

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
& wife
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–54)

RESEARCH NOTES

1787-1876

PENNSYLVANIA & ILLINOIS

Surname Variants

Weetar, Weeter, Weider, Weidner, Weter, Wetter, Wheeler, Widder, Widow, Witer, Wither, Witter, Witters.

12 MAY 1787

PENNSYLVANIA

*Birth*¹

Date of birth calculated from Witter’s tombstone in Brian Cemetery, Christy Township, Lawrence County, Illinois:

SAMUEL WITTER

Died

Dec. 25, 1876

89Y, 6M, 13D

COMMENT:

The 1850, 1860, and 1870 censuses (see abstracts under those dates) cite Samuel’s age as 63, 71, and 69 respectively—suggesting a birth between 2 June 1786 and 1 June 1802. All three censuses consistently state his birthplace as Pennsylvania.

1786-89

PENNSYLVANIA OR FREDERICK CO., MARYLAND

Kinship?

Abraham Witter (Weetar, etc.), who is clustered with Samuel in numerous records below, is widely said to be Samuel’s brother, although no known researcher provides supporting evidence or mounts a proof

¹Eugene Laws, Sumner, Ill., to Elizabeth Shown Mills, 23 June 1977. Laws, a grandson of Samuel’s daughter Sarah by her husband William Laws, supplied a photograph of the stone, whose material and style appear to be contemporaneous with the date of death. The cemetery at that time stood on Laws’s farm, 5.5 miles SW of the town of Sumner, off Highway 1801 in Section 30, Township 3N, Range 13W.

1850 U.S. census, Lawrence Co., Ill., pop. sch., p. 13 (stamped), dwell. 180, fam. 180; NA microfilm M432, roll 115. 1860 U.S. census, Lawrence Co., Ill., pop. sch., Luken Township, p. 157 (penned), dwell. 14, fam. 13; NA microfilm M653, roll 198. Also 1870 U.S. census, Lawrence Co., Ill., pop. sch., Lukin Township, p. 14 (penned), dwell./ fam. 91; NA microfilm M593, roll 245.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

argument. The evidence found to date—presented in the notes that follow—supports that hypothesis with no significant conflicts. Abraham was born in either Pennsylvania or Maryland between 1786 and 1789, according to the 1850–80 censuses. His obituary explicitly addresses his birth and subsequent arrival in Pennsylvania:

On January 27th, 1882, at his residence in Taylor township, Fulton county, Pa., Mr. Abraham Witter, aged 95 years, 7 months, and 16 days. [*i.e.*, *born 11 July 1786*]. The deceased **was born in Frederick County, Md., in the year 1786. He came with his father to Franklin county when eleven years of age, his father settled at Carrick Furnace, [i.e., ca. 1797, Metal Township]** and when a young man [he, Abraham] learned the millwright trade. He followed that trade for 15 or 20 years. He married a daughter of Daniel Pipers, of Amberson’s Valley, by whom they had thirteen children, seven girls and six boys, all of which are living. Four of the boys were in the late war at one time, and all got home safe; the deceased was with the militia at Baltimore in war of 1812. Abraham Witter did the millwright work of the Duncannon iron works, which is still in use yet. In 1812, with his family, he moved to Bedford county, now Fulton, and engaged in farming. He has eighty-four grandchildren, and nineteen great-grandchildren. He had been a member of the United Brethren church for fifty-four years.”²

COMMENT:

- Abraham’s obituary is demonstrably wrong in regards to his alleged 1812 settlement in Bedford. (See notes below for the 1830–50 period.)
- No militia or military record has been found for Abraham, although he was of age to serve.
- The only Witter (or conceivable variant) whom I have placed in Frederick County thus far is John Witter (who signed as Johannis Widder), below.

1790–1800
FRANKLIN CO., PA

Kinship?

No Witter households have been found in Franklin County at the time of Samuel’s birth. Four men of comparable surname appear there during the period of his childhood:³

Jacob Weider (Weidener). 1790–1794. This Jacob warranted and/or patented four tracts of land in Franklin County during 1790–94. One lay on Conecocheague Creek in Montgomery Township; the other locations have not yet been identified in this project. Jacob is not found on the 1800 census of Franklin and he has not been conclusively placed elsewhere, before or after his Franklin County residence.

² McConnellsburg, Penn., *Fulton Republican*, 2 March 1882, obituary of Abraham Witter. Also 1850 U.S. census, Fulton Co., Pa., pop.sch., p. 90 (stamped), dwell. 85, fam. 87, “Abram Weeter”; NA microfilm M432, roll 783. Also 1860 U.S. census, Fulton Co., Pa., pop. sch., Spursville P.O., p. 170 (stamped), dwell./fam. 156, “Abram Waiter;” NA microfilm M653, roll 1113. Also 1870 U.S. census, Fulton Co., Pa., pop. sch., Hustontown P.O., dwell. 78, fam. 76, “Abraham Witter”; M593, roll 1347. Also 1880 U.S. census, Fulton Co., Pa., pop. sch., Taylor twp., E. D. 208, p. 10, dwell. 73, fam. 75, “Abraham Witter”; NA microfilm T9, roll 1133.

³ For complete details and documentation on each man, see file copies of “Jacob Weider: Research Notes,” “Peter Witter: Research Notes,” “Christoffel ‘Stophel’ (Christopher) Witter: Research Notes,” and “John Witter (Johannis Widder): Research Notes”; ESM’s digital folder Desktop>GenealogyFiles>Family Files>Witter>Individual Research Notes.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

Peter Witter (Wither). ca. 1793–1805. Peter’s arrival date is unknown. He first appears on the 1794 tax roll of Peters Township, Franklin County, where he married Catherine Ober, daughter of John Ober who died in Franklin in 1793 and left a probated estate. In 1798, Peter and wife Catharine sold their land in Peters Township. From 1800–6 Peter lived in Metal Township, adjacent to John Witter (Johannis Widder) who arrived by 1800 from Tom’s Creek Hundred, Frederick County, Maryland. The 1800 census attributes to Peter’s household no males old enough to be Samuel or Abraham.

Christoffel “Stophel,” “Christopher” Witter (Wither). 1800–06. Christoffel first appears in Franklin on 8 April 1794, when he bought land in Fannett (now Metal) Township, identifying himself as “late of Earl Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.” He is enumerated adjacent to John and one household from Peter in 1800. He did have a son Samuel and others of age to be Abraham. However, he moved his family in 1806 to Union County, Indiana.

Johannis Widder (aka John Witter, Witer, Wither). 1800–aft. 1820. First found on record in Tom’s Creek Hundred, Frederick County, Maryland, 1782, where his residence was stable enough to prompt a court reference to “John Witer’s Lane.” He sued a debtor in 1785–86 (as “John Witter”), and received patents to two tracts in 1796 (“John Witter”). In 1800, saying he was of “Tom’s Creek Hundred, Frederick County, Maryland,” he made his first known appearance in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, buying a tract in Metal Township, where he would remain for at least two decades. The 1800 census assigns to his household males of age to be Abraham and Samuel. The 1820 census, which is semialphabetized by surname, enumerates him consecutively with the newly married Samuel, who has an additional male in his household of age to be the still-single Abraham. In John’s early Franklin County deeds, he signed his name as “Johannis Widder.”

Two unresolved issues counter the hypothesis that Johannis fathered Samuel—and the widespread belief that he fathered Abraham

- The ten-month spacing between alleged birth dates of two living sons, which is possible but not common.
- All 1850 and later censuses for both Samuel and Abraham consistently place their births in Pennsylvania, not Maryland where Johannis appears to have lived at the time of their births. Against the census data for Abraham, however, one must weigh his obituary that asserts a birth in Frederick County, Maryland—the site of Johannis’s residence in the period Abraham and Samuel were born.

1810
FRANKLIN CO. PA

Census

Samuel Witter does not appear in the county as a head-of household. No Witters are enumerated in Metal Township, although the county deed records place all their land there. The John Witter household, formerly of Metal Township, appears on the list for Hamilton Township, which lay only six or

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

so miles away but was not adjacent.⁴ (A pegleg of Letterkenny Township separates Metal and Hamilton. The inherited land that Samuel and wife sold in 1839 apparently fell within that pegleg.)⁵

Hamilton Township
p. 148 (also 897½)

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------|---------|-------|-----------|----------|-------|-------------------------------|
| Witter, John | 1 male | 45+ | [John] | 1 female | 45+ | [Catherine] |
| | 3 males | 16–25 | [Samuel] | 1 female | 16–25 | [allegedly Mary m. Dan Piper] |
| | | | [Abraham] | | | |
| | | | [Daniel?] | | | |

Neighborhood:

[Last name in col. 1 connects to first name in col. 2]

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Snyder, Adam | Elliot, Joanna |
| Snyder, John | Widney, Margaret |
| Malone, Thomas | Philips, Samuel |
| Hoe, Christian | Elliot, Archibald |
| Campbell, Thomas | Woods, William |
| Elder, James | Woods, Hugh |
| Gettis, Paul | Larman, John |
| McKelvy, William | McConnell, Francis |
| Verner, John | McConnell, Joseph |
| Armstrong, William | Harvey, James |
| Witter, John | McEntire, Samuel |
| Belche, Sarah | McCune, Archibald |
| Wilhelms, Jacob | Withrow, Samuel |

COMMENT:

Other Witters:

Two other Witters appear elsewhere in the county. Neither have households that could contain both Samuel and Abraham. Both are of age to be older sons of John:

- *Antrim Township: Jacob*, 26–44, female 16–25, male 10–15, female 0–10, Antrim Township
- *Peters Township: John*, 26–44, female 16–25, 2 children 0–10, extra male 16–25, in Peters Township.

This Jacob, however, is said to be a son of one Christopher Witter (“Weiter”) who left an 1807 will in Greencastle naming “Jacob, Michael, and George” as his (only) three sons. [Virginia Shannon Fendrick, *American Revolutionary Soldiers of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Chambersburg: Franklin County Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, c1944), 224.]

⁴ 1810 U.S. census, Franklin Co., Pa., Hamilton Township, pp. 147–48, especially 148 (the latter is also numbered 897½), line 1; NA microfilm publication M252, roll 54. For the identity of Johannis Witter’s wife as “Catherine,” see Franklin Co., Pa., Deed Books 5:380 (1802), 5:429 (1802), 6:173 (1803); 9:35 (1810), 221 (1810).

⁵ Franklin Co., Pa., Deed Book 18: 155.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

This John of Peters—from the standpoint of age and location—might reasonably be proposed as the oldest son of Johannis aka “John.”

1812–1815
PENNSYLVANIA

Militia service

The statewide index to militiamen serving in the War of 1812 does not include any person surnamed Witter or any logical variant spelling.⁶

COMMENT:

Considering the possibility that this derivative source might have mistranscribed the surname, I flagged all “W” entries for individuals named *Samuel* and *Abraham*, then ran an 1810 and 1820 census search for their named officers and others identifiable for their companies. That yielded no Samuel or William whose associates were clustered in Franklin and Bedford Counties.

5 SEPTEMBER 1812–JANUARY 1813
PENNSYLVANIA

Militia service?

One Samuel “Weidner”—identity unproved—appears among the Franklin County Light Dragoons under Colonel Jared Irwin, Capt. Andrew Oakes, and Lt. Thomas Wilson. According to an 1887 history of Franklin:⁷

“June 12, 1812, Congress declared war against Great Britain. ... During the three years of hostilities thirteen companies of Franklin County men were recruited and sent to the field of action. ... A large number of these was found in this county, many of them ready on short notice to march in effective martial display to the front. We have the names of the ANTRIM GREENS, a rifle company of 60 men; FRANKLIN COUNTY LIGHT DRAGOONS, 41 men - Captain, JAMES McDOWELL; CONCORD LIGHT INFANTRY, 30 men - Captain, MICHAEL HARPER; CHAMBERSBURG UNION VOLUNTEERS, 51 men - Captain, JEREMIAH SNIDER. These companies at once tendered their services, th[r]ough COUNTY BRIGADE INSPECTOR WILLIAM McCLELLAN, to the Government.

⁶ “War of 1812 Index of Soldiers, Undated,” Series 2.61, RG2, Records of the Department of the Auditor General, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg; digitized online at *Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission* (<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r2-61War1812Index/r2-61%20WarOf1812Interface.htm> : accessed 7 January 2012).

⁷ *History of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Warner, Beers & Co., 1887), chap. 8, no pagination shown; transcription and posting by Joyce Moore, *USGenWebArchives* (<http://files.usgwarchives.net/pa/franklin/history/local/wbeers008.txt> : accessed 8 January 2012); the above punctuation and surname capitalization follows the formatting of the online transcription. The source of these lists seems to be I. H. McCauley’s *Historical Sketch of Franklin County, Pennsylvania, Prepared for Centennial Celebration* (Harrisburg, Penn.: Patriot Publishing Co., 1878), 147–48.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

The first detachment of troops left the county September 5, 1812. This was composed of the UNION VOLUNTEERS, the FRANKLIN RIFLEMEN, the CONCORD LIGHT INFANTRY, the MERCERSBURG RIFLES and the ANTRIM GREENS - total 264, officers and men. The quota of the county was 507, and the deficiency was made up by draft from the militia. MAJOR WILLIAM McCLELLAN was in command of the detachment. **They were sent to the northwest frontier, proceeding there by way of Bedford, Pittsburgh and Meadville, reaching the latter place in September. The troops were there re-organized into four regiments—two of rifles and two of infantry.** JEREMIAH SNIDER was elected colonel of the First Regiment, JOHN PURVIANCE of the Second Regiment. The four regiments being formed into a brigade under GENERAL TANNAHILL, DR. SAMUEL D. CULBERTSON, of Chambersburg, was appointed surgeon-in-chief; JOHN McClINTOCK became captain of Snider's company, on the latter being made colonel, and GEORGE K. HARPER was promoted to the vacant lieutenancy in SNIDER's company. The companies of CAPTAINS McClINTOCK, REGES, and HARPER were in COLONEL SNIDER's regiment and those of CAPTAINS OAKS and HAYS in COLONEL JARED IRWIN's regiment. **Immediately after the re-organization, the command marched to Buffalo, reaching there in November, where it went into winter quarters, and remained until discharged, their term of enlistment expiring in January, 1813.**

The 1887 author subsequently listed the officers and men known to serve in the various units. The second company on his list appears as follows in the online transcript:

| | | |
|------------|---|-----------------|
| CAPTAIN | – | ANDREW OAKES |
| LIEUTENANT | – | THOMAS WILSON |
| ENSIGN | – | GEORGE ZEIGLER |
| SERGEANTS | – | PETER CRAMER |
| | | JACOB GUDTNER |
| | | JACOB FLETTER |
| | | JAMES PENNELL |
| CORPORALS | – | WILLIAM DUGAN |
| | | GEORGE SHARER |
| | | HENRY SITES |
| | | JACOB GARRESENE |
| | | THOMAS BRADY |
| | | JOHN POPER |

PRIVATES

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| WILLIAM BOLTON | JOHN GAFF | GEORGE SHAFFER |
| GEORGE BETTES | JOHN GARNER | SAMUEL SMITH |
| HENRY BRENDLINGER | WILLIAM GORDON | JOHN SNYDER |
| JOSEPH BYERLY | RICHARD KELLER | JOHN SREADER |
| SAMUEL BENDER | SAMUEL MARTIN | GEORGE STUFF |
| WILLIAM CARROLL | JAMES McCURDY | GEORGE ULLER |
| PATRICK DUGAN | SAMUEL McLAUGHLIN | SAMUEL WEIDNER |
| EVAN EVANS | WILLIAM OVELMAN | DANIEL WEIDNER |
| WILLIAM FOSTER | THOMAS PLUMMER | CHRISTIAN WILLHELM |
| THOMAS FLETCHER | WILLIAM SCULLY | |

COMMENT:

Re: Samuel and Daniel “Weidner”:

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

- No “Weidner,” or close variant spelling can be found on the Franklin County censuses of either 1810 or 1820. (My past examinations of the original courthouse records focused on *Witter* and known variants at that time; *Weidner* was not among the potential variants that I searched.) As shown on page 2 of these research notes, *Weidener* was one of the variant spellings of the surname subsequently found in state-level land records for Jacob *Witter*. [See Patent Index, P. Series (P-1 to P-19), 1781–1809 (series 17.154), vol. 1 (1781–1794), pp. 343–44; RG-17, Records of the Land Office, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg; digitized online at *Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission* ([http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17PatentIndexes/r17154PatIndP1Inter face.htm](http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17PatentIndexes/r17154PatIndP1Inter%20face.htm) : accessed 8 January 2012). Also Franklin Co. Land Warrant Register, p. 54, Warrant Registers, 1733–1957, Series 17.88; Record Group 17, *ibid.*]
- “Widnor” is also a variant spelling of the Witter surname in Fendrick’s biographical sketches of Revolutionary soldiers who lived at some point in Franklin County. Specifically the sketch for Christopher Witter, who moved from Lancaster Co., Pennsylvania, to Antrim Township, Franklin County, notes the variants “Widnor, Weider, and Widder” in the tax, church, and probate (1807) records created by this man and his sons Jacob, George, and Michael. [Virginia Shannon Fendrick, *American Revolutionary Soldiers of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Chambersburg: Franklin County Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, ca. 1944), 224.]
- A search of the 1810 and 1820 censuses of Franklin, for all members of Capt. Andrew Oakes’s company, places nearly half of them (including Oakes) in Antrim township. However, every township in Franklin County is represented by at least one man. Also, at least five of the men were from Metal Township, where Benjamin Witter appears in 1820 and John Witter had owned land since 1800.
- In January 1813 (as noted above) Samuel and Daniel “Weidner” were discharged at Buffalo. No further trace of a Samuel or Daniel “Weidner” is found in Franklin County or elsewhere in Western Pennsylvania.
- At this point, the evidence suggests that Daniel and Samuel “Weidner”—*if* they were “Witters”—likely belonged to the family of the Jacob and Christopher Witter of Greencastle, rather than the family of John, Christopher, and Peter Witter of Metal Township.

