

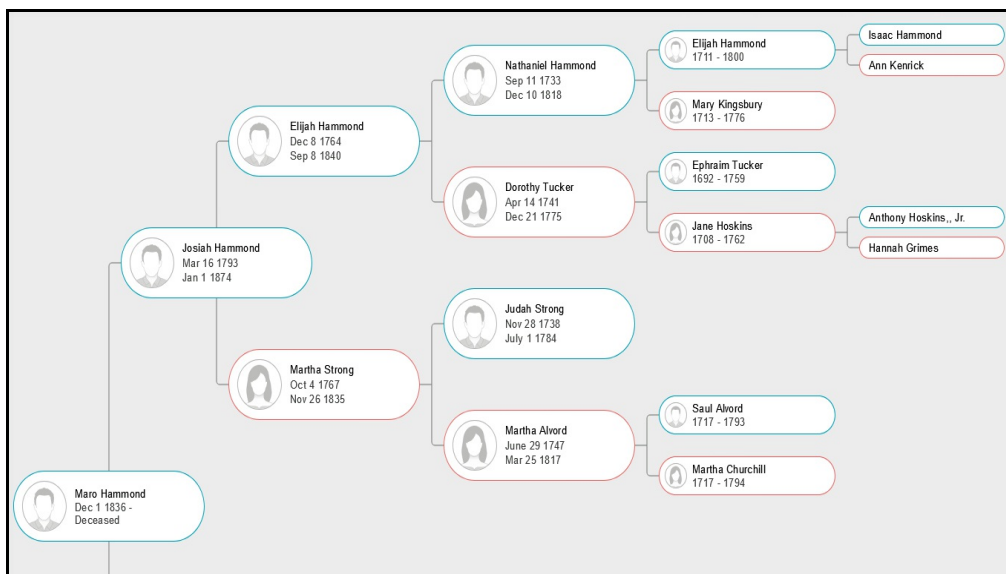
## The Hammond House on Bamforth Road

The Hammond House, at the corner of Bolton and Bamforth, burned at some time before 1900. The date and owners at the time had been lost to memory, however, I recently found by accident a newspaper report of the fire. Following is the story of the Hammond branch who owned the original house and the fire that destroyed it.

The land along Bolton Road and the Tankerhoosen River Valley, much of today's Belding Wildlife Management Area, was first owned by the Thrall Family. Their house, or a modified version of it, still exists on Bolton Road.

In the late 1700's the Thrall family began selling off sections of the land and in 1791 Moses Thrall sold Elijah (2) Hammond eight pieces of land in the valley for 440 pounds (Bolton deed 6-237). It's not clear if there was a house on the property.

The Vernon Hammond's are descendants of early settlers in America. Thomas Hammond, the immigrant, was born in Lavenham, England and settled in Hingham, MA in 1636.



*Maro Hammond's ancestor chart*

A descendant, Elijah (1) Hammond (1711-1800), a carpenter and joiner, came to Coventry, CT in 1730 where he married Mary Kingsbury. About 1750 they moved to Bolton and are the progenitors of the family in Bolton and Vernon. They had three children and are buried in Bolton Center Cemetery.

His grandson Elijah (2) Hammond (1765-1836) married Martha Strong (1767-1835) in 1787. He was a farmer and fireman in Vernon. They had seven children including **Josiah**; Elijah (3) who m. Esther Griswold and were parents of **Rev. Edward Payson**; and **Allen**, who built the New England Mills and was a founder of Rockville Bank.

Elijah (2) was probably the first of the family to move to North Bolton (Vernon) in 1791. He left the Bolton Road property and house to his oldest son Josiah in 1835. In the 1850 census Josiah Hammond is a successful farmer whose real estate is worth \$6,000.

Josiah Strong Hammond (1793-1874) was a farmer and investor in the woolen mills of Rockville. He lived in the house on Bamforth Road where he had only two children Maro (1836-1888) and Rosetta or Rosette (1828-1878). Maro was active in the local and state Republican Party.

