

Date: June 2023

Report to my files/blog

Research question: ***Who were the parents of Sarah Ann Swartz; born 1820 in Clark County, Indiana, died 1902 in York County, Nebraska, married February 1838 in Clark County, Indiana to Marcus Fielding Bennett, moved to Adams County Illinois by 1860 and to York County Nebraska by 1880?***

Subject: Court, church, newspaper, probate and tax records for Clark County, Indiana, Adams County, Illinois and York County, Nebraska

Known Associates of Sarah Ann Schwartz and Marquis Fielding Bennett:

Clark County, Indiana and Adams County, Illinois

1. Airy Prather Bennett (mother of Marquis)
2. Joshua S. Bennett (brother of Marquis)
3. Greenberry Prather (uncle of Marquis and potentially of Sarah)
4. Aaron Prather (uncle of Marquis and potentially of Sarah)
5. Thomas W. Prather (grandfather of Marquis and potentially of Sarah)
6. Walter Prather (great uncle of Marquis and potentially of Sarah) – (widow Martha Jacobs Prather is near neighbor on 1850 IN census)
7. Eli Jacobs (neighbor) –1850 IN census neighbor
8. Elisha H. Bennett – 1850 IN census neighbor (uncle of Marquis)
9. Albert Bennett – 1850 IN census neighbor (cousin of Marquis)
11. John Jacob – 1850 IN census neighbor, potential cousin
13. Robert Dismore – 1855 IL census neighbor, land abuts, potential brother in law
14. Wiley Swartz – 1855 IL census neighbor, potential brother in law
15. Abraham Swartz – 1860 IL census neighbor, potential brother in law
16. Hugh Lyle - 1855 IL census neighbor, born Indiana
17. William Strickler - 1855 IL census neighbor, born Indiana
18. John Strickler - 1855 IL census neighbor, born Indiana
19. William Bottorff - 1855 IL census neighbor, brother of Rev Samuel Bottorff uncle of Elizabeth Dismore, Wiley & Abram Swartz, potential uncle of Sarah Ann Swartz.
20. E. Howard - 1855 IL census neighbor, born Indiana
21. William McFarland - 1855 & 1860 IL census neighbor

Repository or Online DB/site: FamilySearch, Newspapers.com, NewspaperArchive.com and Ancestry

Caveats or Limitations: Due to continued limitations for in person searching and lack of response from Court officials in Clark County, Indiana and Adams County, Illinois this research phase relied primarily on digitized and microfilmed indexes and documents. Where original documents were made available for consultation, it will be noted in the documentation.

Background Information:

(note – the two spellings of Marcus/Marquis F. Bennett's first name are used interchangeably in records across Indiana, Illinois and Nebraska. It is impossible to determine which was the spelling he used himself, so for convenience sake this report will use Marcus unless the quoted record uses another spelling.) The same is true for the two main variants of spelling for Swartz/Schwartz. For documentation of all statements in Background Information see: <http://www.mcwieser.info/relay?p=902>

The parents of Sarah Ann (Schwartz/Swartz) Bennett have been a mystery for at least a hundred years. Her maiden name was given in her 1838 marriage record in Clark County, Indiana, her birthplace was in her 1902 obituary in York County, Nebraska, and her maiden name was repeated in the obituary, death or marriage records of several children. Sarah's marriage, migrations, and later life are well documented (in "standard" sources such as vital records, censuses and obituaries) via numerous online trees at Ancestry.com and FamilySearch (FSID KC58-CKS.) Her husband, Marcus Fielding Bennett, has also been documented on the same sites, using the same sources. Despite the fact Sarah's maiden name and birthplace have never been a mystery, she has never been attached to parents or siblings (at least not in published Swartz or Bennett material or online sites such as Ancestry, FamilySearch or Find a Grave.)

Sarah and Marcus were married in Clark County, Indiana on 13 February 1838 (there is no return of the marriage recorded so we do not know who performed the marriage.) Marriage partners, during this period, were sought within a relatively restricted radius of your home. Marcus' mother, Airy/Ary Prather Bennett, resided in Utica Township, Clark County. She was a granddaughter of Basil Prather and Chlorenda Robertson/Robinson, therefore a member of the extended Prather clan whose land holdings in Clark County centered around Utica Township, the hamlet of Prather in Utica, and the New Chapel Methodist Church. It is highly likely that Sarah's parents lived in this area as well.

No document directly provides her parent's names. This research project will therefore focus on developing patterns of association and interactions, the naming of children, and family migration patterns across 3 states.

