Hamilton Ass't Marshal.

Dwelling-house numbered in the order of visitation.	Families numbered in the order of visitation.	The Name of every Person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1850, was in this family.	DESCRIPTION.			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each Male Person over 15 years of age.	Value of Real Estate owned.	PLACE OF BIRTH. Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Married within the year.	Attended School within the year.	Persons over 20 years of age who cannot read & write.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.
			Age.	Sex.	White, black, or mulatto.							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
126	182	Daniel Maxam	44	m								
127		Cornelia	24	f								
128		Herbert	9	m								
129		Annette	5	f								
130		Jay	3	m								
131	183	Silas Maxham	69	m				Mass				
132		Abigail	70	f								
133		Orpha Fenton	34	f				Mass				
134		Charles	6	m								
135		Orpha E	2	f								

Figure 5. Silas and Abigail Maxam Listing in 1850 Federal Census.

Silas and Abigail Maxham aged 69 and 70 are both listed as having been born in Massachusetts. Their daughter Orpha, who married Hibbard Fenton, is also listed as being in the household with them at age 34, along with her children Charles and Orpha E Fenton. The apparent son Daniel (age 44) of Silas and Abigail Maxham is also listed as residing in the household immediately next to them, with his wife Cornelia and their children Herbert, Annette and Jay.

Abigail Maxham did not appear in any further census reports, since she died in 1852. She is buried in French Creek Cemetery at French Creek, Chautauqua County, New York. The information that is inscribed on her tombstone that is shown in Figure 6 indicates that she died March 7, 1852 and was born November 29, 1799, which varies only slightly from the stated date for Abigail Hewes in the first paragraph of the introduction above.



Abigail  
Wife of  
Silas Maxham  
March 7, 1852  
Aged 72 yrs. 3 mos.  
& 8 days

Figure 6. Gravestone of Abigail Maxham.

Silas Maxham appears in additional census reports to show that he resided in the households of his daughters and their children after the death of his wife Abigail. The entry for Silas Maxham in the 1855 New York State Census lists him as a resident of the home of Hibbard P. Fenton in the town of French Creek, Chautauqua County, New York. The entry is shown in Figure 7.

**I. Population.** Census of the Inhabitants in the South Part Election District of the Town of French Creek in the County of Chautauque taken by me on the 23<sup>d</sup> day of June, 1855.  
Hibbard P. Fenton Marshal

35	Female	189	26	Hibbard P. Fenton	33	m			1	4	1						
36				Leffie Fenton	35	f	Wife	Child	1	4							
37				Charles Fenton	18	m	Child	at Fenton's		4							
38				Abigail Fenton	7	f		at Fenton's		4							
39				Abigail Fenton	2	f		"		2							
40				Silas Maxham	73	m	Wife	at Fenton's	1	4	1						

Figure 7. Silas Maxham Listing in 1855 New York State Census.



This 1855 census report from Figure 7 shows Hibbard Fenton with his wife Orpha Fenton, who was in the residence of Silas Maxham in 1850 with two children named Charles and Orpha E. Fenton. Charles and Orpha E. (Elizabeth) are present in the 1855 listing, with the addition of a daughter Abigail. Silas Maxham is listed with the relationship of "Father" which obviously applies to Orpha and not Hibbard Fenton. Orpha Fenton is listed as having been born in Oneida County, New York to correspond with earlier census reports for the residence of Silas Maxham. The place of birth for Silas Maxham is given as Massachusetts, as reported in the 1850 Federal Census. Orpha Maxham Fenton is obviously the daughter of Silas and Abigail Maxham.

The listing for Silas Maxham in the 1860 Federal Census is shown in Figure 8 along with the listings for a number of neighboring households in the town of Ellery, Chautauqua County, New York.

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**SCHEDULE 1.—Free Inhabitants in** Ellery **in the County of** Chautauqua **State**  
**of** New York **enumerated by me, on the** 3<sup>d</sup> **day of** Sept **1860.** John P. Phelps **Ass't Marshal.**  
**Post Office** Ellery, Chautauqua N.Y.

