

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
& wife  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–54)**

**RESEARCH NOTES**

**12 MAY 1787**  
**PENNSYLVANIA**

*Birth.*<sup>1</sup>

The date of birth is calculated from Witter’s tombstone in Brian Cemetery, Christy Township, Lawrence County, Illinois.

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

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

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**1786-89**  
**PENNSYLVANIA OR FREDERICK CO., MARYLAND**

*Alleged kin.*

**Abraham Witter (Weetar, etc.)**, who is clustered with Samuel in numerous records below, is widely said to be Samuel’s brother, although no known researcher provides supporting evidence or mounts a proof argument. The evidence found to date—presented in the notes that follow—supports that hypothesis with no conflicts. Abraham was born in either Pennsylvania or Maryland between 1786 and 1789, according to the 1850–80 censuses. His obituary explicitly addresses his birth and subsequent arrival in Pennsylvania:

On January 27<sup>th</sup>, 1882, at his residence in Taylor township, Fulton county, Pa., Mr. Abraham Witter, aged 95 years, 7 months, and 16 days. [*i.e.*, *born 11 July 1786*]. The deceased **was born in Frederick County, Md., in the year 1786. He came with his father to Franklin county when eleven years of age, his father settled at Carrick Furnace, [i.e., ca. 1797, Metal Township]** and when a young man [he, Abraham] learned the millwright trade. He followed that trade for 15 or 20 years. He married a

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

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

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daughter of Daniel Pipers, of Amberson’s Valley, by whom they had thirteen children, seven girls and six boys, all of which are living. Four of the boys were in the late war at one time, and all got home safe; the deceased was with the militia at Baltimore in war of 1812. Abraham Witter did the millwright work of the Duncannon iron works, which is still in use yet. In 1812, with his family, he moved to Bedford county, now Fulton, and engaged in farming. He has eighty-four grandchildren, and nineteen great-grandchildren. He had been a member of the United Brethren church for fifty-four years.”<sup>2</sup>

COMMENT:

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

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**1790–1800**  
**FRANKLIN CO., PA**

*Possible parent.*

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

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

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

**Christoffel “Stophel,” “Christopher” Witter (Wither). 1800–06.** Christoffel first appears in Franklin on 8 April 1794, when he bought land in Fannett (now Metal) Township, identifying himself as “late of Earl Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.” He is enumerated adjacent to John and one household from

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

<sup>3</sup> For complete details and documentation on each man, see file copies of “Jacob Weider: Research Notes,” “Peter Witter: Research Notes,” “Christoffel ‘Stophel’ (Christopher) Witter: Research Notes,” and “John Witter (Johannis Widder): Research Notes” digitally filed under (Family Files>Individual Research Notes>Witter>).

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Peter in 1800. He did have a son Samuel and others of age to be Abraham. However, he moved his family in 1806 to Union County, Indiana.

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

One unresolved problem counters the widespread belief that Johannis fathered Abraham (born 11 July 1786) and Samuel (23 May 1787), aside from the uncommon ten-month spacing between alleged birth dates of two living sons. All 1850–70 censuses for Samuel and all 1850–80 censuses for Abraham consistently place their births in Pennsylvania, not Maryland, where Johannis appears to have lived at the time of their births. Against the census data for Abraham, however, one must weigh his obituary that asserts a birth in Frederick County, Maryland—the site of Johannis’s residence in the period Abraham and Samuel were born.

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**1810**  
**FRANKLIN CO. PA**

*Census.*

Samuel Witter does not appear in the county as a head-of household. No Witters are enumerated in Metal Township, although the county deed records place all their land there. The John Witter household, formerly of Metal Township, appears on the list for Hamilton Township, which lay only six or so miles away but was not adjacent. (A pegleg of Letterkenny Township separates Metal and Hamilton. The inherited land that Samuel and wife sold in 1839 apparently fell within that pegleg.)<sup>4</sup>

Hamilton Township  
p. 148 (also 897½)

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

**Neighborhood:**

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

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

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

COMMENT:

**Other Witters:**

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

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

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

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

**Reifsnider / Reifsmider**

- *Montgomery Township* (p. 894, 18 lines from bottom): **Henry Reifsnider** 45+. female 45+, 2 males 16–25, 1 female 16–25, 1 male 10–15, 1 female 10–15, 2 males under 10. If correct this household would not include Rachel (b. 1802) or her presumed sister Anna Maria (b. ca. 1804–5).
- *Peters Township* (p. 890, last line): **Jacob Reifsnider** 26–44, 1 female 26–44, 2 males 0–10. Again, the data preclude Rachel and Anna Maria.
- Virtually all Reifsniders on the 1810 census are in Eastern Pennsylvania.
- **Lurgan Township**: *Not found on the 1810 census* is one **John “Reifsnider”** who patented land on 14 February 1810 (**no. 162**), **129.80 acres** that had been warranted on 21 October 1749 to Samuel Howard and Wm. Forsyth. [See Patent Indexes, 1809–1823, p. 290; H Series (1809–1957), series 17.155; RG-17, Records of the Land Office, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg; digitized online at *Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission* (<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17PatentIndexes/r17-154PatIndP1Interface.htm> : accessed 2 January 2012).] This patent is the *only* patent I’ve found for someone of similar surname spelling in Franklin County through 1839.

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**TO DO:**

- Locate the plat for the John “Refsnider” land.
- Run deeds to determine (a) whether “Refsnider” sold this land before he died; (b) whether its neighbors matched that of the land that the Witters and Timmons jointly sold in 1839.
- Run probate records for “Refsnider” (etc.) in Franklin County.

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**1812–1815**  
**PENNSYLVANIA**

*Militia service.*

The statewide index to militiamen serving in the War of 1812 does not include any person surnamed Witter or any logical variant spelling.<sup>5</sup>

**COMMENT:**

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

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**5 SEPTEMBER 1812–JANUARY 1813**  
**PENNSYLVANIA**

*Possible militia service.*

One Samuel “Weidner”—identity unproved—has been identified for the Franklin County Light Dragoons under Colonel Jared Irwin, Capt. Andrew Oakes, and Lt. Thomas Wilson. According to an 1887 history of Franklin.<sup>6</sup>

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

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<sup>5</sup> “War of 1812 Index of Soldiers, Undated,” Series 2.61, RG2, Records of the Department of the Auditor General, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg; digitized online at *Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission* <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r2-61War1812Index/r2-61%20WarOf1812Interface.htm> : accessed 7 January 2012.

<sup>6</sup> *History of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Warner, Beers & Co., 1887), chap. 8, no pagination shown; transcription and posting by Joyce Moore, *USGenWebArchives* (<http://files.usgwarchives.net/pa/franklin/history/local/wbeers008.txt> : accessed 8 July 2012); the above punctuation and surname capitalization follows the formatting of the online transcription. The source of these lists seems to be I. H. McCauley’s *Historical Sketch of Franklin County, Pennsylvania, Prepared for Centennial Celebration* (Harrisburg, Penn.: Patriot Publishing Co., 1878), 147–48.

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

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

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

**PRIVATEs**

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

**COMMENT:**

Re: Samuel and Daniel “Weidner”:

- No “Weidner,” or close variant spelling can be found on the Franklin County censuses of either 1810 or 1820. (My past examinations of the original courthouse records focused on *Witter* and known variants at that time; *Weidner* was not among the potential variants that

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were searched.) As shown on page 2 of these research notes, *Weidener* was one of the variant spellings of the surname in land records for Jacob *Witter*. [See Patent Index, P. Series (P-1 to P-19), 1781–1809 (series 17.154), vol. 1 (1781–1794), pp. 343–44; RG-17, Records of the Land Office, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg; digitized online at *Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission* (<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17PatentIndexes/r17154PatIndP1Interface.htm> : accessed 8 January 2012). Also Franklin Co. Land Warrant Register, p. 54, Warrant Registers, 1733–1957, Series 17.88; Record Group 17, *ibid.*]

- “Widnor” is also noted as a variant spelling of the Witter surname in Fendrick’s biographical sketches of Revolutionary Soldiers who lived at some point in Franklin County. Specifically the sketch for Christopher Witter, who moved from Lancaster Co., Pennsylvania, to Antrim Township, Franklin County, notes the variants “Widnor, Weider, and Widder” in the tax, church, and probate (1807) records created by this man and his sons Jacob, George, and Michael. [Virginia Shannon Fendrick, *American Revolutionary Soldiers of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Chambersburg: Franklin County Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, c1944), 224.]
- A search of the 1810 and 1820 censuses of Franklin, for all members of Capt. Andrew Oakes’s company, places nearly half of them (including Oakes) in Antrim township. However, every township in Franklin County is represented by at least one man. Also, at least five of the men were from Metal Township, where Benjamin Witter appears in 1820 and John Witter had owned land since 1800.
- In January 1813 (as noted above) Samuel and Daniel “Weidner” were discharged at Buffalo. No further trace of a Samuel or Daniel “Weidner” is found in Franklin County or elsewhere in Western Pennsylvania.
- At this point, the evidence suggest that Daniel and Samuel “Weidner”—*if* they were “Witters”—more-likely belonged to the family of the Jacob and Christopher Witter of Greencastle, rather than the family of John, Christopher, and Peter Witter of Metal Township.

