

The Families of Amariah Rockwell of Coventry, Connecticut, and His Son, David Rockwell of Coventry

Kenneth W. Rockwell

The Rockwells in colonial Connecticut are comprised of three families: those descending from William Rockwell, who died in Windsor in 1640; the descendants of John Rockwell, a settler of Stamford in 1641; and the family of Josiah Rockwell, who died in Norwich in 1676. These families are known to have been related based on a DNA testing project, but documentation is lacking to show the exact connection.^[1] The descendants of Josiah Rockwell have been incompletely researched. A privately printed genealogy by Arlene Bell made a start, but was quite incomplete and contained several errors.^[2] This article will focus on one branch of that family, Amariah (*Daniel*³, *Josiah*²⁻¹), and resolve a misunderstanding concerning two sons, Daniel and David.

Amariah and Martha (Kingsbury) Rockwell of Norwich, Connecticut, settled in Coventry, Tolland County, Connecticut, where the vital records include the births of the following children:^[3]

- Daniel Rockwell, born 27 July 1753.
- Martha Rockwell, born 8 August 1755.
- Irenah Kingsbury Rockwell, born 2 July 1758.
- Jabez Rockwell, born 4 June 1760.
- Amariah Rockwell, born 22 November 1762.
- Amariah Rockwell, born 10 June 1765.
- Daniel Rockwell, born 8 March 1768.
- Tabitha Rockwell, born 6 November 1771.

The records also include the death of one of these children:

- Daniel Rockwell, died 2 May 1777.

Amariah Rockwell later settled in Langdon, Cheshire County, New Hampshire, purchasing land there on 22 November 1790, from Benjamin Palmer of Langdon. The boundary description includes mention of a neighboring property owned by his son Jabez Rockwell, who settled there first.^[4] Amariah was of Langdon when he signed his will on 14 January 1800, which

¹ Kenneth W. Rockwell, "Early Rockwell Settlers of Connecticut: DNA Analysis Shows a Relationship," *New England Ancestors* 4:2 (Spring 2003):51–53.

² Arlene D. Bell, *Some of the Descendants of Josiah Rockwell of Norwich, Connecticut* (Salem, Va.: the author, 1989).

³ Coventry, Connecticut, Town Records [FHL 0,003,861 and 1,376,123], 1:335; Susan Whitney Dimock, *Births, Marriages, Baptisms and Deaths from the Records of the Town and Churches in Coventry, Connecticut, 1711–1844* (New York: Baker & Taylor, 1897), 193.

⁴ Cheshire County, New Hampshire, Deeds, 16:435.

was probated on 17 February 1800.^[5] The will mentions the living children listed above (all except for Amariah and Daniel), but also the “heirs of my son David Rockwell.” A summary: to grandson William Wilson, 40 acres of land in Langdon, and all of Amariah’s right in a sawmill; to daughter Irenah K. Rockwell, 10 acres; to daughter Tabitha Prentiss, 5 acres; half of the remainder of his real estate to son Jabez, and the other half of the remainder to “heirs of my son David Rockwell deceased, to be equally divided between them”; and his personal estate to “my four children, viz. Jabez, Martha, Irenah K. Rockwell, Tabitha Prentiss, and the heirs of my son David,” to be divided into five equal shares.

As a result of these records, reconstructions of this family^[6] add son David without a birth date, and state the oldest child, Daniel, died before 1768, when another child was given the same name, and that the second Daniel was the one who died in 1777. The lack of a death record for the first Daniel was not unique, as this appears to have happened with the first son named Amariah; he certainly died before the second one was born in 1765. Neither is there record of the second Amariah’s death, although that could have occurred elsewhere than in Coventry.

