

The COLBURN Families of NY State

In recent years I have spent considerable effort in a quest to determine what happened to the six sons of Ebenezer Colburn and Mercy (Everett) who migrated from Rindge NH to Otsego County, NY in the 1790's. In order of their age, they were:

Edward Everett	- born 30 March 1769, Princeton, MA
David	- born 17 Feb. 1771, Princeton, MA
Ellis (Twin)	- born 17 March 1775, Princeton, MA
Lewis (Twin)	- born 17 March 1775, Princeton, MA
George	- born 5 Sept. 1777, Princeton, MA
Jonathan	- born 9 Feb. 1780, Rindge, NH

Edward, the eldest of the group, and his bride of a few months, *Esther (Lovejoy)*, were the first to arrive in 1794. The other brothers came one at a time at later dates. We hope to determine by reviewing old family letters the dates the others migrated. Land records are inconclusive as often the deeds were not filed for years after the purchase. Edward and Esther built a homestead atop what is now locally known as Plainfield Hill. At that time it was located in Richfield, however the town of Plainfield was established in 1799. At the first Plainfield Town Meeting, held at the home of Captain Vose Palmer (another GGF of the writer), Edward and Ellis Colburn were named "Overseers of Highways". Eventually, Ellis, David, Lewis, and Jonathan all purchased property "on the hill". It is hard to imagine why these brothers would select mountainside property to farm! It would seem that they soon came to their senses as they moved down the mountain and dispersed. The Ellis homestead cellar hole is quite visible in the fork between Hughes Road and Adams Pond Road. The Edward home site across on the south side of Hughes Road is only marked by several piles of stones; As it was built to overhang the hill, there was no excavated cellar. It was still standing when my mother and dad visited circa 1926 and they recalled it having 3 living levels below the road level. According to a letter from his daughter, Louisa, the family moved to a farm near Unadilla Forks in May 1810 where he raised eight children. This farm on Hackley St. (Co Rd 18) was turned over to Edward & Esther's youngest son, Edward and his wife Louisa Hulbert and in turn to their son Edward H. His son (my father), Edward E. purchased the farm from his father's widow and resold the property in 1925. This line of the Colburns has "daughters-out" except for the writer's two sons who remain unmarried at this date.

Ellis and his wife Betsy also moved "off the hill" about the same time, but they went in the other direction to Burlington Flats where they reared a family of 6 girls and one boy, George E. The descendants of this line had very large families, but with surprisingly few sons to carry on the Colburn name down through the generations. Although still centered in Otsego County, the families are now dispersed throughout the country. Eleanor Rider of Edmeston, NY has collected much information on the Ellis line as has the late Bob Hoag of Sarasota, FL.

George died unmarried (we believe) 2 August 1869. We know he joined his brothers in Otsego County, but know little of his life or where he died.

Lewis, twin of Ellis is shown to have bought property "on the hill" in 1798 and he and wife Mary (Baker) sold out to Ellis in 1802 and relocated to Sacketts Harbor, NY where they died. They had four sons; Lewis J. and John are buried in Sacketts Harbor and it is not known at this writing if they had progeny. Luther Baker relocated to Oriskany Falls and there are known descendants from his sons Leonard Burdell and George Luther. Calvin relocated to the area near Ellington in Chautauqua County where he had a daughter, Jane M., but it is unknown if he had any sons. Everett Colburn of Ilion, NY, a descendant of Luther Baker Colburn provided much information on the Lewis line.

Jonathan married Lydia Page, probably in Rindge, NH and joined his brothers in Otsego Co. NY in 1802, after the birth of their 1st child. Jonathan died in 1814 from illness contracted during the War of 1812. Their children were as follows:

Roxana b.1801 m. Amos Leach res. Chautauqua Co.
Amos b.1805 d. 1880 Dodge Co., WI - no children
Nelson b.1807 d. 1884 St. Louis, MI - no known children
[Nelson was adopted by Uncles Ellis & Edward at father's death.]
Erastus b.1809 m. Eliza Bill res. Chautauqua Co.
Hovey b.1812 m. Clarissa Gates res. Chautauqua Co.

After Jonathan's untimely death, his widow married in 1815 Jabish Dewey and others apparently raised the Colburn children as a child of the 2nd marriage writes "--He is the only correspondent I have of the Colburn relatives as my Colburn Brothers never lived with my father & even some were married before I was born."

Descendants of Erastus and Hovey probably exist in Chautauqua Co. today.

David married Rebecca Locke of Fitzwilliam, NH and joined his brothers in establishing a homesite on Plainfield Hill. Land records show that they sold their part of the mountain in 1812 and probably moved to Burlington Flats. The following children were born:

Polly b.1800 m. John David res. Chautauqua Co.
Sophrinia b.1803 m. Joseph Clark
Harvey b.1805 d. Cattaraugus Co.
Lucy b.1808 m. Henry Arnold res. Chautauqua Co.
Rebecca b.1811 m. Andrew Arnold res. Chautauqua Co.
Clarinda b.1813 m. Joseph Wilbur res. Ohio
Emeline b.1814 m. Horatio Wilbur res. Ohio
David L. b.1818 m. Ann Walters res. Chautauqua Co

Rebecca died in July 1838 and is buried at Burlington Flats. David sold his Burlington property in 1839 and joined his children near Kennedy in Chautauqua Co. where he died in 1852. His grave is in the Davis cemetery on Waterboro Hill in the Town of Ellington. Descendants of David must abound in the Ellington area.

It is interesting that children of Lewis, Jonathan and David settled in the Poland/Ellington area of Chautauqua Co. near Jamestown. Several other Colburn lines are found in the same area that are not related to our family. There is an annual Colburn Family Reunion in the Jamestown area. This was known to have been active in 1925 and I hope to obtain additional information from their records.

Edward Everett Colburn Jr.
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