

BIOGRAPHY OF MARY (BUNNELL) BENSLEY

Mary Bunnell (*Isaac*⁵, *Solomon*⁴, *Benjamin*³, *Benjamin*², *William*¹) was born October 7, 1768 in Middle Smithfield Township, in what is now Monroe Co., PA, one of eight children of Isaac and Eleanor (Barkalow) Bunnell

ⁱ. She married, about 1795, William Bensley, who was born in October 27, 1769 in Westchester County, NY. William and his wife relocated to Barton Township (in what was at that time the town of Old Tioga)ⁱⁱ, Tioga Co, NY about 1803 from Middle Smithfield Township, in what was at the time Northampton Co., PA.ⁱⁱⁱ John Bunnell, Mary's brother, and his wife Hannah had relocated to Candor Township about 1797. Mary, and her husband may have relocated about the same time as they were in Barton, NY about 1803.^{iv} At least one source alleges that Mary and her husband purchased land from her brother John^v: a second source states that the land was purchased from **his** brother John.^{vi} A third source states that land, when purchased by William and Mary consisted of 117 acres, "with only a small clearing and a log house by way of improvements."^{vii} This would indicate that the land was previously owned and settled, but certainly not by whom.

While William was a weaver by trade, he was evidently a farmer as well. He and his family cleared the forest from the 117 acres he had purchased.^{viii} Such an endeavor was normally done to prepare the land for farming. The 117-acre property he purchased was located "on the river road, about one mile west of Barton village."^{ix} The 1869 Tioga County Township map clearly shows three Bensleys still living along that road and near one residence the description "Bensley's

ⁱ a. Source B71: *History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins, and Schuyler Counties, New York* by Everts & Ensign, 1879, provides Mary's date and place of birth.

b. Source CO1: Letter, from Mrs. Elizabeth Jones, Office of the Registrar-General, , D.A.R., July 16, 1923 to Mr. H.E. Deats states that Mary Bunnell, daughter of Isaac and Eleanor (Barkalow) Bunnell was born 1768 and married Wm Bensley.

ⁱⁱ Source B71: *History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins, and Schuyler Counties, New York* by Everts & Ensign, 1879

ⁱⁱⁱa. Source B41: *Gay's Gazetteer* states (page 160) that John and Hannah moved to Tioga Co. from Pike Co., PA. The land purchase cited above places him in Tioga Co in 1797.

c. Source B70: *Pennsylvania Line: A Research Guide to Pennsylvania Genealogy and Local History*, William L. Iscrupe and Shirley G. M. Iscrupe; Published by Southwest Genealogical Services; 1990; pages 163 - 168, 194: Middle Smithfield Township is in the Northeastern part of what is currently Monroe Co. That portion of the county was originally part of Northampton Co. until 1798, when it was included in the newly formed Wayne Co. In 1820 Pike Co. was formed and included Middle Smithfield Township. Finally in 1840 Monroe Co. was formed from parts of Northampton and Pike Co.s and included Middle Smithfield Township. John apparently moved to Tioga Co., NY prior to 1798, and was relocating from Northampton Co, PA. At the time *Gay's Gazetteer* was written, that area was Pike Co.

^{iv} a. Source B41: *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785 - 1888*, W.B. Gay & Co., Syracuse, NY, 1887 (Reprint by Tioga County Historical Society, Owego, NY, 1985) Page 79, states that William Bensley relocated to the Town of Barton, Tioga Co., NY "from Smithfield, Wayne (now Pike) [now, 1997, Monroe] county, Pa. He removed to this town [Barton] May 10, 1803...." He "married Mary, daughter of Isaac Bunnell,..." sister of John Bunnell. Thus, William and Mary and John were from Smithfield Township and relocated to Tioga Co., though John undoubtedly preceded his sister by up to 6 years.

b. Source CO3; A letter from Mrs. Horace G. Walters, Dec. 4, 1945 cites *Asbury Church and Its Minisink Influence* by Charles Cafferty, publisher and date unknown, pg. 39: "William Bensley 1769 -m- Mary Bunnell (daughter of Isaac of Monroe Co. Pa) b. Oct 7, 1768-d. Dec. 8, 1828. Both are buried at Barton N.Y"

^v Source CO3: Letter from Mrs. Horace G. Walters, Dec. 4, 1945: "Wm. Bensley purchased land from her (Mary Bunnell) brother John Bunnell who married Hannah Jayne. (Late John Biles quoted this latter statement)." This implies that approximately 1803, William and Mary purchased land purchased earlier by John Bunnell.