However, two other records require a rewrite of the account of this family, in regard to the two Daniels. An entry in the Windham probate records reads:

At a court of probate held in Lebanon in the District of Windham 24th June 1785. Present William Williams Esq., Judge: This court grants Letters of Administration on the Estate of Daniel Rockwell dec’d to Amariah Rockwell of Coventry, father of sd decd. who gave Bond accordingly with Josiah Rockwell of Lebanon surety, to exhibit into the Registry of said Court an Inventory of said deceased’s Estate on or before the first Tuesday of Sept. next ensuing, also to render to this Court a just account of his administration thereon on or before the first Tuesday of June 1786.^[7]

A related document dated the same day, 24 June 1785, apparently went missing and did not get transcribed into the official record; it was auctioned online in 2007 and reads as follows:

These may inform & Certifie Whom it may Concern that Mr Amariah Rockwell of Coventry is duly appointed Sole Administrator on the Estate of his Son Daniel Rockwell of sd Town late a Soldier in the Connecticut Line of the Continental Army Decd & has given Bonds according to Law.^[8]

⁵ Cheshire County, New Hampshire, Probate, Wills 1:14–15 [FHL 0,015,721]; details also published in Frank B. Kingsbury, *History and Genealogical Register of the Town of Langdon, Sullivan County, New Hampshire* (White River Junction, Vt.: Right Printing Co., 1932), 658–659.

⁶ Such as in Bell, *Descendants of Josiah Rockwell* [note 2], 14, and Kingsbury, *History of Langdon* [note 5], 568–659.

⁷ Windham, Connecticut, District Probate, special volume 5, page 87 [FHL 0,005,927].

⁸ The auction notice, found via Google at <http://www.liveauctionworld.com>, item 30151, sold on 25 October 2007, reads: “William Williams Autograph Document Signed “*Wm Williams Judge/ Probate,*” one page, 6” x 7.5”, Lebanon, District of Windham Connecticut. June 24, 1785. In full, “*These may inform & Certifie Whom it may Concern that Mr Amariah Rockwell of Coventry is duly appointed Sole Administrator on the Estate of his Son Daniel Rockwell of sd Town late a Soldier in the Connecticut Line of the Continental Army Decd & has given Bonds according to Law.*” Noted to be signed by Williams “*in the absence of yr Clerk.*” Amariah Rockwell (1728–1800) was the father of Daniel Rockwell (1753–1777) who died at the age of 23 on 2 May 1777 in Coventry, Connecticut.

Clearly, this son Daniel could not have been the one born in 1768. In order to be old enough to serve as a soldier of the Revolution, he must be the one born in 1753. And if he was living until 1777, how does one explain the naming of the child born in 1768? A logical solution is that this latter son was not named Daniel but David. The two names look quite similar, particularly in the cursive. The writing clearly reads, “Daniel,” but the clerk may have been working from another script and transcribed it incorrectly, after which published copies of the official record (such as Dimock) perpetuated the error.

Although little else is known about this David, his family can be reconstructed with the aid of land records associated with his father’s estate.

Genealogical Summary

1. AMARIAH⁴ ROCKWELL, son of Daniel³ (*Josiah*²⁻¹) and Tabitha (Hartshorn) Rockwell,^[9] was born in Norwich, Connecticut, 29 October 1728.^[10] He died in Langdon, New Hampshire, between 14 January 1800 and 17 February 1800 (date of will and probate).^[11] He married in Norwich 21 March 1753, **MARTHA KINGSBURY**.^[12] She was born in Norwich on 15 August 1733, daughter of Ephraim and Martha (Smith) Kingsbury, who were married in Norwich on 3 July 1728.^[13] Amariah and Martha settled in Coventry, where their children were born. Several land records document the family there, beginning with a deed dated 15 March 1753, when Edmund Grover of Coventry sold two parcels in Coventry’s Second Society, totaling 55 acres with a house and barn, to “Amariah Rockwell of Norwich.”^[14] The Second Society was the northern parish of Coventry. Records of this church lack baptism and membership lists from the years when Amariah Rockwell’s family lived there, but Amariah’s name appears at least once in the Society’s records.^[15] Other deeds of note were gifts to Amariah’s two surviving sons: to Jabez on 6 December 1782,^[16]

Both had fought in the American Revolution. William Williams, a member . . . With light folds, the document is in very fine condition.”

