

Samuel Brooks and Samuel Brooks of New York via Derbyshire

I came to this family through Walter BROOKS born 1843 in Monroe county, New York. Walter was the husband of Catherine EATEN and, through the Eatons, he was the brother-in-law of Hezekiah JEAL (1836-1929). I have been researching the Jeals of Kent for the last few weeks.

In researching Walter Brooks' ancestors I have discovered amongst on-line family trees some confusion and intermixing of two different families. The confusion over these two different families is not surprising given that they are both headed by Samuel and Mary Brooks with both couples originating from the county of Derbyshire, England and both ending up in the state of New York, USA.

Walter was the son of Samuel BROOKS born circa 1806 and Mary Ann TAFT born circa 1810. I have yet to identify a record of their passage from England to New York however Mary Ann Taft's obituary records her as having arrived in the USA around 1840.

Samuel and Mary Ann married in Duffield parish, Derbyshire on 23 July 1832. They had at least three children in England; David born around 1835, Maria born 1837 and John born 1841. The US records related to these three children consistently describe them as having been born in England. Walter, born 1843 in New York, is almost certainly the first American child of this couple.

This provides a timeline for their passage of somewhere between 1841 and 1843. This also suggests the family should show up in the 1841 English census but I have yet to find a record for them.

The family settled in Rochester and Samuel died June 1859 at the age of 53. He is buried at Mount Hope cemetery. After Samuel's death Mary and her youngest moved to Cohocton, Steuben county, where she would live out her days. She died in 1906 and, like her husband, is buried at Mount Hope cemetery, Rochester.

Samuel Brooks and Mary Ann Taft had the following children

- David Brooks born England 1835, married Elizabeth [unknown], died 1913 in Kansas.
- Maria Brooks (also known as Kate?) born England 1837, married William MYLECRAINE, died 1930 in Rochester, Monroe county, New York
- John Brooks born England 1841, married Gertrude [unknown], died 1907 in Cohocton, Steuben county, New York.
- Walter Brooks born Rochester, NY 1843 married Catherine EATON died 1892 in Minnesota.
- Ann Brooks born Rochester, NY circa 1846. Recorded in the 1850 but not the 1860 Federal census so probably died as a child.
- Reuben Brooks born Rochester, NY circa 1849. Recorded in the 1850 but not the 1860 Federal census so probably died as a child.
- Harriet Ruth Millicent Brooks born 1851 Rochester, NY 1851, married John BOWERS, died 1934 in Rochester, Monroe county, New York.

I referred above to a second Brooks family and Samuel Brooks and Mary Ellen MARTIN headed this family up. Whilst this second Samuel appears to have hailed from Heage in North Derbyshire his wife was Irish. They married on 7 October 1833 at St Peter's church in the city of Derby.

This was Samuel's second marriage as he is recorded in the register as a widower. It is very likely that his first wife was Sarah CORBETT, daughter of Samuel and Martha Corbett and born in Derby around 1798. She was baptized that year at St Peter's on Christmas Day. There is a burial record for a Sarah Brooks aged 35 dated 24 April 1833 at St Peter's, Derby. This is six months before Samuel married the spinster Mary Martin.

So, the sequence of events goes like this - Samuel Brooks and Sarah Corbett both in their early 30s married in 1831. After less than 18 months Sarah died and within six months Samuel remarried to the 23 year old Mary Martin.

It is not clear whether Samuel and Sarah had any children. There is a burial of a baby Samuel Brooks at All Saints (rather than St Peter's) in February 1833. It does seem odd that they would bury their child at one church and then when the mother died soon after, bury her at a different church. The two churches are a little over 3 miles apart. The verdict is out as to whether this child was theirs.

Samuel and his second wife, Mary, had at least five children before they set sail for the Americas in 1853. They arrived in New York aboard the *Lady Franklin* on 1 June. Their eldest son, George Martin Brooks, did not travel with them. Later that year George married Dinah GORSE at St Alkmund, Derby on 1 October. The couple eventually followed arriving in New York 3 March 1855 aboard the *Jeremiah Thomson*.

This family of Brooks settled in New Lisbon, Otsego county, New York and their details are as follows.

Samuel Brooks born 4 April 1800, Derbyshire married Mary Ellen Martin born circa 1810 in Ireland. Mary died 23 July 1878 in New Lisbon. Samuel survived his wife by 10 years, dying 26 March 1889 in New Lisbon. Their children were

- George Martin Brooks born England 1834 married (in England) Dinah GORSE, died 1903 in Otsego county, NY.
- Benjamin Walter Brooks born England 1835 married first Mary Ann JACKSON and secondly Elizabeth LEE died 1893 in Mount Upton, Chenango county, NY.
- Samuel Brooks born England 1838 married Emma YOUNG died 1878 in Maine.
- Reuben Brooks born 1840 England married Martha PORTER died 1897 in Otsego county, New York.
- Mary Ann Brooks born 1845 England – the last record I can find for Mary Ann is the 1880 Federal census where she was with her father, after that I do not know what became of her.

These two Brooks families may well be related however I have not undertaken any research into this. It is worth noting the shared use of the names 'Walter' and 'Reuben' which may well be common Brooks family names.

Mary Ann Taft's mother is with her in Cohocton in 1860 as evidenced by the Federal census. Despite not having discovered the passenger manifest that records this family's journey to the USA I think it likely that the elderly Rebecca Taft joined the family to support her daughter following the incapacity or death of her son-in-law in the late 1850's. Mary Ann Taft was the daughter of Thomas TAFT (1780-1829) & Rebecca ROPER (1780-1873). Her grand parents were respectively Thomas TAFT & Millicent REDGATE and Daniel ROPPER & Elizabeth ABBOTT.

The above is based exclusively on on-line resources available via Ancestry.com, FindMyPast.co.uk, freereg2.freereg.org.uk and familysearch.org and includes transcripts and indexes where the original documents referenced may contain information that disproves the asserted relationships. As ever I am grateful to the public family trees available on Ancestry.com which prompted this note but also provided invaluable insights.

Glenn Palmer
gatp63@hotmail.com

London 23 January 2016