Dwelling-house— the number in the order of visitation.	Family numbered in the order of visitation.	The name of every person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1860, was in this family.	DESCRIPTION.			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male and female, over 15 years of age.	VALUE OF ESTATE OWNED.		Place of Birth, Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Married within the year.	Attended school within the year.	Persons over 20 yrs of age who cannot read & write.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.
			Age.	Sex.	White, black, or mulatto.		Value of Real Estate.	Value of Personal Estate.					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
2644	2638	Daniel D Smith	61	M		Farm	1500	600	N York				
		Sarah	56	F		HouseRuf			"				
		Daniel	22	M		Farm Labor			"				
2645	2639	Yemas Le Young	31	M		Seoiver		250	"				
		Lucy L	24	F		HouseRuf			"				
		Smith R	11	M					"				
		Silas Maxham	80	M		non			Mass				
2646	2640	Fayette Pickett	54	M		Farm	4200	1200	N York				
		Eliza	23	F		HouseRuf			"				
		Barrett	7 1/2	F					"				
		Sanson Pickett	54	M		Farm			Vermont				
		Sonoma	57	F		HouseRuf		800	N. Y.				
		Rhoda Young	33	F		" nonR			N York				
2647	2641	Adams Maxham	48	M		Farm	3000	700	"				
		Ellenor	46	F		HouseRuf			"				
		Eliza Ann	21	F		" nonR			"				
		Orpha H	18	F					"		1		
		Jay	13	M					"		1		
		Adams	4	M					"				

Figure 8. Silas Maxham Listing in 1860 Federal Census

The first household listing in Figure 8 is for Daniel D Smith (age 61) and his wife Sarah (age 56), who was the daughter of Silas and Abigail Maxham. The household listing for the residence

immediately next to Daniel and Sarah Maxham Smith is for Zenas C Young and his wife Lucy; who was Sarah Lucy Smith, the daughter of Sarah Maxham Smith. Silas Maxham is listed as a resident of the home of Zenas and Lucy Smith Young at age 80 with a place of birth in Massachusetts. The last entry in Figure 8 that was a residence that was very close to the first two is for Valorus Maxham and his wife Eleanor.

Silas Maxham does not appear in any additional census records since he died in 1863. A photo of his tombstone is shown in Figure 9 from French Creek Cemetery in the town of French Creek, Chautauqua County, New York. The inscription on the tombstone indicates that Silas Maxham was born on August 30, 1780 and died on September 2, 1863.



Silas Maxham  
Died  
Sept. 2, 1863  
Aged 83 yrs. 3 d's

Figure 9. Tombstone of Silas Maxham.



### **The Children of Silas and Abigail Hewes Maxham**

Six children of Silas and Abigail Maxham have been listed to this point, and attention is now turned to presenting further evidence to formally verify the parent and child relationships. Documented evidence is provided for all six of these children.

#### ***Sarah Maxham Smith***

It has been stated that Sarah Maxham Smith was the daughter of Silas and Abigail Maxham and that Silas Maxham was residing in the home of her daughter Lucy Young in the 1860 Federal Census in Figure 8. This is all verified very easily through the extensive inscription on her tombstone at Dewittville Cemetery in Jamestown, Chautauqua County, New York as shown in Figure 10.



Sarah R  
Wife of  
Daniel D. Smith  
Daughter of  
Silas & Abigail Maxham  
Died July 16, 1864  
Aged 59 yrs, 9 mos, 7 days

Figure 10. Tombstone of Sarah Maxham Smith.

Based on the inscription Sarah Maxham was born on October 9, 1804 and she died July 16, 1864. The inscription leaves no doubt regarding the fact that she married Daniel D. Smith and that her parents were Silas and Abigail Maxham.

Another point of interest comes from an entry for “Sally Smith” in the town of Ellery in Chautauqua County in the 1855 New York State Census that is shown in Figure 11.

**I. Population.** CENSUS of the Inhabitants in the Election District of the 2nd in the County of Chautauqua taken by me on the 17 day of June, 1855. John Amos Marshal.

