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CASE STUDY

Board for Certification of Genealogists
Requirement 5

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A Resolution of Conflicting Direct and Indirect Evidence Identifies the Father of Nathaniel Atwell of New York

Nathaniel Atwell was born in April 1786 in Columbia County, New York and died in Glenville, Schenectady County, New York on 7 November 1862.¹ Throughout the three quarters of a century preceding his death, Nathaniel left records of genealogical value across multiple counties throughout New York, during a time when county boundary lines frequently changed. None of those records names Nathaniel's father.

A handwritten letter penned by Nathaniel's great grandson found in the family surname files of a county historical society names Nathaniel's parents as Nathaniel Atwell and "Phena (or Parrelina)" Burr Atwell. Enclosed with the letter is an unsourced, undated biographical sketch of Nathaniel that claims he and his sister, Olivia, were orphaned when quite young and that Nathaniel "had no recollection of his parents."²

Indirect evidence gleaned from Nathaniel's maternal grandfather's will, his paternal uncle's Revolutionary War pension application, mid-eighteenth-century Connecticut church records, and strong ties between two families prove that Nathaniel's father was Benjamin Atwell.³

¹ Vale Cemetery (Schenectady, New York), Nathaniel Atwell gravestone; photographed by Jenny Rizzo Irwin, 16 June 2021. The gravestone inscription is worn by the elements but legible, and reads: "Nathaniel Atwell died Nov. 7, 1862, aged 76 years & 7 months." Also, "Died," death notice, Nathaniel Atwell, *Evening Star and Times* (Schenectady, New York), 8 November 1862, p. 1, col. 6; database images, *Old Fulton New York Post Cards* (<https://www.fultonhistory.com>) : accessed 29 June 2021). The death notice indicates Nathaniel died "in his 77th year." Nathaniel's birth month and year are calculated as April 1786. For birth location see 1855 New York State census, Schenectady County, population schedule, Glenville, unpaginated, dwelling 117, family 126, Nathaniel Atwell household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9BR8-VLW>) : accessed 15 June 2021; New York State Archives, Albany, New York. The New York State census includes a question for birth county of New York State-born residents.

² Clarence Atwell (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), to David A. Keefer, Glenville Town Historian, handwritten letter, 28 January 1953; Atwell family file, Schenectady County Historical Society (SCHS), Schenectady, New York. Enclosed with the letter is a typewritten, undated biographical sketch of Nathaniel Atwell, author unknown.

³ Autosomal DNA evidence was not used to support evidence related to identifying Nathaniel Atwell's father. Living test takers are six to eight generations removed from a most recent common ancestor which is too distant for autosomal DNA test results to support biological relationships. Y-DNA testing was not pursued.

NATHANIEL ATWELL

Clarence Atwell, Nathaniel's great grandson, wrote the letter naming Nathaniel's parents as Nathaniel and Phena. Clarence was the son of Daniel Allen Atwell.⁴ Daniel Allen was the son of Jason Atwell.⁵ Jason was the son of Nathaniel Atwell.⁶ In the letter, Clarence wrote that his great grandfather Nathaniel and his (Nathaniel's) sister were "raised by an uncle, Daniel Allen and his wife Ami Burr Allen" and that the Allens are buried in Delphi Falls, formerly Pompey Hollow, New York.⁷

Nathaniel's Residences Throughout New York

Nathaniel lived in numerous upstate New York counties as a young man. His likely residence as an adolescent in Daniel Allen's 1800 household in Pompey, Onondaga County, New York is documented with a tick mark as a male between the ages of ten and fifteen.⁸ In the twenty years between 1810 and 1830 Nathaniel lived in four different counties. He headed an 1810 household in Schodack, Rensselaer County, New York, with a presumed wife and young son.⁹ Ten years later, he and his growing family lived in Fort Ann, Washington County, New York.¹⁰ In the late 1820s Nathaniel and his wife, Reliance,

⁴ State of Florida, Bureau of Vital Statistics, death certificate, state file no. 84 076364, 13 August 1984, Clarence A. Atwell; Bureau of Vital Statistics, Jacksonville, Florida. Also, 1900 U.S. census, Clay County, Nebraska, population schedule, Fairfield, p. 38 reverse (stamped), enumeration district (ED) 30, sheet 14-B, dwelling 292, family 292, Daniel A. Atwell household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HT-DTN9-WGC>) : accessed 10 August 2021); National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) microfilm publication T623, roll 920. Also, "Obituary," Daniel Allen Atwell, *The Fairfield Independent* (Fairfield, Nebraska), 21 July 1905, p. 1, col. 5; database images, *Newspapers.com* (<https://www.newspapers.com/>) : accessed 10 August 2021).

⁵ 1870 U.S. census, Van Buren County, Michigan, population schedule, Porter, p. 31 (penned), dwelling 244, family 241, Jason Atwell household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HT-63LQ-TF2>) : accessed 10 August 2021); NARA microfilm publication M593, roll 706.

⁶ Van Buren County, Michigan, return of deaths, p. 189, record no. 39, Jason Atwell household, 14 October 1886; "Michigan Deaths, 1867-1897," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-DZK3-8HC>) : accessed 10 August 2021); Michigan Secretary of State, Department of Vital Records, Lansing, Michigan. Also, for indirect evidence of Jason as Nathaniel's son, see 1850 U.S. census, Schenectady County, New York, population schedule, Glenville, p. 461 (penned), dwelling 376, family 392, Nathaniel Atwell household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HT-63GX-CH>) : accessed 29 June 2021); NARA microfilm publication M432, roll 594.

⁷ Clarence Atwell, to David A. Keefer, handwritten letter, 28 January 1953.

⁸ 1800 U.S. census, Onondaga County, New York, Pompey, p. 128 (penned), line 2, Daniel Allen; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GRZT-F9Z>) : accessed 14 June 2021); NARA microfilm publication M32, roll 24.

⁹ 1810 U.S. census, Rensselaer County, New York, Schodack, p. 551 (penned), line 24, Nath^e Atwell household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYY1-9M47>) : accessed 10 June 2021); National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) microfilm publication M252, roll 35.

¹⁰ 1820 U.S. census, Washington County, New York, Fort Ann, population schedule, tenth page (unnumbered), line 13, Nathanul Hatwell [Nathaniel Atwell] household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9YB4-671>) : accessed 27 June 2021); NARA microfilm publication M33, roll 76.

bought and sold land in the towns of Providence and Galway in Saratoga County, New York.¹¹ In 1830 Nathaniel settled in Glenville, where he would remain for the rest of his life.¹²

A soldier in the War of 1812, Nathaniel enlisted at Sandy Hill, Washington County, New York on 10 September 1814 and was discharged 24 September 1814 when his unit was disbanded in Burlington, Chittenden County, Vermont.¹³

Nathaniel's will, written 20 January 1851, names his wife Reliance, daughters Irena and Phena Elizabeth, and sons Jason and Daniel Allen.¹⁴ His son, Daniel Allen Atwell, was likely named after the man in Pompey who raised Nathaniel after his parents' deaths. Nathaniel's daughter Phena may have been named after his mother.

Nathaniel was interred in the Atwell family plot in Vale Cemetery in Schenectady, Schenectady County, New York on 3 June 1867, nearly five years after his death on 7 November 1862.¹⁵ It is possible that Nathaniel was first buried on his farm in nearby Glenville and his remains were moved after his son, D. A. Atwell purchased the plot in March 1865.¹⁶

Nathaniel as Nathaniel's father

Family lore regarding Nathaniel's father being named Nathaniel possibly stemmed from an undocumented reference in a family history published more than one hundred years after Nathaniel's death. Charles Burr Todd's *A General History of the Burr Family* names Parrehna (Burr) Atwell as the

¹¹ Saratoga County, New York, Deed Book T:233–34, David Reynolds and Maria Reynolds to Nathaniel Atwell, 3 November 1827; “United States, New York Land Records, 1630–1975,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-99WC-G8WB> : accessed 27 June 2021); Saratoga County courthouse, Ballston Spa, New York. Also, Saratoga County, New York, Deed Book T:234–235, Nathaniel and Reliance Atwell to George H. Elliott, 31 December 1829; “United States, New York Land Records, 1630–1975” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-99WC-G8DD> : accessed 27 June 2021); Saratoga County courthouse, Ballston Spa, New York.

¹² 1830 U.S. census, Schenectady County, New York, Glenville, sixth page (unnumbered), line 16, Nathaniel Etwill [Atwell] household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYYK-SFL9> : accessed 27 June 2021); NARA microfilm publication M19, roll 91.

¹³ Schenectady County, New York, Nathaniel Atwell, declaration to obtain military bounty land, 25 June 1855; “War of 1812 Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files,” database images, *Fold3* (<https://www.fold3.com/image/274456098> : accessed 11 June 2021); War of 1812 Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files, Record Group 15; National Archives, Washington, D.C.

¹⁴ Schenectady County, New York, Will Book H:297–299, last will and testament of Nathaniel Atwell, proved 17 November 1862; “New York Probate Records 1629–1971,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYCV-QLX> : accessed 4 August 2021); Schenectady County courthouse, Schenectady, New York.

¹⁵ Vale Cemetery (Schenectady, New York), interment card, Nathaniel Atwell, interred 3 June 1867; Vale Cemetery, Schenectady, New York 12307. The interment card files are alphabetically arranged, 3” x 5” index cards stored in drawers in a locked vault.

