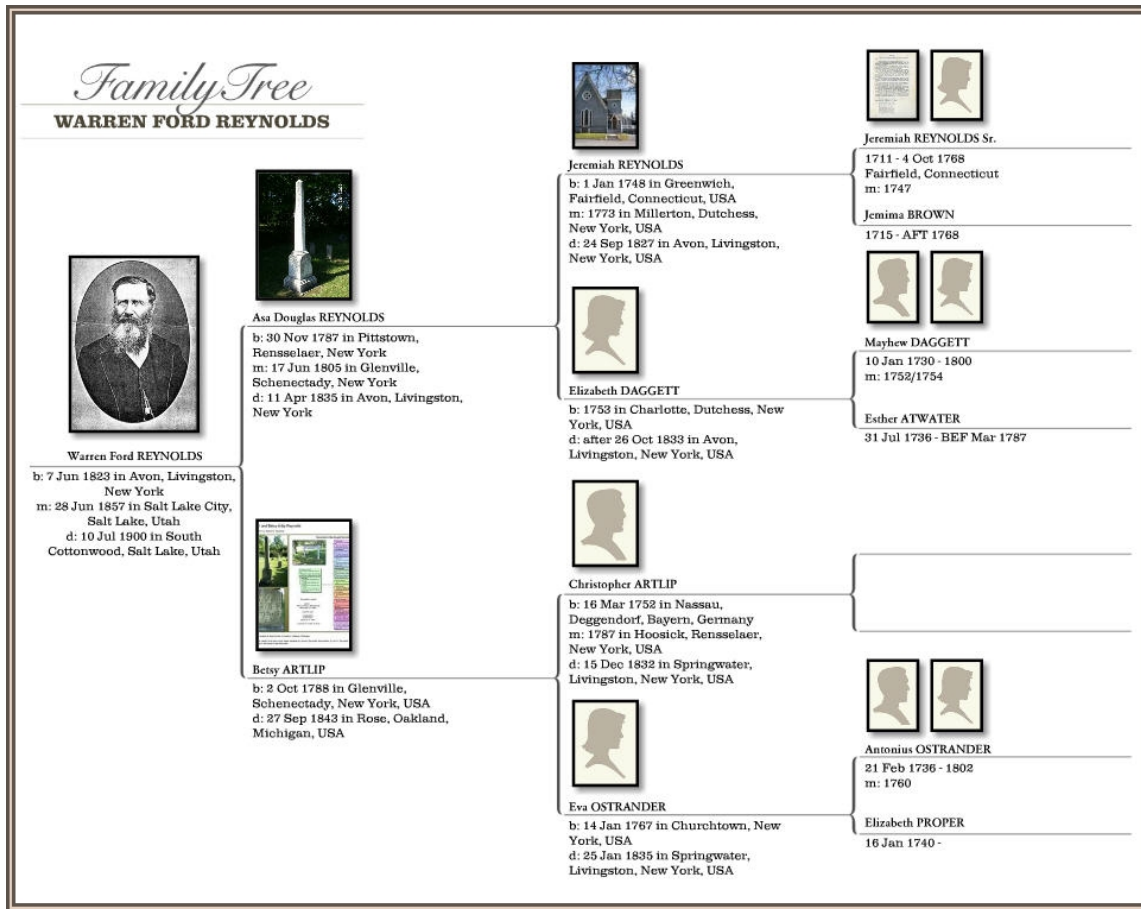


## The Setting of the Asa D. Reynolds Family Just Before Warren's Birth



### Westward Move to the Genesee

In the early 1800s many of Jeremiah and Elizabeth's family had removed to Saratoga and Schenectady counties where Jeremiah was said to have made his living as a "green" Grocer. While their firstborn son Shubal and his wife Hannah Daggett remained in Glenville until their deaths in 1854 and 1859, respectively, other members including the families of second son Levi and third son Asa Douglas decided to try their fortunes on lands that were "opening up" to the west. The Genesee Valley in western New York looked especially promising. By the end of the war of 1812, large tracts of land had been "put to the chain" and were being divided and offered by controlling interests and individuals such as the Wadsworth brothers, William and James. Advertisements were

