

**ENOCH BARTON (1775-1833) OF PENNSYLVANIA (& OHIO)
AND QUESTIONABLE DESCENT
FROM CAPTAIN ELISHA BARTON (1729-1823)**

The intent of this report is to shed a cold, hard light of truth on the genealogy of this particular branch of the Barton family. There is not one scrap of credible documentary evidence thus far known, that can be shown linking Enoch Barton (1775-1833), a former resident of south Tuscarora Valley, old Mifflin (now Juniata) County, Pennsylvania, with Elisha Barton, one-time commissioned Captain of the Eastern Battalion, Morris County New Jersey Militia during the Revolutionary War. No military service pension record is known for the former Captain, apparently, but many details of his service record are known suggesting his service was valid. The issue of the Captain's service is accepted here. Elisha Barton's died at age 93 on 31 Mar 1823 near Fleming in old Hunterdon County, New Jersey. The Captain's Will, of which two editions are known was rewritten not too many years before his death and both editions mentioned a younger son named Enoch Barton. Evidence has recently come to light suggesting that early work on the genealogy of Captain Barton's family with respect to one Enoch Barton, a former resident of old Mifflin County, Pennsylvania.

The background in the matter is not complex. In the 1920s, Adolph Law Voge along with his cousin and associate, Dr. Joshua Lindley Barton, both Barton family descendants and residents of New York, desired to contact as many Barton relatives as possible with the goal of reconstructing their Barton family genealogy. In order to gather potentially useful family information from wayward kin the two gentlemen posted advertisements, titled, "To Those of Barton Blood", in various major newspapers across the country. Walter Hogan Barton, a one-time reporter for the Chicago Tribune before moving to Maywood, southwestern Nebraska, to start up his own local newspaper, was plausibly sent a copy of the Voge-Barton ad from a relative or old associate in Chicago. Walter H. Barton responded to the ad and with that response included a bible record that had been passed down in his Barton family from his grandfather Enoch Barton's time. The record conceivably was begun at Enoch Barton and family's old home in south Tuscarora Valley, old Mifflin (now Juniata) County Pennsylvania sometime during the first three decades of the early 19th century.

Personal correspondence from the files of the New Jersey genealogist, Hiram E. Deats (Deats, undated), himself an actual descendant of Captain Elisha Barton, reveals that the information Misterys Voge and Barton received from W.H. Barton of Nebraska was shared with Mr. Deats. Despite strong evidence of a mismatch between the birth date of Enoch Barton as shown in bibles of Captain Barton's descendant families who had remained in New Jersey and the date of birth provided by Walter Hogan Barton for his grandfather Enoch Barton, misterys Voge and Deats were less impressed by this mismatch than they were impressed by the nature of the names given the children of W.H. Barton's grandfather Enoch. Without seeking corroboration of any sort, the two men simply assumed the two Enochs were the same man and such is reflected in the personal correspondence that passed between Voge and Deats.

Over two decades later, Dr. George E. McCracken discovered the older work of Adolph Law Voge in the Library of Congress Manuscripts Division, Mr. Voge having passed away some years previously. Rather than indicating, as he surely would have learned in the course of his study, that there appeared to be a very real discrepancy between the birth dates available for the two Enochs, Professor McCracken merely accepted the same conclusion arrived at earlier by Voge and Deats -- right names, about the right time and place, therefore, must be one in the same Enoch Barton. Dr. McCracken accepted the older unfounded view without investigation and sent it to press (McCracken 1953-a, p. 114; 1953-b, p. 212). However, in all fairness to Dr. McCracken he may not have been aware of the birth date mismatch between the two bible records. Subsequent authors uncritically followed Dr. McCracken's publications resulting today in hosts of books and internet sites, too numerous to list individually, all purporting to represent as fact a situation that has little factual basis.

