

CANAWLERS AT REST

HARVEY NEWTON PUTNAM

b. December 10, 1812
d. June 13, 1879

By Carolyn I. Schmidt

Harvey Newton Putnam was born on December 10, 1812, to Malachi and Sarah (Blount) Putnam at Martinsburg, Lewis county, New York. His grandparents on his father's side were Andrew Putman (5-2-1742, 4-26-1819) and Lucy Parks (12-30-1744, 1814). His father, Malachi Putman, was born in Winchester, N.Y. on October 14, 1772, and died in Lowville, N.Y. at age 75 on April 18, 1847. On September 13, 1802, Malachi married Harvey's mother, Sarah, who was born in Herkimer, N.Y. on February 7, 1782, and died on September 12, 1868. Malachi and Sarah are buried in the Old Lowville Cemetery. They had ten children:

Calvin (Col.)	b. 03-20-1804	d. 11-03-1842	NorthAdams, NY
Minerva	b. 05-04-1806	d. 02-27-1809	
Perley	b. 01-24-1808	d.	Martinsburg, NY
Chauncey	b. 05-21-1810	d.	Danbury, CT
Harvey	b. 12-10-1813	d. 06-13-1879	Ft. Wayne, IN
John	b. 01-02-1815	d.	Postville, IA
Minerva	b. 07-05-1817	d.	Watertown, NY
Sereno J M	b. 12-20-1820	d. 08-20-1891	Janesville, WN
Seymour	b. 02-02-1822	d.	
Elizabeth A	b. 05-18-1824	d. 09-20-1886	Watertown, NY

Harvey's childhood was spent in mercantile pursuits in order to help support his siblings. By age 30 he had become a well-to-do general storekeeper and postmaster at Martinsburg, New York. He married Alvira L. (?) of Lowville, New York, who was born circa 1818. They had a daughter, Annette Elizabeth (Eliza), who was born in 1840, in Martinsburg.

In 1844 Harvey, Alvira and little Eliza left Buffalo, New York, by lake for Toledo, Ohio. At Toledo they boarded a canal boat for Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

At Ft. Wayne Harvey secured a job as bookkeeper at Smith & Foote's distillery. The establishment was located on the Wabash & Erie Canal basin just east

of the Comparet property. He worked there for five years before going into the grocery business at the northeast corner of Clinton and Columbia streets. Today this site is the parking garage for the Ft. Wayne City/County Building.

Due to poor health, Harvey gave up the grocery and became a canal boat captain of one of Hill & Orbison's fast passenger packets. He pursued this job for three summers. Later he was honored by having a canal boat, which ran on the eastern division of the canal, bear his name.

In 1857-58 Harvey represented the first ward on the Ft. Wayne city council. At the same time he worked in Messrs. Oakley & French's hardware store as a bookkeeper.

Sometime in the late 1850s Annette Elizabeth Putnam, Harvey's daughter, married Andrew Rodgers Henderson (3-31-1826, 5-15-1898), who had come to Ft. Wayne from New York in 1857 to take charge of a large woolen mill. He had been the superintendent of a woolen mill in the east. They lived at 115 East Wayne Street beside her parents' home. The site of these homes is now a one-half block long park beside One Summit Square.

Andrew and Eliza had one son, Charles W. Henderson, who was born circa 1861. The 1860 census shows Andrew's personal estate of \$175. He was 33 and she was 20 years old. It also shows Harvey owning property worth \$1,000 and a personal estate of \$200.

Harvey held his bookkeeping job until being elected in 1861 to become Ft. Wayne's city treasurer in 1862. He acted as treasurer for two years before returning to the hardware store for six months.

Once again his health became so bad that he moved to his farm four miles north of the city. He stayed there three years before returning in 1867 to Ft. Wayne to engage in the grocery business on Columbia street near Clinton with his son-in-law, A. R. Henderson. He left this job in 1868. He then worked for the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago Railway. The 1870 census shows him as a railroad bookkeeper with a personal estate of \$1,000.