5 SEPTEMBER 1812–JANUARY 1813
PENNSYLVANIA

Militia service?

The following map approximates the path of the march the Franklin County troops made in Fall 1812:

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)



COMMENT:

If Samuel “Weidner” returned to Franklin County after being discharged at Buffalo, no further trace of him has been found until the 1820 census appearance of the newly wed 34-year-old Samuel “Witter” in Metal Township, where he is listed consecutively with John Witter (aka “Johannis Wigger”).

The absence of Samuel Witter/Wigger from other Franklin County records during this 1813–20 period is a critical issue given that one Samuel Witter—a millwright from Pennsylvania, as was our Samuel—subsequently enlisted in the 17th U.S. Regiment on the Western frontier. (See 4 April 1814, below. Also see file copy, “Samuel Witter, U.S. 17th: Research Notes” and E. S. Mills, “Samuel Witter [1787–1876] and the War of 1812,” research report dated 15 January 2012.)

FEBRUARY–MARCH 1814
PENNSYLVANIA

Militia service?

The 1887 history of Franklin County presents no further War of 1812 action for Franklin County units until **early 1814**, when Pennsylvania’s governor “ordered a draft upon the State for troops.” The narrative continues this way:

“Franklin, Cumberland, York and Adams Counties’ quota under the call was 1,000 men, **the men from this county to assemble in Loudon on the 1st of March**. CAPTAIN SAMUEL DUNN, of Path Valley, had a company of forty men. These at once volunteered. The balance of the county's quota was 175 men. CAPTAIN SAMUEL GORDON's full company from Washington, and **CAPTAIN STAKE's partial company from Lurgan, rendezvoused at Loudon**. **WILLIAM McCLELLAN in command, who took them to Erie, leaving Loudon March 4**. MAJOR McCLELLAN's official report says the command, 221 privates, was officered by one major, three captains, five lieutenants and two ensigns. **At Erie,**

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

they were put in the **Fifth Regiment**, commanded by COLONEL JAMES FELTON; JAMES WOOD, of Greencastle, was major; THOMAS POE, of Antrim, adjutant. The latter was a brave and gallant soldier. He was a man born to command. It is told of him that by the mere power of his presence he quelled an outbreak of his men in camp, and by a word forced them to go quietly to their quarters. He fell mortally wounded at the battle of Chippewa, July 6, 1814.

“CAPTAIN JACOB STAKE lived between Roxbury and Strasburg. DR. W.C. LANE says of his command: ‘He went as a captain of drafted men as far as Erie, at which place his company was merged into those of CAPTAINS DUNN and GORDON].’⁸

COMMENT:

No Witter or similar name appears on the 1814 list, although Abraham Witter’s obituary states that he fought in the **Defense of Baltimore**—the famed conflict of 12–15 September 1814 that led Francis Scott Key to pen the poem that became America’s national anthem. The “Loudon” referenced above was the now-historic Fort Loudoun in Franklin County.

Re Capt. Jacob Stake: He and most of the Stake/Stech family in 1820 and 1830 resided in of Letterkenny Township, where Samuel Witter and wife Rachel co-owned property in 1839. In 1830, at which time Samuel and Abraham Witter lived 5 houses apart in Fannett Township, one of the Stech brothers was enumerated *adjacent* to Abraham and 4 houses from Samuel.

4 APRIL 1814

KENTUCKY

Military service?

“Records of Men Enlisted in the U.S. Army Prior to the Peace Establishment May 17, 1815.”⁹

| | | |
|-------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| No. | 4951 | |
| Name: | Witter, Samuel | [“Witer” is added below this] |

ORGANIZATION:

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Rank | Rect. [Recruit] |
| Regiment | 17 U.S.I. |
| Company Commander: | [blank] |

DESCRIPTION:

| | |
|--------|------|
| Height | 5’4” |
| Eyes | Dark |
| Hair | Dark |

⁸ *History of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Warner, Beers & Co., 1887), chap. 8, no pagination shown; transcription and posting by Joyce Moore, *USGenWebArchives* (<http://files.usgwarchives.net/pa/franklin/history/local/wbeers008.txt> : accessed 8 January 2012); the punctuation and surname capitalization, above, follows the formatting of the online transcription.

⁹ *Register of Enlistments in the U.S. Army, 1798–1914*, National Archives microfilm publication M233, roll 13, “Records of Men Enlisted in the U.S. Army Prior to the Peace Establishment, May 17, 1815,” vol. “S–W,” U.S. A p. 123; digital images, “U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments, 1798–1914,” *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 7 January 2012).

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

Coloring Dark
Age 31
Occupation Mill Wright

WHERE BORN:

Town or County [blank]
State Pennsylvania

ENLISTMENT:

When Apr. 4 1814
Where Kentucky
By whom Lt. Hackley
Period 5 years
Remarks D[uty] R[oster] dated Lexington Barracks, June 6[?] 1814
 Marched to Detroit May 14, 1815
 D. R., Capt. B. W. Sanders Co., Fb. 16, and
 I.R. Feb. 25/15, Present, private
 I.R., Lieut. R. M. Ewings Co., May 31/15 present
 Discharges at Chillicothe, Ohio, June 7/15, term expired
 See pension case.

COMMENT:

The details in the document do not provide adequate evidence to conclude that this Samuel Witter is our Samuel Witter of Franklin County, Pennsylvania. Some pieces of the data match known details for our Samuel. Some of the data is possibly compatible. One piece of data is currently incompatible. Many details provide clues that can be pursued.

Compatible Data:

Occupation:

The 17th Regiment recruit is said to be a “millright.” The 1850 and 1860 enumerations of Lawrence County, Illinois, abstracted below under those dates, identify our Samuel as “millwright” and “millerite,” respectively. As previously noted on p. 2 of these research notes, the obituary of Samuel’s likely brother Abraham also identifies him as a mill wright, and the tax rolls of Bedford County in the 1840s (abstracted below) cite him as a miller.

Birthplace:

The same state of birth, Pennsylvania, is attributed to both men. In neither case does a known record assert a place of birth within that state.

Physical Description:

Samuel Witter of the 17th Regiment is said to have dark complexion, dark hair, and dark eyes. A generation later, the youngest son of our Samuel (John W. Witters, born 15 May 1845, Bedford County, Pennsylvania), described himself in his Civil War pension application as having “dark complexion, black eyes, and dark hair.” Samuel of the 17th Regiment was quite short: 5’4”. John, son of Samuel, was also short: 5’6.” [For John’s data, see his affidavit of 25 March 1915, in John W. Witters (Pvt., Co. E, 154 Regt., Illinois Inf., Civil War), pension application no. S.C. 384,432, Case Files of Approved Pension Applications ..., 1861–1934; Civil War and Later Pension Files; Department of Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15; National Archives.]

At this point, it is tempting to assume that Samuel of the 17th is Samuel Witter (1787–1876). However, any conclusion would be premature so long as significant sources remain unexamined, significant research methods remain unused, and contradictory information remains unresolved.

Possibly Compatible Data:

Age

The surviving tombstone for our Samuel Witter cites his birthdate as 12 May 1787. The 1850, 1860, and 1870 censuses cite his age as 63, 71, and 69 respectively—suggesting a birth between 2 June 1786 and 1 June 1802. The stated age for Samuel of the U.S. 17th places his birth about 1783–84.

Superficially, the 17th Regiment recruit appears to be several years older than our Samuel Witter. However, given the significant variation in our Samuel’s age across several census years, the accuracy of his birth date on the tombstone cannot be accepted without question. The same might also be said for the recruit, whose military record gives no specific birth date at all.

Seemingly Incompatible Data:

Place of Enlistment

The register’s statement that Samuel Witter enlisted in *Kentucky* does not seem compatible with known facts and assumptions for our Samuel Witter. The two earliest proved records for our Samuel are the 1820 and 1830 censuses of Franklin County, Pennsylvania (see subsequent abstracts). As also shown later in this summary, Samuel would remain in Franklin through 1838–40, at which time he and the miller Abraham moved across the county line into Bedford County, and Samuel is trackable there through 1845. All of Samuel’s known children were born in Pennsylvania, beginning 12 August 1820, the birth date given for Samuel’s eldest son (Benjamin) in Witter Family Records.

Upon this basis, it has been *assumed* that our Samuel was born in Pennsylvania on 12 May 1787 and remained in that state consistently until his removal to Illinois. Any identification of him as the Samuel Witter who was recruited into a *Kentucky* regiment requires evidence of his removal to Kentucky before 4 April 1814 or to a region in which that Kentucky regiment carried out recruitment activities.

At least two common explanations might apply:

- *Earlier service.* Theoretically, Samuel (1787–1876) may have enlisted earlier in the war, when militia and volunteer units were raised in Pennsylvania. Some units saw short-term action. Many units on the western frontier disbanded and consolidated, as forces were decimated.
- *Wanderlust.* As a young and unmarried male, Samuel might have left Franklin County for the west—perhaps to join his kinsmen (the Christoffel Witter family) who had settled along the Indiana-Ohio line.

SPRING 1814

KENTUCKY

Legal context

The 17th Regiment of the U.S. Army was one of ten “regular army” units created under a Congressional Act of January 1812 in a buildup for the anticipated conflict with England. At the outbreak of the war, regulars were enrolled for a mandatory five years. However, a series of Congressional acts modified that in 1813 and 1814. *If Samuel Witter enlisted on 4 April 1814, the law governing his enlistment would have been the act of 27 January 1814, which states:*¹⁰

“In order to complete the present military establishment to the full number authorized by law with the greatest possible despatch, there shall be paid to each effective able-bodied man who shall after the first day of February next be enlisted into the army of the United States, to serve *for the term of five years, or during the war, at his election*, ... the sum of one hundred and twenty-four dollars; fifty dollars of which to be paid at the time the recruit is enlisted, fifty dollars when he shall be mustered and have joined some military corps for service, and twenty-four dollars when he shall be discharged from service.

CA. 1814–1815

KENTUCKY

Military service?

Officers and unit dates for the Seventeenth Regiment, U. S. Infantry.¹¹

“Organized under the acts of January 11 and June 26, 1812. Consolidated May 30, 1814, with the 1st, 24th, 28th and 29th regiments of infantry to form the present 3rd Regiment of Infantry, United States Army.

“Field and Staff—

Col. Samuel Wells, Lieut.-Colonel Wm. McMillan, **George Todd**, Majors Richard Davenport, George Croghan, Richard Graham, Richard Oldham, etc. (17).

“4th Company—

Capt. B. W. Sanders, Lieut. Cyrus W. Baylor, Ensign Richard Mitchell (117).

“7th Company—

Capt. Wm. I. Adair, Lieuts. **James Hackley**, Thos. W. Hawkins, Ensign Thomas R. McKnight. (115).

¹⁰ *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 13th Cong., 1st Sess., 27 January 1814, chap. 7, “An Act making further provision for filling the ranks of the regular army.” *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 12th Cong., 2d Sess., 29 January 1813, chap. XVI, was the first to reduce the minimum period to “one year, unless sooner discharged.” See also 13th Cong., 1st Sess., 5 July 1813 and 12 Aug. 1813, for various modifications.

¹¹ A. C. Quisenberry, “Kentucky Troops in the War of 1812,” *Register of the Kentucky State Historical Society* 10 (September 1912): 51.

SPRING 1814
KENTUCKY

Historical context

Although the 17th was initially a Kentucky unit, by early 1814 its ranks (and those of many other Army units) were severely depleted. According to the *U. S. Army Lineage Series*:¹²

A mighty effort was made in 1814 to raise the Army to strength, and nearly 27,000 men came in, but in spite of this, four of the regiments had to be consolidated because they were too small. The 17th, 19th, 26th, and 27th were joined to form a new 17th and a new 19th, while the two highest numbered, the 47th and 48th, were redesignated the 27th and 26th, respectively.

SPRING 1814
KENTUCKY-OHIO

Military service?

A classic compilation of “Kentucky soldiers” by that state’s Adjutant General’s Office in 1891 claims a recruiting campaign in Ohio in March 1814:

“Roll of Field and Staff, Miller’s Regiment, U.S. Infantry, War of 1812—Commanded by Colonel John Miller:

John Miller, Colonel

[“Appointed or Enlisted”] July 9, 1812, Commanded 1st Brigade at Black’s Rock

George Todd, Lt.-Colonel

[“Appointed or Enlisted”] March 13, 1814, *Superintendent recruiting in Ohio*¹³

COMMENT:

This compilation presents Miller’s regiment as a Kentucky force. However, Miller and Tod[d] are identified more reliably elsewhere as officers of the Ohio-based 19th Regiment, which recruited in Ohio during late March and early April while on its march to Fort Erie. The subsequent activities credited to that unit do not parallel the duty rosters and payrolls known for Samuel Witter.

For example, David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, eds., *Encyclopedia of the War of 1812* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1997), 84, 353–54, treat both Miller and Tod as Ohioans. Also see, “Correspondence of Major Tod, War of 1812,” *Western Reserve and Northern Ohio Historical Society*, Tract No. 15 (April 1873): 1–3; digital images, “Correspondence of Major Tod, War of 1812,” *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 7 January 2012), which identifies Tod

¹² John K. Mahon and Romana Danysh, *U.S. Army Lineage Series: Infantry, Part 1, Regular Army* (Washington: Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, 1972), 14; htm edition at *U.S. Army Center of Military History* (<http://www.history.army.mil/books/Lineage/in/infantry.htm> : accessed 7 January 2012).

¹³ *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky, Soldiers of the War of 1812* (Frankfort: E. Polk Johnson, Public Printer, 1891), 340, for March 1814 “Roll of Field and Staff, Miller’s Regiment, U.S. Infantry, War of 1812, Commanded by Colonel John Miller”; digital images, *Internet Archive* (<http://www.archive.org> : accessed 7 January 2012).

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

as a Supreme Court justice in Ohio at the start of the war but discusses an 1812 engagement in which a unit of Kentucky forces accompanied his own forces on a campaign to Detroit.

TO DO:

Potentially, the specific location at which Lieut. James Hackley recruited Samuel Witter can be identified by the location of Witter’s enlistment papers or the NARA researcher’s examination of the 1814–82 “**Registers of No. of Recruits**” for its details on April 1814 recruitment activity by Lt. Hackley. [“Registers of No. of Recruits,” Recruiting Division, 1814–1913; Records of Divisions of the Adjutant General’s Office; Adjutant General’s Records, RG 94. Described in PI 17, entry 94, unmicrofilmed.]

14 MAY 1814
LEXINGTON BARRACKS, KY.

Military service?

Witter’s service summary (see above, under 4 April 1814) places Witter on a “March to Detroit” that supposedly started that day. Presumably it started from the Lexington Barracks, where the recruits were assembled. As shown below, in the next nine days they went only as far as New Port, Ky., a staging ground on the Ohio River, about 90–95 miles from Lexington.

23 MAY 1814
NEW PORT, KY.

Military service?

