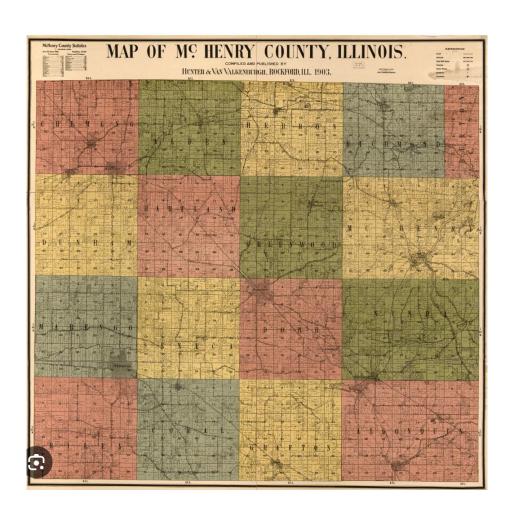
# Riley Township and the Riley Center Memorial Cemetery

Pioneers the first to 1860

# Formation of County and Townships



McHenry County was formed in 1836 from portions of Cook and LaSalle counties. It encompassed the land to Lake Michigan. In 1839 it was separated, and Lake County was established.

The first Board of County Commissioners in 1837 established precincts, which were precursors to townships, and began laying out roads and determining the county seat.

In December 1849, McHenry County voters approved the township system. The first township governments began operating in 1850. Townships were established to address the needs of local communities, particularly in providing road maintenance and other services before municipalities were fully developed.

# Riley Township and Town Hall



Riley Township, as far southwest in McHenry County as possible, is located south of Marengo, Illinois. The Riley Town Hall, built in 1868, is a significant historical structure and the oldest town hall in McHenry County.

It has been in use ever since its construction, and still today houses township meetings, as well as other local organized meetings and events.



# Earliest Settlers and events (very short history of the beginning)



Whitman, Cobb

Marengo Beacon Republican Times September 21, 1939 The first settler of Riley township was Whitman Cobb who came from New York and located there in 1836, where he remained till about the year 1874, when he moved to Warren, Illinois and engaged in the grain business. At the expiration of three years, he returned to Riley Township where he died soon afterward. In 1837 Charles Knapp settled in Riley, as did an old gentleman by the name of Samuel Smith. 1838 came Russell Bailley, Roswell Bates, N.E. Barnes, Jenkins and Osborne. [Daily Sentinel (Woodstock) August 28, 1939]

Early arrivals continue to settle in the township including Roswell Bates, N. E. Barnes, Jenkins, Underwood, and Osborn. [1877 Directory McHenry County] [1885 History of McHenry County Illinois]

First white child born Ezra Knapp, son of Charles Knapp (1838). First person who died Samuel Janus Smith (1766-1837) has 3 daughters and 2 sons, one born on February 4, 1803, and one on February 9, 1803, both Samuel Jr. First marriage ceremony performed by J.P. Ward Burley marrying Spence Flanders and Caroline Cobb. (1841)

# Cobb, Whitman Born: July 11, 1785, Died: February 2, 1866

Theoretically first to establish living in Riley Township. Burial in Marengo

#### Died.

In Riley, Feb. 2d, 1366, at the residence of his son in-law, Martin Metcalf, Mr. WHITMAN COBB, aged eighty-one years.

Mr. Cobb was a well known and highly respected member of society, having been one of the first settlers of McHenry county, and an influential man in every movement having for its object the well being of the community. He was the friend and wise counseller of his neighbors, a fond and nin gent husband and father, a kind, liberal and honest man. His mind was clear and his perceptors vivid to the last. His children, who surrounded his bedaide, were comforted with his kind words of counsel, and his parting with them was with theme was with theme and deep lictions. Having well performed life's duties he che-rinity laid down its bardens, and died in the happy consciousness of a heart as peace with God and man, and with the caim trust of a christian

#### Cobb, Caroline (first schoolteacher)

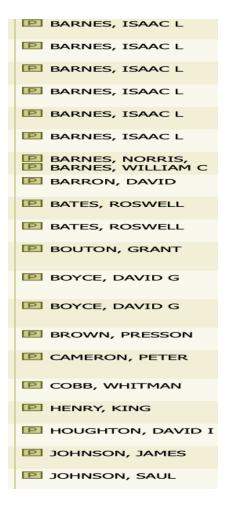
Birth 1822 New York / Married Spencer Flanders 1841 / death 1866 burial in Marengo.

