

Mystery Monday: Who Is 'A. Beerbower' in the Frances "Fannie" Isabella (Brown) Chapman Photo Collection?



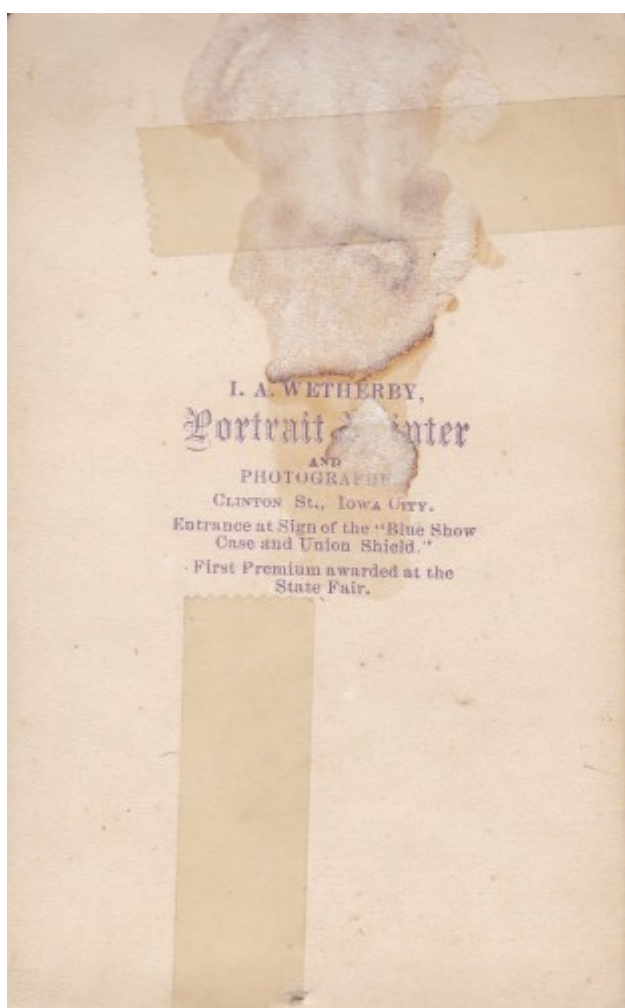
A. Beerbower, Iowa City, Iowa photographer. (Click to enlarge.)

[Beerbower Family, Helbling Family](#) (Click for Family Tree)

A kind lady who owns this photo contacted us after finding the blog's stories about other Beerbowers. Unfortunately, we don't know exactly who this "A. Beerbower" is. We do have a few possibilities, and knowing the photographer and being able to determine approximately when he was in business and where can

help us pinpoint who it might be. Thankfully, we have a scan of the reverse of the picture, and it includes the photographer's name and place of business.

Isaac Augustus Wetherby was a portrait painter in Boston, Massachusetts in 1849, but by 1854 he had taken a photo of the old Iowa Capitol, so most likely the image of A. Beerbower was taken sometime around or after that later date. Further research listed on a walking tour in Iowa City stated that Wetherby had a commercial photography studio from 1854-1874 in Iowa City, so we now have our time frame for the photo.



A. Beerbower, Iowa City, Iowa photographer, reverse.

Iowa City can be a transient place, since it is the home of the University of Iowa. Students from other states attend the university, and people often had their likeness made when they were visiting an area. So we know that just because the photo

was taken there does not mean that A. Beerbower actually lived there.

Andrew C. Beerbower is one candidate for consideration as "A. Beerbower." He was born about 1843 in Ohio (possibly Hardy, Holmes, Ohio) to George Albert Beerbower and Margaret Virginia Wolgamott. George was the son of Caspar J. Beerbower (1782-1851) and Christina (Reiber) Beerbower (1784-1849), as was Eleazer John Beerbower (1815-1882), our direct ancestor.

Andrew's parents moved the family to Lincoln Twp., Madison County, Iowa, about 1852, when Andrew was about nine. Andrew was 17 when war broke out, and enlisted in Company H, Iowa 23rd Infantry Regiment on 29 Aug 1862. Might this image have been one he had taken for a sweetheart or his parents before he went off to war? Possibly, but often those photos would be in full military uniform. Also, Iowa City was 150 miles from Andrew's home.