General Research Plan outline (*for all phases of this project – this project is part of a larger project reconstructing the family of John Swartz jr.*)

- ✓ Initial literature search to identify possible candidates for Sarah's Swartz father in Clark County and adjoining counties in Indiana.
- ✓ Clark County, Indiana - 1820-1880 for candidate Swartz households for Sarah Swartz' father.
- ✓ Clark County, Indiana - Marquis Bennett household and identified F.A.N. Federal census (Indiana did not conduct state census after about 1810.) Marquis is expected to appear as a head of household in the 1840 and 1850 census and in the household of his father or mother in 1820 and 1830.
- ✓ Clark County, Indiana – Marquis F. Bennett and identified F.A.N. Land records including purchase, mortgage, sale. Land records will need to be mapped onto a Clark County map giving section numbers for the Illinois Grant Survey aka Clark's Grant Survey of 1785.
- ✓ Clark County, Indiana – Marquis F. Bennett and identified F.A.N. Marriage, vital records, court records, church membership and newspapers.
- ✓ Adams County, Illinois – 1840 -1910 federal census for Marquis Bennett and household and identified F.A.N. 1840- 1910 for candidate Swartz sibling households. 1855 – 1865 Illinois state census for Marquis, F.A.N. and candidate Swartz siblings households.
- ✓ Adams County, Illinois - Land records including purchase, mortgage, sale. Land records will need to be mapped onto an Adams County map showing township and section.
- ✓ Adams County, Illinois – Marriage, vital records court records, church membership and newspapers. The marriages of Bennett children should also be examined to expand the F.A.N.

- ✓ York County, Nebraska – 1870 – 1910 for candidate Swartz relatives, Marquis Bennett household and identified F.A.N. Land records, both purchase and sale, court records, church membership, newspapers and both federal and state census records for F.A.N. families. The depth and breadth of York County research is to be determined based on results from Indiana and Illinois research.
- Comparisons and Graphing - Naming patterns, intergenerational marriage connections, other charts or maps that may prove useful for final proof argument.
- DNA – atDNA test match lists on Ancestry.com and MyHeritage for Heather McLeland-Wieser and Dana McLeland documented Swartz descendants (of Clark County, Indiana), should be analyzed for potential matches descended from Sarah Ann Schwartz using the Leeds method of clustering as well as pedigree triangulation. Other more advanced analysis methods may be used if agreement is reached with relevant matches regarding sharing of match lists and uploading to Gedmatch.

Methodist Church Records - Clark County, Indiana

Source Information

Citation - New Chapel Methodist Church, "Trustees Minute Book," unnumbered pages, first entry dated 1811; Indiana Historical Society (IHS) Library, Indianapolis; 1 reel of microfilm; covers period 1811-1906. IHS Library call number F-72. OCLC Number 10336162.

Extract – see Attachment 1

Comments and Evaluation of Source - The first item is the Trustees minute book from 1811 - 1859. Loose papers cover 1842-1906. Book loaned to IHS by member of congregation, loose papers loaned to IHS by Church. The book is heavily water damaged along its upper edge and is about 20% unreadable as a result. Records are primarily financial and appointment of trustees to replace those who have resigned or died in office. Financial matters include - purchase of items such as pews, stove and pulpit for the church, construction of the new building (mid 1830s) annual hiring of a sexton and the duties of the sexton. Occasionally there are records of annual voting for new trustees that appear to be following newly changed Indiana law. In the earlier book the information is likely written by one of the trustees - probably whichever is mentioned as either secretary or recording secretary in different periods. There is no way to know who wrote the loose pages.

Comments -Sarah Ann's obituary states that she was a lifelong member of the Methodist Church, and the Swartz and Prather families are well known as founders of the earliest Methodist Church in Indiana, New Chapel Methodist Church. A 1940 history of New Chapel Church printed in the Jefferson Evening News gives a list of "families on the early roster of the church"¹ which includes the names Jacobs, Swartz, Prather, Bottorff, Howard, Spangler and Bennett, all families who owned land surrounding the Church, served on its boards and buried their members in its cemetery. The extant records of the New Chapel Church are currently owned by the Indiana Historical Society and a microfilm copy of those records was purchased and read from cover to cover. On the first page of the book, dated 29 January 1811, the board of trustees included Edward Jacob, John Swartz, Basil Prather, David Spangler, Henry Bottorff, Michael Schwartz, Jeremiah Jacob jr and Basil R. Prather. John Swartz remained on the board until his death in 1824 when Thomas Jacob was named to his vacant place. In the 1840s the Board of Trustees of New Chapel Methodist Church included Jacob and George Swartz, James Smith, John Fry and Moses

¹ Jeffersonville Evening News, "Oldest Active Methodist Group in the State is Organized While Indiana is Territory," *New Chapel Church History Reveals its Founding in 1801*, newspaper article reprint, New Chapel Methodist Church (Watson, Indiana, United States), Saturday 7 Sept 1940, p. unknown; "New Chapel has furnished several pastors from its members including Rev. Solomon Jacobs, George and Jacob Swartz, Peter Henry Bottorff and Dr. Jacob Bruner."

