Ancestors and Descendants of Ebenezer Harris

This is part of an ongoing adventure in family history, featuring a Harris family that has had close ties to the Cattaraugus Co. (NY) and McKean Co. (PA) area since the early 1800's. Like most stories it could be told in several ways. The fundamental structure is of course the basic succession of parent and child… or perhaps the chronology of the search for that information… or a rebuttal of published errors in the information… or….? The adventure has been in finding that succession of parents and children, and the remaining fragments of their lives, amidst the sometimes conflicting pieces of evidence scattered in a trail from Massachusetts to Oregon and California.

"Our" Ebenezer Harris was born 15 June 1764 (or 6 June 1766?) in Killingly, Windham Co., CT. (I say "our" Ebenezer because there were two by that name buying and selling property in Cattaraugus Co. in the first half of the 19th century.) He married his cousin, Margy Harris, in Packersfield, New Hampshire in 1793 and moved to Cattaraugus Co. by 1820 when he appears in the US Census there. They had 12 children: William Adams, Reuben (died young), Rebekah, Ira, Alva, Freelove, Goldpha, Delpha, Elmina, Parley (died as an infant), Pearly, and Margy,

"in 1823 his name appears on a list of settlers in Farmersville, Cattaraugus county, New York. He was a farmer. He was a member of the Presbyterian church as was his wife, Marjorie HARRIS, who was also his cousin. Children: William, died in Wisconsin; Alva, died in Wisconsin; Delpha, of who further; Golpha, died in Wisconsin; Ira, died in Illinois; Parley, died in McKean county, Pennsylvania; Rebecca and other daughters died in Wisconsin.

Delpha, son of William Asa HARRIS, was born in Connecticut, 1808, died in Bradford, Pennsylvania, December 19, 1884. He learned the trade of shoemaker. In 1884 he settled in Bradford, where he continued in business until his retirement from active life. He was a member of the Methodist Episcopal church, a Republican in politics, and a man of sterling character. He married Anna MOORE, born May 25, 1811, died in Bradford, April 4, 1902, youngest daughter of Asa MOORE'**"**

(www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~pamckean/ (Family Files: Harris and Barr Files)

But wait! That was written of "William Asa, son of Asa (4) HARRIS, was born in Connecticut, about 1783. He settled in New York state and in 1823 his name appears…" (*www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~pamckean/ (Family Files: Harris and Barr Files*)

So much of the information sounds the same – both Ebenezer and William Asa married to a cousin Margy, and several children by the same name, including a boy named Delpha! (Actually, as we will discover, Goldpha, Delpha, and Pearly were all boys).

Thus the adventure begins. Who was the father of these children? Ebenezer? William Asa? What is the evidence supporting our conclusion?

The information quoted above from the "Harris and Barr Files" is readily available on the internet, It is a reproduction of the Harris article found in Vol. I, p8-10, of the *Genealogical and Personal History of Northern Pennsylvania* , John W. Jordan, editor, 1913. The same information, in recognizably the same terminology occurs in a 1948 letter from her aunt to my mother – a source for my mother's college paper on the family. It is also the basis for the ancestral information given by Louella Harris of Bradford, PA in 1931. (*www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~pamckean/ (Family Files:*
Harris Family - Bradford and /or Tuna Valley -1931)

Louella wrote:

> "In 1817, this fourth Asa seems to have been living in Nelson, New Hanpshire. At least he did if he is the father of Rebecca Harris, and as her name does not appear in any of the other families, she apparently belonged to the lost family. At the same time, Rebecca Harris's aunt, Hannah Harris Ingalls, who was a daughter of the third Asa, and therefore a sister of the fourth Asa, was living in Redman, New Hampshire. The letter referred to is dated February 25, 1817 and is from Hannah Ingals to her niece Rebecca Harris; and the subject is the prospect of Rebecca's parents moving to western New York.

The fifth Asa, William Asa, was born in Connecticut in 1783, and is said by the Genealogy to be the son of the fourth Asa. As Asa IV was at this time twenty-one, and Asa III was only forty-six, it seems more reasonable that he was the son of Asa III and brother to Asa IV. He came to New York early in the nineteenth century. His name is on a list of early settlers of Farmersville, Cattaraugus County, New York in 1823. He married his cousin Marjory Harris, presumably a daughter of that lost Asa.

They were the parents of Delpha Harris, our grandfather, who according to the records, was born somewhere in Connecticut in 1808. In 1833, the year of my father's birth, they were living in Carroll, now Kiantone, New York; and Marjory Harris writes to Mrs. Rebecca Harris of Farmersville, that "Delpha has as clever a woman as the world affords".