At her home, in Seneca, Ill., CAROLINE E. FLANDERS, daughter of the late W. Cobb, and wife of S. Flanders, aged 44 years and 6 months. Many years the departed had been in fee at last, after a severe illness of seven weeks, the death angel bere her from the loving arms that had so often seemed by devoted attention to hold her back from the "shadowed valley." During the last weary weeks of constant suffering she maintained a Christ-like submission, and on the morning of her last earthly Sabbath said she was only waiting the summons to her rest and to her God, She a mother, makes night in her home where she had been the day.

#### And then they got busy buying land for farming (or investment)

The following purchased the first land patents for Riley Township from the (Chicago) General Land Office on March 10, 1843. Cost \$1.25 an acre.





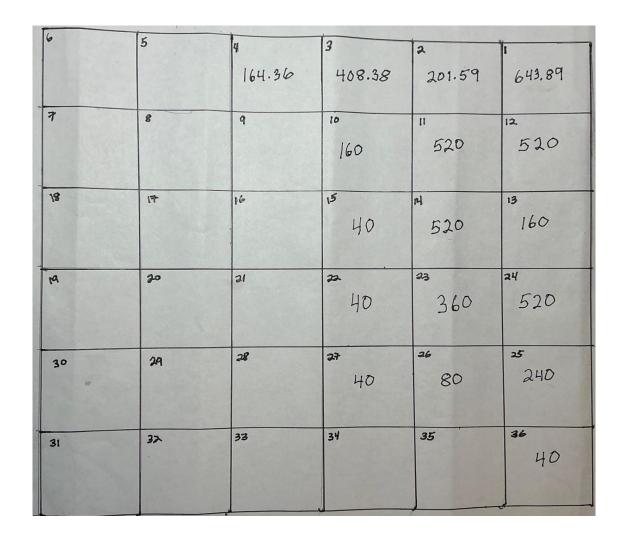
E KING, ALFRED
P KNAPP, CHARLES
P MARVIN, ISAAC
P MCCONNELL, EMELINE
MITCHELL, GEORGE W
MITCHELL, JOHN R
MITCHELL, JOHN R
P MOSSER, SAMUEL
P MOSSER, SAMUEL
P RENWICK, ASHER M
P RENWICK, WALTER
E SEARS, AARON V
E SEARS, AARON V
E SEARS, ALDEN F
E SEARS, DELANY
E SEARS, HIRAM A
E SEARS, MARSHALL P
E SEARS, NANCY
E SMITH, ALBERT E
■ SMITH, SAMUEL

P SPENCER, CALVIN
P SPONKNABLE, CHRISTOPHER
■ TODD, SYLVESTER H
P WHITE, DEVILLE
P WHITE, EZRA
P WILLIAMS, CHESTER
P WILLIAMS, SIAS K
P WOOD, EDSON G
WORTHINGTON, JOHN

glorecords.blm.gov

# Acreage they bought and now to possibly interpret their purchases ...

Riley Township first General Land Office acreage all purchased on March 10, 1843



# Riley Methodist Church



In 1836 the first settlers came to Riley Township. At first services were held in homes and schoolhouses. First prayer meeting and Sunday school in cabin of Marshall and Maria Sears. The Town Hall was built in 1868. and a few years later worship services were held in it. The men usually sat on one side of the room, the women on the other. Records are incomplete, we find different denominations serving Riley.

In 1897 the Charles Nelsons donated the ground for the new church next to the Town Hall and near the cemetery. The community contributed generously with labor and money. The church was built for \$1600 and boasts all its original pieces from that time aside from one stained glass window and padded seats add to wooden pews.

Over the years the size of the congregation lessened until it was not feasible to keep the church open. The McHenry County Historical Society took charge of the Church in 2009. The last service in the church was in November 2008.