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**5 SEPTEMBER 1812–JANUARY 1813**  
**PENNSYLVANIA**

*Possible militia service.*

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

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COMMENT:

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

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

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**FEBRUARY–MARCH 1814**  
**PENNSYLVANIA**

*Possible militia service.*

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

“Franklin, Cumberland, York and Adams Counties’ quota under the call was 1,000 men, **the men from this county to assemble in Loudon on the 1st of March.** CAPTAIN SAMUEL DUNN, of Path Valley, had a company of forty men. These at once volunteered. The balance of the county's quota



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was 175 men. CAPTAIN SAMUEL GORDON's full company from Washington, and **CAPTAIN STAKE's partial company from Lurgan, rendezvoused at Loudon. WILLIAM McCLELLAN in command, who took them to Erie, leaving Loudon March 4.** MAJOR McCLELLAN's official report says the command, 221 privates, was officered by one major, three captains, five lieutenants and two ensigns. **At Erie, they were put in the Fifth Regiment,** commanded by COLONEL JAMES FELTON; JAMES WOOD, of Greencastle, was major; THOMAS POE, of Antrim, adjutant. The latter was a brave and gallant soldier. He was a man born to com-mand. It is told of him that by the mere power of his presence he quelled an outbreak of his men in camp, and by a word forced them to go quietly to their quarters. He fell mortally wounded at the battle of Chippewa, July 6, 1814.

**“CAPTAIN JACOB STAKE lived between Roxbury and Strasburg.** DR. W.C. LANE says of his command: ‘He went as a captain of drafted men as far as Erie, at which place his company was merged into those of CAPTAINS DUNN and GORDON].”<sup>7</sup>

COMMENT:

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

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

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**4 APRIL 1814**  
**KENTUCKY**

*Possible military service.*

“Records of Men Enlisted in the U.S. Army Prior to the Peace Establishment May 17, 1815.”<sup>8</sup>

No.	4951	
Name:	<b>Witter, Samuel</b>	[“Witer” is added below this]
ORGANIZATION:		
Rank	Rect. [Recruit]	
Regiment	17 U.S.I.	
Company Commander:	[blank]	

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<sup>7</sup> *History of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Warner, Beers & Co., 1887), chap. 8, no pagination shown; transcription and posting by Joyce Moore, *USGenWebArchives* (<http://files.usgwarchives.net/pa/franklin/history/local/wbeers008.txt> : accessed 8 January 2012); the punctuation and surname capitalization, above, follows the formatting of the online transcription.

<sup>8</sup> *Register of Enlistments in the U.S. Army, 1798–1914*, National Archives microfilm publication M233, roll 13, “Records of Men Enlisted in the U.S. Army Prior to the Peace Establishment, May 17, 1815,” vol. “S–W,” U.S. A p. 123; digital images, “U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments, 1798–1914,” database and images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 7 January 2012).

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DESCRIPTION:

Height	5’4”
Eyes	Dark
Hair	Dark
Coloring	Dark
Age	31
Occupation	Mill Wright

WHERE BORN:

Town or County	[blank]
State	Pennsylvania

ENLISTMENT:

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

COMMENT:

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

**Compatible Data:**

**Occupation:**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment recruit is said to be a “millright.” The 1850 and 1860 enumerations of Lawrence County, Illinois, abstracted below under those dates, identify our Samuel as “millwright” and “millerite,” respectively. As previously noted on p. 1 of these research notes, the obituary of Samuel’s likely brother Abraham also identifies him as a miller, as do the tax rolls of Bedford County in the 1840s (abstracted below).

**Birthplace:**

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

**Physical Description:**

Samuel Witter of the 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment is said to have dark complexion, dark hair, and dark eyes. A generation later, the youngest son of our Samuel (John W. Witters, born 15 May 1845, Bedford County, Pennsylvania), described himself in his Civil War pension application as having “dark complexion, black eyes, and dark hair.” Samuel of the 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment was quite short: 5’4”. John, son of Samuel, was also short: 5’6.” [For John’s data, see his affidavit of 25 March 1915, in John

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W. Witters. [Pvt., Co. E, 154 Regt., Illinois Inf., Civil War), pension application no. S.C. 384,432, Case Files of Approved Pension Applications ..., 1861–1934; Civil War and Later Pension Files; Department of Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15; National Archives.]

At this point, it is tempting to assume the two Samuels are one and the same. However, any such conclusion would be premature so long as significant sources remain unexamined, significant research methods remain used, and contradictory information remains unresolved.

**Possibly Compatible Data:**

***Age***

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

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

**Seemingly Incompatible Data:**

***Place of Enlistment***

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

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

At least two common explanations might apply:

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

**SPRING 1814**  
**KENTUCKY**

*Legal context.*

The 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the U.S. Army was one of ten “regular army” units created under a Congressional Act of January 1812 in a buildup for the anticipated conflict with England. At the outbreak of the war, regulars were enrolled for a mandatory five years. However, a series of Congressional acts modified that in 1813 and 1814. *If Samuel Witter enlisted on 4 April 1814, the law governing his enlistment would have been the act of 27 January 1814, which states:*<sup>9</sup>

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

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**CA. 1814–1815**  
**KENTUCKY**

*Possible military service.*

Officers and unit dates for the Seventeenth Regiment, U. S. Infantry.<sup>10</sup>

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

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

“4<sup>th</sup> Company—**Capt. B. W. Sanders**, Lieut. Cyrus W. Baylor, Ensign Richard Mitchell (117).

“7<sup>th</sup> Company—Capt. Wm. I. Adair, Lieuts. **James Hackley**, Thos. W. Hawkins, Ensign Thomas R. McKnight. (115).

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<sup>9</sup> *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 12<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2d Sess., 29 January 1813, chap. XVI, was the first to reduce the minimum period to “one year, unless sooner discharged.” See also 13<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> Sess., 5 July 1813 and 12 Aug. 1813, for various modifications. *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 13<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1st Sess., 27 January 1814, chap. 7, “An Act making further provision for filling the ranks of the regular army.”

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

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**SPRING 1814**

**KENTUCKY**

*Historical context.*

Although the 17th was initially a Kentucky unit, by early 1814 its ranks (and those of many other Army units) were severely depleted. According to the *U. S. Army Lineage Series*:<sup>11</sup>

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

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**SPRING 1814**

**KENTUCKY-OHIO**

*Possible military service.*

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

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

John Miller, Colonel

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

George Todd, Lt.-Colonel

[“Appointed or Enlisted”] March 13, 1814, *Superintendent recruiting in Ohio*<sup>12</sup>

**COMMENT:**

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

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

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<sup>11</sup> John K. Mahon and Romana Danysh, *U.S. Army Lineage Series: Infantry, Part 1, Regular Army* (Washington: Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, 1972), 14; htm edition at *U.S. Army Center of Military History* (<http://www.history.army.mil/books/Lineage/in/infantry.htm> : accessed 7 January 2012).

<sup>12</sup> *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky, Soldiers of the War of 1812* (Frankfort: E. Polk Johnson, Public Printer, 1891), 340, for March 1814 “Roll of Field and Staff, Miller’s Regiment, U.S. Infantry, War of 1812, Commanded by Colonel John Miller”; digital images, *Internet Archive* (<http://www.archive.org> : accessed 7 January 2012).

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

1812,” *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 7 January 2012), which identifies Tod as a Supreme Court justice in Ohio at the start of the war but discusses an 1812 engagement in which a unit of Kentucky forces accompanied his own forces on a campaign to Detroit.

**TO DO:**

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

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**14 MAY 1814**  
**LEXINGTON BARRACKS, KY.**

*Possible military service.*

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

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**23 MAY 1814**  
**NEW PORT, KY.**

*Possible military service.*

“Muster roll of Captain Benjamin W. Sanders’s Company of the 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Infantry in the Service of the U. States under the command of Col. Samuel Wells, from the several periods of enlistment to the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1814, the time of present Muster.”<sup>13</sup>

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

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

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<sup>13</sup> “Muster roll of Captain Benjamin W. Sanders’s Company of the 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Infantry in the Service of the U. States under the command of Col. Samuel Wells, from the several periods of enlistment to the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1814, the time of present Muster?”, 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry, ca. 1812–1815, Companies: Crittendon–Sanders; Muster Rolls of Regular Army Organizations, 1784–Oct 31, 1912; RG 94, Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

*Privates:*

Arrington, Stephen	Moser, Jacob
Adams, Delucian	McNitt, Joseph
Broughton, Reuben L.	Moseby, John
Blythe, William	Milroy, Henry
Boston, Abner	Monroe, John
Bush, Edward	Milburn, Jonathan
Barnett, Joseph	Marks, Nathaniel
Baker, John	Moore, Augustus
Butler, John	Mondsey, Reuben
Burtram Emsly	Monnihan, John
Bowler, William	Norris, Beverly
Beck, James	Pike, Oliver
Boyd, John	Pool, John
Cokendorfer, David	<b>Parker, Lewis*</b>
Cook, Lodrick	Roberts, John
Calvert, Nash	Roberts, Jesse
Cayson, Reuben	Rose, Benjamin
Cook, David	Roberts, Thomas
Calvert, William	Reece, David
Campbell, John	Richards, Samuel
Darnell, Samuel L. (& S.)	Row, Robert
Davidson, Robert	Reynolds, Isham
Dunn, Hezekiah	Stewart, Alexander
Dunn, Gabriel	Sharrard, Samuel
David, John	Swartzwalter, George
Davis, Benjamin	Sharp, John
Davis, James J.	Savage, John
Eldridge, John	Tubbs, Jesse
Emberton, Richard	Taylor, Berry
Flack, William	Temple, Dixon T.
Fuller, William	Tillett, Jacob
Gilbert, William	Tyre, John
Grissom, James	Taylor, James W.
[12 names missing from numbered roll]	White, Edward
Iago, Jacob	West, James
Kinney, Richard	<b>Witter, Samuel</b>
Samuel Kerr	Wheeler, Greenberry
Lowdon, Samuel	Weekly, Abraham
Lowry, Andrew	Wyatt, McGilbry
Lambert, Cornelius	
Loyd, John	

COMMENT:

**Regarding the roll:**

- The above list extracts only the name and ranks. For full details, see

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

1. Digital image of the original document (Family Files>Documents>People> Witter>Samuel: 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry)
  2. Excel file “1814 Comrades of Samuel Witter” (Family Files>Reports>Witter>War of 1812)
- The digital scan of this document, provided by a D.C. based researcher, is missing a page with 12 “H” names.

