**INVENTORY – RC LOUCKS – HALL/LOWER – 2015 – Turner-Jones-Whiting Restored Child’s Chest of Drawers, ca. 1840 (For Fenton History Center)** **THE COPY TO USE**

**A WordPerfect document in MyFiles**

**Inventory Document in Lower Hall Inventory Binder and in a drawer of the chest**

**An Important Prefatory Note. In this document I underscore some of the significant misinformation regarding the Asa Turner family that surfaces in both on-line and printed materials and has spread rapidly via the internet.**

**PART ONE**

**THE TURNER-JONES-WHITING CHEST**

**IN THE FAMILY-HISTORY CONTEXT**

**Initial Commentary**

**A prized family heirloom, this small, sturdy chest of drawers has, as a descriptive section explains, been professionally restored. It was constructed, ca. 1840, for Mary Isabel (Jones) Whiting (21 Dec. 1831 - 21 Aug. 1902), by her ordained Baptist-clergyman grandfather, the Reverend – or “*Elder*” – Asa Turner (14 June 1765 - 27 Nov. 1847). Asa, an 1814 Ellery, Chautauqua Co., pioneer, was also the grandfather of Aunt Mary’s elder sister, my great, great grandmother, Lucinda P. Jones Curtis (18 Feb. 1822 - 3 Nov. 1910). (Mary was Stockton-born, as possibly was Lucinda; both were reared in that town and died in Busti.) Thus Asa was my own four-greats grandsire, and one of the most intriguing forebears I’ve ever investigated.**

**As subsequently elaborated, Aunt Mary Whiting passed this sentiment-laden piece on to her Busti granddaughter, Mabel Whiting Siggins (1876 - 1953). The latter’s two daughters, Elizabeth Mack (1909 - 2004) and Rachel Nobbs Hallister (1915 - 1998), had, in turn, played with the “dresser,” as Mabel labeled it. Eventually, Mabel handed the dresser over to Rachel Nobbs, of Chandlers Valley, for the enjoyment of the latter’s two daughters – Dawn Nobbs Welch and Priscilla Nobbs Lunn (born, respectively, in 1941 and 1943).**

**Nearly four decades elapsed between early 1953, when Mabel apprized me of the historic chest’s existence, and the summer of 1991 when, thanks to Elizabeth, a beloved friend and cousin, I miraculously came into its possession. This occurred after its dispersal at a Jamestown-area (West Ellicott) Nobbs-Hallister tag (or “household”) sale. And it was not until Christmas time of that year that I finally managed to identify – as the Elder Asa Turner – the specific forebear who had lovingly fabricated it.**

**I’ve elected to focus most of this exceedingly long inventory document on Turner and his life and extended family, in order to provide a broad and rich context into which this Fenton-designated heirloom can be placed and thus better appreciated.**

**Extended Introductory Turner Notes – Pronunciation and the “Elder” Label.**

**I know not how Asa pronounced the “s” in his Old Testament given name, whether using voiced (i.e., “Zuh”) or unvoiced (“Suh”). I’ve encountered both forms. Alma Turner Stebbing, an Asa-descended Ontario 5th cousin, employs the voiced form.**

**The “Elder” Label. Lacking time to adequately explore the roughly equivalent “Rev.” and “Elder” titles, both of which contemporaries applied to this particular ordained Baptist minister, I can offer only these inconclusive reflections. Contemporary *non-Baptist*-generated materials seem generally to designate Turner as “*Rev.*” (See, e.g., the 27 April 1842 and 7 Dec. 1847 *Fredonia Censor* obituaries for Asa’s “consort” Isabel and for Asa. These obituaries are cited in Lois Barris, comp., *Death Notices, 1819-1899, Reported in the Fredonia Censor*, [Fredonia, 1892].) See also the 5 Jan. 1843 *Mayville Sentinel* reference to the “Rev. Asa Turner”’s officiation at the Dec. 1842 Stockton marriage of his granddaughter Lucinda Jones to David Henry [“Henry”] Curtis.) A non-Baptist exception to that generalization is a ca. 1845 manuscript reference to “*Elder* Turner” (as an abolitionist sympathizer) by Judge E.T. Foote, a Congregationalist who knew him. Reference: See the Chautauqua Co. Historical Society’s Foote Papers (Vol. 9, “Antislavery”), pp. 101-102, for Foote’s ca. 1845 list of potential “liberty men” activists, “Elder Turner” included, for the Liberty Party and its abolitionist cause.**

**In contrast to this general non-Baptist pattern, contemporary Baptist sources – both printed and manuscript, and including an 1813 volume by English authority, David Benedict – usually employed the “Elder” tag for my well-known forebear.**

**I believe that once ordained, contemporary Baptist ministers were, by fellow Baptists, uniformly designated as “Elders.” In other words, I don’t believe the label indicated heightened prestige or authority. (I know that Elder Jarius Handy, the Mayville Baptist Church’s pastor during part of Asa’s stormy relationship with the institution, was so labeled immediately after his seminary ordination.)**

**Clearly, the “elder” position was the highest ranking and most prestigious in the decentralized, bishop-less, relatively egalitarian local congregation-centered Baptist system. (Note that local congregants referred to one another as “*brothers*” and “*sisters*.”) I don’t know when or where Asa Turner became an ordained Baptist minister (and if he had to undergo separate ordination as a missionary, before launching his subsequently explained pioneering missionary activity in Upper Canada). But it’s clear that, as an ordained cleric of that denomination, Elder Turner possessed general, denomination-wide, pastoral authority for life, independent of any congregation with which he might at a particular time be affiliated. Indeed, he did not need to be the pastor of any church to possess such pastoral authority. (These data mean that the Baptists’ ordained ministers contrasted with their deacons who exercised authority in the specific congregations that chose them.) As an ordained minister (and, thus, *elder*) Turner could during the remainder of his life, e.g., preach, recruit and baptize converts, perform marriage and burial services, administer “the sacrament” and serve as a supply minister – even (to repeat) at times when he was not (as was sometimes Turner’s situation) the pastor of any specific church.**

**As subsequently elaborated, the parents of those Stockton-reared Jones sisters, Mary Whiting and Lucinda Curtis, were Asa’s daughter *Lovice* Turner Jones (see Notes) and her Massachusetts-born husband, Reuben Jones (17 Apr. 1799 - 29 Jan. 1849) (see Notes). By thus initially highlighting the name of this exceedingly fascinating three-greats grandmother, I am underscoring the fact her Christian name was *Lovice* (which is pronounced “LO-vice,” thus rhyming with “*Clovis.*”). She was, most emphatically, not “*Louisa,” “Louise,” “Loisa,”* “*Lovina*” or *“Lovisa*, to cite some of the names misapplied to her, e.g., in official public records, various publications and internet sites and even some Turner family records. I’ll subsequently underscore, remember, some other internet-spread family misinformation. (Note. To look ahead, a prime example is the erroneous notion that Asa died at Lovice’s home and that it was located in the Town of Stockton. He, did, indeed, die somewhere in Stockton, but at that time Lovice and Reuben had for roughly three years been Mayville area, Town of Chautauqua, residents.)**

**Testifying that she was, in fact, *Lovice,* are, e.g., her grave marker, sundry official documents (including Reuben’s estate settlement records, her land deeds and a subsequently cited 1854 power-of-attorney document bearing her signature), as well as Julia Potter’s manuscript record cited immediately below and the statement of her knowledgable great granddaughter, Mabel Whiting Siggins.**

**Notes on Lovice’s Birth Place and the Disputed Date. Parenthetically, I’ll also point out an issue regarding the birth date of Lovice, who, as subsequently elaborated, was Canadian-born, in Hastings Co., Ontario. The data on her “*Lovice*”-inscribed Mayville Cemetery grave marker tell us she died 2 Sept. 1854, aged 51-10-15, thus making her birth date 18 Oct. 1802. But some Turner family materials (including materials written by her sister Julia G. Turner Potter and transmitted to me by Julia’s Rice-line descendant, Norman Mills) rather convincingly record it as 6 Nov. 1803. For the record: that latter date would be consistent with her 26 Oct. 1850 census-listed age as 47. (Significantly, perhaps, an 18 Oct. 1802 date would place Lovice’s birth a mere 11 months after that of her brother Lewis Turner [born 19 Nov. 1801].) I’m baffled by the seemingly gross age-at-death error on her marker.**

**With regard to the name issue: Close analysis of Julia’s difficult, scrawling script shows – as indicated above – that she correctly labeled her sister as “*Lovice.*” Julia Potter’s Mills-transmitted materials are a copy of data she assembled in 1852, in Logansport, IN, for the previously cited Judge E.T. Foote, for his projected county history. (The volume was ultimately written by Andrew W. Young and published in 1875). Julia’s response to Judge Foote’s Turner data request has not surfaced in the CCHS’s Foote Papers. I’ll be frequently citing Julia’s invaluable data, for which I’m indebted to Norman Mills.**

**Notes on Reuben Jones’s Birth Place and Date. His 17 Apr. 1799 birth date is calculated from his Mayville Cemetery grave marker citation of his age at his 29 Jan. 1849 death as 49-9-12. (That marker-cited death date is corroborated by the county’s surrogate court intestate-estate records. According to an 1850 Town of Chautauqua census appendix, his death followed a two-week bout with “fever.”) Reuben’s Mass. birth was cited by his daughters Lucinda and Mary in the 1900 census. (The widowed Lucinda was currently residing at the Whitings’ Busti Corners home.) That datum is consistent with the 1845 NYS census indication of his being a New England native. I haven’t learned the birth town or parentage of Reuben, who arrived in Chautauqua County sometime prior to his 28 Sept. 1820 Ellery marriage to Lovice. I don’t know if this young bachelor (who I haven’t found in the 1820 census listing of household heads) arrived alone, or in the company of others, whether relatives or friends. (Nor, regrettably, do I have an 1825 New York State census record for him.) Nor do I know if Reuben was related to the Miles Jones who married Lovice’s sister, Pamela/Permelia Turner. That Reuben was an Ellery resident before the couple moved to Stockton (by 1825, as subsequently elaborated) is documented by this fact: That when, in 1829, he joined the Stockton Baptist Church, Reuben did so via a transfer letter from an Ellery Baptist church, presumably Asa’s. (The couple’s 28 Sept. 1820 marriage date and place were supplied by Julia T. Potter’s Mills-transmitted Turner materials.)**

**Introduction to Part One**

**Born and raised in southern New England, Grandfather Asa was descended on both sides from numerous early English settlers of the region. They included some of the founders of Hartford and New Haven (originally separate Connecticut colonies).**

**Nearly his entire life, in the midst of fundamental changes in American life, Grandfather Asa, like his forebears, pursued what continued to be the most common contemporary occupation, farming, and he customarily resided in relatively remote locales. But, despite those somewhat restrictive circumstances, Turner led an extraordinarily interesting, versatile and action-packed, life. A simultaneous wearer of multiple hats and continuously on the go, that energetic man of both the cloth and the plow was, a reliable source tells me, blessed with an engaging personality (see Note). Early on portending the impressive adult in the making, Turner, likely large for his age, enlisted, in March 1778, three months shy of his 13th birthday, in the American Patriot cause. Until 1782 or ’83, the maturing lad participated, on and off – for, by his estimate, at least 2 years and 7 months – in his native Connecticut’s coastal defense efforts. Some of them involved Redcoat encounters. As compensation for that service, regarding which (despite admittedly hazy recollections and the unavailability of appropriate documentation to buttress his application), Asa would, in 1834, begin receiving an $80 per-annum federal pension.**

**During the post-Revolutionary decades, a significant part of which he spent in Ontario (then the “Upper Canada” Province– see Note), Asa served in many important capacities. He was, for example, an effective frontier missionary preacher on both sides of the international border, the founder and pastor of pioneer-era churches, a tireless participant in his denomination’s supra-congregational ecclesiastical organizations and, not least, a social reform activist. In the course of his protracted earthly pilgrimage, that Baptist evangelist became – his off-the-beaten-path residences notwithstanding – a widely recognized name among the networks connecting the loosely affiliated transatlantic English-speaking Calvinist Baptists, in the United States, Canada and Britain. To his additional credit, scattered sources testify, Turner embraced civic responsibilities, by serving in relatively low-level local elective offices, both American and Canadian, and as a militia officer.**

**Notes**

**(1). My “*engaging personality*” speculation is based on a reliable on-line-accessible source: *Celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of American Independence at Sinclairville, N.Y., July 4, 1876, in the Sixty-Eighty Year of the Settlement of the Town of Charlotte ...* by Obed Edson (1832 - 1919). That prominent attorney, peace justice and local historian was the Sinclairville-born son of 1810 Charlotte pioneers. Edson, who interviewed old settlers, tells us that “*Rev. Asa Turner, a baptist preacher, was also an early missionary here. He was social* [i.e., sociable] *and consequently popular among the settlers, and was always warmly received by them.*”**

**(2). Britain’s Upper Canada Province, principally present-day southern Ontario, was set off from Catholic Quebec in 1791, mainly to accommodate – with a liberal land-grant policy – Protestant Loyalist refugees from the United States.**

**Elder Turner (to use his official Baptist preacher title) was born 14 June 1765, in Watertown, Litchfield Co., CT (see Note regarding confusion), in a household affiliated with that British colony’s officially established and public-tax-supported Congregational churches. Asa, without question, grew up in such a church. His parents were Deacon Jedediah (a.k.a. Jediah) Turner (1733 - 1819; also a Revolutionary soldier) and the second of his four wives. She was Rachel Thompson (22 Dec. 1735 or 1737 - about 17 Oct. 1771). On 27 Nov. 1847, in the Town of Stockton, Chautauqua Co., NY, at age 82, Elder Turner succumbed (according to the previously cited 7 Dec. *Fredonia Censor* obituary) to “apoplexy.” (This was the contemporary term for death involving sudden loss of consciousness, a phenomenon which, for us, usually signifies a stroke or heart attack.) A widower by that time, Asa was still actively ministering to a Baptist congregation in whose initial “gathering” he’d several years earlier been instrumental.**

**A Watertown Birthplace Note. On-line and printed sources (although in a sense technically correct) often misleadingly identify Asa’s 1765 birthplace as Waterbury, New Haven County. The confusion arises from the fact that as of that date, the future Watertown still constituted the Westbury parish of Waterbury, a large town which back then (like today) was located in New Haven County. But in 1780, Westbury was transformed into Watertown, and the new town was annexed to the already existing Litchfield County. The adult Asa always cited the latter jurisdictions as his birth place (e.g., in pension application documents), and his obituary lists Litchfield County.**

**The Baptists’ Decentralization. This is a convenient juncture to elaborate on a crucial dimension of the Baptist denomination which the Connecticut-Congregationalist-reared Asa wholeheartedly embraced in his late 20s. In the Baptists’ highly decentralized system, both then and now, the basic unit is the virtually self-created, independent and self-governing local congregation. That pattern dovetails with the signature Protestant “priesthood of all believers” doctrine. Historically, the “brethren” of those small entities rejected the old Connecticut-style “established,” “state” churches in favor of church-state separation. The Baptist congregations select their own officials, including deacons and pastors. The Baptist system contrasts with the bishop-centered superstructure of such top-down oriented Protestant denominations as the Methodists and Episcopalians/Anglicans. For the Baptists, necessary inter-congregational cooperation, e.g., in missionary endeavors, is advanced through the operation of loose, voluntary and flexible bodies, such as (regionally based) “associations” and “councils.” The latter category included, e.g., ordination councils and various ad hoc ones.**