made and compelling stories told of the beauty and fertility of this land of rolling hills and scenic lakes. Timbers of white oak, Linden, ash, cherry and precious sycamore were abundant. And, in the flat areas the soils were said to be of deep alluvium capable of yielding the best grasses, fruits and wheat. So fresh was the clinging occurrence of the previous native landowners that even the smells of the Iroquois nation still hung in the air. Members of Levi and Asa's generation could relate first hand knowledge of the stores of grain and the fruit orchards purposely destroyed by the advancing government agents in their quest to drive the natives from their presence. In later years when the artifacts of the native Indians and their locations were scientifically recorded by the State it was as if the whole Genesee was a land of archeological bounty – mounds and evidence of prior humans were everywhere – as one man was alleged to have said: “you want to find an arrowhead? Just dig down, you'll find it.” Wildlife abounded too -- deer, bear, and wolf with ample food and prey. (1)

### Log Cabins and Rented Land

Living conditions at this time in our Nation's history were harsh. The land was being opened up and cultivated for the first time; much clearing was needed to make room for the growing of crops. Housing was crude and unhealthy. Dwellings were log structures with cramped space. Disease was prevalent and the practice of medicine was in its modern infancy. People moved often from place to place seeking their fortunes; a formal education in most cases was nonexistent.

It was in this exciting atmosphere of westward movement that several members of Jeremiah and Elizabeth's family, were stirred to take their young families and experience the new frontier, firsthand. Sometime during 1917 Levi, Asa Douglas, and Elizabeth, with her husband John Kennicutt, gathered their families, packed their wagons once again, and moved further west settling in the vicinity of Avon in the Genesee Valley. Whether they moved independently or as a caravan together is not known. (2) On an acreage of rented farmland, just east of the Genesee River and two miles south of the town of Avon, Asa and Betsy settled in with their growing family. Indeed, they were as much pioneers in the true sense of the word as those to follow later who trekked across the trails and plains of the west. (3)

### 1820 Census

All three of the families mentioned above were located in Avon for the 1820 census, and living close together. Their three households had increased to twenty-eight individuals. Asa D's family included two boys less than ten years of age who cannot be identified, possibly nephews. The census reported those who were involved in agriculture, commerce and manufacturing. The Reynolds family reported agriculture, as did about 90 percent of their neighbors.

In the 1820 census, Jeremiah and Elizabeth were still residing in Glenville, Schenectady County. They did not immediately follow their children west, but they did join the three families mentioned above soon after 1820. John Kennicutt's widowed father Daniel was the first member of the family to die as far west as Avon, New York, which he did on 12 April 1817. Warren's maternal grandparents, Christopher and Eva Ostrander Artlip also came west to be near their children. They found residence at the small village of Springwater, just eighteen miles south of the Reynolds place. Both Christopher and Eva died at Springwater; he on December 15, 1832 and she on January 25, 1835. We know that a close relationship was established and maintained between Warren's family and the Artlip family because in his 1854 letter to Asa he mentioned hearing from his Aunt Lucinda Mosher, wife of Reuben Brace, his mother's youngest brother.

John Kennicutt and seven other members of his family are recorded in the 1820 Avon census. John died in Avon at age 54 leaving three daughters and four sons still at home under the age of nineteen. One month later the oldest of these seven, Amy C., married her cousin Sylvanus Reynolds, son of Shubael and Mercy Lounsbury Reynolds. It is very likely that it was at this point in time that Jeremiah and Elizabeth came to Avon, probably to live with their daughter Elizabeth and her children. In the fall of the following year, after reaching Avon, Jeremiah died on 24 September, 1827 in his eightieth year. We learn from his obituary that he was suffering from a severe and lingering illness.

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1. This paragraph was not sourced as the information contained therein is commonly treated in the various published works treating the history of Livingston County, New York. The words are those of the author and the author alone.

2. The year 1917 is confirmed in the records and written histories of Asa Reynolds provided by Robert Mahaney, M.D.

3. Personal correspondence with Robert C. Mahaney, 24 July, 2009 i.e., "The SUNY at Genesso had maps of land rented then and they show where the Reynolds lived. The county historical society had nothing to add and the county records were burned years ago."  
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By great-grandson Robert N. Reynolds