“Muster roll of Captain Benjamin W. Sanders’s Company of the 17th Regiment of Infantry in the Service of the U. States under the command of Col. Samuel Wells, from the several periods of enlistment to the 2nd May 1814, the time of present Muster.”¹⁴

B. W. Sanders, Capt.
Henry Crittenden, 1st Lieut.
William Baylor, 2d Lieut.
William Eubanks, 3d Lieut.
Richard Mitchell, Ensign
Norton, Obediah, Sergeant
Eastland, John A., Sergeant
Carter, John F., Sergeant
St. Amour, Augustus, Sergeant

Byrnes, Mathew, Corporal
Jamison, Hiram, Corporal
Cravens, Thomas, Corporal [Jessamine Co., Ky.]*
Wright, Reuben Corporal
McMullen, John, Corporal
Staunton, John, Drummer
Corbett, Samuel W., Fifer

¹⁴ “Muster roll of Captain Benjamin W. Sanders’s Company of the 17th Regiment of Infantry in the Service of the U. States under the command of Col. Samuel Wells, from the several periods of enlistment to the 2nd May 1814, the time of present Muster?”, 17th Infantry, ca. 1812–1815, Companies: Crittendon–Sanders; Muster Rolls of Regular Army Organizations, 1784–Oct 31, 1912; RG 94, Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

Privates:

Arrington, Stephen
Adams, Delucian
Broughton, Reuben L.
Blythe, William
Boston, Abner
Bush, Edward
Barnett, Joseph
Baker, John
Butler, John
Burtram Emsly
Bowler, William
Beck, James
Boyd, John
Cokendorfer, David
Cook, Lodrick
Calvert, Nash
Cayson, Reuben
Cook, David
Calvert, William
Campbell, John
Darnell, Samuel L. (& S.)
Davidson, Robert
Dunn, Hezekiah
Dunn, Gabriel
David, John
Davis, Benjamin
Davis, James J.
Eldridge, John
Emberton, Richard
Flack, William
Fuller, William
Gilbert, William
Grissom, James
[12 names missing from numbered roll]
Iago, Jacob
Kinney, Richard
Samuel Kerr
Lowdon, Samuel
Lowry, Andrew
Lambert, Cornelius
Loyd, John

Moser, Jacob
McNitt, Joseph
Moseby, John
Milroy, Henry
Monroe, John
Milburn, Jonathan
Marks, Nathaniel
Moore, Augustus
Mondsey, Reuben
Monnihan, John
Norris, Beverly
Pike, Oliver
Pool, John
Parker, Lewis*
Roberts, John
Roberts, Jesse
Rose, Benjamin
Roberts, Thomas
Reece, David
Richards, Samuel
Row, Robert
Reynolds, Isham
Stewart, Alexander
Sharrard, Samuel
Swartzwalter, George
Sharp, John
Savage, John
Tubbs, Jesse
Taylor, Berry
Temple, Dixon T.
Tillett, Jacob
Tyre, John
Taylor, James W.
White, Edward
West, James
Witter, Samuel
Wheeler, Greenberry
Weekly, Abraham
Wyatt, McGilbry

COMMENT:

Regarding the roll:

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

- The above list extracts only the name and ranks. For full details, see
 1. Digital image of the original document (Family Files>Documents>People> Witter>Samuel: 17th Infantry)
 2. Excel file “1814 Comrades of Samuel Witter” (Family Files>Reports>Witter>War of 1812)
 - The digital scan of this document, provided by a D.C. based researcher, is missing a page with 12 “H” names.

Regarding the soldiers:

- **Lewis Parker** was recruited the same day as Witter (4 April), by the same recruiter (James Hackley), and both were brought into Sanders’s Co. on the same day (11 April). Parker’s origins are yet unknown.
- **Thomas Cravens of Jessamine Co., Ky.** was recruited by **Hackley the following day**, from which we might infer that Witter and Parker enlisted at a point no more than a one-day ride from Jessamine.
- For profiles of each man on this roll and the October list below—drawn from bounty land records, pension files and elsewhere—see E. S. Mills, “Samuel Witter’s Fellow Soldiers,” 20 February 2012 (Family Files>Reports>Witter).

4 AUGUST 1814
MICHILIMACKINAC ISLAND

Military service?

Although Samuel Witter’s service summary in the Enlistment Register cites no engagements, the activities of his unit can be tracked by studying the service summaries of all men in his unit. For two of those men, the records show participation in the 4 August 1814 effort to retake Michilimackinac (“Mackinac”) Island from the British:¹⁵

James S. Davis

“D[uty] R[oster] 16 Feby. 1815, Erie, Pa., absent, wounded at Michilimackinac, left at Detroit”

Samuel M. (var. W.) Hall

“I[fantry] R[oster] 28 Feby. 1815, Col. R. M. Ewings Co., absent, wounded at Michilimackinac. Left in Genl. Hospital, Detroit, Aug. 1814.

31 OCTOBER 1814
FT. ERIE, UPPER CANADA

¹⁵ *Register of Enlistments in the U.S. Army, 1798–1914*, National Archives microfilm publication M233, roll 13, “Records of Men Enlisted in the U.S. Army Prior to the Peace Establishment, May 17, 1815,” vol. “D-E, H,” p. 24 (Davis); and vol. H, p. 501 “Hall”; digital images, “U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments, 1798–1914,” database and images, *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com) : accessed 19–20 February 2012). The date of the battle does not appear in either record. For that date see “War of 1812 History: Timeline,” *War of 1812 Bicentennial* (<http://www.warof1812-bicentennial.info/history/timeline.php>) : accessed 19 February 2012).

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

Military service?

“Roll of Captain B. W. Sanders’ Company, Kentucky Infantry—Commanded by Colonel John Miller. Unless otherwise indicated, *the dates provided for all men on this list are the same as those provided for Witter: June 1, 1814–October 31, 1814.*¹⁶

B. W. Sanders, Captain
Henry Crittenden, Lieutenant
William Baylor, Lieutenant
R. Mitchell, Ensign
Obediah Norton, Sergeant
John A. Eastland, Sergeant
Hugh Harpham, Sergeant
James Iliff, Sergeant
Reuben Broughton, Sergeant
Matthew Burns, Corporal
Hiram Jamison, Corporal
Thomas Cravens, Corporal
John Boyd, Corporal
John Moseby, Corporal
John Stanton, Drummer
Wyatt McGibbery, Fifer

[Privates]

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Avington, Stephen | London, Samuel |
| Adams, Delaran | Lowry, Andrew |
| Andrew, ____, “Private Waiter” | Lambert, Cornelius |
| Blythe, William | Lloyd, John |
| Boston, Abner | McLain, James |
| Bush, Edward (Dead) | Moser, Jacob |
| Barnett, Joseph | McMullen, John |
| Baker, John | McNitt, Joseph |
| Butler, John | Millery, Henry (Died Nov. 1, 1814) |
| Bartram, Emely [<i>sic</i>] (Oct. 29–31, 1814) | Monroe, John |
| Bowler, William (Dead) | Milburn, Jonathan |
| Beck, James | Marks, Nathaniel |
| Corbett, Samuel W. | Moore, Augustus |
| Carter, John F. | Munsey, Reuben |
| Collins, Henry | Munathan, John |
| Cakendolpher, David | Moore, James |
| Cook, Lodowick | Norris, Beverly (Dead) |
| Cook, David | Pike, Oliver |

¹⁶ G. Glenn Clift, *Kentucky Soldiers of the War of 1812* (1931; repr., Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Co., 1969), 344–45.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

| | |
|--|---|
| Cason, Reuben | Pool, John |
| Calvert, Nash | Parker, Lewis |
| Calvert, William | Roberts, John |
| Campbell, John | Roberts, Jesse |
| Darnell, Samuel S. | Ross, Benjamin |
| Davidson, Robert | Roberts, Thomas |
| Dunn, Hezekiah | Reece, David (Nov. 4, 1813–Oct. 31, 1814) |
| Dunn, Gabriel (Dead) | Richards, Samuel |
| David, John (Dead) | Reuben, _____ |
| Davis, Benjamin | Row, Robert |
| Davis, James S. | Reynolds, Isham (Dead) |
| Eldridge, John | St. Amour, Augustus |
| Embleton, Richard | Stringfield, William (Apr. 1, 1814–Oct. 31, 1814) |
| Flack, William | Stewart, Alex (Dead) |
| Fuller, William | Savage, John |
| Gilbert, William | Sherrard, Samuel |
| Gilbert, William, Sr. | Swartzwaslter, George |
| Grissom, James (Dead) | Sharpe, James (May 26, 1814–Oct. 31, 1814) |
| George, Thomas W. | Sharp, John |
| Hall, Aaron (Mar. 21–Oct. 31, 1814) | Tubb, Jesse |
| Hall, Samuel W. (July 2–Oct. 31, 1814) | Taylor, Berry |
| Hamby, Meshick | Temple, Dixon Y. |
| Hamilton, Andrew | Tillett, Jacob |
| Head, John | Tyree, John |
| Head, Benjamin | Taylor, James W. |
| Hunt, William | Wright, Reuben |
| Humphrey, William | White, Edward |
| Harning, Rudolph | West, James |
| Henry, Richard | Witter, Samuel |
| Igo, Jacob | Wheeler, Greenberry |
| Jenkins, Eli | Weakley, Abraham |
| Samuel Kerr | Wells, Berry |
| Joseph Long | |

COMMENT;

The roll cites no location for the unit at the time the roll was compiled. However, the location can be determined by the references to troop movements in the service summaries of Witter’s fellow soldiers.

The abstractor does not identify this as a *payroll*. In fact, he suggests that the parenthetical dates may represent the date of enlistment and the period of service. However, all individuals on the roll carry the same ending dates—as typical for a payroll.

TO DO:

1. The original roll needs to be located and studied. In *many* cases, these published rolls omit critical data and the original might also provide contextual clues.

2. Later pension records should be sought for all these men and their widow or orphans, to determine whether any commented upon Witter and to glean all possible information about the company and its activities.

1814–15

Military service?

No morning reports, weekly reports, or monthly returns apparently survive from War of 1812 military posts or encampments in which Witter might have served.¹⁷

COMMENT:

Unlike muster rolls, this kind of return does not enumerate all soldiers—only the officers and the units stationed there at the time. Beyond that, they provide statistical data and details on “events.” Soldiers are typically mentioned only in the context of an event such as a furlough or illness.

These “post returns” have been reproduced by the National Archives on 1,550 rolls. The records are arranged alphabetically by the name of the post. The descriptive pamphlet for that collection is available online at the National Archives website, as a searchable PDF. To identify any and all appropriate returns, without knowing where Witter’s unit might have been, I ran a search for “1814” and “1815,” then examined each hit to identify posts that post would have been within the regions in which the 17th is known to have campaigned.

The only returns identified for any post in Kentucky, in the Old Northwest, or surrounding the Great Lakes were those for Detroit. However, they did not begin until August 1815, after Samuel Witter had been discharged.

1814–1815

DETROIT, MICHILIMACKINAC, NIAGARA & ERIE, PA

Possible military service

The Samuel Witter service summary in the Enlistment Register does not identify any campaigns in which Witter served. One history of the 17th Infantry identifies two campaigns in which the regiment participated after Witter’s enlistment. Its synopsis of the actions, quoted below, mentions only one company of the 17th, but not that of Capt. Sanders. The details may assist in determining whether Samuel of the 17th was one and the same as Samuel Witter (1787–1876).

¹⁷ *Returns from U.S. Military Posts, 1800–1916*, National Archives microfilm publication M615; and descriptive pamphlet accessible at *National Archives* (<http://www.archives.gov> : 7 January 2012). M615, but not its “DP,” has been digitized by Ancestry.com.

Niagara Campaign
Summer 1814

“Following Perry’s Victory on Lake Erie, the British retreated back to Canada and eventual defeat at the river Thames. The 17th was sent back to occupy Detroit with the bulk of the Northwest Army. With a reduced need for men, Capt. Chunn's company of the 17th was detached with another company of the 19th infantry for operations on the Niagara frontier. Arriving in Buffalo, Chunn's company was assigned to the training camp at Flint Hill, commanded by Gen. Winfield Scott to prepare for the invasion of Canada. On their way there, they were diverted to a raid on Dover, Canada on May 14. There they were employed to burn food stores and public property.

“The main invasion began on July 2nd with the attack and capture of Ft. Erie from the British. Assigned to Gen. Ripley's brigade, Capt. Chunn's company was attached to the 21st infantry along with Lt. Riddle's company of the 19th infantry. Together they were participants in the battle of Lundy's Lane on July 25th, attacking the British center, taking the crest of the hill and the artillery positions.

“Withdrawing to Ft. Erie, they remained for the siege of the fort by the British. The remainder of the 17th arrived at Ft. Erie from Detroit on October 6th [three weeks after the siege was lifted¹⁸] onboard the Brig Niagara. Capt. Chunn was cited for bravery and brevetted to Major for his defense of the American fortifications on Snake Hill during the British assault of August.

“Following the abandonment of Ft. Erie by the Americans in the fall of 1814, the 17th regiment was taken into winter quarters in Erie, Pennsylvania. They were here when the war ended in December. The regiment was disbanded during the post-war reductions, and the remnant was taken into the 3rd infantry.

Other Campaigns

“While in Detroit in the summer on 1814, a portion of the 17th was detached to an expedition conducted by the Navy and Army to recapture Ft. Mackinaw. While able to cut off supplies to the British on the upper Great Lakes, the campaign soon became hindered by the loss of ships to Canadian raiding parties. Trying to repeat the British landing on Mackinaw Island also met with defeat. With these setbacks, the American force retired to Detroit where it remained for most of the war, conducting occasional raids into Canada.” [John Sec, “The Seventeenth Regiment of U.S. Infantry,” *Fort Erie and the War of 1812* (<http://www.iaw.com/~jsek/us17inf.htm> : accessed 7 January 2012).]

COMMENT:

Witter’s unit would have been among “the remainder of the 17th [who] arrived at Ft. Erie from Detroit on October 6th aboard the Brig Niagara.” See entry (above) for 4 August 1814,

¹⁸ David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, eds., *Encyclopedia of the War of 1812* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1997), 67.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

Michilimackinac, and entries (below) for “November-December 1815, Fort Erie,” and “February 1815, Erie, PA.”

The service summary of one of his fellow soldiers. Henry Millroy (var. Milroy, Millery), notes that Millroy “died in Hosp’l at Fort Erie, U.C.” on 1 November 1814. [“Register of Enlistments,” Vol. M-O, p. 184]

1-5 NOVEMBER 1814
FORT ERIE, UPPER CANADA

Military service?

Witter’s unit were among the American forces that left Fort Erie, U.C., on 5 November 1814, destroying the fort in its wake.¹⁹

9 NOVEMBER 1814–19 JANUARY 1815
BUFFALO (AKA WILLIAMSVILLE), NEW YORK

Military service?

The service summaries of four of Witter’s fellow soldiers has Sanders’s Company wintering at “Camp near Buffalo” between 9 November and 17 or 19 January 1815:²⁰

Edward Bush

Infantry roster of 28 February 1815: “Absent. Died Nov. 20/14 at Camp near Buffalo.”

James McLain (var. McLean)

Infantry roster of 28 February 1815: “Absent. Died Nov. 9, 1814 at Camp near Buffalo.”

Isham Reynolds

Infantry roster of 28 February 1815: Absent. Died 14 Nov. 1814 “at Camp near Buffalo. Dysentery.”

Green Berry Wheeler

Infantry roster of 28 February 1815: Absent. Died Nov. 2, 1814 “at Camp near Buffalo—fever.”

¹⁹ “Old Fort Erie: Timeline,” Canada, *Niagara Parks* (<http://www.niagaraparks.com/old-fort-erie/timeline.html> : accessed 20 February 2012).

²⁰ *Register of Enlistments in the U.S. Army, 1798–1914*, National Archives microfilm publication M233, roll 13, “Records of Men Enlisted in the U.S. Army Prior to the Peace Establishment, May 17, 1815,” vols. B, p. [?] (Bush); M-O, p. 249 (McLain); P-R, p. 459 (Reynolds), “W, Y-Z,” p. 128 (Wheeler).

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

28 JANUARY–20 APRIL 1815

ERIE (WILLIAMSVILLE), PA

Military service?

Witter’s service summary notes his presence on two rosters during the month that the war officially ended, specifically 16 and 18 February 1815; but it does not state a location. The service summaries of four fellow soldiers place their unit at Erie, Pa., between 28 January and 28 February 1815.²¹

William Bowler

Infantry roster of 28 February 1815: Absent. 28 January 1815 “at Erie, Fever.”

