

Over 200 years of the Fowler Family: The Brooks, Bartletts, Blanchards, and Rices

This document is part of the story about the Fowler family of Gratiot and Isabella Counties in central Michigan and their roots in America. In this section, we discuss the roots of Nellie Pearl Brooks (1873-1960), daughter of Elisha Hall Brooks (1818-1891) and Laura Jane Bartlett Brooks (1830-1908). Nellie became the wife of Anson James Fowler (1866 Coe, Isabella, MI – 1959 Traverse City MI) in 1893. For the history of the Fowler side and the lineage of the women the Fowler men married, all but Nellie Pearl Brooks, see <http://MelissaCravenFowler.com> and choose “Tom’s Ancestry” tab. You will also find other materials there, such as descendent charts.

We will break Nellie’s ancestry into paternal and maternal sides, beginning with the generation that is as far back in time as we can, and work forward to each subsequent generation, discussing not just the husband but also the wife of each generation, and then also reaching back to discuss the wife’s ancestors.



Anson and Nellie Brooks Fowler with their first two great-grandsons, Ron and Tom, about 1945

Nellie Brooks’ mother’s family, The Bartletts and Rices

Nellie’s parents were Elisha Hall Brooks (1818 Braceville, OH – 1891 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI) and Laura Jane Bartlett (1830 Gustavus, Trumbull OH – 1908 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI), married in 1844.

And Laura Jane was the daughter of Otis R. Bartlett (1802 Brompton, Quebec, Canada – 1897 Pine River, Gratiot, MI) and Zipporah Coats Bartlett (1806 NY – 1882 Coe, Isabella, MI).

- The first Bartlett in the Bartlett lineage of whom we are sure, was Roswell Bartlett (1780 Massachusetts – 1866 Trumull Co. Ohio) who married Olive J. Rice (1783 Brookfield, Worcester, MA – 1850 Green Twp, Trumbull, OH) in 1799. We have been unable to determine who Roswell’s parents were, but there were Bartlett families having children during

the same period that Roswell was born -- in the towns of Amesbury, Plymouth, Shutesbury, Beverly, Brookfield, Williamsburg, Campton, Edgartown, and Nantucket, Massachusetts. So it was a vast family. And there have been 20 Bartlett immigrant-ancestors identified by the Bartlett Society ¹ !! One family tree at Ancestry (OPD and uncorroborated) provides us with a possible brother for Roswell, Joseph Bartlett (b 1784 Massachusetts), but other trees describe three or more Joseph Bartletts born in 1784 and '85 in Massachusetts, so even if accurate, this is not much of a clue.

Olive J. Rice, was one of seven children born to Enoch Rice (1746 Westborough, Worcester, MA – 1843 Greene Twp, Trumbull, OH) and Olive Bruce Rice (1749 Westborough, Worcester, MA – 1837 Greene Twp, Trumbull, OH), and was descended from multiple lines of early Massachusetts settlers (including surnames King, Wheeler, Forbush, Maynard/Mainard, Morse, Ward, and Bruce).

Notable was her great-great-grandfather Thomas Rice (1654 Sudbury MA – abt 1748 Westborough MA), whose father and grandfather had come to the Colonies in 1638. There is a massive amount of genealogical information on this line ², so we are not going to repeat it all here, but here is a taste:

Thomas Rice (1654 – 1747), a member of the Great and General Court of Massachusetts representing Marlborough in 1715 and 1716 and a founder of Westborough, Massachusetts on 18 November 1717, and a selectman for the town in 1718 and 1727. Thomas was the grandson of Edmund Rice, a 1638 immigrant from England and founder of Sudbury. Rice's brother Jonas was an early resident and founder of Worcester. Rice was among the first to settle prior to 1675 in the southwestern portion of Marlborough known as Chauncey, the portion of Marlborough that later became Westborough. Rice's home was a fortified garrison house that was used by area settlers for refuge from Indian raids during King Philip's War 1675-1676. During Queen Anne's War in 1704, two of Rice's sons, Adonijah and Ashur, were abducted from a flax field in Marlborough by Mohawk raiders from Canada. He was one of the founding members of the town on 18 November 1717, and one of the original members of the Congregational Church at Westborough begun by Ebenezer Parkman in 1724. He represented the Town of Marlborough in the Great and General Court of Massachusetts, the colonial legislature in Boston in 1715 and 1716. And he served as a selectman in Westborough in the years 1718 and 1727. Thomas Rice died in 1747, with the Boston Gazette claiming he died at age 94. ³

The Rice generations stayed in Massachusetts until Enoch and his family left the state. Enoch Rice and Olive Bruce married in 1768 and lived in Massachusetts through at least 1790, according to the federal census; their youngest three children were said to have been born in Brookfield, Worcester Co, MA. But seemingly, these New Englanders were on the move in the same way that the Fowlers and so many others were during this period. By 1799, the family seems to have been in Washington Co, NY. About 1799, daughter Olive reportedly married Roswell Bartlett in Salem, Washington County, NY (OPD). Was the Rice family farming in NY circa 1799 when they met up with Roswell Bartlett, also heading west? Had Olive's father, Enoch, been granted land in Washington County, NY as a result of his Revolution service?

¹ <http://bartlettsociety.org>

² Rosemary E. Bachelor, Book One: The Rice Family Celebrating Our Diversity, 2002. The Edmund Rice Association <http://www.edmund-rice.org/newsletters.htm>
<http://www.edmund-rice.org/era5gens/index.htm>

³ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Rice_\(1654\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Rice_(1654))

Did Roswell already know the Rices? Might he even have been part of their travelling party? We don't know.

We DO know that soon after the marriage, as early as 1800, they (Roswell and Olive and all the Rice family) travelled, most likely as a family group, to Brompton Twp, Richmond Co, Quebec. ⁴

We can loosely track the Rices' travels by these factoids: The Rice family was still in Massachusetts in 1790; their eldest daughter was married in Worcester MA in 1796; the eldest son was married in Massachusetts in Feb 1799, although he was listed as "of Salem, NY" ⁵; the eldest daughter's first child was born in NY State in 1799; daughter Olive married Roswell Bartlett in 1799 in Salem, NY (although oddly, Massachusetts records say they married in 1810 in Roxbury); Roswell and Olive's first child arrived in Brompton Quebec in 1801; one of Enoch's grandsons claimed to have been born in Canada in 1803; and the eldest daughter's second child was born in Quebec in 1807.

Why Canada?

...in the early part of 1800 Canada offered 160 acres of land to any man who would settle on it. Many people from New England accepted this offer. When the War of 1812 came, these emigrants were expected to become British subjects or leave the country. Many of them abandoned their newly acquired farms and ended up in northeastern Ohio. ⁶

In the 1790s a third wave of American immigrants (erroneously described as Late Loyalists) came in search of land. The war of 1812-14 put an end to further migration from the United States. ⁷

...for both Upper and Lower Canada. Identical proclamations issued on 7 February 1792, stated the terms on which land would become available. Grants were offered without distinction of nationality, and details were circulated through New England and the northern states....For most immigrants it [oath of allegiance] was a trivial formality that was performed in order to acquire property. ...Until 1812, Upper Canada remained an American community...⁸ out of ten were of American birth or descent.....After 1815, a non-American minority set to work to convert Upper Canada into a British Society governed by truly British leaders...[The late loyalists were classified as "aliens" and] could not buy or inherit land, vote or sit in the Assembly...⁸

⁴ <http://www.edmund-rice.org/era5gens/p30.htm#i58579>

⁵ James N. Granger, Launcelot Granger of Newbury, Mass. and Suffield, Conn.: a genealogical history. 1893

⁶ Harriet Taylor Upton, A Twentieth Century History of Trumbull County, Ohio, 1909.
https://books.google.com/books?id=bd0yAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA461&lpg=PA461&dq=%22mill+of+Rice+%26+Martin+in+Greensburg%22&source=bl&ots=GCaUd8Dnc3&sig=MDx0oFf0480AzMsWn_vvlgLn6Zc&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Bt8aVbCUJMqbgwT9p4CoBA&ved=0CB4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22mill%20of%20Rice%20%26%20Martin%20in%20Greensburg%22&f=false

⁷ <http://www.historytoday.com/phillip-buckner/peopling-canada#sthash.n1dHmAFA.dpuf>

⁸ Peter Marshall, "Americans in Upper Canada, 1791-1812. Late loyalists or Early Immigrants?". In Canadian Migration Patterns from Britain and North America. University of Ottawa Press. Pages 33-44.
https://books.google.com/books?id=fwY3id1HolQC&pg=PA33&lpg=PA33&dq=american+immigrants+to+Canada+late+loyalists&source=bl&ots=w dn5B63Yy0&sig=Yp5aJbak5mniwWkDgtyszcz94Lfw&hl=en&sa=X&ei=S8MEVeOIGcirgwSJ_YHwBw&ved=0CDEQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=american%20immigrants%20to%20Canada%20late%20loyalists&f=false

The Rice party left New York for free Canadian farmland in the winter of 1800⁹, and most likely mumbled an oath of allegiance to get 160-200 acres of land in that new frontier area. That must have ranked particularly with Enoch Rice who had served in the Revolution -- on the American side!¹⁰

All of Roswell and Olive Bartlett's children were said to have been born in Brompton, Quebec, Canada between 1801 and 1814. After 1812, Upper Canada (Quebec) became an untenable area for American immigrants as more British immigrated into the area. Roswell Bartlett and family moved to Greene Township, Trumbull Co. Ohio early in the spring of 1817. We know that Roswell's parents-in-law, Olive and Enoch Rice, and all (but one of) their other children eventually came to Trumbull Co. too. Some came in 1817 and some later, according to a history of the county. Except for their youngest daughter Sophia Rice (1785 – 1883), who had married Nathan Baker about 1805 (and later his brother John Baker in Maine), lived in a logging area in Madawaska, New Brunswick, Canada, was deeply embroiled in the Maine/NB boundary controversy, and died in northeastern Maine¹¹.

Roswell Bartlett came to Greene Township, Ohio with 5 other men: John & William Harrington, John Wakefield, Ichabod Merritt and Ephraim Rice (his brother-in-law). After looking over the land they went to Warren OH (the Trumbull County seat) and bought sections 7, 14 and 17 at \$2.50 an acre. They divided the land into 6 equal parts and Roswell took the south center piece. The men cooperated in building cabins on their land, all of which were completed by fall. They were the "original six settlers" of Greene Twp¹².

First Settlements: Early in the spring of 1817 six men, John and William Harrington, John Wakefield, Ephraim Rice, Roswell Bartlett, and Ichabod Merritt, came into the township to examine the soil, timber, etc. Selecting sections seven, fourteen, and seventeen, they went to Warren and bought them of the owner's agent, General Simon Perkins, at \$2.50 per acre, paying one-third down. The following boundaries by local points will include the purchase: Beginning at the old cemetery on the east bank of Mosquito creek, thence north one and one-half miles to the east and west road, at a point about thirty rods west to Mineral Springs Cheese factory, thence east along that road—except when it angles to the south at the mill—to the west line of Timothy Higgins' farm, thence south to the northeast corner of the Sloan farm, thence west to the old cemetery, and contained nine hundred and sixty acres of land. This tract they divided into six equal parcels, each one mile long east and west and eighty rods wide. To Ichabod Merritt—he being the youngest—they gave the first choice. He took the north piece because there was a "deer lick" on it located near where the cheese factory now stands. William Harrington being next in age took the south piece. John Harrington took

⁹ According to "The Grace M. Winnagle Collection" at the Warren Ohio Public Library, the Bartlett family "started for Lower Canada on 25 Feb 1800 and were on the road for 14 days before they arrived".

¹⁰ While we were unable to find war records for Enoch, he is listed in "The Official roster of the soldiers of the American Revolution buried in the state of Ohio".
And here: <http://www.edmund-rice.org/era5gens/p30.htm#i58579>

¹¹ <http://www.upperstjohn.com/people/johnbaker.htm>
<http://www.genealogy.mylinktothepast.com/p79859.htm>
<http://www.genealogy.mylinktothepast.com/p80662.htm#c80662.3>
<http://www.genealogy.mylinktothepast.com/ui06.htm#a62687>

¹² Harriet Taylor Upton, A Twentieth Century History of Trumbull County, Ohio, 1909.
https://books.google.com/books?id=bd0yAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA461&lpg=PA461&dq=%22mill+of+Rice+%26+Martin+in+Greensburg%22&source=bl&ots=GCaUd8Dnc3&sig=MDx0oFf0480AzMsWn_vvlqLn6Zc&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Bt8aVbCUJMqbgwT9p4CoBA&ved=0CB4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22mill%20of%20Rice%20%26%20Martin%20in%20Greensburg%22&f=false

next to Merritt, and John Wakefield next to William Harrington, Ephraim Rice taking the north, and Roswell Bartlett the south middle pieces. That spring Ichabod Merritt, Ephraim Rice, and John Wakefield built three log cabins, sixteen feet square and seven feet high. The roofs were made of oak shakes held on with poles; the floors, of puncheon, were made by splitting out flat pieces from logs and smoothing them with axes. Merritt's mother occupied the first cabin built, keeping house for her two sons, Ichabod and Aaron. These cabins were followed by ones for John Harrington, Bartlett, and William Harrington. That fall Ebenezer Kee bought part of section four, just west of Merritt, and built a cabin and moved into it.

In the spring of 1818 David Rice came and bought out Ichabod Merritt, who purchased the northeast part of section thirty-four, and built a cabin on it. Ephraim Kee came that spring and bought what was called the wild plum lot in section thirty-four, joining Merritt, and settled on it. There being no roads laid out and each purchase of land except Ephraim Kee's and Merritt's being crossed by the creek, the building sites were selected near that stream and the first road cut out started from E. Kee's, near where the south cemetery now is, and went north to J. Merritt's, then northwest to W. Harrington's cabin, near the old cemetery, and then followed up the creek to John Wakefield's, Bartlett's, E. Rice's, John Harrington's, and David Rice's, to Ebenezer Kee's. In 1819 John Martin, T. B. Spring, H. P. Higgins, James Bascom, and C. P. Hayford settled, and in 1820 Timothy Higgins, John M. Jestin, Robert Evans, and Samuel Hayford, moved in.

In 1821 Levi Rice, Ephraim Rice, second, and W. Wakefield became settlers, and Noah Bowen located on section forty-nine in the south part of the township.

In 1822 Ami Churchill and his sons, Major and Barnabas, with Noah Coleman, Levi Bailey, Steward Kee, Sr., Ira Kee, and -- Sloan, father of John and Isaac Sloan, built cabins and bought land. From 1822 until 1840 the township settled up rapidly, and probably had at the latter year nearly as many inhabitants as at any time since.¹³

He was a Town Trustee / Justice of the Peace / School Teacher in 1820/21 in Greene twp. In the first election in the township in 1820, Roswell was elected trustee and the next spring (1821) Justice of the Peace. According to the History of Trumbull and Mahoning Counties, Ohio by H.Z. Williams & Bro. (1882), Roswell Bartlett was selected as the school teacher during the winter when there was no farming to be done.¹⁴

The first school was taught by Roswell Bartlett in the winter of 1818 - 19. The next winter, James Bascom taught and the following winter, John Harrington was the teacher. In 1821, William Harrington taught; and the winter of 1822, W. Bartlett. The summer schools, during those four years, were taught by Rhoda Rice, Mary and Syrena Evans, and Charlotte Bascom. The first teachers were taken from among the settlers. As the settlement grew, neighborhood schools were erected, often taught by a father. Eventually, there were eight district schools.¹⁵

A funny story was told about Roswell. It seemed that in 1823 he owned the only horse in the township. One day he and Merritt and William Harrington were going to go into the town of Gustavus and Roswell on his horse said that he would ride on ahead and let the people know that they were coming. Merritt said, "Look here, Bartlett, by hines we can beat you and your old hoss there." He apparently had a very low opinion of the horse and at that he started at a hunters lope jumping brooks and fallen timber and dashing through swales and brush and arrived at Gustavus far ahead of Roswell. Merritt then told the people there that Bartlett would arrive some time that day "if his old hoss didn't give out".¹⁶

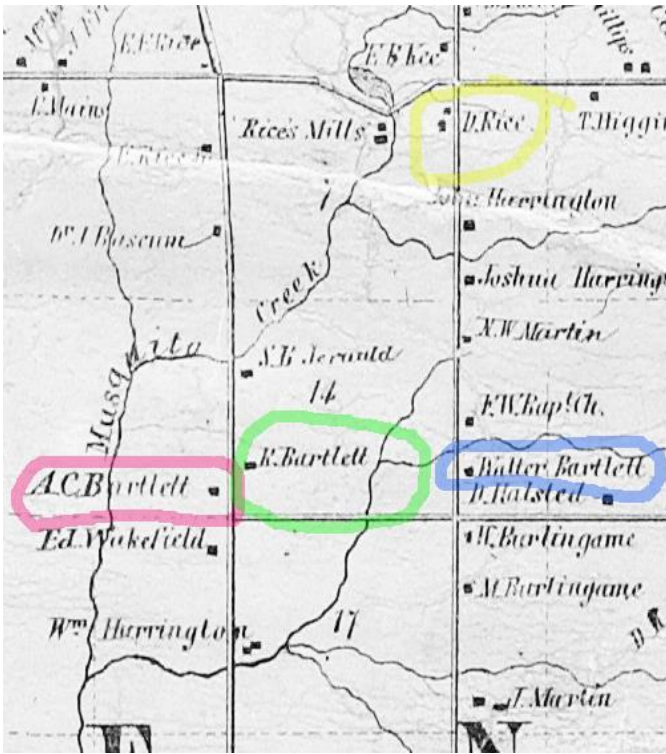
¹³ History of Trumbull and Mahoning Counties, Volumes 1-2, pages 561-562. Chapter XXIV. Greene.

<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:B-ky5vPYvEJ:www.heritagepursuit.com/Mahoning/Mahoning1882VollIP561Trumbull.htm+&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us>

¹⁴ Mary Case Hopkins, The Greene Story, 1817-1963, a History of Greene Township, Trumbull Co. OH. 1963

¹⁵ <https://www.beyond-books.org/Hpldocs/PDF/CityHistory/GREENE.pdf>

¹⁶ H.Z. Williams & Bro. The History of Trumbull and Mahoning Counties, Ohio. 1882



1856 map of Greene Township, Trumbull County Ohio. ¹⁷, cropped to show sections 7, 14, and 17.