**Regarding the soldiers:**

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

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**4 AUGUST 1814**  
**MICHILIMACKINAC ISLAND**

*Possible military service.*

Although Samuel Witter’s service summary in the Enlistment Register cites no engagements, the activities of his unit can be tracked by studying the service summaries of all men in his unit. For two of those men, the records note participation in the 4 August 1814 effort to retake Michilimackinac (“Mackinac”) Island from the British:<sup>14</sup>

**James S. Davis**

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

**Samuel M. (var. W.) Hall**

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

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**31 OCTOBER 1814**  
**FT. ERIE, UPPER CANADA**

*Possible military service.*

“Roll of Captain B. W. Sanders’ Company, Kentucky Infantry—Commanded by Colonel John Miller. Unless

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<sup>14</sup> *Register of Enlistments in the U.S. Army, 1798–1914*, National Archives microfilm publication M233, roll 13, “Records of Men Enlisted in the U.S. Army Prior to the Peace Establishment, May 17, 1815,” vol. “D-E, H,” p. 24 (Davis); and vol. H, p. 501 “Hall”; digital images, “U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments, 1798–1914,” database and images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 19–20 February 2012). The date of the battle does not appear in either record. For that date see “War of 1812 History: Timeline,” *War of 1812 Bicentennial* (<http://www.warof1812-bicentennial.info/history/timeline.php> : accessed 19 February 2012).



**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

otherwise indicated, *the dates provided for all men on this list are the same as those provided for Witter: June 1, 1814–October 31, 1814.*<sup>15</sup>

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

[Privates]

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

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<sup>15</sup> G. Glenn Clift, *Kentucky Soldiers of the War of 1812* (1931; reprinted, Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Co., 1969), 344–45.

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

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

**COMMENT;**

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

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

**TO DO:**

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

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

**1814–15**

*Possible military service.*

No surviving morning reports, weekly reports, or monthly returns apparently survive from War of 1812 military posts or encampments in which Witter might have served.<sup>16</sup>

**COMMENTS:**

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

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

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

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**1814–1815**

**DETROIT, MICHILIMACKINAC, NIAGARA & ERIE, PA**

*Possible military service.*

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

**Niagara Campaign**  
**Summer 1814**

“Following Perry’s Victory on Lake Erie, the British retreated back to Canada and eventual defeat at the river Thames. The 17th was sent back to occupy Detroit with the bulk of the Northwest Army. With a reduced need for men, Capt. Chunn’s company of the 17th was detached with another company of the 19th infantry for operations on the Niagara frontier. Arriving in Buffalo,

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<sup>16</sup> *Returns from U.S. Military Posts, 1800–1916*, National Archives microfilm publication M615; and descriptive pamphlet accessible at *National Archives* (<http://www.archives.gov> : 7 January 2012). M615, but not its “DP,” has been digitized by Ancestry.com.

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

Chunn's company was assigned to the training camp at Flint Hill, commanded by Gen. Winfield Scott to prepare for the invasion of Canada. On their way there, they were diverted to a raid on Dover, Canada on May 14. There they were employed to burn food stores and public property.

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

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

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

#### Other Campaigns

“While in Detroit in the summer on 1814, a portion of the 17th was detached to an expedition conducted by the Navy and Army to recapture Ft. Mackinaw. While able to cut off supplies to the British on the upper Great Lakes, the campaign soon became hindered by the loss of ships to Canadian raiding parties. Trying to repeat the British landing on Mackinaw Island also met with defeat. With these setbacks, the American force retired to Detroit where it remained for most of the war, conducting occasional raids into Canada.”<sup>18</sup>

#### COMMENT:

Witter's unit would have been among “the remainder of the 17<sup>th</sup> [who] arrived at Ft. Erie from Detroit on October 6<sup>th</sup> aboard the Brig Niagara.” See entry (above) for 4 August 1814, Michilimackinac, and entries (below) for “November-December 1815, Fort Erie,” and “February 1815, Erie, PA.”

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

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<sup>17</sup> David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, eds., *Encyclopedia of the War of 1812* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1997), 67.

<sup>18</sup> John Sec, “The Seventeenth Regiment of U.S. Infantry,” *Fort Erie and the War of 1812* (<http://www.iaw.com/~jsek/us17inf.htm> : accessed 7 January 2012).

**1-5 NOVEMBER 1814**  
**FORT ERIE, UPPER CANADA**

*Possible military service.*

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

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

*Possible military service.*

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

**Edward Bush**

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

**James McLain (var. McLean)**

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

**Isham Reynolds**

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

**Green Berry Wheeler**

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

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**28 JANUARY–20 APRIL 1815**  
**ERIE (WILLIAMSVILLE), PA**

*Possible military service.*

Witter’s service summary notes his presence on two rosters during the month that the war officially ended, specifically 16 and 18 February 1815; but it does not state a location. The service summaries of fellow soldiers place their unit at Erie, Pa. between 28 January and 28 February 1815.<sup>21</sup>

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

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

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

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

**William Bowler**

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

**Hezekiah Dunn**

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

**John Monroe**

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

**Beverly Norris**

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

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**MARCH-JUNE 1815**

*Possible military service.*

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

**COMMENT:**

Samuel Witter of the 17<sup>th</sup> was not one of the 10,000 who stayed with the Army. Even though he did not serve the full five years for which he had obligated himself, his willingness to make that commitment had maximized his bounty under the act of 27 January 1824. The \$100 he received initially and the \$24 he received at discharge, would have a purchasing power of \$1,811 today. In a place and time in which land could be purchased from the federal government at \$2 an acre, his service would have bought him 62 acres of raw, uncleared, public land. [Lawrence H. Officer and Samuel H. Williamson, “Purchasing Power of Money in the United States from 1774 to Present,” *Measuring Worth* (<http://www.measuringworth.com/ppowerus/> : accessed 7 January 2012.)

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**31 MAY 1815**

**ERIE, PA**

*Possible military service.*

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

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<sup>22</sup> *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 13th Cong., 3d Sess., chap. LXXIX, "An Act fixing the military peace establishment of the United States."

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

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

COMMENT:

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

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**7 JUNE 1815**  
**CHILLICOTHE, OHIO**

*Possible military service.*

Discharge of **Samuel Witter**.<sup>24</sup>

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

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

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

File Jacket:

“Warrant No. 23642, 160 acres

War of 1812.

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

Warrantee: **Samuel Witter**

Soldier: Same

Pr Service 17 inf.

Nature of claim: Bounty Land. Single.”

COMMENT:

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

*Identification of Hon. Alney McLean:*

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

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

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

“McLEAN, Alney, (1779–1841) a Representative from Kentucky; born in Burke County, N.C., June 10, 1779; pursued preparatory studies; moved to Kentucky; appointed surveyor of Muhlenberg County in 1799 and elected one of the trustees of Greenville on its formation; studied law; was admitted to the bar and commenced practice in Greenville, Muhlenberg County, Ky., about 1805; member of the State house of representatives in 1812 and 1813; served as a captain in the War of 1812; elected as a Republican to the Fourteenth Congress (March 4, 1815–March 3, 1817); elected to the Sixteenth Congress (March 4, 1819–March 3, 1821); served as judge of the fourteenth district of Kentucky from 1821 until his death; presidential elector on the Clay ticket in 1824 and on the ticket of Clay and Sergeant in 1832; died near Greenville, Muhlenberg County, Ky., December 30, 1841; interment in Old Caney Station Cemetery, near Greenville, Ky.”  
[*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774–Present* ([http://bioguide .congress.gov](http://bioguide.congress.gov) : accessed 7 January 2012), for “Alney McLean.”]

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

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

McLean’s biography offers two potentially relevant details:

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

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**14 FEBRUARY 1820**  
**WASHINGTON, D.C.**

*Possible bounty land.*

Registration of Returned Bounty Land Warrant.

“Samuel Witter, Private, 17 Infantry. Honl. A. McLean” “No. 23642.”<sup>25</sup>

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



**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

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

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

COMMENT:

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

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

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**CA. 1820**  
**ARKANSAS**

*Possible bounty land.*

Register of Arkansas Patentees.<sup>26</sup>

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

COMMENT:

See analysis under date of 14 February 1820.

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**CA. 1820**  
**ARKANSAS**

*Possible bounty land.*

The State of Arkansas has also posted online digital images from its state-level register of military bounty lands issued within its bounds. That state-level register is arranged by land description (section, township, and range). It contains no name index and the Arkansas website provides no database. Using

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<sup>26</sup> *War of 1812 Military Bounty Land Warrants, 1815–1858*, NARA microfilm publication M848, roll 1, “Target 2, Index of Arkansas Patentees,” p. 257.

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

the legal description of the land, Witter’s registration was locatable in the register, which provided the following data:<sup>27</sup>

**Township 1N Range 2W**

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

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**CA. 1820**  
**ARKANSAS**

*Possible bounty land.*

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

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

“In Testimony WHEREOF, We have caused these Letters to be made patent, and the Seal of the General Land Office to be hereunto affixed. Given under my Hand, at the City of Washington, this **Twenty Seventh** day of **November** in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and **Twenty** and of the Independence of the United States of America, the **forty-fifth**. By the President, **James Monroe**. [Signed] **Josiah Meigs**, Commissioner of the General Land Office.”