Hezekiah Dunn

Infantry roster of 28 February 1815: “Absent. Died Dec 19/14 at Erie, Pa., lockjaw.”

John Monroe

Infantry roster of 28 February 1815: “Absent. Discharged on Surg.’s Certif. at Erie or Buffalo, 17 or 19 January 1815.”

Beverly Norris

Infantry roster of 28 February 1815: Absent. Died 25 December 1814 “at Williamsville of Dysentery.”

MARCH-JUNE 1815

Military service?

On the heels of its 3 March 1815 Declaration of Peace, Congress enacted legislation to limit the size of the U.S. Army to a maximum of ten thousand men. The terms of that act also stated, “the President of the United States [shall] cause ... the supernumerary officers, non-commissioned officers, musicians, and *privates*, to be discharged from the service of the United States, from and after the first day of May next, or as soon as circumstances may permit.”²²

COMMENT:

Samuel Witter of the 17th was not one of the 10,000 who stayed with the Army. Even though he did not serve the full five years for which he had obligated himself, his willingness to make that commitment had maximized his bounty under the act of 27 January 1814. The \$100 he received initially and the \$24 he received at discharge, would have a purchasing power of \$1,811 today. In a place and time in which land could be purchased from the federal government at \$2 an acre, his service would have bought him 62 acres of raw, uncleared, public land. [Lawrence H. Officer and Samuel H. Williamson, “Purchasing Power of Money in the United States from 1774 to Present,” *Measuring Worth* (<http://www.measuringworth.com/ppowerus/> : accessed 7 January 2012.)

²¹ *Register of Enlistments in the U.S. Army, 1798–1914*, National Archives microfilm publication M233, roll 13, “Records of Men Enlisted in the U.S. Army Prior to the Peace Establishment, May 17, 1815,” vols. B, p. 15 (Bowler); “D-E, H,” p. 94 (Dunn); L-M, p. 335 (Monroe); M-O, p. 409 (Norris).

²² *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 13th Cong., 3d Sess., chap. LXXIX, “An Act fixing the military peace establishment of the United States.”

31 MAY 1815
ERIE, PA

Military service?

Samuel Witter is cited on the Infantry Roster of Lt. R. M. Ewing’s Co., compiled 31 May 1815 at Erie, Pennsylvania.²³

COMMENT:

Witter’s own service summary does not state where the roll was compiled. That is determined from the service summaries of fellow soldiers, some of whose entries cite the place of the roll.

7 JUNE 1815
CHILLICOTHE, OHIO

Military service?

Discharge of **Samuel Witter**.²⁴

“By Order of Brig. Gen. Duncan M’Arthur, Commanding Eighth Military District. To all whom it may Concern. Know Ye, that **Samuel Witter**, a Private of Lt. R. W. Ewing’s company, Seventeenth regiment of U. S. Infy., who was enlisted the fourth day of April eighteen hundred and fourteen to serve during the war, is hereby honorably discharged from the army of the United States, having faithfully served out the full period of his enlistment.

“Said Samuel Witter was born in [blank] in the State of Pennsylvania, is about thirty one years of age, five feet four inches high, dark complexion, dark eyes, dark hair, and by occupation, when enlisted, a Millright. Given at Chillicothe, Ohio, this Seventh day of June 1815.” Signed: “George Tod, Lt. Colonel,” and witness[?] “E. Parker?”

Note in top right corner: “Hon. Alny McLean”

File Jacket:

“Warrant No. 23642, 160 acres

War of 1812.

Act of Dec. 24, 1811 Jan. 11, 1812

Warrantee: **Samuel Witter**

Soldier: Same

Pr Service 17 inf.

²³ Bounty Land File, Samuel Witter (Pvt., Lt. R. W. Ewing’s Co., 17th Regt., U.S. Infantry), bounty land warrant file 23642 (Acts of Dec. 24, 1811 & Jan. 11, 1812, 160 acres); Military Bounty Land Warrants and Related Papers; Records of the Bureau of Land Management, Record Group 49; National Archives, Washington.

²⁴ Bounty Land File, Samuel Witter (Pvt., Lt. R. W. Ewing’s Co., 17th Regt., U.S. Infantry), bounty land warrant file 23642 (Acts of Dec. 24, 1811 & Jan. 11, 1812, 160 acres); Military Bounty Land Warrants and Related Papers; Records of the Bureau of Land Management, Record Group 49; National Archives, Washington.

Nature of claim: Bounty Land. Single.”

COMMENT:

This bounty-land file offers nothing more. The word “single” refers to the type of grant allowed under the law, not the status of the grantee.

Identification of Hon. Alney McLean:

The involvement of McLean strongly suggests that this Samuel Witter returned to Kentucky after his discharge at Chillicothe, Ohio. Before and after the war, McLean was an attorney in Greenville, Muhlenberg County, Kentucky. Post-war, he also served two terms in the U.S. Congress. The *Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress* provides the following:

“McLEAN, Alney, (1779–1841) a Representative from Kentucky; born in Burke County, N.C., June 10, 1779; pursued preparatory studies; moved to Kentucky; appointed surveyor of Muhlenberg County in 1799 and elected one of the trustees of Greenville on its formation; studied law; was admitted to the bar and commenced practice in Greenville, Muhlenberg County, Ky., about 1805; member of the State house of representatives in 1812 and 1813; served as a captain in the War of 1812; elected as a Republican to the Fourteenth Congress (March 4, 1815–March 3, 1817); elected to the Sixteenth Congress (March 4, 1819–March 3, 1821); served as judge of the fourteenth district of Kentucky from 1821 until his death; presidential elector on the Clay ticket in 1824 and on the ticket of Clay and Sergeant in 1832; died near Greenville, Muhlenberg County, Ky., December 30, 1841; interment in Old Caney Station Cemetery, near Greenville, Ky.”

[*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774–Present* (<http://bioguide.congress.gov> : accessed 7 January 2012), for “Alney McLean.”]

McLean’s involvement with Witter’s bounty-land warrant is not explained on the document, but one of two situations typically existed.

- Men discharged from service in 1815 were often approached by attorneys who offered to obtain the bounty land for them. Some paid the veteran a token for his rights to the warrant, and the land would eventually be patented by someone else.
- Veterans, postwar, also approached attorneys in the area where they resided, seeking help in filing for the bounty land. This possibility, if applicable, would suggest that Witter settled for at least a while, postwar, in the Muhlenberg area. That county lies in Southwest Kentucky, about seventy-five miles below the Ohio River and about a hundred miles east of the Mississippi.

McLean’s biography offers two potentially relevant details:

- He was a county surveyor before the war, an occupation frequently found among land speculators who used their expertise with soil and topography to ferret out the most productive tracts of land.
- Between March 1817 and March 1819, McLean was not in Congress. The bio does not account for his activities. Ostensibly, he would have returned to his family and his law practice in Kentucky. The timing is relevant to any determination of when and where he became involved with Samuel Witter.

14 FEBRUARY 1820
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Bounty land?

Registration of Returned Bounty Land Warrant.

“Samuel Witter, Private, 17 Infantry. Honl. A. McLean” “No. 23642.”²⁵

“Pursuant to the second section of an Act of Congress passed the 6th of May, 1812, authorizing the Secretary of War to issue Land Warrants to the noncommissioned Officers and Soldiers enlisted in the service of the United States, conformably to the acts of the 24th of December, 1811, and of the 11th of January, 1812, **Samuel Witter**, late a **Private** in the company commanded by **Lieutenant R. W. Ewing**, of the **17th Regiment United States Infantry**, is entitled to ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY ACRES OF LAND, to be located agreeably to the said act on any unlocated parts of the six millions of acres appropriated by law for the original grantees of such military warrants; and this warrant is not assignable or transferrable in any manner whatsoever.

“Given at the War Office of the United States, this 14 day of February, A.D. one thousand eight hundred and twenty. **Loc[ation] Ark[ansas]. P146.** [S/] J. C. Calhoun, Secretary of War. Registered. [S/] Nat. Cutting, Clerk.”

COMMENT:

As indicated in the warrant, the Acts of 1811 and 1812 explicitly forbade the assignment or transfer of the warrant to any party other than the one who served. That provision of the law was ignored by many, if not most recipients. In an effort to prevent the circulation of the warrants, none were issued directly to the men who served. They were retained by the General Land Office and a notice was sent to each veteran, alerting him that a warrant was available in his name. [See Anne Bruner Eales and Robert M. Kvasnicka, *Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives of the United States*, 3d ed. (Washington: NARA, 2000), 185.]

No evidence has yet been found that Samuel Witter actually went to Arkansas to cash in his bounty land. That was *not* the common practice.

CA. 1820
ARKANSAS

Bounty land?

Register of Arkansas Patentees.²⁶

Witter, Samuel. Vol. 1, page 293. Sect. 14, Township 1 West, Range 2? West. Warrant 23642.

²⁵ *War of 1812 Military Bounty Land Warrants, 1815–1858*, NARA microfilm publication M848, roll 11, "Warrants Issued under the Act of May 6, 1812; Volumes 79-83, and Three Unnumbered Volumes; Warrants 22383-24770," unnumbered pages, warrants filed in numerical sequence.

²⁶ *War of 1812 Military Bounty Land Warrants, 1815–1858*, NARA microfilm publication M848, roll 1, "Target 2, Index of Arkansas Patentees," p. 257.

COMMENT:

See analysis under date of 14 February 1820.

CA. 1820
ARKANSAS

Bounty land

The State of Arkansas has also posted online digital images from its state-level register of military bounty lands issued within its bounds. That state-level register is arranged by land description (section, township, and range). It contains no name index and the Arkansas website provides no database. Using the legal description of the land, Witter’s registration was locatable in the register, which provided the following data:²⁷

Township 1N Range 2W

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| To whom Patented: | Samuel Wetter |
| Quarter or Half of Sec.: | SE |
| No. of Sec. | 14 |
| No. of Warrant: | 23,642 |
| Date of Patent: | Nov. 27, 1820 |

CA. 1820
ARKANSAS

Bounty land?

A digital image of the actual patent issued to “Samuel Wetter” is available at the online database maintained by the Bureau of Land Management. The quality of the download image provided by the website is poor; but the site offers the option to purchase a better copy. On the following transcription, made from the website image, boldface marks the words penned on the preprinted form.

“**James Monroe**, President of the United States of America, to All to whom these presents shall come, Greeting. Know ye That in pursuance of the Acts of Congress appropriating and granting Land to the late Army of the United States, passed on and since the sixth day of May, 1812, **Samuel Wetter** having deposited in the General Land Office a Warrant in **his** favor numbered **23,642**, there is granted **unto the said Samuel Wetter**, late a **private in Ewings Company of the 17th Regiment of Infantry**, a certain Tract of Land, containing **One hundred & Sixty Acres**, being the **South East qr.** of Section **fourteen** of Township **one North** and Range **Two West** in the Tract appropriated (by the Acts aforesaid) for Military Bounties, in the Territory of Arkansas. To Have and to Hold the said **quarter** Section of land with the appurtenances thereof, into the said **Samuel Wetter** and to **his** heirs and assigns forever.

²⁷ State of Arkansas, *Historical Land Records* (<http://www.cosl.org/history/military.aspx> : accessed 7 January 2012), “Military Bounty Lands” discussion and digitized register of same name, p. 9.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

“In Testimony WHEREOF, We 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, this **Twenty Seventh** day of **November** in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and **Twenty** and of the Independence of the United States of America, the **forty-fifth**. By the President, **James Monroe**. [Signed] **Josiah Meigs**, Commissioner of the General Land Office.”

BLM’s accompanying database entry for the patent places the land in **Monroe County, Arkansas**.²⁸

CA. 1819–20
FRANKLIN? CO. PA

Marriage

No marriage record has been found for Samuel and Rachel. Pennsylvania at that time did not require marriages to be recorded. *Presuming* that the couple married prior to the birth of the eldest known child (Benjamin, see below under 12 August 1820), then the marriage of Samuel and Rachel likely occurred in 1819.

CA. 1819–20
FRANKLIN? CO. PA

Proof argument

Rachel’s identity remains unsettled. Direct evidence exists but its information is secondhand, contradictory, and recorded long after the fact. Significant indirect evidence seems to contradict the direct evidence. No hypothesis can be considered a valid conclusion until and unless it withstands the first criteria of the Genealogical Proof Standard: reasonably exhaustive research. That criteria has not yet been met.

The evidence for Rachel’s identity (for which details and documentation are presented in chronological sequence within this set of research notes) could be summarized as follows:

1. All known records created during her lifetime cite her only as Rachel or Rachael Witter.
2. No known document created in her lifetime assigns her a maiden surname.
3. She and Samuel, jointly with William Timmons and wife Anna Maria, sold a tract of land in Franklin County, Letterkenny Township (see abstract under 8 April 1839)—land for which there is no purchase deed, warrant, or patent in their names, jointly or severally. The implication is that the two couples are heirs to inherited land. One of four possible kinships should exist here:
 - a. Anna Maria was née Witter and a sister of Samuel Witter.
 - b. Rachel was a sister of William Timmons.

²⁸ Bureau of Land Management, “Land Patent Search,” database and digital images, *General Land Office Records* (<http://www.glorecords.blm.gov/PatentSearch> : accessed 7 January 2012), Samuel Wetter (Monroe County, Arkansas), Document Nr. 23642, BLM Serial Nr. AR NO S/N.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

- c. Rachel was a sister of Anna Maria.
 - d. William Timmons was a half-brother of Samuel Witter.
4. Anna Maria (aka “Tillie”) was née “**Rayfsnyder**” according to the death certificate of her youngest son, Henry “Harry” Clay Timmons. [“Illinois Deaths and Stillbirths Index, 1916–1947,” *Ancestry.com*, for “Harry Clay Timmons,” who died 6 March 1925.]
 5. A separate line of descendants—one that seems to have not yet connected itself to the Henry Clay Timmons line in any online genealogy or “tree,” identifies Anna Maria’s maiden name as “Reifsnider” or “Reifsmider,” but provides no evidence. This identification traces back to an early LDS effort, also undocumented. [See “William Ward Timmons,” Pin 948263, CD 129; and “Anna Maria Reifsmider,” Pin 948264, CD 129; FamilySearch Pedigree Resource File, citing submission by Leona Winger, South Jordan, UT.]
 6. *Refsnider*, *Reafsnyder*, *Reifsnider*, *Reifsmider*, and other variant spellings appear in numerous records of Letterkenny Township. All clearly refer to the same core family.
 7. Twentieth-century death certificates for Rachel’s two youngest children identify her surname as “**Smith**.” When her youngest son John died in 1930, the informant (“Mrs. G. T. Roth, Judsonia, Arkansas,” John’s great-neice) stated that John was the son of Samuel Witter and “**Lizzie Smith**” and that both parents had been born in Pennsylvania. When Rachel’s youngest daughter Margaret died in 1933, the informant (identity not yet known) identified Margaret’s mother as “**Rachel Smith**.” The informant also *misidentified* Margaret’s husband. (See abstracts under dates of 10 September 1836 and 15 May 1845.)
 8. No other known document calls Rachel “Lizzie.” It is possible that Mrs. Roth (née Anna F. Witter, daughter of James, granddaughter of Benjamin, and great-granddaughter of Samuel and Rachel), was simply confused. She was born several decades after the death of Rachel and was taken to Arkansas as a child by her parents. “Elizabeth” was a family name—the name of Samuel and Rachel’s eldest daughter (Mrs. Roth’s great-aunt), Elizabeth Witter Jones. At Mrs. Roth’s birth, Elizabeth Jones was still alive and living in the Illinois community in which Mrs. Roth was born. Possibly, when asked for the name of John’s mother, she recalled the aged aunt. On the other hand, when John died, he lived with an older sister Margaret, who could have been Mrs. Roth’s own informant. In that case, one might hypothesize that Rachel carried a double name *Rachel Elizabeth* and was called “Lizzie” within the family.

(As an aside: this illogical attribution of the nickname “Lizzie” to a woman named Rachel is echoed among the offspring of Anna Maria Timmons. While all records found to date for Anna Maria call her “Anna” or “Anna Maria,” the 1925 death certificate of her son—informant not identified—calls her “Tillie,” which is not a standard nickname for either Anna or Maria.)

The name *Elizabeth* was passed on by both Rachel and Anna Maria. Rachel gave the name to her first-born daughter; Anna Maria gave that name to her first known daughter. See Timmons notes under date of 8 April 1839, below.)