**Such Baptist interaction and cooperation was already alluded to, in my observation that Asa’s name surfaced in the transatlantic networks involving English-speaking Calvinist Baptists. In that cooperative context, take note, both his Canadian and Chautauqua Co. pioneer missionary endeavors were funded by ministerial associations. Moreover, Turner was (in addition to church councils participation) involved in the creation and operation of Chautauqua Baptist associations attended by delegates of the constituent congregations.**

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**I don’t know when the young, Congregationalist-reared, but future-Baptist Asa permanently departed his native New England for New York State, which would be his home, on and off, for most of his remaining years. Quite possibly his initial residence in that adoptive state was the Hudson River Valley town of Lansingburgh (now a Troy suburb) where an older brother, Thomas, had previously settled. On 14 Feb. 1788, at age 22, Asa married, quite likely in that town, the 18-year-old Isabel Ketchum (born 9 Oct. 1769). According to the Julia T. Potter Mills-transmitted Turner data, Isabel was a Lansingburgh native. She was almost certainly a younger sister of Thomas Turner’s wife, Sarah Ketchum. (Sarah was a daughter of Samuel and Deborah Ketchum, who, as of 1790 census time, were Lansingburgh residents.) Isabel Turner died in the Town of Stockton, 23 March 1842, aged 72. (Note. Although some sources list 3 Mar., the 23 Mar. date is confirmed, e.g., by Julia T. Potter’s Mills-transmitted materials and by the previously cited 27 Apr. *Fredonia Censor* obituary.)**

**A. The Turners’ Pivotal Franklin Years, ca. 1788-90 - 1798**

**By 1790, the census informs us, the couple had moved some 80 miles southwest, to create a wilderness farm in the Town of Franklin, Delaware County, NY. Around their property quickly grew the long-strung-out Catskill village of Franklin. (Julia tells us “that town was built upon what was my Father’s farm where he first settled.”) Their Franklin stay proved to be a pivotal, life-transforming experience for the Turner family. The enterprising, hard-working and versatile Asa set aside space in their still-standing, historic-marker-recognized farmhouse for commercial purposes. He operated (surely with Isabel’s help) both a store and tavern. He also embraced civic responsibilities, serving, e.g., as a militia captain. (Note. The wilderness town was also home to other Turner relatives, including Asa’s brother, William – who subsequently joined him in Chautauqua County – and their sister, Mary “Polly” McCall.)**

**It was in 1792, early in the couple’s Franklin residency -- in the aftermath of a visit by an itinerant Connecticut revivalist -- that he and Isabel made their momentous decision to affiliate with the Baptists. (That is, take note, a later conversion date than I, like some others, had assumed.) Come Jan. 1793, the couple became founding members of, and Asa assumed a leadership role in, the First Baptist Church of Franklin. He was, for example, a member of the three-man committee that oversaw the 1795 construction of the congregation’s first meeting house, some three miles from the village. He and Isabel remained members during the few remaining years of their Franklin stay.**

**It was, of course, this life-altering Delaware county spiritual and ecclesiastical activity that, somehow, relatively quickly helped propel Asa to commit himself to the pursuit of Baptist missionary and pastoral endeavors. That embrace of an evangelistic career initially took him and his growing family to the southern part of present-day Ontario’s Hastings County. That Lake Ontario northern shore area was then part of “Upper Canada.”**

**B. The Turners’ Upper Canadian Years, 1798 - 1811**

**It was in 1798 that Asa, Isabel and their three surviving Franklin-born children crossed the fluid international border. The trio were Gideon, Benjamin and Julia Geraldine, the namesake of an older Julia who was born and died in Franklin. Conceivably the family reached their still raw frontier Hastings County destination, facing the Bay of Quinte, by crossing the nearby St. Lawrence River via Jefferson County, NY. This Revolutionary veteran’s purpose was launching an ambitious, American ministerial association-funded missionary and church-founding enterprise. He reached out to fellow pioneer settlers, many of them, like Asa, United States immigrants. Fulfilling this objective of course required his ordination by fellow Baptists, to become the “Reverend”/“Elder” Turner. As previously noted, I don’t know when or where the ordination took place, but my guess is it must have occurred prior to Asa’s American-sponsored departure. To further qualify to perform his pastoral duties, in Jan. 1803, this self-styled “*Anabaptist Calvinist*” ordained “*Minister*,” a dissenter from the established Church of England, secured a court license to officiate at marriages. His license was approved under the authority of the Adolphustown Sessions.**

**For this bare-bones commentary on Asa’s Upper Canadian activity, I’ve heavily relied on the research of Frankford, Ontario, family historian John Carew, whose wife, Sue Faulkner Carew, is Asa’s descendant. (See 24 and 26 Mar. 2015 Carew email messages.) In**

**contrast to Julia Geraldine Turner Potter (1796 - 1875) – who in her Mills-transmitted Foote date of 1852 – suggested that her parental family spent all their Canadian years in Hastings County’s Sidney Township, Carew has discovered that initially Asa was a property owner somewhere in the contiguous Thurlow Township. This is confirmed by his signature on a 1798 petition. But from 1806 - 1811, Asa owned several properties (“south of Oak Hill”) in Sidney Township. Sidney, by the way, is the location which Julia Turner Potter listed (erroneously perhaps) as the birth place of all the couple’s five Canadian-born children. (The first was Mary, 1799, and the fifth was Harry Gilbert, 1808.) As a Sidney Township resident, on the 5th Concession, Asa served as a path master in 1807 and pound keeper in 1810. He divested himself of all those Canadian properties between 1811 - 1814, following his 1811 departure for New York State. That extensive Hastings County property indicates, of course, that – portending the future – Turner continued to pursue farming in conjunction with his clerical activities.**

**Carew’s “understanding of Asa Turner’s ministry” between 1803 (when, remember, he was licensed to perform marriages) and 1811 is “that it was conducted in various locations in Thurlow and Sidney, mostly from the homes of his parishioners, under the auspices of the Thurlow Baptist Association.”**

**It was John who disabused me of my erroneous notion that Asa and Isabel raised their children in Sidney Township’s “Turner Settlement” – i.e., in the hamlet of “Turner’s Corner,” which is located in Turner Valley not far from the Village of Stirling. Stirling Village’s Sidney Baptist Church – which, Carew asserts, “had its start in 1829, long after Asa Turner’s departure from Upper Canada” – “was undoubtedly a result of the strong influence which he had engendered and established in the Thurlow/Sidney area.” The “Turner Settlement” acquired “that unofficial title over time, owing to” the Turner family’s “influence . . . in that enclave through to the 1900s.” In contrast to Asa and Isabel, Benjamin, the couple’s second son, did rear his own three offspring in that hamlet. (Two of them married Faulkners. They were “the Turner/Faulkner ancestors of double cousins,” i.e., John’s wife Sue Faulkner Carew and Alma Turner Stebbing.)**

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**For this bare-bones Upper Canadian section, I’m also indebted to Alma Stebbing, who is highly knowledgable about Asa and his family. Time and space constraints dictate limiting myself to citing a handful of her germane comments on an earlier draft, a version which already included John Carew’s input. (See her impromptu, hastily composed “few comments” 30 Mar. 2015 email message, portions of which are both paraphrased and quoted below. This “food for thought” missive was produced, Alma noted, without consulting her genealogical data.)**

**Alma agrees that “Asa and Isabel’s home was on the 5th [Concession, as contrasted with Benjamin Turner’s 8th Concession Turner Settlement property]; and he [Asa] would have raised his children there.” Asa “probably had services at “that home.” His residence was, by the way, “very near where” the couple’s daughter and son-in-law, “Pamela and Miles Jones,” subsequently “lived,” when – as elsewhere elaborated – that Chautauqua-County couple relocated for several years to Upper Canada.**

**With regard to Stirling Village’s Sidney Baptist Church, Alma points out that the organization “lists Asa Turner as their first minister prior to 1800.” “The church,” she reminds us, “is not the building” [as Carew implied], but, rather, it constitutes what I, myself, would label as a “‘gathered’ body of like-minded believers.” The “current” church [i.e., meeting house] “is the 4th that I know of in terms of structure.”**

**“But,” Alma contends, “services were held in homes prior” to the original building’s construction. “[A]nd then the congregation folded when Asa went back to the U.S. The same congregation reunited, . . . more came, and a church was built in 1829" – the date which, remember, Carew cited for the organization’s “start . . . long after . . . Asa’s “departure from Upper Canada.”**

**This section can appropriately conclude by quoting the historical marker erected at Stirling’s Turner-founded Sidney Baptist Church by the Ontario Heritage Foundation. It attests to Asa’s high repute in the foreign province where that American Revolutionary veteran labored for so many years.**

***ASA TURNER***

***One of the first Baptist missionaries to serve the scattered communities along the north shore of Lake Ontario, Turner came to Upper Canada from New York State and settled in this vicinity by 1798. With great dedication he ministered to the residents of Thurlow and Sidney Townships, conducting services in pioneer homes and organizing several congregations including the forerunner of this parish. In 1802 Turner and two other American missionaries, Reuben Crandall and Joseph Winn, formed the Thurlow Baptist Association, the first Baptist association in the province. Until his return to the United States nine years later, Turner worked with Crandall and Winn to ensure the growth of this association, thereby assisting in establishing a permanent organizational framework for the Baptist Church in eastern Ontario.***

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**It was in late February or early March of 1811, not long before the outbreak of America’s second war with Britain, that Asa and Isabel departed Hastings County for New York State. Although the Empire State became the couple’s permanent home and, consequently, the location of Elder Turner’s subsequent pastorates, their international border crossing did not sever the family’s Canadian ties.**

**C. The Turners’ Cayuga County Phase, 1811 - 1814**

**They initially settled down, for an uncharacteristically brief three-year stay, in the central New York Finger-Lakes region’s Cayuga County. Their home (a farm, surely, for Asa was, by March, a local landowner) was located in the Town of Scipio. That area was already one of the Baptists’ strongholds. Come 1823, their particular Scipio locale would be set off as the Town of Venice (a fact that has generated some confusion). In May of that pivotal 1811 year, under the auspices, no doubt, of one of the loose-knit denomination’s missionary associations, Asa assumed the pastorate of a recently formed Baptist congregation. Under his effective leadership, the Scipio/Venice church added 193 members. (See the internet-accessible Elliot G. Storke, *History of Cayuga Co., New York.*)**

**Accompanying Asa and Isabel to the couple’s birth country were their six younger offspring. Five of them – Mary, Lewis, Lovice, Pamela Ketchum (a.k.a. Pamelia/Permelia) and Harry Gilbert – were Hastings-born. The eldest (and Franklin-born) of those six younger siblings was, of course, the already cited Julia G. Turner (future wife of Mayville attorney Anselm Potter). (Son Lewis would die 7 May 1813, at age 12, in Scipio/Venice.) But the couple’s two eldest offspring, sons Gideon and Benjamin, opted to remain behind in Canada, where they became the forebears of myriad descendants. One can have little doubt that Asa and Isabel made return visits to their growing across-the-border family. We know that back-and-forth visitors included Julia Turner Potter, plus her daughter, Julia Potter Rice, and Rice grandchildren. As previously noted, Turner daughter, Pamela Ketchum Turner and her husband Miles Jones and their family eventually left Chautauqua County, for a long-time Ontario residence, before repatriating themselves.**

**Lengthy Contextual Notes on Turner Family Naming Patterns, Relocations and Interconnections. Pamela Ketchum Turner is sometimes designated Pamelia or Permelia. Importantly, such appealing utilization of a mother’s maiden surname as a middle name, a pattern then unusual in non-elite families, is but one evidence of the extended Turner family’s strong trans-generational bonds and their pronounced sense of history and continuity. Benjamin Turner similarly bestowed his mother’s maiden name on a daughter. Also attesting to the robust Turner family bonds and sentimentality is their frequent cross-generational recycling of given names, both first and middle, a pattern pronounced, e.g., in my own Reuben and Lovice Turner Jones branch.**

**In that familial naming context, a noteworthy fact is that Deacon Jedediah/Jediah Turner (1733 - 1819) and his third wife, Hannah Webster, produced a son they named Jedediah Thompson Turner (1773 - 1814). Thereby, significantly, the couple honored the father’s previous (second) wife, Rachel Thompson. It was, by the way, in association with this intriguing half brother of Asa (and in the company of various extended family members) that the venturesome Jediah moved for a time to New York State’s frontier Madison County Town of Cazenovia. In 1799, Deacon Jedediah (who, by the way, already had considerable experience with frontier conditions) became a founding member of the Cazenovia Presbyterian Church.**

**A Parenthetical Interjection. Coincidentally, Cazenovia was also the final Empire State way-station of my rather peripatetic Loucks forebears before moving on to Chautauqua County’s Town of Ellery in 1814-15, the very time the Turners arrived. The Loucks patriarch, Joseph Sr. (aka Jost Loux), shared with Asa the revered status of a Revolutionary veteran. To speak to a larger point: I have no doubt the well-known Louckses and Turners quickly became aware of their mutual pre-Ellery Cazenovia connection. In a sparsely settled but rapidly growing frontier area such as our contemporary county, the interacting pioneer families would as a matter of course – in the process of transition from strangers to interdependent neighbors and friends – have exchanged information about their prior residences and experiences and highlighted the commonalities.**

**Deacon Jedediah Turner subsequently departed Cazenovia for the Hudson Valley, and as of 1810 was living in a long-time family-associated locale, the Schagticoke section of Lansingburgh, in Rensselaer County’s Troy area. During that interlude he served as a deacon of the Lansingburgh’s First Presbyterian Church. It was possibly there that Jediah made his fourth marital alliance, to Aseneth \_\_\_\_\_\_, the widow of Thomas Merchant/Marchant. Jediah and Aseneth soon relocated, to Franklin, NY, long after Asa’s departure for Canada. The couple had made that move by 1813, the year they joined the Franklin Congregational Church. For the record: Jediah died in that town in 1819, and was buried among his Baptist family members in Franklin’s now abandoned Baptist cemetery. His disintegrated grave marker incorporates the “deacon” honorific. Aseneth died there five years later.**

**Lengthy Contextual Notes (continued). Very importantly, the fact that Jediah thus honored his second wife, Rachel, in the naming of the son he sired by Hannah has prompted my formulation of a conjecture regarding the identify of the patriarch’s childless first wife. For that young woman neither a first or maiden name were recorded following her 1758 death in Norfolk, Litchfield Co., CT (when Jediah was aged about 25).**

**For essential background regarding the mystery-shrouded Norfolk wife, note that it was that raw, inhospitable mountainous town on the colony’s northwestern frontier, which became home in 1745 to the 12-year-old Hartford-bred Jediah. The wilderness-bound trek involved multiple units of the both paternal- and maternal-side interwoven extended family to which he belonged. Jediah grew to manhood and entered his brief first marriage in that pioneering environment.**