⁹ *Vital Records of Norwich, 1659–1848* (Hartford, Conn.: Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Connecticut, 1913), 1:23, 40; James Savage, *A Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England*, 4 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1860–1862), 3:558; Bell, *Descendants of Josiah Rockwell* [note 2], 2, 3, 6, 13–14. This line was also published for Orin Rockwell in “Records of Early Church Families,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 26 (1935):153. My study of the family agrees on this descent, except that the magazine article also claimed that Josiah¹ was probably the son of William¹ Rockwell. No records have demonstrated any connection between William of Windsor and Josiah of Norwich.

¹⁰ *Vital Records of Norwich* [note 9], 1:23.

¹¹ See note 5.

¹² *Vital Records of Norwich* [note 9], 1:311.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 1:107–108; Frederick John Kingsbury, *The Genealogy of the Descendants of Henry Kingsbury of Ipswich and Haverhill, Mass.*, Mary Kingsbury Talcott, ed. (Hartford, Conn.: Case, Lockwood & Brainard, 1905), 209–210, 237–238; Kenneth J. Kingsbury, *Kingsbury Hall: The Genealogy of a Family* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, 2005), 127, 208. Both genealogies show the youngest Rockwell child as Talitha, instead of Tabitha.

¹⁴ Coventry Deeds, 4:127.

¹⁵ Coventry, Connecticut, Second Congregational Church records, 1740–1917, vol. 1, Society meetings, 1740–1788 [FHL 0,003,862]. On 26 February 1770, Amariah Rockwell was one of those chosen to receive the Society rates for the year ensuing (p. 46).

¹⁶ Coventry Deeds, 7:29.

and to David on 14 December 1790.^[17] His next (and last) deed was the sale of a parcel to David on 28 May 1791, in which he described himself as “Amariah Rockwell of Landon, county of Cheshire & State of New Hampshire.”^[18] These two dates bracket his migration north. Amariah is listed in Coventry in the 1790 census, indexed as “Amorialo Bockwell.”^[19] In Langdon, he was chosen “culler of lumber” at a town meeting held on 6 March 1792.^[20]

Children of Amariah⁴ and Martha (Kingsbury) Rockwell, born in Coventry:

- i. DANIEL⁵ ROCKWELL, b. 27 July 1753; d. Coventry 2 May 1777, unmarried. He served as a soldier in the American Revolution.
- ii. MARTHA ROCKWELL, b. 8 Aug. 1755. In the Coventry town records, immediately after the birth records for the children of Amariah and Martha, is another that reads: “William Willson ye son of Martha Rockwell was born Oct. 9, 1777.” Martha was unmarried at the time, but her father recognized him as a grandson, giving him a legacy in his will. Martha later m. THOMAS JOHNSON, and they were living in Langdon when they sold her share in Amariah’s land in Langdon on 27 March 1809.^[21] William Wilson appears to have become an active and valued member of the community. At the annual town meeting held in March 1822, he was chosen Third Selectman, and on March 1824, he was chosen Second Selectman.^[22]
- iii. IRENAH KINGSBURY ROCKWELL, b. 2 July 1758; m. Langdon 17 March 1800, JEDEDIAH SMITH,^[23] b. Ashford, Conn., 11 Nov. 1754, son of Samuel and Mehitabel (Wadkins) Smith,^[24] d. Langdon 33 [sic] Sept. 1832 aged 80.^[25] They lived in Langdon when, on 24 July 1816, she sold her share in a land parcel inherited from her father to her sister, Tabitha Prentiss of Langdon.^[26]
- iv. JABEZ ROCKWELL, b. 4 June 1760; d. Warehouse Point, East Windsor, Conn., 19 July 1825 aged 75;^[27] m. Tolland, Conn., 2 Oct. 1783, IRENE PORTER of North Coventry, b. 6 March 1765, daughter of Jonathan and Lois (Richards) Porter, d. Coventry 16 July 1837.^[28] Six children were

¹⁷ Coventry Deeds, 8:270.

¹⁸ Coventry Deeds, 8:272.

