**Finding Abraham\***

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I have inherited several artifacts from my Latta family (Branch 17) including the hand written will on legal-size-lined paper of my great-great-grandfather John Latta (1784-1865). John was married to Anna Elizabeth Hockenbury (1793-1865). She died the month following his death.

**John II Latta** (b. 1784; d. 20 Nov 1865-Wayne Township (Monroe Co.)

John made his last will and testament on October 7, 1865. Instead of a signature, his will has an "X" and an indication that it is his mark. The will was admitted to probate January 31, 1866.

**Last Will and Testament of John Latta**

*"In the name of the Benevolent Father of All, I John Latta of Monroe County, Ohio, do make and publish this my last will and testament, to will as follows, to wit:*

*Item first - That all my just debts and funeral expenses be paid out of my personal estate.*

*Item second - I give and bequeath to my son John C. Latta all my personal estate except what will be sufficient to make the above payments.*

*Item third - I give and bequeath to my daughters Catharine Morris and Sarah Jane Nalley the sum of twenty dollars each which shall be given them of my personal estate.*

*Item fourth - My other four children, Samuel Latta, Julia A. Pool, Lucinda Mercer, George M. Latta, and also Harriett S. Latta and Allice Latta, heirs of Abraham Latta, all of whom I here mention as having received all that I allow them to have of my estate.*

*Item fifth - And also I give and bequeath unto my son John C. Latta all my real estate, to wit: The North West Quarter of the North East Quarter of Section No. nine in Township No. five of Range No. six, situated in Monroe County, Ohio. I also require my son John C. Latta to maintain my wife Anna Latta or cause her to be maintained in a comfortable manner during her life time and pay the above mentioned sums of twenty dollars to each of my daughters.*

*In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this seventh day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-five.*

*John Latta (his mark)*

*Subscribed in presence of Ike Morris and Samuel Latta*

*I certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the last will and testament of John Latta, decd, admitted to Probate January 31, 1866.*

I began the search for my Latta family, Branch 17, based on this will. I visited cemeteries, libraries, historical societies, individuals and exchanged countless emails. With that research coupled with data from records posted on familysearch.org, ancestry.com, findagrave.com, latta.org, Bible records, obituaries and other sources, I found more and more information on all the children listed in the will, but nothing on Abraham. Because of the wording in the will, I was pretty sure that Abraham died before his father, thus the reason for Abraham’s two daughters, Harriett S. and Allice, to be mentioned. They would have had to be born before 1865. For years I searched for these three names used in conjunction with one another. Many times Cheryl “Sue” (Lattea) Cox, our Branch 17 captain, and I debated on where he possibly could be. Abraham certainly seemed like a dead end. No Abraham. No Harriett. No Allice.

But in 2015 I was searching for the descendants of George Madison Latta, a son mentioned in the will above. He and his descendants were the only children of John Latta and Annie Hockenbury that we knew of who spelled their last name as “Lattea.” I grew up in northeast Ohio and always spelled my last name as Latta (pronounced Lat’ uh), but my grandmother (Effie Schaub Latta) told me that in the southeast corner of Ohio and West Virginia areas where most of our earlier family had lived that the name was often pronounced Lat’ ty or Lat’ tie. Perhaps that contributed to the name variation for George and his family.

“Lattea” is not a very common name and typing just the last name and “Indiana” on findagrave.com brought me to two Lattea stones in the state. One was in Shelby County, Indiana – **the stone for Abraham**. After all these years, I had finally found him. The “Lattea” variation of the name had been used on his tombstone. He was in the Van Pelt Cemetery in Waldron. He was born in 1830 and died on March 8, 1856. Clicking on the link provided there took me directly to his daughter Harriett Samantha (Lattea) Pope (1852-1929), in the Lewis Creek Baptist Cemetery in Shelbyville where so many others of this family are buried. I visited the cemetery the summer of 2016.

Although “Lattea” is shown on the tombstone, on his marriage document in Shelby County, Indiana, the license dated 15th day of April 1851 and marriage on the 20th day of April, 1851, to Eliza Ann Kincade, his name is still spelled as **LATTA.** Eliza Ann is with her parents and six siblings in the 1850 census for Fearing Twp., Washington Co., Ohio. Mapquest shows that the closest part of Fearing Township is today about 35 miles from Woodsfield, where Abraham’s parents lived and are buried. The Kincade/Kincaid/Kinkade family must have moved to Indiana shortly after that census.

Finding the gravestone for his daughter Harriett led to months of research. Thanks to help from many libraries, I have secured the obituary for her, her sister Allice, their spouses, and most of their children. (Much thanks goes to Mike Perkins from the Indianapolis Public Library and Phyllis (Miller) Fleming, local Shelby County, Indiana, historian. Both were so helpful in helping me find the family obituaries.) I feel that obituaries often tell us so much more about that person. We may learn about the cause of death, the rest of the family, what the person did for a living and for fun, his religion, and the cemetery that is his final resting place. So much of genealogy is just another name, another date, another location. Obituaries often add some meat to those bare bones.