Jacobs all of whom were potential uncles of Sarah Ann as well as Thomas and Greenberry Prather (either the uncles of Marquis or the cousins by the same name.) On 15 January 1842 M. F Bennett was proposed for election as trustee but was not elected, although his probable cousin Granville M. Bennett was elected.² The extant records do not include admissions or dismissals but the inclusion of M. F. Bennett on the slate of proposed trustees can be taken as proof that he (and probably his wife) was a member of the church in the years shortly after his marriage.

Methodist Church Records – Adams County, Illinois

Citation - Methodist Episcopal Church, Illinois Conference, LaPrairie Circuit (Illinois, Adams), Church Records, 1854-1898; FHL film 965,273, items 2-6; DGS 7621301.

Extract – see Attachments 2-5

Evaluation of Source - FamilySearch has digitized Adams County, Illinois Methodist Church circuit records covering the period of roughly 1854 – 1898 (and perhaps through the early 1900s), although no indexing is available. Review of the entire DGS set shows that there are almost no records that can be dated before 1862 and the majority date from 1864-1878. Most dating must be done using internal evidence such as known marriage and death dates correlated with appearances in the record books. The individual class lists within those circuit books are often not dated. Whole pages have been X'd out but with no reason given although the individual names are clearly visible. The entries appear to have been written in various hands, perhaps by the class leaders who are usually named at the head of the page. In theory each book arranges the class lists alphabetically and then numbers the classes within in location, however there are occasions when the class lists do not appear alphabetically and the pages within each book are often not numbered.

General Comments on history of the Methodist Church in Adams County - The history of the various circuits and classes in this period is complex with circuits dividing and renaming and classes coming and going as well as dividing and being renamed often with no indication on the pages of the records. In 1874, the circuit name was changed from Pulaski to La Prairie³ which may reflect a slight change in geographic coverage. Based on a review of surnames in various circuits it appears that classes were based on locality with members drawn from a small local radius. The location of classes is a reflection of population density in the county – Houston had a lower population density than Camp Point or Northeastern and there are more classes located along the border with those two townships than in the interior of Houston township itself.