Roswell Bartlett circled in green; David Rice in yellow; Walter Bartlett (son of Roswell) in blue; Asher C. Bartlett (grandson of Roswell, son of Walter) in pink.

David Rice's mill can also be seen near the top.

No 21. Township of Greene being Township Number					Seven in the Third Range				
Land & Houses	Acres	Lot	Acres	Value Including Taxes	State Tax	County Tax	Dist Road Tax	Dist Township Tax	Amount
Owner's Name					0 6 M	0 6 M	0 6 M	0 6 M	0 6 M
Bowen Noah	37	47	100	143	675	675	193	096	1639
Bascom James	37	24	50	96	336	336	096	048	816
Bartlett Roswell	37	14	159	297	1040	1040	297	148	2525
Bartlett Otis	37	36	22	42	147	147	042	021	357

1831 tax record for Otis and Roswell Bartlett in Greene Twp, Trumbull Co, Ohio; Roswell with 159 acres and Otis with 22. Ohio, Tax Records, 1800-1850.

Roswell and Olive J. Rice Bartlett's children were:

¹⁷ <http://www.newtonfalls.org/library/1856MAP/Greene.htm>

- Walter Bartlett (1801 Brompton, Quebec Canada – 1897 Greene Twp., Trumbull Co., OH) married twice and had children with both his wives. He married Fidelia Roxy Coburn (1801 – 1832) before 1824, and had at least two children with her. He then married Prudence Abbott (1802 – 1885 Greene Twp., Trumbull Co., OH) after 1832 and they were all buried in Pioneer Cemetery, Greene, Trumbull, OH, as were his infant children. Walter was a farmer all his life. His farm can be seen On the map above.



Walter, Roxy and Prudence's graves in Pioneer Cemetery, Greene, Trumbull, OH (photo from Find-A-Grave ¹⁸)

- Otis Bartlett (1802 Brompton, Quebec Canada – 1897 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI) married Zipporah Coats (1806 Attica, Wyoming, NY – 1882 Coe, Isabella, MI). Read more about him further on.
- Lucy Bartlett (1803 Brompton, Quebec Canada – after 1880) Lucy married Orin B Jennings and had no children with him. Apparently (OPD) they divorced between 1860 and 1875, before he remarried in Missouri. We do not know what happened to Lucy after the 1880 census.
- David Rice Bartlett (1807 Brompton, Quebec Canada – 1890 Greene, Trumbull, OH) married Lucy Emeline Brace (1810 Connecticut – 1890 Trumbull Co, OH) probably about 1826. David established a mill which can be seen on the map above, and was also a Baptist minister and, of course, a farmer. The couple had five children, one of them later in life -- Olive Philena, who married and then died at age 17, is buried with them. Olive's son William censused with the couple in 1870 and 1880.



David, Lucy, and daughter Olive's graves in Pioneer Cemetery, Greene, Trumbull, OH (photo from Find-A-Grave ²⁰)

David Rice, who came to Greensburg in 1818, traveled 1700 miles in 30 days in a horse and sleigh. He erected a grist mill on Mosquito Creek. It was a log mill, and the mill of Rice & Martin was the outcome of that mill. ¹⁹

¹⁸ <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=27193787&ref=acom>

¹⁹ Harriet Taylor Upton, A Twentieth Century History of Trumbull County, Ohio, 1909. <https://books.google.com/books?id=bd0yAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA461&lpg=PA461&dq=%22mill+of+Rice+%26+Mart>

- Sophrona Bartlett (1814 Brompton, Quebec Canada – 1903 Pine Twp, Crawford, PA). Married Daniel Corbit Thayer (1809 Concord, Essex, VT – 1898 Linesville, Crawford, PA) and had fourteen children between 1831 and 1860. Daniel was a famer in Crawford County, PA.



Sophrona and Daniel Thayer and some of their 14 children. Photo (courtesy of Find-A-Grave ²¹) is labelled 1856.



Sophrona and Daniel Thayer and son William's grave, Linesville Cemetery, Linesville, Crawford, PA (photo from Find-A-Grave ²²)

- Judson Bartlett (?? Brompton, Quebec Canada - ??) This information was given to us by Lawrence Sonley but we have been completely unable to substantiate any vital information for him. We think that he was Otis' brother, and that he came north to the St. Louis, Michigan area with or after his brother, but have little to confirm that. The only factoid we can find for any Judson Bartlett was land ownership in St. Clair County, MI in 1876. And that a Judson Bartlett was a founding member of the Coe Church of Christ (Coe Twp, Isabella, MI) in 1883. The complication may come from Otis and Zipporah's son Rufus Judson Bartlett.

[n+in+Greensburg%22&source=bl&ots=GCaUd8Dnc3&sig=MDx0oFf0480AzMsWn_vvlqLn6Zc&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Bt8aVbCUJMqbgwT9p4CoBA&ved=0CB4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22mill%20of%20Rice%20%26%20Martin%20in%20Greensburg%22&f=false](http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GScid=41161&GRid=27193785&n+in+Greensburg%22&source=bl&ots=GCaUd8Dnc3&sig=MDx0oFf0480AzMsWn_vvlqLn6Zc&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Bt8aVbCUJMqbgwT9p4CoBA&ved=0CB4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22mill%20of%20Rice%20%26%20Martin%20in%20Greensburg%22&f=false)

²⁰ <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GScid=41161&GRid=27193785&>

²¹ <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=17565363>

²² <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=thayer&GSiman=1&GScid=237179&GRid=127424378&>

And after Olive died in 1850, Roswell remarried to Philena Saxon (1800 VT – abt 1863 Ohio) sometime about 1850. Philena's first husband (may have been) an Ebenezer Bartlett of a Vermont Bartlett family (OPD). We found Philena Bartlett in Ashtabula OH in the 1850 census with no husband but with her son Ezekiel. In 1860, she, Ezekiel, Ezekiel's second wife Melissa and a son John (born of Ezekiel's first wife Lydia) were living in Roswell's household. Were Roswell and Philena actually married? OPD says yes, in 1850. Or was she the widow of a brother or cousin whom Roswell took in? We do not know for sure.

The "Free Will Baptist" church was organized in 1831. Roswell Bartlett donated land for a church. His son, David Rice Bartlett, became a Baptist minister in 1838.²³

Roswell died in March 1866 in Trumbull County Ohio and was buried in Pioneer Cemetery, next to his first wife, Olive. We do not know where Philena or her son Ezekiel were buried or when they died, nor can we track much about her grandson; his name is too common to be sure we could be following the correct John Bartlett.

Also buried in the Pioneer Cemetery were Olive's parents Enoch and Olive Rice, and quite a few other Rice's and Bartletts, including 2 Revolutionary War vets²⁴, Aaron Rice who might have been Enoch's brother, and Ephraim Rice who was probably also related but we don't know how. We also do not know if these men accompanied the family to Canada as well as to Ohio.

²³ From one of the following citations: "The Grace M. Winnagle Collection" at the Warren Ohio Public Library; the History of Trumbull County (Ohio), Harriet Taylor Upton, 1909; The history of Trumbull and Mahoning Counties, Ohio, H.Z. Williams & Bro. (1882); The Greene Story, 1817-1963, Mary Case Hopkins, 1963 <http://www.gencircles.com/clubs/surnames/bartlett/messages/read/12> .

²⁴ While we were unable to find war records for Ephraim or Aaron (Massachusetts residents), they are listed in "The Official roster of the soldiers of the American Revolution buried in the state of Ohio".



Enoch Rice (1746 – 1843) and Olive Bruce Rice's (1749 – 1837) repaired gravestone in the Pioneer Cemetery, Greene Twp, Trumbull, OH
(photo courtesy of Find-A-Grave ²⁵)



Grave of Olive J. Rice Bartlett (1783 – 1850) in Pioneer Cemetery, Green, Trumbull OH. Husband Roswell (1780 – 1866) was buried here as well but there is no stone for him anymore. (photo courtesy of Find-A-Grave ²⁶)

- Olive and Roswell's son Otis R. Bartlett (1802 Brompton, Quebec Canada – 1897 Pine River, Gratiot, MI) and wife Zipporah Coats Bartlett (1806 Attica, Wyoming, NY – 1882 Coe, Isabella, MI), married in 1827 in Trumbull Co. OH, and moved from Ohio to DeKalb Co, Indiana between 1837 and 1840, where their daughter Laura Jane married Elisha Brooks. Living next to the household in 1840 was Zipporah's brother, Daniel Coats and wife.

It is through Zipporah Coats, that we can claim a direct connection to British, Spanish and French royalty ²⁷. Her lineage also provides a second direct link to John Alden and Priscilla

²⁵ <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSsr=41&GScid=41161&GRid=27193834&http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=84882457>

²⁶ <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GScid=41161&GRid=27193790&>

²⁷ Here's the line from King Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine to Nellie Pearl Brooks:
 Henry Plantagenet, King Henry II, 1133-1189 and Eleanor of Aquitaine, 1114-1167
 John Plantagenet, King, 1161-1216
 Henry Plantagenet, King Henry III 1207-1272
 Edmund Plantagenet Earl, 1230-1284
 Henry Plantagenet, 3rd Earl of Lancaster, 1281-1348
 Joan Plantagenet, 1312-
 John Mowbray, 4th Baron De Mowbray, 1340-1369
 Catherine De Mowbray, 1358-

Mullins, Mayflower passengers, through surname sequence Coats, Palmer, Rice, Forbush ²⁸, Bruce, Maynard, Gray, Billings, Bill, Pabodie, Hewitt, Hodgkins, Tilden, Little, Lettice, Alden. We discussed John Alden previously in relation to the Tower family.

Other lines along Zipporah's tree, which arrived very early in New England, were the Sumners of Rowley MA, Hodgkins of Ipswich MA, Palmers of Charlestown MA and Stonington CT, Billings of Stonington CT, and the Roses, Gates, Bills, Comstocks and Elderkins of New London CT.

The Coats arrived in 1635 in Lynn, MA from Sarum, Wiltshire England, and subsequent generations moved into and settled the Eastern Connecticut counties of Windham and New London. It was William Coats (1721 Stonington CT – 1787 Stonington CT) who married Antrase Gray (1726 Little Compton, RI – 1785 Stonington CT), descendent of the Gray/Grey and DeGrey line which stretched back to English kings. And it is, not surprisingly, after the Revolution, that their son and Zipporah's grandfather, William Coats, Jr. (1745 Lebanon CT – 1821 Burlington, Otsego, NY), moved into central NY.

The next generations of Coats then moved into many other frontier states. Zipporah's father Rufus Coats (abt 1777 Stonington, New London, CT – 1853 Stafford Twp, DeKalb, IN) reportedly lived in CT, NY, PA, OH, and Indiana in his lifetime. He and his wife, Mercy Rose (1780 Stonington, New London, CT – aft 1850 DeKalb Co, IN) had 12 children who ended up in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Minnesota, Pennsylvania and Nebraska. OPD puts Rufus' burial site as Rose Cemetery, DeKalb, IN ²⁹ but we have not been able to substantiate that, neither have we found another site.

Otis and Zipporah had 6 children:

Lord Thomas Grey, 1384-1415
Knight Ralph Grey, 1406-1443
Knight Ralph Grey, 1432-1464
Edward De Grey, 1447-1553
Ralph De Grey, 1529-1565
Ralph De Grey, 1552-1623
John Grey, 1602-1646
Edward Gray, 1628-1681 (immigrant to Massachusetts)
Thomas Gray, 1648-1721
Edward Gray, 1699-1759
Antrase Gray, 1726 - 1785
William Coates, 1745-1821
Rufus Coates, 1777- 1853
Zipporah Coates, 1806-1882 (and also Hezekial Rufus Coats, 1802 – 1877)
Laura Jane Bartlett, 1830 -1908
Nellie Pearl Brooks 1873 - 1960

²⁸ BTW, the Forbushes may have been Scottish, an exception to the rule of English ancestors!

²⁹ <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=cr&CRid=2339572&CScn=rose&CSctry=4&CSst=17&CScty=808&>

- Charity Ann Bartlett (1827 Gustavus Twp, Trumbull, OH – 1871 Birch Run, Saginaw, MI) married Leverett J. Totten ³⁰ (1823 NY – 1871 Midland Co, MI) in 1844 in DeKalb Co, IN. the couple had 6 children, some born before they moved to Pine River, Gratiot, MI in about 1855, and some after. They bought land on the same section as the Brooks had, a lot in the town of St. Louis, and another farm in Coe Twp. Leverett was a blacksmith...

"Being the first blacksmith in the area, the practical place for Leverett to ply his trade was at the hub of local commerce: Pine River Village. He daily commuted from the farm to his shop, located at the South edge of the settlement, between the river's East bank and the trail that went to Elyton (Alma). (In relation to current landmarks, it was just South of where the St. Louis city water tower now stands). Within a few years of the Totten's arrival in the community, other blacksmiths came, making smithing less profitable than when Leverett was the sole artisan there." ³¹

and farmer but had financial trouble with his Gratiot Co. farm ³². We have not located gravesites for them, although it's entirely possible they were buried in the Coe Township cemetery of Pleasant Ridge, as the earliest graves there with stones mark people who died in the same year they did. All of their six children stayed in the Gratiot/Isabella area and several were buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, St. Louis, MI.

- Laura Jane Bartlett (1830 Gustavus Twp, Trumbull, OH – 1908 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI) married Elisha Hall Brooks (1818 Braceville, Trumbull, OH – 1891 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI). More on them elsewhere in this document.
- Sarah Maria Bartlett (1837 Gustavus Twp, Trumbull, OH –aft 1880 Saginaw, MI) Sarah was the first school teacher at the Elm Grove School, in 1857 ³³, in a log cabin at "Custiss' Corners", and some information that she did not marry, we found records which tell us she married in 1866 and had a family. Her husband was William Dove (abt 1830 England – aft 1910 probably Michigan) who arrived in the U.S. in the late

³⁰ For the Totten lineage, see <http://genforum.genealogy.com/totten/messages/850.html>
Also see Lawrence Sonley, A Totten Family Tree. St Louis, MI, Nov 1985

³¹ <http://genforum.genealogy.com/totten/messages/850.html>
Also see Lawrence Sonley, A Totten Family Tree. St Louis, MI, Nov 1985

³² In 1868, Leverett and Charity purchased a 100-acre farm (N 1/2 of the NE 1/4 and the North part of the S 1/2 of the NE 1/4 of Section 31 of Coe Twp.) for \$400 cash plus the assumption of a \$600 mortgage. The newly acquired farm was located three miles South and a mile West of Salt River Village (later named Shepherd). During the few years that the Tottens lived on the Coe Twp. farm, the mortgage did not get paid, and, after Leverett and Charity's death, the place had an unfortunate end. The youngest children were not old enough to work the land; oldest son Henry did not want it; and oldest daughter Laura and her husband Elisha Brooks already had 100 acres to look after. Apparently there was some intention among the heirs to try to hold onto the farm until one or another of the younger children became old enough to operate it. No evidence has been found to indicate that property taxes were defaulted; so it is assumed that that annual obligation was met, but, there never was enough money to pay-off the mortgage which was part of the 1868 purchase agreement. Finally, heirs of the 1868 mortgagee (lender) wanted the matter settled. In June 1871 the Circuit Court of Isabella County sold the farm at public auction for \$400.
See Lawrence Sonley, A Totten Family Tree. St Louis, MI, Nov 1985

³³ Located on the south side of Adams Rd. between Jerome Rd. & Begole Rd. according to "Rural School Locations, Gratiot County, Michigan" <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mivanbur/GratiotSchools.htm>

1850's and lived in Isabella County through 1870. Their sons' christening and marriage records substantiate her being their mother. In the 1880 census, we found the couple living in Emmet Co, MI with their three children. There is a claim, too, that Sarah Maria died on a trip between Saginaw and Pine River in the late 1860's or 1870's, and that she was buried along the side of the road! Census records show her in Emmet County, however, with her family in 1880. We have not located gravesites for either of them.

- Roswell John Fletcher Bartlett (1842 Wilmington Twp., Dekalb Co., IN – 1908 Douglas Co, WV). Married twice: to Emerett S. Gilbert (1844 Lapeer Co, MI – 1917 Michigan) in 1864 in Gratiot Co, MI and to Margaret Catherine Kunkle (1854 PA – 1937 Berwick, Columbia Co, PA) in 1891 in WV. He had 3 children with Emerett and the family censused in Colorado in 1880. Emerett and he probably divorced because she returned to Michigan and did not die until 1917, claiming herself as a widow in the 1900 census in MI in which she was also listed as a servant in to a couple there. [“Widow” was sometimes the only category available to divorcees in census records.] By 1891, he was re-married to Margaret Kunkle in West Virginia. He and Margaret had 3 children. Margaret censused with her daughters twice after Roswell died in 1908. He was buried Sugarlands Brethren Church Cemetery, Thomas, Tucker Co, WV, and Margaret, who re-married, was buried in Berwick, Pennsylvania according to her death certificate.



Roswell John Fletcher Bartlett and second wife Margaret Catherine Kunkle Bartlett (courtesy of Ancestry.com family tree)



Roswell John Fletcher Bartlett (drawing found on Ancestry.com family tree)



Grave stone for Roswell John Fletcher Bartlett in Sugarlands Brethren Church Cemetery, Thomas, Tucker Co, WV (photo courtesy of Find-A-Grave ³⁴)

- Harmon Asbury Bartlett (abt 1845 Dekalb Co., IN – bet 1892 and 1910) married Elizabeth Delana Dexter (1846 – between 1881 and 1889) in St. Louis, Gratiot, MI in

³⁴ <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=bartlett&GSiman=1&GScid=2350525&GRid=95041953&>

1868. They censused in Vernon Twp, Isabella Co, MI in 1870 and held land there in 1879. In 1872, the couple sold a half-lot of land in St. Louis to Laura Jane Bartlett Brooks ³⁵. In 1878, the couple bought Otis' 40 acres in section 35 of Coe Twp, Isabella Co, and in 1881, they bought/sold more land in Gratiot Co ³⁶. In 1889, Harmon, then widowed, remarried to Ella Elizabeth Franklin (1864 - 1936), in Virginia, where the couple went on to have two daughters. Ella and their daughters were buried in Virginia; we do not know Harmon's death date or burial place.