A comparison of dates would make it appear that it was Asa III who was a man of mature age at the time of the Revolutionary War, and who therefore must have been the _ _ _ _ ancestor. He had brass molds for making six sizes of bullets, in which he said he was "making pills for the Whigs". These molds must have been brought with the family to western New York, as father distinctly remembered to have seen them.

The children of William Asa and Marjory Harris mostly moved to Wisconsin and we know very little of them. Sarah Shaw, a daughter of Aunt Rebecca, I think, made a long visit to her relatives on the Tuna about 1880. Eliza Jones, another daughter of a Harris, lived for many years with her Uncle Delpha. Pearley, as his mother writes his name, Parley as he was called, must have come to the Tuna about the same time his brother Delpha did. He married Elizabeth Farr, who was I believe, his second wife. He was a good deal of an invalid, or thought he was, in his later years, and did little work. My most distinct recollection of him is seeing him lying on the floor of his half-log cabin near the creek at Tuna, and swatting flies with something that looked like a butter ladle.

Pearley had four children. The youngest, Bert, died of black diphtheria. There was no quarantine of course, and almost everyone on the creekl visited the house either before or afte his death. Strange to say, no epidemic resulted. Leila was nearest to my age, but I never knew her well. When she married a _____ _____, she dropped out of the Harris clan, and her early death kept us from knowing her children. Ellen was the mother of an illegitimate daughter (Ada). She went to Meadville in Jamestown and brought up her daughter to be a reputable member of society. Worster Harris had a family, none of whom are any discredit to the name; but unfortunately we do not know them."

We could here note several items that Louella mentions:

1) Nelson, Hew Hampshire

2) Some confusion in the succession of Asa'a and William Asa

3) Wisconsin (and?) Sarah Shaw

4) Pearley and Elizabeth , his "invalid" status

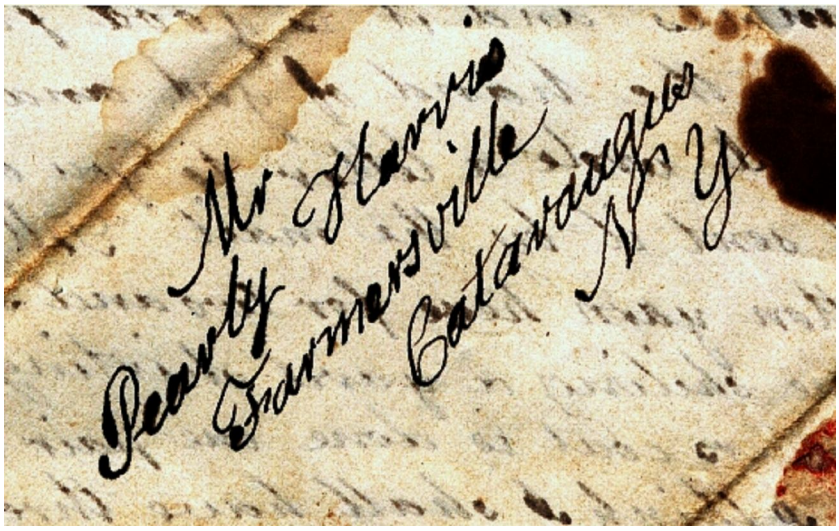
5. Pearley's children: Bert, Leila, Ellen and Worster

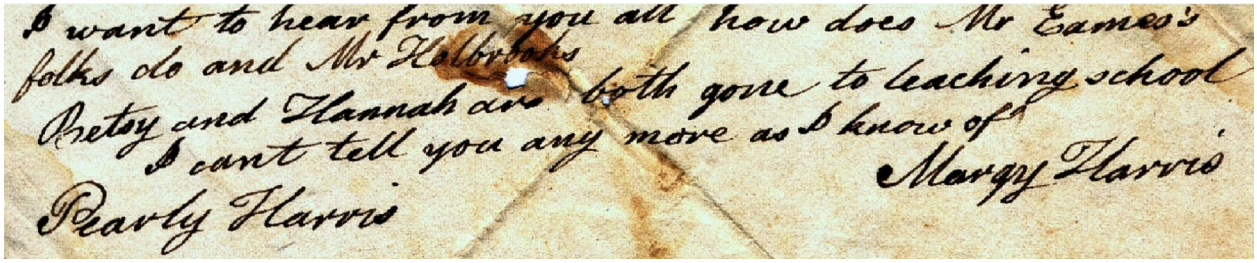
The adventure continues, but now turns to a different course. What is the basis for the comment about "conflicting pieces of evidence"?