**Not long after being widowed, he abandoned Norfolk in favor of Waterbury’s Westbury parish (the future Litchfield Co. Town of Watertown). In that more promising Connecticut locale he twice remarried and fathered children by both those spouses.**

**To circle back to this contextual note’s main point, which is the identity of that first wife who Norfolk records cite only as “the wife of Jedediah Turner”: My hunch is that her name was Ruth Perce (or Pierce?) Turner. This conjecture is prompted by the fact that Jediah and Rachel Thompson Turner named their eldest daughter Ruth Perce (or Pierce?) Turner (1768 - 1789). If that was, indeed, the scenario, Jediah was, in 1768, thereby both honoring his first wife and establishing the precedent followed in the 1773 naming of Jedediah Thompson Turner in Rachel’s honor.**

**To resume focus on Elder Asa and Isabel Turner: the couple’s 1811 Hastings-to-Cayuga move meant that the couple was currently located roughly 80-miles northwest of their prior Empire State home. No doubt they seized the opportunity for visits to Franklin, where numerous extended family members continued to reside. A particular incentive would, of course, have been the fact, noted above, that as of 1813 Asa’s father and step-mother, Deacon Jedediah and Aseneth, had fairly recently relocated there from the Troy area.**

**Upon returning to the United States, Asa surely rejoiced in the fact that the Franklin Baptist Church he’d been instrumental in establishing was already a flourishing entity. As of 1813, according to David Benedict’s landmark, London-published, internet-accessible *General History of the Baptist Denomination in America, And Other Parts of the World*, the Franklin church boasted 250 members, making it “by far the largest” unit in the Baptists’ county-based Franklin Association. By the way, Benedict provides additional evidence of Turner’s importance in contemporary, including transatlantic, Baptist circles. While in Scipio/Venice, “*Elder* Turner ... communicated” the information Benedict used to explicate the contemporary Upper Canada Baptist organizational set-up.**

**It must have been during his career’s Cayuga phase, rather than the subsequent Chautauqua County one, that Asa served in Buffalo as a war-time military chaplain. According to his daughter, Julia Potter, “during the War of 1812,” her father “was chaplain in the army at Buffalo a few months or a year. I do not recollect the exact time.” It was in June 1812 that our young nation declared war on Britain and hostilities had virtually ended by fall 1814. The necessarily hectic pace of the uprooted Turners’ lives following their early-1814 Chautauqua arrival would have virtually ruled out a lengthy contemporary Buffalo stay.**

**As this analysis shows, the Elder Turner was, in the early phase of his career, a rather peripatetic servant of the Lord in the Baptist cause. In early 1814, in his 49th year, he, along with Isabel and all their now-five younger children pulled up their Cayuga stakes, to make yet another move. Those offspring included, of course, *Lovice*, my direct ancestor. The destination of their roughly 150 difficult-miles trip was the raw frontier county of “Chautauque” (its spelling until 1859) in the state’s far southwestern corner. It was a part of the Holland Land Company’s immense domain. There, as a prominent Baptist missionary and as a preacher for his denomination, and for most of that time also as an active farmer, he remained for the remainder of his 82 years. This means that the Chautauqua phase constituted 33 years, or approximately half of Asa’s adult life. But, true to form, this decidedly sociable and engaging man, who, remember, was still actively leading a congregation when death arrived, never stayed put. He was always moving about within the borders of that county and its nearby environs. (His farming vocation must have greatly diminished as he aged and likely ended before he died, still in the clerical harness.)**

**D. The Turners’ West Ellery Years, 1814 - 1834-35**

**Part 1. Introduction**

**The Turners immediately settled just north of what would become the lake-side community of Maple Springs, in the “West Ellery” section of the large, Lake Chautauqua-bordered, Town of Ellery. There, for approximately twenty years, the family resided on a farm at the northeasterly corner of the Lewis and Walker road intersection. By decidedly consequential coincidence, their property abutted the Lewis Road farm purchased in 1818 by my maternal-side three-greats grandfather, Minot Hoyt (1790 - 1866). Shortly before the Hoyts’ arrival, Asa’s eldest brother (and former Franklin-resident), William Turner (1761 - 1837), also settled nearby. William, whose name honored two maternal-side great grandfathers and his mother’s young deceased brother, was likely a favorite of Lovice Jones. She and Reuben named their fourth child and younger son William T. Jones (1835 - 1917), with the “T,” I’d wager, standing for “Turner.”**

**Notes on Turner Names and Neighbors. Obviously, two of the other Jones siblings bore family names. I refer to both (1) Mary Isabel (her first name honored Asa’s sister, Mary “Polly” McCall and other Turner-side females) and (2) Lewis G. Jones. The latter was named for Lovice’s young deceased brother, Lewis, and likely the G stood for Gideon, his uncle’s name. I know not the origin of the first-born Lucinda P. Jones Curtis’s first name. But based on the extended-family penchant for cross-generational name recycling, I have little doubt her “P” stood for “Pamela” (or the variant “Pamelia”/”Permelia” forms).**

**Turner Neighbor Linkages. Nearby Turner-Hoyt neighbors included James McCoul (1794 - 1877), another of my maternal three-greats grandsires. As a young bachelor, James had accompanied Minot to Ellery in March, 1818. James’s Ellery-born widowed daughter Rachel (McCoul) Brodt (1824 - 1912) would, in 1855, become the second wife of Minot’s son, Charles Hoyt, of Busti. Their son Lester Hoyt, my great grandfather, married Lucinda P. Jones Curtis’s Busti-born daughter, Edith Curtis. Edith was, of course, the great granddaughter of Elder Asa, who had officiated at Lucinda’s 1842 Stockton marriage to David Henry (“Henry”) Curtis. (Note. The *Mayville Sentinel* dates the couple’s marriage as 28 Dec., in contrast to the more likely 29 Dec. cited in both the Lester Hoyt Bible and records of Clyde Curtis, grandson of the couple via their son Albert.)**

**From that initial West Ellery base of operations, Elder Asa assisted in the founding of several Chautauqua County Baptist churches, including initially – in 1814 -- what today constitutes the active Ellery Center Baptist Church. This evangelist was the first pastor of the congregation – a body which during his tenure, as was generally true for the denomination’s pioneer-phase churches in the U.S. and Upper Canada, had no permanent meeting house.**

**From the outset, needless to say, Turner actively participated in his denomination’s activities in that frontier county and beyond. He served, for example, on the ad hoc interchurch councils that formally launched (and “extended the right hand of fellowship”) to new churches composed of Baptist pioneer settlers. These included, in 1817, both (1) the still flourishing Panama Baptist Church and (2) the Town of Stockton’s “*Bear Creek*” congregation that would eventually construct a meeting house at *Delanti*, today’s hamlet of Stockton. Significantly, in 1820, he acted as his Ellery church’s representative on the council that launched the church in Mayville, the nearby county seat at the head of Lake Chautauqua. To look ahead, Mayville was the congregation with which this life-time Baptist Elder was next affiliated -- as a member “brother” (but not, in an official role as its own pastor or as a deacon). That affiliation, take note, coincided with some of the most turbulent and controversial years of his professional and personal life.**

**Note. Reuben and Lovice (Turner) Jones were, as subsequently elaborated, members of that now defunct Bear Creek/Stockton-hamlet church. This was prior to their permanently moving to the Mayville area ca. 1844 - 1845 and, in April 1846, their joining that community’s Baptist church.**

**Early in the fast-paced Chautauqua years and drawing on his pioneering Canadian experience, Elder Turner was also instrumental in establishing the various local, including regional-based, Baptist *associations* that are denominational hallmarks. To the end of his life, he was an association participant and leader. The first such organization, in existence by 1820, was the rapidly expanding and influential “Chautauque Baptist Association.” (It included some Cattaraugus County churches and some Warren Co., PA, ones.) Asa, I know, was a delegate -- from the Mayville church he’d recently joined – to the Association’s 1823 session in Fredonia. Although I lack documentary evidence for his West Ellery years, my guess is that, as a figure of such stature, he also served on some of the contemporary ad hoc ordination councils comprised of delegates of established congregations. (I know he did so in 1840, as a Stockton resident.)**

**From the outset, Turner also assisted the expanding network of wilderness Baptist churches by acting, on an ad hoc basis, as a “supply pastor.” I.e., he provided essential services for sister churches currently lacking a minister (surely reaching his destinations by horseback). For example, on 5 Sept. 1819, a Sabbath, he performed the baptism rite for 7 newly accepted members of the above-cited Town of Stockton “Bear Creek” congregation with which the Joneses would subsequently become affiliated. (See the out-of-order pp. 12-13 of the Stockton Baptist Church Manuscript Records Book I, 24 Feb. 1817 - 13 Nov. 1829, at Stockton’s Mary E. Seymour Free Library.)**

**D. The Turners’ West Ellery Years, 1814 - 1834-35 (continued)**

**Part 2. The Quiet Phase of Asa’s Mayville Church Affiliation, 1823 - ca. 1827**

**I haven’t determined when the Elder Turner concluded his maiden Chautauqua County pastorate with the Ellery congregation. The last evidence of that relationship of which I’m aware was his representation of his flock on the Feb. 1820 council which launched the Mayville church. I do know that his Ellery pastorate had formally ended by early 1823, for on Saturday, 24 May 1823, in his 58th year, Asa was received into the Mayville Church, on the basis of a requested dismissal letter from the “church in Ellery.” At that juncture, the fledgling county-seat-based congregation lacked both a minister and a permanent meeting house (until constructing one in 1834 they assembled in the courthouse). But, as previously noted, Elder Turner joined – and continued functioning -- in the capacity of one of the congregation’s constituent “brethren,” not as the their minister or a deacon. I wonder if, as he aged, he was contemplating a simpler life, with farming as his principal activity.**

**Importantly, as the Mayville Church archives’ rich manuscript records show, that formal 1823 admission was a follow-up of a Turner association dating back to the prior autumn. On 4 Oct. 1822, by which time he may well have already concluded his Ellery pastorate, he participated in a Mayville “covenant meeting,” by commenting on a case under consideration. On 10 Nov., the “church meeting” he attended voted that “*Br. Turner take a seat with us,”* as the body continued investigating an ongoing discipline case*.* Then on 22 March 1823, as “*Elder Turner*,” Asa opened a “covenant meeting” with prayer. The following day, a Sabbath (a month before joining the congregation as a lay person), he “administered the sacrament” (i.e., communion service).**

**Note on Sources. The Mayville archival materials, which should be photocopied or microfilmed for a public repository, are vulnerably stored in the church office. Most important for my research were the two earliest manuscript volumes, both short-titled as “Book of Church Records.” The dividing point between the two volumes is Nov. 1833, the date of the church’s reunification following the schism spawned by the Anti-Masonic movement. (These volumes’ full titles are “Records of the first Baptist Church of Christ at Mayville, Chautauque County, New York.”)**

**From the official viewpoint of the Mayville Church, Asa’s status as one of the congregation’s “brethren” continued on for seven years, until the body unilaterally and dramatically terminated Asa’s membership, on 4 June 1830, in his 65th year. At the time of that formal expulsion (near the close of the 1826 - 1830 pastorate of Elder Jarius Handy, a Turner protagonist), all parties concerned were caught up in an upheaval triggered by the Upstate-New York-centered national Anti-Masonic movement.**

**But, for the record, roughly the first five years of Elder Turner’s experiences as a Mayville congregant, 1823 - ca. 1827, had been, in retrospect, relatively quiet ones. Importantly, during that tranquil phase – and for a brief time thereafter -- Asa, who with Isabel continued operating their West Ellery farm, was not a pastor of any church. But, true to form, he actively participated in the affairs of his new church home and its sister congregations. For example, in his lay capacity, “*Elder Turner*” was, in August 1823, chosen by the church as one of its three additional delegates to the fledgling Chautauque Baptist Association’s Sept. 1823 meeting in Fredonia. He repeated that service in 1827.**

**During those quiet years, he also continued providing ad hoc assistance for pastor-less sister churches. The most poignant of those itinerant supply-pastoral errands, and one of immense satisfaction for him, occurred on 4 Dec. 1825. Subsequent to traveling from his West Ellery farm, Asa visited the 8-year-old Baptist congregation in the Town of Stockton’s valley-situated Bear Creek settlement (the future Delanti/Stockton hamlet). (The creek is Bear Lake’s outlet.) That day (a Sabbath) the manuscript records tell us, “*Lovisa Jones* [i.e., his daughter Lovice] *related the work of God on her soul was received by the church and baptized by Elder Turner.*” (The 22- or 23-year-old Lovice – since 28 Sept. 1820, Reuben Jones’s wife – was by then the mother of the eldest of the couple’s four children, Lucinda P. and Lewis G.) Likely Asa plunged his daughter into the frigid waters of Bear Creek (the Cassadaga being rather far afield).**

**Importantly, for the Jones couple’s family story, this poignant record of Lovice’s baptism and church affiliation shows, of course, that Lovice and Reuben were Town of Stockton residents as of late 1825. That they had moved there from Ellery (the location of their 28 Sept. 1820 marriage) is suggested by data cited in the note that follows. I had long assumed, take note, that the birth (18 Feb. 1822) of Lucinda, the couple’s first child, had occurred in Stockton (where she grew up). But this 1825 record of Lovice’s Stockton baptism constitutes the earliest documentation I’ve thus far discovered of the family’s residence in that town (where the 1830 census also listed them). It follows that Lucinda (and Lewis) may, in fact, have been born in Ellery, not Stockton. I alluded to my uncertainty about Lucinda’s birth place in the p. 1 “Initial Commentary” of this inventory document.**

**Extended Notes. For Lovice’s baptism, see 4 Dec. 1825 insertion, on p. 95, of the previously cited Stockton Baptist Church Manuscript Records Book I, 24 Feb. 1817 - 13 Nov. 1829. By citing her as “*Lovisa,*” the entry also illustrates the rampant confusion regarding Lovice’s given name. The fact that she had not previously undergone a conversion experience -- a requisite for the denomination’s adults-only baptism rite and the subsequent step of acquiring church membership -- signifies that Lovice had not been a member of her father’s 1814-founded Ellery church. Finally undergoing that mystical experience must have been an immense relief for her and other family members.**

**It was not until 7 Feb. 1829, three years after Lovice did so, that Reuben finally joined the Stockton church the couple attended. But, in contrast to his wife, he was not added to the rolls in the aftermath of a conversion experience and ensuing baptism. Rather, he was admitted via a transfer letter from “our Sister Church in Ellery,” presumably the one that Asa had founded, a fact proving that Reuben’s conversion and baptism had occurred earlier. (These data, of course, point to a period of pre-Stockton Ellery residence for Reuben, a period that may have included the earliest phase of the couple’s marriage and the birth of one or both of their eldest children.)**

**I’m surprised, and puzzled, by the three year gap between Lovice’s and Reuben’s joining the Stockton church, for (as noted above) the couple must have been Stockton residents by 1825. Conceivably, Reuben delayed his membership transfer because he was experiencing some doubts about the state of his soul. Another highly unlikely possibility I’ve considered is that after Lovice joined, the couple temporarily departed Stockton and did not return until closer to Reuben’s 1829 membership transfer. But if they did so, why didn’t Lovice transfer her membership to another church? There’s no Stockton-records’ notation of such a transfer and of her subsequently rejoining that church.**