- Rufus Judson Bartlett ³⁷ (1850 Newville Twp., Dekalb Co., IN – 1919 Vestaburg, Montcalm, MI) married Viola Perdita McCoy (1859 Gratiot, MI – 1850 Sheridan, Montcalm, MI) in 1874 in St. Louis, MI. By 1800, Rufus was farming in Ferris, Montcalm, MI, but he was also a minister: in 1900 the census found them in Kingston, Tuscola, MI where he was occupied as a minister and at which time Viola declared they had never had children. In 1910 they were living in Richland, Montcalm, MI where he admitted to being both a minister AND a farmer. They were buried in Richland Town Cemetery, Vestaburg, Montcalm, MI

A careful historian, Lawrence Sonley, also described the roots of Laura Jane Bartlett in his book about the Brooks family ³⁸. Rather than re-typing the pages, we have scanned those and added them here with Sonley's permission. Forgive any repetition.....

THE BARTLETTS

By reason of the fact that descendants of Elisha Brooks also have Bartlett ancestors--through his wife, Laura (Bartlett)--a glimpse of that family's background is presented.

³⁵ 1/2 acre, north half of lot #3, block #2, Knapp's addition to the village of St. Louis. Liber 27, p135. On today's map, surrounded by North main St, Faro Ct, and Olive St. She must have sold it between 1872 and 1881 because she seems to have re-purchased this in 1881 (liber 54, p305) and sold it in 1882: liber 55, page 531.

³⁶ Gratiot Co deeds: "Herman" Bartlett, bought or sold in 1881, liber 52, pg 210; Delana Bartlett bought from Wilcox, 1881, liber 51, pg 439.

³⁷ In marriage record, this is Rufus Jordan Bartlett. Michigan Marriage Records, 1867-1952.

³⁸ *BROOKS Genealogy of a Family of That Name, A Roster of Fifteen Generations*, 1983. See the full PDF version (with permission of Sonley) at <http://MelissaCravenFowler.com> and choose "Tom's Ancestry" tab

The name Bartlett is of English origin and literally means descendant of little Bart, Bart being a nickname for any man named Bartholomew.

* * * * *

The 1850 census of Newville Twp., DeKalb Co., Indiana, gives Otis Bartlett's birthplace as Canada. It is surmised that his parents moved there from New England after the Revolutionary War. His marriage to Zipporah Coats was probably about 1827. They are known to have resided in Trumbull Co., Ohio, for a time, inasmuch as the census lists their first three children as having been born there.

A history of DeKalb County, published in 1859, reveals that the first permanent white settlers of Newville and Stafford Townships located there about 1836. The author of that book stated that, "Within a few years afterward, quite a number moved in." Among those named as having been among the "afterward" arrivals was Otis Bartlett. Correlating that fact with Harmon Bartlett's 1845 birth in Pennsylvania and Laura Bartlett's April, 1845, marriage to Elisha Brooks in DeKalb Co. pinpoints the family's time of migration to Indiana as late winter or early spring of 1845. It is assumed that other Bartlett families in the area at the time were relatives of Otis. Coats families also there may have been Zipporah's kin.

Indiana residency of the family was not long. On September 6, 1857, in Gratiot County, Michigan, Otis bought (from an individual, not the government) forty acres on section eleven of Pine River Township (SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$).

The 1850 census lists Otis' trade as "cabinet maker." Although resources of the farm contributed to the family livelihood, it was his skill as a furniture maker and carpenter that was the main means of support. His interests, however, were not confined solely to worldly work, he also was a self-styled preacher. The book History of Gratiot County, Michigan (1913) accords him the title Reverend

and states that he was "a well known expounder of the gospel." The author of that book, having been personally acquainted with him, added that the man was "somewhat crude and eccentric, but esteemed." Elisha Brooks' son, Warren, once remarked to his niece, Ruth Dutt Estes, that his grandfather Bartlett had been a "United Brethren preacher, but rather mixed up in his beliefs."

The cause of Otis' death, at age 92, is officially recorded as "old age." No tombstone marks the site, but he and his wife are believed to be buried at the west-central edge of the Coe (Pleasant Ridge) cemetery in southeastern Isabella County, near the unmarked burial plot of Warren Brooks' daughter Alta and her husband, Thomas Leonard.

Zipporah, the unusual given name of Otis' wife, was of Biblical origin (Zipporah was the wife of Moses). Oral history perpetuates a claim that Zipporah Coats was related to the Coats family once prominent in the sewing thread industry. No effort has been made to substantiate that claim.

* * * * *

Charity Bartlett, at age 15, married Leverett Totten. Deed records show that the Tottens purchased forty acres from the government on Nov. 17, 1855, on section one of Pine River Twp., Gratiot Co., Mich., (NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$)--the same section on which Elisha and Laura (Bartlett) Brooks homesteaded. Leverett also was a blacksmith and was the first smith in Pine River (St. Louis). His shop was near where the city water tower now stands. Charity and Leverett lived only sixteen years after settling in Michigan--both dying in their forties. Of their six children, three produced offspring, but the family tree resulting from those three now numbers more than 1,400 members.

* * * * *

Laura Bartlett, as the wife of Elisha Brooks, shared most of her husband's life story, as recounted in the biographical text of this book.

* * * * *

Maria Bartlett (pronounced ma-RYE-a) was a school teacher by the age of twenty, as documented in the following letter written by Warren Brooks to The St. Louis Leader about 1928 or '29.

When reading of so many school activities in different localities, I thought perhaps a few items in regard to the early history of the Elm Grove school district would be of interest to at least a few of your many readers.

The first school in this district was taught by Maria Bartlett, in 1857, in a little log cabin owned but unoccupied by old Uncle Sylvanus Sias on what is now known as Curtiss' Corners. One night during the term, the building caught fire and burned

down, supposedly from an overheated stove. This proved quite a serious loss as the scholars lost practically all their school books, the supply being somewhat limited at best. However, the term was concluded one-half mile west in a little log cabin owned but unoccupied by Watson P. Reed, on what is now known as Kiter's farm. If not the first, this was one of the first schools taught in Pine River Township.

The following season the district erected a hewed log structure on the original site. It was 16 x 24 and composed entirely of pine logs. The seats, desks, chinks and shingles were hand shaved. Even the door steps were two large pine logs flattened on each side, and extended the full length of the front end of the building.

Following are the names of the scholars who attended this school: Charles and Sarah Robinson, Will and Dan Vanderbeek; Will, Mioma and Ellen Holmes; George, Deborah and Mira Mecum; Mitchell, George and Villa Packer; Harmon and Judson Bartlett; Genalia Groom, Frank and Ann Henerett, and Marion Caldwell; Henry and Laura Totten, and Warren Brooks. Of all this happy, rollicking bunch of school children, only three remain: Laura Totten Davison, Villa Packer and Warren Brooks.

Maria never married. At Saginaw, sometime in the 1860s or '70s, terminal cancer was diagnosed, and she died on the way home --buried near the roadside at a location now unknown.

* * * * *

Nothing is known of the fate of Roswell Bartlett.

* * * * *

Harmon Bartlett bought a residential lot in St. Louis in May, 1867. He married Elizabeth Dexter the following year, and in August, 1869, sold the St. Louis lot to his sister, Laura Brooks. Where he lived thereafter and whether he had children is not known.

* * * * *

Judson, the youngest Bartlett child, familiarly called "Jud-die," had a colorful career in the ministry. At the age of nine he joined the United Brethren Church, then transferred to the Church of Christ (Disciples) when he was fifteen. About 1884 he and his wife went to Vestaburg, Montcalm County, when it was still a lumbering village. While centered there the rest of his life, he preached for varying lengths of time at eight churches scattered throughout that county--all of which were at small, country sites that have nearly disappeared from today's maps. He had no children.

Otis Bartlett was a Cabinet Maker and Preacher in 1850. Lawrence Sonley wrote,

"The Indiana census listed Otis' trade as "Cabinet Maker", which likely included general carpentry; and in Michigan, of course, he also farmed. His interests, however, were not confined to worldly work, as he also was a self-styled preacher. *The History of Gratiot County, Michigan*, 1913, accords him the title of Reverend and states that he was "a well known expounder of the gospel". The author of that book, having been personally acquainted with him, added that the man was "somewhat crude and eccentric, but esteemed". Warren Brooks, his grandson, once remarked that his Grandfather Bartlett had been a "United Brethren preacher, but rather mixed up in his beliefs".³⁹

Otis and Zipporah followed their two married daughters and families to Isabella Co, MI in about 1857, when the weather conditions had forced original settlers to flee and sell their farm at low prices. On 6 Aug 1857, Otis negotiated a \$2000 purchase of 40 acres in Pine River Twp. (NW 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of section 11, one section south and one section west of the Brooks' patent section). That transaction, equivalent to a land contract of today, was officially recorded in the county deed book before a deed was warranted. The "Article of Agreement" stipulated that Otis was to pay \$40 down, \$40 and interest in 1858 and 1859, and \$100 and interest in 1861, after which a promissory note was to be given for the balance⁴⁰. In retrospect, it seems Otis was overly eager for land and that this was an unwise business venture. High annual payments on the note could not be made and the acreage reverted to the seller in the early 1860's. Though inflated land values averaged \$10 an acre or \$25 at most, the \$50 price tag on that parcel of land was ruthless. When researching deeds in the Gratiot Co offices, we stumbled across a release of Otis' ancient debt, written decades later, maybe after 1915. (Sorry we did not write down the particulars!)

Isabella County deed records show that Otis also bought 40 acres in Isabella County in 1864 (the NE 1/4 of the SW 1/4 of section 35, Coe Twp.)⁴¹. He and Zipporah sold that 40 acres to their son Harman in 1878 for \$700⁴² which was confirmed by the 1879 atlas of the county. Confusingly, in 1882, Otis re-sold about 15 acres of that same tract to Morris Cohoon for \$300 (west half except for south 5 acres, of the NE 1/4 of the SW 1/4 of Section 35)⁴³ and seemingly kept 5 acres for himself. And then in 1885, Otis sold the east half of the same property, plus the five acres he had held out of the 1892 sale, to his son Rufus J. Bartlett for \$500⁴⁴.

Otis died in 1897 in Pine River Twp. According to Lawrence Sonley, he had lived with daughter Laura Bartlett Brooks and family in his advanced years. He and Zipporah (who died in 1881) were buried in Pleasant Ridge Cemetery, next door to his former property on section 35 of Coe Township. No tombstones mark their graves, but they are said to be buried at the west-central edge of the cemetery near the also-unmarked burial plot of Warren Brooks' daughter Alta and her husband, Tom Leonard.

³⁹ Lawrence Sonley, *A Totten Family Tree*. St Louis, MI, Nov 1985

⁴⁰ Gratiot County deed, liber 1, page 504.

⁴¹ Isabella County deed: liber 2, p 303

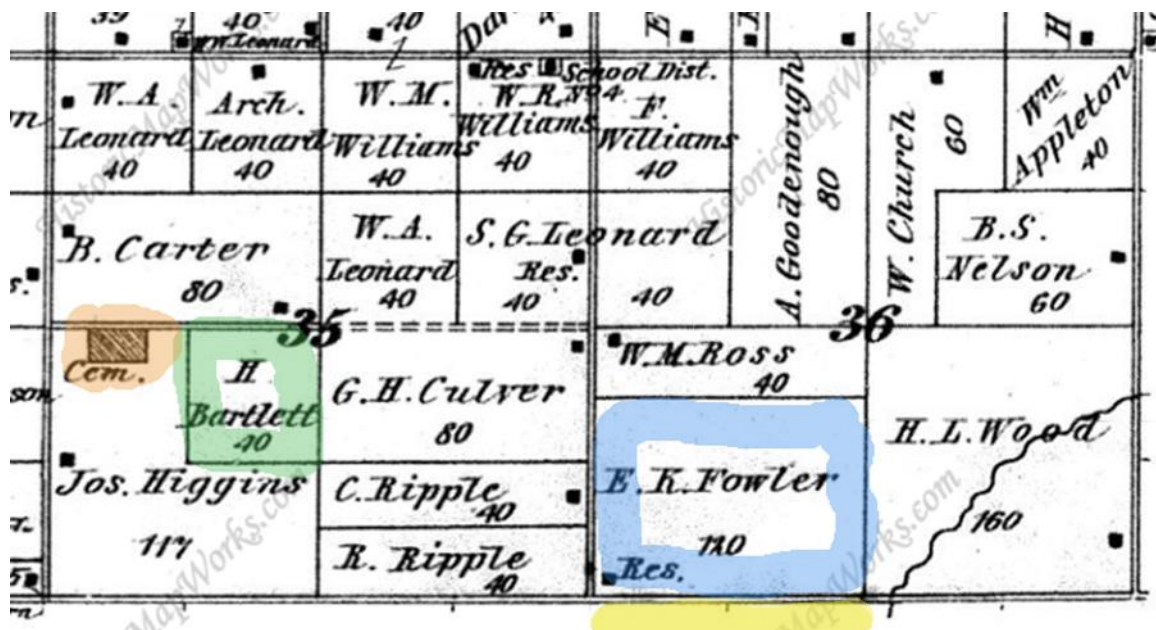
⁴² Isabella County deed: liber 27, p 260

⁴³ Isabella County deed: liber 47, p 509

⁴⁴ Isabella County deed: liber 52, p 108

The west central edge of the Pleasant Ridge (Coe) Cemetery where Otis and Zipporah were buried in unmarked graves.

(photo by author, 2015)



1879 map of Coe Township ⁴⁵. Bartlett property, described above and registered to son Harmon Bartlett, circled in green. Edward Fowler property circled in blue. Elisha Brooks patent north border in yellow (in adjacent

⁴⁵ <http://www.historicmapworks.com/Map/US/473315/Coe+Township/>

township and county). The Bartlett's first land purchase was one section south and one section west of the Brooks' patent section. Pleasant Ridge Cemetery circled in orange.

- Otis and Zipporah's daughter, Laura Jane Bartlett (1830 Gustavus Twp, Trumbull, OH – 1908 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI), married Elisha Hall Brooks (1818 Braceville, Trumbull, OH – 1891 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI). More on them elsewhere further along after we discuss the Brooks lineage.

Nellie Brooks' father's family, The Brooks and Blanchards

We are fortunate to be able to lean heavily on the work of Lawrence Sonley and his genealogy of the Brooks family ⁴⁶.

- Sonley tells us that Thomas Brooks, Sr, a minister in England was our oldest known Brooks. We have not been able to corroborate this man's connection to our family.

In the next generation, three Brooks brothers (Henry, Thomas Jr., and Richard), immigrated to the American colonies from England in 1635. Two supposedly settled in Massachusetts and we have found records for them there: Thomas, Jr, and our ancestor Henry. Richard supposedly arrived at the same time (1635), went to Maine where he was a ship-builder, but we have not found any records for him.

- Henry Brooks (1592 Cheshire or Norfolk England – 1683 Woburn MA), and his first wife Grace Wheeler Brooks (1595 Carnfield, Bedfordshire, England – 1650 Woburn MA) were Nellie's 6th great-grandparents:

The first record of Henry Brooks is of March 14, 1638, made in Concord, Mass. and is the date when he was given the rights of a freeman. His next appearance on the colonial records is in Woburn, Mass. where in 1699 he appeared on the tax lists and on subsequent tax lists there until 1657.

We have abundant documentary proof that Henry Brooks was one of the first settlers of Concord. He lived there with his wife, whose name is unknown, four sons and two daughters until about 1648, when he moved to Woburn. While in Woburn, his wife died. This was prior to 1651 for on March 27, of that year Henry Brooks married Susannah, the widow of Ezekiel Richardson of that place. The Brooks home in Woburn was on a tract containing six parcels of land of 178 acres at a section known as "Horn Pond." This tract, with a frame farm house, was purchased from William Brackenburt of Charlestown, December 20, 1650. In later days, this house stood on what was known as South Street now Main Street and stood there until 1789 when it was torn down by Captain Nathaniel Brooks, a descendent.

Henry Brooks was not only a farmer but a clothier as well. During the years 1669, 1671 and 1672, he served his town as a selectman. There are no records of the date of his birth and our best clue to this date is given in a record of a suit which was instituted in December 1658 wherein he describes himself as being aged 66 years. This places the date of his birth 1591-1592.

We may be satisfied, in spite of faulty records, that Henry Brooks was one of those who left Great Britain in pursuit of religious freedom. The exact date of his arrival will perhaps always be conjecture and the place whence he embarked unknown but the story of Henry Brooks and his descendants will forever be linked with the great history story of America. He and his descendants are closely connected with the various phases of American history -- its early New England settlements, the organization of new towns, churches and early colonial government. His children and grandchildren took active part in the Indian wars, especially King Philip's and the French and Indian. In the Revolution there fought many of his descendants. Some participated in the War of 1812, and they contributed their share in the development of the Nation through their agricultural pursuits, for most all of the descendants of Timothy were farmers. The first Western Reserve Bank had the assistance of two of his descendants in its founding. The Baptist Church of America has claimed many of Henry Brooks' descendants not only as members but as ministers. ⁴⁷

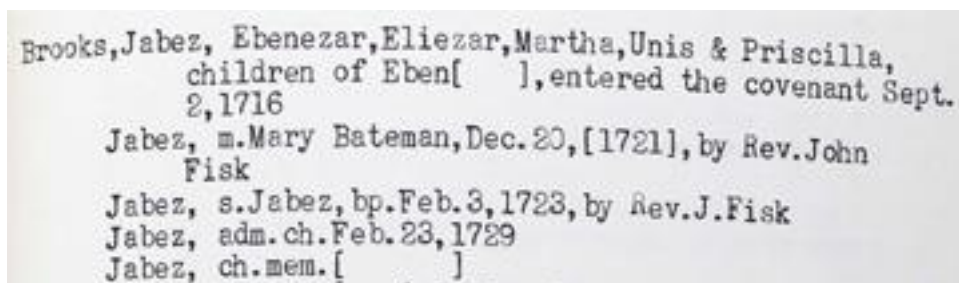
⁴⁶ *BROOKS Genealogy of a Family of That Name, A Roster of Fifteen Generations*, 1983. See the full PDF version (with permission of Sonley) at <http://MelissaCravenFowler.com> and choose "Tom's Ancestry" tab

⁴⁷ *Timothy Brooks of Massachusetts and His Descendants*, By Robert Peacock Brooks, Limited Edition 1927, THE BIBLIO COMPANY Publishers, Pompton Lakes, N.J.