9. My line-by-line, page-by-page study of all surviving Smith/Schmidt records in the Franklin and Bedford County courthouses has yielded no evidence of a Witter connection. The strongest evidence of Rachel’s identity is the deed of sale executed jointly with the Timmons.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

10. The Harry Clay Timmons death certificate, which identified his mother as Tillie Rayfsnyder, also asserts that his mother was born in Germany. This data parallels the 1820 census data for the Samuel Witter household which asserts that one individual in the family was of foreign birth. (The 1850 census data, however, assigns both women the same Pennsylvania birthplace it gives to all other members of the household, setting Rachel “Lizzie” Witter’s birth at ca. 1801–2 and Anna Maria “Tillie” Timmons’s birth at ca. 1804–5.)
11. Research on the Reifschneiders has yet to yield any evidence—direct or indirect—to identify Rachel or place Anna Maria into a birth family.
12. Research on the Timmonses has yielded no direct evidence for the birth family of William Timmons; it does reveal several female-headed households of the appropriate time period that might include William and Rachel.

TO DO:

Complete *thorough* research in all **Reifsnnyder/ Reifsmyder** and **Timmons** records available for Franklin County—and all records created by their associates and neighbors.

1ST MONDAY, AUGUST 1820
FRANKLIN CO., PENN.

Census

Metal Township. Returns for this year consist of several different lists, each semi-alphabetized by first letter of surname. *John and Samuel are listed adjacent at the end of 11 “W” entries for Metal Township.*²⁹

(p. 386)

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|-------|------------|-----------|-------|----------------------------------|
| Witter, John | 1 male | 45+ | [John] | 1 female | 26–45 | [Catherine] |
| | 1 male | 26–45 | [Abraham?] | 1 female | 10–16 | |
| | 2 males | 18–26 | | 3 females | 0–10 | |
| | 2 males | 10–16 | | | | |
| | 4 males | 0–10 | | | | <i>3 engaged in manufactures</i> |
| Witter, Samuel | 1 male | 26–45 | [Samuel] | 1 female | 16–26 | [Rachel; no child yet born] |
| | 1 male | 18–26 | [?] | 1 female | 10-16 | [Rachel’s sister?] |

1 foreigner, not naturalized

COMMENT:

John and Samuel are the only households in Metal Township with a surname similar to *Witter*.

1 foreigner, not naturalized:

²⁹ 1820 U.S. census, Franklin Co., Penn., p. 86 (stamped), p. ~~386~~ (*sic*; penned), lines 18–19; Ancestry.com’s database misreads this name as “Wilton.”

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

The “foreigner not naturalized” should not be either Samuel or Rachel. Samuel would be a natural-born American. Rachel, if born elsewhere, would have been naturalized via “derivative citizenship” at her marriage to an American. [John J. Newman, *American Naturalization Processes and Procedures* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1985), 22.] The age of the female 10–16 corresponds to that of Anna Maria Raifsnnyder, who (extrapolating from 1830 and 1840 census data) did not marry William Timmons until ca. 1823 or 1824.

12 AUGUST 1820
FRANKLIN CO., PA

Birth of child

Benjamin Witter, eldest son of Samuel and Rachel, was born 12 August 1820 and died 31 July 1872, according to family records held by his Lawrence County descendants in 1970.³⁰

11 FEBRUARY 1823
FRANKLIN CO., PA

Birth of child

Elizabeth Witter, eldest daughter of Samuel and Rachel, born 11 February 1823 and died 30 August 1889, according to her obelisk in Brian Cemetery, Sumner, Illinois.³¹

17 NOVEMBER 1825
FRANKLIN CO., PA

Birth of child

William Witter aka Witters, second son of Samuel and Rachel, born 17 November 1825 and died 27 June 1895 in Norris City, White County, Illinois.³²

1827–28 (1825-35)
FRANKLIN CO., PA

Birth of child

Barbara Anna Witter, second daughter of Samuel and Rachel, likely born ca. 1827–28, although census data provide a broader date range of 1825–30.³³

³⁰ Witter Family Records, a loose sheet compiled from various unnamed Bibles; in possession (October 1970) of Chloe Bowen Stacey (Mrs. J. O. Stacey) of Olney, Ill., who was the granddaughter of Benjamin’s daughter Melissa Witter Coffman (Mrs. Amzi Coffman); 1970 typescript by Mrs. Stacey in possession of Elizabeth Shown Mills.

³¹ *Find A Grave* (http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSsr=41&GScid=104865&GRid=737_79155& : accessed 1 January 2010), “Elizabeth Jones” obelisk, image at Elizabeth Witter Jones memorial page 73779155, Brian Cemetery, Sumner, Lawrence Co., Ill.; Carol Knoell, contributor. The marker does not name her parents; that identification comes from Witter Family Records.

³² Witter Family Records.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

CA. 1830
FRANKLIN CO., PA

Birth of child.

A child should have been born in this gap between Barbara Anna (ca. 1827–28) and Catherine (1832). The 1830 census, abstracted below, reports an otherwise unidentified female child in this age bracket. She has not been identified. *If* she lived to adulthood, she likely married before 1850 and possibly stayed behind in Pennsylvania, considering that the Illinois family’s personal records have no trace of her.

1830
FRANKLIN CO., PA

Census

Fannett Township. Unalphabetized.³⁴
 (p. 215, lines 1–11)

| | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Witter, Abraham | 1 male 40–50 | [Abraham] | 1 female 20–30 | [wife née Catherine Piper] |
| | 1 male 5–10 | | 1 female 10–15 | |
| | 1 male 0–5 | | 1 female 0–5 | |

Stake, John [Stech]

[skip 5]

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Wither, Sam^l | 1 male 20–30 | [Samuel] | 1 female 20–30 | [Rachel] |
| | 1 male 5–10 | [Benj.] | 1 female 5–10 | [Elizabeth] |
| | | | 3 females 0–5 | [Ann, ?, and William?] |

[skip 2]

| | | | |
|----------------------|--------------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| Piper, Daniel | 1 male 50–60 | & family | [father of Abraham Witter’s wife; |
|----------------------|--------------|----------|-----------------------------------|

³³ Much more work needs to be done on Barbara Anna. The Witter Family Record says only that she married “first a Fausin, then a Mathias” and was buried in Brian Cemetery. Census records, if identified correctly, show her to have married Isaac Mathias *first*, by whom she had at least three sons, Benjamin (b. ca. 1848, Pa.), Samuel (b. ca. 1849–50, Pa.) and William (b. ca. 1851, Pa.) before marrying James Vanfossen, with whom she is enumerated in 1870-80 in Lawrence Co. Ill. One “Anna” Mathias, aged 75, is called “mother” of the unmarried William on the 1900 census; “unk.” is given for Anna’s birth month and year, William’s birth year is incorrect, their home had no other occupants, and the informant is unknown. Brian Cemetery has one “Anna Mathias,” b. 22 May 1824; d. 27 May 1903.

See 1850 U.S. census, Huntingdon Co., Pa., pop. sch., Clay Township, p. 233, dwell. 91, fam. 91 (Isaac Mathias, 27; Ann 24; Benjamin F., 2; Samuel 1). 1850 U.S. census, Butler Co., Ohio, pop. sch., Union Township, p. 294-B.; dwell. 129, fam. 130, James “Vanfossen.” Lawrence Co., Ill.; 1870 U.S. census, Lawrence Co., Ill., pop. sch., town of Sumner, p. 1, dwell. 4, fam. 4 (James Vanfossen, 52; Ann Vanfossen, 35). 1880 U.S. census, Lawrence Co., Ill., pop. sch., Sumner-Christy Township, p. 32, dwell. 109, fam. 109 (James Vanfossen, 62, Ann, 50, b. Pa., f&m b. Pa.), p. 38, dwell. 175, fam. 176 (Benjamin Mathias, 32, b. Pa.); Dennison Township, p. 17, dwell. 155, fam. 158 (Samuel Mathias, 30, b. Pa.); and Christy Township, p. 2, dwell. 18, fam. 18 (William Mathias, 29, b. Pa.). 1900 U.S. cens., Christy Township, ED 110, sheet 15-B, dwell. 343, fam. 345 (William Mathias, b. Apr. 1848; Ann Mathias, 75). *Find A Grave* (www.findagrave.com), memorial 33043793, Annie Mathias, May 22, 1824-May 27, 1903, contributed by Charlotte Eagleson Sechrest.

³⁴ 1840 U.S. census, Franklin Co., Pa., Lurgent Township, p. 343, line 12; NA microfilm publication M704, roll 458.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

he allegedly married a Mary Witter]

Neighborhood:

[First page of Fannett Twp; the last name in col. 1 links to the first name in col. 2.]

Witter, Abraham

Stake, John

Hawney, John

Taylor, John

Stewart, Samuel

Stewart, George

Wither, Samuel

Skyock, John

Rain, John

Piper, Daniel

Fricke, Andrew

Shields, John

Shields, Thomas

[Cont. at top of col. 2]

Ray, Robert

Piper, Robert

Barnhart, Mary

Riddle, David

Fagan, Barnibus

Lathers, John

Barnhart, Daniel

Taylor, Caspor

Rollins, Leiah [*female*]

McGea, Adam

Stevenson, Thomas

Piper, Adam

[End of page]

COMMENTS:

Samuel’s household:

Son William, born in November 1825, appears to be tallied as a female on this census.

Abraham’s neighbors:

Because Abraham is the first listing for Fannett District, his relative position amid neighbors is halfway obscured. The fact that he is the first listing could indicate one of several things: (a) he lived along the township line, (b) he lived adjacent to the enumerator, who started from his own home; or (c) he was a townsperson and the enumerator started in town and worked his way out into the rural regions and back again.

Piper:

Daniel Piper’s daughter married Abraham Witter, according to Abraham’s obituary transcribed on page 2 of these notes. In 1850 in Illinois, Abraham Piper, son of Daniel, lived next door to William Witter, son of Samuel. [Lawrence Co., p. 1 verso, dwellings 14–15, families 14–15; NA microfilm publication M432, roll 115.]

Skyock:

This quite-uncommon surname is also found near John Witter (Johannis Widder) in Frederick County, Maryland. See file copy, “John Witter (Johannes Widder): Research Notes.”

John Stake (Stech):

In 1840, John Stake’s widow **Barbara Stake** was enumerated next door to **William Timmons** in Letterkenny Township. (Note that Samuel and Rachel Witter named 2nd daughter **Barbara**.) In 1839, **William** and **Anna Maria Timmons**, together with **Samuel** and **Rachel Witter**, sold a tract of land they co-owned in **Letterkenny Township** on Conodoquinet Creek. (See 8 April 1839, below.)

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

Other Witters:

Letterkenny Township: Joseph Witter (50–60), who lived with a female 50–60, a female 5–10, 1 female 0–5, and a male 0–10.

This Joseph of Letterkenny was one age bracket older than Samuel, which could mean they were anywhere from one year to nineteen years apart in age. A Lutheran, Joseph had two daughters (by **wife Sarah**) baptized on the same day in the **Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church** at Pleasant Hall, Franklin Co.: **Catharine**, b. 15 Dec. 1822, and **Mary** b. [illegible] 1826, both baptized 27 August 1827 (Salem Register, 1790–1896, p. 52).

MAY 1832
FRANKLIN CO., PA

Birth of child

Catherine Witter, daughter of Samuel and Rachel, was born in May 1832, according to 1900 census.³⁵

COMMENT:

No Civil War pension file has been found for John or Catherine Melrose.

CA. 1834
FRANKLIN CO. PA

Birth of child

Martha “Nancy” Witter was born in 1834, in Pennsylvania, as daughter of “Samuel Witter” and “Rachel Smith,” according to the Witter Family Record.³⁶

10 SEPTEMBER 1836
FRANKLIN? CO. PA

Birth of child

Margaret Ellen “Maggie” Witter was born 10 September 1836, in Pennsylvania, as daughter of “Samuel Witter” and “Rachel Smith,” according to her death certificate dated 20 November 1933.³⁷

³⁵ 1900 U.S. census, Richland Co., Ill., Claremont, ED 119, sheet 16-A, dwell. 40, fam. 41 (Catharine Melrose); NA microfilm publication T623, roll 338. For her Richland Co. marriage to John Melrose on 23 April 1854, see “Illinois Statewide Marriage Index, 1763–1900,” *Illinois State Archives* (<http://www.ilsos.gov/GenealogyMWeb/marrsrch.html> : accessed 13 July 2009). Witter Family Records cites an “about 1831” birth for Catherine and an undated marriage to “Wm. or John Melrose.”

³⁶ Witter Family Record. The 1850 census enumeration of the parental household (subsequently abstracted in these notes), places *Nancy’s* birth between 2 June 1833 and 1 June 1834. The Witter Family Record states that she married a “Mr. Sumner.” For the marriage of *Martha* Witters to Schuyler Sumner, 12 June 1856, see Lawrence Co., Ill., Marriage Book E: 65. After her death, Schuyler married her sister Harriet.

³⁷ “Illinois Deaths and Stillbirths Index, 1916–1947,” *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.Ancestry.com> : accessed 22 December 2009), for “Margret Ellen Brumfeild” (widow of “George” [should be Thomas]), who died 18 November 1933; Ancestry cites FHL microfilm 1,675,056.

1838 [Late]
Bedford Co., PA

Tax roll

Bedford Township. Semialphabetized list. No exact date. If the tax roll adhered to the practice that was followed in Bedford in years for which dates are found, it would have been compiled in late 1838 and certified about the first of 1839.³⁸

| | | |
|----------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Widow, Samuel | Occupation: | [Blank]* |
| | Patent: | 114 acres |
| | Rates: | 5 |
| | Cows: | 3 |
| | Valuation: | 366 |

COMMENT:

I have read all Bedford Co. tax rolls from 1786. This is the first reference to an individual whose name is phonetically equivalent. Reading on through 1850, I found no prior or subsequent reference to this Samuel “Widow”—*unless* he was the miller Samuel Witter (Weeter, etc.).

Three pieces of contradictory evidence needs to be considered here:

- In April 1839, Samuel Witter and wife sold land in Letterkenny Township, Franklin County, conjointly with another couple, at which time they were *said* to be residents of Letterkenny. The possibility exists that the person who drafted the document, after naming all parties, may have written “All of Letterkenny Township” as an assumption.
- As shown below, Samuel is enumerated in 1840 in Franklin, not Bedford.
- In this era, Pennsylvania created county-level assessment rolls triennially. When the next Bedford roll was created in 1841, Samuel and Abraham would both be assessed in Bedford.

It is possible that Samuel did not make a “clean” move to Bedford but, instead, bounced across the county line a time or two before deciding to stay in Bedford.

MARCH 1839
FRANKLIN OR BEDFORD CO., PA

Birth of child

Sarah Jane Witter, daughter of Samuel and Rachel, born about March 1839.³⁹

³⁸ Bedford Co., Pa., “Board of County Commissioners, [Triennial] Assessment Book (Copy), 1835–1844 (1 vol.),” p. 102; Pennsylvania State Archives; accessed as FHL roll 1,449,112.

³⁹ The Witter Family Record places her birth at “about 1838.” The 1850 census entry for her parental household (abstracted later in this report), places her birth between 2 June 1838 and 1 June 1839. The 1900 census record states that she was born in

8 APRIL 1839
FRANKLIN CO., PA.

Land sale

William Timmons (s) and wife **Anna Maria** (x) and **Samuel Witter** (s) and wife **Rachael** (x), sell to **John Gunter**, all of **Letterkenny**, for \$425, 18 acres and 40 perches “neat measure,” in Letterkenny described as follows:

“Beginning at a beech tree on the **Conodoquinet Creek**, thence up same 146.8 perches to a spruce stump, thence S23° W97.75 perches to a gum, thence by land of **John Deardorff**, formerly part of the same, S42.5° E 41.4 perches to a post, thence S 9° E 48.5 perches to a chestnut, thence S 81.5° E182 perches to beginning.”⁴⁰

Witnesses: Wm. S. Thompson.

Proved by Thompson 8 April 1839, who attested that Anna Maria and Rachael are of full age.

COMMENT:

Timmons:

Like Samuel Witter, William Ward Timmons was a millwright. [1860 U.S. census, Franklin Co., Pa., Letterkenny Twp., p. 532, dwell. 587, fam. 586.] This census cites William as 60 and Anna as 55, with Mat. 21, David 18, Jno. 16, Eliz. 15, Hen[ry] 12, and Anna M. 12.