¹⁹ 1790 U.S. Census, Coventry, Tolland County, Connecticut, roll 1, p. 142.

²⁰ Kingsbury, *History of Langdon* [note 5], 658.

²¹ Cheshire County Deeds, 54:311.

²² Langdon town records, 1:391, 417 [FHL 0,015,196].

²³ New Hampshire Vital Records. These New Hampshire State Vital Records are online under various titles on AmericanAncestors.org, FamilySearch.org, and Ancestry.com.

²⁴ Kingsbury, *History of Langdon* [note 5], 698–699; Barbour Collection of Connecticut Vital Records, citing Ashford Vital Records, 1:56 (birth and parents’ marriage).

²⁵ *New Hampshire Sentinel*, Keene, N.H., 29 November 1832, p. 3, “In Langdon, Sept. 33 [sic, 23?] 28?] of a cancer, Mr Jedediah Smith, aged 80 years. Printers in N.H. & N.Y. are requested, etc.”

²⁶ Cheshire County Deeds, 76:73.

²⁷ Kingsbury, *History of Langdon* [note 5], 659; “Connecticut Deaths: from Files of Connecticut Observer,” issue of 2 August 1825, *Connecticut Marriages and Deaths 1790–1833*, online at AmericanAncestors.org; Henry R. Stiles, *The History and Genealogies of Ancient Windsor, Connecticut*, 2 vols. (Hartford, Conn.: Case, Lockwood & Brainard, 1891–1892; reprint Somersworth, N.H.: New Hampshire Publishing Co., 1976), 2:658.

²⁸ Kingsbury, *History of Langdon* [note 5], 659; Stiles, *Ancient Windsor* [note 27], 2:658.

recorded in Langdon.^[29] A few land records are found for Jabez in Coventry, including a deed dated 27 Dec. 1790, in which Amariah of Coventry and Jabez Rockwell “of Langdon, County of Cheshire, State of New Hampshire,” jointly sold a parcel of about 42 acres to Minor Hillard of Tolland, Conn.^[30] Jabez was enumerated in Langdon in 1790.^[31] Jabez and Irene may have moved to Langdon with her brother, Amaziah Porter, who also lived there, and Jabez owned land there by 1791. Jabez held a number of positions in the Langdon town government, and was chosen First Selectman at the annual town meeting on 1 March 1791, and Town Clerk and Treasurer on 6 March 1792.^[32] Jabez and Irene joined the Langdon church, but left by 1794, perhaps after selling the land to his father.^[33] They moved to Hartford County and lived at Warehouse Point in East Windsor, where he was a “mechanic.” On 19 Feb. 1823, Jabez and Irena Rockwell of East Windsor sold to Daniel Avery of Coventry a piece of land, 6 acres and 80 rods, that “fell to the sd Irena as her portion out of the estate of her hon. Father Jonathan Porter, late of Coventry deceased.”^[34] Jabez was living in East Windsor, Conn., when on 3 Jan. 1801, he sold to Jessaniah Kittridge of Walpole, N.H., a 12-acre parcel of land in Langdon, “being all the land set off to me by the committee to divide the estate of Amariah Rockwell.”^[35]

- v. AMARIAH ROCKWELL, b. 22 Nov. 1762; evidently d. young.
- vi. AMARIAH ROCKWELL, b. 10 June 1765. He may be the Amariah Rockwell who paid a poll tax in Langdon in 1809–1810,^[36] but if so, he was not mentioned in his father’s will. Nothing else is known, and the Langdon town records do not show him holding any positions during these or adjacent years. An alternative identity for the Langdon man is the son of Jabez Rockwell, although Stiles states that Jabez’s son lived in Columbia, Conn. (just south of Coventry), and died unmarried.^[37]
- 2. vii. DAVID ROCKWELL, b. 8 March 1768; m. POLLY CASE.
- viii. TABITHA ROCKWELL, b. 6 Nov. 1771; m. THOMAS PRENTISS. On 24 July 1816, she purchased her sister Irenah’s share in their father’s estate. He was probably the “Thos Printis” in the 1800 census of Langdon with

²⁹ Kingsbury, *History of Langdon* [note 5], 659; New Hampshire Vital Records [note 23]; Langdon town records, 1:473, 486.