- Henry's son was John Wheeler Brooks (b. 1623 in England - d.1691 Woburn, MA), who married Eunice Mousall (1628 England – 1684 Woburn MA) ⁴⁸. Eunice's father, John Bell Mousall (1596 Norwich, Norfolk, England – 1665 Woburn MA), grandfather Ralph Mousall (1575 Norwich, Norfolk, England – 1657 Charlestown MA) and grandmother Alice Bell Mousall (1578 Norwich, Norfolk, England – 1674 Charlestown MA) arrived in the American Colonies with the Winthrop fleet of ships, about 1630 from Norwich, Norfolk, England. John was one of the founders of Woburn, MA ⁴⁹.

- Our direct Brooks line left Woburn about 1711, when John and Eunice's son Ebenezer Brooks (1666 Woburn MA – after 1716 Killingly, Windham, CT) and wife Martha Wilder Brooks (1666 Woburn MA – after 1716 Killingly, Windham, CT) moved to Killingly, Connecticut, just west of the Rhode Island border. Martha's grandfather, Thomas Wilder (1618 Shiplake, Oxfordshire, England – 1667 Lancaster, Worcester, MA) had immigrated in 1638.

The couple had at least three daughters and three sons between 1688 and 1701. In 1716, the couple received in full communion and had all their children baptized in Putnam, CT, and that is the last record we have for Ebenezer or Martha. We have no death dates for the couple, nor grave sites.



The Brooks join the Connecticut church in 1716

Connecticut, Church Record Abstracts, 1630-1920

It was the availability of cheap land, granted from military service (Ebenezer participated in a military expedition to Quebec in 1690 ⁵⁰) and resold by enterprising speculators, which enticed Ebenezer to leave the relative security of the populous Massachusetts area and move to the “frontier wilds” of northeastern Connecticut. Several generations lived in that place, including...

- Jabez Brooks, Sr (1793 Woburn, Middlesex, MA – 1758 Killingly, Windham, CT) and wife Mary Bateman Brooks (1696 Woburn, Middlesex, MA – 1756 Plainfield, Windham, CT), married in 1721 in Putnam, CT. Mary parents, Eleazar Bateman and Elizabeth Wright Bateman had also moved to CT from Woburn and possibly about the same time as the

⁴⁸ For more on Henry and John, see William R Cutter and Arthur G. Loring, THE BROOKS FAMILY OF WOBURN, MASS, 1904.

http://www.archive.org/stream/brooksfamilyofwo00cutt/brooksfamilyofwo00cutt_djvu.txt

⁴⁹ A fuller description of the Mousalls: <http://troutwind.tripod.com/mousall.html> Also John's will http://www.geneamusings.com/2013/08/amanuensis-monday-probate-records-of_12.html and A Chronological History of Woburn, Massachusetts <http://users.rcn.com/woblib/chnrlgy.htm>

⁵⁰ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Quebec_\(1690\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Quebec_(1690))

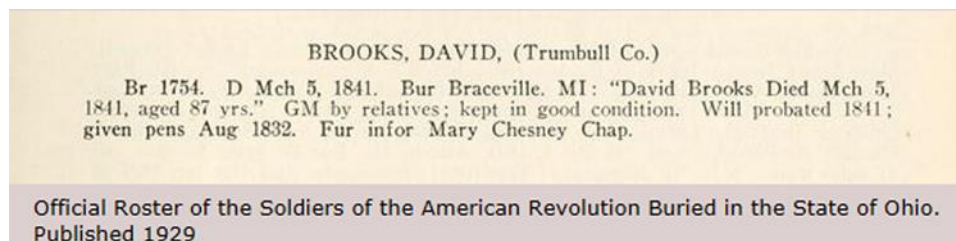
Brooks did. The Bateman immigrant ancestors had been Eleazar's father Thomas Bateman who had been born in Essex, England, and his parents William and Frances who immigrated to Massachusetts in 1630.

Elizabeth Wright's grandparents were, of course, British immigrants to Massachusetts and were married there in 1630.

Jabez and Mary had at least 6 children between 1722 and 1736

- Jabez Brooks, Jr. (1722 Killingly, Windham, CT - ??) Records for this man are not simple to locate as he had at least one cousin, also Jabez-son-of-Jabez, born a few years later, by the same name. It is thought that "our" Jabez served in the Revolution and was killed in Quebec in 1776 (OPD). The name of his wife may have been Sarah Smith or that might have been his cousin's wife. And we believe him to be the father of 4 children, including David.
- David Brooks (1754 Killingly, Windham, CT – 1841 Braceville OH), Revolutionary War veteran and grandfather of Elisha Brooks, moved to New Marlboro, Berkshire Co, MA after the Revolution (in which he served) and before 1781, marrying there in 1781, censusing there in 1790 and 1800, and then moving to Braceville, Trumbull County, Ohio in 1811, dying there in 1841. He and his wife Waitstill Blanchard had 13 or more children, between 1781 and 1805, in Massachusetts before the move; as far as we know, all the living children went with them.

The Bureau of Land Management does not show any original patents being issued to David Brooks for the land he farmed. But we know that he applied for a bounty-land warrant (land given to veterans of the Revolution) in 1833 and was apparently given a pension in 1832.



Roster from Find-A-Grave ⁵¹

David's wife Waitstill "Waty" Blanchard (1761 Pittston PA -1844 Braceville OH) was the great-granddaughter of William Blanchard (1670 Yorkshire, England – 1757 Coventry RI) and Jane Steere (1668 Providence, RI – 1752 Coventry RI). William immigrated to the Colonies before 1699, when he married Jane in Providence RI, and may have been the only one of his family to make the voyage. Jane's father was John Steere (1634 Ockley, Surrey, England – 1724 Providence, RI) who immigrated before 1660, and her mother was Hannah Wickendon (1638 – Newport RI – 1705 Providence RI) whose father William had immigrated sometime before 1666 to the Newport RI area from Oxfordshire, England. ⁵²

⁵¹ <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=131722022&ref=acom&ftm=1>

⁵² We have not yet read this, but here is a major work on this family: Blanchards of Rhode Island, Adeline May Crandall, 1942. <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015068086258;view=1up;seq=23>

Waty's grandparents were Theophilus Blanchard (1712 Providence RI – 1761 Coventry RI) and Patience Jefford Blanchard (1713 Voluntown CT – 1754 Orwell, VT). We know little about Patience's father Joshua Jefford (b 1687 Voluntown, New London CT - ??) but his birth information and his wife's name, Ann.

An interesting Blanchard was Waty's father, Jeremiah Blanchard (1738, Scituate, Providence, Rhode Island – 1807 Port Blanchard, Luzerne, PA), who in 1772 purchased land in Pittston PA, near present-day Scranton, where native unrest resulted in violent settler massacres in this period. Late in 1772 or early in 1773 Jeremiah Blanchard brought his family to the "Wyoming Valley". His first wife, Phebe Bates (1734 Coventry, Kent, RI – 1773 in RI or Luzerne??) mother of his 7 children including Waty, died shortly thereafter. He went back to RI and remarried in 1773 to Abigail Steward (1738 RI – 1807 Pittston, Luzerne, PA) and went on to have 8 more children with her. Jeremiah commanded the fort at Pittston, which was the only thing between the settlers and total annihilation⁵³. In addition, he farmed a large tract of land, was skilled as a smithy (as was his uncle Timothy Blanchard), at extracting teeth and at "blood-letting". A good man to have around.

Among the early settlers of the Valley there were few, if any, who had enjoyed the advantages of regular instruction in the various trades and professions, so necessary to the enjoyment of civilized life. Thus circumstanced, the daily wants of the people were peculiarly calculated to elicit native ingenuity and talent. Among the many whose skill and ingenuity the necessities and the wants of the settlers called into exercise, none was more useful than Captain Blanchard. He possessed quite a mechanical talent, and could turn his hand to the fabrication of most of the necessary implements in wood and iron for the use of settlers in a new country. His residence being at a distance from any practical physician, he was frequently called upon by his neighbors-who fully appreciated his native good sense and sound judgment-for counsel and advice in cases requiring medical aid. Hundreds can attest the skill with which, for many years, he kindly and gratuitously supplied the place of the surgeon in the letting of blood and in the extracting of teeth, among his afflicted neighbors.⁵⁴

⁵³ HISTORICAL ADDRESS at the WYOMING MONUMENT 3d of July 1878 on the 100th Anniversary of the BATTLE AND MASSACRE OF WYOMING

by Steuben Jenkins, Wilkes-Barre, PA

<http://www.inman-family.org/documents/battlewyo.htm>

⁵⁴ from an obituary of Capt. Jeremiah Blanchard, Jr., published at the time of his death in the Wyoming Republican and Farmer's Herald (Kingston, Pennsylvania). Reprinted in: Oscar Jewell Harvey and Ernest Gray Smith, A History of Wilkes-Barré, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania: from its first beginnings to the present time, including chapters of newly-discovered early Wyoming Valley history, together with many biographical sketches and much genealogical material. Volume II. 1909. Page 998. <http://books.google.com/books?id=rEYVAAAAYAAJ&q=Jeremiah+Blanchard#v=snippet&q=Jeremiah%20Blanchard&f=false>

An Old Homestead Going.

The old Blanchard homestead at Port Blanchard is in course of demolition. It was built 110 years ago by Capt. Jeremiah Blanchard and has been occupied continuously by his descendants, five generations of the family having lived there. Originally the site was one of the most beautiful in the valley, a fine grove of chestnut trees intervening between the house and the river, the road then being in what is now the rear of the house.

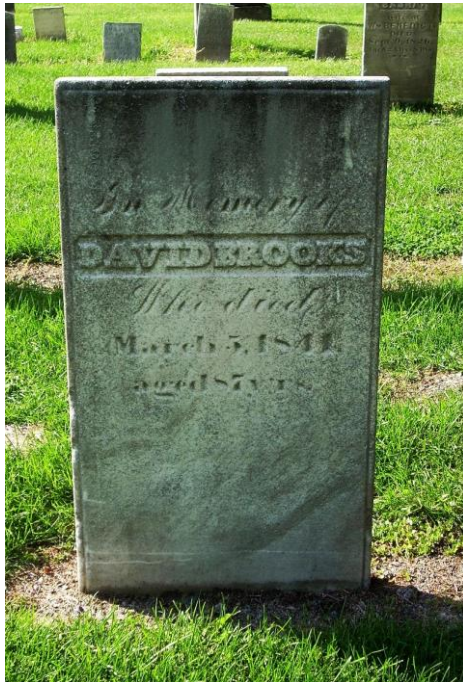


1894 account of the demolition of Jeremiah Blanchard's homestead. ⁵⁵

The Blanchard Homestead, taken about in 1880's. Built 1787 on the banks of the Susquehanna River in Port Blanchard, Luzerne, PA. It was torn down in 1894. (photo courtesy of Ancestry.com family tree)

If we follow the Blanchard wives' families back in time, we encounter more families who arrived during the Great Migration. You are getting the point: no matter which of these lines we follow back in time, we arrive at early English immigrants to the American colonies. The lineages the intervening-generation Brooks men married into (Smith, Bateman, Wilder, Mousall, Wheeler), and the Blanchards married into (Bates, Oldham, Burges, Harrington, White, Cranston, Clarke, and Latham) fit the same mold.

⁵⁵ The Historical Record, a Quarterly Publication principally devoted to the Early History of the Wyoming Valley and Contiguous Territory. Volume V. No 1. Page 147. 1894
https://books.google.com/books?id=1DEUAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA240&lpg=PA240&dq=%22+blanchard+homestead%22+luzerne&source=bl&ots=g0mI1Oo_sh&sig=Sa-swAEA6wKc3bLB19mxq8jMKfU&hl=en&sa=X&ei=F08NVaW3EIWWNobygeAC&ved=0CDEQ6AEwBg#v=onepage&q=%22%20blanchard%20homestead%22%20luzerne&f=false



The grave of David Brooks (1754-1841) at Braceville Center Cemetery, Braceville OH

Although wife Waty survived her husband, son John, and daughter-in-law Hannah, there was no stone erected for her.

(photo courtesy of Find-A-Grave ⁵⁶)

- John Brooks (1781 New Marlboro, Berkshire, MA – 1823 Braceville, Trumbull, OH) and his wife Hannah Russell Brooks (1784 ?? – 1826 Braceville OH, and about whose family we have not been able to learn anything) married before 1810 in Massachusetts and then moved to Ohio with the Brooks family. They both died at relatively young ages after having their 6 children between 1812 and 1823 in Ohio. One child died in the same year John did and another in the same year Hannah did!
John served in the War of 1812, between September 1813 and March 1814.
Here are their children:

- Rosella Brooks (1807 Massachusetts – 1868 Allen County, Ohio) In 1826, she married Daniel Jacobs (1800 – between 1838 and 1840) and then in 1840 Hezekial Rufus Coats (1802 NY – 1877 Allen, Ohio) ⁵⁷. Rosella may have had one daughter with

⁵⁶ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/131722022>

⁵⁷ Hezekial was brother to Zipporah Coats Bartlett (1806 Attica, Wyoming, NY – 1882 Coe, Isabella, MI), wife of Otis Bartlett. Which means that he too was directly descended from European royalty.

Here's the line:

Henry Plantagenet, King Henry II, 1133-1189 and Eleanor of Aquitaine, 1114-1167
 John Plantagenet, King, 1161-1216
 Henry Plantagenet, King Henry III 1207-1272
 Edmund Plantagenet Earl, 1230-1284
 Henry Plantagenet, 3rd Earl of Lancaster, 1281-1348
 Joan Plantagenet, 1312-
 John Mowbray, 4th Baron De Mowbray, 1340-1369
 Catherine De Mowbray, 1358-
 Lord Thomas Grey, 1384-1415
 Knight Ralph Grey, 1406-1443
 Knight Ralph Grey, 1432-1464
 Edward De Grey, 1447-1553

Jacob, Lucinda Jacobs (OPD unsubstantiated), but inherited a large family from Hezekiel and his first wife and had at least four more children with Hezekial. Rosella and one of her sons were buried in the Old Beaverdam Cemetery, Beaverdam, Allen, OH, but we have not located a grave for Hezekial.



Hezekial Rufus Coats
(photo courtesy of Ancestry.com
family tree)



Rosella Jacobs Coats' grave at Old Beaverdam
Cemetery, Beaverdam, Allen, OH
(photo from Find-A-Grave ⁵⁸)

- David Brooks (1812 Braceville, Trumbull, OH – 1823 Braceville, Trumbull, OH). There is no record for the burial of David at Braceville Center Cemetery, but there's a good chance that is where he was buried.

Ralph De Grey, 1529-1565
Ralph De Grey, 1552-1623
John Grey, 1602-1646
Edward Gray, 1628-1681 (immigrant to Massachusetts)
Thomas Gray, 1648-1721
Edward Gray, 1699-1759
Antrase Gray, 1726 - 1785
William Coates, 1745-1821
Rufus Coates, 1777- 1853
Hezekial Rufus Coats, 1802 – 1877 (and also Zipporah Coates, 1806-1882)

⁵⁸ <http://findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=coat&GSiman=1&GScid=39805&GRid=71304733&>

- o Hannah Brooks (1814 Braceville, Trumbull, OH – 1871 St. Louis, Gratiot, MI) married Joseph Lewis Frary (1806 Berkshire, MA – 1890 St. Louis, Gratiot, MI) in 1833 in Portage County, Ohio.

The couple had 5 children in Ohio before relocating to Gratiot County, MI in 1863. In 1870, they were living in the “village” of St. Louis, MI, but Joseph was also listed as owning a farm worth \$4000. In 1879, after Hannah had died, Joseph remarried twice, still living in Pine River Twp. Hannah was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, St. Louis, but surprisingly, we do not know where Joseph or his later wives were buried. (His third wife may have been buried in Ford Cemetery, Bannister, Gratiot, with a new surname of Livingston.)

Joseph was a major land speculator in Gratiot County, buying and selling parts of Pine River Township through 1888⁵⁹. His parcel of section 24 in Pine River Twp, surrounded by today’s Prospect, Olive, Hebron, and Corinth Sts. was known as “Frary’s Addition” to the plats of St. Louis.



Hannah Brooks Frary’s grave at Oak Grove Cemetery, St. Louis, MI (photo by author, 2015)

- o Elisha Hall Brooks (1818 Braceville, Trumbull, OH – 1891 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI). Married Laura Jane Bartlett (1830 Gustavus, Trumbull, OH – 1908 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI). See below.
- o Othniel Charles Brooks (1821 Braceville, Trumbull, OH – 1896 Trumbull Co, OH) married Lois Wilmot (1825 Bethany, Wayne, PA – 1865 Braceville, Trumbull, OH) in 1846 and in 1869, widowed, married Mercie A. Tucker (1833 Ohio – 1915 St. Louis, Gratiot, MI) in Ohio. Othniel and Lois had at least three children, perhaps 5 according to Sonley’s genealogy (only 2 of whom lived to adulthood) before Lois died in 1865. He had three more children with Mercie. The family relocated to Gratiot County Michigan in about 1875.

As early as 1859, Othniel was buying and selling land in Gratiot County. In 1859, for instance, he sold 306 acres of land in township 12, section 6, the same land he had patented⁶⁰. In 1875, he purchased significant acreage in sections 24, 11, 12, 15 and 31 of Pine River Twp⁶¹. In 1876, he sold part of section 24 to his wife Mercie⁶² and

⁵⁹ Gratiot Co deeds: libers 7 through 72 (1889) including parts of sections in Pine River Twp; 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 24, and Township 11 (maybe Arcada Twp?) sections 1, 4, 36. Also lots in the village of St. Louis. In liber 82, one entry for Mary Frary (now Livingston) probably third wife.