¹⁶ Vale Cemetery (Schenectady, New York), plot payment card, D.A. Atwell, 31 March 1865; Vale Cemetery, Schenectady, New York 12307. The payment cards are alphabetically arranged index cards stored in a locked vault. For Nathaniel's residence in Glenville, see 1860 U.S. census, Schenectady County, population schedule, Glenville, p. 1 (penned), dwelling 2, family 3, Nathaniel [Nathaniel] Atwell household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9BS4-X9X> : accessed 27 June 2021); NARA microfilm publication M653, roll 858. Also, 1855 N. Y. S. census, Schenectady Co., pop. sch., Glenville, unpaginated, dwell. 117, fam. 126, Nathaniel Atwell.

daughter of Gideon Burr of Canaan, and wife of Nathaniel Atwell.¹⁷ “Parrelina” is similar enough to “Parrehna” and could have been a simple transcription error where the “h” was read as “li.” The author visited many of the towns mentioned in the book and “personally examined the records,” however, he also cautioned that the later Burr generations were not as complete as the earlier generations. Parrehna was in the fifth (of nine) generations of the “Hartford Branch” of Burrs studied and was not profiled as extensively as others in her generation, suggesting limited research was conducted.¹⁸ Authored works often contain accurate information and clues, especially when documented, however, they are generally more error-prone sources than original records created closer in time to an event.¹⁹

References to Nathaniel’s father being named Nathaniel’s exist in online trees. Of the forty-two *Ancestry* public member trees where Nathaniel Atwell appears, fifteen name his father as Nathaniel and twelve name his mother as Phena (two name her as Parrehna and two with multiple combinations of Phena and Parrehna). In most trees, Nathaniel’s parents are unnamed.²⁰ It is likely that the source for most of the public trees naming Nathaniel’s father as Nathaniel are other *Ancestry* user-created trees.

While three different sources—the letter, the biographical sketch, and online trees— name Nathaniel’s father as Nathaniel, they are not independent. Independent sources have unrelated origins and are used to corroborate a genealogical conclusion.²¹ Although multiple sources provide direct evidence of Nathaniel as Nathaniel’s father, a lack of independence and unreliability of unsourced authored sources raises questions as to the credibility of the conclusion.

Only two men with names similar to Nathaniel Atwell headed households in 1790. Nathan Atwell lived alone in Cockermouth, Grafton County, New Hampshire.²² Nathan Attiwell lived in Lynn, Essex County, Massachusetts with three males under age sixteen and three females.²³ Neither of these households is consistent with a family consisting only of Nathaniel, his wife Phena, and two young children.

¹⁷ Charles Burr Todd, *A General History of the Burr Family, With a Genealogical Record from 1193 to 1902*, 4th ed., (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1902), p. 285; image, *Google Books* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/A_General_History_of_the_Burr_Family/Aj47AAAAMAAJ) : accessed 29 August 2021).

¹⁸ Todd, *A General History of the Burr Family*, p. ix.

¹⁹ Thomas W. Jones, *Mastering Genealogical Proof* (Arlington, Virginia: National Genealogical Society, 2013), p. 8–10.

²⁰ “Public Member Trees,” database, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1030/>) : accessed 29 August 2021; search for “Nathaniel Atwell” with birth and death years of 1786 and 1862, respectively.

²¹ Jones, *Mastering Genealogical Proof*, p. 135–136.

²² 1790 U.S. census, Grafton County, New Hampshire, Cockermouth, p. 15 (penned), line 20, Nathan Attiwell household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYBC-9ZBD>) : accessed 6 October 2022; NARA microfilm publication M637, roll 5.

²³ 1790 U.S. census, Essex County, Massachusetts, Lynn, p. 334 (penned), column 1, line 37, Nathan Atwell household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYYG-9963>) : accessed 6 October 2022; NARA microfilm publication M637, roll 4.

BURR AND ATWELL FAMILY TIES

The Burrs and Atwells of Wintonbury, Connecticut

The Burr and Atwell families were from Wintonbury Parish, a congregation formed in 1736 that was originally part of Old Windsor, Connecticut. The town of Wintonbury, now Bloomfield, lies in Hartford County and was incorporated from the nearby towns of Windsor, Farmington, and Simsbury.²⁴

GIDEON BURR, NATHANIEL'S MATERNAL GRANDFATHER

Gideon Burr and Eunice Loomis were married at the Wintonbury Congregational Church on 11 November 1742.²⁵ Gideon's children were baptized at the Wintonbury Congregational Church:

- Eunice, baptized 17 June 1743²⁶
- Eunice, baptized 14 October 1744²⁷
- Sarah, baptized 7 September 1746²⁸
- Gideon, baptized 29 November 1749²⁹
- Gideon, baptized 16 December 1750³⁰
- Elizabeth, baptized 20 May 1753³¹
- Hannah, baptized 8 June 1755³²

²⁴ Wintonbury Historical Society, *Images of America, Bloomfield* (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2001), p. 7. Also, Mary Kingsbury Talcott, "Records of the Church in Wintonbury Parish (now Bloomfield), Conn.," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 71 (April 1917): 157.

²⁵ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, marriages 1738–1786, p. 124, 11 November 1742, Gideon Burr and Eunice Loomis; "Church Records, 1738–1918," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KX-Y> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

²⁶ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 37, no. 87, 17 June 1743, Eunice Burr; "Church Records, 1738–1918," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KJ-D> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

²⁷ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 39, no. 111, 14 October 1744, Eunice Burr; "Church Records, 1738–1918," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KJ-N> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

²⁸ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 41, no. 151, 7 September 1746, Sarah Burr; "Church Records, 1738–1918," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KX-P> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

²⁹ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 44B, no. 219, 29 November 1749, Gideon Burr; "Church Records, 1738–1918," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KN-4> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

³⁰ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 46, no. 252, 16 December 1750, Gideon Burr; "Church Records, 1738–1918," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KN-4> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

³¹ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 50, no. 313, 20 May 1753, Elizabeth Burr; "Church Records, 1738–1918," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KX-M> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

³² Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 54, no. 373, 8 June 1755, Hannah Burr; "Church Records, 1738–1918," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KF-H> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

REQUIREMENT 5: CASE STUDY

- Ozias, baptized 4 December 1757³³
- Phena, baptized 26 October 1760³⁴
- Moses, baptized 3 April 1763³⁵

Gideon's daughter Eunice died on 17 June 1743.³⁶ His wife, Eunice, died on 30 August 1746 at about age twenty-six.³⁷ Gideon remarried after Eunice's death.³⁸ Gideon's newborn son, Gideon, died after a few weeks on 30 November 1749.³⁹ Gideon's son Moses may have died as a young adult.⁴⁰

Church records place Gideon Burr and his family in Wintonbury parish from 1742 to 1763. Land records support Gideon's residence in nearby Simsbury. In 1745 Gideon purchased thirty acres in Simsbury.⁴¹ Over the next eight years, he bought and sold adjacent parcels to his Simsbury land.⁴² In

³³ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 58, no. 433, 4 December 1757, Ozias Burr; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KX-6>) : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

³⁴ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 64, no. 507, 26 October 1760, Phena Burr; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KX-7>) : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

³⁵ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 69, no. 577, 3 April 1763, Moses Burr; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KX-Q>) : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

³⁶ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, deaths 1738–1787, p. 150, no. 31, 17 June 1743, Eunice Burr; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KF-P>) : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

³⁷ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, deaths 1738–1787, p. 151, no. 46, 30 August 1746, Eunice Burr; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KD-L>) : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

³⁸ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, deaths 1738–1787, p. 125–127; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KX-D>) : accessed 6 October 2022), a search for a marriage 1746–1749 for Gideon Burr returned no results. The birth of Gideon's child in 1749 and subsequent children suggests he married not long after Eunice's death. It is likely Gideon married his wife after Eunice in the wife's home church.

³⁹ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, deaths 1738–1787, p. 152, no. 65, 30 November 1749, Gideon Burr; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KD-L>) : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

⁴⁰ Todd, *A General History of the Burr Family*, 4th ed., p. 294.

⁴¹ Town of Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Deed Book 8:186, Samuel Barber to Gideon Burr, 13 May 1745; “Land Records, 1640–1919,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3N-R935>) : accessed 3 September 2021); Windsor Town Hall, Windsor. This image is only viewable at a Family History Center or *FamilySearch* affiliate library.

⁴² Town of Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Deed Book 8:186, Thomas Crow to Gideon Burr, 13 May 1745; “Land Records, 1640–1919,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3N-R935>) : accessed 3 September 2021); Windsor Town Hall, Windsor. Also, Town of Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Deed Book 10:25, Thomas Humphry to Geidion [Gideon] Burr, 13 April 1752; “Land Records, 1640–1919,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3J-49KD-2>) : accessed 3 September 2021); Windsor Town Hall, Windsor. Also, Town of Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Deed Book 10:25, Geidion [Gideon] Burr to Thomas Humphry, 13 April 1752; “Land Records, 1640–1919,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3J-49KX-K>) : accessed 3 September 2021); Windsor Town Hall, Windsor. Also, Town of Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Deed Book 10:223, Gideon Burr to David Brown, 19 October 1753; “Land Records, 1640–1919,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3J-49KX-K>) : accessed 3 September 2021); Windsor Town Hall, Windsor. Also, Town of Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Deed Book 10:223, Gideon Burr to David Brown, 19 October 1753; “Land Records, 1640–1919,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3J-49KX-K>) : accessed 3 September 2021); Windsor Town Hall, Windsor. Also, Town of Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Deed Book 10:223, Gideon Burr to David Brown, 19 October 1753; “Land Records, 1640–1919,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3J-49KX-K>) : accessed 3 September 2021); Windsor Town Hall, Windsor.

1759, Gideon's last recorded land purchase in Simsbury, he purchased six and one-quarter acres adjacent to his own land. A witness to this transaction was Nathaniel Case.⁴³ Nathaniel Case may have been the brother or father of Joseph Atwell's wife, Miriam. Three weeks prior to Gideon's last purchase, Joseph and Miriam Atwell quitclaimed land left by Miriam's father, Nathaniel Case, to Miriam's brother, Nathaniel Case.⁴⁴

The Burrs were among the hearty, industrious New Englanders that migrated to New York in the mid-late eighteenth century. Connecticut men in search of fertile land on which to farm settled in and around the small Dutch towns near New York's Hudson and Mohawk Rivers.⁴⁵ In July 1779 Gideon was taxed in Kings District, Albany County, New York.⁴⁶ In 1886 Kings District was transferred from Albany County to the newly formed Columbia County.⁴⁷ Kings District became the town of Canaan in 1788.⁴⁸

GIDEON BURR'S WILL

Gideon Burr died on 24 April 1797 and was buried in Flat Brook Cemetery in Canaan.⁴⁹ Gideon Burr of Kings District wrote his will on 11 February 1784. The will was proved fourteen years later in

[ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3J-49KZ-Q](https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3J-49KZ-Q) : accessed 3 September 2021); Windsor Town Hall, Windsor. The referenced images are only viewable at a Family History Center or *FamilySearch* affiliate library.