³⁰ Coventry Deeds, 8:303.

³¹ 1790 U.S. Census, Langdon, Cheshire County, New Hampshire, roll 5, p. 127.

³² Langdon town records [note 22], 1:56–57.

³³ Kingsbury, *History of Langdon* [note 5], 659. This appears to be speculation on Kingsbury’s part, as no actual deed to this effect was recorded. Another clue that Stiles was Kingsbury’s source is the wording for details of one of the children of Jabez. “Oren” [actually Orin], born in 1784, was described by both Kingsbury and Stiles as joining the Mormons “early in life . . . and dying at Salt Lake City.” That was not this man, but his son, Orrin Porter Rockwell. Orin the father died at Nauvoo, Illinois, 22 September 1839, according to the “Church families” article cited in note 9. See also the entry for him at *Early Latter-day Saints*, <http://www.earlylds.com/getperson.php?personID=I134864&tree=Earlylds>.

³⁴ Coventry Deeds, 15:79.

³⁵ Cheshire County Deeds, 36:113.

³⁶ Kingsbury, *History of Langdon* [note 5], 659.

³⁷ Stiles, *Ancient Windsor* [note 27], 2:658.

a male and a female 26–44 and three females under 10.^[38] However, Thomas has not been found as a head of household in the 1790 or 1810 censuses.

2. DAVID⁵ ROCKWELL, son of Amariah⁴ and Martha (Kingsbury) Rockwell, was born on 8 March 1768 and died before 6 June 1797, when [his father-in-law] Benjamin Case of Coventry was appointed administrator of his estate.^[39] He married **POLLY CASE**, although a marriage record has not been found. That she was the daughter of Benjamin and Abigail (Richardson) Case of Coventry^[40] is shown by Benjamin Case's will, dated 29 September 1794 and proved on 18 April 1801. The will provides for "my well-beloved wife" (without naming her), and includes a list of "the sums which my daughters have heretofore received toward their part or portion," including Polly Rockwell.^[41]

David left few records during his lifetime, but he lived in Coventry, where land records document his presence through 14 April 1792, when he sold to Elijah Weston two parcels he had purchased from Weston on 1 April 1791.^[42] An inventory of David's personal estate was made on 30 June 1797, and a portion thereof set off for his widow, Polly Rockwell, on 4 July 1797. On 25 February and 29 March 1799, some articles were sold to cover debts, including a set of "coppers [cooper's] tools, which may indicate that David was a cooper by trade.^[43] One of his descendants addressed a query to David H. Van Hoosear, a genealogist of Fairfield County, Connecticut, who published a newspaper column including:

ROCKWELL-CASE: David Rockwell, b. in Massachusetts or Connecticut, d. at sea. Who were his parents? Md. Mary "Polly" Case. She md. 2d after his death Alpheus Underwood; md. 3d Dea. Amos Langdon; md. 4th Hezekiah Butter; md. 5th, Jas. Thorp Rhodes. She d. 1855, aged 86, and buried in New Marlboro, Mill River [Berkshire Courier]. Thought to be dau. of Benjamin and Abigail Case.

The query gives details on two sons, Joseph Whitfield Rockwell, who lived in New Marlborough, Berkshire County, Massachusetts, and Harry Rockwell, who lived in Chatham [now East Hampton], Connecticut.^[44]

David may have lived at Warehouse Point, East Windsor, Connecticut, for a time, as did his brother, Jabez, for David's son Harry was reportedly born there in 1796. The widow Polly's second marriage, to Alpheus Underwood,

³⁸ 1800 U.S. Census, Langdon, Cheshire County, New Hampshire, roll 20, p. 912.

³⁹ Andover District Probate, File 2104 [FHL 1,015,141], Records 2:69–70, 87 [FHL 1,376,037].