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

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

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

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

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**CA. 1819–20**  
**FRANKLIN? CO. PA**

*Marriage.*

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

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**CA. 1819–20**  
**FRANKLIN? CO. PA**

*Proof argument.*

**Rachel’s identity** is based on a body of complex evidence. Direct evidence exists but its information is secondhand, contradictory, and recorded long after the fact. Indirect evidence seems to contradict the direct evidence but, when carefully analyzed, points to a conclusion. This hypothesis cannot be considered a valid conclusion until and unless it withstands the first criteria of the Genealogical Proof Standard: reasonably exhaustive research. Reifschmeider research is not yet complete.

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

1. All known records created during her lifetime cite her only as Rachel or Rachael Witter.
2. No known document created in her lifetime assigns her a maiden surname.
3. She and Samuel, jointly with William Timmons and wife Anna Maria, jointly sold a tract of land in Franklin County, Letterkenny Township (see abstract under 8 April 1839)—land for which there is no purchase deed, warrant, or patent in their names, jointly or severally. The implication is that the two couples are heirs to inherited land. One of four possible kinships should exist here:
  - a. Anna Maria was née Witter and a brother of Samuel Witter.
  - b. Rachel was a sister of William Timmons.
  - c. Rachel was a sister of Anna Maria.
  - d. William Timmons was a half-brother of Samuel Witter.
4. Anna Maria (aka “Tillie”) was née “Rayfsnyder” according to the death certificate of her youngest son, Henry “Harry” Clay Timmons. (“Illinois Deaths and Stillbirths Index, 1916–1947,” *Ancestry.com*, for “Harry Clay Timmons,” who died 6 March 1925.)
5. A separate line of descendants—one that has not yet connected itself to the Henry Clay Timmons line in any online genealogy or “tree,” identifies Anna Maria’s maiden name as “Reifsnider” or “Reifsmider,” but provides no evidence. This identification traces back to an early LDS effort, also undocumented. (See “William Ward Timmons,” Pin 948263, CD 129; and “Anna Maria Reifsmider,” Pin 948264, CD 129; FamilySearch Pedigree Resource File, citing submission by Leona Winger, South Jordan, UT.)
6. *Refsnider*, *Reafsnyder*, *Reifsnider*, *Reifsmider*, and other variant spellings appear in numerous records of Letterkenny Township. All clearly refer to the same core family.
7. Twentieth-century death certificates for Rachel’s two youngest children identify her surname as “Smith.” When her youngest son John died in 1930, the informant ( “Mrs. G. T. Roth [of] Judsonia,

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

Arkansas,” John’s great-neice) stated that John was the son of Samuel Witter and “**Lizzie Smith**” and that both parents had been born in Pennsylvania. When Rachel’s youngest daughter Margaret died in 1933, the informant (identity not yet known) identified her mother as “**Rachel Smith.**” (See abstracts under dates of 10 September 1836 and 15 May 1845.)

8. No other known document calls Rachel “Lizzie.” It is possible that Mrs. Roth (née Anna F. Witter, daughter of James, granddaughter of Benjamin, and great-granddaughter of Samuel and Rachel), was simply confused. She was born several decades after the death of her great-grandmother and was taken to Arkansas as a child by her parents. “Elizabeth” was a family name—the name of Samuel and Rachel’s eldest daughter (Mrs. Roth’s great-aunt), Elizabeth Witter Jones. At Mrs. Roth’s birth, Elizabeth Jones was still alive and living in the Illinois community in which Mrs. Roth was born. Possibly, when asked for the name of John’s mother, she recalled the aged aunt. On the other hand, when John died, he lived with an older sister Margaret, who could have been Mrs. Roth’s own informant. In that case, one might hypothesize that Rachel carried a double name *Rachel Elizabeth* and was called “Lizzie” within the family.

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

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

9. My line-by-line, page-by-page study of all surviving Smith/Schmidt records in the Franklin and Bedford County courthouses yielded no evidence of a Witter connection. The strongest evidence of Rachel’s identity is the deed of sale executed jointly with the Timmons.
10. The Harry Clay Timmons death certificate, which identified his mother as Tillie Rayfsnyder, also asserts that his mother was born in Germany. This data parallels the 1820 census data for the Samuel Witter household which asserts that one individual in the family was of foreign birth. (The 1850 census data, by comparison, assigns both women the same Pennsylvania birthplace it gives to all other members of the household, setting Rachel “Lizzie” Witter’s birth at ca. 1801–2 and Anna Maria “Tillie” Timmons’s birth at ca. 1804–5.)
11. The seeming disparity between the alleged “Smith” surname and the Timmons evidence is easily reconciled when the surname “Reifsnider” or “Reifsmyder” is given the proper German spelling: *Reifschmieder*. *Schmieder* is the German word for the occupation *smith*—blacksmith or ironworker. *Reif*, in German, carries several meanings. As a verb it meant “called.” As a noun, among other meanings, it meant a metal ring. Thus, the name *Reifschmieder* might have one of two origins: an ironworker or smith who made rings of the type used for harnesses and other utilitarian needs; or a man who was “called Smith.” The latter could also open up the possibility of another, earlier, surname.

**TO DO:**

**Complete *thorough* research all “Reifsnider/ Reifsmyder records available for Franklin County.**

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

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**1<sup>ST</sup> MONDAY, AUGUST 1820**  
**FRANKLIN CO., PENN.**

*Census.*

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

(p. 386)

<b>Witter, John</b>	1 male	45+	[John]	1 female	26–45	[Catherine]
	1 male	26–45	[Abraham?]	1 female	10–16	
	2 males	18–26		3 females	0–10	
	2 males	10–16				
	4 males	0–10				<i>3 engaged in manufactures</i>
<b>Witter, Samuel</b>	1 male	26–45	[Samuel]	1 female	16–26	[Rachel; no child yet born]
	1 male	18–26		1 female	10-16	[Rachel’s sister?]
						<i>1 foreigner, not naturalized</i>

COMMENT:

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

**1 foreigner, not naturalized:**

The “foreigner not naturalized” should not be either Samuel or Rachel. Samuel would be a natural-born American. Rachel, if born elsewhere, would have been naturalized via “derivative citizenship” at her marriage to an American. [John J. Newman, *American Naturalization Processes and Procedures* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1985), 22.]

The age of the female 10–16 corresponds to that of Anna Maria Raifsnnyder, who (extrapolating from 1830 and 1840 census data) did not marry William Timmons until ca. 1823 or 1824.

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**12 AUGUST 1820**  
**FRANKLIN CO., PA**

*Birth of child.*

**Benjamin Witter**, eldest son of Samuel and Rachel, was born 12 August 1820 and died 31 July 1872, according to family records held by his Lawrence County descendants in 1970.<sup>30</sup>

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

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

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

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**11 FEBRUARY 1823**  
**FRANKLIN CO., PA**

*Birth of child.*

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

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**17 NOVEMBER 1825**  
**FRANKLIN CO., PA**

*Birth of child.*

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

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**1827–28**  
**FRANKLIN CO., PA**

*Birth of child.*

Barbara? **Ann Witter**, second daughter of Samuel and Rachel, born ca. 1827–28; said to have married “first a Fausin, then a Mathias”; supposedly buried in Brian Cemetery, where no marker appears to have survived.<sup>33</sup> (No record of either marriage has been found in Illinois.)

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**CA. 1830**  
**FRANKLIN CO., PA**

*Birth of child.*

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

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**1830**  
**FRANKLIN CO., PA**

*Census.*

Fannett Township. Unalphabetized.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Tombstone of Elizabeth Jones, Brian Cemetery, Sumner, Lawrence Co., Illinois; digital image, Carol Knoell, contributor, *Find A Grave* ([http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSsr=41&GScid=104865&GRid=737\\_79155&](http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSsr=41&GScid=104865&GRid=737_79155&); accessed 1 January 2010). The tombstone does not name her parents; that identification comes from Witter Family Records.

<sup>32</sup> Witter Family Records.

<sup>33</sup> Witter Family Records. The quote is from Margaret Chloe (Bowen) Stacy, Stacey Insurance Agency, 519 West Main Street, Olney, IL 52450, letter dated 26 October 1970, to Elizabeth Shown Mills; Mrs. Stacey was the granddaughter of Benjamin Witter and Malinda Day.

<sup>34</sup> 1840 U.S. census, Franklin Co., Penn., Lurgent Township, p. 343, line 12.

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

(p. 215, lines 1–11)

<b>Witter, Abraham</b>	1 male 40–50	[Abraham]	1 female 20–30	[wife née Catherine Piper]
	1 male 5–10		1 female 10–15	
	1 male 0–5		1 female 0–5	

**Stake, John [Stech]**

[skip 5]

<b>Wither, Sam<sup>l</sup></b>	1 male 20–30	[Samuel]	1 female 20–30	[Rachel]
	1 male 5–10	[Benj.]	1 female 5–10	[Elizabeth]
			3 females 0–5	[Ann, ?, and William? ]

[skip 2]

<b>Piper, Daniel</b>	1 male 50–60	& family	[father of Abraham Witter’s wife; he allegedly married a Mary Witter]
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**Neighborhood:**

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

**Witter, Abraham** Ray, Robert

Stake, John

Hawney, John

Taylor, John

Stewart, Samuel

Stewart, George

**Wither, Samuel**

Skyock, John

Rain, John

**Piper, Daniel**

Fricker, Andrew

Shields, John

Shields, Thomas

[Cont. at top of col. 2]

**Piper, Robert**

Barnhart, Mary

Riddle, David

Fagan, Barnibus

Lathers, John

Barnhart, Daniel

Taylor, Caspor

Rollins, Leiah [*female*]

McGea, Adam

Stevenson, Thomas

**Piper, Adam**

[End of page]

COMMENTS:

**Samuel’s household:**

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

**Abraham’s neighbors:**

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

**Piper:**

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

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

**Skyock:**

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

**John Stake (Stech):**

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

**Other Witters:**

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

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

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**MAY 1832**  
**FRANKLIN CO., PA**

*Birth of child.*

**Catherine Witter**, daughter of Samuel and Rachel, was born in May 1832, according to 1900 census.<sup>35</sup>

**TO DO:**

Seek a Civil War widow’s pension for Catherine Melrose to see what personal and family data might appear therein.