According to numerous (undocumented) family trees at *FamilySearch* and *Ancestry.com*, son David’s middle name was that of another area family: **Byers**.

1840: Lurgan Township, stamped p. 346, 3 lines from bottom. William Timmons and family are enumerated between **Barbara Stake** and Wm. Little. John **Gunter**, who bought the Witter-Timmons land in 1839, is on the same page but 23 households away. Between him and the Timmonses is John **Deardorf**, whose property adjoined the Witter-Timmons land.

1850: I have not found this Timmons Family on the 1850 census. Apparently, their whole neighborhood is missing that year; their 1860 neighbors also cannot be found in 1850.

1860, 1870, 1880: Letterkenny Township.

The Timmons son Henry also migrated to Illinois. His death registration cites his birth as 24 September 1847 in Franklin Co., Penn., and death as 9 March 1925 in Fulton, Whiteside Co., Illinois [northwest Illinois]. A retired boiler maker, he was said to be the son of William Timmons

March 1841). As adults, she and her sisters seem to have regularly shaved years off their ages. 1900 U.S. census, Lawrence Co., Ill., Christy, ED 110, sheet 4-B, dwell. 83, fam. 84 (Sarah Laws). For her marriage to William M. Beaird on 7 July 1861, see Richland Co., Ill., Marriage Book 2: 28; for her 8 March 1874 marriage to William Laws (as Sarah Jane Baird), see Lawrence Co., Ill., Marriage Book G: 92.

⁴⁰ Franklin Co. Pa., Deed Book 18:155.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

of Scotland and “Tilly Rayfsnyder” of Germany. [“Illinois Deaths and Stillbirths index, 1916–1946,” Ancestry.com.]

The Scottish birth attributed to William—Rachel’s potential brother—echoes the 1820 census which places 1 foreign-born, unnaturalized person in Rachel and Samuel’s home.

TO DO:

- Complete thorough research on **William** and **Anna Maria Timmons**.
- Work deeds and probates for **John Deardoff** to determine how and when he acquired his part of the larger tract from which the Witters and Timmonses held just 18 acres.

1839 [Late]
Bedford Co., PA
Tax roll

Bedford Township and Dublin Township: Neither Samuel nor any other Witters appear.⁴¹

COMMENT:

Two similar-surname men make their first appearance in North Woodberry Township of Bedford County—both “Single Freeman”: **Jacob Weter** (taxed \$.06) and **David Wetter** (taxed \$.50). In subsequent years, both their names are spelled as “Witter.” I found no record suggesting a connecton to Samuel or Abraham; not did I find anything to disprove a connection.

1840
FRANKLIN CO., PA
Census

Lurgent Township. Unalphabetized.⁴²

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|-------|----------------|------------------------------------|-------|---------------------|
| Witter, Sam^l | 1 male | 50–60 | [Samuel] | 1 female | 60–70 | [?mother/m-in-law?] |
| | 1 male | 15–20 | [Benj. or Wm.] | 1 female | 40–50 | [Rachel] |
| | | | | 1 female | 15–20 | [Elizabeth] |
| | | | | 2 females | 10–15 | [Barbara and ?] |
| | | | | 2 females | 5–10 | [Martha, Catherine] |
| | | | | 2 females | 0–5 | [Margaret, Sarah] |
| | | | | 11 total / 0 occupations indicated | | |

Neighbors:

[The 13 names in column 2 appear sequentially after the 13 names in column 1]

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Hamilton, Robert | Mowry, _____ |
| Martin, Montgomery | Wright, John |
| Burkholder, Jacob | Reabanck, _____ |

⁴¹ Bedford Co., Pa., 1839 Tax Assessment Roll, Pennsylvania State Archives; accessed as FHL roll 1,449,113.

⁴² 1840 U.S. census, Franklin Co., Penn., Lurgent Township, p. 343, line 12.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

Burkholder, Sam¹

Whisler, Jacob
Bar, James
Holmes, Robert
Ershner, John
Hassell, Charles
Dehl, Peter
Rouse, George
Witter, Sam¹
Claspinger, Henry?
[cont. in column 2]

Byers, John
Russel, John
Houck, Wm.
Pye, Margaret
Donovan, Joseph
Hunter, Francis
Speer, Wm.
Jones, Peter
Binkey, Peter
Keonz, John

COMMENTS:

- 1 son is missing from Samuel’s household. It seems likely that Benjamin, the eldest but apparently still single son, is out on his own.
- Abraham Witter, Samuel’s presumed brother, has already settled permanently in adjacent Bedford County, Dublin Township. (1840 U.S. census, Bedford Co., stamped p. 411 verso, line 22, Abraham “Wheater.”)
- **Samuel Burkholder**, in 1830 (Fannett Twp. p. 269), lived 7 houses from the apparent widow **Catherine Reifsnider**. In 1840, **Mary Reifsnyder** was enumerated in Letterkenny, where the Timmonses and Witters lived when they sold their jointly owned land in 1839. Both Rachel Witter and Anna Maria Timmons named daughters *Catharine*. However, (a) because that is also one of the most common German names, it alone does nothing to establish a pattern; and (b) Samuel Witter’s mother appears to be named Catherine.

1840 [Late]
Bedford Co., PA

Tax roll

Bedford Township and Dublin Township: Neither Samuel nor any other Witters appear.⁴³

1841
BEDFORD CO., PA

Tax roll

Triennial Assessment Book for Dublin Township, “W” section; showing exact sequence from which neighborhood clues might be drawn.⁴⁴

Wolf, Jacob Senr.

⁴³ Bedford Co., Pa., 1839 Tax Assessment Roll, Pennsylvania State Archives; accessed as FHL roll 1,449,113.

⁴⁴ Bedford Co., 1841 (Triennial) Assessment Book, p. 331; FHL microfilm 1,449,112.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

Wolf, J. & Do.
Winegarner, Conrad
Winegarner, Jacob
Wilds, Rachel [1844 roll identifies her late husband as *Benjamin*]
Winegarner, John

Witter, Abraham

Patent Land: 323
Horses: 3
Cattle: 4
Value: \$674.05

Witter, Samuel

Improvement: 200
Horse: 1
Cattle: 1
Value: \$288

Wollett, Jacob
Wollett, Benjamin
Waidman, Thomas
Wilson, Widow
Wolf, Jacob
Walker, Thomas James [*sic*]
Walker, John
Welch, William, Taylor, house & lot
Wilds Heirs [heirs of John]
Wilds, William

COMMENT:

No record of Samuel’s “improvement” has been found in Bedford County deeds, grants, or warrants, at the local or state level.

The word *improvement*, as typically used, indicates that he had settled open land and made improvements upon it, although he had no legal claim to a title. This was a fairly common practice, by which men selected a piece of land, then cleared and planted some of it to test its productivity, before paying the fees for a warrant and survey.

APRIL 1841
BEDFORD CO., PA

Birth of child

Harriet Witter, daughter of Samuel and Rachel, was apparently born in April 1841.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ The Witter Family Record places her birth at “about 1841.” The 1850 census entry for her parental household (abstracted later in these notes), places her birth between 2 June 1840 and 1 June 1841. The 1900 census record, however, states that she

14 JANUARY 1842?
BEDFORD CO., PA.

Tax roll

Certification of Dublin Township assessment roll for 1841, semi-alphabetical by first letter of surname.
Consecutive entries:⁴⁶

Witter, Abraham

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Patented acres: | 333 |
| Horses: | 3 |
| Cows: | 4 |
| Value (total): | \$674 |

Witter, Samuel

| | |
|-------------------------|-------|
| <i>Warranted</i> acres: | 200 |
| Horse: | 1 |
| Cows: | 1 |
| Value: | \$288 |

COMMENT:

- I did not get full neighborhood for want of time at FHL.
- Note that Samuel’s land is now said to be “warranted”—i.e., he has received a warrant authorizing him to have it surveyed in his name. No record of the warrant or the survey has yet been found. It is also possible that Samuel is renting land warranted by someone else.

NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 1842
BEDFORD CO., PA.

Tax Roll

Dublin Township *assessment list*.⁴⁷

Witters, Samuel, farmer

| | |
|-------------------|-------|
| Warranted acres | 200 |
| Horses | 2 |
| Cattle | 2 |
| Valuation (total) | \$368 |

Ditto, Abraham

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Patented Acres | 333 |
|----------------|-----|

was born in April 1849). As adults, she and her sisters seem to have regularly shaved years off their ages. 1900 U.S. census, Douglas Co., Oregon, Myrtle Creek Precinct, ED 57, sheet 3-A, dwell./fam. 62 (Harriet Sumner). For her 13 March 1871 marriage to Dr. Schuyler Sumner, her sister’s widower, see Lawrence Co., Ill., Marriage Book E: 446.

⁴⁶ Bedford Co., 1841 Tax Assessment Roll, Pennsylvania State Archives; accessed as FHL microfilm 1,449,374.

⁴⁷ Bedford Co., 1842 Tax Roll, Pennsylvania State Archives; accessed as FHL microfilm 1,449,374.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

| | |
|--------|-------|
| Value | \$400 |
| Horses | 2 |
| Value | \$40 |
| Cattle | 3 |
| Value | \$756 |

“Single Free men”

Witters, Benjamin [no data]

“List of Taxables ... entitled to Vote”

Witter, Samuel

Witter, Abraham

COMMENT:

- Benjamin is noticeably absent from the voter list, although he was past 21.
- The Witters who were earlier in North Woodberry Township do not seem to be in the county this year.

Benjamin appears to have married between the creation of this roll and the roughly concurrent taking of the septennial enumeration, below.

TO DO:

Get voter laws in effect in Pennsylvania at that time, to answer the following questions:

- Was land ownership required for voting?
- If *not*, then why is Benjamin not listed as entitled to vote?
- If *so*, then why does there not seem to be a land grant or deed to Samuel?

NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 1842

BEDFORD CO., PA.

Census

“Septennial Enumeration of Dublin Township, 1842.”

The instruction at the head of the roll reads as follows:

“To John A. Keepers, Assessor of the township of Dublin, in the county aforesaid. Greeting: You are hereby required to make out two complete lists in Alphabetical order, containing a just and true account of the names, surnames, and occupations of every taxable person of the age of twenty one years and upwards, whether male or female, resident within the township aforesaid. The number of all negroes, mulattoes, and people of color held as slaves within the said township, carefully and accurately to take in a separate list distinguishing their sexes, and as near as may be their several ages—And at the same time to make out one other separate list, containing the names of the deaf and dumb persons, if any resident in the said township, distinguishing their sexes and as nearly as may be their several ages.

“The duties here assigned, you shall well and faithfully discharge, or answer the contrary under the penalty of one Hundred Dollars [and] make a return to the Commissioners of the county of Bedford, aforesaid, at their office in Bedford, on the 20th day of December A. D. 1842.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

“Witness, the Hands and Seal of said Commissioners, at their office aforesaid, the 11th day of Novr. in the year of our Lord, one thousand 1842.”⁴⁸

Semi-alphabetical by surname. The complete “W” list is shown below, for contextual clues.

| | | | |
|---------------|---------------------------|--------|------------------------|
| Wolet, | Jacob L., farmer | 1 male | |
| Ditto, | Mary | | 1 female |
| Wolet, | Benjamin, Farmer | 1 male | |
| Ditto, | Catharine | | 1 female |
| Weter, | Samuel, Farmer | 1 male | |
| Ditto | Rachel | | 1 female |
| Weter, | Benjamin, Milright | 1 male | [eldest son of Samuel] |
| | Susanah | | 1 female |
| Weter, | Abraham, Farmer | 1 male | [Abr. has no son 21+] |
| Ditto | Catharine | | 1 female |
| Wingardner, | John, farmer | 1 male | |
| Ditto | Mary | | 1 female |
| Windgardner, | Jacob, Farmer | 1 male | |
| Ditto | Elizabeth | | 1 female |
| Windgardner, | Abraham, Laborer | 1 male | |
| Windgardner, | Conrad, Farmer | 1 male | |
| Wolf, | Jacob Sr?, Farmer | 1 male | |
| Ditto | Margaret | | 1 female |
| Wolf, | Jacob Jur., Laborer | 1 male | |
| Wilds, | Tomson, Farmer | 1 male | |
| Ditto | Margaret | | 1 female |
| Woodcock, | Thomas, Farmer | 1 male | |
| Ditto | Catharine | | 1 female |
| Welch, | Wm., Constable | 1 male | |
| Ditto | Sarah | | 1 female |
| Welch, | David, Farmer | 1 male | |
| Ditto | Elizabeth | | 1 female |
| Wilson, | Henry, Farmer | 1 male | |
| Ditto | Nancy | | 1 female |
| Walker, | John, Laborer | 1 male | |
| Ditto | Mary | | 1 female |
| Walker, | James, Farmer | 1 male | |
| Wilson, | Samuel, Farmer | 1 male | |
| Wilds, | William, Farmer | 1 male | |
| Ditto | Eliza | | 1 female |
| Waniol? | William, Laborer | 1 male | |
| Ditto | Catharine | | 1 female |

⁴⁸ Bedford Co., Septennial Enumeration, 1842, Pennsylvania State Archives; accessed as FHL 1,449,375.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

Wilson, Henry, farmer

Weetar, Samuel, farmer

| | |
|----------------|-------|
| Patented acres | 150 |
| Value | \$400 |
| Horses | 2 |
| Value | \$40 |
| Cattle | 2 |
| Value | \$14 |
| Total val. | \$454 |

Weetar, Benjamin, trade

| | |
|------------|----|
| Cattle | 1 |
| Value | 7 |
| Total val. | 18 |

Winegarner, John, farmer

Weetar, Abraham, d^o

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Patented land | 333 acres |
| Value | 800 |
| <i>Saw mill</i> | 1 |
| Value | 40 |
| Horses | 2 |
| Value | 40 |
| Cattle | 4 |
| Value | 28 |
| Total val. | 606 |

Wolf, Jacob, Gent.

Wolf, Jacob, Jr., farmer

Winegarner, Conrad, Gent.

Winegarner, Jacob, farmer

Wollet, Jacob L., farmer

Woodcock, Thomas, farmer

Woodman, Adam

Wilds, Widow of Bj.

Wilds, Thompson, farmer

Wilson, Samuel, farmer

Wilds, John, Heirs of

(p. 544)

Wollett, Benjamin, farmer

Wilds, William, Gent.

⁵⁰ Bedford Co., 1844 (Triennial) Assessment Book, pp. 543–44; FHL microfilm 1,448,113,

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

Wilson, James
Welch, William
Welch, David, Gentleman
Wildes, George, Gentleman
Wildes, John, Gentleman [taxed on nothing]
Walker, James, farmer
Woods, Joseph, trade
Warner, William, laborer
Walker, James J., farmer

COMMENT:

Other Witters:

Thomas of North Woodberry Township and **William** of South Woodberry.

Samuel’s acreage has decreased by 50 acres, although Bedford County deeds have no record of a sale. His remaining acreage is said to be patented. However, I have found no record of the patent.

Meanwhile, Abraham has gained 33 acres since the last tax roll, also without benefit of deed.

15 MAY 1845
BEDFORD CO., PA

Birth of child

John W. Witter, the youngest son of Samuel and Rachel, filed for a pension on 23 July 1930, stating that he was born 15 May 1845 in Bedford County, Pennsylvania. A Civil War company muster, dated 22 February 1865, asserts a birth in Orange, Pennsylvania—a location that cannot be reconciled with known facts about his parents.

1845
BEDFORD CO., PA.

Tax roll

Dublin Township. Semialphabetical by first letter of surname.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Weeter, Samuel: | \$54 valuation | \$.48 county tax | \$.3016 state tax |
| Weeter, Benjamin: | \$20 valuation | \$.18 county tax | \$.0206 state tax |
| Witter, Abraham, farmer | \$556 valuation | \$5.00 county tax | \$1.8000 state tax |

COMMENT:

Samuel has obviously disposed of his land in preparation for his move to Illinois, where his former neighbors and his daughter’s in-laws (Joshua Jones Sr. and wife Elizabeth) moved in 1839. Samuel seems to have remained in Bedford one more year, however. The late 1846 roll includes him; the late 1847 roll does not.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

Bedford County deeds offer no record of the land’s disposal—nor its acquisition. Possible explanations:

- Samuel may not have owned the warranted land on which he paid taxes. In various times and places in the past, *renters* signed lease contracts by which *they*, rather than the owners, were responsible for paying the taxes.
- Samuel might have sold it to a family member, with the deed going unrecorded for decades or generations.

TO DO:

Extend the deed search down through the 20th century, for a tardily recorded sale.