^{vi}Source B41: *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785 - 1888*, W.B. Gay & Co., Syracuse, NY, 1887 (Reprint by Tioga County Historical Society, Owego, NY, 1985), page 79, says that William's land was first "owned by John Bensley, brother of William." Further, Gays, page 248, says that John "first settled in the Park Settlement, in the southeast corner of Candor..." later moving to Newark Valley. Park Settlement is 12 to 15 miles from Barton and they are separated by Tioga Township, so the probability of John Bunnell owning land that he sold to William is very low. The error may have occurred because William's brother and Mary's brother were both named John.

^{vii} Source B71: *History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins, and Schuyler Counties, New York* by Everts & Ensign, 1879

^{viii} Source B71: *History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins, and Schuyler Counties, New York* by Everts & Ensign, 1879

^{ix} Source B41: *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785 - 1888*, W.B. Gay & Co., Syracuse, NY, 1887 (Reprint by Tioga County Historical Society, Owego, NY, 1985), page 79

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Homestead” is written. The map shows a J.G. Bensley (probably John, son of William and Mary) and two “D. Bensley” (probably David and Daniel, sons of William and Mary) . The farm remained in the Bensley family for about 80 years. ^x

William and Mary (Bunnell) Bensley had 9 or 10 children; They were (Source indicated in [] brackets):

Gershom or Gershorn	[B41 & B71]
John	[B41 & B71]
Daniel	[B41 & B71]
David	[B71]
Henry	[B41 & B71]
Eleanor	[B41 & B71]
Elizabeth	[B41 & B71]
Anna	[B41]
Mary A.	[B41 & B71]
Sarah	[B41 & B71]

The two sources, B41: *Historical Gazetteer and Directory of Tioga County* and B71: *History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins, and Schuyler Counties, New York* differ greatly when it comes to the life of Daniel Bensley.

B41 states that “Daniel married Lucina P. Felt, of Potter county, Pa., by whom he had four children, viz.: Elliott L., who lives on the homestead, Charles and Daniel, who died in infancy, and Bertha L.”

B71 states that: “. . . . He married, July 1, 1820, Martha, daughter of Gershorn Bunnell, of Monroe C., Pa. “ It goes on to state that she died in 1863, and in 1865 “he married Mary F. Todd” And finally it states that “Mr. Bensley has never had any children of his own, but has shared his home with those in need,”

It is possible that the first source actually attributed David’s marriage and children to Daniel, though not mentioning David as a child of William and Mary. It appears more probable that the second source is correct in that it is specifically written as a biography of Daniel Bensley.

William Bensley died about 1852 at the age of 83^{xi}. Mary died Dec. 8, 1828; both are buried at Barton, NY.^{xii}

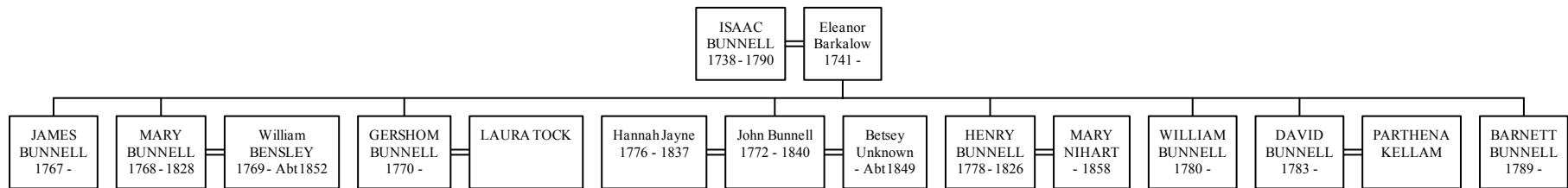
^x Source B41: *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785 - 1888*, W.B. Gay & Co., Syracuse, NY, 1887 (Reprint by Tioga County Historical Society, Owego, NY, 1985), page 79

^{xi} Source B71: *History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins, and Schuyler Counties, New York* by Everts & Ensign, 1879

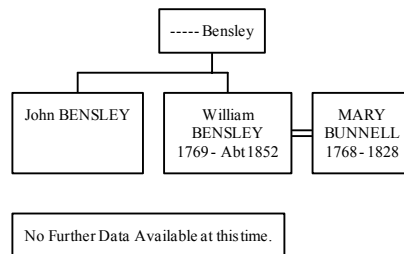
^{xii} Source CO3; A letter from Mrs. Horace G. Walters, Dec. 4, 1945 cites *Asbury Church and Its Minisink Influence* by Charles Cafferty, publisher and date unknown, pg. 39: “William Bensley 1769 -m- Mary Bunnell (daughter of Isaac of Monroe Co. Pa) b. Oct 7, 1768-d. Dec. 8, 1828. Both are buried at Barton N.Y.”

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Siblings (and their spouses) of Mary Bunnell



Siblings (and their spouses) of William Bensley



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Children (and their spouses) of William and Mary Bensley