---

**CA. 1834**  
**FRANKLIN CO. PA**

*Birth of child.*

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

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

<sup>36</sup> Witter Family Record. The 1850 census enumeration of the parental household (subsequently abstracted in these notes), places *Nancy’s* birth between 2 June 1833 and 1 June 1834. The Witter Family Record states that she married a “Mr. Sumner.” For the marriage of *Martha* Witters to Schuyler Sumner, 12 June 1856, see “Illinois Statewide Marriage index, 1763–1900,”



**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

---

**10 SEPTEMBER 1836**  
**FRANKLIN? CO. PA**

*Birth of child.*

**Margaret Ellen Witter** was born 10 September 1836, in Pennsylvania, as daughter of “Samuel Witter” and “Rachel Smith,” according to her death certificate dated 20 November 1933.<sup>37</sup>

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**1838 [Late]**  
**Bedford Co., PA**

*Tax roll.*

Bedford Township. Semialphabetized list. No exact date. If the tax roll adhered to the practice that was followed in Bedford in years for which dates are found, it would have been compiled in late 1838 and certified about the first of 1839.<sup>38</sup>

<b>Widow, Samuel</b>	Occupation:	[Blank]*
	Patent:	114 acres
	Rates:	5
	Cows:	3
	Valuation:	366

**COMMENT:**

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

In April 1839, Samuel Witter and wife sold land in Letterkenny Township, Franklin County, conjointly with another couple, at which time they were *said* to be residents of Letterkenny. The possibility exists that the person who drafted the document, after naming all parties, may have written “All of Letterkenny Township” as an assumption. On the other hand, as shown below, Samuel is enumerated in 1840 in Franklin, not Bedford.

In this era, Pennsylvania created county-level assessment rolls triennially. When the next Bedford roll was created in 1841, Samuel and Abraham would both be assessed in Bedford.

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*Illinois State Archives* (<http://www.ilsos.gov/GenealogyMWeb/marrsrch.html> : accessed 13 July 2009). After her death, Schuyler married her sister Harriet, according to both Witter Family Record and the Illinois State Archives database.

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

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

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

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**MARCH 1839**  
**FRANKLIN OR BEDFORD CO., PA**

*Birth of child.*

**Sarah Jane Witter**, daughter of Samuel and Rachel, born about March 1839.<sup>39</sup>

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**8 APRIL 1839**  
**FRANKLIN CO., PA.**

*Land sale.*

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

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

Witnesses: Wm. S. Thompson.

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

COMMENT:

**Timmons:**

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

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

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

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

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<sup>39</sup> The Witter Family Record places her birth at “about 1838.” The 1850 census entry for her parental household (abstracted later in this report), places her birth between 2 June 1838 and 1 June 1839. The 1900 census record states that she was born in March 1841). As adults, she and her sisters seem to have regularly shaved years off their ages. 1900 U.S. census, Lawrence Co., Ill., Christy, ED 110, sheet 4-B, dwell. 83, fam. 84 (Sarah Laws). For her 8 March 1874 marriage to William Laws (as Sarah Jane Baird) and her marriage to William M. Beard on 7 July 1861, see “Illinois Statewide Marriage index, 1763–1900,” *Illinois State Archives* (<http://www.ilsos.gov/GenealogyMWeb/marrsrch.html>) : accessed 13 July 2009).

<sup>40</sup> Franklin Co. Deed Book 18:155

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

**1860, 1870, 1880:** *Letterkenny Township.*

The Timmons son Henry also migrated to Illinois. His death registration cites his birth as 24 September 1847 in Franklin Co., Penn., and death as 9 March 1925 in Fulton, Whiteside Co., Illinois [northwest Illinois]. A retired boiler maker, he was said to be the son of William Timmons of Scotland and “Tilly Rayfsnyder” of Germany. (“Illinois Deaths and Stillbirths index, 1916–1946,” *Ancestry.com.*)

**TO DO:**

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

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**1839 [Late]**  
**Bedford Co., PA**

*Tax roll.*

Bedford Township and Dublin Township: Neither Samuel nor any other Witters appear.<sup>41</sup>

**COMMENT:**

Two similar-surname men make their first appearance in North Woodberry Township—both “Single Freeman”: **Jacob Weter** (\$.06) and **David Weter** (\$.50). In subsequent years, both their names are spelled as “Witter.”

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**1840**  
**FRANKLIN CO., PA**

*Census.*

Lurgent Township. Unalphabetized.<sup>42</sup>

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

**Neighbors:**

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

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

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

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

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

**Burkholder, Sam<sup>1</sup>**

Whisler, Jacob  
Bar, James  
Holmes, Robert  
Ershner, John  
Hassell, Charles  
Dehl, Peter  
Rouse, George

**Witter, Sam<sup>1</sup>**

Claspinger, Henry?  
[cont. in column 2]

**Byers, John**

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

COMMENTS:

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

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**1840 [Late]**

**Bedford Co., PA**

*Tax roll.*

Bedford Township and Dublin Township: Neither Samuel nor any other Witters appear.<sup>43</sup>

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**1841**

**BEDFORD CO., PA**

*Tax roll.*

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

Wolf, Jacob Senr.

Wolf, J. & Do.

Winegarner, Conrad

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

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

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

Winegarner, Jacob

Wilds, Rachel [1844 roll identifies her late husband as *Benjamin*]

Winegarner, John

**Witter, Abraham**

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

**Witter, Samuel**

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

Wollett, Jacob

Wollett, Benjamin

Waidman, Thomas

Wilson, Widow

Wolf, Jacob

Walker, ~~Thomas~~ James [sic]

Walker, John

Welch, William, Taylor, house & lot

Wilds Heirs [heirs of John]

Wilds, William

COMMENT:

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

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

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**APRIL 1841**  
**BEDFORD CO., PA**

*Birth of child.*

**Harriet Witter**, daughter of Samuel and Rachel, was apparently born in April 1841.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> The Witter Family Record places her birth at “about 1841.” The 1850 census entry for her parental household (abstracted later in these notes), places her birth between 2 June 1840 and 1 June 1841. The 1900 census record, however, states that she was born in April 1849). As adults, she and her sisters seem to have regularly shaved years off their ages. 1900 U.S. census, Douglas Co., Oregon, Myrtle Creek Precinct, ED 57, sheet 3-A, dwell./fam. 62 (Harriet Sumner). For her 13 March 1871 marriage to Dr. Schuyler Sumner, her sister’s widower, see “Illinois Statewide Marriage index, 1763–1900,” *Illinois State Archives* (<http://www.ilsos.gov/GenealogyMWeb/marrsrch.html>) : accessed 13 July 2009).

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

**14 JANUARY 1842?**  
**BEDFORD CO., PA.**

*Tax roll.*

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

**Witter, Abraham**

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

**Witter, Samuel**

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

COMMENT:

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

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**NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 1842**  
**BEDFORD CO., PA.**

*Tax Roll.*

Dublin Township *assessment list*.<sup>47</sup>

**Witters, Samuel, farmer**

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

**Ditto, Abraham**

Patented Acres	333
Value	\$400
Horses	2
Value	\$40
Cattle	3
Value	\$756

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

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

“Single Free men”  
Witters, Benjamin [no data]

“List of Taxables ... entitled to Vote”  
Witter, Samuel  
Witter, Abraham

COMMENT:

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

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

TO DO:

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

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

---

**NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 1842**  
**BEDFORD CO., PA.**

*Census.*

“Septennial Enumeration of Dublin Township, 1842.”

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

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

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

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

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

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

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

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



Samuel Witter (1787–1876)  
Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)

TO DO:

Septennial returns are also said to exist at the state archives for **Franklin County, 1786 and 1800–42**. These need to be searched. A fuller discussion of the septennial censuses can be found at *Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania* (<https://www82.safesecureweb.com/genpa/research/taxrecords.html>).

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**1843 [Late]**  
**Bedford Co., PA**

*Tax roll.*

Dublin Township. Semialphabetical. [Full list of “W” entries not extracted for want of time.]<sup>49</sup>

**Weters, Samuel, Farmer**

Warranted acres	200	Value	\$400
Horses	2	Value	\$70
Cattle	2	Value	\$20
Total:			\$426
[County] Tax:			\$2.55
[State] Tax:			\$ .95

**Weters, Abraiah [Abraham]**

Patented Acres	300	Value	\$500
<b>Sawmill</b>	1	Value	\$50
Horses	2	Value	\$70
Cattle:	2	Value	\$24
Total Value			\$840
[County] Tax			\$5.04
[State] Tax			\$1.68

COMMENT:

Samuel’s son Benjamin was not found on this list.

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**1844**  
**BEDFORD CO., PA.**

*Tax roll.*

Dublin Township, “W” section; all names in exact sequence, for contextual clues.<sup>50</sup>

Wilson, Henry, farmer

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<sup>49</sup> Bedford Co., 1843 Tax Assessment Roll, Pennsylvania State Archives; accessed as FHL microfilm 1,449,377.

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

**Weetar, Samuel, farmer**

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

**Weetar, Benjamin, trade**

Cattle	1
Value	7
Total val.	18

Winegarner, John, farmer

**Weetar, Abraham, d<sup>o</sup>**

Patented land	333 acres
Value	800
Saw mill	1
Value	40
Horses	2
Value	40
Cattle	4
Value	28
Total val.	606

Wolf, Jacob, Gent.