⁴⁰ Sourced annotation at FindaGrave.com, memorial no. 119149092, provides Abigail's maiden name.

⁴¹ Andover District Probate, File 491 [FHL 1,015,130], Records 2:178–180.

⁴² Coventry Deeds, 8:271; 9:476. David and his family apparently were living with his father at the time of the 1790 census (see note 19) since the gender and ages of the children match. A David Rockwell was living in East Windsor in 1790, but the gender and ages of the children in his household do not match our David Rockwell's family.

⁴³ Andover District Probate, File 2104 [note 39].

⁴⁴ David Van Hoosear, "Genealogical & Historical Information: Columns from the Norwalk Hour 1906–1921," manuscript at the Wilton, Connecticut, Public Library, vol. 4, entry no. 2721, from the issue of Friday, 28 January 1916.

has not been found, but four children of this marriage and her subsequent three marriages are recorded in New Marlborough.^[45] Her mother, Abigail, relict of Benjamin Case of Coventry, died aged 73 in New Marlborough.^[46] The probate records of Amariah Rockwell do not name the children who were David's heirs, or even how many there were, but the Langdon land records answer these questions. The son Joseph was living in New Marlborough on 5 October 1812 when he and Anson Dodge, also of New Marlborough, sold and quit-claimed to William Wilson "two fifths of a certain tract or parcel of land in said Langdon . . . containing about sixteen acres . . . it being the same land which the late Amariah Rockwell deceased by his last will and testament conveyed to the heirs of his son David Rockwell deceased."^[47] This description suggests that David had five children, and land records identify them.

Children of David⁵ and Polly (Case) Rockwell:

- i. JOSEPH WHITFIELD⁶ ROCKWELL, reportedly b. 25 Aug. 1788.^[48] Joseph served in the War of 1812 and held the rank of Captain when he led a militia company from 14 Sept. to 30 Oct. 1814. He was living in Dwight, Livingston Co., Illinois, when he applied for a pension in 1871. In his pension application he stated that he married HARRIET HINE on 11 March 1811 in Tyringham, Berkshire Co., Mass.^[49] The marriage was recorded in New Marlborough; however, it appears to be one of three recorded on 9 Feb. 1812. It lists Joseph's residence as New Marlborough, and Harriet's as "Harrington, Ct." [*sic*, Harwinton].^[50] Either Joseph was misremembering his own marriage date, or the marriage was recorded nearly eleven months late, which is quite likely.
- ii. HIRAM ROCKWELL, b. say 1790. He was living in New Marlborough on 20 Aug. 1816 when he sold to Anson Dodge "one undivided fifth of a certain piece of land lying in the town of Langdon . . . being the same land that was given by Amariah Rockwell now deceased to the heirs of David Rockwell now deceased, the whole land containing by estimation fifteen acres."^[51] This deed is the only record found of Hiram, so even his position in the family's birth order is uncertain, but he was certainly an adult by 1816.
- iii. HARRIET ROCKWELL, b. Coventry 23 Nov. 1791; d. Jefferson, Ashtabula Co., Ohio, 30 July 1887, bur. West Lenox Cemetery, Lenox Center, Ashtabula Co.;^[52] m. 28 Nov. 1811, ANSON DODGE of New Marlborough.^[53]

⁴⁵ Register of Births, Marriages, and Deaths in the Town of New Marlborough, 1734–1918 [FHL 0,250,275], Births, 1:49; Marriages, 1:49, 55, 57.

⁴⁶ Charles R. Hale Collection of Newspaper Deaths and Cemetery Inscriptions, Connecticut State Library, from the *Hartford Courant*, 2 March 1813 [FHL 0,003,398].

⁴⁷ Cheshire County Deeds, 75:247–248.

⁴⁸ Van Hoosear, "Genealogical & Historical Information" [note 44].

⁴⁹ War of 1812 Pension Applications, file S.O. 21608, copied and sent to the author by descendant Gary Wright.

⁵⁰ Register of New Marlborough [note 45], Marriages, 1:29.

⁵¹ Cheshire County Deeds, 78:155–156.