My Grandmother Lena Harris, widow of Albert L Harris sold their house on Court Street in Little Valley, NY in 1965. As a teenager, I had the task of feeding the bonfire used to dispose of the burnable accumulation in the old barn. As a

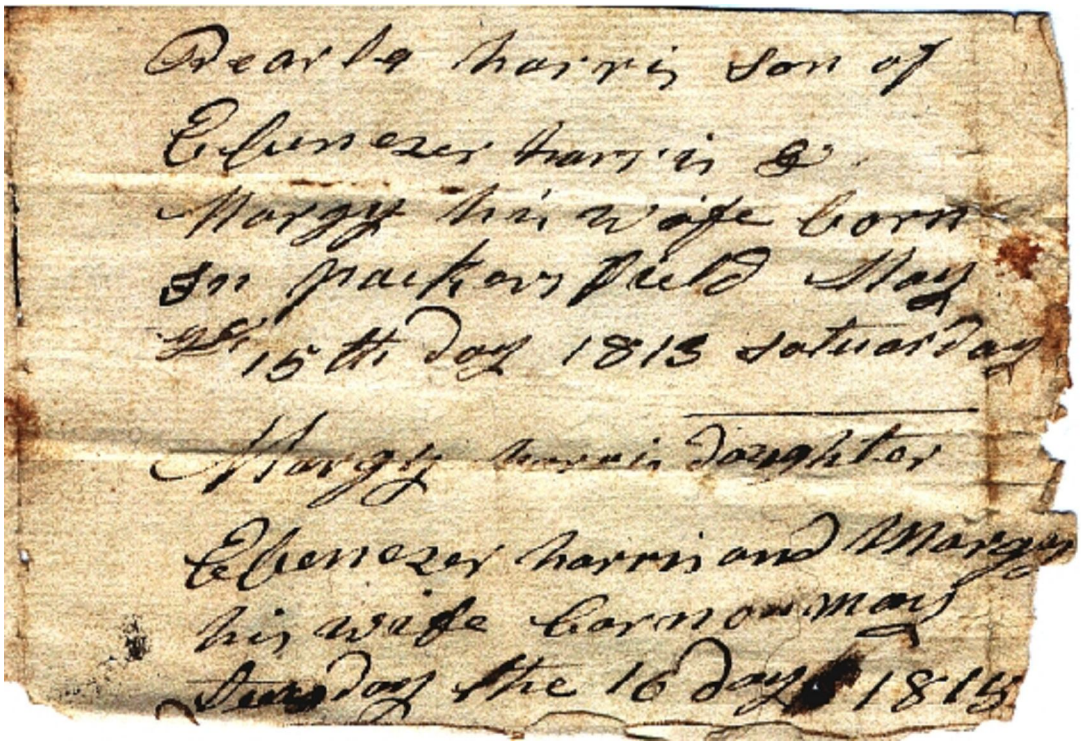
stamp collector, I saved a shoebox full of old letters in stamped envelopes. In time I began studying the family history in those old (ca. 1838-1880) letters.

Among them, an 1838 letter from Margy to her son Pearly:





Also. an even earlier document contained within one of the letters:



This fragment; showing the birth of Pearly in 1813, in Packersfield, (NH), child of Margy and Ebenezer Harris; was with a small booklet of births and deaths of the Harris family in the period from 1760 to 1815.

Among the items left to me since my mothers death was the "Pearly Harris Family Record" - information recorded beginning about 1925, with records from Pearley's birth (15 May 1823, Farmersville, NY ? – conflicting information again!) to deaths as late as 1973.

Traces about Pearly and his family taken from that record include:

"On July 9th 1844 he was married to Elizabeth Webb and settled at Tuna Creek, PA. His continual ill health made their life together one of constant struggle…."

"At the time this record was made only one of (their) children was living; Wooster, the 2nd child. The first to go was Alice, on Feb 22nd, 1856, aged 7 mos…Alberti …1879…Leila…1881…Ellen…1923."

"On Sept. 6, 1925, the descendants of Pearly and Elizabeth Harris, to the number of about 45, met at the home of Mrs. Mabel Mckinney, at Limestone, NY and organized a yearly reunion. There were four generations represented. The oldest person present was W. B. Harris of Ellicottville, N.Y. and the youngest, little Allen Lockwood of Bradford, Pa. The following is a list of the heads of families at the beginning of this organization.

Wooster B. Harris	Ellicottville, N.Y.
Walter "	" "
Lee J. "	" "
Albert "	" "
Wallace B. "	" "
Frank P. "	Cal.
Arthur Blendinger	Buffalo, N.Y.