Gilbert Barton (1801-1891), son of Enoch Barton of south Tuscarora Valley, reported both his parents as born "Scotland" (United States. 1880-a). Research in progress suggests there was an immigrant Barton family living not only in Tuscarora Valley at the same time Enoch Barton lived there but in the same part of the Valley close to where Enoch Barton lived. Furthermore, this one immigrant Barton family was in the Valley during the entire thirty-year interval the Enoch Barton family resided there. Early work on this Irish Barton family leaves many unanswered

questions as the primary investigator of that family, a Mr. Al Beale, has recently passed away and cannot now be queried about his research on the immigrant family nor has his personal research notes been sought for review to include here. The fact that this immigrant Barton family was Irish rather than Scottish may not have been more of a significant distinction to Gilbert Barton than his father's immigrant status. Beyond the fact this Irish immigrant Barton family was living nearby, there may also have been some intermarriages in common with families that were associated with both Barton families. Certainly, that issue deserves a closer look for any parts those relationships may play if no direct link between Enoch Barton of Tuscarora Valley and Captain Elisha Barton is ever found.

Two daughters of Captain Elisha and Jemima (Van Kirk) Barton, Rachel (Barton) Kline and Catherine (Barton) Kline, as well as a son, Noah Barton, and all their families moved to Northumberland County of eastern central Pennsylvania in the late 1790s and early 1800s. Historical accounts and/or legal documents exist as corroborating evidence serving to tie all three of these individuals to New Jersey origins or directly to Elisha Barton. The places where the three Barton children and their kin settled in old Northumberland County Pennsylvania, the Klines near present-day Klinesville and the Noah Barton family in Shamokin, were relatively close to one another. None lived closer than about 60 miles [linear distance, though actual travel distance was likely much further] to the area south of present-day East Waterford, Juniata County, where Enoch Barton, father of Gilbert Barton (1801-1891) and siblings, lived during the first three decades of the early 1800s. Additionally, one report, still uncorroborated, puts the birth of Enoch and Margaret (Towar) Barton's fourth child Charlotte in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in 1805 (Kuhbender and Espy, 1987, p. 32). This last bit of geographical information, if true, may indicate an entirely different migration path for Enoch Barton's family into eastern central Pennsylvania via the Susquehanna Valley rather than the more direct route the New Jersey Bartons might have followed -- up the Schuylkill Valley.

Misters Voge and Deat's penned remarks show their awareness of the fact that several of Captain Elisha Barton's children had moved to eastern central Pennsylvania and this knowledge might have swayed their thinking about the Enoch they learned had once lived in Tuscarora Valley. No considerations of the geographical distance that separated Enoch of Tuscarora from the Elisha Barton children appear to have ever been considered judging from the letters between Misters Voge and Deats. As Mr. Deat's noted, in a penned reference to appearances of early Barton family members in eastern Pennsylvania, "where else could they go? There was nowhere else to go." Today, we're aware that large areas of eastern and central Kentucky as well as northern Tennessee and practically all areas between those frontiers and the denser settlements of the fledgling U.S. were by the 1790s, at least, drawing thousands upon thousands of settlers. Too, the barest beginnings of settlement were also appearing at the time on the north bank of the Ohio River in the southwest part of the area soon to receive the name of that river at statehood. Where could the New Jersey son of Captain Elisha Barton gone? Practically anywhere out on the frontier could be one answer, and maybe, the answer.

Enoch Barton's son Gilbert, likely to have been aware of his own father's early history was the only one of his children to live long enough, to likely have been of reasonably good mental state enabling him to make a credible report, provided a widely available and published record (U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census, 1880-a) suggesting a Scottish origin for his father. That report, at a minimum, casts shadow over the older Voge-Deats idea that the two Enochs were one and the same person. Charlotte (Barton) Espy, former widow of James Hart and younger sister of Gilbert Barton, was the only other child of Enoch Barton surviving to respond to the 1880 census. Therein she gave an aberrant response, reporting herself and parents to have all been born in Ohio. Charlotte reportedly suffered kidney disease towards the end of her life and finally succumbed to its effects on 27 Sep 1886 (Kuhbender & Espy, 1987, p. 32). The effects of the ailment may be one possible explanation for the different responses she gave for her place of birth in 1880, therein reporting Ohio, compared to her 1870 census record in which she reported her Pennsylvania birth. (U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census, 1870; 1880-b).