**The most sustained of Elder Turner’s contemporary (“quiet phase”) ad hoc sisterly supportive activity of which I’m aware occurred in 1826 - 27, when Asa served, in conjunction with other elders, as a part-time supply pastor for the 1819-founded Busti Baptist Church. To look ahead, the widowed Lovice Jones would become a member of that church in 1853, a year prior to her death, in Busti. (See Busti Baptist Church Minute Book I, 1817 - 1853. Photo copy, ca. 1919. Fenton History Center, 974.795 B7.)**

**D. The Turners’ West Ellery Years, 1814 - 1834-35 (continued)**

**Part 3. The Schismatic Phase of Asa’s Mayville Church Affiliation & His Chautauque Baptist Ministry, 1828 - 1833**

**The relatively quiet phase of Asa’s Mayville affiliation (1823 - ca. 1827) began dramatically changing in 1828. That was the year the short-lived but long-term consequential national- and Upstate-New York-centered Anti-Masonic movement began disrupting the struggling young churches of Chautauqua County’s aspiring Baptists and significantly affected the course of Elder Turner’s life.**

**The always civic-minded and still energetic Asa – a Revolutionary veteran, remember – thrust himself, body and soul, into the controversial Anti-Masonic movement. He quickly emerged as a high-profile and vocal area leader of that reform cause, a cause which generated heated disagreements – and, ultimately, schisms – in several Baptist congregations, including Mayville’s and one of Stockton’s. Central to the agenda of the American agitators everywhere, whether secular or religious in orientation, was destroying the allegedly dangerous power and influence of the secretive and conspiratorial fraternal organizations exemplified by the Free Masons’ network of lodges. Such ubiquitous bodies were, their critics alleged, incompatible with the values and institutions of a free, open, equalitarian – and, in sum – democratic social and political order. Anti-Masonic measures would, the reformers commonly hoped, help to head off and ultimately to reverse contemporary America’s dangerous backsliding into the *tyrannical* and *aristocratic* order against which the revered patriots of the Revolution generation had taken up arms. To advance that laudable goal, the Anti-Masonic champions characteristically tried, in the religious realm, mandating that their lodge-affiliated church members sever such connections.**

**Between Nov. 1828 and April 1829, Mayville Church records show, the congregation was becoming rather evenly divided by that simultaneously patriotic and righteousness issue. Successive church meetings alternately passed and rescinded Anti-Masonic motions of increasing severity. On 4 Feb. 1829, Turner was, significantly, one of the “visiting brethren” from “Chautauque” who participated in a county-wide Baptist Anti-Mason Convention. (Notes. For the convention, see the 18 Feb. 1829 *Jamestown Journal*. The**

**newspaper’s 1829-30 issues were brim-full of Anti-Masonic materials. For the Mayville Church data, see the previously cited two manuscript record volumes.)**

**By the time of that landmark Feb. 1829, Baptist convention, the schismatic process which would rip the Mayville congregation asunder was well underway, with Elder Turner in the forefront. On 15 April, a specially convened church meeting aired complaints against him. Asa was charged with such transgressions as treating the church with “neglect and contempt” and its pastor, Elder Jarius Handy, with disrespect. In particular, and most seriously, Turner had, for example, absented “himself for a long time from its regular meetings and communions,” held “meetings on the same day the church met with a part of the church” and endeavored “to rais a party in the church against it.” In a great leap of faith, the majority then declared the Free Mason issue officially closed, and warned that anyone reintroducing it as a subject for discussion should be considered “a transgressor.”**

**The above-cited data constitute some of the important sources about the nature and the early chronology of the Mayville Baptist schism which, by the spring of 1829, had culminated in the formation of a rival “Chautauque Baptist Church.” Returning once again to the active ministry in his mid-60s, Elder Turner served as pastor of that scantily documented dissident body, which functioned for approximately four years, 1829 - 1833.**

**Note. During this, Asa’s renegade period, he was instrumental in launching, in 1831, a new Baptist church just across the fluid state line, in Warren County’s Farmington Township. The organization, which eventually constructed facilities in today’s Lander hamlet and long-ago disbanded, was organized 21 Feb., at a session which “Elder Turner” moderated and at which he preached. See J.S. Schenck, ed., *History of Warren Co., PA* (1887), 592-93. Note that the Farmington Church became part of the Chautauqua County-based Chautauqua Baptist Association.**

**It must be noted that well before that pivotal 15 April 1829 meeting, the Mayville church had vainly endeavored to head off the schismatic process now spiraling out of control. Beginning back in Feb. (the month of the landmark county convention), official committees had attempted to reason with the lead dissenters. Particularly intriguing is the fact that Turner alone, among the three men the committees contacted, was willing – and, indeed, eager – to engage constructively with his interrogators. Although, so they reported, he “justified himself & condemned the proceedings of the Chh,” Asa “conversed freely” with them. In contrast, one of the others refused “to hear” the committee, defiantly declaring “we are not the Chh.” And the third “treated the committee roughly, refusing to hear them, & ordering them away from his premises.”**

**On 30 April, a special county-based church council convened in Mayville to deal with the local crisis. The overwhelming majority sided with Mayville’s Elder Handy-associated faction. The Turner-allied – and now Chautauque Baptist Church-associated – members, the council noted, had withdrawn from the legitimate organization. But, so the dissidents claimed, it was they who in fact now constituted the true Mayville church, their rivals having by their actions forfeited any claim to the name.**

**Significantly, as well, in the summer of 1829, the Anti-Masonic factions of other county Baptist churches, including ones in Pomfret and Stockton, formed a rival county-based Baptist Association. One of the delegates from a Stockton church was Elder Washington Winsor, for whom, tellingly, one of Asa Turner’s grandsons (a child of Miles and Pamela Jones) was named.**

**A year later, abandoning hope of reconciliation, a 4 June 1830 church meeting, formally expelled the alleged seceders, including Turner, and proceeded to “withdraw the hand of fellowship” from them. The fact that three months later, in Sept., Elder Handy departed the now once-again pastor-less Mayville church is, no doubt, a testament to the personal frustration and poisonous animosity engendered by the Anti-Masonic crisis.**

**D. The Turners’ West Ellery Years, 1814 - 1834-35 (concluded)**

**Part 4. The Mayville Church’s Reunification & Asa Turner’s Withdrawal, 1832 - 1834**

**The rich Mayville church records document the relatively slow and painful process through which, as the Anti-Masonic fervor waned, the schism-torn organization became whole again. Following the 21 Oct. 1832 sermon, “the brethren and sisters” tarried “for a few moments,” to be apprized of the possibility of their “coming together again” with the “absenting” members. A committee appointed that day reported in mid-Dec. their inability to negotiate conditions for “a union.” The endeavors of a follow-up reconciliation committee, appointed the following April (in 1833), also proved fruitless in the short run. But, in the aftermath of subsequent negotiations, the “whole body” of the church convened, on 13 Nov. 1833, for “friendly conversation” in neutral territory, the “Methodist Chapel.” The participants represented the “Mayville Baptist Church” and Turner’s “First Baptist Church of Chautauque.” That session agreed to reunite the competing bodies, as the sole Mayville-based Baptist church. A key proviso was that, henceforth, no one was to raise the issue of which of the constituent elements of the henceforth whole-again organization had in fact constituted the “legitimate” church.**

**A formal vote on 16 Nov. 1833 settled the matter. This meant that, at age 68, Asa Turner was once again a member of the organization he had joined back in March, 1823, and from which he had officially been expelled in June, 1830. Also reuniting with the church were Turner’s daughter, Julia G. Turner Potter, and his fellow Baptist pastor, Elder Washington Winsor. (Doubtlessly Julia had been a member of her father’s renegade Chautauque Baptist Church.) Once again, then, the ex-Anti-Masonic champion was no longer the active minister of a particular congregation. By the way, 3 months after the rapprochement, in Feb. 1834, the reconstituted organization purchased Mayville land on which they soon constructed a wooden structure. (It is now attached to the rear of the 1876-erected brick edifice which still serves the venerable congregation.)**

**Nine months after that landmark reconciliation, the Mayville church took additional Turner-relevant action. A 23 Aug. 1834 “covenant meeting” (as contrasted with a “church meeting”) voted “*Leters of commendation and dismissal to Eld. Turner and his wife* [Isabel].”**

**E. The Turners’ Northwest Ellery Years: The Pickard Road Farm & the Denton Church, 1834 - ca. 1839**

**Asa and Isabel’s formal late-August severance of their oft-stormy Mayville church affiliation roughly coincided with two other, somewhat earlier, landmark events in the aging couple’s intriguing life saga. Needless to say, I yearn to know more about the connections among that three-fold set of occurrences. The first had been a significant boost in the couple’s income and long-term financial security, and the second was – for what proved to be a relatively brief time – a substantial alteration in their place of residence.**

**First, the financial change. On 4 Mar. 1834, Asa began collecting an $80 per annum pension for his Revolutionary services (a benefit formally authorized on 6 Feb). Moreover, he also received $240 in arrears.**

**Note. I obtained on-line, from the National Archives, photo copies of the informative documents in Turner’s Revolutionary Pension Papers. Essential for his securing the pension was the assistance of Asa’s prominent Mayville attorney – his Presbyterian son-in-law, Anselm Potter (1786 - 1848). (Attorney Potter was, of course – like Asa – well acquainted with long-time County Court Judge E.T. Foote.) Tragically, Potter spent his final two or so years in the Utica Lunatic Asylum.**

**Consider now the couple’s relatively short-lived change of residence. On 2 May 1834 – two months after that income boost and a year before disposing of their 58.5-acre West Ellery property – the couple made a major land purchase. From Cyrus Root, they acquired a 51-acre property roughly two miles distant in northwesterly Ellery, on the north side of today’s Pickard Road (Rte 52A). The property is today numbered as 5094, and served by the Dewittville post office. The Turners’ new farm was significantly closer to Mayville than their old West Ellery property.**

**The $400 purchase price (translating to $7.84 per acre) dramatically contrasts with the $600 ($11.76 per acre) for which, on 19 Feb. 1839, the couple sold the farm to their son, Harry G. Turner. As these figures conclusively show, that property, when acquired from Root, had no house (and, presumably, no barn). Thus it was the Elder Asa, in his 69th year, who initiated the erection of the still standing, post-and-beam-form, farm house. I entertain no doubt that Asa not only oversaw but also actively engaged in the construction of the dwelling house and also of the barn that was situated behind it. (Note. These and subsequently cited property transaction data are based on deeds and other documents at the Chautauqua Co. Clerk’s Office.)**

**Notes on Turner Properties**

**1. Elaboration on the Turner-Kayner Property’s Original and Current Status**

**Today that 5094 Pickard Road Turner farm is the beautifully maintained property which its owner, Jaimie D. Kayner, acquired at a 1989 delinquent tax sale. The old farm house was then in a dilapidated (“ready to be bulldozed”) condition. In its original, Turner-constructed, form, the approximately 8-room, Greek-Revival-influenced dwelling consisted of two sections. Its 1-1/2 story upright, road-facing gable, section, approximately 22-feet square, had two upper chambers. From the right (easterly) side of the upright section projected a substantial single-story ell, to which Kayner has made extensive additions. The original ell, approximately 30-feet long by 24-feet deep, contained four rooms, two across the front and two behind. Kayner has exposed (for interior view) some of the hand-hewn posts and beams.**

**The Rte 52A Turner-Kayner property lies a short distance east of the Coe Road intersection (Waterman’s Corners), well before 52A’s intersection (at Jones Corners) with Rte 57 (a highway which connects Ellery Center and Centralia).**

**2. The 1835 Sale of the Turners’ West Ellery Property**

**It was not until 12 Dec. 1833, that the Turners had acquired from the Holland Land**

**Company (for $275) the title to their farm at the Walker-Lewis intersection. Presumably they had long been making payments since contracting for the farm ca. 1814. On 12 May 1835, the couple, by now relocated to Pickard Road, finally sold that West Ellery farm, in equal parts (of 29-1/4 acres) to the adjoining landowners, Minot Hoyt and Ira Haskins. The long delay between the Turners’ formal acquisition of the Walker-Lewis property title and the property’s sale (Dec. 1833 to May 1835) helps explain why the couple had to rely on a $300 mortgage to Root to purchase the Pickard Road farm. (The old farm presumably served as surety.)**

**The fact that the Turners purchased the substantially closer-to-Mayville Root property at the beginning of May 1834 – and, I’d guess, immediately began constructing a new residence and operating a new farm – brings into focus the question of why they opted to withdraw from their current Mayville church home in late August. Integral to that issue is, of course, this related one: Where Asa and Isabel attend services – and in what capacity did Asa do so – during their roughly five-year Pickard Road residency?**

**The Denton Baptist Church**

**I have little doubt that in conjunction with that move, the couple – who, chances are, were constantly reminded of the turbulence and animosity of their Mayville years – opted to become affiliated with what by then constituted another long-established area Baptist congregation, the Denton Church. That institution has a confusing history I’ve not been able adequately to sort out. It had, apparently, originally been formed back in 1808 (six years before Asa’s arrival) in an area that became part of Ellery. In 1821 the church was reconstituted, in a location which that year became part of the adjacent new Town of Stockton (in its southwestern corner). The reconstituted organization’s official name was appropriately changed to the “First Baptist Church of Stockton.” The fact that that congregation began meeting at a public school house situated a short distance north of the town line, at Stockton’s Denton Corners, helps account for the “Denton Baptist Church” label by which it became known. (Note. The Denton intersection is located on Rte 54 [the Centralia-Hartfield Road], at which point the road continues on [as Rte 380] to South Stockton.)**

**That Denton Church nomenclature was solidified when, at some point, the congregation erected a permanent meeting house at a corner of the Denton intersection opposite the school. I am not clear if that church construction occurred before, during or after the Turners’ Pickard Road residence. (Note. I have relied on the rather confusing account in Cathryn Berndt’s *Stockton – Seen Through the Rear View Mirror [*1987], p. 49. I find that she had relied heavily on the account in Andrew W. Young, *Chautauqua County History*, 571.)**

**Of immense significance, of course, are these geographical data: Denton Corners (the location of both the church-utilized school house and, at some point, the permanent Baptist meeting house) is situated roughly three miles north of the Turner-Kayner Pickard Road farm – which, remember, lies just east of Waterman’s Corners. (The road linking the Waterman’s and Denton Corners is labeled Coe Road, and constitutes a continuation of Bayview Road.)**

**The close proximity of those key residential, educational and ecclesiastical locations is, of course, a major factor underlying my hunch that, upon leaving the Mayville church, the newly relocated Turner couple affiliated themselves with the nearby Denton congregation. Moreover, it’s quite possible that Asa served briefly as their pastor, during his Pickard Road residency. Note that Berndt (p. 49) made the undocumented statement that Asa was the Denton Church’s first minister. She seems, although I’m not positive, to be referring there to the congregation that was reorganized in 1821, as the “First Baptist Church of Stockton.” I’m somewhat dubious about that apparent Berndt assertion, given the fact that in 1820 Elder Asa was still the pastor of the 1814-formed (and homeless) congregation that became today’s Ellery Baptist Church and that soon thereafter he began participating in the Mayville church, which he joined in 1823.**