⁶⁰ Gratiot Co deeds: liber 4, pages 351 and 352.

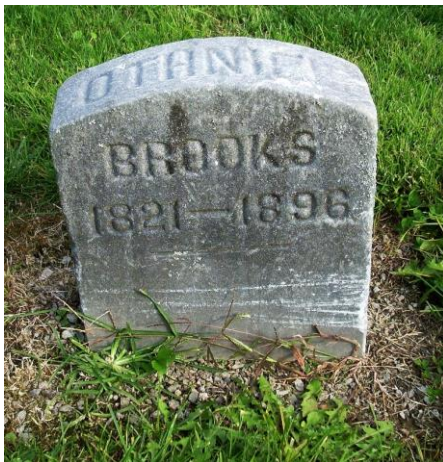
⁶¹ Gratiot Co deeds: liber 33, page 585.

later other pieces of land to her, in the 1887 era.

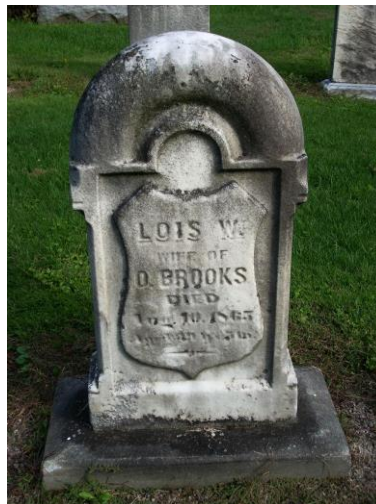
After 1876, the name we saw more in the grantee/grantor indices in the Gratiot County Clerk's office was that of Mercie, lending credence to her claim of being divorced from Othniel: in the census of 1900, Mercie, living with one of her sons in St. Louis, claimed to be divorced from Othniel.

Starting in 1877, Mercie traded pieces of twp 12, section 24, lots in the village of St. Louis, section 13, etc. We found her name as late as 1908 (when she sold to her son Gale Othniel Brooks), still wheeling and dealing.

Othniel must have returned to Ohio because he died in Trumbull Co and was buried in Braceville Center Cemetery with his first wife and parents. Mercie was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, St. Louis, Gratiot Co, MI.



Grave of Othniel Brooks at
Braceville Center Cemetery.
Photo courtesy of Find-A-Grave ⁶³



Grave of Lois Wilmot Brooks at
Braceville Center Cemetery.
Photo courtesy of Find-A-
Grave ⁶⁴



Grave of Mercie/Mercy Tucker
Brooks at Oak Grove Cemetery,
St. Louis, MI.
Photo courtesy of Find-A-Grave ⁶⁵

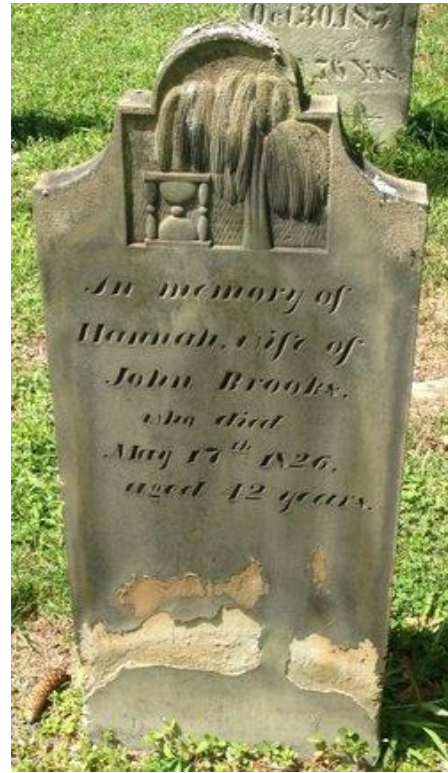
- Zilpha Brooks (1823 Braceville, Trumbull, OH – 1826 Braceville, Trumbull, OH). There is no record for the burial of Zilpha at Braceville Center Cemetery, but there's a good chance that is where she was buried.

⁶² Gratiot Co deeds: liber 37, page 7.

⁶³ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/167584404/othniel-charles-brooks>

⁶⁴ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/167584431>

⁶⁵ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/49091545/mercie-a.-brooks>



John and Hannah Brooks were buried in Braceville Center Cemetery, Newton Falls, OH. ⁶⁶

Our chapters now come together in Nellie's parents

- Elisha Brooks (1818 Braceville, Trumbull, OH – 1891 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI) married Laura Jane Bartlett (1830 Gustavus, Trumbull OH – 1908 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI) in 1844 in Newville Twp., Dekalb Co, Indiana.

In Lawrence Sonley's book on the Brooks we found terrific descriptions of the roots of Elisha Brooks and those of his wife Laura Jane Bartlett. Rather than re-typing the pages, we have scanned those and added them here with permission. Below, find pages 26 – 32 of Lawrence Sonley's *BROOKS Genealogy of a Family of That Name, A Roster of Fifteen Generations*, 1983. Forgive any repetition of that which we have already written.

According to Sonley, it had not been his intent to publish such a detailed genealogy of the Brooks; however, early in the research, he came across an earlier Brooks volume, "of extensive breadth", written by Alice Brooks Dowland, a granddaughter of Elisha's brother Othniel. Alice had, as her base, a diary of Elisha's, which had been in the hands of William Bliss Brooks, and which provided a framework from which to trace the Brooks line back to England. With Sonley's permission, we are delighted to share both Dowland's and Sonley's work in this matter. And he was kind enough to agree to allow scans of his book to be published here in this document, as well as on the internet. (You can see the full version at: <http://MelissaCravenFowler.com> -- choose "Tom's Ancestry" tab)

⁶⁶ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/131727656/John-Brooks> and <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/131727773/Hannah-Brooks>

ELISHA BROOKS

The composition and precise handwriting of his diary give evidence that Elisha was a literate man, despite the fact that his schooling did not extend beyond what was locally available during his boyhood in the small community of Braceville, Ohio.

Obligated by circumstances to live with aged and probably stern grandparents, understandably his childhood was grim and disheartening. So, not surprisingly, by the time he reached self-supporting age, he was filled with ambitious dreams of independence, wanderlust and adventure. He left home at 17.

An excerpt from the diary, written near Vicksburg, Mississippi when he was 23, reveals the traumatic effect which his parents' untimely death had on him and his siblings. Also, the entry provides a brief account of his early travels. In his own words:

". . . Of that once happy family consisting of eight persons, one half were soon laid low in the tomb and four unhappy orphans were left to wander their unhappy way through a cold and heartless world.

"My eldest sister has since married Daniel Jacobs, and now resides in Lima, Allen County, Ohio; my second sister married Joseph L. Frary and resides in Windham, Portage County, Ohio; my brother Othniel was living in Braceville, Trumbull County when I received the last information from home.

"I lived several years in the neighborhood where I was born, but left there the 18th of October, 1835 and went to Lima, Ohio, where I lived until the 10th of October, 1838, when I repaired to Cincinnati, then descended the Ohio River and the Mississippi as far as the mouth of the Arkansas; I remained there until October, 1839 and descended to the Island One Hundred and remained there until September 1840, then descended to the Yazoo River, where I now remain this date, March 22nd, 1841.

"As I have received no communication from my friends lately, I suppose they do not know where I am at this time, and as I am in a land of strangers and far from my friends, I have written these few lines from a sense of duty to my relatives, so that in case some unforeseen accident should befall me, I hope that this book may fall into the hands of some friend who will send it and my trunk to: Daniel Jacobs, Lima, Allen County, Ohio."

At that moment, youthful ambitions seem to have palled; there was a hint of despair--a general disillusionment with life. (Perhaps the dark mood of that particular spring day was due to fatigue or illness.)

Within a couple of years, more or less, Elisha worked his way back north, presumably returning to Ohio for a visit. Then, still footloose and looking for new horizons, he headed for Indiana. It is not now known how or when he became acquainted with the family of Otis and Zipporah (Coats) Bartlett, formerly of Gustavus, Ohio (twenty-odd miles northeast of Braceville). However, in Newville Township, DeKalb County, Indiana--April, 1845--he married Laura Bartlett. He was 27 and she 15. By 1848 they had two sons.

Discovery of gold in California, offering the prospect of quick riches, was a temptation Elisha could not resist. Leaving his wife and children with his in-laws, in 1849 he joined a westbound wagon train--which survived acute shortages of food and water on separate occasions. Unsuccessful in his search for gold, after a time he succumbed to discouragement and homesickness. Dreading to make the rigorous trip back to Indiana via the overland route, he took a boat to the Isthmus of Panama, then shuttled across the Gulf of Mexico and up the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers.

No date is recorded, but sometime between 1850 and 1854, Daniel, the eldest child, died.

When news was learned that government land in parts of mid-Lower Michigan was available at a bargain price, in September of 1854 the 3-member Brooks family packed their possessions and travelled by team and wagon to Maple Rapids in Clinton County. Settled in 1835, that frontier trading post was at a junction of Chippewa Indian trails which crisscrossed the center of the state.

A mile and a half northwest of the hamlet, Elisha left his wife and son at the home of Arnold Payne, the first permanent white family of the county named Gratiot. (Having located near the county's southern boundary in 1846, the Paynes welcomed whomever wanted to stop over.)

Going onward alone, twenty-five miles northeastward in Gratiot County, he reached the settlement of Pine River (named St. Louis in 1865), which had been founded by a half dozen families during 1853 and '54. Scouting the area for suitable farm land, four miles beyond Pine River he selected 160 gently sloped acres on the north edge of the county (NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 1, of what became Pine River Twp. the following year). To transact the \$80 purchase, he then had to backtrack fifty miles southwest to Ionia, where the Government Land Office was located. The conveyance was made Oct. 10, 1854.

Prior to August, 1854, the price of government tracts had been \$1.25 per acre, available to anyone 21 years of age or head of a family. But, because a lot of prairie land was accessible in other states and territories, few people were attracted to the forested wilds of Michigan. So, to encourage rapid settlement there, a Congressional act reduced the price to fifty cents an acre. Each purchaser was permitted to have 320 acres, but after enactment of the new price it was foreseen that some investors might undertake improvement of the land at their individual leisure, thus delaying development of the area. Conse-

gently, a retroactive order required every fifty-cents-an-acre buyer to occupy his property within one year from date of purchase, or forfeit his land and payment.

Until white inhabitants arrived, the area was a nearly impenetrable wilderness of trees and undergrowth; but in 1853 the founders of Pine River village had widened a narrow, meandering Indian trail into a wagon road, thus creating an arterial transit route between Pine River and Maple Rapids. Afterward, travelers who sometimes found a segment of the road impassable simply hewed themselves a detour.

The Indian population of the county was not large, and members were peaceful, accepting the intrusion of white men without resistance. For quite some time a small tribe of Chippewas had lived by the Maple River near the southern edge of the county. In 1848 the Lutheran Church established a 1200-acre mission along the west side of the Pine River a couple of miles inside the county's north boundary. That school/church, known as the Bethany Mission (and Indiantown), also served as a trading post. (The Indian footpath between Maple Rapids and the Mission was what the founders of Pine River village had followed when they first entered the area in 1853.) As white men's diseases decimated the Maple River natives, remnants of the tribe went to the Mission. In 1856 the federal government granted the state's scattered tribes of Chippewas a reservation in Isabella County, and by 1858-59 the Indians of Gratiot moved there. Timewise, therefore, the ten-year period of biracial coexistence in the county was less than is commonly supposed today, and much less than was experienced in other regions of the nation, both before then and after.

The first priority of every settler was construction of a shelter. Until the first sawmills made lumber available in 1856, dwellings had to be built of logs.

Returning from Ionia, Elisha stopped at the Paynes to see his wife, then went on alone to their place at the top of the county. The first day, he put up a bark-sided shanty as temporary cover for himself, with an open fire pit for cooking his meals. With team and tools, in the following days he got a house started before snowfall began in early November. Chinks between the logs were stuffed inside and out with wet clay, which heat from the fireplace then baked hard. Roof shakes (shingles), consisting of wood slices three feet long and an inch thick, were made by driving a rive (a special 16" x 3" blade) through pine blocks with a maul.

Toward winter's end he was anxious to bring his family from the Payne place before spring rains turned the road into quagmire. But because the winter was long, with snows lingering into April, the wagon could not be used; so he contrived a makeshift pung (crude sleigh) to which he hitched the team and made the trip.

With lodging built, each farmer then quickly cleared away enough brush and stumps so a small crop of grain and vegetables could be grown. The first year or two, only food for family could be produced--little for sale or barter. Horses and cows subsisted mainly on wild forage.

Before the county's first grist mill was built at Elyton (Alma) in 1857, the nearest mill where flour and corn meal could be ground was at Muir in Ionia Co., a distance of forty-five miles. A round trip to Muir took at least four days.

Due to the swampy flatlands eastward from Pine River village, access to Saginaw in summer was a flatboat ride on the Pine and Tittabawassee Rivers. Floating downstream took a day and a half, but return trips were three to four times longer, because supply-laden boats had to be portaged around shallow portions of the winding Pine. The overland route to Saginaw could be traversed only in winter when the terrain was frozen.

With livelihood established, farmers then concentrated on the backbreaking job of clearing more land--removing the wilderness to make way for further crop production. Until that was accomplished, dependence on small acreage resulted in a narrow margin of survival when adverse weather diminished harvests, as was the case from 1856 through 1859. The only thing that prevented wholesale starvation was an abundance of wild game and emergency provisions donated by sympathetic downstate citizens. Settlers with little foresight--no experience or cash reserves--were totally unprepared for the challenges of frontier life. From the poverty of those years, the county gained a reputation of being a wretched place in which to live. Some people gave up and left, but despite the rugged existence most of the pioneers adapted and endured.

Sales of government tracts at 1854's reduced price caused a land rush, and the imminence of sudden population growth in the county raised the need for local government. An act of the state legislature in February 1855 authorized the formation of townships and the first election of officers. Being public spirited and able, as were many of the pioneers, Elisha ran for office early on. In 1856 he served as Treasurer of Pine River Township, and Justice of the Peace in 1857.

Surprising as it now seems, a post office was established at Pine River as early as the fall of 1855. To facilitate the flow of mail in the rural area north of the village, Elisha was appointed to operate a branch at his residence (Feb. 24, 1857 to June 17, 1859). For the purpose of giving the office its own address identity, it was called Forest Hill, a description of Elisha's hilltop homestead. Thereafter, the branch office passed to the homes of other postmasters until it came to rest at a small settlement five miles southwest of where it started. That is how the present village of Forest Hill got its name.

After lumber became locally available for construction, about 1858 or '59 Elisha built a frame house, and the log hut was abandoned.

From the day Elisha left his grandparents' care in 1835, until he settled in Michigan twenty years later, his means of livelihood involved assorted forms of hard physical labor. In Michigan, farming was his main occupation, but he also was a dedicated purveyor of pulpit religion. Sometime during the course of his early life a religious bent began asserting itself; also, his father-in-law, a United Brethren preacher, undoubtedly was influential. A passage in the book "Churches of Christ" (of Michigan) reveals that he had been a member of the Disciples of Christ denomination in Indiana. Whether he ever received any formal instruction or ordination from a school of religion is not known, but by midlife he was recognized as a successful "evangelist."

About 1861 an evangelist from Indiana visited central Michigan. With Elisha's collaboration, revival meetings were held at Pine River and Salt River (Shepherd, in Isabella Co.) villages. The formation of several small churches resulted.

Before church buildings could be afforded, meetings were held at schoolhouses or residences. Membership of the Forest Hill congregation quickly outgrew its quarters, so three branches were formed: one remaining there, one at Pine River and one at Pleasant Ridge (Coe, in Isabella Co.). Living near Pleasant Ridge, it was convenient for the Brooks family to attend services there. After a few years, they transferred their membership to St. Louis (formerly Pine River).

Soon after arriving in 1855, settlers made plans for educating their children. The first school in Pine River village was erected in 1857. (By 1867 the county had 61 log and 24 frame schoolhouses.) An exact date is not known, but approximately in the late 1860s or early '70s Elisha thought St. Louis was ready for a facility more advanced than elementary grades. Under his promotion, and the support of local Disciples of Christ, a small stock company constructed an imposing frame building atop the hill on the north edge of the river; and Elisha was the first president of The St. Louis Academy Association. Although there is no precise record of its duration, the venture was short-lived, abandoned before 1879--as public interest in a private school was insufficient to support its continuance. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries the building successfully served as Yerington's College, where commercial courses and music were taught. After that, the structure stood vacant a number of years until razed in 1952.

* * * * *

Born over a period of twenty-eight years (1845-1873), Elisha and Laura Brooks had eight children. The following biographical briefs describe the lives of the four who survived to adulthood.

* * * * *

Born in Indiana, son Daniel, as already noted, died there.

* * * * *

Warren, the second child born in Indiana, married Emaline, daughter of Amos and Eleanor (Reeves) Payne of Greene Co., Pennsylvania. As farmers, they lived their years together on the south half of the acreage which Warren's father had homesteaded. There, they raised three daughters and a son: Angeline, Alta, Elsie and Bliss. Another daughter, Mintie, died at age 8. Emaline died in 1915. Sometime in the 1920s Warren moved to a farm two miles south, where he remained until his death in 1933.

* * * * *

In Michigan, daughter Jessie was the only one of the children born in the log house before it was replaced. She married Charles Dutt, one of thirteen children born to (?) and Lydia (Hoover/Huber) Dute. (Some of the children changed the spelling of the name to Dutt.) The Dutes were of German extraction and lived in Venango Co. Pa. Charles could not speak English until he was nine years old, when he taught himself to read and write. Later, some of the Dutt offspring, and their widowed mother, settled in central Michigan on farms near Riverdale (Gratiot Co.) and Vestaburg (Montcalm Co.). Elizabeth, one of Charles' younger sisters, was the mother of Conrad Riess, the husband of Warren Brooks' daughter Angeline. Jessie and Charles were farmers in Coe Township, Isabella Co. (section 26), where they had three sons and a daughter: Meade, Clyde, Ruth and Charles. About 1908 they moved to Alma, Mich. where Charles engaged in carpentry. In 1916 Jessie and Charles went to Tulsa, Oklahoma where he continued to ply his carpentry trade. A couple of years after Jessie died there in 1921, Charles went to Los Angeles, California where he lived with his eldest son, Meade, until Meade's death in 1930, after which he resided at a retirement home in San Gabriel, Calif.