⁵² Photograph of the gravestone online at FindaGrave.com, memorial no. 111904797, the birth and death information from the annotation.

⁵³ Register of New Marlborough [note 45], Marriages, 1:29. Rev. Jacob Catlin officiated.

b. 16 March 1788, son of John and Abigail (___) Dodge of New Marlborough,^[54] d. 29 April 1858, bur. with Harriet.^[55] Anson and Harriet Dodge, on 7 June 1814, sold a parcel of land in Langdon “being the same land that was given by Amariah Rockwell deceased to the heirs of David Rockwell deceased.” Anson Dodge also purchased the shares of two of Harriet’s siblings, Hiram and Helena, but then sold this land to William Wilson. One of these sales was on 29 Oct. 1817,^[56] probably Hiram’s share; the other was sold along with Joseph W. Rockwell’s share in 1812, as noted above.

iv. HELENA ROCKWELL, b. ca. 1793; d. New Marlborough 18 Jan. 1875 aged 82, the cause being “apoplexia”;^[57] m. 9 Dec. 1813, PETER J.F.S. “BETTEKOR” [spelled “Betticher” in the deeds] of New Marlborough, with Rev. Jacob Catlin officiating.^[58] They were of New Marlborough when, on 12 Feb. 1814, they sold and quitclaimed to Anson Dodge all title in the 15-acre parcel in Langdon bequeathed by Amariah Rockwell to the heirs of David Rockwell.^[59] No births of children for this couple are found in New Marlborough. The 1820 census shows no children in their household.^[60] The 1830 household shows two males under 5.^[61] Perhaps they “had a late start”; however, there are two males age 30–39, so the boys could be connected with the other man, whoever he was.

v. HARRY ROCKWELL, reportedly b. Warehouse Point, East Windsor, Conn., 18 Jan. 1796, according to the query published by Van Hoosear, but the birth is not recorded in the town’s vital records. He d. 17 Oct. 1886, aged 89 years, 3 months, and was bur. in the Young Street Cemetery in East Hampton, Conn.^[62] He m. ESTHER NILES of Chatham,^[63] b. there 29 Oct. 1797, daughter of Elisha and Naomi (Ackley) Niles.^[64] She d. 17 Oct. 1886, aged 89, and was bur. in the Young Street Cemetery.^[65]

According to a newspaper printed on Monday, 27 July 1835, “Singular Marriage: In Jan. 1817, Mr. Harry Rockwell was married to Esther Niles, by Rev. Mr. West, of East Hampton. In Oct. 1819, business called Mr. Rockwell to Savannah, from which place he intended to return in 6 months. He returned the 4th of the present month, having been absent

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Births, 1:12.

⁵⁵ Photographs of the gravestone and of Anson himself are online at FindaGrave.com, memorial no. 111904863.

⁵⁶ Cheshire County Deeds, 78:511.

⁵⁷ Register of New Marlborough [note 45], Deaths, 2:24. This record identifies Helena’s parents as David and Polly Rockwell, but the place of her birth is blank.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, Marriages, 1:33.

⁵⁹ Cheshire County Deeds, 67:246–247.

⁶⁰ 1820 U.S. Census, New Marlborough, Berkshire County, Massachusetts, roll 48, p. 21, spelled “Betticker.”

⁶¹ 1830 U.S. Census, New Marlborough, roll 62, p. 288, spelled “Bettiker.”

⁶² Photograph of Harry with unsourced annotation on FindaGrave.com, memorial no. 8276184.

⁶³ Van Hoosear, “Genealogical & Historical Information” [note 44].

⁶⁴ Barbour Collection of Connecticut Vital Records, citing Chatham Vital Records, 200 (birth and parents’ marriage). The name of Chatham was changed to East Hampton in 1915. See also Anne McKee Niles, *John Niles of Dorchester and Braintree, Massachusetts . . .* (Springfield, Mo.: the author, 2004), 65.