**I believe, however, that Berndt must have had access to some uncited documentary evidence for associating Asa with the Denton Church and for naming him as one of its pastors. It’s possible, I suppose, that the Denton Church had no pastor between its 1821 reorganization and Asa’s 1834 Pickard Road relocation, and that the Elder Turner did, indeed, serve as the reconstituted congregation’s first minister, during his short-lived northwestern Ellery residence.**

**To conclude this confused analysis, I reiterate my belief that it was the Denton congregation with which he and Isabel were affiliated during their Pickard Road farm residence and that possibly he served it as pastor. (Note. The Chautauqua Baptist Association records might well help resolve these issues.)**

**The Turners’ close proximity during their Pickard Road residency to the Town of Stockton and the strong possibility of their contemporary affiliation with the southwesterly Stockton-located Denton Church foreshadowed this important fact: that the remainder of the couple’s lives was almost entirely Stockton-based.**

**F. The Turners’ (and Joneses’) Stockton Years, the Child’s Chest and the Pleasant Valley Church Pastorate, ca. 1839 - 1847**

**It was, remember, back in 1991 that I finally identified the ancestral maker of my recently acquired Turner-Jones-Whiting child’s chest of drawers as having been Elder Asa Turner. The fact that, as of 1840 census time, Asa and Isabel were residing in the Town of Stockton household headed by their son-in-law, Reuben Jones, plus the couple’s advanced ages (75 and 70, respectively) contributed to an initial conclusion/hypothesis which eventually proved invalid. I refer to my mistaken notion that, by 1840, the venerable cleric had permanently retired from the active ministry. That retirement notion was reinforced by the fact that the sole post-1840 Turner pastoral act of which I was then aware was Asa’s officiation at the 1842 marriage of his granddaughter, Lucinda P. Jones, to David Henry Curtis. Since 1991, however, I’ve gradually learned that during nearly the entirety of his post-Ellery years in Stockton, Elder Turner was, impressively, the active pastor of a Baptist congregation – a congregation in the creation of which he’d been instrumental (and, perhaps, the prime mover). (Note. I return to “prime mover” motif speculation in both the body and a subsequent footnote of this section.)**

**A Perspectives Note. Underscoring the impressiveness of Asa’s old-age professional engagement is the fact that during roughly half of the decade-plus years that his ecclesiastical life was Mayville-oriented, Turner had not held the pastorship of any church – although, remember, he did perform supply-pastoral services. (The notable Mayville-area exception was, of course, the roughly four contentious years Asa headed the renegade Chautauque Baptist Church.)**

**With regard to the timing of the couple’s residency shift, it must have been circa late 1838 or early 1839 that they moved to some location in adjacent Stockton. (As previously noted, they sold their Pickard Road farm to son Harry in Feb. 1839.) Importantly, there’s no official record of their purchasing or selling property in the Town of Stockton, a fact suggesting that while living there Asa had given up independent farming. (He could, of course, some of the time have rented property that presented some agricultural opportunity.) I don’t know if the couple initially (and necessarily briefly) resided independently somewhere in Stockton. Or if it was immediately upon relocating there that they joined what had constituted the six-person Jones household, consisting of Reuben, Lovice and their four children. Whatever the date the couple moved in, the now eight-member, three-generational, household must have been exceedingly crowded. I wonder if health issues of Isabel (who died in 1842) was a factor in the Turners’ joining the Joneses, whatever the timing. If her health was, indeed, problematic, Asa’s ongoing pastoral duties might have curbed his ability to care for her. (Note. As previously explained, the Joneses must have been Town of Stockton residents since at least 1825, presumably having moved there at an undetermined date from Ellery.)**

**By the way, my guess is that it was around 1840 census time that Elder Asa, as a hardy and industrious in-residence grandparent, constructed the small chest of drawers for the ever appreciative Mary Isabel Jones. (Aunt Mary was aged ten in 1840.)**

**A Contextual (and Speculative) Semi-Digression**

**To understand Asa Turner’s last – Stockton-based, and pastorally oriented -- years, I’ve elected to interrupt the narrative flow by presenting some wide-ranging and rather digressive (and speculative) contextual data, much of it geographically- as well as extended-family oriented. But these data keep the patriarch in mind and eventually circle back to him and the Stockton ecclesiastical circumstances that are the focus of this concluding F. section of Part One.**

**To begin: With regard to the location of the Jones farm where the Turners resided, I’m quite certain that as of roughly late 1829 (see note below) Reuben and Lovice were residing on a property located at the highly elevated and grandly scenic northwesterly corner of the Lord Road’s T-intersection with the north-south running Bowers Road. That property is roughly 1-1/2 miles due east of the “Bear Creek” settlement which was long called Delanti and, today, constitutes the hamlet of Stockton. That farm was served by the 1826-established Delanti post office.**

**Most likely, the Lord-Bowers property was still the couple’s (and the Turners’) home at 1840 census time. I say this because of the long-time similarity of the Joneses’ neighbors, as shown by comparing the 1830 and 1840 census enumerations data. (The 1835 New York State census for Stockton is missing.) I don’t know if the couple lived elsewhere in eastern Stockton (with or without Asa) between 1840 and ca. 1844 - 45, when the Joneses permanently departed Stockton for the Town of Chautauqua. Central to my uncertainly about the couple’s residences is the fact that Reuben never acquired a recorded title to any property in either Stockton or Chautauqua.**

**Notes. I’ve ascertained the probable Lord-Bowers location of Reuben’s property (as of late 1829) with the help of the Jones entry in *Holland Land Company Delinquent Contracts in Chautauqua County, New York* (Lois M. Barris, comp., 1991), p. 71. Reuben, take note, was not the “delinquent” party referenced by this source. It was, rather, Israel, or possibly, Quarter, Smith. I don’t know what kind of arrangements Reuben entered into with one or the other of the Smiths and/or the Holland Land Company in order to reside there as of 1829. As observed above, perhaps he was renting or leasing from one of those parties. These data are quite obviously highly confusing to me and I hope someday to achieve more clarity.**

**I know not if, after Isabel’s 1842 death (or even prior to it), Asa departed the Jones household, to reside independently. It’s possible that, as a widower, he stayed on with the Joneses (continuing to help with the farm work in addition to preaching) until approximately 1844 - 45, when (as noted above) Reuben and Lovice moved to their new Town of Chautauqua farm. It was situated a mile or two southwest of Mayville, somewhere in the Van Ness - Bloomer Road neighborhood. It was there, take note, that Reuben, by then a high-profile and immensely respected Mayville Baptist Church congregant, died (just 14 months after Asa) – on 29 Jan. 1849, aged 49-9-12.**

**Needless to say, upon relocating to Chautauqua the Jones family took along the child’s chest crafted by Asa for Mary Isabel, who was by moving time aged approximately thirteen.**

**Enriching that Turner-Jones extended-family context that is essential for understanding Asa’s last years is another significant set of data. In ca. 1845, Lucinda and David Henry (“Henry”) Curtis also relocated from their Stockton farm to a Town of Chautauqua property, one which, like their previous home, was, census data tell us, close to that of Lucinda’s parents. (Those two Van Ness-Bloomer-area households were listed side-by-side in both the 1840 Stockton and 1845 Chautauqua enumerations, and my guess is the households relocated in tandem.)**

**I can’t determine their precise locations because neither family acquired a recorded title to those Mayville-area properties, which had also been the case for both David Henry and (as previously mentioned) Reuben, back in Stockton. Both men must, then, have been leasing, renting or contracting (possibly with the Holland Land Company) for the lands they farmed in those two towns.**

**Notes. I’ve determined the general Van Ness-Bloomer-Road location of both the Joneses’ and the Curtises’ same-neighborhood (and possibly adjacent) Mayville-area farms by correlating the families’ 1845 census-indicated neighbors’ data with other sources. The most important source is the *New Topographical Atlas of Chautauqua County, New York* (Philadelphia, 1867), p. 17.**

**The 1845 NYS census and the 1850 federal one were the last to list by given name only the heads of the enumerated households, their other members being indicated only by various age, gender and other statistical data.**

**Very importantly – to circle back to Elder Turner – the 1845 Chautauqua census enumeration records the presence in the Jones household – and, thus, near the Curtises -- of an adult New England-born male who, I believe, must have been Asa. To explain: there were two male New England natives in that household both of whom were entitled to vote and, thus, 21 or older. One was obviously Reuben. The household’s other two males – i.e., Reuben’s NYS-born sons Lewis (born in 1825) and William (born in 1835) -- were both minors. These data led me to suspect that Asa was the other New England-born voter-eligible male. If, in fact, that male was he, Turner – perhaps for health reasons -- must, at age about 80, and surely for a relatively brief time, have taken leave of his Stockton pastoral obligations and (re)joined Reuben and Lovice’s family. A lengthy stay with the Joneses would, of course, be inconsistent with Julia T. Potter’s credible citation (see below) of her father’s vigorous and pastorally-oriented final Stockton years.**

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**Keeping in mind these wide-ranging and digressive contextual data – including the details of the Turners’ and Joneses’ Stockton residence(s), we can now focus on the specifics of Asa’s pastoral career during the final several years of his life in that town.**

**To elaborate on a few prior points, the Turners had, in ca. late 1838 or 1839, relocated from Ellery to that adjacent jurisdiction because of Asa’s central role in creating a Baptist congregation to serve residents of southeasterly Stockton. In 1852, the then-Indiana resident Julia G. Turner Potter informed Judge E.T. Foote that her father had “gathered” that church (one which she mistakenly associated with “the N. East part of Stockton”).**

**Note. See again, the family historical materials, copies of which I obtained from Turner-Potter-Rice descendant, Norman Mills. By the way, Julia’s “gathered” verb suggests – as previously noted – that Asa had been instrumental in the congregation’s initial formation and, indeed, was the “prime mover” in the process. Note that the Mills-transmitted materials also document the subsequently presented data regarding Asa’s death and its larger context.**

**My guess is that Asa took that momentous ecclesiastical step in 1839 (the year he sold Harry the Pickard Road farm). The earliest documentary evidence I’ve thus far discovered of the new Stockton organization’s existence is an account of an 8 Apr. 1840 ordination council hosted by the Ellery Baptist Church. Elder Asa was one of the two delegates who represented the “South East Stockton” church at the Ellery-convened council. As both previously noted and elaborated below, that new Stockton church founded by Asa benefitted from its Elder’s active pastoral leadership and physical labor until the time he died.**

**Note. Regarding the council, see Ellery Baptist Church Papers, 1817 - 1977; correspondence folder, 1820 - 1877, in the SUNY Fredonia Local History Collection, WNY MSS 1. Asa had, remember, in 1814, been that church’s founding Elder. It’s possible that Chautauqua Baptist Association records contain additional information about Turner’s Stockton church.**

**As that very general “South East Stockton” nomenclature suggests, Asa’s church originally (as was the norm) lacked a meeting house. Accordingly, services must have been conducted at members’ residences or, possibly, a school house. The focal point of that southeasterly part of Stockton was the Cassadaga Creek-adjacent intersection historically known as “Pleasant Valley,” but which today is (“non-euphoniously”) called (and map-labeled as) “Kabob.” For perspective – that low-lying community is about 2-1/2 miles south of the Joneses’ hilltop farm at the Lord-Bowers T-intersection.**

**Note. Considerable confusion exists in both published and internet-located sources regarding the location of the “Pleasant Valley” community (aka Kabob) with which Asa was affiliated. I’ve encountered on-line sources that locate it back in Scipio, Cayuga County. Importantly, the authors of both the earliest and the most recent monographs on Chautauqua Co. Revolutionary soldiers (the County D.A.R., in 1925, and Frederick Ward Kates, in 1981) were clearly clueless regarding the community’s Town of Stockton location. Kates almost certainly believed Asa’s Pleasant Valley pastorate preceded his pre-1814 arrival in our county. (See the Section F. ADDENDUM for the citation data for these two works.)**

**Testifying to the fact that the widowed Elder Turner was residing somewhere in that general area about 1845 is an important Foote Papers document. A leader in the anti-slavery-dedicated Liberty Party, Judge E.T. Foote identified as one of the like-minded “liberty men” “Elder Turner.” (Foote was, of course, well acquainted with Asa, in part because he was attorney Anselm Potter’s father-in-law.) Turner, Foote noted, was served by the “Orregon” [i.e, Oregon] post office. That Town of Stockton facility, established in 1823, was close to today’s Centralia community, which lies roughly two miles southwest – as crows fly – from Pleasant Valley.**

**Note. See Chautauqua Co. Historical Society’s Foote Papers, vol. 9 [“Anti-Slavery”], p. 102. As of 1845, remember, the Joneses had recently moved to the Mayville area, where, I believe, Asa joined them for a time. Foote’s citation of Asa’s ca. 1845 Oregon postal address reinforces my belief that Asa’s likely stay with the Joneses in the Mayville area must have been a brief one. See Berndt, *Stockton*, p. 113, regarding the Oregon post office.**

**Very importantly, Foote’s identification of Turner as a fellow anti-slavery proponent also underscores Asa’s appealing social and political reform commitment previously explored in the Anti-Masonic context.**

**I have no idea just what place (or places) in southeasterly Stockton’s Pleasant Valley/Kabob area – or in what circumstances – Asa resided during the interval between the Joneses’ ca. 1844-45 Mayville relocation and his 1847 (Pleasant Valley) death. (Remember, of course, that likely Asa stayed briefly at the Mayville-area farm.) Conceivably Turner resided with the families of congregants. As an aged, although still decidedly hardy, widower, he would have been hard put to manage living alone, unless, of course, non-family members provided considerable assistance. Nor, remember, do I know if, by those late years, the non-landowning Asa had completely given up farming. (I can imagine him at least doing gardening.)**

**Toward the close of Asa’s life and of his pastoral care for them, the Pleasant Valley congregation embarked upon the landmark project of constructing their own meeting house. Needless to say, that was a signal event in the life of Turner, who had long presided over “homeless” flocks. The structure was located in the heart of Pleasant Valley/Kabob, on the south side of the short Moon Road, just east of Cassadaga Creek and thus adjacent to the Town of Charlotte border. The site is clearly visible on the internet-accessible 1854 county Wall Map.**

**As Julia G. Turner Potter informed E.T. Foote, from her long-time Indiana home, her father’s “last work ... was to engage in building a house of worship for” the congregation he had “gathered.” Moreover, true to form and his advanced age notwithstanding, “his energy and efforts were taxed to the utmost until it was finished.” Julia’s testimony certainly suggests that Asa played not only, so I’ve speculated, a “prime mover” role in the congregation’s initial formation, but also with regard to the construction project, in which he actively participated.**