The photo was not taken when he came home, as he did not make it home- he was killed at the Battle of Milliken's Bend, in Louisiana, on 7 June 1863- his birthday per one account.

Andrew's brother was Albert A. Beerbower- yet another candidate for the above picture. Albert was also born in Ohio, about 1845 or so. He married his first wife in Montezuma, Powesheik, Iowa. Looking at census records, we find an Albert Beerbower in the 1880 US Federal Census- in Iowa City! He was 35 that year though, so could this be his picture? (Have not yet found him in the 1870 census.)

At first glance, one last candidate is Albert W. Beerbower, born September 1888 in Iowa to Orange J. Beerbower and Jennie B. Beerbower. When one reads back that our photographer was only in practice from 1854-1874, we see that we can eliminate this particular Beerbower.

There were a lot of Beerbowers in Madison County, Iowa around these years, so there may be others, or the man in the picture

could have been from another state entirely. Right now though, my wager is on Albert A. Beerbower being the proper identification of this photo- if he was found in the 1870 census in the same place, it would be a very plausible conclusion, and age 25 may be closer to his actual age when the portrait was taken.

The only way we will know the name of this young man for sure is by someone else having the same image and knowing who it is. We hope that one of our readers will be just that person, and contact us!

Notes, Sources, and References:

1. I. A. Wetherby– https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac_Augustus_Wetherby
2. "Old Capitol" in Iowa, 1854 by I.A. Wetherby- Isaac A. Wetherby image of Old Capitol at the time of the 1854 Johnson County fair. The Capitol was in Iowa City, Johnson Co., Iowa until 1857 when it moved to Des Moines. <https://secure.flickr.com/photos/shsi-library/5330254063/in/photostream/>
3. Wetherby Cottage– <http://eventful.com/iowacity/events/photography-walking-tour-iowa-city-/E0-001-011629261-7>
4. *History of Madison County, Iowa, and Its People, Volume 1*. Herman A. Mueller, editor, S. J. Clarke publishing Company, 1915, page 298. <http://files.usgwarchives.net/ia/madison/bios/madbi oa-c.txt>

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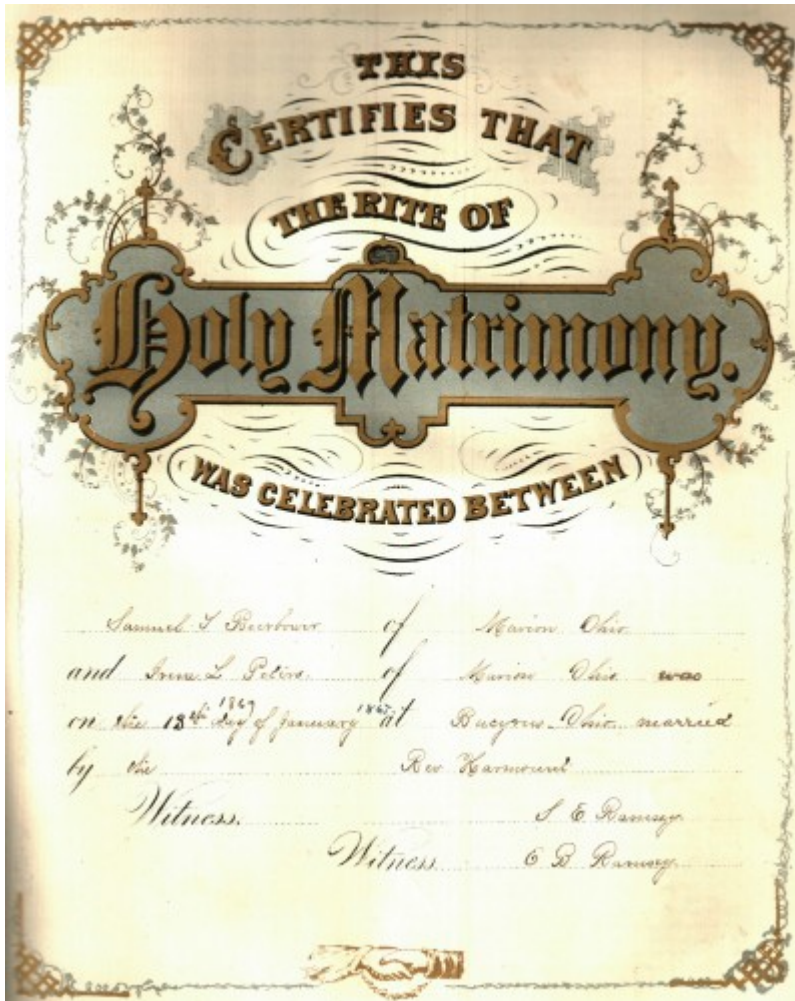
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Wedding Wednesday: Samuel T. Beerbower and Irene L. Peters