Dwellings numbered in this town.	Of what material built.	Value.	Families numbered of their valuation.	Name of every person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June was in this family.	Age.	Sex.	Color.	Relation to the head of the family.	In what county of this State, or in what other State or Foreign Country born.	Married.	Widowed.	Years resident in this city or town.	Profession, Trade, or Occupation.	VOTERS.				Persons over 21 years who cannot read and write.	Persons of color.	Deaf, dumb, idiotic, insane, or lame.		
														Native.	Foreign.	Alien.	Free.					
112	Frame	129	28	Daniel Smith	56	M		Owner	Connecticut	1		5	Iron									
				Sally	12	F		Wife	Otsego	1												
				Lucy	2	F		Daughter	Chautauqua													
				Daniel	2	M		Son	Chautauqua													
				Sarah	2	F		Mother	Connecticut	1		99	Iron									

Figure 11. Sally Smith Listing in 1855 New York State Census.

By comparing the entries for the family of Daniel D. Smith in the 1860 Federal Census in Figure 8 and the entry for Daniel Smith in the 1855 New York State Census in Figure 11 it is clear that both families lived in the Town of Ellery. Daniel Sr has his age change from 56 to 61 and Lucy has her age change from 19 to 24, but she is the wife of Zenas Young in the neighboring residence in 1860. Daniel, Jr. has his age change from 16 to 22 and Sarah who was Daniel Sr.’s “Mother” is aged 78 in 1855 and does not appear in in the 1860 Federal Census. This looks very much like the same family in the two census reports, except that the name of the wife is “Sally” in 1855 and “Sarah” in 1860. An important point is that Sally was a common nickname for Sarah at that time, so these are very likely to be the same families.

If these two census entries are in fact for the same families, Sarah Maxham Smith was born in Otsego County, New York according to the 1855 New York State Census in Figure 11. This would place Silas and Abigail Maxham in Otsego County in 1804, before they appeared in Orwell, Oswego County, New York in 1807 or 1808. It was noted in the introduction that Abigail Maxham’s parents Daniel and Sarah Cushman Hewes moved to Springfield, Otsego County, New York around 1812; so there could be a connection. There is one discrepancy, since the 1860 Federal Census records Daniel D. Smith’s birthplace as “New York” and the 1855 New York State Census lists it as “Connecticut”.

Additional information to show that these two entries refer to the same family comes from 1850 Federal Census records for the Town of Ellery in Chautauqua County, New York that were made quite difficult to find since Daniel Smith is listed as “Danl Smith”, as shown in Figure 12.



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Dwellings houses, the order of visitation.	Families numbered in the order of visitation.	The Name of every Person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1850, was in this family.	DESCRIPTION.			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each Male Person over 15 years of age.	Value of Real Estate owned.	PLACE OF BIRTH. Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Married within the year.		Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.
			Age.	Sex.	White, black, or mulatto.				Attended School within the year.	Remained 21 years of age or more since marriage.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2262	2402	Daniel Smith	31	M		Farmer	1000	"			
		Elly	46	F				"			
		Julia	24	M		Farmer's Son		"			
		Lucy	19	F				"		1	
		Daniel	11	M				"		1	
		Angelina	19	F				"			
		Leah	73	F				"			

This listing for Daniel Smith in 1850 is recorded on the same page as the entry for the Valorous Maxham family, just like the entry for the 1860 Federal Census in Figure 8. The issue of particular importance in the 1850 Federal Census entry is that the wife of Daniel Smith is listed as “Sally”, just like the 1855 New York State Census in Figure 11. The Ages for Daniel Sr., Sarah (Sally) and Lucy all change appropriately across all three census reports for 1850, 1855 and 1860. The entry for Daniels mother Sarah changes appropriately for the 1850 and 1855 census reports. Silas (aged 24) and Aurelia (aged 19) in the 1850 Federal Census were very likely children of Daniel and Sarah Maxham Smith who married before the 1855 New York State Census was taken. The reported place of birth for Daniel Smith is recorded as New York in the 1850 Census. This leaves no doubt that all three census records are referring to the same family, and the possibility that Sarah Maxham was born in Otsego County in 1804 is plausible. However, it is also quite evident from the case for Daniel Smith that errors can definitely be contained in the census reports for the reported place of birth.