**Julia Potter also reported that, so she had “been informed,” “two weeks previous to his own death a funeral discourse was preached there” (by Asa, presumably). “The corpse was not taken into the house,” which means, conceivably, the service was conducted on the grounds of the still unfinished structure. In any event, “on that occasion my Father remarked that he should be the first whose remains would be carried into the house . . .” “[A]nd so it was two weeks after,” she observed, i.e., on 27 November 1847. That death came suddenly for the 82-year-old is suggested not only by Julia’s from-a-distance account but also by Elder Turner’s *Fredonia Censor* obituary citation of “apoplexy,” which, remember, implies stroke- or heart-attack induced loss of consciousness. (Importantly, take note, no Chautauqua County will-probate or intestate-estate proceedings were recorded for the by then non-landholding Asa.)**

**By the way, to address another now universally accepted notion regarding the circumstances of Asa’s death, Julia’s Mills-transmitted account of his Pleasant Valley pastorate and his demise makes no mention of and thus further disproves the patently incorrect assertion that when death came Asa was residing, in Stockton, “with his daughter ‘Louisa’ Jones” – i.e., with Lovice Jones. I’ve already both implicitly and directly refuted that in-print and internet carved-in-stone misconception by showing that as of 1847 Lovice and Reuben had for two or three years been Mayville-area, Town of Chautauqua, residents. In the ADDENDUM to this Section F (Stockton) section, I’ll elaborate on the origin of that misconception, in the 1925 Chautauqua Co. DAR monograph.**

**Returning now to the Elder Turner’s sudden but, according to Julia, self-predicted, death, and his subsequent funeral at the new facility. one inevitably wonders which of his Baptist elder colleagues delivered the sermon. And, in a pre-embalming era of relatively slow communication, how many of the area Baptist and other clergy were able to join his appreciative congregants and his family members at the service.**

**Note. As stated above, Asa’s new meeting house was clearly visible on the 1854 county Wall Map, 7 years after his death. Significantly, however, it does not appear on the Town of Stockton map, on p. 71 of the 1867 county atlas. By the latter date, the Pleasant Valley congregation must have disbanded. The Chautauqua Baptist Association records might shed light on the process.**

**The Curtis Cemetery Interment Possibility. Another important end-of-life topic is the resting place of Asa and Isabel’s remains. Internet-proliferated sources cite Asa’s and/or Isabel’s alleged burial in the Stockton hamlet’s “Stockton Cemetery” – i.e., the Railroad Avenue-located “Old Stockton” (or “Evergreen”) Cemetery. But, as elaborated in the ADDENDUM, Frederick W. Kates’s 1981 study correctly says that Asa’s grave location is unknown and no marker has been discovered.**

**My strong hunch is that the couple were buried in the once substantial and long abandoned Curtis Cemetery in Pleasant Valley/Kabob. Still clearly identifiable by its thick periwinkle covering, the now deed-reserved graveyard lies, in what’s become a woods, behind the multiple dwellings at the untidy 4035 Bruyer Road property. That farm lies a short distance northwest of the “Y” intersection with Bowers (on the left side). The burying ground has long lacked any standing markers, although, so Elizabeth Curtis (my third cousin-by-marriage) reports, a few stones – including some fragments – are still intact beneath the vegetation. That farm was originally owned by – or was close to that of – my four-greats grandfather Thomas Curtis (another Revolutionary veteran) subsequent to his 1815 Stockton arrival. (Thomas was the grandfather of Asa’s grandson-in-law, David Henry Curtis, Lucinda Jones’s spouse.) That convenient cemetery, I believe, served not only my own family but also other neighborhood residents.**

**In time, some of its occupants were moved elsewhere. For example, Thomas and Thankful (Crandall) Curtis’s remains were “lifted” for reburial in the other Stockton hamlet cemetery, Greenwood (on Cemetery Road). (Note. Also moved to Greenwood were the couple’s two grave stones. Those markers, which I saw in the 1950s and had been recorded by Clayburne B. Sampson, long ago disintegrated and were discarded.) I’m aware of other Greenwood reinterments of bodies originally buried in the Curtis Cemetery. And I know, on sound authority, that some of the other remaining Curtis Cemetery markers were recycled by opportunistic area residents for cellar- and/or walk-way paving.**

**The Curtis graveyard site for the initial Turner burial, Isabel’s, makes sense geographically, for it lay roughly two miles south of the Lord-Bowers location of the Reuben Jones farm, where the matriarch was likely still living at her 1842 death. The Curtis location was just as close to the Joneses’ as was the Old Stockton/Evergreen Cemetery. Moreover, the Joneses and Turners were by then, of course, well acquainted with their Curtis neighbors, into whose extended family Lucinda married, come December. For Asa’s subsequent burial, of course, that neighborhood cemetery makes practical sense because, as of 1847, he was still serving the Pleasant Valley-oriented congregation which he’d “gathered” ca. 1839.**

**That the Turners’ graves, wherever located, were originally marked I have virtually no doubt. I say that in light of the close-knit extended family the couple headed, of the respect that Asa’ current congregation accorded the couple and of the venerable Elder’s high standing in the county Baptist community and “association.” But there is no record of their remains having been removed to Greenwood, and – if located in Curtis –the Turner markers were likely among those pilfered by disrespectful neighbors.**

**F. The Turners’ (and Joneses’) Stockton Years, the Child’s Chest and the Pleasant Valley Pastorate, ca. 1839 - 1847 (Continued)**

**AN ADDENDUM – THE RAMPANT CONFUSION REGARDING ASA TURNER’S DEATH-TIME RESIDENCE & BURIAL PLACE**

**I believe I’ve determined the origin of the erroneous statement that Asa died at the Stockton residence of his daughter, “Louisa” Jones. Those likely responsible were members of the “Chautauqua County, N.Y., Chapters, National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution,” and in particular of Fredonia’s Benjamin Prescott Chapter. In 1925, those county chapters jointly published *Soldiers of the American Revolution Who at One Time were Residents of, or Whose Graves are Located in Chautauqua County, New York.* On p. 22, the volume asserted, Asa “at time of death was living with daughter, Louisa [sic] Jones, in Stockton.” By the way, the book also asserted, “Grave in Stockton Cemetery,” for which, as previously noted, there is no documentary substantiation of which I’m aware.**

**(Note that “Louisa” was then pronounced “Lu-*I*-za, with a long I and the second syllable being accented. That was true, e.g., for Louisa May Alcott.)**

**Here are my thoughts regarding the evolution of that oft-repeated death-residence error. Asa’s Revolutionary veteran’s pension file includes a 1915 letter to the Pension Bureau from Mrs. W.H. Cooper [Marian F.], “chairman” of the Fredonia D.A.R. chapter’s Historical Committee, requesting that pensioner’s “military history.” Bureau personnel, a notation shows, duly responded to Cooper’s request.**

**The documents in Asa’s on-line-transmitted file include, at the beginning, a noteworthy 23 May 1854 power-of-attorney document which Lovice, as a Busti resident, personally signed, shortly before her own death. There Lovice -- identified as Asa’s “heir at law” – authorized Amos Muzzy, a Panama, NY, attorney to investigate the possibility of unpaid pension monies owing to her father’s heirs (he found none). In that document, Lovice herself, I’m virtually certain, penned in “Stockton” as his place of death. But nowhere in the extensive Turner file do I find a statement that it was at Lovice’s residence in that town that Asa died. Learning the Stockton location and frequently encountering that daughter’s name, the Fredonia committee, I believe, carelessly jumped to, and printed, that conclusion with no documentation. And, of course, those D.A.R. women – as is the near universal practice – misinterpreted Lovice’s name as “Louisa.” (Her name is usually written as *“Lovisa”* in the pension file documents – including, take note, consistently so in the body of the noteworthy power-of-attorney document which she personally signed. As subsequently elaborated, I can understand how one could easily misinterpret Lovice’s signature on that key 1854 document, transcribing it as Lovisa or Louisa.)**

**Some of those errors in the 1925 D.A.R. volume were repeated by Frederick Ward Kates, in his 1981 (the first of two volumes): *Patriot-Soldiers of 1775-1783: The Veterans of the War for American Independence of Chautauqua County, New York* (Jamestown Chapter, National Society, D.A.R., 1981). On p. 318, Kates asserts that “at the time of his death” Asa “was residing in the town of Stockton with his daughter Louisa [Mrs. Reuben Jones].” Kates’s editorial brackets signify that he had identified Lovice/Louisa Turner Jones’s husband, even though he repeated her erroneous given name. But Kates did not reiterate the undocumented 1925 assertion about Asa’s “Stockton Cemetery” grave. Kates had, I know, consulted the late Mrs. Cathryn Berndt, the Stockton town historian, who had found no evidence of Asa’s [or Isabel’s] grave location and emphatically questioned its “Stockton Cemetery” location. (I’ve already, of course, posited the notion of a Curtis Cemetery burial for the couple.)**

**After appearing in print, in those 1925 and 1981 publications, and elsewhere, the erroneous data regarding the Jones-residence location of Asa’s Stockton death – and the undocumented assertion about a “Stockton Cemetery” grave – have gone viral on the internet, surfacing frequently, e.g., in Ancestry.com data.**

**PART ONE**

**THE TURNER-JONES-WHITING CHEST IN**

**THE FAMILY-HISTORY CONTEXT (Concluded)**

**A TWO-PART EPILOGUE REGARDING LOVICE TURNER JONES**

**A. ELABORATIVE NOTES ON THE WOMAN**

**Lovice’s signature on that in-sundry-ways noteworthy 1854 power-of-attorney document is the only example I’ve found of her small, tight and beautiful handwriting. (But, remember, I believe she also penned in “*Stockton*.”) It’s clear, given my knowledge of her correct name, that she signed it “*Lovice Jones.*” But, as previously noted, I can well understand how easily one could misread that signature as, e.g., “*Louisa*” or “*Lovisa.”***

**By the way, that signature tells me that, as her life’s end approached, Lovice had considerable writing experience. For context, remember that many contemporary females resorted to “*X – Her Mark*” signatures. (This was, of course, particularly the case with older women – as exemplified, e.g., by Isabel Turner, when signing Chautauqua County deeds.) Or, if possessed of some rudimentary penmanship training and experience, contemporary women necessarily wrote in a laboriously constructed mode. These data suggest that Lovice was the beneficiary of some substantial formal education. For perspective, note that Julia G. Potter (1796 - 1875), Lovice’s long-widowed sister was a sometime self-supporting school teacher.**

**These discoveries immediately enhanced my respect for these intriguing female relatives. And, it goes without saying, his daughters’ accomplishments reinforce my long-standing fascination and high regard for Elder Asa Turner. His parents must similarly have endorsed women’s education, for Asa’s sister, Mary “Polly” McCall of Franklin, was literate (witness her firm, unbelabored signature on a supportive pension-file affidavit, the body of which, is in a different hand). Asa’s prominent Lansingburgh brother, Thomas Turner, also affixed his bold, distinctively stylized signature to a comparable document in Asa’s file.**

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**To continue exploring the important 1854 power-of-attorney document: For me, one of its arresting features is its identification/designation of Lovice as “*child and heir at law to Asa Turner*,” the veteran whose pension payment record she wished, during her final months, to have Amos Muzzy investigate. (An “heir at law” is “a person entitled to inherit property under intestate succession laws.”)**

**By way of elaboration: Significantly, at his death (as previously mentioned) Asa possessed no real estate – and, as the “heir at law” phrase further substantiates, he left no will for Chautauqua County probation. Moreover, I’ve located no record of county surrogate-court intestate-estate proceedings to distribute the personal property of which his estate would necessarily have consisted. Yet such personal property might well, I believe, have been relatively substantial. That is suggested by Turner’s 1839 cash sale of the Pickard Road farm and his respectable pension income beginning in 1834. Chances are that he was also modestly compensated by his Stockton church’s brethren. He was surely too savvy to stash away his assets in cash-form. My guess is that such liquid assets would (in the common contemporary mode) have been invested in loans, via promissary notes, to area persons Asa knew.**

**Upon his death without a will, Asa’s “heirs at law” would have included not only Lovice (who in the 1854 document cited such status to justify her attorney’s investigation) but also her then six living American and Ontario siblings – of whom only Harry was residing in close proximity.**

**I’ve long wondered if – and, indeed, I have a strong suspicion that – prior to his death Asa somehow informally designated Lovice as his principal heir and privately arranged that she would inherit much or most of his personal property. In part, that scenario is suggested by the fact that Lovice was the nearby child with whom Asa’s life was most entwined during his and Isabel’s final years. But if, in fact, such Turner property was invested in loans secured by promissary loans, I don’t know how Lovice could have been the recipient of such monies unless her deceased parent’s estate had undergone the probate process. (The nonoccurrence of that process is, of course, documented not only by the absence of relevant surrogate-court records but also by Lovice’s “heir at law” designation over six years after Asa’s death.)**

**Such a hypothetical extra-legally transmitted Turner legacy would help explain a remarkable phenomenon: the fact that Lovice was able, shortly after the 1849 death of Reuben (who had no real-estate holdings), to purchase (without a mortgage) a farm on the Mayville area’s McKay Road and construct a house and barn on the property. I’m unable to conceive of any other way she could have secured the necessary substantial cash outlay. Moreover, if Asa’s assets had been divided seven-ways among his “heirs at law” offspring, Lovice’s share would surely have been small, thereby ruling out my notion that it was Asa’s legacy that underwrote the farm establishment.**

**To continue this intriguing and utterly perplexing Turner-Jones saga (which, take note, is further explicated in Part B): Lovice’s two-stage sale prior to her death of that remarkably substantial McKay Road real estate suggests that, like her father, she, too, died with relatively substantial liquid assets.**

**Her death (her marker tells us) occurred 2 Sept. 1854 – at which time Lovice was, as elaborated below, a Town of Busti resident, and virtually without question living with the Whitings in their Busti hamlet (or “Busti Corners”) home. Like Asa, Lovice left no will and her estate did not undergo surrogate-court intestate proceedings . I believe that she passed along a considerable amount of money to Mary Whiting. Substantiating that notion is the statement of the latter’s great, great grandson, David Philip Mack (1931 - 2013) in his biography of Mabel Whiting Siggins, his own beloved grandmother and Mary’s granddaughter. Mary Whiting, a “loving grandmother,” was also, David reported, “a savvy businesswoman.” Moreover, “she brought money and property to” her marriage to Eli Whiting “and willed it to her children when she died.” See *Mabel’s Journey* (Small Batch Books, Amherst, MA, 2011), 34. Substantiating Mary’s image as an enterprising woman is a recollection of Mabel Whiting Siggins. Before her marriage, Mabel informed me, Mary engaged in a Mayville-area home-based candle-making enterprise. (I’ve not seen Mary Whiting’s will.)**

**A Note on Lovice’s Final Busti Residence**

**I have three-fold documentary evidence that Lovice was a Busti hamlet/Busti Corners resident by the time of her 2 Sept. 1854 death, and – as subsequently explained – I believe she had moved there by late 1852 or early 1853. That three-part residential evidence consists of the fact that (1) Lovice joined the hamlet-based Busti Baptist Church on 30 Apr. 1853; that (2) on 10 April 1854 she signed – as a Town of Busti resident – a deed conveying to Anson Goddard, for $800, her remaining Mayville-area real estate; and that (3), as noted above, on 23 May 1854, as “a resident of Busti,” she signed the revealing and subsequently further explicated power of attorney document. Tellingly, that deed signing was witnessed by Emry Davis, a hamlet-dwelling peace justice, and Davis (a Busti Baptist leader) also wrote out and witnessed the power-of-attorney document.**