* * * * *

California, Lincoln and Laura, the fourth, fifth and sixth offspring respectively, died in childhood.

* * * * *

Flora, the seventh child, married Chester Alexander who was born in Lenawee Co., Mich. to Mortimer and Mary Alexander. He was a telegrapher until age 21. Married to Etta Baker at Holt, Mich. in 1883, they moved to Isabella Co. where two daughters, Bessie and Dora, were born. Etta died in 1892, and the following year "Chet" married Flora Brooks. They lived on his farm (Coe Twp., section 27) until the early 1900s when they went to St. Louis where he was affiliated with a meat market. After 1909 they returned to the farm and built a new barn in 1915. Around 1920-21 they lived in Shepherd two

or three years while Chet worked for a livestock shipping co-op. Back on the farm again, when Chet's health declined in the '20s, they moved to a house at the east edge of the nearby settlement of Coe, keeping their farm for rental income. Nine miles east, along the Pine River in Porter Twp., Midland Co., they owned 112 acres of summer cow-pasture. Directly after Chet died in 1932, oil was discovered in that part of Porter Twp. With income from oil wells, Flora was able to have a winter home near Tampa, Florida; also, she funded construction of a dormitory at the summer campground of mid-state units of the Christian Church at Rock Lake in Montcalm Co. Flora had no children of her own, and both stepdaughters preceded her in death.

* * * * *

The eighth and youngest child, Nellie, wed Anson Fowler, one of four children born to Edward and Eunice (Eddy) Fowler. In mid-Michigan the elder Fowlers were farmers, but prior to their establishment there both Edward and Eunice had been school teachers in Hillsdale Co., Mich. (Earlier forebears--Fowler and Eddy--had roots in New York state.) Anson was born on the south boundary of Isabella Co., adjacent to the Elisha Brooks farm on the north side of Gratiot Co. Thus Nellie and Anson were next-door neighbors. Married, they were farmers and lived on the north half of what had been Elisha's homestead. After Elisha died in 1891, his widow, Laura, lived with Nellie and Anson the remainder of her years. The Fowlers had one son and one daughter: O. S. and Ketha. About 1935, or soon after, they began going to Florida with Nellie's sister Flora, their winter home being nearby at Dunedin. They wintered there every year until 1958.

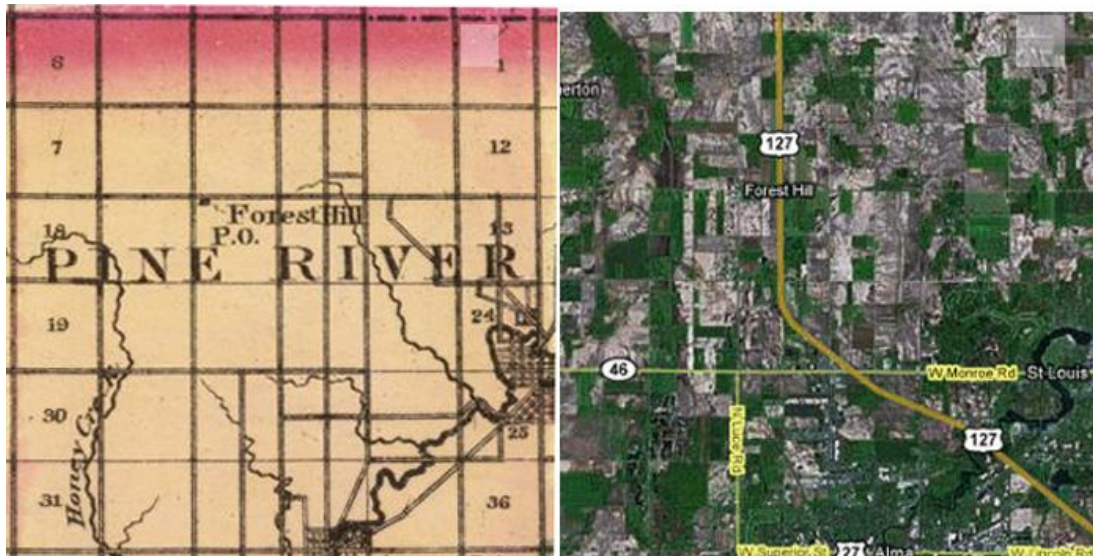
To recap: Elisha and his brother Othniel (and probably Rosella and Hannah too) were raised by their grandparents, David and Waty, in the Braceville area. Elisha had a wanderlust -- starting in 1835 at the age of 17, even before his grandfather died in 1841, he had lived in several states.

We do not know why he found himself in Indiana in 1844 or 45, but it was there he married Laura Jane Bartlett (1830 Gustavus, Trumbull OH – 1908 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI), whom he may have known in Trumbull County as a youth, although she would have been quite young when he left Braceville, but whose parents had relocated to Indiana between 1837 and 1840. When he took off for the gold fields of California, he left Laura and at least two young children, Daniel and Warren, with her parents, Otis R. Bartlett (1802 Brompton, Quebec Canada – 1897 Pine River, Gratiot, MI) and Zipporah Coats Bartlett (1806 Attica, Wyoming, NY – 1882 Coe, Isabella, MI).

Elisha wasn't just gallivanting, he may have been preaching. Although there is some reason to believe he wanted to strike it rich while in California too. It was not to be. He returned discouraged.

Elisha and Laura moved to central Michigan and bought a quarter-section of land in Pine River Twp, Gratiot County, MI, arriving 1854 ⁶⁷. Along with them (or soon afterwards) came Laura's parents, Otis and Zipporah Bartlett in 1857; Otis' brother Judson Bartlett; Laura's sister and brother-in-law, Charity Ann Bartlett and Leverett J. Totten in 1855 ⁶⁸; Laura's sister Sarah Maria Bartlett, before 1857; Laura's brother Harmon Asbury Bartlett, before 1868; one of Elisha's sisters and her husband, Joseph and Hannah Brooks Frary in 1863; and Elisha's brother Othniel Brooks in 1875. The Tottens bought 40 acres within Pine River section one near the Brooks' acreage but held that land only until 1867.

The couple's remaining children were born between 1857 and 1873 in Michigan.



Elisha Brooks' patented quarter section: Historical map of Pine River Township, left, showing sections; slightly highlighted block is the Brooks' ⁶⁹.
(2010 satellite map showing Pine River Township, right, with that quarter section slightly highlighted.)

⁶⁷ The biography of Elisha's son, Warren Books <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mislabs/beers/beers012.html>, states they arrived in Pine River in 1854. In St. Louis at 150 (2003, Concept Communications), David McMacken also says Elisha arrived in 1854. The patent document, shown, for the Brooks land was issued in 1857, however, the same day as that of Edward Fowler. This leads us to question the accuracy of using that patent date; perhaps the actual document was not issued until the settler had shown "improvements" to the land.

Also there is corroboration on the 1854 date because the Brooks family celebrated, in November 1904, the 50th anniversary of Elisha settling on the farm:

Nov 24, 1904: Chet' and Flora, Warren and Emmie and Charlie's folks and Mother Lulu and Coll were all here to dinner. It was the 50th anniversary of Mr. Brooks settlement on the farm. Also Thanksgiving.
---Anson Fowler's journal, 1904

⁶⁸ As written by Lawrence Sonley in his book 'A Totten Family Tree', The Tottens followed the Brookses (Charity's sister Laura and her husband Elisha) to Michigan.

⁶⁹ Old Gratiot Co. map by David Rumsey, <http://www.davidrumsey.com>

Elisha was registered as a farmer in Pine River, Gratiot Co, in the 1860 federal census. He built a large home on a hill on his patented property, planted 7 kinds of oak trees on the hillside around it, and called it "Forest Hill".

Looking south
from near the
county line along
Chippewa Road,
Gratiot County,
at what Elisha
Brooks named
"Forest Hill".
(photo by author,
2015)



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

CERTIFICATE }
No. 12,183 }

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

Whereas Elisha H. Brooks, of DeKalb County, Indiana,

has deposited in the GENERAL LAND OFFICE of the United States, a Certificate of the REGISTER OF THE LAND OFFICE at Ponca, whereby it appears that full payment has been made by the said

Elisha H. Brooks, according to the provisions of the Act of Congress of the 24th of April, 1820, entitled "An act making further provision for the sale of the Public Lands," for the North West fractional quarter of Section One, in Township twelve, North, R. Range three, West, in the District of Kansas subject to sale at Ponca, Michigan, containing one hundred and sixty five acres, and ninety hundredths of an acre,

according to the official plat of the Survey of the said Lands, returned to the General Land Office by the SURVEYOR GENERAL, which said tract has been purchased by the said Elisha H. Brooks,

NOW KNOW YE, That the United States of America, in consideration of the premises, and in conformity with the several acts of Congress in such case made and provided, HAVE GIVEN AND GRANTED, and by these presents DO GIVE AND GRANT, unto the said

Elisha H. Brooks, and to his heirs, the said tract above described: To have and to hold the same, together with all the rights, privileges, immunities, and appurtenances of whatsoever nature, thereunto belonging, unto the said

Elisha H. Brooks, and to his heirs and assigns forever.

In Testimony Whereof, I, James Buchanan, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, have caused these Letters to be made PATENT, and the SEAL of the GENERAL LAND OFFICE to be hereunto affixed.

GIVEN under my hand, at the CITY OF WASHINGTON, the tenth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty seven, and of the INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNITED STATES the Eighty first.



BY THE PRESIDENT:

James Buchanan,
By G. H. Jones, Asst. Secretary,
J. W. Granger, Recorder of the General Land Office.

Elisha's patent document for land purchased in Pine River Twp, Gratiot Co.

This was not the only property that Elisha bought in Gratiot County. Although we have not discovered when they bought them, they owned parts of section 24, north of the village of St. Louis. In 1869, he and Laura sold part of section 24, about one acre, to the St. Louis Academy for \$100⁷⁰; this was the property on which they would build a college to train preachers, although the school was started before that year. They bought and sold other pieces of section 24 as years went by⁷¹. Another half-acre lot, Laura sold to her brother in 1869 and bought it back from him 3 years later! Clearly, there was money to be made for the smart investor.

Among the land records in nearby Isabella County was the following: In May 1874, a land transfer between Edward K. Fowler and Warren Brooks for approximately an acre of land in what is now downtown Mt. Pleasant (Union Twp, Section 15) was finalized for \$50⁷², and a deal where Elisha Brooks bought the same piece of land from Edward for \$75 was also finalized⁷³. Edward was somehow the middleman between Warren and Elisha and made \$25 on the deal. We did not follow up on the eventual disposition of this parcel.



1879 map of Section 15, Union Township, Isabella Co, MI⁷⁴

The 1-acre property in question is measured from the NW corner of the SW 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of section 15. Approximately under the "S" in "Pleasant" on this 1879 map.

⁷⁰ Gratiot County deeds: liber 19, pages 204-205

⁷¹ Gratiot County deeds: Liber 16, page 621; liber 23, p 554; liber 23, page 626; liber 38, p37; liber 41, p 568; liber 42, p 240; liber 46, page 626.

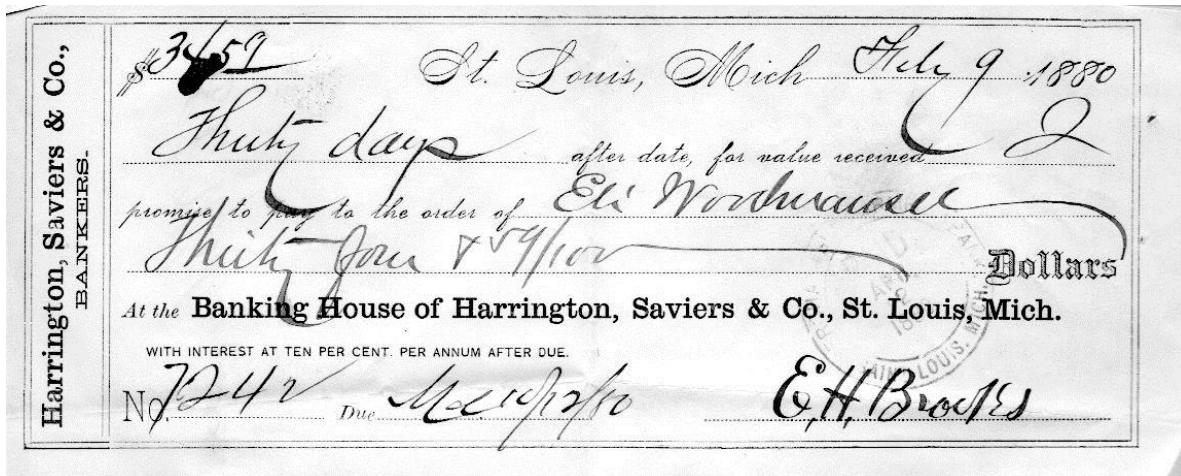
⁷² Isabella County deed: liber 18, p 617

⁷³ Isabella County deed: liber 15, p 150

⁷⁴

<http://www.historicmapworks.com/Map/US/473335/Union+Township++Mt++Pleasant/Isabella+County+1879+Microfilm/Michigan/>

In 1880, Elisha borrowed \$34 for 30 days from the bank in St Louis. This note was stamped "paid" in April 1880:



Elisha as preacher and founder of churches and an academy to teach preachers Elisha may have left much of the farming to his oldest and only-surviving son Warren, to whom he sold 60 acres of his quarter section in 1874 for \$500 ⁷⁵, when turned his hand to preaching the gospel, and founding an academy of the Disciples of Christ in St. Louis in 1865 to train preachers, selling them the land to build the college 4 years later ⁷⁶. The building which he built for his enterprise later became Yerington's College. It is not known exactly when he began preaching, but it may be that he was influenced by his father-in-law, Otis Bartlett, a United Brethren preacher and also a man who made the journey north to settle in Isabella County near the Brooks family. Whether Elisha had any formal training is not known, but he had joined the Disciples in Christ while living in Indiana, according to Sonley's research.

Once his family was settled, he hit the road as an itinerant preacher. Having made numerous converts, he saw the need for an academy to train more laity, and he organized the St. Louis Academy Association. On a parcel on the north side of the millpond in St. Louis he built a 2-story school building, ...first occupied in 1866... The Academy flourished for a number of years, but then it suffered a downturn in its fortunes....Elisha saw his beloved school close in 1881. After his death in 1890, the Association sold the building. ⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Gratiot County deeds: liber 28, 564.

⁷⁶ Gratiot County deeds: liber 19, pages 204-205

⁷⁷ David McMacken, St. Louis at 150, Concept Communications, 2003.



The building which became Yerington College was built by Elisha for his St. Louis Academy. It was first occupied in 1866.⁷⁸

Elisha was credited with founding three Church of Christ congregations in the area. Surprisingly to us, neither the Fowlers nor the Brooks were listed as “founding members” of the Coe Church of Christ in 1883, in the document below, found in the possession of Dennis Fowler; although Laura’s uncle, Judson Bartlett was. The Edward Fowlers may have attended the Baptist Church, as his mother, Harriet, was associated with that group in Hillsdale County.

⁷⁸ David McMacken, St. Louis at 150, Concept Communications, 2003, page 45.

PLEASANT RIDGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

We whose names are placed in this record do on this 13th day of January A.D. 1883 hereby band ourselves together into a congregation to be known as the Church of Christ at Pleasant Ridge, Isabella County, Michigan.

In so doing we wish and intend with the help of God to build on Christ our blessed Savior in Spirit, Speech and action and to do our best henceforth to conform ourselves fully as individuals and as a church to the divine will making Christian Character alone the test of Christian fellowship. And in the effort to do all this we earnestly implore the blessing and assistance of our Heavenly Father to the end that we may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things and Shine as lights in the world holding forth the word of life.

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Ankrom
Mr. & Mrs. John E. Boyles
Mrs. Frank Boyles
Mr. & Mrs. Judson Bartlett
Mr. & Mrs. Abner Carter
Ema Carter
Anna Carter
Mr. & Mrs. Billings Carter
Mr. & Mrs. George H. Culver
George Culver Jr.
Mary Culver
Ada E. Culver
Mr. & Mrs. Charles J. Dutt
Lafayette A. Eagon
Mr. & Mrs. Archibald Fordyce
Cornelia Goodenough
Eddy Goodenough
Eliza Gay
Mr. & Mrs. Isaac Ingersoll
Mr. & Mrs. John J. Jackson
Mr. & Mrs. Solomon G. Leonard
Alice Leonard
Sarah Leonard
Mr. & Mrs. William Alexandria Leonard
Mr. & Mrs. Archibald Leonard
Mrs. Leonard wife of H.G.
Leray Leonard
Lizza Leonard
Jane Leonard wife of M.H.
John L. McCurdy
Mr. & Mrs. John McClellan
Mr. & Mrs. Isaac Morse
Ida Ney wife of William
Otie Ferrine
Ema Adella Taylor
Mr. & Mrs. James M. Wood
Ola Wood
Bell Wood

54 members

About the year 1861 came a noted preacher from Indiana, named L. L. Carpenter. He, with Elisha Brooks and Elias Sias, held meetings in the school houses in Pine River and at Salt River Village. The result was a revival, and several small churches were formed. ⁷⁹

“Coe’s Heritage in the Restoration Movement”, a document in the possession of Tom Fowler, also tells us:

(Elias Sias) was instrumental, together with Elisha H. Brooks, in planting congregations in Central Michigan. Sias is supposed to have baptized over 4,000 during his ministry. Brooks spent 25 years preaching in Gratiot County and baptized over 1,000. One such congregation was the Forest Hill Church of Christ which Sias began in 1859.