It was noted in the first paragraph of the introduction that Electa Maxham Hunt was a daughter of Silas and Abigail Hewes Maxham. This is known based on information from two applications to Sons of the American Revolution, where documentation was provided to show her parentage and that Abigail Hewes Maxham was the daughter of Daniel and Sarah Cushman Hewes. The application also states that Electa Maxham married Aaron Hunt and that she was born in 1813 and died in 1844. The entry probably was meant to note that she died sometime 'after 1844', given the recorded birthdate of her son in the application document.

Electa Maxham Hunt is buried next to her husband Aaron at Dewittville Cemetery in the town of Chautauqua in Chautauqua County, New York and her gravestone is shown in Figure 13.



Electa M  
Hunt  
June 24, 1814  
Jan. 3, 1885

Figure 13. Gravestone of Electa Maxham Hunt.

The gravestone in Figure 13 gives her lifespan as June 24, 1814 to January 3, 1885; which is most likely correct. New York State Census reports for 1855, 1865 and 1875 all list Electa Maxham Hunt with a birthplace in Oneida County, New York; which is completely consistent with the discussion following Figure 1 regarding Silas Maxham residing there in 1810.

### *Orpha Maxham Fenton*

The initial formal link between Silas Maxham and Orpha Fenton was observed in the 1855 New York State Census report in Figure 7 that shows Hibbard Fenton with his wife Orpha Fenton, their children, and with the additional listing of Silas Maxham with his relationship given as “Father”. This relationship is further documented in the obituary of Mrs. Hibbard P. Fenton from the Jamestown Evening Journal, May 24, 1897, page 6 as shown in Figure 14.

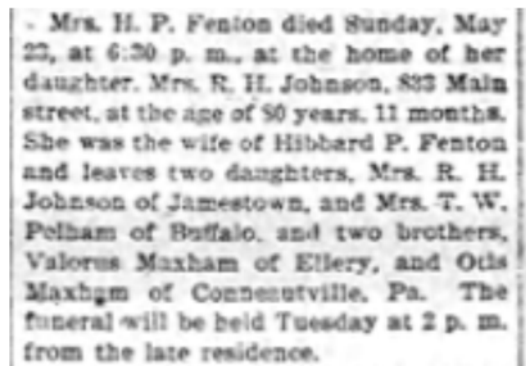


Figure 14. Obituary of Orpha Maxham Fenton.



The primary point of interest from this obituary is that Orpha Fenton had two surviving brothers, Valorus Maxham of Ellery, NY and Otis Maxham of Conneautville, PA. So Orpha Fenton had two brothers, and her maiden name was Orpha Maxham. Silas Maxham is obviously her father, as listed in the 1855 New York State Census.

Orpha Fenton was enumerated as a resident with Silas Maxham in the 1850 Federal Census in Figure 5, and as a further connection she was also listed as being in the residence of Valorus Maxham in that same Federal Census for the town of Ellery in Chautauqua County, as seen in Figure 15.

**SCHEDULE I.—Free Inhabitants in** *the town of Ellery* **in the County of** *Chautauque* **State** *of New York* **enumerated by me, on the** *24th* **day of** *Sept* **1850.** *Col. C. C. Marshall*

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1	2	3	DESCRIPTION.			7	8	9	10 11 12			13
			Age.	Sex.	Color.				Married within the year.	Attended School within the year.	Persons over 15 years of age who cannot read & write.	
		<i>Marg. J. Kewerlin</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>Y</i>				<i>N.Y.</i>				
		<i>Valorus Maxham</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Farmer</i>	<i>600</i>	<i>"</i>				
		<i>Elcaner</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>Y</i>				<i>"</i>				
		<i>Eliza</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>Y</i>				<i>"</i>	<i>1</i>			
		<i>Orpha M.</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Y</i>				<i>"</i>				
		<i>Orpha Fenton</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>Y</i>				<i>"</i>				
		<i>Charles</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>M</i>				<i>N.Y.</i>	<i>1</i>			
		<i>Harvey E.</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Y</i>				<i>N.Y.</i>				

Figure 15. Valorus Maxum Listing in 1850 Federal Census.