1846

BEDFORD CO., PA.

Tax roll

Dublin Township. County taxes only. Semi-alphabetical by first letter of surname.

Weeter, Samuel: \$54 valuation \$.32 county tax

Weeter, Benjamin: \$20 valuation \$.12 county tax

[*skip one*]

Witter, Abraham, farmer \$550 valuation \$3.34 county tax

Single Freeman roll:

Weter, Stephen [No amount shown. Stephen is Abraham’s oldest son.]

1847

BEDFORD CO., PA.

Tax roll

Dublin Township. Semialphabetical by first letter of surname.

Witter, Samuel: Not found

Witter, Benjamin: Not found

Witter, Abraham, farmer

“Located” land: 333 acres \$500 value

Horses: 2 \$40 value

Cattle: 3 (over 4 years) \$30 value

Total valuation: \$570 “state and county”

Yearly income: \$641

COMMENT:

- Samuel’s move from Pennsylvania to Illinois can be placed between the 1846 and 1847 tax assessment rolls. This placement agrees with the 1850 census data for the household of

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

Samuel’s daughter and son-in-law, Elizabeth and Joshua Jones Jr., which show a four-year-old born in Pennsylvania and a two-year-old born in Illinois. See census notes below.

- On the 1849 Septennial Return, Abraham (aged 63) and his son Stephen (aged 26) are in the Clear Ridge community. In 1850, they fall off the rolls of Bedford, due to the creation of the new county of Fulton, along the Franklin County line. [Bedford tax rolls, FHL microfilm 1,433,960; and 1850 U.S. census]

1820–1850
PENNSYLVANIA

Land patents

A search of the state-level **warrant** and **patent** index books through 1850 revealed no land warranted or patented to Samuel Witter. That search was conducted only in the “W” section of each volume, which indexes the name of the patentee. The entries also identify the previous warrantee, most of whom bore a different surname. *I did not read all pages of all volumes for possible references to Samuel as a warrantee of land later patented by another man.*⁵¹

3 SEPTEMBER 1850
LAWRENCE CO., ILL

Census

[No District Cited]⁵²

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|----------------------|----|--------|-------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| 180/180 | Samuel Witter | 63 | male | Mill Wright | \$150 | Penn. | |
| | Rachel “ | 48 | female | | | “ | |
| | Catherine “ | 19 | female | | | “ | |
| | Nancy “ | 16 | female | | | “ | att. sch. |
| | Margarette “ | 14 | female | | | “ | “ “ |
| | Sarah “ | 12 | female | | | “ | |
| | Harriet “ | 9 | female | | | “ | |
| | John “ | 4 | male | | | “ | |

Neighborhood:

Note that Samuel and Rachel are 25 households from their married daughter and son-in-law Elizabeth and Joshua Jones Jr. (son of Samuel Jones and nephew-in-law of the widow Elizabeth Jones who resided

⁵¹ Patent Indexes, P Series (1781–1809), series 17.154, and Patent Indexes, H Series (1809–1957), series 17.155; also Warrant Registers, 1733–1957, series 17.88; all in RG-17, Records of the Land Office, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg; digitized online at *Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission* (<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17PatentIndexes/r17-154PatIndP1Interface.htm> : accessed 1–3 January 2010).

⁵² 1850 U.S. census, Lawrence Co., Ill., pop. sch., [no district, no post office], folios 11–14 (stamped), particularly 12 verso (Samuel Witter); NA microfilm publication M432, roll 115. All individuals extracted above are enumerated as “white.”

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

next to Samuel, below). In order to include both families in the neighborhood cluster, the following census extraction is a large one.

Data for each include name, age, occupation, and birthplaces to reflect key social patterns and potential kinships. The migration and naming patterns to be drawn from the data might also yield clues to the unidentified siblings of Samuel and Rachel—as well as the unknown family of Susan[ah], first wife of their son Benjamin.

Note: “Ia.” was the 1850 abbreviation of Indiana, not Iowa.

- 152 Oldham, James 37 chair maker \$100, Md.; Caroline 31, Penn.; Ann 12, Ohio; Thomas 9, Ia.; Martha 7, Ia.; John 4, Ia.; Henry 2, Ills.; Charles 6/12, Ills.; *and* Hammersley, Charles 25 chairmaker, Ia.
- 153 Passmore, Preston 27 farmer, Penn.; Rachel 25, Ohio [no children]
- 154 Morgan Henry M. 25 farmer \$500, Ohio; Edith M. 24, Ohio [no children]
- 155 **Jones**, Joshua 31 shoe & boot maker \$200, Md.; **Elizabeth [Witter] 27, Penn.**; William 6, Penn.; Samuel 4, Penn.; Benjamin 2, Ills.; Lafayette 1/12, Ills.
- 156 Pierce, William 34 farmer, Md.; Elizabeth 26, Ia.; Asa 12, Ohio; Solomon 6, Ills.; Mary 4, Ills.; Isabel 1, Ills.
- 157 Williams, John J. 29 farmer \$450, Ills.; Nancy 30, Ky.; Joseph 7, Ills.; Mary J. 5, Ills.; Martha 3, Ills.; Pemina 1, S.C. [*sic*]
- 158 Travis, William 72 farmer \$600, Tenn.; Lydia 68, Tenn.; Malone, Martha J. 6, Ills.
- 159 Hensell, Adam 39 carpenter, Ohio; Elizabeth 40, Ohio; Mary M. 20, Ohio; Sarah J. 17, Ohio; Daniel 11, Ohio; John 9, Ills.; Adam 5, Ills.; Peter 1, Ills.
- 160 **Jones**, William 36 farmer \$500, Md.; Sarah 26, Md.; Elizabeth 10, Ills.; Jane 8, Ills.; Thomas 6, Ills.; John 4, Ills.; Melissa 3/12, Ills. [William is the first cousin of Joshua at 155 and son of Elizabeth at 179. See file copy of “Joshua Jones: Research Notes”]
- 161 Cooper, William 28 farmer \$800, Ky.; Martha J. 28, Ills.; Mary A. 8, Ills.; Samuel N. 5, Ills.; Sarah J. 3, Ills.; G. W. 7/12, Ills.; *and* Turner, Edna 16, N.C.
- 162 Harlan, Lydia 40 \$1500, Ky.; Thomas 18 farmer, Ills.; James 14, Ills.; Ellen 11, Ills.; *and* Fyffe, Wilson 28 Ills.
- 163 West, Maria 38, Ky.; William 14, Ills.; Sarah 10, Ills.; Lafayette 1, Ills.
- 164 Crump, Edward P. 27 farmer, Ky.; Sabra 32, Ia.; George F. 5, Ia.; Zachary 3, Ia.; Sylvester 3/12, Ia.
- 165 Woodsworth, William 33 wool carder, Ohio; Catharine 25, Tenn.; *and* Fowler, George W. 2, Ills.; *and* Woodsworth, Frances 26, Tenn.; James 9, Ills.; Mary 4, Mo.; Sarah 2, Mo.
- 166 Newell, Samuel 65 farmer \$3000, Va.; Sarah 61, Va.; Mary 34, Ills.; Eusebia 22, Ills.; Thomas 20 farmer, Ills.; Samuel 18 farmer, Ills.
- 167 Hays, Sandy A. 43 farmer \$250, Va.; Jane 42, Ky.; Elizabeth 20, Ia.; Hiram 17 farmer, Ia.; Sarah 15, Ia.; Mary 13, Ia.; William 10, Ia.; James 4, Ills.
- 168 Kirkpatrick, Thomas 26, Ills.; Elizabeth 26, Ia.; Emily 2, Ill.; George 1, Ill.
- 169 Watson, Hezekiah 54 farmer, Tenn.; Amy 4, Tenn.; Emaline 22, Ia.; George 15, farmer, Ills.; Perry 13, Ills.; Hiram 11, Ills.; William 1, Ills.
- 170 Coxe, Levi 53 farmer, Tenn.; Elisabeth 45, Ky.; Minerva 10, Ills.; Caroline 7, Ills.; Emaline 7, Ills.; Lafayette 6, Ills.; James Mc 3, Ills.; Rebecca 2, Ills.
- 171 McClean, William 48 farmer, Ohio; Elizabeth 40, Ohio; Admiral 23, Ills.; Sarah 18, Ills.; Ealsey 16, Ills.; Mary 13, Ills.; Amanda 9, Ills.; Marion 5, Ills.; Erica 1, Ills.
- 172 Robinson, William 28 farmer \$400, Ill.; Mary 22, Ill.; Mary M. 3, Ills.; Sophia 1, Ills.; Catherine 3/12, Ills.
- 173 Cooper, George W. 50 \$2000, Va.; Mary 49, Ky.; Mary 17, Ills.; Emaline 15, Ills.; Sarah 13, Ills.; Martha 9, Ills.; *and* Cooper, James 24, Tenn.; Washington 22, Ky.; Hiram 21, Ky.; Cooper, William 21, Ky.
- 174 Kimmel, George 30 farmer \$200, Ia.; Cordelia [Quick] 30, Ky.; Sarah J? 1, Ill.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

- 175 Abernathy, Martha 47 \$400, Ky.; George 18 farmer, Ky.; Sydney 14, Ky.; Elijah 12, Ills.; Sarah Ann 10, Ills.; Elizabeth 7, Ills.
- 176 Combs, Murphy 26 farmer \$200, Penn.; Susannah **[Jones? Witter? Landis?]** 24, Penn.; Marian 5, Ills.; Andrew 3, Ills.; Harrison 1, Ills.
- 177 Briant, Frederick 45 farmer \$200, Germany; Susan [DeLong] 24, Penn; Catharine 3, Ills.; Mary 1, Ills.
- 178 Brian, Jacob 42 farmer \$1,000, Germany; Eliza [Landis] 31, Penn.; Catharine 8, Ills.; Frederick 6, Ills.; John 4, Ills.; Martin 2, Ills.; *and* Landis, Susannah 63, Penn.
- 179 **Jones, Elizabeth** 63 Md.; Jesse 17, Penn.; Mary Ann 19, Penn.
- 180 **Witter, Samuel**
- 181 Gines, Henry 36 farmer \$800, Penn.; Ester [Moelliger] 36, Ohio; Amanda 11, Ohio; Christiana 9, Ohio; Henry 7, Ohio; Philip 3, Ills.; Catharine 1, Ills.
- 182 Ridgley, Richard 75 \$500, Md.; Mary 69, Md.; Doan, Sarah M. 4, Ohio
- 183 Ridgeley, John 24 farmer, Ohio; Mary 19, Tenn.; Ann Maria 2, Ills.; Margaret 1, Ills.
- 184 Ridgeley, Alfred 20 farmer, Ohio; Elizabeth 18, Ia.
- 185 Bunn, Benjamin 38 farmer \$1200, Ohio; Mary **[Shick?]** 33, Ohio; Catharine 14, Ohio; Mariah 13, Ohio; Eli 12, Ills.; Hiatt 10, Ills.; Jonathan F. 7, Ills.; Mary A. 4, Ills.; Winfield Scott 2, Ills.; *and* **Shick**, John 68 farmer \$800, Penn. [*His granddaughter Malinda Day soon became the 2d wife of Benjamin Witter, son of Samuel.*]
- 186 Shick, George 30 farmer, Ohio; Dulcena 25, Ohio; Angeline 7, Ohio; Melissa 5, Ohio; Robert 3, Ohio; George 1, Ohio; Shick, Abram 19, Ohio [*Malinda Day Witter, in 1867, named a daughter Dulcena for her aunt-in-law, Dulcena Shick.*]
- 187 Ridgely, George W. farmer \$500, Md.; Mary 44, Penn.; Richard 18, Ohio; Marion 16, Ohio; Mary J. 14, Ohio; William 11, Ohio; Benton 8, Ills.; Cynthia 5, Ills.; Eliza 2, Ills.; *and* Inyard, Clarisse 22, Ohio; Inyard, Mary Ann 1, Ills.
- 188 Corrie, Thomas 35 farmer \$1800, Scotland; Olivia 39, Scotland; James 14, Ills.; George 13, Ills.; William 8, Ills.; Thomas N. 4; Ills.; *and* Moore, Pallas 22, Tenn.; Delila 15, Ills.
- 189 Bell, William 27 farmer, Tenn.; Minerva 20, Ohio; Mary Ann 3, Ills.
- 190 Moore, Edward 37 farmer, Tenn.; Elizabeth 27, Germany; Nancy 8, Ills.; Clarisa 6, Ills.; Thomas C. 8/12, Ills.
- 191 Moore, John 29 farmer \$150, Tenn.; David S. 4, Ills.; Pallas 2, Ills.
- 192 Edmundson, Elbert S. 24 farmer, Tenn.; Malinda 18, Ill.; *and* Anderson, John 20 apprentice, Tenn.; *and* Wagley, Ephraim 16 apprentice, Ia.

COMMENT:

The \$150 property valuation credited to Samuel is roughly that of a horse and typical household furnishings in a yeoman family.

As in Pennsylvania, no land ownership has been found for Samuel. However, platting the lands of the three Jones families (Widow Elizabeth, son William, and nephew Joshua), as well as those of Samuel Witter’s married sons Benjamin and William, reveals that all are clustered together along the Lawrence-Richland county line.

Son Benjamin is enumerated across the county line in Richmond.

28 SEPTEMBER 1850

Legal context

On this day, Congress passed a law providing additional **bounty land** to veterans and dependents of past wars. The relevant terms of this law were as follows:⁵³

“Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled, That each of the surviving, or the widow or minor children of deceased commissioned and non-commissioned officers, musicians, or privates, whether of regulars, volunteers, rangers, or militia, who performed military service in any regiment, company, or detachment, in the service of the United States, in the war with Great Britain, declared by the United States on the eighteenth day of June, eighteen hundred and twelve, or in any of the Indian wars since seventeen hundred and ninety, and each of the commissioned officers who was engaged in the military service of the United States in the late war with Mexico, **shall be entitled to lands as follows: Those who engaged to serve twelve months or during the war, and actually served nine months, shall receive one hundred and sixty acres, and those who engaged to serve six months, and actually served four months, shall receive eighty acres, and those who engaged to serve for any or an indefinite period, and actually served one month, shall receive forty acres.** Provided, That wherever any officer or soldier was honorably discharged in consequence of **disability** in the service, before the expiration of his period of service, he shall receive the amount to which he would have been entitled if he had served the full period for which he had engaged to serve : Provided, **The person so having been in service shall not receive said land, or any part thereof, if it shall appear, by the muster rolls of his regiment or corps, that he deserted, or was dishonorably discharged from service, or if he has received, or is entitled to, any military land bounty under any act of Congress heretofore passed.**”

COMMENT:

I have found no evidence of a bounty land application filed by Samuel under this law. If he was, indeed, the Samuel of the 17th Regiment, then his receipt and sale of a warrant in 1820 would disqualify him under the 1850 act and its sequels below.

22 MARCH 1852

Legal context

A new Congressional act of this day extended the 1850 **bounty land** law in several regards:⁵⁴

- Eligibility included all who “were called into military service, and whose services have been paid by the United States” after 18 June 1812—whether the service was in militias, volunteer, or regular

⁵³ *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 31st Cong., 1st sess., 28 Sept. 1850, Chap. LXXXV, “An Act granting Bounty Land to certain Officers and Soldiers who have been engaged in the Military Service of the United States.”

⁵⁴ *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 32nd Cong., 1st sess., 22 March 1852, Chap. 19, “An Act to make Land Warrants assignable, and for other Purposes.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

troops—“upon proof of length of service as therein required. ... “Nothing herein contained shall authorize bounty land to these who have heretofore received or become entitled to same.”

- The new act also counted the time spent marching “to the place where they were mustered ... were discharged [when that distance was “more than twenty miles from the place where the unit was organized. The marching credit was calculated at 20 miles per day.
- Bounty land warrants would now be “assignable, by deed or instrument of writing.”
- Any person who was entitled to a preemption right in federal land would be able to use the warrant in payment for the land at the rate of \$1.25 per acre.
- Bounty land warrants could be used for unpatented land anywhere in the public domain.