Wolf, Jacob, Jr., farmer

Winegarner, Conrad, Gent.

Winegarner, Jacob, farmer

Wollet, Jacob L., farmer

Woodcock, Thomas, farmer

Woodman, Adam

Wilds, Widow of Bj.

Wilds, Thompson, farmer

Wilson, Samuel, farmer

Wilds, John, Heirs of

(p. 544)

Wollett, Benjamin, farmer

Wilds, William, Gent.

Wilson, James

Welch, William

Welch, David, Gentleman

Wildes, George, Gentleman

Wildes, John, Gentleman [taxed on nothing]

Walker, James, farmer

Woods, Joseph, trade

Warner, William, laborer

Walker, James J., farmer

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

COMMENT:

**Other Witters:**

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

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

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

---

**15 MAY 1845**  
**BEDFORD CO., PA**

*Birth of child.*

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

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**1845**  
**BEDFORD CO., PA.**

*Tax roll.*

Dublin Township. Semialphabetical by first letter of surname.

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

COMMENT:

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

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

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

**TO DO:**

Extend the deed search down through the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

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**1846**

**BEDFORD CO., PA.**

*Tax roll.*

Dublin Township. County taxes only. Semialphabetical by first letter of surname.

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

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

[*skip one*]

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

*Single Freeman roll:*

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

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**1847**

**BEDFORD CO., PA.**

*Tax roll.*

Dublin Township. Semialphabetical by first letter of surname.

**Witter, Samuel:** Not found

**Witter, Benjamin:** Not found

**Witter, Abraham, farmer**

“Located” land: 333 acres \$500 value

Horses: 2 \$40 value

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

Total valuation: \$570 “state and county”

Yearly income: \$641

**COMMENT:**

- Samuel’s move from Pennsylvania to Illinois can be placed between the 1846 and 1847 tax assessment rolls. This placement agrees with the 1850 census data for the household of Samuel’s daughter and son-in-law, Elizabeth and Joshua Jones Jr., which show a four-year-old born in Pennsylvania and a two-year-old born in Illinois. See census notes below.
  - On the 1849 Septennial Return, Abraham (aged 63) and his son Stephen (aged 26) are in the Clear Ridge community. In 1850, they fall off the rolls of Bedford, due to the creation of the new county of Fulton, along the Franklin County line. [Bedford tax rolls, FHL microfilm 1,433,960; and 1850 U.S. census]
- 

**1820–1850**

**PENNSYLVANIA**

*Land patents.*

A search of the state-level **warrant** and **patent** index books through 1850 revealed no land warranted or patented to Samuel Witter. That search was conducted only in the “W” section of each volume, which indexes the name of the patentee. The entries also identify the previous warrantee, most of whom bore

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

a different surname. *I did not read all pages of all volumes for possible references to Samuel as a warrantee of land later patented by another man.*<sup>51</sup>

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**3 SEPTEMBER 1850**

**LAWRENCE CO., ILL**

*Census.*

[No District Cited]<sup>52</sup>

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

**Neighborhood:**

Note: Samuel and Rachel are 25 households from their married daughter and son-in-law Elizabeth and Joshua Jones Jr. (son of Samuel Jones and nephew-in-law of the widow Elizabeth Jones who resided next to Samuel, below). In order to include both families in the neighborhood cluster, the following census extraction is a large one.

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

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

- 152 Oldham, James 37 chair maker \$100, Md.; Caroline 31, Penn.; Ann 12, Ohio; Thomas 9, Ia.; Martha 7, Ia.; John 4, Ia.; Henry 2, Ills.; Charles 6/12, Ills.; *and* Hammersley, Charles 25 chairmaker, Ia.
- 153 Passmore, Preston 27 farmer, Penn.; Rachel 25, Ohio [no children]
- 154 Morgan Henry M. 25 farmer \$500, Ohio; Edith M. 24, Ohio [no children]
- 155 **Jones**, Joshua 31 shoe & boot maker \$200, Md.; **Elizabeth [Witter] 27, Penn.**; William 6, Penn.; Samuel 4, Penn.; Benjamin 2, Ills.; Lafayette 1/12, Ills.
- 156 Pierce, William 34 farmer, Md.; Elizabeth 26, Ia.; Asa 12, Ohio; Solomon 6, Ills.; Mary 4, Ills.; Isabel 1, Ills.

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

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

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

- 157 Williams, John J. 29 farmer \$450, Ills.; Nancy 30, Ky.; Joseph 7, Ills.; Mary J. 5, Ills.; Martha 3, Ills.; Pemina 1, S.C. [*sic*]
- 158 Travis, William 72 farmer \$600, Tenn.; Lydia 68, Tenn.; Malone, Martha J. 6, Ills.
- 159 Hensell, Adam 39 carpenter, Ohio; Elizabeth 40, Ohio; Mary M. 20, Ohio; Sarah J. 17, Ohio; Daniel 11, Ohio; John 9, Ills.; Adam 5, Ills.; Peter 1, Ills.
- 160 **Jones**, William 36 farmer \$500, Md.; Sarah 26, Md.; Elizabeth 10, Ills.; Jane 8, Ills.; Thomas 6, Ills.; John 4, Ills.; Melissa 3/12, Ills. [William is the first cousin of Joshua at 155 and son of Elizabeth at 179. See file copy of “Joshua Jones: Research Notes”]
- 161 Cooper, William 28 farmer \$800, Ky.; Martha J. 28, Ills.; Mary A. 8, Ills.; Samuel N. 5, Ills.; Sarah J. 3, Ills.; G. W. 7/12, Ills.; *and* Turner, Edna 16, N.C.
- 162 Harlan, Lydia 40 \$1500, Ky.; Thomas 18 farmer, Ills.; James 14, Ills.; Ellen 11, Ills.; *and* Fyffe, Wilson 28 Ills.
- 163 West, Maria 38, Ky.; William 14, Ills.; Sarah 10, Ills.; Lafayette 1, Ills.
- 164 Crump, Edward P. 27 farmer, Ky.; Sabra 32, Ia.; George F. 5, Ia.; Zachary 3, Ia.; Sylvester 3/12, Ia.
- 165 Woodsworth, William 33 wool carder, Ohio; Catharine 25, Tenn.; *and* Fowler, George W. 2, Ills.; *and* Woodsworth, Frances 26, Tenn.; James 9, Ills.; Mary 4, Mo.; Sarah 2, Mo.
- 166 Newell, Samuel 65 farmer \$3000, Va.; Sarah 61, Va.; Mary 34, Ills.; Eusebia 22, Ills.; Thomas 20 farmer, Ills.; Samuel 18 farmer, Ills.
- 167 Hays, Sandy A. 43 farmer \$250, Va.; Jane 42, Ky.; Elizabeth 20, Ia.; Hiram 17 farmer, Ia.; Sarah 15, Ia.; Mary 13, Ia.; William 10, Ia.; James 4, Ills.
- 168 Kirkpatrick, Thomas 26, Ills.; Elizabeth 26, Ia.; Emily 2, Ill.; George 1, Ill.
- 169 Watson, Hezekiah 54 farmer, Tenn.; Amy 4, Tenn.; Emaline 22, Ia.; George 15, farmer, Ills.; Perry 13, Ills.; Hiram 11, Ills.; William 1, Ills.
- 170 Coxe, Levi 53 farmer, Tenn.; Elisabeth 45, Ky.; Minerva 10, Ills.; Caroline 7, Ills.; Emaline 7, Ills.; Lafayette 6, Ills.; James Mc 3, Ills.; Rebecca 2, Ills.
- 171 McClean, William 48 farmer, Ohio; Elizabeth 40, Ohio; Admiral 23, Ills.; Sarah 18, Ills.; Ealsey 16, Ills.; Mary 13, Ills.; Amanda 9, Ills.; Marion 5, Ills.; Erica 1, Ills.
- 172 Robinson, William 28 farmer \$400, Ill.; Mary 22, Ill.; Mary M. 3, Ills.; Sophia 1, Ills.; Catherine 3/12, Ills.
- 173 Cooper, George W. 50 \$2000, Va.; Mary 49, Ky.; Mary 17, Ills.; Emaline 15, Ills.; Sarah 13, Ills.; Martha 9, Ills.; *and* Cooper, James 24, Tenn.; Washington 22, Ky.; Hiram 21, Ky.; Cooper, William 21, Ky.
- 174 Kimmel, George 30 farmer \$200, Ia.; Cordelia [Quick] 30, Ky.; Sarah J? 1, Ill.
- 175 Abernathy, Martha 47 \$400, Ky.; George 18 farmer, Ky.; Sydney 14, Ky.; Elijah 12, Ills.; Sarah Ann 10, Ills.; Elizabeth 7, Ills.
- 176 Combs, Murphy 26 farmer \$200, Penn.; Susannah [**Jones?**] 24, Penn.; Marian 5, Ills.; Andrew 3, Ills.; Harrison 1, Ills.
- 177 Briant, Frederick 45 farmer \$200, Germany; Susan [Delong] 24, Penn.; Catharine 3, Ills.; Mary 1, Ills.
- 178 Brian, Jacob 42 farmer \$1,000, Germany; Eliza [Landis] 31, Penn.; Catharine 8, Ills.; Frederick 6, Ills.; John 4, Ills.; Martin 2, Ills.; *and* Landis, Susannah 63, Penn.
- 179 **Jones, Elizabeth** 63 Md.; Jesse 17, Penn.; Mary Ann 19, Penn.
- 180 **Witter, Samuel**
- 181 Gines, Henry 36 farmer \$800, Penn.; Ester [Moelliger] 36, Ohio; Amanda 11, Ohio; Christiana 9, Ohio; Henry 7, Ohio; Philip 3, Ills.; Catharine 1, Ills.
- 182 Ridgley, Richard 75 \$500, Md.; Mary 69, Md.; Doan, Sarah M. 4, Ohio
- 183 Ridgeley, John 24 farmer, Ohio; Mary 19, Tenn.; Ann Maria 2, Ills.; Margaret 1, Ills.
- 184 Ridgeley, Alfred 20 farmer, Ohio; Elizabeth 18, Ia.
- 185 Bunn, Benjamin 38 farmer \$1200, Ohio; Mary [**Shick?**] 33, Ohio; Catharine 14, Ohio; Mariah 13, Ohio; Eli 12, Ills.; Hiatt 10, Ills.; Jonathan F. 7, Ills.; Mary A. 4, Ills.; Winfield Scott 2, Ills.; *and* **Shick**, John 68 farmer \$800, Penn. [*His granddaughter Malinda Day soon became the 2d wife of Benjamin Witter, son of Samuel.*]