⁴³ Town of Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Deed Book 11:21, William Webster to Gideon Burr, 23 March 1759; "Land Records, 1640–1919," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3J-49KQ-X> : accessed 3 September 2021); Windsor Town Hall, Windsor. This image is only viewable at a Family History Center or *FamilySearch* affiliate library.

⁴⁴ Town of Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Deed Book 11:52, Joseph Atwell and Meriam Atwell to Nathaniel Case, 3 March 1759; "Land Records, 1640–1919," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3J-49K9-Y> : accessed 3 September 2021); Windsor Town Hall, Windsor. This image is only viewable at a Family History Center or *FamilySearch* affiliate library.

⁴⁵ David Maldwyn Ellis, "The Yankee Invasion of New York, 1783–1850," *New York History* 32 (January 1951): 3–17; database images, *JSTOR* (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/23149993> : accessed 7 September 2021).

⁴⁶ Tax list, 31 July 1779, unpaginated, column 5, line 33, entry for Gideon Burr; folder 34, Albany County: Land and Personal Tax List of Kings District; box 2, Tax Assessment Lists Submitted by the Superintendents of Taxes to the Treasurer of New York State, 1779–1788; collection A3210-77, New York State Treasurer's Office Accounts and Tax Assessment Lists; New York State Archives, Albany.

⁴⁷ *Laws of the State of New York: Passed at the Sessions of the Legislature Held in the Years 1785, 1786, 1787, and 1788, Inclusive, Being the Eighth, Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Sessions*, vol. 2 (Albany, New York: Weed, 1886), p. 234–236, chapter 28, ninth session, "An Act to Divide the County of Albany into Two Counties," (4 April 1786); database images, *Google Books* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/Laws_of_the_State_of_New_York/7d8TAAAAAYAAJ : accessed 11 October 2021).

⁴⁸ *Laws of the State of New York: Passed at the Sessions of the Legislature Held in the Years 1785, 1786, 1787, and 1788, Inclusive, Being the Eighth, Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Sessions*, vol. 2 (Albany, New York: Weed, 1886), p. 748–769, particularly 756–757, chapter 64, eleventh session, "An Act for Dividing the Counties of This State into Towns," (7 March 1788); database images, *Google Books* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/Laws_of_the_State_of_New_York/7d8TAAAAAYAAJ : accessed 11 October 2021).

⁴⁹ *Find a Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/29197544/gideon-burr> : accessed 4 July 2021), memorial 29197544, "Gideon Burr" and database image of Flatbrook Cemetery (Flatbrook, Columbia County, New York), Gideon Burr gravestone; both contributed by Elise Scharpf Saar, memorial page created 20 August 2008, photo added 21 August 2008. Flatbrook Cemetery is located across the street from Flat Brook Baptist Church (Canaan, New York). The church does not maintain burial records. See Bill Erickson, pastor, Flat Brook Baptist Church, Canaan, New York (gal220williamjerickson@gmail.com) to Jenny Rizzo Irwin, printed copy of email, 8 July 2021, "Re: records," Atwell Folder, Personal Family Files; privately held by Jenny Rizzo Irwin, Watervliet, New York. The Town of Canaan maintains the Flat Brook cemetery but does not have any plot plan or information about who is buried there. See Charlotte L. Cowan, Canaan Town Clerk/Tax Collector (townclerk@canaannewyork.org) to Jenny Rizzo Irwin, printed

REQUIREMENT 5: CASE STUDY

Columbia County on 16 January 1798. In addition to his wife, Hannah, Gideon named the following children in his will:

- Gideon Burr,
- Ozias Burr,
- Eunice (Burr) Kidder, wife of Oliver Kidder,
- Sarah Burr, widow of Steven Burr late of Windsor, Connecticut,
- Elizabeth (Burr) Hall, wife of Benjamin Hall,
- Phene (Burr) Atwell, wife of Benjamin Atwell,
- Abi Burr, and
- Hannah (Burr) Atwell, late wife of Joseph Atwell, Jr.⁵⁰

Gideon's children baptized in Wintonbury were named in his will. Abi Burr was born after the family left Wintonbury.⁵¹ Gideon's daughter, Sarah, married Stephen Burr Jr. on 22 October 1761 Wintonbury.⁵² Stephen Burr junior died on 3 April 1782.⁵³ Sarah and Stephen's marriage and Stephen's subsequent death in 1782 is consistent with Gideon's will written in 1784 naming his daughter, "Sarah Burr, wife of Stephen Burr late of Windsor." Stephen may have lived in Windsor but worshipped in Wintonbury.⁵⁴

Two of Gideon's daughters, Phene and Hannah, married Atwell men. Phene is likely the same person as Phena, named in Clarence's letter as Nathaniel's mother. Gideon's daughter, Abi Burr, was born about 20 May 1766 and died on 7 July 1835.⁵⁵ Clarence's letter names Daniel Allen as the uncle that

copy of email, 12 August 2021, "Re: Flat Brook cemetery," Atwell Folder, Personal Family Files; privately held by Jenny Rizzo Irwin, Watervliet, New York.

⁵⁰ Columbia County, New York, Will Book A:432–35, last will and testament of Gideon Burr, written 11 February 1784, proved 16 January 1798; "New York Probate Records 1629–1971," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G992-MN2T> : accessed 20 June 2021); Columbia County courthouse, Hudson. Kings District, Albany County, became part of Columbia County in 1876. See *Laws of the State of New York: Passed at the Sessions of the Legislature Held in the Years 1785–1888, Inclusive, Being the Eighth, Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Sessions*, vol. 2, (Albany, New York: Weed, 1886), p. 234–236, chapter 28, ninth session, "An Act to Divide the County of Albany Into Two Counties," (4 April 1786); database images, *Google Books* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/Laws_of_the_State_of_New_York/7d8TAAAAAAAJ : accessed 15 September 2021).

⁵¹ *Find a Grave*, memorial 21401544, "Abi Burr Allen."

⁵² Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, marriages 1738–1786, p. 132, no. 109, 22 October 1761, Stephen Burr Jr and Sarah Burr; "Church Records, 1738–1918," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9K6-D> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

⁵³ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, deaths 1738–1787, p. 186, no. 23, 3 April 1782, Stephen Burr, Junr; "Church Records, 1738–1918," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9K6-M> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

⁵⁴ Columbia Co., New York, Will Book A:432–35, Gideon Burr, written 1784, proved 1798.

⁵⁵ *Find a Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/21401544/abi-allen> : accessed 30 September 2022), memorial 21401544, "Abi Burr Allen" and database image of Delphi Falls Baptist Church Cemetery (Delphi Falls, Onondaga County, New York), Abi Allen gravestone; memorial created by Barbara LeClaire on 6 September 2007, gravestone image contributed by Taryn DiTomasso on 11 September 2009. Gravestone is inscribed with "In memory of Abi wife of Maj. Daniel Allen who died July 7th 1835. Aged 69 years 1 mo. & 17 days." Abi Allen's birth date is calculated based on her gravestone. The memorial page references Abi as "the daughter of Noadiah Burr, not of Gideon," however, Gideon's will specifically naming Abi as his daughter is stronger evidence of Abi's parentage.

raised Nathaniel after the death of his (Nathaniel's) parents.⁵⁶ Daniel was an uncle through his marriage to Nathaniel's mother Phene's sister, Abi. Gideon wrote his will in 1784, prior to his daughter Abi's 1790 marriage to Daniel.⁵⁷ Gideon wrote his will prior to Nathaniel Atwell's birth and the subsequent death of his parents, Phene and Benjamin.

JOSEPH ATWELL, NATHANIEL'S PATERNAL GRANDFATHER

Joseph Atwell and Miriam Case were married at the Congregational Church in Wintonbury on 27 December 1753.⁵⁸ Like Gideon Burr's children, Joseph's children were baptized at the Wintonbury Congregational Church:

- Joseph, twin of Benjamin, baptized 3 November 1754⁵⁹
- Benjamin, twin of Joseph, baptized 3 November 1754⁶⁰
- Anna, baptized 17 October 1756⁶¹
- Ozias, baptized 23 July 1758⁶²

Olive Atwell, born about 1760, and her sister Anner Atwell, born about 1762, were baptized as teenagers on 26 November 1775. No reference is made regarding their father, however, the regular two-year interval with which Joseph's children were baptized and the absence of other Atwell men having children baptized in the Wintonbury Congregational Church makes it likely Olive and Anner were also daughters of Joseph.⁶³ An unnamed child of Joseph's died shortly after birth on 26 October 1764.⁶⁴

⁵⁶ Clarence Atwell, to David A. Keefer, handwritten letter, 28 January 1953.

⁵⁷ Columbia Co., New York, Will Book A:432–35, Gideon Burr, written 1784, proved 1798. Also, Bruce, *Onondaga's Centennial, Gleanings of a Century*, vol. 2, p. 164–5.