### Methodist Church Cemetery

#### McHenry County Cemeteries 4v. Elaine Obenchain



The exact location of this cemetery is unknown. Two county history books refer to it briefly. The 1885 History of McHenry County Illinois says, "After the Methodist church was built, near the line, a small burying ground was laid out adjacent to it." The 1922 history says that "only a small graveyard was laid out close to the Kane County line." Although these descriptions might refer respectively to Storm or Barber Cemetery, neither was known to be next to a church. Therefore, it may well be a separate and an undiscovered graveyard.

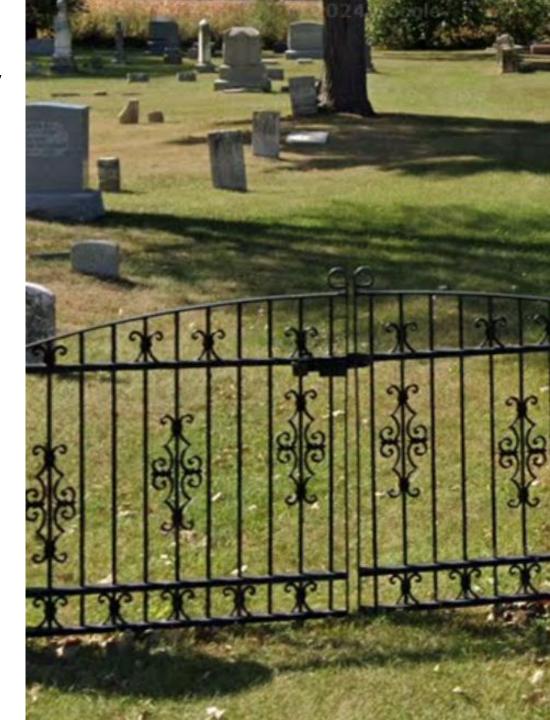
One can speculate that this may be the burial place in 1837 of Samuel Smith, Riley Township's first death. Another Smith, Dr. Eli Smith, was active in the Methodist church and hosted first Methodist service in the township in 1837 at his home. A Milo Smith owned 80 acres across the road from Storm Cemetery, so the possibility exists that these three Smiths were related and that this is Storm Cemetery. Unfortunately, no records exist to verify or deny these speculations.

#### Riley Center Memorial Cemetery /

McHenry County Cemeteries 4 v. Elaine Obenchain

This cemetery was officially launched on April 3, 1850. when the township agreed to purchase burial grounds and paid \$10 to Clark Robinson for the original piece of property. Potatoes were planted to prepare the ground which was later tilled and seeded to grass. The cemetery was first platted in 1861. There are some stones from years prior to 1850 so that it is possible that parts of the burial grounds were already in use. No doubt there were transfers here from other sites. In 1874 the private graveyard containing the remains of Jonathan Kidder was added to this cemetery. This is the northeast section of the current cemetery encompassing the last two rows in A through G as shown on the accompanying map. Later capacity was more than doubled by adding lots to the west. At one time there was a section reserved for potter's field, but its location has long since been forgotten.

In 1912 the overgrown condition of the graveyard forced the township to end the practice of free burials, and an association was formed to provide maintenance funds. The township currently provides excellent stewardship as reflected in the tidy and welcoming condition of the cemetery.





### The Cemetery Burials Corson, John (54 years) February 5, 1788-April 16, 1842 Corson, Elizabeth (86 years)

John Corson died on April 16, 1842. His burial was in the Lutheran Cemetery in Lycoming County, Pennsylvania.

This tombstone was added for the burial of his wife, Elizabeth, who died August 22, 1882. She came to Riley, McHenry County, Illinois sometime between 1860 and 1870 with one or both of her daughters.