⁶⁵ Photograph of Esther’s gravestone on FindaGrave.com, memorial no. 25358450.

over 16 years. During his absence, Mrs. Rockwell obtained a divorce & was a second time married. With her second husband, she lived until his death, which happened March 12, 1831, and from that time to the present time she has remained a widow. On Saturday, July 4, Mr. Rockwell arrived in Chatham, East Hampton Society, and found her in the same house in which he had left her in 1819, and on July 9th, they were again married, by Rev. Mr. Loper of Middle Haddam.⁶⁶ Decades later, a longer, perhaps embellished version of this saga appeared in a county history.⁶⁷

Harry was in Chatham when, on 18 Nov. 1817, he sold land in Langdon to William Wilson, "the same land that was given by Amariah Rockwell deceased to the heirs of David Rockwell deceased, it being one equal undivided fifth of said land divided to the heirs of David Rockwell deceased."⁶⁸ On 18 Aug. 1832, Charles Haling and wife Caroline quitclaimed to Esther Evans of Chatham all rights in a tract of land in Chatham "being land distributed to the said Caroline Haling by the distributors on the estate of her father George Evans, late of Chatham deceased."⁶⁹ This document probably identifies Esther's second husband as George Evans. Then on 5 Aug. 1836, Roswell and Sybil Brooks of Chatham, quitclaimed for \$100 to Harry and Esther Rockwell all rights in an 8-acre parcel "given to us in the distribution of the estate of George Evans, late of Chatham." The parcel bordered on land held by Lydia Evans, George H. Evans, and Harvey Evans.⁷⁰ They, along with Caroline Haling, were apparently children of George Evans by a former wife. Harry Rockwell had to surrender this land in February 1844 to pay a debt to Charles H. Buell of Chatham, after the latter won a judgment against him at a County Court held in Middletown in Oct. 1843.⁷¹ But the land returned to the family a decade later. On 10 July 1855, Charles H. Buell of Chatham, for \$60, quitclaimed to "Edwin Almerin Rockwell" of Chatham his title to a parcel of land in Chatham, "it being property set to me on execution no. 2, dated January 19, 1844."⁷² Esther's father is identified by a deed dated 10 Jan. 1837, when Elisha Niles of Chatham, for \$23.04 received from Harry Rockwell, conveyed to "my grandson Henry Edward Rockwell of said Chatham" 5¾ acres.⁷³ Henry Edward

⁶⁶ Joan M. Dixon, *National Intelligencer and Washington Advertiser Newspaper Abstracts*, vol. 11 (Bowie, Md.: Heritage Books, 2006), 397. The first marriage is not in the vital records of Chatham, but the second one is: Harry Rockwell, of New Marlborough, and Esther Evans, of Chatham, 9 July 1835 (Chatham Vital Statistics [FHL 1,480,162], Marriages, 1:328; also in the Barbour Collection with this citation).

⁶⁷ *History of Middlesex County, Connecticut: Biographies of its Prominent Men* (New York: J. B. Beers, 1884), 212.

⁶⁸ Cheshire County Deeds, 75:492.

⁶⁹ Chatham Deeds, 22:93.

⁷⁰ Chatham Deeds, 22:36.

⁷¹ Chatham Deeds, 24:494.

⁷² Chatham Deeds, 30:55.

⁷³ Chatham Deeds, 23:560.

was apparently the child of Harry and Esther's first marriage. Edwin, age 10 in 1850,^[74] was from their second marriage.^[75]

Kenneth W. Rockwell is a librarian at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. He is the author of several articles on early families of Fairfield County, Connecticut, and has been researching the Rockwell families of New England. He may be contacted at kwrockwell@yahoo.com.

⁷⁴ 1850 U.S. Census, Chatham, Middlesex County, Connecticut, roll 44, p. 322A.

⁷⁵ Edwin was buried in the Young Street Cemetery in East Hampton; a photograph of his gravestone is on FindaGrave.com, memorial no. 47824000. Another child of Harry and Esther was buried there: Horatio Rockwell, died 8 September 1839; a photograph of his gravestone is on FindaGrave.com, memorial no. 47824017.