⁵⁸ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, marriages 1738–1786, p. 128, no. 62, 27 December 1753, Joseph Atwell and Miriam Case; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KX-R> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

⁵⁹ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 52, no. 350, 3 November 1754, Joseph Atwell; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KX-V> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

⁶⁰ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 52, no. 351, 3 November 1754, Benjamin Atwell; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KX-V> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

⁶¹ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 56, no. 405, 17 October 1756, Anna Atwell; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KX-J> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

⁶² Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 59, no. 446, 23 July 1758, Ozias Atwell; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KF-L> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

⁶³ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 101, no. 938, 26 November 1775, Olive Atwell; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KN-9> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford. Also, Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 101, no. 939, 26 November 1775, Anner Atwell; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KN-9> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

⁶⁴ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, deaths 1738–1787, p. 166, no. 205, 26 October 1764, child Atwell; “Church Records, 1738–1918,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KD-K> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

Nathaniel's paternal grandparents, Joseph and Miriam Atwell, were Connecticut landowners. Joseph Atwell of Windsor purchased land in Wintonbury parish in 1755.⁶⁵ Over the next four years Joseph and his wife Miriam bought and sold land in Wintonbury.⁶⁶ Joseph's wife, Miriam, age thirty-two, died on 4 June 1765.⁶⁷

One year after Miriam's death, Joseph married Mabel Pinny on 13 June 1766 at St. Andrew's Church, Simsbury.⁶⁸ He moved his family to New York State between his 1766 marriage and when he was taxed in July 1779 in Kings District.⁶⁹ Gideon Burr, also from Wintonbury, was also taxed that same year in Kings District.⁷⁰

In 1788 Joseph may have been one of the men that built the first house by a white man in what is now Cayuga County. The house was located on land leased from Native Americans, located between two of New York's Finger Lakes—Cayuga Lake and Owasco Lake.⁷¹ Joseph purchased land he had been leasing in Aurelius, Herkimer County, New York in 1792.⁷² The town of Aurelius was formed in 1788 in Montgomery County.⁷³ In 1791 the part of Montgomery County where Aurelius was located became

⁶⁵ Town of Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Deed Book 11:97, Samuel Pierce to Joseph Atwell, 24 February 1755; "Land Records, 1640–1919," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3J-49VY-1>) : accessed 3 September 2021; Windsor Town Hall, Windsor. This image is only viewable at a Family History Center or *FamilySearch* affiliate library.

⁶⁶ Town of Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Deed Book 11:96, Joseph Atwell and Meriam Atwell to Elijah Hoskins, 21 March 1757; "Land Records, 1640–1919," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3J-49VB-2>) : accessed 3 September 2021; Windsor Town Hall, Windsor. Also, Town of Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Deed Book 11:216, Pelatiah Mills to Meriam Atwell by the hand of Joseph Atwell, 30 December 1758; "Land Records, 1640–1919," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3J-49VL-S>) : accessed 3 September 2021; Windsor Town Hall, Windsor. Also, Town of Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Deed Book 11:19, Joseph Atwell and Meriam Attwell [Atwell] to Benoni Clark, 12 May 1759; "Land Records, 1640–1919," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3J-49KQ-P>) : accessed 3 September 2021; Windsor Town Hall, Windsor. The referenced images are only viewable at a Family History Center or *FamilySearch* affiliate library.

⁶⁷ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, deaths 1738–1787, p. 167, no. 210, 10 June 1765, Miriam Atwell; "Church Records, 1738–1918," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9K6-1>) : accessed 2 September 2021; Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

⁶⁸ Albert C. Bates, *Records of Rev. Roger Viets, rector of St. Andrew's, Simsbury, Conn. And Missionary from the Society for the Propagation of The Gospel in Foreign Parts* (Hartford: Press of The Case, 1893), p. 56; "Records of Rev. Roger Viets, Rector of St. Andrew's, Simsbury, Conn.," database image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/26230/images/dvm_LocHist010945-00029-0) : accessed 24 June 2021).

⁶⁹ Tax list, 31 July 1779, unpaginated, column 5, line 26, entry for Joseph Atwell; folder 34, Albany County: Land and Personal Tax List of Kings District; box 2, Tax Assessment Lists Submitted by the Superintendents of Taxes to the Treasurer of New York State, 1779–1788; collection A3210-77, New York State Treasurer's Office Accounts and Tax Assessment Lists; New York State Archives, Albany.

⁷⁰ Tax list, 31 July 1779, Gideon Burr; Albany County: Land and Personal Tax List of Kings District; New York State Archives, Albany.

⁷¹ *History of Cayuga County, New York, Compiled from Papers in the Archives of the Cayuga county Historical Society, with Special Chapters by Local Authors from 1775 to 1908* (Auburn, New York: Cayuga County Historical Society, 1908) p. 246–247; database images, *GoogleBooks* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/History_of_Cayuga_County_New_York/v9Y4AQAAMAAI) : accessed 11 October 2022).

⁷² Herkimer County, New York, Deed Book 1:232–233, Elhanah Watson to Joseph Atwell, 19 February 1792; "United States, New York Land Records, 1630–1975," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G9W3-Y221>) : accessed 12 October 2022; Herkimer County Courthouse, Herkimer.

⁷³ *Laws of the State of New York: Passed at the Sessions of the Legislature Held in the Years 1789, 1790, 1791, 1792, 1793, 1794, 1795, and 1796, Inclusive, Being the Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth*

part of the newly created Herkimer County.⁷⁴ In 1794 Aurelius became part of newly created Onondaga County.⁷⁵ In 1799 Onondaga County was divided and Aurelius became part of the newly created Cayuga County.⁷⁶

Joseph's 1790 residence is unknown.⁷⁷ Joseph Atwell's will, written 14 March 1798 and filed in Onondaga County, names his wife Mabel, and specifically provides for schooling for his two sons Ellihu and Penney. The remainder of his estate was divided among his sons and daughters. Mabel was name executrix and Joseph's son, Joseph, was name executor. Levi Atwell was witness to the will.⁷⁸ Mabel paid personal estate tax in Aurelius, Cayuga County, New York in 1799. She was listed on the tax roll just below Levi Atwell, possibly her son.⁷⁹

Burr / Atwell Marriages

Contemporaries Gideon Burr and Joseph Atwell appear to have led somewhat parallel lives. Both raised young families in Wintonbury, Connecticut during the mid-1700s, both were widowed young

Sessions, vol. 3, (Albany, New York: Weed, 1887), p. 491–494, chapter 18, seventeenth session, “An Act for Erecting Lands Called the Military Tract into a Separate County,” (5 March 1794); database images, *Google Books* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/Laws_of_the_State_of_New_York/RuATAAAAYAAJ) : accessed 11 October 2022).

⁷⁴ New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer*, rev. ed., part 2 (New York, New York: New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 2017), p. 525. Also, *Laws of the State of New York: Passed at the Sessions of the Legislature Held in the Years 1789, 1790, 1791, 1792, 1793, 1794, 1795, and 1796, Inclusive, Being the Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Sessions*, vol. 3, (Albany, New York: Weed, 1887), p. 206–209, chapter 10, fourteenth session, “An Act for Dividing the County of Montgomery,” (16 February 1791); database images, *Google Books* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/Laws_of_the_State_of_New_York/RuATAAAAYAAJ) : accessed 11 October 2022).

⁷⁵ *Laws of the State of New York: Passed at the Sessions of the Legislature Held in the Years 1789, 1790, 1791, 1792, 1793, 1794, 1795, and 1796, Inclusive, Being the Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Sessions*, vol. 3, (Albany, New York: Weed, 1887), p. 491–494, chapter 18, seventeenth session, “An Act for Erecting Lands Called the Military Tract into a Separate County,” (5 March 1794); database images, *Google Books* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/Laws_of_the_State_of_New_York/RuATAAAAYAAJ) : accessed 11 October 2022).

⁷⁶ *Laws of the State of New York: Passed at the Sessions of the Legislature Held in the Years 1797, 1798, 1799, and 1800, Inclusive, Being the Twentieth, Twenty-first, Twenty-second, and Twenty-Third Sessions*, vol. 4, (Albany, New York: Weed, 1887), p. 333–335, chapter 26, twenty-second session, “An Act to Divide the County of Onondaga,” (8 March 1799); database images, *Google Books* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/Laws_of_the_State_of_New_York/duwAAAAAMAAJ) : accessed 11 October 2022).

⁷⁷ United States Census, 1790,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1803959>) : accessed 7 October 2022), a search for first name J* with last name At*w*1 in New York returned one result, Joseph Atwell in Balls Town, Albany County. Similarly, “1790 United States Federal Census,” database images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/5058/>) : accessed 7 October 2022), a search for first name J* with last name At*w*1 returned the same result. The Joseph Atwell in Balls Town was likely Joseph's son, Joseph. It is unlikely that the Joseph Atwell who built the 1788 house would have returned to Albany County in 1790 and then gone back to Aurelius to purchase land in 1792.

⁷⁸ Onondaga County, New York, Will Book A:12–14, last will and testament, Joseph Atwell, written 14 March 1798; “Wills, 1796–1867,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9YCX-ZTQ>) : accessed 24 June 2021); Onondaga County courthouse, Syracuse.

⁷⁹ Aurelius, Cayuga County, New York, “1799 Assessment Roll of the Real and Personal Estates,” Mabel Atwell; “New York, U.S., Tax Assessment Rolls of Real and Personal Estates, 1799–1804, database images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/43099:6771>) : accessed 19 June 2021); New York State Archives, Albany, New York.

and remarried, both were members of the Congregational Church, and both left New England for New York State sometime around the Revolutionary War. There is no doubt that the two men thought highly of each other, as evidenced by three marriages among their children. See Figure 1 for a family tree of Burr/Atwell connections.