#### Joslin, Augustus William Young August 15, 1796 - October 20, 1843 (47 years)

Father John Joslin (1753–1830)
Mother Sarah M. "Sally" Hale (1766–1830)
1830 • Mina, Chautauqua, New York,
1838 Birth of son Jerald Newell B. Joslin
Pennsylvania
1840 Summerhill, Crawford,
Pennsylvania, USA
Sometime between 1840 and 1843 he
came to Illinois





Joslin, Clarissa Ann (Pratt) w/o Augustus William Young Joslin December 8, 1796 – May 4, 1858 (62 years)

Clarissa Ann Pratt was born on 8 December 1796, in Pownal, Bennington County, Vermont. She was the daughter of Stephen Pratt and Lucy Curtis. She had 1 son (Newell Joslin) with Augustus Wm Young Joslin. She died on 4 May 1858, and was buried in Riley, McHenry County, Illinois. 1850 Census living in Belvidere, Boone, Illinois. Name Clarissa Bates. Inferred husband Davis Bates, included in household Newell Joslin.





#### Jenkins, Mary c. 1782 – July 4, 1848 (66 years) Jenkins, David c. 1847 - July 23, 1866 (19 years)

Research note for Mary: Dates acquired from Obenchain
Ancestry give all unknown

Son David born 1847 – location unknown – died July 23, 1866 From Pension Statement by Amy A Fay, his niece, he was buried in Riley Center Cemetery in Marengo, Illinois Married November 20, 1863, Sharon, Wisconsin to Arvilla 'Addie' Adilade Lewis (Jenkins) (Baker) (Ayers) Son Lewis 1866-1893

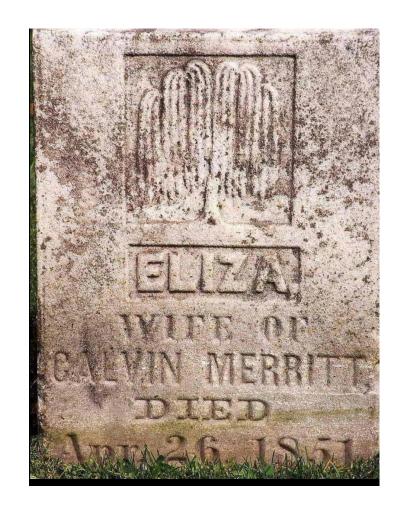


# Merritt, Eliza (Shattuck)

March 9, 1806, Oswego County, Oswego New York April 26, 1851, Belvidere, Boone County, Illinois (44 years)

1820 Census Newburgh, Cuyahoga, Ohio, 1823 Married Calvin Merritt; they had eight children in 13 years.

1850 Census Ohio, Boone, Illinois / Calvin is 53. According to records they moved back and forth between Ohio and Boone County, Illinois.



Norton, Frances M. 1851–July 7, 1851 (less than a year) Norton, Caroline (Mather) April 13, 1824 - June 4, 1854, 30 years 1 month 22 days

Same Tombstone a daughter Frances

w/o Justus d/o D & R Mather 30y 1m 22d

Daughter Norton, Frances M. 1851-July 7, 1851 (age less than 1 year)

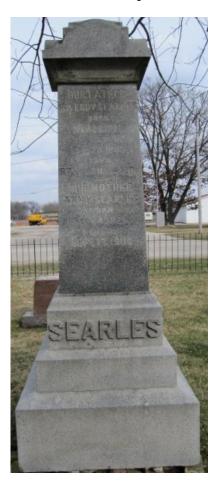
Research note: Ancestry record Caroline Mather information confusing places and dates.



# Searles, Maria U March 7, 1851-January 30, 1852 (10 months)

Inscription 10 months 22 days Sister.





# Mellen, George L 1849-September 10, 1852 (3 years)

No Grave Photo

S/O EG& C 3 years 1 month

No other Mellen listed in Riley Center Memorial Cemetery or any McHenry County Cemeteries (FindAGrave)

There is an E.G. Mellen in Boone County in 1860 owning 40 acres of land 1850-1880 Non-population census schedule Owns 3 horses, 5 milk cows, and 4 other cattle. Value of livestock 200, Wheat 200 bushels, Corn 150 bushels, Oats 150 bushels.

Stanley, Mary Anne February 1854-February 1854, daughter (less than one month)
Stanley, Mary M (Henry) 1829-February 1, 1854, w/o L mother age 24-25

Mary Anne Stanley was buried with her mother Mary M. (Henry) Stanley 1829 - 09 February 1854. Her mother daughter of King Henry and Charity Henry.