Marriage Certificate of Samuel Beerbower and Irene Peters, 18 Jan 1867, Bucyrus, Ohio. Posted with kind permission of the Marion County Historical Society. (Click to enlarge.)

[Beerbower Family](#) *(Click for Family Tree)*

Samuel Taylor Beerbower (1842-1902) was the son of Eleazer John Beerbower and Matilda Louise McKelvey. His bride, Irene Lewella Peters (1846-1924) was the daughter of Nathan Peters and his second wife, Mary Cady Russell.



Marriage record for Samuel T. Beerbower and Irene L. Peters, married January 18th, 1867, in the Samuel T. Beerbower Family Bible. Posted with kind permission of the Marion County Historical Society (MCHS), Marion, Ohio. (Click to enlarge.)

Both Samuel and Irene were Marion natives, so it is curious that they were married in Bucyrus, Ohio. Bucyrus is a bit less than 20 miles north of Marion, but is in another county (Crawford), and the county seat. We are not aware of any family living in Bucyrus. Maybe they could get a license there more quickly, or they eloped?

Notes, Sources, and References:

1) Marriage certificate and Samuel T. Beerbower bible posted with the kind permission of the Marion County Historical Society (MCHS), Marion, Ohio.

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Fuzzy Friday: Exactly WHICH Winchester, Ohio?

ELEAZER JOHN BEERBOWER m. MATILDA L. McKELVEY
b. 4/24/1815 d. 10/24/1884 b. 1/27/1823 d. 7/18/1900
The above couple married at Winchester, Ohio, July 3, 1839.

Eleazer John Beerbower and Matilda L. McKelvey- marriage information from "House of Bierbauer- Two Hundred Years of Family History" by JC Culver and CW Beerbower, 1942, page 146.

[Beerbower Family](#) (Click for Family Tree)

Matilda McKelvey and Eleazer John Beerbower "married at Winchester, Ohio, July 3, 1839."

At first glance- this was exciting- they were from the same place as Ollie McKelvey! (See previous post, [Those Places Thursday: Canal Winchester, Ohio and the McElvey Family.](#))

But wait!

Canal Winchester, where Ollie was from, is in the central part of Ohio, in both Franklin and Fairfield Counties; plain

'Winchester' is in the southern section, in Adams County; it is also the township name. Apparently there were up to five towns and at least one township in Ohio named 'Winchester' at some point in the 1800s, so "Canal" was added to Reuben Dove's town to distinguish it from the others. Apparently "Canal" was sometimes used, sometimes not, in referring to Canal Winchester, depending on the fortunes of that waterway located in town.

So where did the McKelvey-Beerbower marriage take place in 1839? In *which* Winchester, Ohio?

Adams County Marriages do not list either the bride nor groom under M or B headings, thus that may be the wrong Winchester. BUT a Thomas McKelvey is listed there in *A History of Adams County, Ohio*. It appears that most in that family changed their names to Kelvey, but details on each son are not listed. So there may have been some McKelveys in Adams County. More to research.

[The McKelvey Family History](#), 1931, online at Family Search, lists family that was mostly in Illinois and Iowa. No Matilda was found with a search, and the book has been perused up to the last dates possible for Matilda and family, with not a speck of information that is useful for our line at this point in knowledge.