OLIVE ATWELL AND OZIAS BURR, NATHANIEL'S (DOUBLE) AUNT AND UNCLE

On 1 February 1780 Ozias Burr married Olive Atwell of Connecticut.⁸⁰ Ozias was baptized in Wintonbury on 4 December 1757.⁸¹ Olive was baptized at about age fifteen in Wintonbury on 26 November 1775, placing her birth year around 1760.⁸² She died in 1794 and is buried in Pease Cemetery in Delphi Falls, Onondaga County, New York.⁸³

HANNAH BURR AND JOSEPH ATWELL, NATHANIEL'S (DOUBLE) AUNT AND UNCLE

Gideon's will names his late daughter, Hannah, wife of Joseph Atwell.⁸⁴ The connection between the two families make it probable that Joseph was the twin of Benjamin baptized in Wintonbury in November 1754.⁸⁵

PHENA BURR AND BENJAMIN ATWELL, NATHANIEL'S PARENTS

Phena and Benjamin married sometime before Gideon's will was written on 11 February 1784.⁸⁶ Their son, Nathaniel, was born in Columbia County, New York.⁸⁷ Nathaniel's April 1786 birth in Columbia County places his mother Phena in the same place where her father Gideon lived in 1784—Kings District, which became later became part of Columbia County.⁸⁸

⁸⁰ W. M. Beauchamp for the Onondaga Historical Association, *Revolutionary Soldiers Resident or Dying in Onondaga County, N.Y. With Supplementary List of Possible Veterans, Based on a Pension List of Franklin H. Chase, Syracuse, N.Y.* (Syracuse, New York: The McDonnell Co., 1913), p. 170; "Revolutionary Soldiers Resident or Dying in Onondaga County, New York," database images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/171:12684> : accessed 11 October 2022). Beauchamp's sources include pension lists, county records, cemetery visits, the 1790 U.S. census, and "personal reports" provided by descendants. Although an authored work, the connection between the Atwell and Burr families and the link to Connecticut is worth consideration, particularly given that the events occurred more than a century before civil vital records were maintained. Also, Sons of the American Revolution, supplemental application, national no. 78053, Lt. Col. Carlos Burr Dawes, descendant of Judge Ozias Burr, approved 26 March 1954; "U.S., Sons of the American Revolution Membership Applications, 1889–1970," database images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/807629:2204> : accessed 11 October 2022). No record of a marriage between Ozias Burr and Olive Atwell exists in the records of the Flat Brook Baptist Church (Canaan, New York). See Bill Erickson, pastor, Flat Brook Baptist Church, Canaan, New York to Jenny Rizzo Irwin, email, 8 July 2021.

⁸¹ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 58, no. 433, 4 December 1757, Ozias Burr; "Church Records, 1738–1918," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS3F-J9KX-6> : accessed 2 September 2021); Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

⁸² Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms, p. 101, no. 938, 26 November 1775, Olive Atwell.

⁸³ *Find a Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/129407833/olive-burr> : accessed 11 October 2022), memorial 129407833, "Olive Atwell Burr," memorial by Nancy Bell, 8 May 2014; no gravestone.

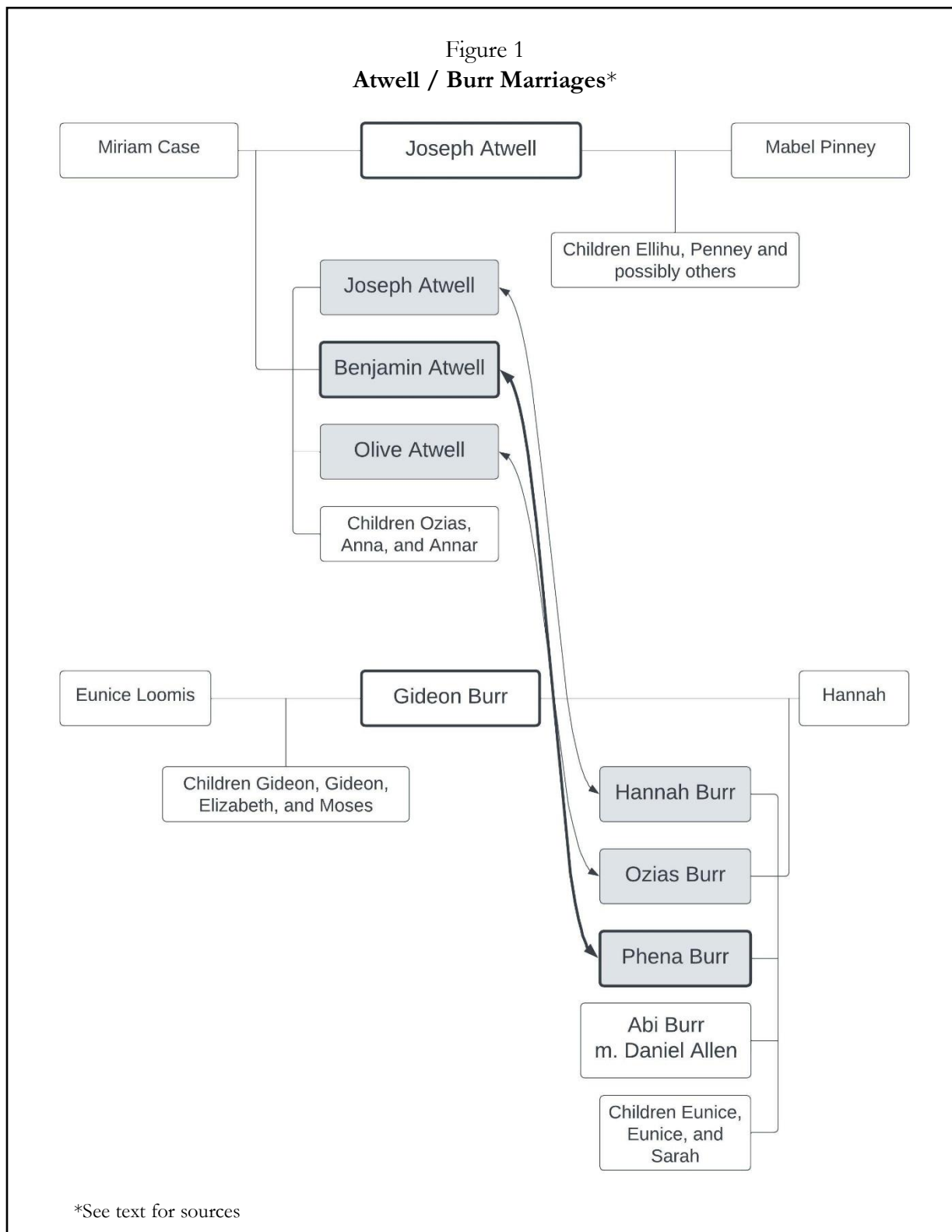
⁸⁴ Columbia Co., New York, Will Book A:432–35, Gideon Burr, written 1784, proved 1798.

⁸⁵ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Conn.), Records, vol. 1, baptisms, p. 52, no. 350, 3 November 1754, Joseph Atwell.

⁸⁶ Columbia Co., New York, Will Book A:432–35, Gideon Burr, written 1784, proved 1798.

⁸⁷ 1855 N. Y. S. census, Schenectady Co., pop. sch., Glenville, unpaginated, dwell. 117, fam. 126, Nathaniel Atwell.

⁸⁸ For Nathaniel Atwell's birth see Vale Cemetery (Schenectady, New York), Nathaniel Atwell gravestone. Also, "Died," death notice, Nathaniel Atwell, *Evening Star and Times* (Schenectady, New York), 8 November 1862. For Gideon Burr's 1874 residence see Columbia Co., New York, Will Book A:432–35, Gideon Burr, written 1784, proved 1798. For Kings



District becoming part of Columbia County see *Laws of the State of New York* . . . , p. 234–236, chapter 28, ninth session (4 April 1786).

JOSEPH ATWELL, NATHANIEL'S UNCLE

Joseph's Revolutionary War Pension Application

Few records exist regarding Benjamin Atwell; however, parts of his life are documented in records left by his twin brother, Joseph. Joseph lived to eighty and is buried in Cazenovia, Madison County, New York.⁸⁹ Joseph's service in the Revolutionary War and close affiliation with Ozias Burr and Daniel Allen in central New York support Benjamin as being Nathaniel Atwell's father.

On 7 June 1832, a federal law was passed to provide pension benefits to Revolutionary War soldiers who served in state militias.⁹⁰ Three months after the law was passed, Joseph appeared before the Madison County Court of Common Pleas to make a declaration regarding his pension eligibility. Under oath, Joseph declared the following:

- he was born on 26 October 1754 in Wintonbury, according to a family Bible lost by 1832,
- he lived in Connecticut until age fourteen [about 1768–1769] when his family moved to Canaan,
- he enlisted in the volunteer New York State militia during the winter of 1776 and served with his “brother Benjamin Atwell,”
- since the Revolutionary War, he had resided in New York, mostly in the town of Cazenovia, his [then] current residence.⁹¹

Joseph's declaration supports his birth in Connecticut, the Atwell family's move to Canaan, his residence in Cazenovia, and his brother's name of Benjamin.

Joseph's move to Pompey

In 1790 Joseph lived in Balls Town, Albany County, New York. His household included two males over age sixteen, two males under sixteen, and three females.⁹² The composition of the household suggests the possibility of a blended family or the inclusion of hired laborers. Before the turn of the new century, Joseph and his family migrated to Pompey.

⁸⁹ *Find a Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/37768274/joseph-atwell> : accessed 29 August 2021), memorial 37768274, “Pvt Joseph Atwell” and database image of Evergreen Cemetery (Cazenovia, Madison County, New York), Joseph Atwell gravestone; memorial and gravestone photo contributed by “Andrew L.” on 31 May 2009.

⁹⁰ 4 Stat. 529 (7 June 1832), “An Act Supplementary to the ‘Act for the Relief of Certain Surviving Officers and Soldiers of the Revolution’”; database images, *Library of Congress* (<https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/l1/lsl/l1sl-c22/l1sl-c22.pdf> : accessed 29 August 2021).

⁹¹ Madison County, New York, declaration to obtain pension, Joseph Atwell (Pvt. Capt. Fosburg, N.Y. Militia), 7 June 1832, pension no. S.12009; Case Files of Approved Pension Applications . . . , 1800–ca. 1912; Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files; database images, *Fold3* (<https://www.fold3.com/image/10996646> : accessed 22 June 2021); NARA microfilm publication M804, roll 88.

⁹² 1790 U.S. census, Albany County, New York, Balls Town, p. 301 (penned), line 14, Joseph Atwell; database images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5058/images/4440870_00297 : accessed 22 June 2021); NARA microfilm publication M637, roll 6. A search of the 1790 census for “Jos* At*w*I” yielded two results—one in Reading, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, the other in Balls Town, Albany County (now Ballston, Saratoga County), New York. Balls Town was not far from Canaan.