**Moreover, I’m certain that during the brief post-Mayville interlude prior to her death Lovice was residing with the hamlet-based Whitings because her daughter Mary – Eli Whiting’s wife since 1852 – was the only Jones child then residing in the Town of Busti.**

**THE TWO-PART EPILOGUE (concluded)**

**B. LOVICE’S POTENTIAL-CUT-SHORT WIDOWHOOD, 1849 - 1854**

**“*Like daughter, like mother*,” I would comment. Lovice Jones strikes me as being, like Aunt Mary Whiting, a decidedly savvy, energetic and enterprising woman, and definitely a self-starter – all qualities that were, of course, exemplified by her father, Asa. But it was not until Lovice’s sudden thrust into widowhood, thereby becoming far more self-dependent, that evidence of those attributes surfaced in the family data I’ve encountered. That highly revealing phase of her life was, of course, a brief one, cut short, I’ve little doubt, by a period of deteriorating health that culminated in her death.**

**Lovice’s widowed status began, remember, on 29 January 1849, when, in his 50th year, Reuben succumbed to a two-week “fever” bout, at their farm in Mayville’s Bloomer - Van Ness Road area. His death occurred a mere 14 months after Asa’s. Reuben’s survivors also included the couple’s four children, of whom Mary (at 17) and Will (13) were minors, and thus now Lovice’s responsibility. Immediate family members also included their capable, jack-of-all-trades son-in-law, David Henry (“Henry”) Curtis, who, with Lucinda, had resided close to the Joneses back in Stockton as well as in Chautauqua.**

**Note. Those mourning Reuben’s death also included fellow members of the Mayville Baptist Church which the couple had formally joined close to three years earlier. (They did so in April 1846, via transfer from their Stockton church, the records of which indicate Reuben had, during his many years there, maintained a low profile.) At his father-in-law’s old Mayville Church, in stark contrast, Reuben rapidly became during those roughly 33 months a lay leader and, as his congregation’s representative, an increasingly visible figure in county-wide Baptist activities, including ordinations. A spontaneous and touching entry in the Mayville record book testifies to the depth of a fellow congregant’s sense of loss. Moreover, that testament (of which I found nothing comparable in the lengthy manuscript document) provides the only direct, personal commentary I’ve encountered with regard to this major, and appealing, figure in the Turner-Jones-Whiting chest saga.**

**Dated 29 January 1849, the anonymous colleague’s poignant statement reads: “*Bro. Rufus* [sic] *Jones died – in whose death the church has lost one of its most pious devoted members. His life ever pleasing to the christian was without offence to the unconverted beloved by all in life lamented in death*[.] (See Manuscript record book, Vol. 2, p. 170, in the church archives)**

**On 29 May, precisely four months after Reuben’s relatively sudden demise, without a will, Lovice successfully petitioned the county surrogate court to grant her “letters of administration” of his estate. Because he owned no real estate, the property consisted of “goods, chattels and credits” only; and she estimated that “personal estate”’s value at the rather considerable sum of “Eight hundred dollars.” Regrettably, the inventory produced by the court-appointed appraisers is missing. Nor, importantly as well, is there a record of how the court distributed those assets and what percentage they awarded Lovice. (See Administration Proceedings, Chaut. Co. Surrogate Court, Vol. 2, p. 114ff.)**

**On 3 Sept. 1849, three months after her court petition, and five years prior to her own demise, Lovice Jones revealed her take-charge attitude. She initiated a remarkable round of activity via which she rapidly established, virtually from scratch, a working farm that was home for herself and her two dependent children. On that pivotal date, she purchased the land for that operation, by paying Anson H. Goddard, the adjoining property owner, the sum of $622 for a 50-acre tract, southwest of Mayville. (Vol. 48, p. 170, Chaut. Co. Clerk’s Office) (That calculates to $12 per acre.) The property, the 1850 census shows, consisted mostly of “improved” (i.e., cleared and fit for tilling and pasturing) land, plus a wood lot. Had Lovice, one wonders, long yearned to own outright the land on which she labored, something she had never achieved during her three decades as Reuben’s spouse?**

**As previously observed, I have little doubt that it was moneys that Lovice somehow informally inherited from Asa that enabled her to make that land purchase and to finance the other essential steps in creating a working family farm home. To elaborate: Lovice could hardly have rapidly converted her own (unknown) share of Reuben’s personal estate into that sizeable amount of cash. And, moreover, her successfully doing so would have emptied her original house and jeopardized her ability to equip and operate her own farm. I also suspect she might have had an understanding with Reuben that it was she, alone, who had control of that legacy, rather than treating it as a joint asset. Clearly she was not including her own money when she estimated, in her surrogate court petition, the value of Reuben’s personal property as $800. Had she done so, the figure would surely have been considerably larger. (Note for the record: New York State’s landmark Apr. 1848 Married Women’s Property Act – which served as a model for other states – allowed “*any married female to receive, by gift, grant, devise or bequest, from any person other than her husband and hold to her sole and separate use, as if she were a single female, real and personal property . . . .*” But I cannot see the relevance of that reform legislation to Lovice’s particular situation, given the absence of a formal transfer of property from Asa following his Nov. 1847 death.)**

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**Significantly, as well, with regard to Lovice’s widowhood transactions: On 27 Feb. 1851 (when both Mary and Will were still residing – and working – at home), she resold 25 acres of her farm to Goddard. He paid her $250, or $10 per acre (Vol. 52, p. 163). Had she concluded, perhaps, that the original holding was too large for convenient operation? Or did other variables (e.g., her health status) come into play? This follow-up real estate reduction means, of course, that as of 1851, Lovice retained only the 25 acres, with buildings, that she would -- as a Busti resident, remember – convey to Goddard, on l0 April 1854. For the latter transaction, five months before her death, she received $800, or $32 per acre (Vol. 65, 310).**

**The vast disparity between the original purchase price for the entire farm and the 1854 sale figure for the final 25-acre portion ($12 per acre vs. $32) conclusively proves that Lovice’s original outlay had been for land alone, without farm structures.**

**Thus high on the then energetic woman’s 1849 to-do list was erecting a house and barn. She arranged for the construction of a 1-1/2 story, timber-frame dwelling to house herself, Mary and Will. That this was an immediate post-purchase step is proved by the nearly double jump in value of “*Loisa*” Jones’s real estate as of the year ending June 1850: It skyrocketed from $622, the 1849 purchase price, to the $1200 valuation she reported in October to the census taker. The 1850 figure surely took into account not only the new farm house but also the long-gone barn she constructed a short distance behind the house. I believe her parental inheritance helped finance that two-fold construction project. Well before that mid-1850 estimate Lovice’s new farm was clearly up and running.**

**Lovice’s modest but sturdy and eye-catching residence still stands, on a 5-acre portion of her last-transferred (1854) tract. The property’s current address is 7039 McKay Road, a picturesque hillside location near the n.w. corner of McKay’s intersection with the Mayville -Sherman Road (Rte. 43) and roughly 3/4's miles southwest of the village line. (McKay is a continuation of Van Ness Road, which leads to the area where, I believe, the Joneses had previously resided.) After identifying that structure as Lovice’s, I established a rewarding friendship with the then owner, the intensely interested and now deceased Jeane Russell Church.**

**Lovice’s new domain was conveniently close to the 6999 McKay Road (former Stroebel) farm which – as of 1850 census time – Henry and Lucinda Curtis had recently established. There, beyond the railroad tracks, the couple erected a dwelling and barn which were long-ago razed. The 1-1/2-story house was the same size as Lovice’s and its four-bay facade the mirror image of hers (as originally configured). The Curtises continued residing there until 1856, when, two years after Lovice’s death, they, too, permanently joined other Jones family members in Busti. (I have in my Shippensburg garden rocks that were incorporated into the Curtises’ cellar walls.)**

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**Chances are it was some time fairly early in 1850 that the enterprising widow Jones and her two minor children moved from her and Reuben’s former residence into the newly completed McKay Road one. And, with the indispensable help of Mary and Will plus, surely, both Henry and Lucinda Curtis, that she began operating her then 50-acre farm. With the benefit of hindsight, we know, of course, that Lovice’s prospects for an independent life quickly came to naught – as a consequence, I’m surmising, of deteriorating health. It’s possible that her above-cited sale, in February 1851, of half her acreage was a sign of such decline – and a portent, as well, of her not far-distant move to Busti.**

**A landmark event in the story of her sad-ending widowhood occurred the following year, when on 26 May 1852, the 21-year-old Mary Jones married the strapping Busti blacksmith and wagon maker, Eli Whiting (1828 - 1905). The young couple set up housekeeping in the Busti hamlet (“Busti Corners”), and, by the way, Mary became affiliated with her Methodist husband’s local congregation. The departure of the industrious and resourceful Mary, who, as previously mentioned, had contributed to the family income by candle making, must have been a great loss for her mother.**

**It was surely either in late 1852 or very early 1853 that Lovice took another major step of her widowed years, by following the young couple to Busti. My evidence of the timing: it was on 15 Jan. 1853 that the Mayville Church granted Lovice a dismissal letter, a document which enabled her, as previously noted, on 30 April, to join Busti’s Baptist congregation. (My guess is that she had already moved to Busti when her Mayville congregation authorized that Jan. 1853 document.) As Lovice knew, her father had in 1826-27, shortly after baptizing her, served the Busti Baptist Church as a supply pastor. The date of her Busti relocation meant that Lovice was on hand to assist her daughter when, on 5 Aug. 1853, Mary gave birth to the first of her three sons who reached adulthood. That infant, who, became Mabel Whiting Siggins’s father and Eli’s business partner, they named, in his grandsire’s honor, Marion Reuben.**

**Notes. See Busti Baptist Church Minute Book I, 1817 - 1853. Photo copy, ca. 1919. Fenton History Center, 974.795 B7. In a prior Part A. Epilogue note, remember, I explained how I know Lovice was living – with the Whitings – in the Town of Busti and its hamlet (aka “Busti Corners) – during the final stage of her life.**

**To continue this chronology of Lovice’s final years, when the once independent widow became so dependent on others: it was, as previously noted, on 10 April 1854, just five months prior to her death, that Lovice sold her remaining McKay Road acreage. And it was a month thereafter, on 23 May (a few days short of the young Whitings’ second anniversary) that Lovice signed the intriguing power-of-attorney document identifying her as Asa Turner’s “heir at law.” Her attorney’s fruitless investigation of possible pension monies owing to Asa Turner must, like her sale of the farm, have been part of Lovice’s endeavors to get her affairs in order. And, I suspect, of her endeavors to informally leave at least a substantial part of her assets to the daughter who had made her Busti home available to her.**

**Come 2 Sept., Lovice’s initially promising but “potential-cut-short widowhood” ended, with her death. Her remains were, of necessity, quickly transported back to Mayville – partway by train, perhaps – for burial beside Reuben. For their lot, her offspring commissioned a marble headstone – a marker which, remember, likely misstated her age at death (as 51-10-15) and thus, incorrectly indicated the date of her Canadian birth fifty-plus years before. (Note. If she was born 18 Oct. 1802, as calculated from the marker data, she was in her 52nd year; if on 6 Nov. 1803, as Julia Potter stated, she was in her 51st.)**

**According to David Mack’s biography of his grandmother, remember, Mary Whiting, “a savvy businesswoman . . . brought money and property to” her marriage and “willed it to her children when she died.” As I’ve speculated here, those assets were an informal legacy from her widowed mother, assets Lovice had, in turn, partially acquired from her father, Elder Asa Turner, whose “heir at law” she claimed to be. If my hunches are correct we’ll surely never know.**

**By the way, Lovice certainly would have been pleased to know that after her death, her other three children eventually established family homes in the Town of Busti. In 1856, remember, the Curtises moved there from McKay Road. Although not long after their mother’s death, both Lewis (1 Apr. 1825 - 3 Mar. 1876) and Will (21 Oct. 1835 - 26 Mar. 1917) moved for a few years to Waushara County, Wisconsin, the brothers subsequently settled in Busti. But the enterprising Uncle Will, a “tall and spare” man said Mabel, returned to the west in the 1870s, ending up in Coffey, County, Kansas. Lucinda, Lewis and Mary are buried in Busti Cemetery, as is Mertie L. Jones (22 Oct. 1863 - 9 Nov. 1865), the youngest child of Will and his wife, Emma (Morse) Jones.**

**Note: Lewis’s childless widow, Elizabeth “Lib” (Link) Jones Wicks (10 Feb. 1829 - 27 Aug. 1917) is buried in an unmarked Busti grave beside Lewis, her first husband (on the Jones lot, which is adjacent to the Whitings’). The daughter of Philip P. and Elizabeth Haner Link, Lib was raised in the Town of Charlotte’s southwesterly Cassadaga Valley (Sinclairville-area) section, immediately across the town line from the easterly part of Stockton where Lewis Jones and his parental family resided. A tall, big-boned, attractive woman, the well-liked “Aunt Lib” always remained close to Lewis’s Whiting-Curtis-Hoyt extended-family members. After Lewis’s 1876 death, she remarried – 27 Nov. 1878, at the Eli Whiting residence – to the widowed Walter D. Wicks (1814 - 1896). The couple lived on Walter’s Martin Road farm, in the northerly part of the Town of Kiantone, before relocating to nearby Jamestown. (For the Jones-Wicks marriage, see 6 Dec. 1878 *Jamestown Journal*; for her obituary, see the 27 Aug. 1917 issue; for Walter’s death, see 6 July 1896 *Jamestown Evening Journal*.)**

**As these data amply testify, Mary’s 1852 Whiting marriage and Busti relocation was a pivotal event not only in both her and Lovice’s lives, but also those of the other Jones siblings and generations of their descendants.**

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**Concluding the first part of this lengthy, context-oriented, inventory document requires our circling back to the Turner-Jones-Whiting child’s chest, or “dresser,” that is, supposedly, its focus. That lovingly constructed, ca. 1840, piece must have been carted about 1850 from the Joneses’ original Mayville area residence, to the new McKay Road farmhouse Lovice commissioned. In all likelihood, I suspect, Aunt Mary Jones, who so treasured her grandfather’s gift, took it along to Busti Corners around the time of her 1852 marriage to Uncle Eli. If not, the transfer took place, at the latest, when Lovice permanently moved to Busti, by early 1853. It remained in the Whiting household, where Mabel Whiting Siggins played with it while growing up. Subsequently, the chest was moved to Mabel’s own Busti residences, including the Donelson Road farm where her daughters, Elizabeth Siggins Mack and Rachel Siggins Nobbs, enjoyably played with it.**

**Notes. Along with the chest, Aunt Mary’s family fell heir to other possessions of Lovice, a fact which reinforces my conclusion that it was with the Whiting family that Lovice spent the final phase of her life. (That Busti residence was something of which the knowledgable Mabel Siggins was unaware.) Those Jones heirlooms included Lovice’s small spinning wheel (which Philip Mack converted into a lamp) and her long-handled bed warming pan.**