Orpha Maxham Fenton is buried at Lakeview Cemetery in Jamestown, Chautauqua County, New York, next to her husband Hibbard Pulaski Fenton. A photograph of her gravestone is shown in Figure 16, where her lifespan is given as 1816 to 1897. Based on records from Lakeview Cemetery, Orpha Maxham Fenton was born on June 4, 1816 and she died on May 23, 1897. These cemetery records also indicate that Orpha Fenton was the daughter of Silas and Abigail Maxham and that her middle name was Elizabeth. She is listed in the New York State Census entries for 1855, 1865 and 1875 with a consistently reported birthplace in Oneida County, New York.



Hibbard P. Fenton  
1821 – 1905  
Orpha E. Fenton  
1816 – 1897

Figure 16. Gravestone of Orpha Maxham Fenton.

### ***Otis H. Maxham***

Otis Maxham was first identified as being the male between 20 and 29 who was enumerated as being in the household headed by Silas Maxham in the 1840 Federal Census for Chautauqua County, New York in Figure 4. The direct evidence that he was a son of Silas and Abigail Maxham comes from the obituary of Orpha Maxham Fenton in Figure 14.

Otis H. Maxham was listed in the town of Ellery, Chautauqua County in the 1850 Federal Census as shown in Figure 17, and most of his siblings were also enumerated there, or elsewhere in Chautauqua County. He is listed there with his wife Emily Cleland Maxham and their son Marcena Maxham at age one. The residence of Otis Maxham is noted as being in Conneautville, PA in the 1897 obituary of Orpha Maxham Fenton, and Otis did not stay in New York for very long after the 1850 Federal Census was taken. He is listed as a resident of Meadville, Cussewago Township, Crawford County, Pennsylvania in the 1860 Federal Census, as shown in Figure 18. Emily Cleland Maxham gave birth to their son George (age 3 in the 1860 Federal Census) in Pennsylvania in 1856 and she then died shortly after that, so she does not appear in the 1860 Federal Census. Otis Maxham did not appear in the 1855 New York State Census, so there is no indication of his place of birth in New York, but it was almost certainly Oneida County. The family of Otis H Maxham very likely moved to Pennsylvania before the 1855 Census was taken in New York.



26  
2458259

**SCHEDULE I.—Free Inhabitants in** the town of Clay **in the County of** Franklin **State** of New York **enumerated by me, on the** 28th **day of** Sept **1850.** C. C. C. **Ass't Marshal.**

Dwelling-houses numbered in the order of visitation.	Families numbered in the order of visitation.	The Name of every Person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1850, was in this family.	DESCRIPTION.			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each Male Person over 15 years of age.	Value of Real Estate owned.	Place of Birth, Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Married within the year.	Attended School within the year.	Persons over 20 years of age who cannot read & write.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.
			Age.	Sex.	White, black, or mulatto.							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
33	2458259	Otis Maxum	31	M		Farmer	900					
34		Emily	32	F								
35		Marcena	1	F								

Figure 17. Otis Maxum Listing in 1850 Federal Census.

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**SCHEDULE 1.—Free Inhabitants in** Conneautville Township **in the County of** Crawford **State** of Penna **enumerated by me, on the** 27th **day of** June **1860.** R. V. Dickinson **Ass't Marshal.**

**Post Office** McAdill

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Dwelling-houses numbered in the order of visitation.	Families numbered in the order of visitation.	The name of every person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1860, was in this family.	DESCRIPTION.			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male and female, over 15 years of age.	VALUE OF ESTATE OWNED.		Place of Birth, Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Married within the year.	Attended School within the year.	Persons over 20 years of age who cannot read & write.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.
			Age.	Sex.	White, black, or mulatto.		Value of Real Estate.	Value of Personal Estate.					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
35	1379/1325	Nancy Colawson	62	F			1800	50	Pa				
36		Otis K. Maxham	41	M		Farmer		400	N.Y.				
37		Pemelia "	31	F					"				
38		Marcena "	10	F					"				
39		George "	8	M					Pa				
40		Catherine Kinn	29	F		Concluded			"				
No. white males, <u>18</u>			No. colored males, _____			No. foreign born, _____			No. blind, _____				
No. white females, <u>19</u>			No. colored females, _____			No. deaf and dumb, _____			No. insane, _____				
						<u>1730</u>			<u>6650</u>				
									No. idiotic, _____				
									No. paupers, _____				
												No. convicts, _____	

Figure 18. Otis Maxham Listing in 1860 Federal Census.