Josiah died a widower in 1874. His will divides everything, including property between Maro, age 36, his executor, and his unmarried daughter Rosette. In November 1875 she is deemed by the court insane and she is made Maro's ward.

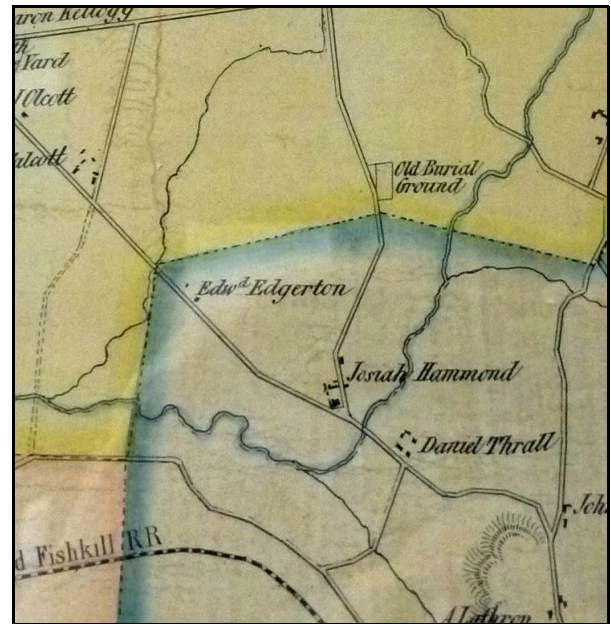
From the *Tolland County Journal*, "In February 1876 Maro and his wife were in Hartford when a fire started and arrived home just as the building was consumed. How the fire originated was a mystery. A young man who was left at home, noticed the smoke, went to check and found the ell in which the kitchen was all ablaze. The neighbors worked hard to stop the fire, but their efforts were unavailing. The winds blew from the barns and they were not affected. Some of the furniture was saved. The loss was stated at \$6,000 with \$3,100 covered by Tolland Mutual."

At the time of the fire Maro had only owned the farm for two years although he had been working it most of his life.

In 1876 Maro goes back to court, has Rosetta declared insane and gets approval to sell her property; selling it on June 15, 1876 just four months after the fire. Two years later In 1878 Rosetta dies without an heir. Presumably Maro gets her assets, which included stock and cash.

Evidence that the house was quickly rebuilt is from the 1880 Agriculture census where Maro has 30 acres tilled, 35 in meadow or orchard, and 40 in woodland. The farm is valued at \$8,000. He hired labor for 33 weeks at \$207. He has only 1 horse, but 2 working oxen, and 5 cows. He made 600 pounds of butter, but sold no milk. He had 2 acres in Indian corn, 2 in oats and 5 in rye. For comparison this is a little larger overall than his neighbor Alfred O. Thrall.

In the regular 1880 census he is living at the farm with his wife and 5 year old son. So the house was probably rebuilt by 1878.



1853 Vernon map with Hammond house

In 1886 Maro at age 50 is not feeling well, has consumption and on July 31, 1886 he sells the 87-acre farm to George Webster. The 87 acres Webster bought extended to Valley Falls Road on the south, north on Bamforth Road beyond the cemetery and included the property and river behind the Thrall house. This is likely the same property Hammond bought from Thrall in 1791. The deed does mention his dwelling house.



*Webster's house in 1900*

About 1887 Maro goes to California and Colorado for TB treatment, his wife staying in Vernon. In January 1888 he dies in Colorado, his body is shipped back and he is buried in the family plot in Elmwood Cemetery. His obituary notes that one of the bearers was A. O. Thrall, a special friend of Maro during their 'boyhood and riper years.' Thrall lived next door on Bolton Road.

Another obituary noted that he was a prominent resident of Vernon and had held many positions of trust in public and private life. He left quite a large estate. His wife inherited all his money, about \$17,000 and moved to Lynn, MA to be near their son.

The Webster family's tenure in the Bamforth Road house is covered in detail at [Tankerhoosen.info/history/webster\\_family.htm](http://Tankerhoosen.info/history/webster_family.htm)



We may learn more when the Rockville newspapers are fully available online.