On October 5, 1873 a scathing article entitled "Ward Workers" appeared in the *Ft. Wayne Gazette* that casts a light on how Harvey was perceived by his fellowmen. It was about politics and elections in the first ward of Ft. Wayne. When talking about the first ward it said that after Wm. Wadington's death it was assumed that his council seat would be turned over in fee simple to Henry Monning; however, this was not the case. It

said:

"Mr. Monning is an intelligent and shrewd German, and possesses an immense influence over the German Catholic vote, which largely predominates in this ward. It is true that at one time Mr. M. could commend nearly the entire Democratic vote of this ward, and, coupled with Mr. Wadington, was irresistible; but that time has passed. There is another large element in the ward composed of employees of the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago Railway shops, and these men became enraged at Mr. Monning a year ago last spring. Harry Campbell, foreman of the Pittsburgh blacksmith shop, was the regular Democratic nominee for Councilman, his opponent being **Honest Cap. Putnam**, the present incumbent. The railroad men, when the polls closed, found that Campbell had been defeated by a majority of fifteen and they openly charged Mr. Monning with casting his vote and influence for **Capt. Putman**. Mr. Monning, we believe stoutly denied the terrible charge of infidelity to his party, but last year when he ran for Council, the matter was brought up against him, and Mr. McKean, the Independent candidate, received the solid support of the railroad interest, carrying the ward by a majority of sixty."

The article ended by saying, "As the natural result of the petty quarrels above referred to, the First Ward, which really has a Democratic majority of over a hundred, is represented in the Council by two wide awake, active Republicans — Mr. W. T. McKean and **Capt. H. N. Putnam**. Would that the Democrats would quarrel more in other wards!"

In 1875 citizens of Ft. Wayne agitated for a municipally-owned waterworks system. According to *The Pictorial History of Fort Wayne, Indiana*, "The owners of the disused [St. Joseph] feeder canal, which brought the waters of the St. Joseph river into the city limits from a point seven miles north of the town, sought to sell the artificial waterway to the city under the claim that the water supply was sufficient and the quality satisfactory. Two factions engaged in a controversy over the advisability of using the canal water, while others were firm in the belief that the entire question should be deferred for further consideration. The council, however, engaged a competent hydraulic engineer, Moses Lane, who prepared and submitted plans for a system of water supply. The canal owners offered to construct a plant in accordance with the Lane plan at a cost of \$380,000, including the laying of 21.8 miles of pipe and the erection of a standpipe five feet in diameter and two hundred feet high.

"A majority of the members of the council favored the use of the canal water, but their further action was stopped by a restraining order secured by certain citizens, and before the time set for the point at is-

sue a councilmanic election was held which resulted in the defeat of every candidate who favored the use of canal water.

"The successful candidates [in the 1876 election], together with the hold-over members, were **N. H. Putnam**, **C. Hettler**, **E. L. Chittenden**, **E. Zorbaugh**, **W. H. Withers**, **D. B. Strobe**, **Joshua Holmes**, **Henry Schnelker**, **C. F. Pfeiffer**, **W. T. McKean**, **J. B. White**, **M. Baltes**, **C. A. Munson**, **D. L. Harding**, **T. Hogan**, **Silas Tam**, **Frank Wittenburg** and **John Wilkinson**."

His health caused Harvey to retire from his business ventures. However, he returned to the city council three times representing the first ward. At the time of his death he was serving his fourth term there. He was elected council man in 1857-58, 1873-74, 1876-77 and 1879.

Harvey was a devout and consistent member of the First Presbyterian Church. He acted as a collector for the church for years.

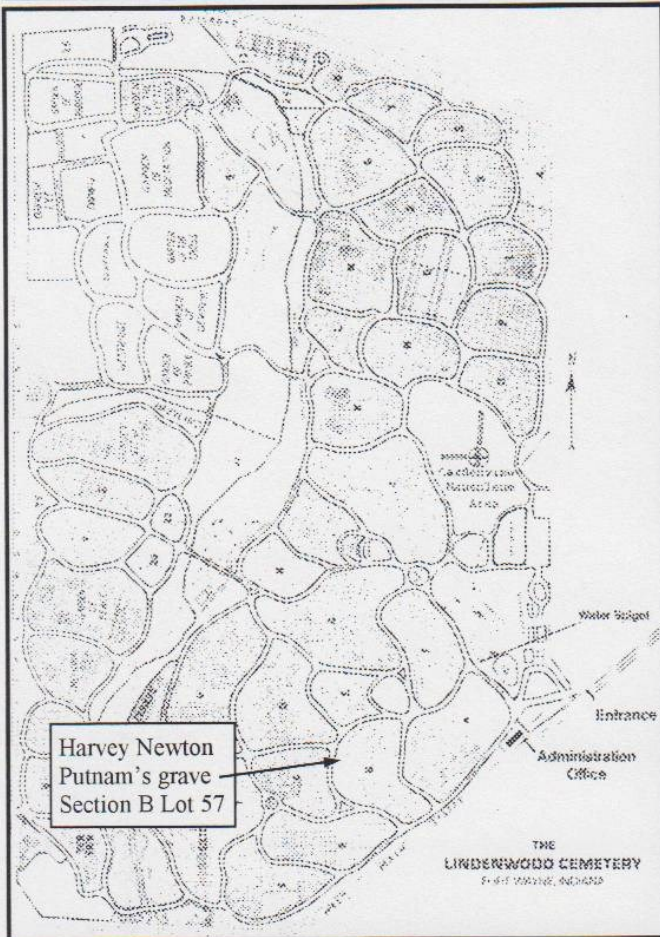
Although he had been an invalid most of his life Harvey was not seriously ill until May 28, 1879, when, while out and about, he became so ill that he had to be taken to his home and put to bed, never to rise. He was unconscious for the last few days of his life. He died at his home at 117 East Wayne Street at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, June 13, 1879, of kidney disease.