After the Revolutionary War, 1.8 million acres of land known as the “military tract” in central and western New York State was allocated as bounty land for soldiers and to encourage settlers loyal to the newly formed nation along the frontier.⁹³ Townships were established and surveyed into one hundred square lots—each lot containing six hundred acres.⁹⁴ New York’s military bounty land was awarded to those who served in the Continental Army through the end of the War.⁹⁵ Joseph served three terms in the volunteer New York Militia between the winter of 1776 and July/August 1777.⁹⁶ He did not qualify for bounty land, however, in 1794 state legislation was enacted to provide for the sale of unappropriated land in the military tract. The law dictated the land be sold to the highest bidder and that twenty-five percent of the purchase price be paid at the time of sale, with the balance due within one year.⁹⁷ On 3 September 1794, Joseph paid a \$31.25 deposit for one hundred acres in lot number forty-four in Pompey.⁹⁸ Upon receipt of the balance of \$93.75, his patent was granted the following year, on 2 September 1795.⁹⁹

About seventeen months after Joseph settled in Pompey, he purchased the remaining five hundred acres in Pompey lot number forty-four with William Pease and Ozias Burr. The lot contained six hundred acres, with the initial one hundred acres in the lot having already been purchased by Joseph.¹⁰⁰ The joint purchase of the six-hundred-acre parcel by the three men is indicative of a close relationship.

In 1800 Joseph lived in Pompey with a woman aged twenty-six to forty-four and three children—two of whom were under ten. The younger children in the 1790 household may have been living on their own by 1800 or may have died.¹⁰¹ Joseph was taxed in Pompey between 1799 and 1803.¹⁰² In 1801

⁹³ New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer*, p. 70.

⁹⁴ *Laws of the State of New York: Passed at the Sessions of the Legislature Held in the Years 1789–1796, Being the Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Sessions*, vol. 3, (Albany, New York: Weed, 1887), p. 89–94, particularly p. 90, chapter 44, twelfth session, “An Act to Appropriate the Lands Set Apart to the Use of the Troops of the Line of This State Lately Serving in the Army of the United States and For Other Purposes Therein Mentioned,” (28 February 1789); database images, *Google Books* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/Laws_of_the_State_of_New_York/RuATAAAAYAAJ) : accessed 25 August 2021).

⁹⁵ *Laws of the State of New York . . .*, p. 89–94, chapter 44, twelfth session (28 February 1789).

⁹⁶ Madison Co., New York, declaration to obtain pension, Joseph Atwell, no. S.12009 (1832).

⁹⁷ *Laws of the State of New York: Passed at the Sessions of the Legislature Held in the Years 1777–1801, Being the First Twenty-four Sessions*, vol. 3, (Albany, New York: Weed, 1887), p. 528–529, section 7, chapter 54, seventeenth session, “An Act for the Further Sale of the Unappropriated Lands of This State,” (27 March 1794); database images, *Google Books* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/Laws_of_the_State_of_New_York/RuATAAAAYAAJ?hl=en) : accessed 25 August 2021).

⁹⁸ New York State, Survey General’s Office, Land Papers, Joseph Atwell, 100 acres, Pompey, 3 September 1794; record series A0272–78, Land Papers, box 57, p. 140; New York State Archives, Albany, New York.

⁹⁹ State of New York, military tract land patent, lot 44, Pompey, Onondaga County, Joseph Atwell, 2 September 1795; “New York State Department of State Military Patents,” series A0447–79, book 8, p. 392, microfilm reel no. 5; New York State Archives, Albany, New York.

¹⁰⁰ Onondaga County, New York, Deed Book D:237–238, John Jacob Astor and Peter Smith to William Pease, Joseph Atwell, and Ozias Burr, dated 7 February 1797, recorded 6 May 1805; “United States, New York Land Records, 1630–1975,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-89WK-C27S>) : accessed 6 September 2021); Onondaga County Courthouse, Syracuse, New York.

¹⁰¹ 1800 U.S. census, Onondaga County, New York, Pompey, p. 128 (penned), line 11, Joseph Atwell; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GRZT-F9Z>) : accessed 14 June 2021); NARA microfilm publication M32, roll 24. A search of the 1800 census for “Jos* At*w*I” returned only one result for Joseph Atwell in New York.

¹⁰² Pompey, Onondaga County, New York, “1799 Assessment Roll of the Real and Personal Estates,” line 4, Joseph Atwell; “New York, U.S., Tax Assessment Rolls of Real and Personal Estates, 1799–1804,” database images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6771/images/41761_328312-00225) : accessed 19 June 2021);

and 1803 he was also taxed in neighboring Cazenovia, Chenango County.¹⁰³ Cazenovia became part of the newly formed Madison County in 1806.¹⁰⁴ Joseph and his family lived in Cazenovia though 1830.¹⁰⁵ In 1830 Joseph conveyed his lands in Cazenovia and Pompey to his grandsons.¹⁰⁶

The Atwell Family Bible

Portions of family records contained in an Atwell family Bible were published as part of “The Christine Atwell Collection.” Christine Atwell, a descendant of Nathaniel’s uncle, Joseph Atwell, was an active

New York State Archives, Albany. The entries are alphabetically arranged. Note that the same record is indexed twice, once under “Homer, Pompey, Onondaga” and a second time under “Onondaga, Onondaga.” Also, Pompey, Onondaga County, New York, “1800 Assessment Roll of the Real and Personal Estates,” line 3, Joseph Atwell; “New York, U.S., Tax Assessment Rolls of Real and Personal Estates, 1799–1804,” database images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6771/images/41761_328312-00373) : accessed 19 June 2021); New York State Archives, Albany. The entries are alphabetically arranged. Also, Pompey, Onondaga County, New York, “1801 Assessment Roll of the Real and Personal Estates,” line 2, Joseph Atwell; “New York, U.S., Tax Assessment Rolls of Real and Personal Estates, 1799–1804,” database images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6771/images/41761_328312-00550) : accessed 19 June 2021); New York State Archives, Albany. The entries are alphabetically arranged. Also, Pompey, Onondaga County, New York, “1802 Assessment Roll of the Real and Personal Estates,” line 3, Joseph Atwell [Atwell]; “New York, U.S., Tax Assessment Rolls of Real and Personal Estates, 1799–1804,” database images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6771/images/41761_328312-00798) : accessed 19 June 2021); New York State Archives, Albany. The entries are alphabetically arranged. Also, Pompey, Onondaga County, New York, “1803 Assessment Roll of the Real and Personal Estates,” line 9, Joseph Atwell; “New York, U.S., Tax Assessment Rolls of Real and Personal Estates, 1799–1804,” database images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6771/images/41761_328793-00133) : accessed 19 June 2021); New York State Archives, Albany. The entries are alphabetically arranged.

¹⁰³ Cazenovia, Chenango County, New York, “1801 Assessment Roll of the Real and Personal Estates,” line 18, Joseph Atwell; “New York, U.S., Tax Assessment Rolls of Real and Personal Estates, 1799–1804,” database images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6771/images/41761_328303-00495) : accessed 19 June 2021); New York State Archives, Albany. The entries are alphabetically arranged. Also, Cazenovia, Chenango County, New York, “1803 Assessment Roll of the Real and Personal Estates,” line 23, Joseph Atwell; “New York, U.S., Tax Assessment Rolls of Real and Personal Estates, 1799–1804,” database images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6771/images/41761_328304-00050) : accessed 19 June 2021); New York State Archives, Albany. The entries are alphabetically arranged.

¹⁰⁴ *Laws of the State of New York: Containing All the Acts Passed at the 28th and 29th Sessions of the Legislature, 1804–5 and 1806*, vol. 4, (Albany, New York: Websters and Skinner, 1806), p. 397–400, chapter 70, twenty-ninth session, “An Act to Erect Part of the County of Chenango into a Separate County by the Name of Madison, and for Other Purposes,” (21 March 1806); database images, *Google Books* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/Laws_of_the_State_of_New_York/_WQ4AAAAIAAJ) : accessed 12 October 2022).

¹⁰⁵ 1810 U.S. census, Madison County, New York, Cazenovia, p. 737 (penned), line 7, J. [Joseph] Atwell [Atwell] household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYY1-S44L>) : accessed 7 August 2021); NARA microfilm publication M252, roll 28. Also, 1820 U.S. census, Madison County, New York, Cazenovia, population schedule, p. 26 (penned), line 4, Joseph Atwater [Atwell] household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYY1-9LQM>) : accessed 7 August 2021); NARA microfilm publication M33, roll 73. Also, 1830 U.S. census, Madison County, New York, Cazenovia, p. 227 (penned), line 26, Joseph Atwell household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYT5-95QF>) : accessed 24 June 2021); NARA microfilm M19, roll 93.

¹⁰⁶ Onondaga County, New York, Deed Book 57:30–31, Joseph Atwell to William G. Atwell, Joseph L. Atwell, and George H. Atwell, 5 July 1830; “United States, New York Land Records, 1630–1975,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G9W2-J8D9>) : accessed 1 September 2021); Onondaga County Courthouse, Syracuse.

family historian and served as Regent of the Owahgena Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.¹⁰⁷ Included among the Atwell family vital events recorded in the Bible were:

- the birth of Joseph Atwell, 1731;
- the birth of Miriam Case, 1735;
- the birth of Joseph Atwell, twin of Benjamin, 25 October 1754;
- the birth of Benjamin Atwell, twin of Joseph, 25 October 1754;
- the birth of Anne Atwell, 17 October 1756;
- the baptism of Ozias Atwell, 23 July 1758;
- the marriage of Joseph Atwell and Miriam Case, 27 December 1753; and
- the death of Miriam Case, 4 June 1765.¹⁰⁸

Christine Atwell's records also note that Joseph and Benjamin were born in Wintonbury, Hartford County, Connecticut and that "Joseph went to Canaan, N. Y., then to Pompey, N. Y. Took up lot No. 44 in the Military Tract [*sic*]. His lot was bounded on one side by Onondaga County and on one side by Madison County."¹⁰⁹

Ozias Burr and Daniel Allen, Nathaniel's uncles

Joseph maintained ties with his former brothers-in-law, Ozias Burr and Daniel Allen. Ozias and Daniel also owned property in Pompey and planted roots in Onondaga County.