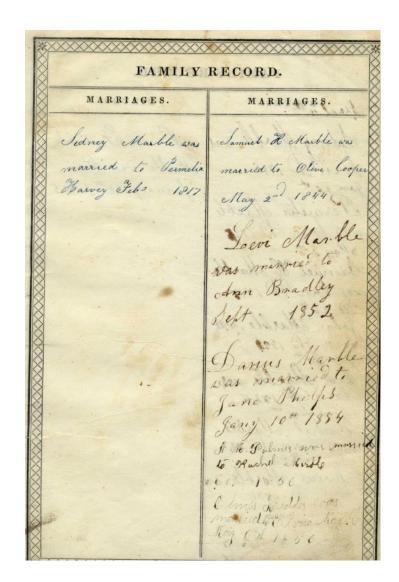
#### Marble, Sidney April 4, 1790 -October 9, 1855, (65 years)

He was born 4 Apr 1790 in New York, the son of John & Phebe (Luce) Marble.

Married Permilla Harvey 1817

He did own land in Riley Township along with his wife and two sons.

Sidney Marble Non-population schedule 1850 farmer in New York. Came to Illinois within 5 years. Ancestry includes Family Bible records. Top his and the next Marble entry, Olive.





Marble, Olive (Cooper) Born: October 10, 1824, New York– February 4, 1856, Riley, McHenry County, Illinois (31 years)

Wife of SH who was the son of Sidney Marble





Olive's maiden name is Cooper. She was born 10 Oct 1824 in New York, She was the first wife of Samuel Harvey Mable. They married on 2 May 1844 in St. Lawrence County, New York. She was the mother of 3 children, Norman Frederick Marble (1845-1845); Martha Janet (Marble) Perkins (1848-1933) and Emily Permelia (Marble) Rockwell (1851-1874).



Basquin, Martin L June 1824 – March 2, 1856, (31 years) Basquin, James Unknown – June 1, 1856 (2 years)

Martin born in Warren County, Pennsylvania. 1850 Census Shoemaker in Geauga, Ohio. Married Melinda Underwood August 7, 1845, Geauga, Ohio.

James information from Obenchain.

Shares Tombstone.

#### Gilchrist, Jane March 16, 1856 – March 18, 1856 (2 days old) Gilchrist, John H. April 20, 1857 – October 3, 1859 (2 years)

No grave photo. Not included in Obenchain.

Jane is the daughter of James and Janet (Crinklaw) Gilchrist with 9 siblings.

Her parents were born in Scotland and came to Illinois in 1848 and then to Nebraska in 1869.

Her brother John is also in Riley Cemetery.

U.S. Federal Census Mortality Schedules, 1850-1885 for John Gilchrist / cause of death / dysentery. John is the son of James and Janet (Crinklaw) Gilchrist with 9 siblings His parents were born in Scotland and came to Illinois in 1848 and then to Nebraska in 1869. His sister Jane is buried in Riley Cemetery. There is no gravestone for her.



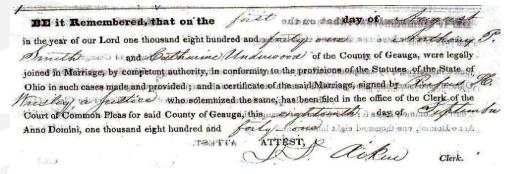
James and Janet (Crinklaw) Gilchrist





Smith, Catharine (Underwood) March 21, 1821, – March 25, 1856, (35 years) Smith, George March 25, 1856 – May 6, 1856 (10 weeks) Smith, Edson 1846 – September 15, 1859

**Catherine**: Born in West Virginia. 1850 Census New York. Married in Ohio to Anthony P. Smith 4 sons, Stanley, Edson, Barto, George, 2 daughters, Mary, Melinda.