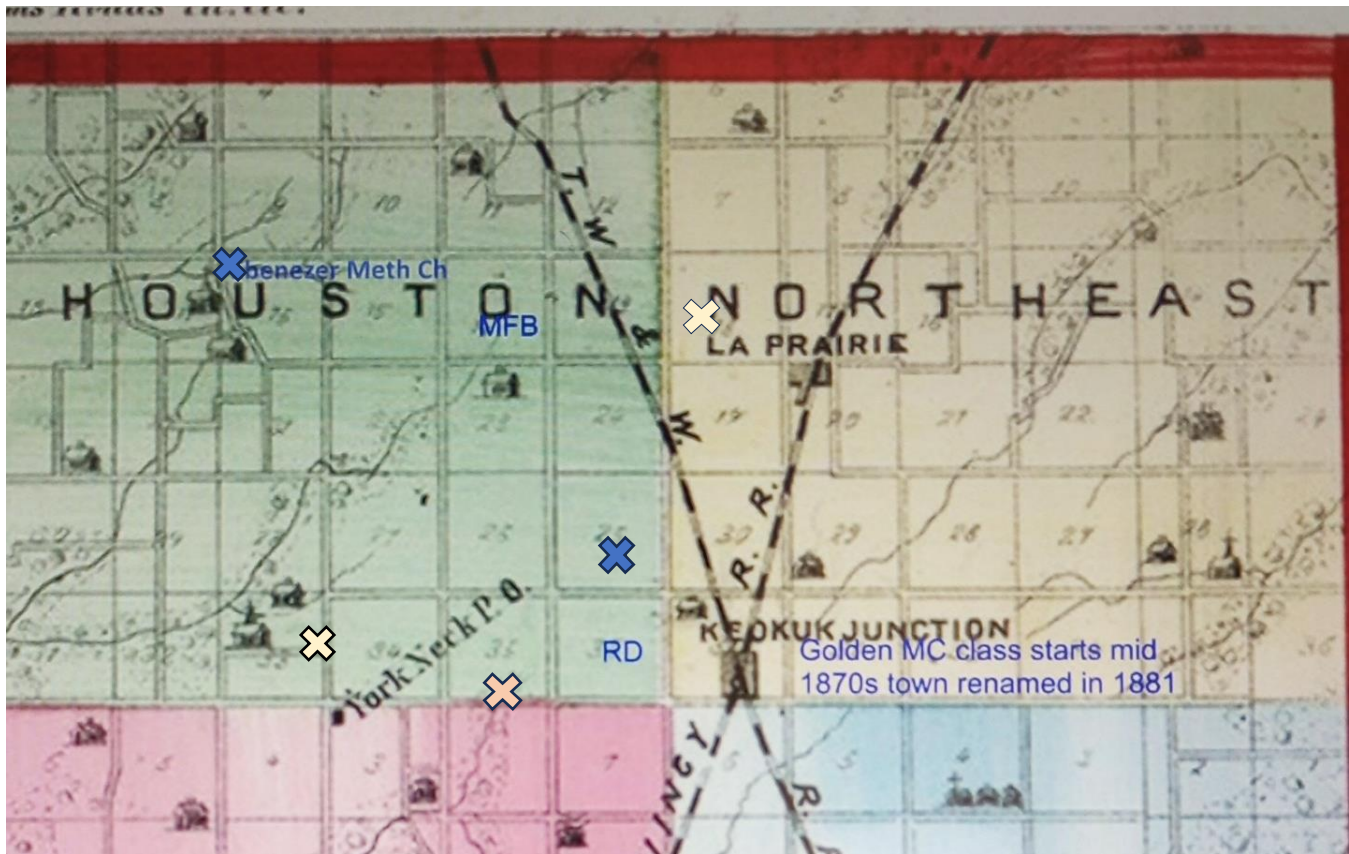
The map below – cropped from the 1872 Adams County, Illinois Land Ownership Atlas⁴ - shows the upper right hand corner of Adams County including the entirety of Houston and Northeast Townships and the upper portion of Camp Point and Clay Townships. Marked with a blue X and labelled with blue type are the locations of the Ebenezer Chapel, which hosted the Ebenezer Classes and the Simpson/Keokuk Junction/Golden Chapel/Church with hosted the Keokuk Junction/Golden Classes. Also in blue are the locations of the 1872 residences of Robert and Elizabeth Dismore and Marquis F. and Sarah Ann Bennett. Marked with a gold X are the locations of the three other classes closest to these two households – Hebron (today marked only by a cemetery), York Neck (not on today's maps at all but possibly the same as Big Neck) and LaPrairie. The Ebenezer Chapel was established in 1859 but there are no records of classes before about 1863. The Hebron cemetery was established in 1834 but there is no record of an adjacent chapel. The Hebron classes appear to have run from the 1850s till the early 1860s – neither Dismores nor Bennetts appear on these class lists. York Neck was a post office and a cemetery which is

²

³ Noted in the FamilySearch catalog entry for "Church records, 1854-1898" Methodist Episcopal Church, Illinois Conference, La Prairie Circuit, film 965273, DGS 7621301.

⁴ Adams County Illinois, *Indexed County Land Ownership Maps, 1860-1918* (Library of Congress microfilm; LC collection number G&M 43; Roll 43, 1872); Township overview map pg 6 ; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com : accessed 25 Oct 2022);

the only thing still in existence with the name York Neck. The York Neck classes started in the 1850s and were still going when the Pulaski Circuit became the LaPrairie Circuit – neither the Dismores nor the Bennetts appear on these class lists.



Adams County Illinois, *Indexed County Land Ownership Maps, 1860-1918* (Library of Congress microfilm; LC collection number G&M 43; Roll 43, 1872) Countywide township map pg 6 ; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com : accessed 25 Oct 2022); modified to focus on the two northeastern townships with portions of Camp Point (in pink) and Clay (in blue) townships.

The Keokuk Junction class first appears in the Circuit records about 1870 or approximately around the time the village of Keokuk Junction was created. According to a history of the Golden Methodist Church published in 1963 at the centennial of the town originally known as Keokuk Junction and renamed in 1881 as Golden,

"The Golden Methodist congregation held their services in the Golden depot until the first school building was erected in the village. Then services of both the Methodist and Presbyterian congregations were held in the schoolhouse until 1872 when the First M. E. Church was built...The land was donated by William A. and Mary A. Strickler...The original church was known as Simpson's Chapel and was part of the old LaPrairie Circuit."