Leonard W. Barlow		Sugar Grove Pa.
Felix Duhan		Great Valley N.Y.
Mabel McKinney	Limestone	N.Y.
Levi C. Way		Jamestown N.Y.
C. M. Lockwood	Bradford	Pa.
Victor Lee		Derrick City "
Harry Mitchell		Jamestown N.Y.

These records, and others in my possession show that we are clearly talking about the same family. Among the saved letters are examples from William Adams, in Wisconsin which mentions Delpha, and from Goldpha, also "gone west".

The information in the small booklet of births and deaths is in almost total agreement with the information in *The Genealogist Vol. 16, No1 Spring 2002*, "Nicholas and Hannah (Blake) Harris…"by Helen S. Ullman, (see pp 115-116)

From these, and other sources we can summarize:

Ebenezer and Margy Harris sold land in Packersfield, NH, 1817. An Ebenezer appears in Ischua, Cattaraugus Co, US Census, 1820, and in Farmersville, 1830. The 1835 New York State Census shows an Ebenezer at Franklinville, with a Delpha next. The 1838 letter from Margy (at Angelica, Allegany Co, NY) to Pearly (at Farmersville) says "tell your father …[and] your fathers coat is done…" She also mentions plans of coming home. This seems to establish that this is the correct Ebenezer Harris and that he was still living. (Another Ebenezer Harris moved into Chautauqua Co., NY at about the same time, and that Ebenezer is also found in deeds for Cattaraugus Co. lands.) Margy is reported to have been buried at Farmersville, 1844.I have found and photographed the stone. An 1852 letter from Goldpha says "I had not heard of …nor…of the disposition of Fathers property…" Interestingly, the only burial record I've found which may be "our" Ebenezer is this one in the White Cemetery, Allen, Allegany Co., NY:

Children of Ebenezer and Margy, most recorded as born in New Hampshire:

1. William Adams Harris (1794-1880)

A William A. Harris appears in US Census 1820, Ischua , immediately after Ebenezer. Two William Harris's are found in Cattaraugus Co. in 1830. The 1852 letter from Goldpha at Bennett, Wisc. states that William is living some 35 miles away. Two 1880 letters from William A. (at Glendale, Wis.) to his Sister [in law] Elizabeth Harris (at Tuna Creek, PA)

and information from his descendants in Wisconsin establish his line there, in agreement with the information from Jordan(1913) above.

Children of William Adams and Anna (????) Harris:
William Adams (b abt 1817 married Eliza RUSSELL), Socrates (b 1822 in NY), Frances (b abt 1826 in NY), Helen (b abt 1831 in NY), Sylvanus (b abt 1832, Farmersville, NY married Minerva GETMAN), Permelia (b 1835 in Ohio married Alexander GETTMAN), Jane (b 1839 in Ohio married William KIMMERLY), Lenora (b 1840 in Ohio married James YOUNGS). I have further
information about some of these families.

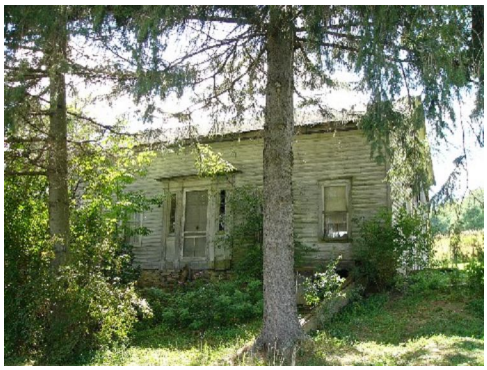
2. Reuben Harris (1796-1798)

3. Rebekah Harris (1798-1859) I have no further record.

4. Ira Harris (1799-????)
An Ira Harris b. abt 1799 in New Hampshire, appears in the 1850 and 1870 US Census, Orange Twp, Fayette Co, Ind. I have no proof that this is the same Ira Harris, however an Ancestry.com search of the 1850 Census reports only 18 Ira Harris's. Four of these were not available to check, but none of the others were born in New Hampshire, and only one other was 51 years old. If this is the correct Ira, information online (Ancestry.com, Fayette Co, Indiana Genealogy Project) shows the following: Ira married on 30 Nov 1843, Mary Jones of Fayette Co. (1817-1893), and he died, 1877, Fayette, Co.
I have no other information on Ira at this writing.

5. Alva Harris (1801- before 1880) Neither Alva Harris reported in an Ancestry.com search of the 1850 US Census matches. However, there is an Alvah Harris, age 50, born New Hampshire, in the household of Joseph Henry of Farmersville, NY,1850. An 1880 letter from William to Elizabeth states "my family are all dieing of(sic) Rebekah Pearly and Alvah and
Freelove it may be Elmina I have lost track of her…"
I have no other information.