**George** Born March 25, 1856, Died: May 6, 1856

Edson: No grave photo. Not registered in Obenchain

U.S. Federal Census Mortality Schedules, 1850-1885 / Disease of the Liver

Father: Anthony Pevil Smith 1822 – 1903 Mother: Catherine Smith (Underwood)

Brother: Barto 1851-1937 Sister: Melinda 1849-1905

### Underwood, Jonas Jr February 4, 1792 – May 5,1856 (64 years)

Jonas Underwood Jr. listed in War of 1812. (Obenchain)

Sometime between 1840 and 1850 Jonas Underwood left New England and landed in Riley Township, Illinois. He purchased 100 acres in Riley Township in 1848 and was listed as a farmer with wife and four children in the 1850 census.

In 1848 as Jonas Underwood bought 80 acres section 22- and 80-acres section 21.

043N - 005E   NW1/4SW1/4   22   Mchenry		<u>IL1120419</u>	UNDERWOOD, JONAS	4/10/1848	21077	IL	3rd PM	043N - 005E	SW1/4NW1/4	22	Mchenry
IL 1120 .420 PUNDERWOOD, JONAS 4/10/1848 21078 IL 3rd PM 043N - 005E E½SE¼ 21 Mchenry								043N - 005E	NW1/4SW1/4	22	Mchenry
		<u>IL1120420</u>	P UNDERWOOD, JONAS	4/10/1848	21078	IL	3rd PM	043N - 005E	E1/2SE1/4	21	Mchenry



#### Searles, Nabby (Brown) July 19,1785 – May 19,1857 (71 years)

In 1780 was solemnized the marriage of Oliver Brown to Mrs. Gracie (Gregory)
Welch in Norwich Connecticut. They became the parents of seven Children–

Oliver Junior Hosea, Daulphin, Lewis, Hannah (Bliss), Nabby (Searles) and Patience (Holcomb). Oliver Brown family from Connecticut to Riga, Genesee County, New York, where they remained until the Spring of 1816, when they came to the Western Reserve They made the journey through an almost trackless wilderness and utilized ox teams and Covered wagons. In 1898 we find her in a Quaker meeting and in 1850 she is in Ohio. Which means she came to Illinois sometime 7 years before she died.



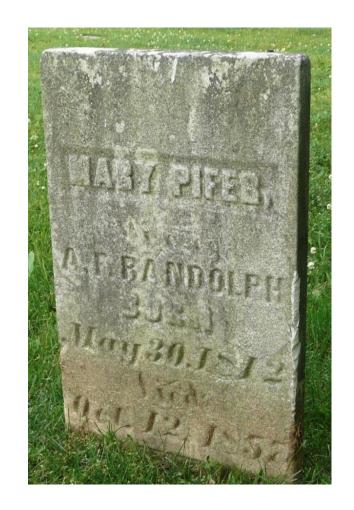


### Randolph, Mary Magdalene Fitz (Peiffer) May 30, 1812 – October 12, 1857

Born in Venango Township of Crawford Co., PA of parents Johannes Peiffer and Susannah Hetrick, and was married 12 Feb 1833 to Alfred Fitz Randolph, s/o Taylor Fitz Randolph and Rebecca Ullery, at the Zion Church of Crawford County, probably located in Saegertown, Crawford County, PA.

According to the personal diary of Walter Fitz Randolph, son of Mary Peiffer, he and his father moved the original grave of Mary Peiffer from some unknown location in Riley township to its present location in the Riley Center Memorial Cemetery, on Thursday, June 28, 1861. The diary entry reads: "To-day Father and I moved Mother's grave. It was an unpleasant task." Family records indicate that she died at her home in Riley.

The grave is located about one half the distance between the road and the back of the cemetery, along the south fence line, adjacent to an active barnyard. An empty lot is immediately adjacent to the north of her site. Apparently reserved for her husband, Alfred Fitz Randolph, who died in Bedford, Taylor County, lowa on 1 November 1878 at the home of their son.



#### Bailiet, Jacob Unknown – May 18, 1858

Birth date is a guess written with symbols <> possible birth December 1 which would make the child about 5 months old.

Son of John and Hannah

Jacob is the only Bailiet listed in Riley Cemetery FindAGrave.

Not listed in U.S., Federal Census Mortality Schedules, 1850-1885

Obenchain and FindAGrave indicate stone deteriorating.