OZIAS BURR

Ozias Burr married Olive Atwell in February 1780.¹¹⁰ Ozias was Nathaniel Atwell's maternal uncle and Olive was Nathaniel Atwell's paternal aunt. On 25 October 1792 Ozias purchased all six hundred acres in lot fifty-four in the Town of Pompey.¹¹¹ Eight months later, he sold one hundred forty of the acres in lot fifty-four to his brother-in-law, Daniel Allen.¹¹² Lot fifty-four abuts lot forty-four.¹¹³ Nathaniel's other uncle, Joseph Atwell, received a patent for one hundred acres in lot forty-four in September 1795 and jointly purchased the remaining five hundred acres in lot forty-four with Ozias

¹⁰⁷ Janet Wethy Foley, 'The Atwell Bible' in "The Christine Atwell Collection," *Early Settlers of New York State, Their Ancestors and Descendants*, vol. 6 (July 1939): 457–458; *The Holy Bible* (Buffalo, New York: H. & E. Phinney, 1848). In July 1939, the Atwell Bible was in possession of Mr. George T. Atwell of Cazenovia, New York.

¹⁰⁸ Foley, "The Christine Atwell Collection," p. 457–458.

¹⁰⁹ Foley, "The Christine Atwell Collection," p. 458.

¹¹⁰ Beauchamp, *Revolutionary Soldiers . . . in Onondaga County*, p. 170. Also, Sons of the American Revolution, supplemental application, national no. 78053, Lt. Col. Carlos Burr Dawes, 26 March 1954.

¹¹¹ Onondaga County, New York, Cayuga Filed Deed Book 1:564, Palmer Cade and Elihu Gridley to Ozias Burr, 24 October 1792; "United States, New York Land Records, 1630–1975," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-89WK-69ZC-L> : accessed 1 September 2021); Onondaga County Courthouse, Syracuse.

¹¹² Onondaga County, New York, Cayuga Filed Deed Book 1:565–566, Ozias Burr to Daniel Allen, 21 June 1793; "United States, New York Land Records, 1630–1975," database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-89WK-69ZC-L> : accessed 1 September 2021); Onondaga County Courthouse, Syracuse.

¹¹³ State of New York, State Engineer and Surveyor, Pompey, No. 10, Onondaga County; "Survey Maps of Lands in New York State, ca. 1711–1913, series A0173–78, map no. 840; database images, *New York State Archives Digital Collections* (<https://digitalcollections.archives.nysed.gov/index.php/Detail/objects/37420> : accessed 19 October 2022); New York State Archives, Albany.

and William Pease in February 1797.¹¹⁴ The migration of the Atwells and Burrs from Connecticut, through Columbia County, New York, and their settlement on adjacent land in Cayuga (now Onondaga) County demonstrates a close relationship.

DANIEL ALLEN

Daniel Allen was named as the uncle that raised Nathaniel and his sister after their parents' death.¹¹⁵ He married Abi Burr, the sister of Nathaniel's mother, Phena.¹¹⁶ Daniel's association with Nathaniel's uncles Joseph and Ozias supports the familial connection.

A published county history states that Daniel Allen lived in Canaan as a young man and worked for Gideon Burr. He married Gideon's daughter, Abi Burr. Daniel and his brother-in-law, Ozias Burr, were among the earlier settlers of Pompey.¹¹⁷ Daniel and Abi raised their family in Delphi Falls, a village in the town of Pompey.¹¹⁸ After Abi's death in 1835, Daniel may have moved in with his son, Alexander H. Allen.¹¹⁹ Daniel was likely the male between age seventy and seventy-nine living in Alexander H. Allen's 1840 household.¹²⁰

Daniel and Joseph were among six men of Cazenovia and Pompey "of respectability and of the first standing of society" that submitted a declaration stating they did not feel their neighbor, Abraham Tilloston, was entitled to a Revolutionary War pension.¹²¹

¹¹⁴ State of New York, military tract land patent, lot 44, Pompey, Onondaga Co., Joseph Atwell, 1795. Also, Onondaga Co., New York, Deed Book D:237–238.

¹¹⁵ Clarence Atwell, to David A. Keefer, handwritten letter, 28 January 1953.

¹¹⁶ Clarence Atwell, to David A. Keefer, handwritten letter, 28 January 1953. Also, Bruce, *Onondaga's Centennial, Gleanings of a Century*, vol. 2, p. 164–5.

¹¹⁷ Dwight H. Bruce, ed., *Onondaga's Centennial, Gleanings of a Century*, vol. 2, (Boston: Boston History Company, 1896), 164–5; digital images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/12848/images/dvm_LocHist003179-00769-0 : accessed 22 June 2021). Bruce states in his book's preface that his sources include "very meager early records," as well as "many older publications of historical, biographical, and statistical character." It is likely that interviews and autobiographical accounts also contributed, especially for the biographical sketches.

¹¹⁸ 1800 U.S. census, Onondaga County, New York, Pompey, p. 128 (penned), line 2, Daniel Allen; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GRZT-F9Z> : accessed 14 June 2021); NARA microfilm publication M32, roll 24. Also, 1810 U.S. census, Onondaga County, New York, Pompey, p. 503 (penned, right center of page), column 1, line 8, Daniel Allen; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYBH-9QG9> : accessed 26 June 2021); NARA microfilm publication M252, roll 34. Also, 1820 U.S. census, Onondaga County, New York, Pompey, population schedule, p. 143 (penned), line 43, Daniel Allen; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9YY1-9T6K> : accessed 16 October 2021); NARA microfilm publication M33, roll 67. Also, 1830 U.S. census, Onondaga County, New York, Pompey, p. 294 (penned), line 6, Daniel Allen; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYT5-S982> : accessed 24 June 2021); NARA microfilm M19, roll 93.

¹¹⁹ Bruce, *Onondaga's Centennial, Gleanings of a Century*, vol. 2, p. 164–5.

¹²⁰ 1840 U.S. census, Onondaga County, New York, Pompey, p. 12 (penned), line 3, Alexander H. Allen; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYBS-KFB> : accessed 12 October 2022); NARA microfilm publication M704, roll 317.

¹²¹ Madison County, New York, Rufus Lyon, Joseph Atwell, Daniel Allen, James M. Gluar, Joseph Attwell Jun., and Elijah Hill, declaration in opposition to obtain pension, Abraham Tilloston (Pvt. Col. Willis, Capt. Levi Willis, Conn. Militia), 22 August 1822, pension no. W22,424; Case Files of Approved Pension Applications . . . , 1800– ca. 1912; Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files; database images, *Fold3* (<https://www.fold3.com/image/18663372> : accessed 2 October 2022); NARA microfilm publication M804, roll 2390.

OLIVER ATWELL, NATHANIEL'S BROTHER

Rev. Gideon Bostwick was the first minister of the newly established Episcopal Church in Great Barrington, Berkshire County, Massachusetts about 1763.¹²² Western Berkshire County and eastern Columbia County, New York form the state boundary.¹²³ Great Barrington is approximately twenty miles east of Canaan.¹²⁴ Rev. Bostwick traveled among towns in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York and Vermont, and maintained remarkable records of baptisms and marriages.¹²⁵

Among the baptisms performed by Rev. Bostwick in New Canaan, New York was the 8 July 1781 baptism of Oliver Atwell, “son of Benjamin Atwell and Phena his wife.” Also baptized the same day in New Canaan were:

- Esther, Sarah, and Hannah (daughters of Gideon Burr and Hannah his wife); and
- Hannah (daughter of Joseph Atwell and Hannah his wife).¹²⁶

Additional Burr and Atwell baptisms recorded by Rev. Bostwick were:

- Rhoda (daughter of Joseph and Mabel Atwell), 19 September 1779;¹²⁷
- Susanna, Levi, and Hurlbut (sons and daughter of Joseph and Mabel Atwell), 31 May 1781;¹²⁸
- Elihu (son of Joseph and Mabel Atwell), 28 October 1781;¹²⁹
- Sylvanus (son of Ozias and Olive Burr), 28 October 1781;¹³⁰ and
- Anne (daughter of Gideon and Hanna Burr), 8 June 1783.¹³¹

No other baptisms were recorded by Rev. Bostwick for children of Benjamin and Phena Atwell.¹³²

The town of Canaan was formed in 1788.¹³³ It is possible that during the time of Rev. Bostwick's travels, the area that later became the town of Canaan was referred to “New Canaan” in reference to some of the town's early settlers who may have come from Canaan, Litchfield County, Connecticut. Rev. Bostwick visited other towns in what today are in Columbia County, including Claverack, Hudson, Kinderhook, and New Lebanon.¹³⁴ No known town was formally recognized as “New

¹²² Katharine M. Abbott, *Old Paths and Legends of the New England Border* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press; 1907), p. 342.

¹²³ Henry Francis Walling, *Map of the County of Berkshire, Massachusetts* (Boston: Smith, Gallup & Co., 1858); database images, *Library of Congress* (<https://www.loc.gov/item/2012592409/> : accessed 19 October 2022).

¹²⁴ *Google Maps* (<https://www.google.com/maps> : accessed 19 October 2022), distance between Great Barrington, Massachusetts and Canaan, New York.

¹²⁵ Arthur C. M. Kelly, transcriber and indexer, *Remarkable Records of Rev. Gideon Bostwick 1770–1793 Great Barrington, Massachusetts* (Rhinebeck, New York: Kinship, 1988). The original records are in storage and not accessible to the public. See Robert Krol, Great Barrington Historical Society, Great Barrington, Massachusetts (info@gbhistory.org), to Jenny Rizzo Irwin, printed copy of email, 3 May 2022, “Re: Rev. Gideon Bostwick records,” Atwell Folder, Personal Family Files; privately held by Jenny Rizzo Irwin (jenny@generationsrevealed.com), 46 Verdun Street, Watervliet, New York.

¹²⁶ Kelly, *Remarkable Records of Rev. Gideon Bostwick*, p. 70.

¹²⁷ Kelly, *Remarkable Records of Rev. Gideon Bostwick*, p. 60.