In 1863, the Forest Hill group was too large and a three-way division was the decided solution. One group moved into St. Louis, one group stayed at Forest Hill, and a third group made up of ten members established a congregation in the District 4 School Building at “Pleasant Ridge”. Pleasant Ridge was so named for a 10

⁷⁹ Hon. Silas Moody, 1907 <http://www.mfhn.com/gratiot/pineriver/pineriv.htm>

foot ridge like hillock sloping west. But the name Pleasant Ridge was already being used by a community 10 miles north of Detroit. So in 1879, the post office logically dubbed the community comprised of a church, a post office, store, school, and several houses as Coe. (This name is attributed to George A. Coe, Michigan's Lieutenant Governor from 1855 to 1858.)

The **charter members** on November 3, 1863 were John J. Sandall, Ann Janette P. Sandall, Cornelius Bigelow, Cynthia Bigelow, **Hannah Frary**, Lucette Mecum, **Elisha Brooks (Evangelist)**, **Laura J. Brooks**, **Sarah Maria Bartlett**, and Mary M. Moody.

The original building, constructed of wood, burned during a severe electrical storm in 1913. A second building replaced it, built in 1915 out of stone gathered from the surrounding countryside, to prevent a similar loss. In 1959, an educational unit was built and in 1970 a second story was added. On April 6, 1980 the congregation moved into an 11,650 square foot third building, 200 feet from the old building.

[Hannah Frary (nee Brooks) was Elisha's sister. Sarah Maria (pronounced ma-RYE-a) Bartlett was Laura's Jane Bartlett Brooks' sister.]

Elisha and Laura had started going into St. Louis to the church there, according to Lawrence Sonley's book:

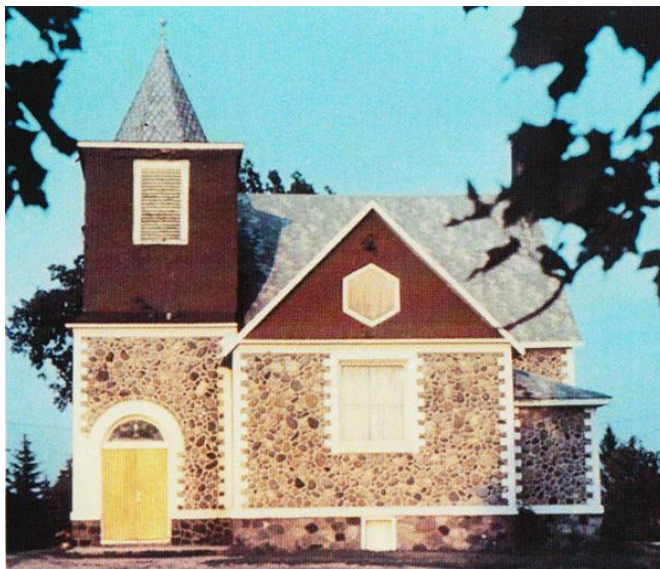
About 1861 an evangelist from Indiana visited central Michigan. With Elisha's collaboration, revival meetings were held at Pine River and Salt River (Shepherd, in Isabella Co.) village. The formation of several small churches resulted.

Members of the Forest Hill congregation quickly outgrew its quarters, so three branches were formed: one remaining there, one at Pine River and one at Pleasant Ridge (Coe in Isabella Co.). Living near Pleasant Ridge it was convenient for the Brooks family to attend services there. After a few years, they transferred their membership to St. Louis (formerly Pine River).

So apparently Elisha, a "charter member", broke with the Coe church and began attending in St. Louis, presumably before the 1883 "founding" happened.

The old stone church at Coe, Isabella Co, Michigan. Family lore states that Anson James Fowler helped build the 1915 stone church at Coe, thought of as the "family church". It was said of Anson that "every time the doors opened, he was there".

Coe Church of Christ
built 1915



More on Elisha and his family

We already knew that Elisha was a jack-of-all trades, farmer, preacher, gold miner, but he also served as treasurer of Pine River Township and justice of the peace, according to Sonley/ He was also postmaster from 1857 to '59, running the post office out of the house on the Coe/Pine River Twp border, and named the post office, Forest Hill, the same name as his home on the oak-tree-wooded hilltop. The tiny village of Forest Hill that many of us know today (see map above), was originally the name for Elisha's home post office. The name moved WITH the post office to its current location -- where there is, illogically, no forest OR hill.⁸⁰

And in 1865, he and two other men won the \$200 contract, by virtue of the lowest bid, to build part of a road in the township, running south from the corners of sections 9/10/15/16, for 80 rods (about 1.38 miles). It was to be finished the following July.

CONTRACT FOR MAKING A ROAD

From *Big Rapids in Saginaw County* to *the settlement of Clinton County* under and by virtue of the Act, entitled "An act to provide for the drainage and reclamation of Swamp Lands by means of State roads and ditches," approved February 11, 1859, and the Acts amendatory thereof.

This Agreement, Made and entered into this *14th* day of *August* A. D. 1865. between the People of the State of Michigan, of the first part, by the Commissioner appointed under the above recited Acts, for the road therein designated as the Alma & Clinton State Road, and *Elisha H Brooks* as principal and *J J Sandell and Elias Woody* as sureties, of the second part: WITNESSETH, THAT WHEREAS, the said Commissioner has given due notice as required by said Acts, of the time and place of the letting of said Contract: AND WHEREAS, at the letting of said Contract, the said *Elisha H Brooks* the said principal was the lowest responsible bidder for said work:

Now, the said Parties Covenant and Agree, as follows, to wit:

The parties of the second part, in consideration of the compensation to be made by the party of the first part, to the said principal covenant and agree that the said principal shall make, construct and finish, in a good substantial and workmanlike manner, and according to the specifications herein contained, a road *four (4) rods wide*, commencing at *the corner of 9-10-15-16 3/4 Sec 12 N R 34* in the County of *Isabella*, running thence, according to the said Commissioners survey thereof: *South Eighty Rods*

from said place of beginning to said termination being *50 Rods* in the county of *Isabella* the distance *more or less*. The following is a description of the land covered by said road, viz:—from said place of beginning to *16 Rods* the land is *Dry* thence to *44 Rods* the land is *Swampy* thence to *Terminus* the land is *Dry*

The distance said road is to be constructed over dry ground, is, as nearly as can be ascertained, *36* miles; over wet ground, *4* miles, and over swampy ground, *4* miles.

The number, position, dimensions and construction of Sluices and Bridges, the width of the Road-bed, of the Clearing and Grubbing, and the Ditches on each side of the road for carrying off the surface water, the Side drains and the grading over low and wet lands, are to be as follows, viz:

⁸⁰ There is a little more about this at:

<http://www.mfhn.com/gratiot/pineriver/pineriv.htm>

Music was important to the Brooks. Tom and Melissa Fowler have possession of, and have restored, the ornate reed organ which Laura Bartlett Brooks bought for her children.



1860's vintage reed organ



Kristen Fowler Landi and Fiona Landi at the Brooks' reed organ.
(photo by author, 2003)

Of Elisha and Laura's eight children, only four lived to adulthood (see also Sonley's run-down on the children, above):

- Warren James Brooks (1848 Stafford, Dekalb Co, IN – 1933 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI). Married Emaline Payne (1849 Greene Co, PA – 1915 St. Louis, MI) in 1870. The couple had five children, some of whom were as old as Elisha and Laura's youngest children. In 1874, Warren bought 60 of Elisha Brooks' original 160 acres ⁸¹, also 40 acres of section 13 in 1923 ⁸², and 40 acres in Midland County – the two last parcels were still in his hands when he died.



Warren James Brooks, wife and daughter's grave at Oak Grove Cemetery, St. Louis, MI.
(photo by author, 2015)

⁸¹ Gratiot County deeds: liber 28, 564.

⁸² Gratiot County deeds: liber 183, p137.

Here is a biography of Warren:

Warren J. Brooks is a leading and highly esteemed farmer and business man of Pine River Township, Gratiot County, owning and cultivating a productive farm of sixty acres. He was born in De Kalb county, Indiana, September 15, 1848, son of Elisha H. and Laura Jane (Bartlett) Brooks, natives of Trumbull county, Ohio.

In the fall of 1854 Elisha H. Brooks removed to Michigan and located one hundred and sixty acres of land in Section 1, Pine River Township. He spent the following winter with his family at Maple Rapids, Clinton County, and in the spring of 1855 installed his family in the little log cabin he had built when he located the farm. There he lived engaged in the cultivation of his land until his death, September 10, 1890; his wife still survives him at the advanced age of seventy-six years. They had seven children: Daniel, deceased; Warren J.; Jessie I., who married Charles J. Dutt; Callie and Lincoln, both deceased; Flora, wife of Chester Alexander; and Nellie, Mrs. Anson Fowler.

Warren J. Brooks was reared to manhood on his father's farm in Pine River Township, where he has always resided. His life has been spent in agricultural pursuits, and he owns a farm of sixty acres, forty of which have been improved. He was married in Pine River township, March 4, 1870, to Miss Emeline Payne, born December 29, 1849, in Greene county, Pennsylvania, daughter of Amos and Eleanor (Reeves) Payne, the latter of whom died in Pennsylvania, and the former in Gratiot county (in which he had located in the late sixties) at about seventy years of age. Mr. and Mrs. Brooks have had five children: Angeline A., wife of Conrad V. Reese; Alta D., wife of Thomas Leonard; Elsie A., wife of John Thomas; Mintie R., who died at the age of eight years; and Willie B. Mr. and Mrs. Brooks are true Christian people, although belonging to no particular religious sect. They are representative people of Pine River Township, and generally esteemed for their substantial and kindly qualities.⁸³

- Jessie Independence Brooks (1857 Pine River, Gratiot, MI – 1921 Tulsa, OK). Married Charles Dutt (1851 Venango Co, PA – 1933 San Gabriel, CA) in 1876 and stayed in the central MI area, Charles working as a carpenter in Alma MI in 1910 for instance, until 1916 when the couple moved to Tulsa OK and lived with their son Meade, a minister, and family there. They had five children between 1877 and 1896. Jessie may have died in Tulsa OK, but she was buried at Riverside Cemetery in Alma, MI with one of her sons -- or at least there is a marker there for her. Charles moved with Meade and family to California and died there, surviving his son by three years; his grave site is unknown.



Grave of Jessie Independence Brooks Dutt at Riverside Cemetery, Alma, MI. (photo courtesy of Find-A-Grave⁸⁴)

⁸³ <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mislabs/beers/beers012.html>

⁸⁴ <http://findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=dutt&GSiman=1&GScid=1506&GRid=61480400&>

This marker looks SO much like those of Elisha's dead children in Oak Grove Cemetery that we wonder if it is really her grave or whether the same family member who had the other children's markers made, also had one made for Jessie. If that were true, however, we would expect the grave to be at Oak Grove Cemetery with the others.

- Flora Hadsell Brooks (1868 Pine River, Gratiot, MI – 1939 Ann Arbor, MI). Flora was the second wife of Chester Delmar Alexander (1859 Lenawee Co, MI – 1932 Saginaw, MI) and step-mother to his two daughters by a previous marriage, both of whom died before either Flora or Chester did. As a younger man, Chester had been a telegraph operator, but in 1900, 1920, and 1930, he was farming in Coe Twp. In 1910, they were living in town (St. Louis) where Chester was a buyer for a store. Flora remained close with her sister Nellie, and after Chester died, Flora traveled abroad to England and to Florida with Nellie and Anson. O.S. Fowler named his youngest son Laurence Delmar Fowler for Chester. The Alexanders were both buried at Oak Grove Cemetery, St. Louis, MI. Chester's first wife, Ettie Junyette Bannister Alexander (1865 Hartland, Niagara, New York – 1892 Las Cruces, Dona Ana, New Mexico) was buried at buried Maple Ridge Cemetery, Holt, Ingham, MI with one of her daughters and some other relatives.



Chester D. Alexander's and Flora Brooks Alexander's grave, Oak Grove Cemetery (photo by author, 2015)



Flora Hadsell Brooks and Chester Delmar Alexander in 1912. (photo courtesy of Brittany Tilby)

- Nellie Pearl Brooks (1873 Pine River Twp, Gratiot, MI – 1960 Dunedin, FL). Read on.

The year before Elisha's death, he sold the remaining 104 acres of his original 160 ⁸⁵, to Laura Jane in one of those moves which seems to us to smack of a savings on taxes. Other relatives whose land records we have researched did the same in that era (Edward Fowler in 1885 and Nelson Fowler in 1898).

After Elisha's death in 1891, Laura lived with Anson and Nellie (or rather, they lived with her in the Forest Hill house) until her death in 1908. Both Elisha and Laura Brooks were buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, St. Louis, MI.

⁸⁵ Gratiot County deeds: liber 77, p 150.



Elisha H. and
Laura Bartlett
Brooks, Oak
Grove
Cemetery, St.
Louis, MI.

(photo by
author, 2009)



Three of the four young children Laura and Elisha lost were also buried with them at Oak Grove Cemetery: Lincoln A, or Abraham Lincoln Brooks (1861 – 1873), Laura Bell Brooks (1866 – 1880), and California Z. Brooks (1859 – 1873). Daniel died in Indiana in 1853 and his burial place is unknown. (Photo by author, 2009)

The Brooks patent land

We were interested to learn how the pieces of the 160 acres that Elisha had patented in section 1 (the Forest Hill property) ended up in the hands of some of their descendants.

In 1871, Elisha and Laura borrowed \$300 against 85 acres of their farmland. The mortgage indicated that they were to pay 10% interest annually for 5 years; however, notes in the hands of the family indicate that they were still paying rent as late as 1878.

MORTGAGE.

(13)

[Printed and sold by Wm. A. Throop & Co., Detroit.

Entered according to an Act of Congress, in the year 1865, by Wm. A. Throop & Co., in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the U. S. for the Western District of Michigan.



This Indenture, Made the *Eleventh* day of *October*

in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy *one* BETWEEN
Elisha H. Brooks and his wife
his wife of *St. Louis* *County*, *Michigan*
of the first part, and *Orsamus M. Pearl* of *DuPlaine*
County, *Michigan*

of the second part. Witnesseth, That the said part *ie* of the first part, for and in consideration of
the sum of *Three Hundred Dollars*

to *them* in hand paid by the said part *ie* of the second part, the receipt whereof is
hereby confessed and acknowledged, have granted, bargained, sold, and by these presents do grant, bargain
and sell, unto the said part *ie* of the second part, and to *his* heirs and assigns, Forever, All

the following described premises to wit:
The exact fractional half of the North
West fractional Quarter of section One (1) in Town
Ship Twelve (12) North of Range Three (3) East
in the County of Ionia and State of Michigan,
containing Eighty five and nine hundredths
of an acre according to the United States survey,
more or less

to the said part *ie* of the second part, and to *his* heirs

St. Louis, Mich -
October 11 1871
\$300. # Two years after date, for value
received I promise to pay Orsamus
M Pearl or order, the sum of three
Hundred Dollars, with interest to be
paid annually at ten percent
from this date. This note is secured
by a Real Estate Mortgage of
Even date and amount
which mortgage is duly stamped
Elisha H. Brooks

$\$30^{00}$ Received on the within note Thirty Dollars as Interest Duplain Nov 20th 1872

 $\$20^{00}$ Received on the within note by mail Twenty Dollars as Interest Duplain March 2nd 1874

 $\$5^{00}$ Received on the within note Five Dollars (by mail) as interest Duplain May 7th 1874

 $\$5^{00}$ Recd on the within note Five Dollars (by mail) as interest Duplain July 2nd 1874

 $\$20^{00}$ Recd on the within note by the hand of R. Faunt Thirty Dollars as interest Duplain Feb 27th 1875

 $\$25^{00}$ Jan 11th 1876 Recd $\$25$ on the within note

 $\$35^{00}$ Recd by mail this 16th Nov. 1876 the sum of thirty five Dollars by draft on myself

 $\$30$ Received on the within note Thirty Dollars as Interest Duplain Feb 20th 1878

And they signed it (witnessed by son Warren):

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in Presence of *Elisha H Brooks*
E R Caburn
W. Brooks } *Laura J Brooks*

Of Elisha's original 160 acres, son Warren Brooks, purchased the south-most 60-acre portion in 1874 for \$500. ⁸⁶

After Elisha died in 1891, apparently all of the children, as well as Laura Jane, inherited the remainder of the farm: in 1895, the four adult children "sold" their rights to the acreage to Laura Jane for \$1 ⁸⁷. The same month, Cephas Wood bought the center section (44 acres) ⁸⁸ from Laura Jane for \$1000; he was the son of James M. Wood from across the street to the west and a shirttail relation: James M Wood's brother, David, was married to Elisha Brook's niece, Lydia M. Frary.

In 1892, Laura Jane borrowed against her 100 acres of section acreage, \$775, for five years at 8% interest. Records show she had only about 60 acres by then, but Oh Well!

Printed by JOHN F. EBY & Co., Detroit, Mich. (Committee's Form, 1891.)

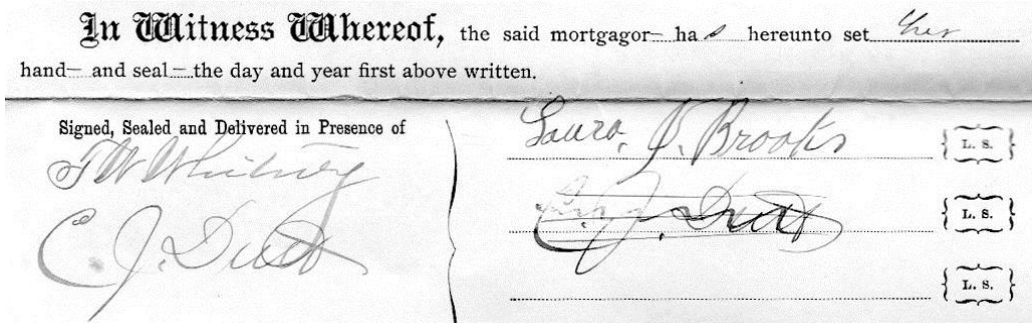
1 **This Mortgage,** Made the *Eighteenth* day of
2 *March* in the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety *two*,
3 by *Laura J. Brooks of Pine River, Gratiot County,*
4 *Michigan* Mortgagee, unto
5 **The Commercial Savings Bank of Adrian, Mich.,** Mortgagee,
6 WITNESSETH, That the said mortgagee, in consideration of the sum of _____
7 *Seven hundred and seventy five* Dollars,
8 the receipt of which is acknowledged; and for the purpose of securing the repayment of the said sum,
9 with interest, as hereinafter provided, and the performance of the covenants hereinafter contained, hereby
10 mortgaged and warrant unto the said mortgagee, *its successors heirs* and assigns, the lands,
11 premises and property situated in the *Township of Pine River*
12 County of *Gratiot* and State of Michigan, described as follows, to wit:
13
14 *The North One hundred (100) acres of the*
15 *North West quarter of Section One (1) in*
16 *Township Twelve (12) North of Range*
17 *Three (3) West.*
18

⁸⁶ Gratiot County deeds: liber 28, 564.