Research note: In Website note is given about condition of stone and not shown except to view original.



# Wheeler, Isadora 1857 – July 11, 1858 (11 months)

Father: Abram / Abraham Wheeler

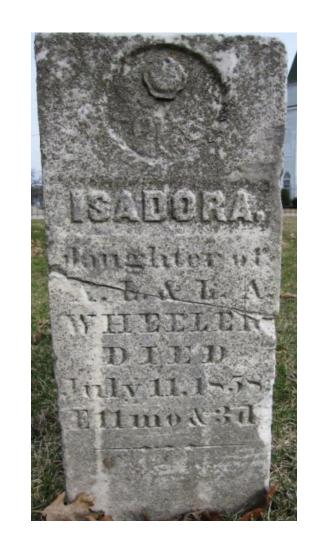
1826-1870

Mother: Laura Ann Wheeler (Fellows)

1832-1905

Sister: Mary Etta Wheeler 1855-1885

Research note: In Website note is given about condition of stone and not shown except to view original.



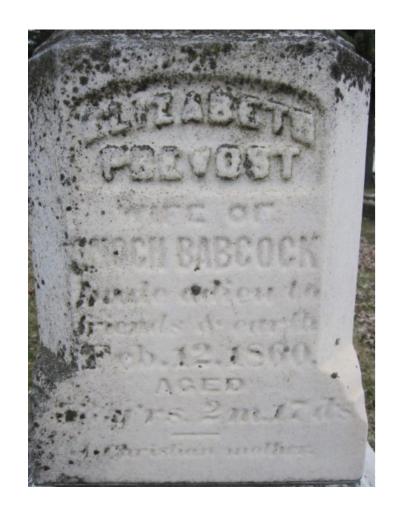
## Babcock, Elizabeth 'Betsey' (Prevost) November 26,1806 – February 12, 1860 (53 years)



Born in Pelham Manor, New York to Augustine James Frederick Prevost and Euphemia Hunt. She married Enoch Babcock in Westford, New York on September 7, 1825. They had 9 children in 19 years.

In the 1840 census they are listed as living in Livonia, New York. And in the 1850 census they are listed a living in Riley Township where he is a farmer.

Enoch Babcock is not listed as having purchased from the General land Office but bought and sold acreage from individuals and is a member of the Board of Trustees in the Township.



# Searl, Lovina A 1843 – March 12,1860 (17 years, 6 days)

Daughter of HW &A It is possible that this is Searles. Sources Only FindAGrave and Obenchain. There are six Searles entries in Obenchain all clustered in Row B 10-15.

Ancestry searched and no HW for male name listed for Searles in McHenry County.



## Ratfield, Rosetta October 16,1858 – May 12, 1860, (1 year)

Inscription reads 3 years old died of scarlet fever.

Father: William Ratfield 1819-1893 Mother: Betsy Ratfield 1829-1890

Father not listed as having purchased from the General land Office but bought and sold acreage from individuals specifically in Section 21.



iiiy

# Henry, Edgar 1859 – May 23, 1860, (1 year)



Inscription reads: s/o BT & EP 1y 3m 13d

Father: Pvt. Byman T. Henry

Co A 95 Ill Inf Civil War Veteran

Mother: Emmaline Phairzina Henry (Wells)

# Kidder, Jonathan Jr. March 18,1796 – June 26,1860 (64 years)



Jonathan Kidder Jr. was born to Johathan Kidder and Polly Severy in Wendell, Massachusetts. He served in the Military in the War. Of 1812 in a Company raised at New Salem for service in Boston. Capt. A Powers Company, Col. T Longley's regiment. He was awarded 150 aces by the U.S. Government for his service. He was employed in farming. He married Nancy Rice Lewis on December 2, 1818. Two of their six children died early and his wife in 1845. He moved to McHenry County in 1845. In 1848 and 1849 he purchased a total of 80 acres in Riley Township for farming. In 1848 he remarried Jerusha Kidder (unknown father). Twelve years late he passed on leaving a very specific will.

.