A kind McKelvey researcher (EH) provided his genealogy from his ancestor James McKelvey (b. 1766 in County Antrim, Parish of Clough, Ireland, d. 1843 in Portage Co., OH). None of our direct line is listed in his excellent genealogy, unfortunately. Around the time of Matilda's birth in 1823 and her marriage in 1839, this researcher's ancestor's were in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, and Portage County, Ohio, places about 250 miles apart; it is a bit less than 150 miles between Portage Co., OH and Franklin Co., OH. Some researchers/records state Matilda was born in Massachusetts, some say Missouri, so this line is probably not directly

related. This James McKelvey apparently had brothers who immigrated to the colonies from Ireland, so that may be a clue to work from. (An aside: I found this researcher through an old query online, and the email still worked! So try all those old queries, no matter their vintage- you may just find another clue.)

The "Adam Smith Family Tree" on Ancestry.com lists a James McKelvey who has daughters Susan b. 1849 in Canal Winchester, Emma b. about 1852, possibly in Canal Winchester, and Matilda, b. 1854, possibly in Canal Winchester. I have a message out to the owner through Ancestry's service. This James could possibly be Matilda McKelvey Beerbower's brother.

We really need the names of Matilda's parents to move further back in our family history. The best chance of finding those might be on a marriage record. A note to both the Franklin and Fairfield county recorders is probably a good next step to see if the marriage record exists from Canal Winchester, and if so, if it contains the names of Matilda's parents. (Marriage records in the town began much later, so this will probably not be useful.) I also have an email out to the [Canal Winchester Area Historical Society](#), in hope that they may be able to point us to some good resources in the area; trying to find old newspapers for the area might be helpful as well. If any of our good readers have more information about the McKelveys of Ohio, please share!

Notes, Sources, and References:

1) McKelvey-Beerbower marriage information on page 146 of *House of Bierbauer. Two Hundred Years of Family History, 1742-1942* compiled by James Culver Bierbower and Charles William Beerbower; Published under the direction of Beerbower History Committee, 1942.

2) *A History of Adams County, Ohio*, by Nelson Wiley Evans,

and Emmons B. Stivers, 1900. Page 849-850.

https://books.google.com/books?id=na8CAAAAMAAJ&printsec=titlepage&source=gbs_summary_r&hl=en#v=onepage&q=McKelvey&f=false

3) Canal Winchester:

Chamber of Commerce- <http://www.canalwinchester.com>

Canal Winchester Area Historical Society- <http://www.cwhistory.org/HISTORY.html>

4) *The McKelvey Family History*, by Frederick Hotchkiss McKelvey, 1931-

https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE1948139

5) Those Places Thursday: Canal Winchester, Ohio and the McElvey Family at <http://heritageramblings.net/2015/06/04/those-places-thursday-canal-winchester-ohio-and-the-mcelvey-family/>

6) Adam Smith Family Tree accessed online at <http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/63019822/person/34096858743>.

Wife is Magdalena Bareis (b. 19 Mar 1835 in Germany, d. Canal Winchester, OH). Daughter Susan McKelvey (b. 04 Aug 1849 in Canal Winchester) m. to Adam Smith in 1869, 11 children including one named Olive who d. young. Daughter Emma McKelvey b. about 1852,

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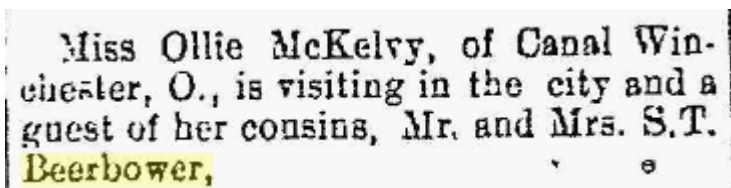
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Those Places Thursday: Canal Winchester, Ohio and the McElvey Family



Miss Ollie McKelvy, of Canal Winchester, O., is visiting in the city and a guest of her consins, Mr. and Mrs. S.T. Beerbower,

Ollie McKelvy of Canal Winchester visiting cousins in Marion, Ohio. *Marion Daily Star* [Marion, Ohio], 04 September 1880, page 81. Posted with kind permission for non-profit use only.

[Beerbower Family](#) *(Click for Family Tree)*

Transportation is the lifeblood of a nation, especially a young nation such as the United States in the early to mid 1800s. Ways to move people, products, and farm produce (both the vegetarian-type as well as the carnivore-preferred) were necessary for cities and towns to develop, and migration to proceed westward. Commerce was imperative to provide markets

to farmers and manufacturers, and to make the US a world trading partner.