**Importantly, Mabel remembered that her grandmother possessed photographs of both Reuben and Lovice, the latter in a dark oval frame. She had no clear recollection of Reuben’s features. In Mabel’s mind’s eye, Mary perhaps “looked a little like” Lovice. Mary had informed her, Mabel recalled, that her mother died when quite young. The “severe” [no doubt dark, perhaps black] outfit in which Lovice had posed made her “look old,” which was not the case. She wore the standard contemporary “frilly” white cap, and lace “around her neck.” Mabel believed the framed photo ended up at the Sigginses’ Donelson Road Busti farm, which the widowed Mabel left, ca. 1937. If that was true, it was left behind when they moved. She recalled her son John Siggins’s refusal to let an antiques dealer purchase it.**

**PART TWO**

**THE TURNER-JONES-WHITING CHEST’S**

**LOUCKS ACQUISITION & ITS APPEARANCE**

**Wrapping up this interminable essay requires elaboration of how this heirloom “dresser” fortuitously, indeed miraculously, came my way back in 1991 and, finally, its current – post-restoration – appearance.**

**A. HOW I ACQUIRED THE TURNER-CONSTRUCTED CHEST, OR DRESSER**

**To expeditiously share this story I’m utilizing a substantially edited version of the 1991 New Year’s Eve letter I crafted for relatives and friends. The bulk of that holiday document happily elaborated on some “unexpected developments” on “the family history scene.” “High on the list was my identification of a long mysterious ‘4 greats’ grandfather.”**

**The saga begins,” I wrote, “back on a memorable February afternoon in 1953,” during my high-school senior year. I “spent” it “researching family history with Mabel Whiting Siggins (1876 - 1957),” at her Busti apartment. “Mabel, a retired school teacher, was a warm, knowledgable and well-informed second cousin of my grandfather Hoyt and a general family favorite.”**

**“That afternoon,” I continued, “Mabel told me a story which I duly recorded in my genealogy card file of how when she was a little girl, her grandmother, Mary Jones Whiting (1831 - 1902), gave to her a small child’s dresser which Mary’s grandfather had made for her when *she* was a child (probably around 1840). Mabel described it in detail: ‘*It had 3 small drawers across the top and 3 larger ones at bottom. No nails – dove-tailing.’* Elizabeth and Rachel Siggins, Mabel’s daughters, had played with the chest, and Mabel had subsequently turned it over to Rachel [Nobbs] for her ... daughters to enjoy.**”

**“I had always wanted to see the little dresser, hoping that perhaps I could commission a reproduction. I did nothing about it, however, until sometime last year when I called Elizabeth [Siggins Mack of Busti] to ask about its current whereabouts. Because of Rachel’s grave illness, I learned, her daughters were in charge of her affairs. Despite her genuine interest, Elizabeth proved slow about following through with her promise to inquire about the dresser, and when I called her in July [1991], during my Jamestown vacation, she had bad news. A few weeks earlier the nieces had sold the chest at a household tag sale.”**

**“Determined to pursue the one in a million chance of recovering the heirloom, I [immediately] called Tony Pratz [of Sugar Grove], the [tag-] sale impresario, and learned that he knew the identity of the purchaser (a man who planned, after restoring his $180 purchase, to take it to the famous Brimsfield, Mass., antiques flea market). Moved by my concern to get the piece back in the family, whatever the price, Tony acted as go-between and produced the chest the following day. [He delivered it that afternoon, while I was away, to the Thayer Street home of my sister, Jean Estus.] I happily paid the $400 tab, of which $40 was Tony’s commission.” (This means the seller had, quite fairly, doubled his $180 outlay.) (See check register for #5287, 11 Aug. 1991, $400.)**

**“The 27-inch high chest,” I continued, “conforms to my mental picture of it, except that it is unexpectedly topped – and its height almost doubled – by a set of late Victorian [lyre-shaped] brackets holding a small machine-made mirror frame [i.e., framed mirror]. These charming alterations were clearly made for Mabel.” (Perhaps they were crafted by her carriage and wagon maker father, Marion Reuben Whiting.)**

**“As one might expect, the chest shows evidence that the original finish was the standard old red milk-base paint. Shadows remain of [the location of] the original knobs, since replaced by plastic ones” [five of which I’ve deposited in a drawer]. “Elizabeth recalls them as spool knobs with concave centers.” [Note: The “mushroom” replacement knobs which Jim Small crafted during the restoration have convex tops. I must have overlooked my concave notation when I engaged him for the project. But it’s highly likely, I believe, that I misquoted Elizabeth in making the concave notation.)**

**“After I returned to Shippensburg with the treasure (which, as Elizabeth puts it, has ‘embarked on a whole new life’), my interest focused on identifying the great, great, great, great grandfather who lovingly crafted it for a little granddaughter. As the grandfather of Aunt Mary Jones Whiting and of Lucinda Jones Curtis (my great, great grandmother), the maker had to be the father of either the girls’ father, Reuben Jones (1799 - 1849), or of their mother, Lovice \_\_\_\_\_\_ Jones (1802 - 1854). And, given the technology of mid-19th century America, this forebear almost certainly had to be someone who lived either with the Joneses or close by.”**

**“During the fall, I sensed being propelled closer to the answer when my [Shippensburg] friend Dick Eschenmann discovered the letters “*M B*” scratched into the side of one of the lower drawers. Building on my [contemporary] hypothesis that Lovice Jones’s maiden name was either *Belknap* or *Berry,* I concluded that “*M B*” must be *her* father.”**

**“I determined to devote much of my [1991] Jamestown Christmas vacation to tracking down Lovice’s father, the mysterious “M B.” My quest started my first morning home, the 20th, and, thanks to the 1840 census, I had by evening managed to identify him. [I scanned microfilmed census reels of various towns, including Chautauqua, searching for a man with those initials.] At that time, the old man was living [in the Town of Stockton] with Lovice and her family. Unfortunately, the pre-1850 censuses name only heads of households, in this case Reuben Jones. Everyone else is indicated only by general age and gender categories. Included in the eight-person Jones household of 1840 was a male aged between 70-80 years. My excitement mounting, I turned to the next microfilm frame and there, under the heading ‘*PENSIONERS FOR REVOLUTIONARY SERVICES INCLUDED IN THE FOREGOING,*’ *I* found the name of the live-in parent/grandparent: ‘ASA TURNER, AGED 75.’”**

**“This man, whom I had long ago considered and then dismissed as being Lovice’s father, turns out to be a fascinating and fairly high-profile forebear. Born in Watertown, Connecticut, Asa enlisted in the American Revolution in 1778, before turning thirteen, and served until 1782. Eventually he became a frontier Baptist preacher, living for some time in Canada ... . By 1814 he was in Chautauqua County, where in addition to supporting himself by farming he founded or helped found four Baptist churches. His home base was the Ellery Center Baptist Church ... .”**

**“What, I can’t help wondering,” my narrative continues, “would Asa Turner have said could he know that I would eventually fork over $400 for a sample of his woodworking skills? For perspective, note that is precisely the sum the old farmer-preacher obligated himself in 1834 to pay for a new 50+ acre farm. And because he had not yet sold his old farm, he had to take out a $300 mortgage to meet that $400 obligation. A few years later, in 1839, Asa sold the new farm to son Harry and by 1840, as noted before, he had moved in with the Joneses. On 29 [or 28] December 1842, ‘the Reverend Asa Turner,’ then 77, officiated at the marriage of his granddaugher Lucinda Jones to David Henry Curtis, my grandfather’s grandparents. The 1845 census suggests that he was still living with Joneses ... . Asa Turner died in November 1847, at age 82, just a little over a year before his daughter Lovice was suddenly left a widow.”**

**“But why, you may be asking, if Asa Turner was indeed the chest’s maker, did he scratch ‘*M B*’ into the side of a drawer. I’m confident,” I reported, “I have solved that riddle:**

***‘M B’ = “MIDDLE BOTTOM.’”* That insight popped into my keyed-up mind, and I instantly shared it with my fascinated sister and Jamestown host, Jean Estus, just as we were retiring for the night.**

**For the record: my knowledgable Shippensburg cabinet-maker/restorer friend, James Small, rejects my “M B” interpretation, arguing this was not a standard cabinet-making notation. But – in part because Turner was not a regular cabinet maker – I’m decidedly dubious about Jim’s conclusion, and still cling to my 1991 interpretation. Adding to the “M B” interpretive problems, by the way, is this bit of datum: Having seen examples of Asa’s firm, rather “tight,” firm and distinctive signature, I’m decidedly doubtful that it was Grandfather Turner who affixed the relatively “loosely”-written “M B.” Perhaps the letters were inscribed by someone who was lending Asa a hand. Reuben Jones, with whose handwriting I’m not familiar, comes to mind.**

**B. THE TURNER-CONSTRUCTED CHEST’S CURRENT (POST-RESTORATION)**

**APPEARANCE: A BRIEF DESCRIPTION/ANALYSIS**

**Introductory Commentary**

**This small, child-geared, chest of drawers (or “dresser”) is, I would say:**

**(1) simple, sturdy and decidedly heavy, and (2), with regard to construction details, a bit coarse, but never egregiously sloppy. Additionally, it strikes me as (3) well proportioned, indeed intriguingly so, and (4) indisputably eye-catching.**

**My layperson’s opinion is that although almost certainly not a trained cabinetmaker, Asa Turner must have had prior woodworking experience when, in his old age, he fabricated this cherished piece for Mary Jones Whiting.**

**With regard to my coarseness of detail comment, Turner left nail holes visible and chose not to fine sand the wood before painting it. (It’s revealing to rake a light over the surface.) He thriftily utilized intriguing scrap wood for the three set-back upper drawers, and his failure to incorporate a protective rail under them has led to slight gouging on the horizontal board on which the drawers slide. These features definitely enhance the chest’s appeal.**

**When I purchased the chest, both it and the Victorian-added bracketed mirror ensemble had a white enamel finish. It hid successive post-Turner paint applications, one of which was orange. That final white coating had been applied circa 1950 by the Nobbs family, immediately after replacing Asa’s drawer pulls with the small plastic ones. As a consequence of that timing, the white enamel was the only non-original paint covering the six areas where the wooden knobs had been located. (As noted before, the outlines of those circles were clearly visible when I acquired the chest). Carefully removing the single white paint coating at those six tell-tale locations enabled James B. Small, my skilled cabinet-maker and restorer friend, to determine rather precisely the shade of the chest’s original dark red milk-based paint as he returned the chest as closely as possible to its original appearance. But, take note, Jim relied on oil-base red paint for the project.**

**Jim Small undertook that long-anticipated restoration work in March 2003, and he endorsed my decision to permanently remove the Victorian mirror apparatus. His bill for the procedure, dated 20 March, listed the major steps: “Strip; Restore ‘original’ paint; Replace 6 knobs” and “Repair drawer-bottom.” For this he charged $760, plus the $45.60 sales tax, for an $805.60 total. (Note. I have placed both that bill and my 25 Mar. 2003 check [#9527] with a copy of this Inventory document, in one of the drawers.)**

**Consistent with his restoration philosophy, Jim did not attempt replicating the chest’s precise appearance when Asa presented it to his granddaughter. Most significantly, he deliberately left the surface “distressed” in strategic areas, as it had been from an early time. The most important of those “wear marks” are the above-referenced “slight gouging” on the horizontal board across which slide the upper three set-back drawers (which lack protective rails).**

**The Chest’s Overall Dimensions and Other Key Features**

**The piece measures 23" high x 19" wide x 16" deep. As these figures suggest, the chest’s front is relatively – and distinctively – narrow, compared with its overall height and depth. Moreover, the prominent set-back top component (see below) and the bold knobs draw one’s eye upward, thereby underscoring the height. These qualities, including the 16-in. depth, contribute to the intriguing proportions and attractiveness to which I referred above – and also to the chest’s essential “character.” Did Asa Turner deliberately create those design components, I wonder, or did they – plus the overall effects thereby produced – just fortuitously “happen”? The former scenario, if true, suggests he was endowed with a good aesthetic sense.**

**The (integral) base section (19" high) incorporates three, 15-3/4" wide, graduated drawers, measuring (top-to-bottom) 3", 4" and 5" in depth.**

**Atop that (integral) base section is a smaller set of three side-by-side drawers, set back**

**6-1/2" from the face of the base. (That unit, sometimes labeled a “glove box,” is a common feature of contemporary chests of drawers.) Overall, the set-back section measures 4" high x 19" wide x 9-1/2" deep. Its three small drawers are each 3" deep. The middle drawer is 7" wide and the flanking ones are 4-1/2" wide.**

**The faces and backs of five of the six drawers are fastened to their respective sides by a bit of perfectly serviceable, although by no means sophisticated, dovetailing, plus a few nails. The exception is the base’s bottom drawer, the components of which are solely united by nails (perhaps Asa was pushed for time at that point). By the way, I very much doubt this was the first dovetailing job he’d tackled.**

**Note that each end piece is fashioned from a single solid board, cut with an offset to accommodate the upper unit. (Thus those solid ends are six-sided.) The top of the set-back unit is 3/4" thick, as is the (exposed) top section of the lower, three-drawer section. The back of the chest incorporates two horizontally positioned boards.**

**The corner posts of both the front (19-in. high) and the back (23" high) are approximately 1-3/4" square. The bottoms of these four corner posts incorporate integral 2" high feet. Turner created these enlivening touches by tapering the inner edges of the bottoms of the posts. Except for the prominent drawer knobs, these charming tapered feet are the sole eye-catching features incorporated into this simple, no-nonsense – and inherently attractive – piece.**

**Each of the six drawers has a hand-turned, mushroom-shaped replacement knob (doubtless of finer craftsmanship than the originals). The convex tops are 1-1/2" dia. and the bottoms are slightly smaller. (The correct bottom diameter dimensions were, remember, determined by the paint-history details. Remember also my prior commentary regarding the convex vs. concave issue.) Importantly, for turning the knobs, Jim utilized wood from an original piece of banister rail from my own 1840s Shippensburg house.**

**As previously noted, the restoration steps Jim Small undertook included “Repair drawer-bottom.” Specifically, he replaced a missing part of the bottom section of the upper drawer of the three-drawer base. He fashioned the replacement piece from pine I’d salvaged from the ca. 1840 farmhouse of a paternal-side great, great grand father, Lyman Root, of the Old State Road (near the Five Points intersection) in Sugar Grove Township, Warren Co., PA.**

**The “M B” and Other Markings**

**Below that restored top drawer of the base is the previously referenced “middle bottom” drawer. It is the left, outer surface of that drawer on which is inscribed the large, very faint – and rather “loose” – “*M B*.” After identifying Turner as the chest’s builder, I continue to wonder, Jim Small’s doubts notwithstanding, if that stands for “middle bottom.”**

**Note that the sides of the drawers reveal a few other pencil (and scribe?) markings by the maker.**

**DISPOSITION**

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**Inventory document in Lower Hall Inventory Binder.**

**14 May 2015 revised version, in RTF, emailed to Fenton H.S. & enthusiastically received.**

**On Specific Legacy List.**

**Note: Duplicate copy of inventory document in a drawer of the chest.**