15 OCTOBER 1854
LAWRENCE CO. ILL

Death

Rachel Witter, wife of Samuel, died this day and was buried in Brian Cemetery.⁵⁵

3 MARCH 1855

Legal context

By a supplementary act of this day, Congress extended **bounty-land** benefits in several ways:⁵⁶

- Beneficiaries would now include any “surviving commissioned and non-commissioned officers, musicians, and privates, whether of regulars, volunteers, rangers, or militia, who were regularly mustered into the service of the United States, and every officer, commissioned, and non-commissioned, seaman, ordinary seaman, flotilla-man, marine, clerk, and landsman in the navy in any of the wars in which this country has been engaged” since 1790.”
- “Wagon-masters and teamsters who may have been employed, under direction of competent authority in time of war in the transportation of military stores and supplies were now eligible.
- Those who had served as volunteers at the British fleet attack on Lewistown, Delaware, in the War of 1812 were also eligible.
- All classes were entitled to 160 acres. If a person had previously received less than that, he was now entitled to the difference.
- Surviving widows—or in the absence of a widow, a minor child or children—were entitled to the quantity that a deceased veteran would receive under the new act.

⁵⁵ Photo of tombstone, supplied by Eugene Laws to Elizabeth Shown Mills, 23 June 1977.

⁵⁶ *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 33rd Cong., 2nd sess., 3 March 1855, Chap. CCVII, “An Act in Addition to certain Acts granting Bounty Land to certain Officers and Soldiers who have been engaged in the Military Service of the United States.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

- Service less than 14 days would not qualify, unless “the person shall actually have been engaged in battle.”
- Certificates and warrants were again assignable

COMMENT:

Samuel Witter of the 17th U.S. Infantry, who received a warrant for 160 acres and sold it by 1820, is still not eligible for additional land under the act of 1855. This was the last bounty land act passed by the Federal government.

8 AUGUST 1860
LAWRENCE CO., ILL

Census

Lukin Township, P.O. Olive.⁵⁷

| | | | | | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|----|--------|----------------|-----------|-------|-------------|
| 14/13 | Samuel Witters | 71 | male | Millerite | \$800/150 | Penn. | |
| | Margaret “ | 22 | female | Domestic | | “ | |
| | Harriet “ | 16 | female | D ^o | | “ | att. school |
| | John “ | 15 | male | | | “ | att. school |

Neighborhood:

- 1/1 Bunn, Benj. 56 farmer \$4000/800, Ohio; Mary 45, Ohio; Eli 21 farmer, Ills.; Hyatt 18 school teacher, Ills.; Finley 17 farm laborer, Ills.; Mary A., Ills.; W. S. 12, Ills.; B. F. 6, Ills.; *and*
 Finley, Martha 26 school teacher, Ohio
- 2/2 Ketcher, Jacob 47 farmer \$1200/600, Penn.; Martha 43, Penn.; Sanford 21 carpenter, Ohio; Adolphus 19 farmer, Ohio; Barshesia 17, Ohio; Marion 12, Ohio; Semantha 4, Ind.; Jane 2, Ills.
- 3/3 Davis, Mr. [*sic*] 34 carriage maker \$1200/600, Tenn.; Mary Jane 30, Ohio; Penny J. 8, Ills.; Lucy 6, Ills.; Hiram 10/12, Ills.
- 4/4 Mills, Reuben 34 C. Laborer \$/100, Tenn.; Susan 13, Tenn.; Helery 10, Tenn.; Sarah 9, Tenn.; William 6, Ills.; Nancy 1, Ills. [*see also household 5*]
- 5/5 Shick, George 41 farmer \$6000/800, Ohio; Duls[e]na 35, Ohio; Malissa P. 15, Ohio; Robert 13, Ohio; George 11, Ohio; Chambers 9, Ills.; Albert C. 4, Ills.; Matilda J. 1, Ills.; *and*
 Mills, Jemimiah *female* 13, Tenn. [*apparently belongs in household 4*]
- 6/6 Mann, John Jr. 28 farmer \$300/150, Ind.; Elizabeth 24, Ky.; Sarah E. 5, Ind.; Louisa H. 1, Ind.
- 7/7 Shick, Abraham 29 farm laborer \$/150, Ohio; Emaline 21, Ind.; Adaline 2, Ills.; Malvira 1, Ills.; Edward 3/12, Ills.; *and*
 Shick, Martin 30 farm laborer \$/200, Ohio; Sarah E. 38, Penn.; Sarah A. 4, Ills.
- 8/8 Apling, David E. 41 farmer \$/400, Ky.; Sarah A. 40 Ky.; George P. 20, farm laborer, Ky.; Mary 18, Ky.; Winfield 16, farm laborer, Ky.; Annie 12, Ky.; Wesley 11, Ky.; Annie [*sic*] 3, Ky.; Fillmore 9, Ky.; Sidney 1, Ills. [*apparently Arbuchnot Apling at end of next household should be here*]
- 9/9 Shick, John V. 47 farmer \$4000/1000, Ohio; Elizabeth 37, Ind.; Frances 14, Ills.; Peter 12, Ills.; Mary 11, Ills.; John H. 9, Ills.; David L. 7, Ills.; Joseph L. 6, Ills.; Quincy C. 10/12, Ills.; *and*

⁵⁷ 1860 U.S. census, Lawrence Co., Ill., Lukin Township, P.O. Olive, pp. 155–59, especially p. 157 (Samuel Witters); NA microfilm publication M653, roll 198. All individuals named above are enumerated as “white.”

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

- Shick, John 86 “unknown [birthplace]”; *and*
Apling, Arbuchnot 14 female Ky. [*see preceding household*]
10/ “Not Occupied”
11/10 Lagrange, Aaron 29 farmer \$300, Ind.; Martha Ann 26, Ohio; Sarilda 6/12, Ills.; *and*
Lagrange, Nancy Ann 56 Va.; *and*
Shick, Amelia J. (2, Ills.) [*This child probably belongs in household 9*]
12/11 Corrie, Alexander 31 farmer \$/250, Ohio; Caroline 25, Ills.; William 6, Ills.; Andrew 5, Ills.; Sarah
3/12, Ills.
13/12 **Jones**, Joshua 42 shoe maker \$1200/300, Md.; Elizabeth **[Witter]** 38, Penn.; William 17, farm laborer,
Penn.; Samuel 15, Penn.; Benjamin 13, Ills.; Lafayette 10, Ills.; Franklin 8, Ills.; Joshua 5, Ills.; Ensley
J. 2, Ills.; *and*
Jones, John H. 27 farm laborer, Md.; *and*
Hinsbarger, Sarah 9, Ills.; *and*
14/13 Witters, Samuel
15/14 Goins, Henry 48 farmer \$3500/800, Penn.; Easter 47 domestic, Ohio; Amanda 21, domestic, Ohio;
Henry S. 17 farm laborer, Ills.; Philip C. 13, Ills.; Catherine 11, Ills.; Fannie 9, Ills.; Easter 2, Ills.
16/15 Michael, Jacob 25 farmer 4700/200, Ohio; Catherine 25 domestic, Ohio; Sarah C. 5, Ills.; Rose Ann 3,
Ills.; Wm. W. 1, Ills.
17/16 Ridgely, Alfred 24 farmer \$700/300, Ohio; George 9 domestic, Ills.; Elizabeth J. 1, Ills.; Sarah 24, Ky.
[*Apparently Sarah, in last place, should be the “domestic” in second place, rather than the child
George being a domestic.*]
18/17 Shick, Peter 27 farmer 4700/200, Ohio; Mary Ann W. 22 domestic, Md.; Martha J. 5, Ills.; Ammasoda J.
3, Ills.
19/18 Bedine, John B. 39 farmer \$200, France; Mary 36 domestic, France; Jane 11, Ohio; Marie 8, Ohio; Mary
Jane 7, Ohio; Amelia 5, Ohio; Elizabeth 1, Ohio
20/19 Bedine, Claude, 69 farmer \$3000/500, France; Jane 68 domestic, France; *and*
Bedine, John C. 29 farmer, France; Malinda 19, domestic Ohio
21/20 Grout, Elmer 20 farmer \$1200/200, NY; Mary F. 22 domestic, Ohio
22/21 Corrie, Andrew 55 farmer \$5000/1200, Scotland; Elizabeth W. 51 domestic, Tenn.; George H. 23 farm
laborer, Ills.; Wm. H. 21 carpenter, Ills.; John T. 18, farm laborer, Ills.; Harriet A. 14, Ills.; Jacob A.
11, Ills.; Charles E. 8, Ills.; Thomas E. 5, Ills.
23/22 Worstell, Sophronia 47 domestic \$600/200, Ohio; George W. 23 farm laborer, Ohio; Thomas J. 20
farm laborer, Ohio; Elizabeth 18 domestic, Ills.; Moses C. 16 farm laborer, Ills.; Cynthia 12, Ills.;
Isaac C. 10, Ills.; Sylvester 8, Ills.
24/23 Hazleton, Warren 36 farmer \$3000/400, NY; Lucy J. 30 domestic, Tenn.; Sarah 12, Ills.; Wm. H. 10,
Ills.; Alsa 8, Ills.; Mary E. 6, Ills.; Lucy J. 4, Ills.; Louis A. 1, Ills.
25/24 Corrie, Thomas 47 farmer \$5000/\$1200, Scotland, Olive 50 domestic, Tenn.; William 18 farm laborer,
Ills.; Thomas N. 14, Ills.

COMMENT:

Note that

- Samuel Witter and daughter Elizabeth Jones are enumerated in adjacent households. Ten years earlier, Witter and his daughter’s aunt by marriage (also named Elizabeth Jones) were adjacent, while Witter’s daughter in that year was 25 households away. The difference in proximity between 1850 and 1860 should stem from the path taken by the census taker, rather than a residential move by one of the households.
- Witter in both years is enumerated adjacent to Henry Gines/Goins. Others in the neighborhood overlap from 1850–60—particularly Bunns, Corries, Ridgelys, and Shicks.

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

It is clear from the census and land correlation that the Witters and Jones lived in the same location in 1850 and 1860—and 1870, as well. Aside from the core families of Witter, Jones (inlaws), Bunn, Corrie, Ridgely, and Shick (inlaws), the community saw the usual outflux and influx of families across each ten-year period.

13 JULY 1870
LAWRENCE CO., IL

Census

Lukin Township, Olive P.O., Lawrence Co.⁵⁸

| | | | | | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|----|--------|---------------|------------|-------|---------|
| 91/91 | Samuel Witters | 69 | male | Farmer | \$2000/650 | Penn. | citizen |
| | John | 25 | male | Works on farm | | “ “ | “ “ |
| | Mariah | 22 | female | | | “ “ | |
| | Mary | 20 | female | | | “ “ | |
| | Annie | 18 | male | | | “ “ | |

Neighborhood:

- 81/81 Ridgley, John Jr. 34 farmer \$800/300, Ill.; Thomas 32 *female* keeping house, Ill.; Olive 10, Ill.; Newton 8, Ill.; Stephen 6, Ill.; Fanny 2, Ill.; *and* Ridgley, Mary 92, Va.
- 82/82 Hill, Isaac 33 farmer \$1600/650, Ind.; Louisa 27, Ohio; Martha 10, Ill.; Wesley 8, Ill.; Sarah 4, Ill.; Susan 10/12, Ill.
- 83/83 Knipp, John 45 blacksmith \$/500, Ill.; Angaline 37 keeping house, Ohio; Henry 17, works on farm, Ill.; Marion 15, Ill.; James 13, Ill.; William 11, Ill.; Nancy 7, Ill.
- 84/84 Morgan, Stephen 44 farmer \$2500/600, Indiana; Mary 43 keeping house, Ind.; William 22, works on farm, Ind.; Mary 10, Ill.; Sarah 8, Ill.
- 85/85 Wright, James, 48, farmer \$2500/750, Ind.; Sarah 30 keeping house, Ill.; David 21 works on farm, Ill.; Eliza 12, Ill.; Nancy 10, Ill.; Elizabeth 9, Ill.; Mahaly 7, Ill.; Lafayette 5, Ill.; **Della** 3, Ill.; Susan 6/12, Ill.
- 86/86 Gaddy, Fuller 39 farmer \$/200, Ill.; Terecee 38, Ill.; George 13, Ill.; Elizabeth 11, Ill.; Sine? *male* 5, Ill.; Mary 5, Ill.; Lucy 3, Ill.; Eana 1, Ill.; *and* Gaddy, George, 60, Tenn.
- 87/87 Gaddy, James 68 farmer \$2000/500, Tenn.; Elizabeth 63, Tenn.; John 40, Tenn.; Lucy 18, Ill.; George 25, Ill.; Jane 15, Ill.; Martha 12, Ill.; George 8, Ill.; Mary 6, Ill.; Thomas 4, Ill.
- 88/88 Wooden, John 37 farmer, Ill.; Elizabeth 36 keeping house, Ill.; Percillah 12, Ill.; Malinda 11, Ill.
- 89/89 Hill, James 30 farmer \$1000/400 Ky.; Sarah 29 keeping house, Ill.; William 7, Ill., Mary 4, Ill.
- 91/91 **Witters, Samuel**
- 92/92 Bell, Elijah 41 farmer \$600/250, Tenn.; Mariah 28 keeping house, Ill.; Catharine 8, Ill.; Ned 6, Ill.; Nancy 4, Ill.; John 2, Ill.
- 93/93 Bell, Thomas 43 farmer \$600/350, Tenn.; Jane 35 keeping house, Ill.; Nathan 16, Ill.; John 14, Ill.; James 12, Ill.; Thomas 10, Ill.; Constantin 7, Ill.; Jane 3, Ill.
- 94/94 Bass, John 67 farmer \$2400/600, Tenn.; Elizabeth 62 keeping house, Va.; William 17 works on farm, Ill.; Mary 25, Ill.

⁵⁸ 1870 U.S. census, Lawrence Co., Ill., Lukin Township, pp. 12–16, especially p. 14 (Samuel Witters); NA microfilm publication M593, roll 245. All individuals enumerated in this neighborhood were classed “white.”

Samuel Witter (1787–1876)
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (1802–1854)

- 95/95 Holsen, Frederick 29 farmer \$4000/1350, Hanover; Nancy 25 keeping house, Ill.; William 5, Ill.; Charles 3/12, Ill.; *and*
Holsen, Herman 22 works on farm, Hanover
- 96/96 Kennitt, James 53 farmer \$700/300, Ill.; Hester 52 keeping house, Ohio; Barbara 16, Ill.; Lenora 10, Ill.; Franklin 13, Ill.; Ellen 6, Ill.; *and*
Kennitt, James 23, Ill.; Susan 18, Ill.
- 97/97 Taylor, Cornelius 45 farmer \$1200/350, Penn.; Eliza 32 keeping house, Ind.; Jesse 13, Ill.; Malvina 11, Ill.; Margaret 8/12, Ill.; William 9, Ill.; Thomas 7, Ill.; Ruben 5, Ill.; Hector 8/12, Ill.
- 98/98 Gardner, Jesse 43 farmer \$400/250, Penn.; Racheal 34, Ill.; Stephen 14, Ill.; Sarah 12, Ill.; Martha 8, Ill.; Allen 6, Ill.; John 4, Ill.; Samuel 8/12, Ill.
- 99/99 Bass, John 25 farmer \$/150, Ill.; Agusta 19 keeping house, Ind.
- 100/100 Bass, Ezekiel 30 farmer \$1000/500, Ill.; Caroline 24 keeping house; Illinois; Ella 3, Ill.; George 2, Ill.; Theodore 3/12, Ill.

COMMENT:

The data for the Witter household errs so radically that it seems to be given by someone outside the family. On the other hand, the extent to which neighborhood children are listed out of chronological sequence suggests that the enumerator himself was exceptionally careless.

Either explanation warrants questioning the validity of the substantial increase in property value attributed to the Witters between 1860 and 1870, as well as the radically younger age given for Samuel here in 1870.

25 DECEMBER 1876
PENNSYLVANIA

Death.

Died 25 December 1876, according to his tombstone in Brian Cemetery, Christy Township:

SAMUEL WITTER/ Died/ Dec. 25, 1876/ 89Y, 6M, 13D

SHARING POLICY

I am happy to share this file, as a PDF, with anyone who can use it. If you wish to extract a portion of it into your own notes or correspondence, please place quotation marks around any material you extract and credit it as follows:

Elizabeth Shown Mills, “Samuel Witter (1787–1876) & Wife Rachel “Lizzie” Smith (ca. 1802–1854: Research Notes,” A Working File Updated 5 December 2013, p. ___; archived online at E. S. Mills, *HistoricPathways* (www.HistoricPathways.com): [date of access]].

If I have made an error in any abstract or transcription—or if my analyses should prove invalid—you would not want to be blamed for my errors. Likewise, as I continue to circulate this work, I would be mortified if others thought I had committed plagiarism because they have seen my words used elsewhere without attribution.