There are no classes labeled Simpson's Chapel in the digitized records. The first class list of Class 1 Keokuk Junction is dated 1870 and was originally labeled La Prairie which has been crossed out and Keokuk Junction written in. The earliest classes appear to be Hebron and York Neck, closer to Camp Point Village in Camp Point Township and Augusta, in upper Northeast Township and quite a distance from the known residences of the Bennetts.

Research Comments - A page by page reading of the records for the Pulaski/La Prairie circuit for the period of roughly 1854-1885. was completed. M.F. Bennett and "Susannah" Bennett are recorded in an undated list for

Ebenezer that appears to be from the around 1865 based in its place within the unpaginated book. Since there is no Susannah Bennett in any other known record for the various Bennett families of Adams County, Illinois and since this is apparently a copy of a different record (different scribal hand and ink and nothing but names recorded) I believe this is meant to be Sarah Ann Bennett. This may provide a rough date for the family's move to Section 16. On the list of the Ebenezer Class circ 1866 Sarah Ann Bennett is "excluded for neglect of duty" (*failure to attend services and classes*), while children John W. and Elizabeth Bennett are not. Sarah and John W. are recorded in the Ebenezer class in 1870-1872.

It appears that we do not have records for any nearby class in the period when both Robert and Elizabeth Dismore and Marquis And Sarah Ann Bennett resided in township 36. The records begin only after the Bennetts move to township 16. This accounts for their consistent presence on two separate lists. There are no Swartz households listed except as single women who all appear to belong to the German Schwartz families of the region. The existing lists are probably too late to capture Swartz attendance as by 1865 both Abraham and Wiley have moved farther away. Wiley moved to adjoining Hancock County around 1860 and Abraham moved to Keene township around the same time.

At an Election held at New Chapel Meeting house on the 15th day of Jan. A.D. 1842 for the purpose of Electing five trustees for said Chapel the following votes were taken

James Smith III	1	Wm. J. Jacob	15
M.D. Robison III	2	III III III	13
E. M. Bennett II	3		
Wm. Hilton	4	I I	
J. S. Jacob	5		
S. Prather	6	III III	9
John Hazard	7	III III III	14
A. Prather	8	III	4
E. Jacob	9	III III III	13
James Morefield	10	I	1
Peter Smith	11		
M. J. Jacob	12	III III	8
M. J. Bennett	13		
Jeremiah Jacob	14		

John Hazard
E. Jacob
M.D. Robison
James Smith
Greenberg Prather

Legal Trustees
for
New Chapel

Jan 15th 1842
At a meeting held at New Chapel Meeting house James Morefield Dexter was paid \$5.40 in full for his first quarter
New Chapel

Attachment 1
New Chapel Methodist Church, "Trustees Minute Book – January 15, 1842," unnumbered pages; Indiana Historical Society Library, Indianapolis. IHS Library call number F-72.

Record for the				Classes Separately.			
Class No.	E. Bennett	Leader.	Meets	Class No.	Leader.	Meets	Remarks.
	Names.				Names.		Remarks.
	E. Bennett				Joseph Brady		
					M. Hemick		
					Lu. Hemick		
					Cothrine Wray		
					M. J. Bennett		
					Susanna Bennett		
					W. W. Williams		
					Caroline Williams		
					W. S. Brother		
					Sarah Brother		
					W. Williams		
					Mary Williams		
					Abner Cook		
					Susanna Lowery		
					Mary Lowery		
					Caroline Lowery		
					Delbert Lowery		
					Brown		
					Mary Brown		
					Eliza Elletts		
					Mary Scott		
	Amel Dwyer						
	Martha Dwyer						
	John Brother						
	Anna Forby						
	E. Williams						
	James Williams						
	Mary Williams						
	Ueli Brady						
	L. B. Dull						
	Martha Dull						
	Merrish Brother						

Attachment 2

Methodist Episcopal Church, Illinois Conference, LaPrairie Circuit (Illinois, Adams), "Class List," unpagged, undated (internal evidence suggests early to mid-1860s), class leader E(lisha H.) Bennett; FHL microfilm 965,273, item 4; DGS 7621301 image 295. " M. F. Bennett"; "Susanua (sic) Bennett." Based on the various surnames and the name of the class leader E. H. Bennett, his is likely the earliest class list for the Ebenezer class.