The 1995 Knauff Genealogy traces the further movements of Otis Maxham and his children in considerable detail. He is buried at Conneautville Cemetery, in Conneautville, Crawford County, PA in agreement with Orpha Maxham Fenton's obituary. His lifespan is given as March 30, 1818 to April 22, 1909.

### Valorus Maxham

Valorus Maxham has appeared in the near proximity of other Maxham Family members in census reports, and his direct link to identify him as a son of Silas and Abigail Maxham is

provided in the obituary of Orpha Maxham Fenton in Figure 14. Census records indicate that his wife was named Eleanor. Records from the Dewittville Cemetery in Chautauqua, Chautauqua County, New York indicate that he is buried there with a lifespan 1812 to 1899 and that he was a son of Silas Maxham.

The recorded birthplace for Valorus Maxham in the New York State Census reports provide absolutely no insight regarding the location of the family when he was born in 1812. The 1855 Census states that he was born in Oneida County, the 1865 Census states that he was born in Oswego County and the 1875 Census states that he was born in Otsego County.

### ***Daniel Maxham***

The family of Daniel Maxham is located directly next to Silas Maxham in the 1850 Federal Census in Figure 5. His wife's name is given as Cornelia, with children Herbert (aged 9), Annett (aged 5) and Jay (aged 3). Daniel Maxham is also registered in the 1855 New York State Census, where it is stated that he was born in Oneida County.

Records from Dewittville Cemetery in Chautauqua, Chautauqua County, New York indicate that Cornelia Maxham died on November 11, 1855 and that Daniel Maxham died on February 9, 1856 so there are no other census reports for Daniel Maxham. Daniel Maxham did leave a will that is recorded in a listing of Chautauqua County Wills for 1844-1856, Volume 2, page 363. The will was signed on February 8, 1856, the day before he died. The will gives his age as 48 and he leaves \$1300 to son Herbert Otis Maxham, \$700 to daughter Annette Lucy Maxham, and everything else to sons Jay Maxham and Valorus Lafayette Maxham. The executors of the will were Franklin Leet and Valorus Maxham. Peter Smith has a copy of the complete will that was filed for Daniel Maxham and he reports that it states "Ordered, that notice be given to Silas Maxham the grandfather of said minors..." This leaves no doubt that Daniel Maxham was the son of Silas and Abigail Hewes Maxham. The two minor children Jay and Valorus Lafayette of Daniel Maxham are residing in the home of Valorus Maxham in the 1860 Federal Census, as shown in Figure 8. Valorus Lafayette Maxham was still residing with Valorus and Eleanor Maxham in the 1865 New York State Census.

If Daniel Maxham was aged 48 on February 8, 1856, as stated in his will, he was born in 1807 or 1808, depending on when his birthday fell. This year of birth would be very close to the time of the movement of the Silas Maxham Family from Oswego County to Oneida County.



## Appendix

History of Oswego County, New York: with illustrations and biographical sketches of some of its prominent men and pioneers. Crisfield Johnson, Higginson Book Company, 1877, page 297.

—1789.—

HISTORY  
—OF—  
OSWEGO COUNTY,

NEW YORK.

—WITH—

Illustrations and Biographical Sketches

—OF—

SOME OF ITS PROMINENT MEN AND PIONEERS.

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PUBLISHED BY L. H. EVERTS & CO.,  
714-16 Filbert Street, Philadelphia.

—1877.—



## OR WELL.

"THE year of the great eclipse," 1806, otherwise known as "the dark days," is an epoch often referred to by the few now surviving who were then old enough to remember that startling phenomenon.

In that year Frederick Eastman and Jesse Merrill, with their families, made their residence on the north bank of the Salmon river, about a mile below the site of the present village of Molino or Pekin, being the first settlers within the limits of the present town of Orwell. One of Mr. Eastman's children was Elliott, who, being born with the century, was then six years old, and is now seventy-seven,—being a resident of Molino, and the sole survivor of the little party which took possession of Orwell in behalf of the white race seventy-one years ago.