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

- 186 Shick, George 30 farmer, Ohio; Dulcena 25, Ohio; Angeline 7, Ohio; Melissa 5, Ohio; Robert 3, Ohio; George 1, Ohio;  
Shick, Abram 19, Ohio [*Malinda Day Witter, in 1867, named a daughter Dulcena for her aunt-in-law, Dulcena Shick.*]
- 187 Ridgely, George W. farmer \$500, Md.; Mary 44, Penn.; Richard 18, Ohio; Marion 16, Ohio; Mary J. 14, Ohio; William 11, Ohio; Benton 8, Ills.; Cynthia 5, Ills.; Eliza 2, Ills.; *and*  
Inyard, Clarisse 22, Ohio; Inyard, Mary Ann 1, Ills.
- 188 Corrie, Thomas 35 farmer \$1800, Scotland; Olivia 39, Scotland; James 14, Ills.; George 13, Ills.; William 8, Ills.; Thomas N. 4; Ills.; *and*  
Moore, Pallas 22, Tenn.; Delila 15, Ills.
- 189 Bell, William 27 farmer, Tenn.; Minerva 20, Ohio; Mary Ann 3, Ills.
- 190 Moore, Edward 37 farmer, Tenn.; Elizabeth 27, Germany; Nancy 8, Ills.; Clarisa 6, Ills.; Thomas C. 8/12, Ills.
- 191 Moore, John 29 farmer \$150, Tenn.; David S. 4, Ills.; Pallas 2, Ills.
- 192 Edmundson, Elbert S. 24 farmer, Tenn.; Malinda 18, Ill.; *and*  
Anderson, John 20 apprentice, Tenn.; *and*  
Wagley, Ephraim 16 apprentice, Ia.

COMMENT:

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

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

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**28 SEPTEMBER 1850**

*Bounty Land.*

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

“Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled, That each of the surviving, or the widow or minor children of deceased commissioned and non-commissioned officers, musicians, or privates, whether of regulars, volunteers, rangers, or militia, who performed military service in any regiment, company, or detachment, in the service of the United States, in the war with Great Britain, declared by the United States on the eighteenth day of June, eighteen hundred and twelve, or in any of the Indian wars since seventeen hundred and ninety, and each of the commissioned officers who was engaged in the military service of the United States in the late war with Mexico, **shall be entitled to lands as follows: Those who engaged to serve twelve months or during the war, and actually served nine months, shall receive one hundred and sixty acres, and those who**

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

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

**engaged to serve six months, and actually served four months, shall receive eighty acres, and those who engaged to serve for any or an indefinite period, and actually served one month, shall receive forty acres.** Provided, That wherever any officer or soldier was honorably discharged in consequence of **disability** in the service, before the expiration of his period of service, he shall receive the amount to which he would have been entitled if he had served the full period for which he had engaged to serve : Provided, **The person so having been in service shall not receive said land, or any part thereof, if it shall appear, by the muster rolls of his regiment or corps, that he deserted, or was dishonorably discharged from service, or if he has received, or is entitled to, any military land bounty under any act of Congress heretofore passed.”**

COMMENT:

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

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**22 MARCH 1852**

*Bounty Land.*

A new Congressional act of this day extended the 1850 law in several regards:<sup>54</sup>

- Eligibility included all who “were called into military service, and whose services have been paid by the United States” after 18 June 1812—whether the service was in militias, volunteer, or regular troops—“upon proof of length of service as therein required. ... “Nothing herein contained shall authorize bounty land to these who have heretofore received or become entitled to same.”
- The new act also counted the time spent marching “to the place where they were mustered ... were discharged [when that distance was “more than twenty miles from the place where the unit was organized. The marching credit was calculated at 20 miles per day.
- Bounty land warrants would now be “assignable, by deed or instrument of writing.”
- Any person who was entitled to a preemption right in federal land would be able to use the warrant in payment for the land at the rate of \$1.25 per acre.
- Bounty land warrants could be used for unpatented land anywhere in the public domain.

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**15 OCTOBER 1854**  
**LAWRENCE CO. ILL**

*Death.*

**Rachel Witter**, wife of Samuel, died this day and was buried in Brian Cemetery.<sup>55</sup>

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

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



**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

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**3 MARCH 1855**

*Bounty Land.*

By a supplementary act of this day, Congress extended the benefits in several additional ways:<sup>56</sup>

- Beneficiaries would now include any “surviving commissioned and non-commissioned officers, musicians, and privates, whether of regulars, volunteers, rangers, or militia, who were regularly mustered into the service of the United States, and every officer, commissioned, and non-commissioned, seaman, ordinary seaman, flotilla-man, marine, clerk, and landsman in the navy in any of the wars in which this country has been engaged” since 1790.”
- “Wagon-masters and teamsters who may have been employed, under direction of competent authority in time of war in the transportation of military stores and supplies were now eligible.
- Those who had served as volunteers at the British fleet attack on Lewistown, Delaware, in the War of 1812 were also eligible.
- All classes were entitled to 160 acres. If a person had previously received less than that, he was now entitled to the difference.
- Surviving widows—or in the absence of a widow, a minor child or children—were entitled to the quantity that a deceased veteran would receive under the new act.
- Service less than 14 days would not qualify, unless “the person shall actually have been engaged in battle.”
- Certificates and warrants were again assignable

COMMENT:

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

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**8 AUGUST 1860**

**LAWRENCE CO., ILL**

*Census.*

Lukin Township, P.O. Olive.<sup>57</sup>

14/13	<b>Samuel Witters</b>	71	male	Millerite	\$800/150	Penn.	
	Margaret “	22	female	Domestic		“	
	Harriet “	16	female	D <sup>o</sup>		“	att. school
	John “	15	male			“	att. school