¹²⁸ Kelly, *Remarkable Records of Rev. Gideon Bostwick*, p. 58.

¹²⁹ Kelly, *Remarkable Records of Rev. Gideon Bostwick*, p. 72.

¹³⁰ Kelly, *Remarkable Records of Rev. Gideon Bostwick*, p. 72.

¹³¹ Kelly, *Remarkable Records of Rev. Gideon Bostwick*, p. 83.

¹³² Kelly, *Remarkable Records of Rev. Gideon Bostwick*.

¹³³ *Laws of the State of New York . . .*, p. 748–769, chapter 64, eleventh session (7 March 1788).

¹³⁴ Kelly, *Remarkable Records of Rev. Gideon Bostwick*, p. 1.

Canaan” in New York.¹³⁵ Baptisms performed by Rev. Bostwick in New Canaan likely took place in what is Canaan today.

The baptismal records support the Atwell and Burr families’ residence in Canaan. The baptism of Oliver, son of Benjamin and Phena Atwell, provides further support of Benjamin and Phena’s marriage. Clarence’s 1953 letter that incorrectly identified Nathaniel’s father as Nathaniel, may also incorrectly identify Nathaniel’s sibling as Olive, instead of Oliver.¹³⁶

If Oliver Atwell survived childhood, he was probably the Oliver Atwell age twenty-six to forty-four that headed an 1810 household in Williamson, Ontario County, New York with an inferred wife and two inferred daughters under age ten.¹³⁷ Williamson was part of Ontario County until 1823 when it became part of newly created Wayne County.¹³⁸ This is probably the Oliver Atwell buried in Marion Cemetery, whose headstone is inscribed “In Memory of Oliver Atwell, who died May 30 in the year 1831. Aged 50 years.”¹³⁹

BENJAMIN ATWELL, NATHANIEL’S FATHER

Very few records exist for the Benjamin Atwell, twin of Joseph, who was baptized in Wintonbury, Connecticut on 3 November 1754.¹⁴⁰ Benjamin spent his childhood in Wintonbury and moved with his family to Canaan about 1768–1769. He served as a Revolutionary War soldier in 1776 with the New York State militia.¹⁴¹ Sometime before 11 February 1784 Benjamin married Phena Burr, whom he had likely known since childhood.¹⁴² Benjamin and Phena had at least two children—Oliver, likely

¹³⁵ New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer*, p. 833. A search of the place name index shows no entry for “New Canaan.”

¹³⁶ Clarence Atwell, to David A. Keefer, handwritten letter, 28 January 1953.

¹³⁷ 1810 U.S. census, Ontario County, New York, Williamson, p. 882 (penned), line 5, Oliver Atwell household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XH2X-Q9D> : accessed 10 April 2022); NARA microfilm publication M252, roll 33. The only other Oliver Atwell located in the 1810 census was over age forty-five and lived in West Hampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts. See 1810 U.S. census, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, West Hampton, p. 530 (penned), line 4, Oliver Ottwell [Atwell] household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9YYY-C3C> : accessed 10 April 2022); NARA microfilm publication M252, roll 19.

¹³⁸ *Laws of the State of New York: Passed at the Sessions of the Legislature Held in the Years 1777–1801, Being the First Twenty-four Sessions*, vol. 3 (Albany, New York: Weed, 1887), p. 158–162, section 1, chapter 138, forty-sixth session, “An Act to Erect a New County, From Parts of the Counties of Ontario and Seneca, by the Name of Wayne, and for Other Purposes,” (11 April 1823); database images, *Google Books* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/Laws_of_the_State_of_New_York/jlc4AAAAIAAJ : accessed 10 April 2022).

¹³⁹ *Find a Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/21156816/oliver-atwell> : accessed 10 April 2022), memorial 21156816, “Oliver Atwell” and database image of Marion Cemetery (Marion, New York), Oliver Atwell gravestone; memorial created by Daryl VerStrete on 25 August 2007 and maintained by Max DeLong, gravestone image contributed by Max DeLong on 11 November 2013. The memorial page includes an unsourced biographical sketch naming Oliver’s parents as Benjamin and Phena (Burr) Atwell and grandson of Joseph and Miriam (Case) Atwell and Gideon and Hannah (Edwards) Burr. The sketch also names one of Oliver’s children as Phena, presumably named after his mother. As with any authored source, undocumented information contained on *Find a Grave* memorials can be subject to error.

¹⁴⁰ Congregational Church (Wintonbury, Connecticut), Records, vol. 1, baptisms 1738–1790, p. 52, no. 351, 3 November 1754, Benjamin Atwell.

¹⁴¹ Madison Co., New York, declaration to obtain pension, Joseph Atwell, 7 June 1832, pension no. S.12009.

¹⁴² Columbia Co., New York, Will Book A:432–35, Gideon Burr, written 1784, proved 1798.

born 1780–1781, and Nathaniel, born in April 1786.¹⁴³ Benjamin and his wife Phena died before their children reached adulthood. Nathaniel likely named one of his sons after the uncle who raised him, Daniel Allen.¹⁴⁴

Only one man named Benjamin Atwell headed a New York household in 1790. Benjamin Atwell of Westfield, Washington County, lived with three females, presumably a wife and two daughters.¹⁴⁵ This Benjamin was likely the Benjamin Atwell “of Saratoga, New York” who purchased 330 acres in Otsego County in 1792.¹⁴⁶ The Otsego County Benjamin Atwell/Atwill died intestate before 21 May 1811, when letters of administration were granted on his estate to Mary Atwill and Lathrop Elderkin.¹⁴⁷ Benjamin Atwill is buried in West Burlington Village Cemetery in Burlington, Otsego County, New York. His headstone reads, “Benjamin Atwill Who Departed This Life August 10th 1810 in the 56th year of his AGE The grave the grave alone It is confes^d Is From the storms of Life A place of rest.”¹⁴⁸

Although the Otsego County Benjamin Atwell/Atwill was born about the same time as Benjamin Atwell, twin of Joseph, they were two distinct men. The Benjamin that was Joseph’s twin and Nathaniel’s father died when Nathaniel was a child. Nathaniel, born in 1786, was age twenty-four when Benjamin Atwell/Atwill died in Otsego County.

¹⁴³ For Oliver Atwell’s birth, see Kelly, *Remarkable Records of Rev. Gideon Bostwick*, p. 70. Also, *Find a Grave*, memorial 21156816, “Oliver Atwell.” For Nathaniel Atwell’s birth, see Vale Cemetery (Schenectady, New York), Nathaniel Atwell gravestone. Also, “Died,” death notice, Nathaniel Atwell, *Evening Star and Times* (Schenectady, New York), 8 November 1862.

¹⁴⁴ Clarence Atwell, to David A. Keefer, handwritten letter, 28 January 1953. Also, Schenectady Co., New York, Will Book H:297–299, Nathaniel Atwell, 1862.

¹⁴⁵ 1790 U.S. census, Washington County, New York, Westfield, p. 205 (penned), line 9, Benjamin Atwell household; database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYB6-4JR> : accessed 22 June 2021); NARA microfilm publication M637, roll 6.

¹⁴⁶ Otsego County, New York, conveyances book A:232–234, Michael Gratz to Benjamin Atwell, 18 September 1792; “United States, New York Land Records, 1630–1975,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-L9WT-FCYB> : accessed 2 August 2021); Otsego County courthouse, Cooperstown.

¹⁴⁷ Otsego County, New York, wills and administration book C:93–94, Benjamin Atwill, letters of administration, 21 May 1811; “New York Probate Records, 1629–1971,” database images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYCX-4QZ> : accessed 2 August 2021); Otsego County courthouse, Cooperstown.

¹⁴⁸ *Find a Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/59661507/benjamin-atwell> : accessed 19 October 2022), memorial 59661507, “Benjamin Atwell” and database image of West Burlington Village Cemetery (Burlington, Otsego County, New York), Benjamin Atwill gravestone; memorial created by Erice Wilcox on 5 October 2010, maintained by Beensker and gravestone photo contributed by Gary Harrington, 20 December 2012. Additional gravestone photo of reverse of stone contributed by Cynthia Kelleher on 28 June 2020. The memorial contains an unsourced biographical sketch and links to incorrectly listed parents and siblings. It appears the memorial contributor mistakenly merged the identities of Benjamin Atwell, twin of Joseph, with Benjamin Atwill of Otsego County.

CONCLUSION

Among the few records naming or referencing Benjamin Atwell, none directly name Nathaniel as his son. However, indirect evidence proves that Benjamin was the father of the Nathaniel Atwell who was born in April 1786 in Columbia County and died in Glenville on 7 November 1862.

A family history published more than a century after Nathaniel's death incorrectly refers to Nathaniel's parents as Nathaniel and Parrehna (Burr) Atwell. Chain migration and multiple marriages between the Atwell and Burr families of Wintonbury, Connecticut then Canaan, New York, then Onondaga County, New York support a strong link between the families. These family ties combine to link Benjamin as Nathaniel's father.

- Nathaniel's maternal grandfather, Gideon Burr's will names his daughter Phene, husband of Benjamin Atwell and his son-in-law, Joseph Atwell, widower of Gideon's late daughter, Hannah.
- Benjamin and Joseph, twins, were baptized in the same church in Wintonbury where Gideon's daughters Phene and Hannah were baptized.
- Joseph's Revolutionary War pension application names his brother, Benjamin Atwell.
- Siblings Joseph Atwell and Olive (Atwell) Burr settled in Pompey with their families. Daniel and Abi (Burr) Allen also settled in Pompey. Olive's husband Ozias Burr and his sister, Abi (Burr) Allen were siblings of Phene (Burr) Atwell—Nathaniel's mother.
- Oliver Atwell, son of Benjamin and Phena Atwell, was baptized in Canaan in 1781.
- No records of Benjamin or Phena were located after Nathaniel's 1786 birth, providing negative evidence in support of family lore that they died young and their children were raised by their uncle Daniel Allen in Pompey.
- Nathaniel's named one of his sons Daniel Allen Atwell, in honor of the man who raised him after the death of his parents.