His memory flies back readily along the intervening path of time to the "year of the great eclipse," and to him we are indebted for much of the early part of the town history.

For a year the two families dwelt alone in the wilderness. In 1807, Nathaniel Bennett and Nathaniel Bennett, Jr., settled in the same locality, and Captain George W. Noyes located on the site of Orwell Corners. Noyes moved away after a few years, but the Bennett family has ever since remained in the vicinity of the place of its first location. In 1807 or 1808, also, Silas Maxham settled half a mile east of Pekin, and Elias Mason made his home near Salmon river falls. In 1808 or 1809, Timothy Balch came from Sandy Creek, and built a log house at Orwell Corners. His son John, who was then sixteen, is now, at the age of eighty-five, the earliest surviving resident of that village.

Old Mr. Balch, who had lived in what is now Sandy Creek but two or three years, had been, like many others, attracted away from the valley of the Mohawk to this northern region by the excellence of the water. That around Utica was not good enough for them. Yet, much as the settlers liked good water, they also liked good whisky, and Mr. Balch soon began selling it to them. This was about all that was necessary in those days to constitute an inn-keeper, and Mr. Balch's house consequently ranks as the first hotel in Orwell.

In 1808, David Eastman, son of Frederick, and Betsey Bennett, daughter of Nathaniel, were united by the first marriage ever celebrated in Orwell. Their daughter Sally, afterwards the wife of Silas Clark, was the first white child born within the same limits, and the young mother was the first victim of death, unless it was old Mrs. Balch, Timothy's mother, who died in 1810, about the same time as Mrs. Bennett.

And what manner of country was it in which was thus begun the hard task of subduing the wilderness to the uses of civilization,—in which was thus opened the unending drama of wedlock, of birth, and of death?

The territory of the present town of Orwell, on the eastern side, was high and rocky, and covered with numerous evergreens,—piñes, hemlocks, spruce, etc. The ground descended westward, but was still uneven, though the soil was well adapted to cultivation. Here, besides an abundance of hemlock, were large quantities of beech, maple, and the other hard-wood trees common in an American forest.

Through the southeastern portion of the tract ran Salmon river, following a southwesterly direction, and a large part of the way flowing through a deep gorge lined on either side with immense walls of earth and rock, overhung with evergreens at the top.

The earliest pioneers, as they made their way cautiously into the untried country before them, following the bank of the Salmon river as their only guide, heard afar up the stream the thunder of falling water, and on progressing still farther, saw the river plunging over a precipice more than a hundred feet high into a dark abyss below. The cataract need not be more particularly described here, as we shall have occasion to refer to it again, a few pages farther on.

It is almost needless to say that these hills furnished admirable covert for unnumbered deer, bears, wolves, and panthers, and for multitudes of the smaller animals then so common in the forests of New York. Salmon in immense numbers came up the river—so properly named after them—as far as the falls, and the early settlers could eke out their scanty supplies by illimitable quantities of this savory fish. In fact, it was so abundant as to lose its savor to the palates of many of its too frequent partakers. As in the case of the traditional hired man and the bean-porridge, they liked it well enough for sixty or seventy meals, but didn't want it for a steady diet.

The territory under consideration was then known as survey-township No. 11 of the Boylston tract, and in official documents was sometimes denominated Longinus. Municipally speaking, it was, at the time of its first settlement in 1806, a part of Williamstown, Oneida county, but in 1807 it was included in the new town of Richland.

Settlers came slowly in, for there was more level land a little farther west, though perhaps it was not superior in the quality of its soil. In 1810 or 1811 a man named Millan Aiken built the first saw-mill in town. It was situated on Salmon river, above the falls, at the point now occupied by the Cross mill. A little later one James Hughes built a trip-hammer shop on the little creek which runs through Pekin, and about eighty rods below that point. Here scythes and axes were forged by the pioneer Vulcan, rudely finished, it is true, but perhaps all the better fitted for the rough work of that primitive period.