On Saturday night, June 14, 1879, the city council met to adopt the usual resolutions of condolence. His funeral was held at the First Presbyterian church at 3 p.m. on June 15, 1879. The city council, city officials and entire police force accompanied his remains to Lindenwood Cemetery in Ft. Wayne. His grave in Section B Lot 57 Grave 2 is marked by a small insignificant head stone.

His obituary described Harvey as "an upright citizen, sterling, faithful city office, an honorable gentleman and the devoted head of a happy family." He was said to have lived quietly and to have died without a struggle.

Surviving Harvey were Alvira, his wife; Elizabeth, his daughter the wife of A. R. Henderson; Charles W. Henderson, his grandson; a brother in Waukesha, WI; a brother in Adams county, NY; a sister in Watertown, Jefferson county, NY and a sister at Lowville, Lewis county, NY.

Alvira L. Putnam lived in her home next to her daughter and son-in-law for a while. The 1919 census shows her boarding with Christian Velos along with 9 other lodgers. She died on November 11, 1889, at the



Harvey Newton
Putnam's grave
Section B Lot 57

Map of Lindenwood Cemetery, Ft. Wayne, Indiana from
Pioneers Resting in Historic Lindenwood

age of 71. She was buried beside Harvey in Grave 1 in Lindenwood Cemetery. She has no headstone.

Annette Elizabeth (Putnam) Henderson died November 3, 1919. She is buried between her father and her husband, Andrew Rodgers Henderson, who died May 15, 1898.

Neither Alvira nor Eliza had headstones. No obituaries were found for them. Alvira's name was not even given in Harvey's obituary. She was noted simply as his aged wife and Eliza was noted as Mrs. A. R. Henderson.

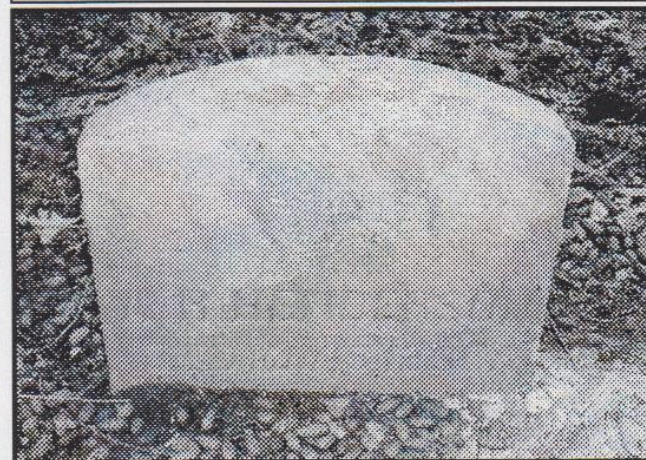
Charles W. Henderson, Harvey's grandson, went to Oregon. No information was found on him there.



H. N. PUTNAM



Above: H.N. Putnam on top of stone and Died June 13, 1879
Aged 66 Y. 6 M. 3 D. on its side
Below: A.R. Henderson Died May 15, 1898, Harvey's son-in-law
Photos by Bob Schmidt



Sources:

- "A Good Man Gone. Death of Councilman H. N. Putnam." *Fort Wayne Daily Gazette*. June 14, 1879.
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- Griswold, B. J. *The Pictorial History of Fort Wayne, Indiana*. Chicago, IL: Robert O. Law Company, 1817.
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- Lindenwood Cemetery Burial and Interment Records. *Pioneers Resting in Historic Lindenwood*. Ft. Wayne, IN: Lindenwood Historical Foundation, 1978.
- Putnam, Eben. *A History of the Putnam Family in England and America*. Salem, MA: The Salem Press Company, 1908.

Special thanks to Rebekah Ashley for her help in locating cemetery records and grave sites for the Putnams and Hendersons in Lindenwood Cemetery.