### St. John, Edwin Proper

November 12,1859 – July 3, 1860 (age approximately 8 months)



Father: George Harrison St. John

Mother: Josephine St. John (Stockwell)

1 sibling 2-year-old Josiah

The family would have a total of 14 children.

1860 Census lists him as Proper St. John 8 months.

Father listed as farmer in Coral Township. Purchased acreage from other individuals.

# Hadsall, David T October 27, 1854 – July 4,1860 (5 years) Hadsall, Mary Ella– July 24,1860 (3 years, 11 months)

Father Edwin Hadsall 1817-1887

Mother Lydia Hadsall (Daily) 1825-1877

Birth and death dates for David differ. Spelling dif. Hodsell

They had a family of eleven children, eight are living, Mira, George,

John, Charles, James, Elinor, Rose and Lena. Millie, David and Ella

are deceased.

Father is a farmer and bought acreage in 1848 and 1849 from

General Land office. Total 80 acres

1846 Father and family moved from Pennsylvania to Illinois.





Burch, Alice I 1859 – December 19,1860 (1 year 8 months 19 days)

Daughter of G & M

Research note: No other person's named Burch found in McHenry County Cemetery.

Research note: There are two Alice Burch's with almost identical tombstones. One in Riley Center Cemetery and One in Harmony Cemetery d. 1874



# Butterfield, Lucy M. (Taylor) November 11,1822 – December 20,1860 (38 years)

Lucy was born in Vermont and married Merrick
Butterfield in Vermont around 1844. They were listed
on the Vermont 1850 Census with two children. In the
1860 Census they were listed with 3 children. Since
here last child was born in 1852 in Vermont, they
came to Illinois sometime within the next 8 years.
Merrick was listed as a farmer; he acquired his
acreage from buying and selling it among local
acquaintances. After Lucy's death, remarried in 1862
remained in farming and moved in McHenry County
until 1900, where he moved and passed away in Souix
Falls, South Dakota.



# Unknown burials found on Find A Grave and researched in Obenchain

Abraham Karl J.H. / Birth and death dates unknown / No stone

Bates, C / .Birth and death dates unknown / No stone

Corson, Marie (Mrs.) / Birth and death dates unknown / No Stone

Fedrowritz, Martha / Birth and death dates unknown / No Stone / Name included in Ancestry in McHenry County Including Riley death 1920

Fisher, A. / Birth and death dates unknown / No Stone

Guse, Hilda / Birth and death dates unknown / No stone

McKee, Bob / Birth and death dates unknown / No Stone

Richardson, S / Birth and death dates unknown / No stone

Richardson, W. I / Birth and death dates unknown / No Stone / Of Harvard notation by Obenchain

Sandmann, Charlotte / Birth and death dates unknown / No Stone No Ancestry / MCHS connection to Carl Sandmann or Henry Sandmann Riley Cemetery

White, Unknown Birth and death dates unknown / No Stone

#### Unknown continued

Wolf, Paul / Birth and death dates unknown / No Stone / Clipping from Amelia (Jahn) Wolf MCHS Rescarta / Newspaper not given

Ancestry 1928 states son Paul preceded her in death.

#### Mrs. Herman Wolf Sr.

Mrs. Herman Wolf Sr. died at her home in Riley Center at 6 A. M. on September 22, after an illness of six months.

She was born February 8, 1866 in Germany but has made her home in this vicinity for 45 years.

Besides her husband, she is survived by five sons, Ernest, Herman Albert, Rudolph and Hugo, and six daughters, Mrs. Carl Braun and Mrs. John Blietz of Belvidere, Mrs. Theodore Rupprecht of Cleveland. Ohio, Alma, Dorothy and Ruby, and ten grandchildren. One daughter, Hattie, and one son, Paul, preceded her in death.

Funeral servives were held at the Zion Lutheran Church, of which she was a member, on September 25 at 1:30 o'clock.

The pall bearers were, Gustav Polnow, Herman Eicksteadt, William Eicksteadt, William Steffen, Albert Abraham and Otto Sawallisch. The Ladies Aid and the Lutheran School children each sang one song during the service. Interment was in the Riley cemetery.