When the Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the country overnight, the heavily forested or wide-plained US with its vast distances presented logistic problems for trade and moving people. Our rich waterways had long provided a fairly easy road to markets and new places, but were limiting when an overland portage was required to move a product between two rivers or lake systems. "The Canal Era" began great private and public work projects in 1791, and linked the large expanses of our young country.

By 1830, the US had over 1,000 miles of canals.

By 1840, 3,326 miles of canals had been built at a cost of over \$125 million, and the completed miles of the new railroads was about the same.

Canals allowed the cost of transportation to drop from about ten cents per ton mile to less than one cent, thus increasing profits as well as opening new, more distant markets for producers and manufacturers.

Canal Winchester was a city that developed along the 308-mile-long Ohio and Erie Canal. Completed in 1834, this canal finished the privately financed inland waterway that included the Erie Canal, and stretched from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River; it essentially linked New York City to New Orleans by water. This opened up settlement in northern Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, and our McKelvey ancestors were a part of this great era.

In 1828, the Ohio & Erie Canal was planned to go right through the wheat field of Reuben Dove in Fairfield County, Ohio. Although he planned to sue the state, he was instead encouraged to lay out a town as being a more profitable venture, and that he did. He called it Canal Winchester, and we know that at least one McKelvey family lived there in 1880.

The area only had a stagecoach run in the early 1800s; when the first canal boat floated through in 1831, it changed the area completely. The Ohio & Erie Canal brought work: on the canal itself, like barge operators and mates; and work alongside, such as hotels and restaurants, warehouses, and markets. Farmers could increase the size of their fields as they now had a way to transport excess grain, and agriculture thus became big business in the area, changed from mainly subsistence when there was no practical way to get grain to market. The railroad came through in 1869, making the canal less efficient due to the speed and capacity of trains, but the city continued to prosper as it moved with the times.

By 1850, railroads had surpassed the number of miles of canalways, with 2.5 times as many miles.

By 1860, railroads had about eight times the miles of canals, and The Canal Era became The Railroad Era.

Maps are important resources in family history research, and a source we often forget to use to help find clues.

From the newspaper article above, we know that:

*Miss Ollie McKelvey lived in Canal Winchester,
Fairfield &*

Franklin Counties, Ohio in 1880.

Researching the above Canal Winchester, Ohio on maps and checking how far it was to Marion, Ohio, where cousin Sam lived, I realized that Canal Winchester was also close to Pickerington, Fairfield County, Ohio. That place was somewhere some ancestors had lived, I remembered, and sure enough, looking at family group records showed me that Matilda and Eleazer Beerbower most probably lived in Pinkerington, as their infant twin sons are buried there. Son Polaski only lived ten days, and Caspar just short of nine months when he died, so likely the family lived there or nearby during the

year 1840. (Matilda was just 17 when the twins were born on 1 April 1840.) Embalming was not prevalent until the Civil War, so they probably would not have traveled far for burial, and may have been living in the area. It is easy to imagine that, even if they had moved away, in their grief they wanted the twin boys to be together in eternity. Their son Samuel T. Beerbower (the above host to Ollie) was born 10 November 1842 in Fairfield County, and their next child likely was as well: George Beerbower, born 10 August 1844 (in Marion, Ohio per my records, but now that is questionable). □George died just three days later, and was also buried in Dovel Memorial Cemetery with his infant brothers.

Canal Winchester, Ohio, is located southeast of Columbus, Ohio; Marion, where Ollie was visiting, was due north of Columbus. There are about 60 miles between the two cities, but train service abounded in Ohio in those years, so the trip may not have been too taxing. Since Ollie apparently traveled alone, that is another indicator of the ease and safety of the trip.

Samuel T. Beerbower's biography in the *History of Marion County, Ohio*, 1883, notes that his family moved to Delaware County, Ohio in 1849, and from there to Marion, Ohio in 1850, then finally to Indianapolis, Indiana in 1867. It was thus a short window of time (~1839-~1849 possibly?) that the McKelvey-Beerbower family resided in Canal Winchester/Fairfield County, Ohio, but apparently other family lived there, and stayed, as Ollie McKelvey did. Further research in that locality may provide more of the story of the McElvey family.