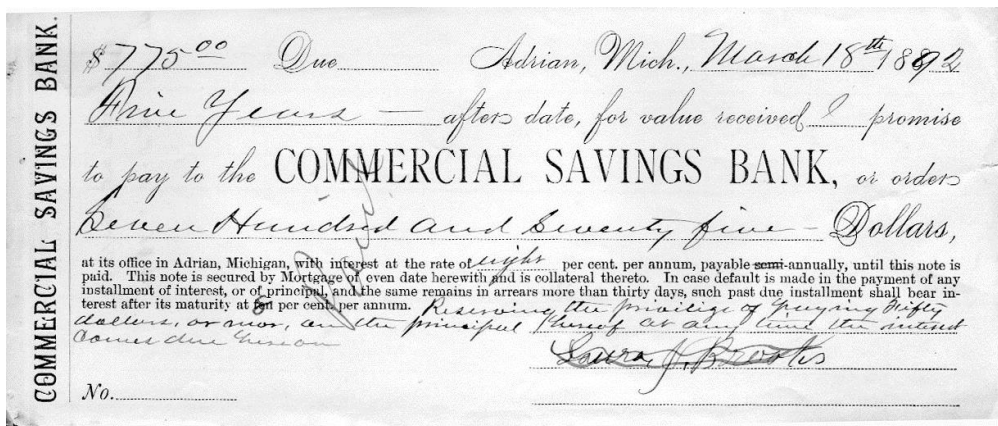
⁸⁷ Gratiot County Deeds: liber 91, p 119.

⁸⁸ Gratiot County deeds: liber 93, p 372

It was signed, and witnessed by her son-in-law, Charles J Dutt:



Here is the note, marked "paid" in red ink across the center:



This is the way things stood with the land until Laura Jane's death in 1908.

1901 map/atlas of Gratiot County, MI ⁸⁹
 (Section 1 of Pine River Township)

Laura Jane Bartlett Brooks, widow of Elisha Brooks, owned the north-most 62-acre slice of Elisha's original quarter section. Cephas Wood the center slice of 44 acres, and son, Warren Brooks, owned the south-most 60-acre portion.



⁸⁹ <http://www.mfhn.com/gratiot/1901maps/PineRiver.jpg>

In April 1906, Laura Jane wrote her will.

In view of the uncertainty of life and desiring to determine the disposition to be made of my property after my death, I Laura J. Brooks of sound and disposing mind and memory, do make this my last will and testament. First: It is my will that all just claims against me be paid out of my estate. Second: I will and devise to my daughter Nellie P. Fowler, fifteen acres of land off of the west end of sixty acres off of the north side of the north west quarter of section one (1) in Township number twelve (2) north of range three (3) west, in Gratiot County in the State of Michigan. Third: I will and bequeath to my children Warren J. Brooks, Jessie Dutt, and Flora H. Alexander, all the rest and residue of my real estate, after giving to my daughter Nellie P. Fowler, that which is devised to her in item second of this will,

share and share alike. Fourth: It is my will that my son Warren J. Brooks be the executor of this my will, and that he be not required to give a bond as such executor. In witness whereof I Laura J. Brooks have signed and acknowledged by the said Laura as my last will and testament, this 23rd day of April 1906

Laura J. Brooks
Signed and acknowledged
by Laura J. Brooks as her last
will and testament in our
presence and signed by us as
witnesses the 23rd day of April
1906

Charles Howland
J. R. Stafford

1906 handwritten will of Laura Jane Bartlett Brooks ⁹⁰

In it she left the west-most quarter of her acreage, 15 acres, including the house, to her daughter Nellie Pearl Brooks Fowler, who had been living with her, and the remaining acreage to her other three adult children, Warren J. Brooks, Jessie I. Brooks Dutt, and Flora H. Brooks Alexander to "share and share alike". At the time that the will went to probate (1910), the value of her 60 acres was \$3400 ⁹¹.

⁹⁰ Gratiot County probate records for Laura J. Brooks; and also deeds, liber 127, page ??

⁹¹ Gratiot County probate records for Laura J. Brooks

In 1910, then, a series of deeds were registered, in which essentially, Flora and Jessie sold the east-most 15 acres to Warren, and Warren and Jessie sold the central 30 acres to Flora⁹². When Flora died in 1939, her heirs sold the 30 central acres to Nellie Fowler for \$1000⁹³.

By 1942, in the Farm Plat Book of that year, the 15 west-most acres were in Nellie's hands, per Laura's bequest; the 30 acres bought from Flora Brooks Alexander in the hands of Nellie's son O.S. or "Orrison"; and the 15 east-most acres in the hands of Warren's heirs, his adult children, "Angie Reiss et al".

Warren had died in 1933 with no will, at which time, he no longer owned the 60 acres he had bought from his parents, nor had he owned them in 1929 when he signed gas leases for his properties⁹⁴. We were unable to determine when he sold those 60 acres of section 1 (between 1902 and 1929). His probate documents from the Gratiot Co clerks' office indicate that, at death, he still owned the 15 east-most acres of Laura Jane's bequest to her children, as well as 40 acres in Section 13 of Pine River Twp, and 15 acres in Midland Co.

By 1955, the east-most 15 was owned by Henry Gibson (Warren Brooks' great-granddaughter's husband). By 1960, it had passed to R. Ross, possibly one of Eunice Eddy Fowler's sister's descendants. In fact, much of section 1 has been acquired by the Ross family in the past decades. Cephas Wood died in 1905, but his widow, Etta Smith Wood, lived until 1961. The plat map of 1955 showed that the Wood property had changed hands before that date.

In 1963, Anson and Nellie had both died, and the 15 acres on the west side of Laura's acreage had gone to Anson and Nellie's daughter and husband, Ketha and George Parsons.

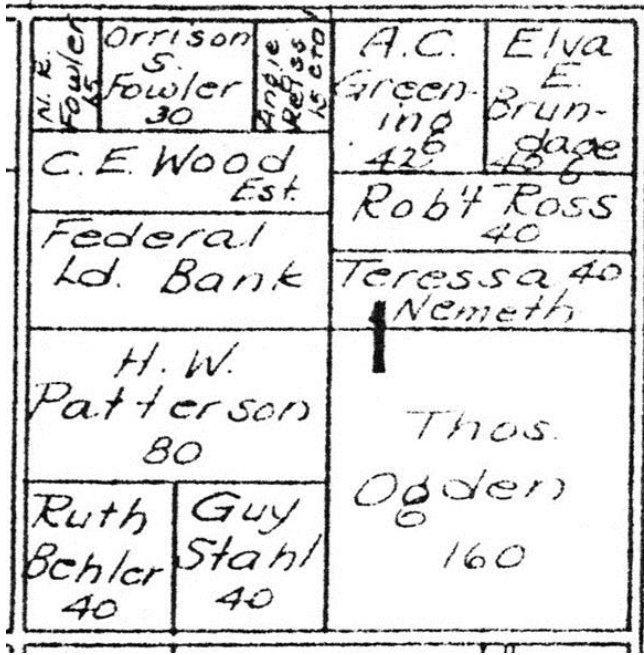
By 1990, Nellie's grandson, Laurence Fowler, had bought the Parson's 15 acres in 1967⁹⁵, and the Ross families had bought a majority of the section. In 2000, Laurence also owned the central 30 acres, despite what the plat said (O.S. "Orrison" died in 1993) although we did not find a transfer deed for the 30 acres. After Larry's death, the 45 acres passed to other Fowler descendants.

⁹² Gratiot County deeds: liber 145, p32; liber 145, p16; liber 145, p81; and probably one we missed!

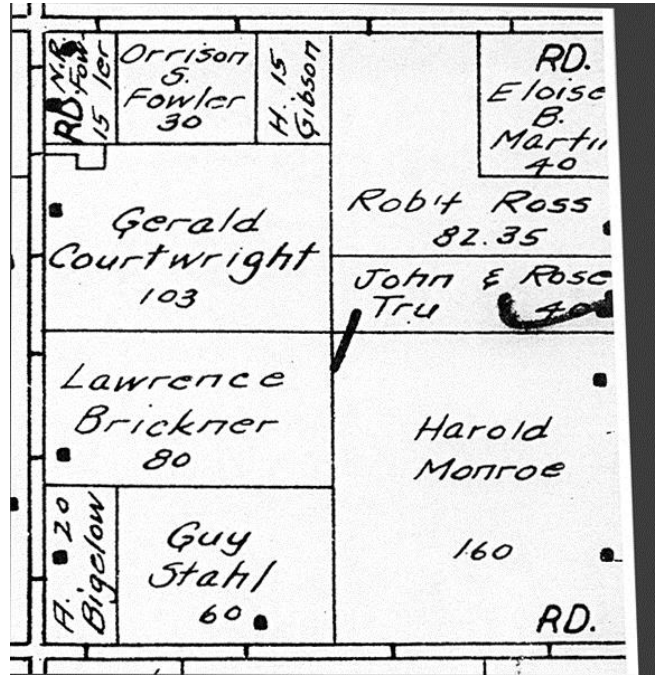
⁹³ Gratiot County deed: liber 226, p 142.

⁹⁴ Gratiot County deeds: liber 205, p394.

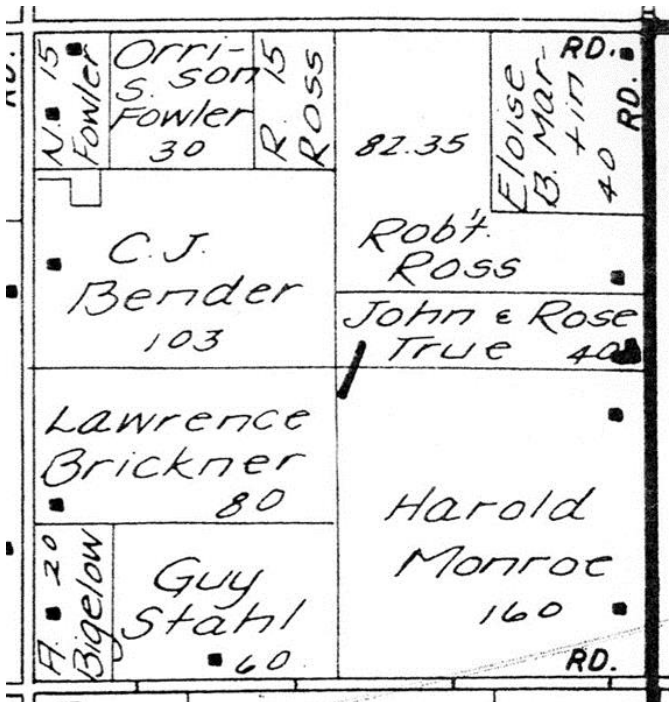
⁹⁵ Gratiot County deeds: liber 364, p692



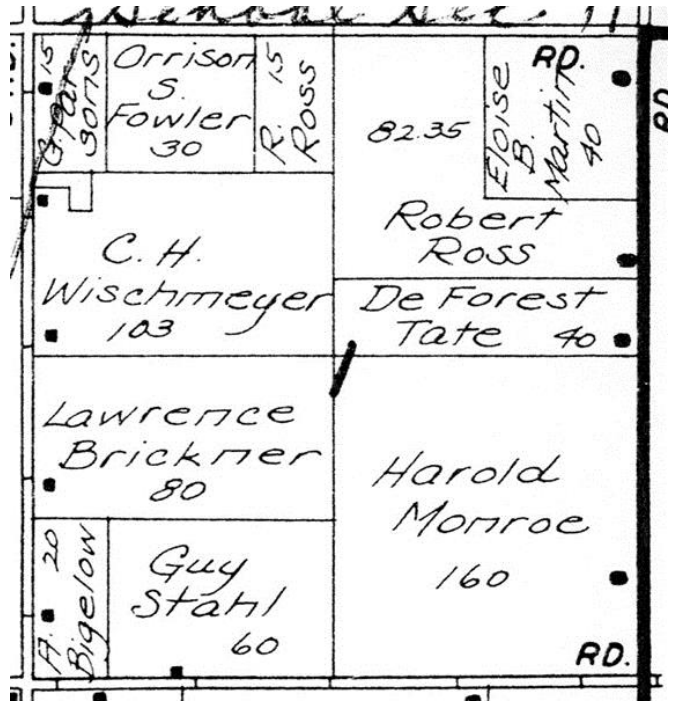
1942



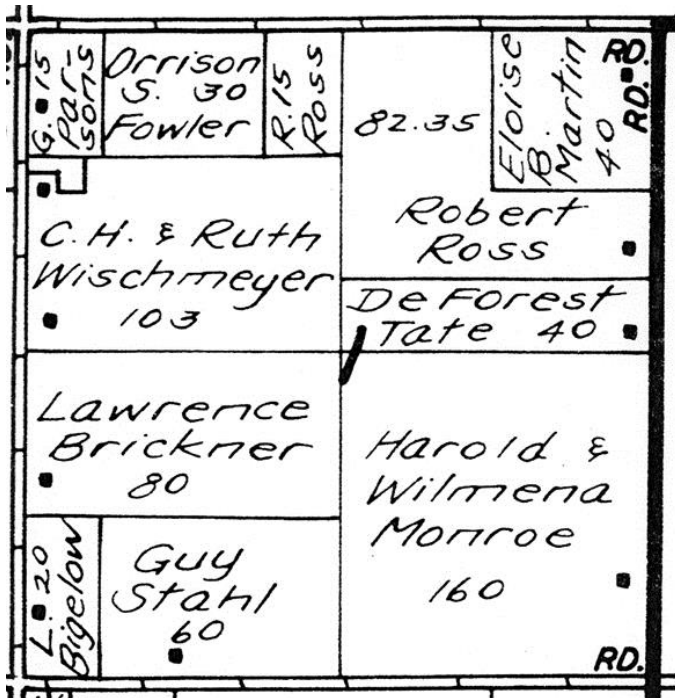
1955



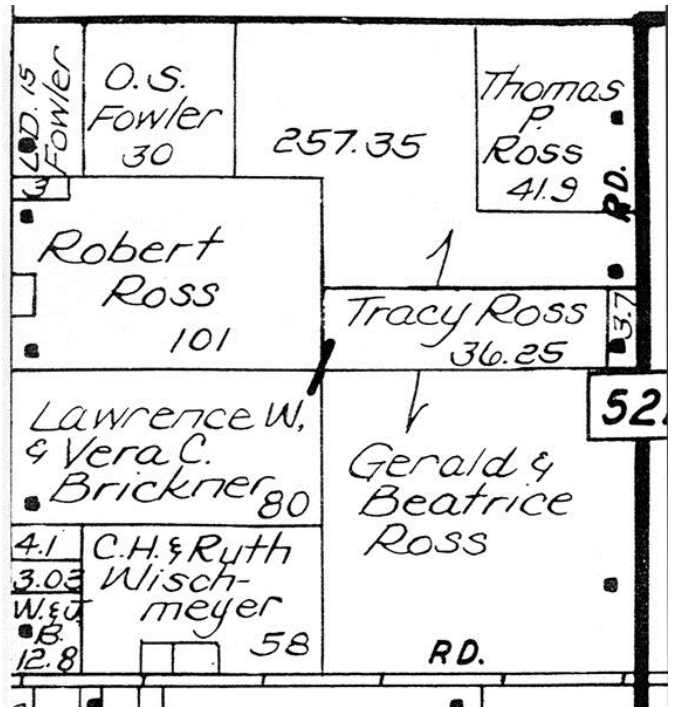
1960



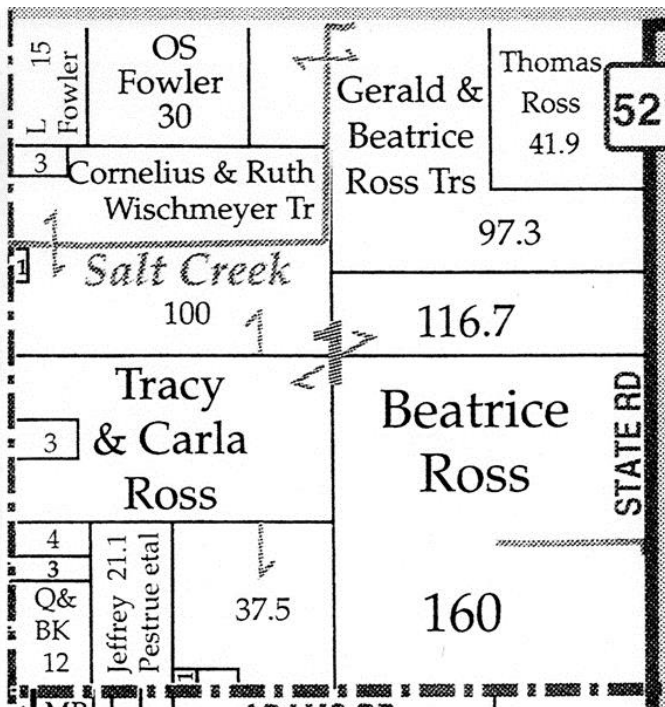
1963



1967



1990



2000

Gratiot County Farm Plat
or Land Atlas Plat Books,
Gratiot County Clerk's office.

- Nellie Pearl Brooks and Anson James Fowler were married in Mount Pleasant Michigan, 13 Sep 1893. For more about this couple and their descendants, return to the Fowler story at <http://MelissaCravenFowler.com> -- choose "Tom's Ancestry" tab