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

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

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

**Neighborhood:**

- 1/1 Bunn, Benj. 56 farmer \$4000/800, Ohio; Mary 45, Ohio; Eli 21 farmer, Ills.; Hyatt 18 school teacher, Ills.; Finley 17 farm laborer, Ills.; Mary A., Ills.; W. S. 12, Ills.; B. F. 6, Ills.; *and*  
Finley, Martha 26 school teacher, Ohio
- 2/2 Ketcher, Jacob 47 farmer \$1200/600, Penn.; Martha 43, Penn.; Sanford 21 carpenter, Ohio; Adolphus 19 farmer, Ohio; Barshesia 17, Ohio; Marion 12, Ohio; Semantha 4, Ind.; Jane 2, Ills.
- 3/3 Davis, Mr. [sic] 34 carriage maker \$1200/600, Tenn.; Mary Jane 30, Ohio; Penny J. 8, Ills.; Lucy 6, Ills.; Hiram 10/12, Ills.
- 4/4 Mills, Reuben 34 C. Laborer \$/100, Tenn.; Susan 13, Tenn.; Helery 10, Tenn.; Sarah 9, Tenn.; William 6, Ills.; Nancy 1, Ills. [*see also household 5*]
- 5/5 Shick, George 41 farmer \$6000/800, Ohio; Duls[e]na 35, Ohio; Malissa P. 15, Ohio; Robert 13, Ohio; George 11, Ohio; Chambers 9, Ills.; Albert C. 4, Ills.; Matilda J. 1, Ills.; *and*  
Mills, Jemimiah *female* 13, Tenn. [*apparently belongs in household 4*]
- 6/6 Mann, John Jr. 28 farmer \$300/150, Ind.; Elizabeth 24, Ky.; Sarah E. 5, Ind.; Louisa H. 1, Ind.
- 7/7 Shick, Abraham 29 farm laborer \$/150, Ohio; Emaline 21, Ind.; Adaline 2, Ills.; Malvira 1, Ills.; Edward 3/12, Ills.; *and*  
Shick, Martin 30 farm laborer \$/200, Ohio; Sarah E. 38, Penn.; Sarah A. 4, Ills.
- 8/8 Apling, David E. 41 farmer \$/400, Ky.; Sarah A. 40 Ky.; George P. 20, farm laborer, Ky.; Mary 18, Ky.; Winfield 16, farm laborer, Ky.; Annie 12, Ky.; Wesley 11, Ky.; Annie [sic] 3, Ky.; Fillmore 9, Ky.; Sidney 1, Ills. [*apparently Arbuchnot Apling at end of next household should be here*]
- 9/9 Shick, John V. 47 farmer \$4000/1000, Ohio; Elizabeth 37, Ind.; Frances 14, Ills.; Peter 12, Ills.; Mary 11, Ills.; John H. 9, Ills.; David L. 7, Ills.; Joseph L. 6, Ills.; Quincy C. 10/12, Ills.; *and*  
Shick, John 86 “unknown [birthplace]”; *and*  
Apling, Arbuchnot 14 female Ky. [*see preceding household*]
- 10/ “Not Occupied”
- 11/10 Lagrange, Aaron 29 farmer \$300, Ind.; Martha Ann 26, Ohio; Sarilda 6/12, Ills.; *and*  
Lagrange, Nancy Ann 56 Va.; *and*  
Shick, Amelia J. (2, Ills.) [*This child probably belongs in household 9*]
- 12/11 Corrie, Alexander 31 farmer \$/250, Ohio; Caroline 25, Ills.; William 6, Ills.; Andrew 5, Ills.; Sarah 3/12, Ills.
- 13/12 **Jones**, Joshua 42 shoe maker \$1200/300, Md.; Elizabeth [**Witter**] 38, Penn.; William 17, farm laborer, Penn.; Samuel 15, Penn.; Benjamin 13, Ills.; Lafayette 10, Ills.; Franklin 8, Ills.; Joshua 5, Ills.; Ensley J. 2, Ills.; *and*  
Jones, John H. 27 farm laborer, Md.; *and*  
Hinsbarger, Sarah 9, Ills.; *and*
- 14/13 Witters, Samuel**
- 15/14 Goins, Henry 48 farmer \$3500/800, Penn.; Easter 47 domestic, Ohio; Amanda 21, domestic, Ohio; Henry S. 17 farm laborer, Ills.; Philip C. 13, Ills.; Catherine 11, Ills.; Fannie 9, Ills.; Easter 2, Ills.
- 16/15 Michael, Jacob 25 farmer 4700/200, Ohio; Catherine 25 domestic, Ohio; Sarah C. 5, Ills.; Rose Ann 3, Ills.; Wm. W. 1, Ills.
- 17/16 Ridgely, Alfred 24 farmer \$700/300, Ohio; George 9 domestic, Ills.; Elizabeth J. 1, Ills.; Sarah 24, Ky. [*Apparently Sarah, in last place, should be the “domestic” in second place, rather than the child George being a domestic.*]
- 18/17 Shick, Peter 27 farmer 4700/200, Ohio; Mary Ann W. 22 domestic, Md.; Martha J. 5, Ills.; Ammasoda J. 3, Ills.
- 19/18 Bedine, John B. 39 farmer \$200, France; Mary 36 domestic, France; Jane 11, Ohio; Marie 8, Ohio; Mary Jane 7, Ohio; Amelia 5, Ohio; Elizabeth 1, Ohio
- 20/19 Bedine, Claude, 69 farmer \$3000/500, France; Jane 68 domestic, France; *and*  
Bedine, John C. 29 farmer, France; Malinda 19, domestic Ohio
- 21/20 Grout, Elmer 20 farmer \$1200/200, NY; Mary F. 22 domestic, Ohio
- 22/21 Corrie, Andrew 55 farmer \$5000/1200, Scotland; Elizabeth W. 51 domestic, Tenn.; George H. 23 farm laborer, Ills.; Wm. H. 21 carpenter, Ills.; John T. 18, farm laborer, Ills.; Harriet A. 14, Ills.; Jacob A. 11, Ills.; Charles E. 8, Ills.; Thomas E. 5, Ills.

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

- 23/22 Worstell, Sophronia 47 domestic \$600/200, Ohio; George W. 23 farm laborer, Ohio; Thomas J. 20 farm laborer, Ohio; Elizabeth 18 domestic, Ills.; Moses C. 16 farm laborer, Ills.; Cynthia 12, Ills.; Isaac C. 10, Ills.; Sylvester 8, Ills.
- 24/23 Hazleton, Warren 36 farmer \$3000/400, NY; Lucy J. 30 domestic, Tenn.; Sarah 12, Ills.; Wm. H. 10, Ills.; Alsa 8, Ills.; Mary E. 6, Ills.; Lucy J. 4, Ills.; Louis A. 1, Ills.
- 25/24 Corrie, Thomas 47 farmer \$5000/\$1200, Scotland, Olive 50 domestic, Tenn.; William 18 farm laborer, Ills.; Thomas N. 14, Ills.

**COMMENT:**

Note that

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

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

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**13 JULY 1870**  
**LAWRENCE CO., IL**

*Census.*

Lukin Township, Olive P.O., Lawrence Co.<sup>58</sup>

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

**Neighborhood:**

- 81/81 Ridgley, John Jr. 34 farmer \$800/300, Ill.; Thomas 32 *female* keeping house, Ill.; Olive 10, Ill.; Newton 8, Ill.; Stephen 6, Ill.; Fanny 2, Ill.; *and*  
 Ridgley, Mary 92, Va.
- 82/82 Hill, Isaac 33 farmer \$1600/650, Ind.; Louisa 27, Ohio; Martha 10, Ill.; Wesley 8, Ill.; Sarah 4, Ill.; Susan 10/12, Ill.
- 83/83 Knipp, John 45 blacksmith \$/500, Ill.; Angaline 37 keeping house, Ohio; Henry 17, works on farm, Ill.; Marion 15, Ill.; James 13, Ill.; William 11, Ill.; Nancy 7, Ill.

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

- 84/84 Morgan, Stephen 44 farmer \$2500/600, Indiana; Mary 43 keeping house, Ind.; William 22, works on farm, Ind.; Mary 10, Ill.; Sarah 8, Ill.
- 85/85 Wright, James, 48, farmer \$2500/750, Ind.; Sarah 30 keeping house, Ill.; David 21 works on farm, Ill.; Eliza 12, Ill.; Nancy 10, Ill.; Elizabeth 9, Ill.; Mahaly 7, Ill.; Lafayette 5, Ill.; **Della** 3, Ill.; Susan 6/12, Ill.
- 86/86 Gaddy, Fuller 39 farmer \$/200, Ill.; Terecee 38, Ill.; George 13, Ill.; Elizabeth 11, Ill.; Sine? *male* 5, Ill.; Mary 5, Ill.; Lucy 3, Ill.; Eana 1, Ill.; *and*  
Gaddy, George, 60, Tenn.
- 87/87 Gaddy, James 68 farmer \$2000/500, Tenn.; Elizabeth 63, Tenn.; John 40, Tenn.; Lucy 18, Ill.; George 25, Ill.; Jane 15, Ill.; Martha 12, Ill.; George 8, Ill.; Mary 6, Ill.; Thomas 4, Ill.
- 88/88 Wooden, John 37 farmer, Ill.; Elizabeth 36 keeping house, Ill.; Percillah 12, Ill.; Malinda 11, Ill.
- 89/89 Hill, James 30 farmer \$1000/400 Ky.; Sarah 29 keeping house, Ill.; William 7, Ill., Mary 4, Ill.
- 91/91 **Witters, Samuel**
- 92/92 Bell, Elijah 41 farmer \$600/250, Tenn.; Mariah 28 keeping house, Ill.; Catharine 8, Ill.; Ned 6, Ill.; Nancy 4, Ill.; John 2, Ill.
- 93/93 Bell, Thomas 43 farmer \$600/350, Tenn.; Jane 35 keeping house, Ill.; Nathan 16, Ill.; John 14, Ill.; James 12, Ill.; Thomas 10, Ill.; Constantin 7, Ill.; Jane 3, Ill.
- 94/94 Bass, John 67 farmer \$2400/600, Tenn.; Elizabeth 62 keeping house, Va.; William 17 works on farm, Ill.; Mary 25, Ill.
- 95/95 Holsen, Frederick 29 farmer \$4000/1350, Hanover; Nancy 25 keeping house, Ill.; William 5, Ill.; Charles 3/12, Ill.; *and*  
Holsen, Herman 22 works on farm, Hanover
- 96/96 Kennitt, James 53 farmer \$700/300, Ill.; Hester 52 keeping house, Ohio; Barbara 16, Ill.; Lenora 10, Ill.; Franklin 13, Ill.; Ellen 6, Ill.; *and*  
Kennitt, James 23, Ill.; Susan 18, Ill.
- 97/97 Taylor, Cornelius 45 farmer \$1200/350, Penn.; Eliza 32 keeping house, Ind.; Jesse 13, Ill.; Malvina 11, Ill.; Margaret 8/12, Ill.; William 9, Ill.; Thomas 7, Ill.; Ruben 5, Ill.; Hector 8/12, Ill.
- 98/98 Gardner, Jesse 43 farmer \$400/250, Penn.; Racheal 34, Ill.; Stephen 14, Ill.; Sarah 12, Ill.; Martha 8, Ill.; Allen 6, Ill.; John 4, Ill.; Samuel 8/12, Ill.
- 99/99 Bass, John 25 farmer \$/150, Ill.; Augusta 19 keeping house, Ind.
- 100/100 Bass, Ezekiel 30 farmer \$1000/500, Ill.; Caroline 24 keeping house; Illinois; Ella 3, Ill.; George 2, Ill.; Theodore 3/12, Ill.

COMMENT:

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

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

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**25 DECEMBER 1876**

**PENNSYLVANIA**

*Death.*

Died 25 December 1876, according to his tombstone in Brian Cemetery, Christy Township, Lawrence County, Illinois (located 5.5 miles SW of Sumner, off Highway 1801 in Section 30, Township 3N, Range

**Samuel Witter (1787–1876)**  
**Rachel “Lizzie” Smith [aka Reifschmieder, Reifsnider] (1802–1854)**

13W). The cemetery in 1977 was located on the farm of Eugene Laws, a grandson of Samuel’s daughter Sarah by her husband William Laws. Mr. Laws provided a photograph of the stone, whose material and style appear to be contemporaneous with the date of death. The photo provides the following data:<sup>59</sup>

SAMUEL WITTER

Died

Dec. 25, 1876

89Y, 6M, 13D

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<sup>59</sup> Eugene Laws, Sumner, Illinois, to Elizabeth Shown Mills, 23 June 1977.