Notes, Sources, and References:

1) An excellent set of pictures of the Ohio and Erie canal-

<http://web.theelms.org/library/eslibrary/SocialStudies/Ohio-Er>

[ie%20Canal.htm](#)

There is a link at the bottom for the Library of Congress' collection of old canal songs.

Also, see <http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/ohioeriecanal/oec.htm>

2) Image from Wikipedia article on the Erie Canal-

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erie_Canal#/media/File:Lockport_bartlett_color_crop.jpg

View east of eastbound Lockport on the Erie Canal by W.H. Bartlett, 1839. Public domain.

3) Some Canal Era information:

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/DETOC/transport/canal.html>

<http://www.ushistory.org/us/25a.asp>

<http://www.canalwinchesterohio.gov/191/History>

4) *The History of Marion County, Ohio*, 1883-

<https://archive.org/details/historyofmarionc00legg>

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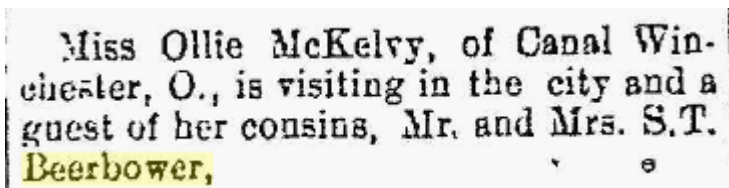
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Wishful Wednesday: The McKelvey Family of Ohio



Miss Ollie McKelvy, of Canal Winchester, O., is visiting in the city and a guest of her consins, Mr. and Mrs. S.T. Beerbower.

Ollie McKelvy of Canal Winchester visiting her Marion, Ohio Beerbower cousins. Marion Daily Star [Marion, Ohio], 04 September 1880, page 8. With permission via Ancestry.com.

[Beerbower Family](#) *(Click for Family Tree)*

The McElvey family has been elusive- possibly because there are so very many ways to spell the name: MacElvey, MacElvy, McKelvey, McKelvy, Mac Elvey, and a host of others I have seen online but my fingers just can't type those letter combinations.

Another reason for being elusive is that it is a maiden name in our line: Matilda Louise McElvey married Eleazer John Beerbower. Add to that a time period before vital records- Matilda was born in 1823 and married in 1839, plus a family that lived in a number of places, and one can understand how

challenging it is to find information on an ancestor's ancestors.

A previous post, [Tombstone Tuesday: Matilda \(Mac Elvey\) Beerbower](#) gives more information about Matilda and her family. Matilda McKelvey and Eleazer John Beerbower married in Winchester, Ohio on 7 March 1839.

Wednesdays are not the only days we have wished for more information on this family, especially the names of the parents of Matilda. So it was exciting when researching the Beerbower family to find the above newspaper article. This was the first document found about the McElvey family, other than those about Matilda as a married woman.

So this article is a good clue- Ollie McKelvey was from Canal Winchester in 1880, called just Winchester in its earliest times and again later, after the canal was not as important. Ollie would have been the child of Matilda McKelvey Beerbower's brother, since she was visiting the family of her cousin, Samuel T. Beerbower. (She couldn't be a child of a sister of Matilda, since she has the family name and a sister would have taken her husband's name.)

Of course, the truth of this assumption would depend on whether or not the word 'cousin' is used in the article as we do today- in earlier times 'Cousin' (as well as 'Aunt' and 'Uncle') were used more loosely, sometimes even for someone not related. Ollie was most probably related though since she had the family name and came from the same town as where Matilda and Eleazer were married- marriages often took place in the bride's hometown.

Notes, Sources, and References:

1) Newspaper citation as above.

2) McKelvey-Beerbower marriage information in *House of Bierbauer. Two Hundred Years of Family History, 1742-1942* compiled by James Culver Bierbower and Charles William Beerbower; Published under the direction of Beerbower History Committee, 1942. A note to the county recorder is probably a good next step to see if the marriage record exists, and if so, does it contain the names of Matilda's parents.

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