The obituaries above, plus others from the rest of my Branch 17 families, are shown as a link by each person’s name on the Latta tree posted on the Monroe County, Ohio, web site organized by Richard Harrington:

<http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~harringtonfamilies/LattaFam.htm>

and also on my own web site, an offshoot of Mr. Harrington’s but only inclusive to the families linked to my “Latta” name, not all of Monroe County, Ohio:

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~lattalinkedlineage/LattaFam.htm>

Both sites are searchable, so after you click on the Latta tree, if you type “Pope” in your search field, it will take you directly to David Pope, spouse of Harriett Latta/Lattea. Allice’s family is listed below theirs.

Below is Harriett’s obituary. It does mention being the daughter of Abraham.

**Pope, Harriett Samantha Pope, nee Lattea**

Source: The Shelbyville [Indiana] Republican; Thursday January 24, 1929; Page 8 **DEATH OF AGED LADY OCCURRED  
Mrs. Harriett Pope Died Last Night  
At Home 7 Miles South of City  
FUNERAL SERVICE FRIDAY**  
 The death of Mrs. Harriett Samantha Pope, age 76 years, widow of David Pope, occurred last night at ten-thirty o’clock at her home seven miles south of this city, near the Winchester M.E. church. Complication of diseases, from which she had suffered for several months, was the cause of death.  
 Mrs. Pope was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Lattea and was born in Rush county, Indiana June 5, 1852. She has lived in the community where she died for the past 45 years. She was a devoted member of the Winchester M.E. church.  
 Eleven children, five sons and six daughters survive. They are James Pope of Washington township, Clarence, Alvia *[sic--Alvin]* and Ernest Pope of Shelby township, Floyd Pope, of Bartholomew county; Mrs. Della Limpus of Oklahoma, Mrs. Lona Campbell of Hope, Indiana, Mrs. Ida Moore and Mrs. Lulu *[sic--Lula]* Glackman, of this city; and Mrs. Katie Yager, of Washington township. She leaves forty grandchildren and twenty great grandchildren.  
 Three half-sisters, Mrs. Bell Green of Shelby township, Mrs. Ida Vawter, of Waldron and Mrs. Annie Bean, of this city, and one half-brother, George Britton, of Oklahoma, also survive.  
 Funeral services will be conducted at the Lewis Creek Baptist church Friday afternoon at two o’clock, with the Rev. Golden Northern, pastor of the Winchester Church officiating. Interment will be in the Lewis Creek Baptist cemetery in charge of Charles M. Ewing, funeral director. *Contributed by Barb Huff to the Shelby Co., Indiana, obituary web site.*

*\*My Note: This obituary say that "six daughters survive" but only lists 5 names. The daughter omitted is Mrs. Elizabeth (or Lizzie) Knowlton, wife of Alvin Knowlton.*

Below is the obituary for Abraham’s second daughter, Allice. Although it does not mention him, I do have her death certificate indicating her parents as:

Father: Abraham Lattie born Ohio

Mother: Eliza Caucade *[sic -- Kincade]* born Ohio

**Banta, Alice M. Banta, nee Latta/Lattea/Lattie**

Source: The Indianapolis [Indiana] Star; Saturday 18 Dec 1920

LAWRENCEBURG, Ind., December 18 --

Mrs. Alice M. Banta, age sixty-seven, widow of Moses D. Banta, is dead of heart disease at her home near this city. Mrs. Banta is survived by a son, George W. Banta,\* and three daughters, Mrs. George W. Wise, Mrs. Robert E. Wheeler and Miss Grace Banta.

*\*My Note: In the 1880, 1900, and1910 census of Moses and Alice Banta and family the only son mentioned is Harry Leroy Banta, in the 1900 census, mentioned with the daughters above: Nellie (married name of Wise), Pearl (married name of Wheeler) and Grace. Perhaps the typist got the George W. (Wise) duplicated for Harry? In Alice’s husband’s obituary in 1917, the son was listed as Harry L. Banta.*

Her husband’s obituary tells more about the family, their location, and their marriage:

**Banta, Moses M. Banta**

Source: The Osgood [Indiana] Journal; 16 May 1917

Moses M. Banta was born Jan. 18, 1847 in Switzerland county, near Vevay and departed this life May 4, 1917. He was the seventh child of a family of fourteen children of Washington and Sarah Banta. Early in life he came to Ripley county with his parents and at the time the Civil War broke out was living on a farm near Cedar Creek. Although a mere child, being only 15 years of age, he enlisted in the 83rd regiment of the Indiana Infantry, where he nobly served for three years. At the close of the war he traveled some in the west and finally settled in Shelby county where he married Alice Lattie on Oct. 30, 1875. To this union were born eight children, four having preceded their father to the Great Beyond.

In Sept., 1917,\* he moved to his little farm west of Osgood where he resided at the time of his death.

He was a kind and loving father and all knowing him could say aught against him. He leaves to mourn their loss, a loving wife, one son, Harry L. Banta, of Shelbyville, three daughters, Mrs. Grace Beadle, Osgood R. 5; Mrs. Nellie Wise of Osgood; and Mrs. Pearl Wheeler, of Cincinnati; five grandchildren and one brother, Lafe Banta, of Washington, Ind.

He was a true and full believer in God but always requested that his Lodge have charge of his funeral services. He was laid to rest in Greendale cemetery May 7, 1917. May he rest in peace.

*\*My Note: The moving to the farm date of September, 1917, must have been an error since he died in May of that year.*

Yes, I finally did find Abraham. Although he died very young, around 26 years of age, and only had the two daughters, he has many, many descendants living today. Harriett had fourteen children and Allice had eight. And from there the family grew and grew.