Ebenezer		Classes Separately.	
Class No.	Names	Leader.	Meets
			Remarks.
	Martin Sherrick	Leader.	Every Two Weeks at the Church
	Susanna Sherrick		
	W. S. Prather		
	Sarah Prather		
5	Catherine Wray		Removed by letter March 1866
	William Willard		Excluded for neglect of duty Sep 1866
	Caroline Willard		
	Elihu Mc Farland		Withdrawn Sep 21 1866
	Rebecca J Mc Farland		
10	Davis Willard		Excluded Sep 3 rd 1866
	Mary Willard		
	Virginia E Willard		
	Mary Willard		
	G. M. Gorby		Removed to Bowen
15	Ann Gorby		
	Julia Hoyt		
	Rhoda Cook		
	America Woods		married John Sherrick
	Nancy Scott		
20	Susanna Lowery		
	Mary Lowery		
	Tabitha Lowery		Married to Swaim
	Nancy Coats		
	Margaret F Bennett		Excluded Sep 8 th 1866
25	Sarah Ann Bennett		
	John W. Bennett		
	Elizabeth Bennett		
	Caroline Craig		

Attachment 3

Methodist Episcopal Church, Illinois Conference, LaPrairie Circuit (Illinois, Adams), "(1866) class list Ebenezer Class," Margaret Bennett; Sarah Bennett; John W Bennett; Elizabeth Bennett; FHL microfilm 965,273, item 3; DGS 7621301 image 291. "Margaret F. Bennett excluded Sept 8th 1866"; date of list based on notes next to some names which are all 1866.

La Prairie Ct Record for the Ebenezer Lot 5 in 1870, &c. 71

Class No.	Names.	Leader.	Meets	Remarks.
Member	1 Robert Keady, C. L.			
"	2 L. A. Stewart L. P.			Removal to Junction
"	3 Martin Sherrick St			
"	4 Lotin M. E. Sherrick			
"	5 Martha Sherrick			
"	6 Brady Stewart			
"	7 Abigail Stewart			
"	8 Mary E. Cook			
"	9 Sally Brown			
"	10 Miss M. E. Brown			Member removed by Letter
"	11 Miss E. A. Brown			
"	12 Mrs. Preatter			
"	13 Sarah Preatter			
"	14 America Sherrick			
"	15 Caroline Willard			
"	16 Boda Cook			
"	17 John Bennett			
"	18 Mary Brady			sick
"	19 E. B. Hoyt			Remained without Letter
"	20 Deborah Hoyt, Sick			Member removed
"	21 John Casulford			
"	22 Lydia Casulford			
"	23 Sarah Bennett			
"	24 Joel C. Sherrick			
"	25 May A. Sherrick			
"	26 Filly M. Bennett			
"	27 Matilda S. Casulford on trial			
"	28 Arvilla Bennett on trial			Spoke in full communion first 23/73
"	29 Alice Brown on trial			Received into full communion March 23/73
"	30 F. de Brown			
"	31 Edith Brown on trial			"
"	32 Susanna Wood on trial			"
"	33 Mary Mathok on trial			"

Attachment 4
 Methodist Episcopal Church, Illinois Conference, LaPrairie Circuit (Illinois, Adams), "1870 class list Ebenezer Class," "Sarah Bennett; John W. Bennett; Arvilla Bennett"; FHL microfilm 965,273, item 3.; DGS 7621301 image 303; List has date of 1870 and 1871.

Classes Separately.

Class No.	Names.	Leader.	Meets	Remarks.
	J. D. Sherrish			
	M. Sherrish			
	Jessie Sherrish			
	Matilda Sherrish			
	Arvilla Sherrish			
	Wm. A. Sherrish			
	Burdette Sherrish			
	Wm. A. Sherrish			
	Wm. A. Sherrish			
	Phoebe Sherrish			
	Wm. A. Sherrish			
	John Bennett			
	Matilda Bennett			
	Sarah Bennett			
	Arvilla Bennett			
	John Wesley Bennett			
	Matilda M. Kendig			
	Sarah Ann Swartz			

Attachment 5

Methodist Episcopal Church, Illinois Conference, LaPrairie Circuit (Illinois, Adams), "(1873) Ebenezer class list," John Bennett; Matilda Bennett; Sarah Bennett; Arvilla Bennett; FHL microfilm 965,273, item 3.; DGS 7621301 image 312; List dated based on marriage date of John Wesley Bennett and Matilda M. Kendig in August 1872.