One might question the accuracy of Gilbert's response in the 1880 census but, on the other hand, Gilbert would have been in the best possible position to have both learned something of his father's origins and to later make report of what he learned, Enoch surviving until son Gilbert was about age 32. What more knowledgeable source might have existed and been better able to comment on Enoch's origin than one of the man's own children? Might review of Elisha Barton's estate papers on file at the New Jersey State Archives at Trenton or, alternatively, the records of Mifflin County Pennsylvania shed additional light on the matter and either contradict or support Gilbert's 1880 report? Perhaps, but to the best of the current writer's knowledge such work has never been done.

Extant court documents in both Warren County Ohio and Mifflin County Pennsylvania (Charles Towar's 1830 Will and subsequent estate records from Mifflin) serve to evidence the early 1830s migration of Enoch Barton from Tuscarora Valley to Deerfield Township, southwestern Warren County, Ohio. Other records document the subsequent dispersal of his children in the States of Ohio and to Illinois after his death. Modern descendants of Enoch Barton of Tuscarora Valley Pennsylvania survive today all having arisen through at least four lines of descent from the man and all should be aware that though some document may yet be uncovered to convincingly show that the two Enochs were indeed the same man it's equally possible such may never be found.

The conclusions arrived at here are that Misters Voge and Deats may have made a hasty call on Enoch Barton former resident of Tuscarora Valley, PA, equating him with the Enoch Barton son of the New Jersey Militia Captain, Elisha Barton. Voge & Deats had little factual evidence to guide them to their conclusion beyond what they took to be convincing similarities in names between two families. In retrospect, their considerations of the names involved were impaired by significant omissions as they had no knowledge of the Towar family and were therefore unable to assess one major source of potential contributions to the list of given names before them. Any names common to the Towar and Tuscarora Barton families and not common to the immediate Tuscarora and New Jersey Barton families really can't be considered 'Barton' names. The name Isabella, for example, may have served to sway professor McCracken and some later observers into thinking the occurrence of the name indicated a pattern and from that pattern some familial connection with Isabella (Unknown) wife of a Gilbert Barton one-time proprietor of the White Horse Tavern at Cranberry, NJ, considered by many to have been a close relative of Captain Elisha. Regarding another significant names issue, is it possible through chance alone for two men with the same surname and both having been born exactly one year apart to receive the same common given name? One would have to agree that yes, such a situation could be entirely possible. Secondly, would it be possible for the Enoch about whom we have information, to have selected, again by chance, three common names: Gilbert, Jemima and Elisha H., not known to occur in the mother's line. Further, and by extension, would it be possible for the 3 of 8 total names to mimic a replication of names found in another, perhaps distantly related family? To both questions and in light of the reported immigrant status for one of the Enochs, both answers will be "yes!" and without any reservations on the parts of the objectively minded.

The prospects for Enoch Barton, son of Captain Elisha, to have met an ill fate soon after his father's death and without the son Enoch's name being captured in some early western record is simply to great to ignore. The true fate of New Jersey's Captain Elisha Barton's son Enoch may also never be discovered and though it might be tempting to combine two Enoch Barton 'loose ends' into a single story such tidy resolutions only impair rather than encourage further research. The conclusions to be drawn from the above are all too clear. The old Enoch Barton bible record appears completely valid but whether that record ever had any connection to descendants of Captain Elisha Barton of Hunterdon County New Jersey remains to be proven. The necessity for seeking definite proof either for or against connection between the two Barton families stems from a variety of circumstantial evidence and the serious doubts that evidence appears to bring.

A plethora of websites on the internet today give the false impression that a case has been made and proven for definite link between Enoch Barton (1775-1833) and Captain Elisha Barton. In reality, so such link has heretofore been established and any suggesting otherwise should be viewed as thoroughly misinformed.

NOTE TO EDIT IN: Walter H. Barton's 1900 census record shows his father (Gilbert) as b. Scotland.

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