6. Freelove Harris (1803-1878) The 1838 letter mentions Freelove, at Angelica. A search of the 1850 Census records shows very few women by the name Freelove. One, Freelove Shaw, wife of Nathaniel, was born in New Hampshire in 1803. Deed records indicate that she was his wife in the 1820's. Records of the disposition of Nathaniel's estate after his death in Sept. 1850 lead to Wisconsin, and ultimately the search lead to the burial of Freelove at Greenwood Cemetery, Reedsburg, WI. An 1856 wall map in Angelica includes Shaw residence among the property owners names, along roads still identifiable. A visit there resulted in permission from the current owner (of what the deed refers to as the Shaw farm) to take photographs.



I found the joist of unpeeled logs and the well inside the cellar to be of particular interest.

7. Goldpha Harris (1805-1886)

A Goldper Harris “of twenty and under thirty” appears in the 1830 US Census, at Arkwright, Chautauqua Co., NY. In 1840 a Goldpha (30-40) is found in Chester Twp, Geauga Co., OH. In 1850, a Goldpha , age 45, born in New Hampshire is in Dodge Co, Wisconsin. He remains in Dodge Co. in 1860 and 1870. The 1852 letter indicates that he had been there almost five years, and encourages Pearly to “stir up Delpha to write to me” suggesting that Pearly and Delpha are living close to each other.

Children of Goldpha and Polly Ann (MATHEWS) Harris:
Volney (b 1827 in NY, married Lucy KINGSBURY); Oldine (1830-1834); Lucy (b 1833 in NY, married Luther BRUCE); Erasmus Darwin (b 1836 in Ohio, married Annie SWEET).

8. Delpha Harris (1807-1884)
A Delpha Harris , (30-40) is found in Carroll Twp, Chautauqua Co., NY, in 1840. In the 1850 Census, Delpha age 42 is found with his wife and eight children in Carrolton, Cattaraugus Co., NY. (But of note is the fact that the three youngest children- ages 4, 2, and 5/12 -were born in PA while the older five - ages 17 to 9 - were born in NY.) By 1860 , in Bradford, McKean Co., PA we find Delpha and wife Ann are at residence #763, oldest son Marshal and several of the younger children are at residence # 788, and “Perley” and Elizabeth with three children are at residence #794. Delpha died 20 Dec 1884, with burial at Oak Hill Cemetery, Bradford, PA.

Children of Delpha and Ana (MOORE) Harris:
Marshal D. (b 1833 married Abby EDSON. Their children, surname HARRIS, Luella, Anna, Inez, Mary); Louisa E. (b 1835 married Oscar HOWE . Their children, surname HOWE , William, Pherson, Frank, Luella, Llewellyn); Sarah (1839-1845); Victoria E. (b 1839 married Almon HORTON. Their children, surname HORTON, Abbeygail, Bina, Clement, Lillie, Arthur); Frederick J. (b 1841 married Emily HOWE. Their children, surname HARRIS, Allen, Mary, Orphia, Milton); Nancy B. (b 1843 married James MALONA. Their children, surname MALONA, Wilma, Luly, Paul); Mary R. (b 1848 married J. Emory SLOCUM.
Their children, surname SLOCUM, Carrie, Harry); Fernando C. (b 1849 married Clara INGLESBY. Their children, surname HARRIS, John, Delpha, Ruth, Alice, Leslie, Fernando)

9. Elmina Harris (1810-bef1880) No other information.

10.Parley Harris (Feb-Aug, 1812) (Called Perly in the Ullman reference)

11. Pearly Harris (1813-1875) (Also called Perly in the Ullman reference)
Pearly and Elizabeth (WEBB) Harris are found in the 1850 US Census of Bradford Twp, McKean Co., PA. at residence #426 with two children. At residence # 428 are Rice and Harriet WEBB, while Pearly’s in-laws Henry and Elizabeth (HAMLIN) WEBB and five other children are at residence #437. Letters from the Webb’s and documents from Henry’s lumber business are among the items of the letters collection. In 1860, Pearly, Elizabeth and three children are at residence #794 as mentioned above. The 1870 Census for Carrolton Twp, Cattaraugus Co., NY, shows Pearly and Elizabeth, with four children (the youngest, age 4, born in NY) at Limestone Post Office. The 1880 Us Census, McKean Co., PA enumeration district 77 (noted as Tuna Valley) shows: at residence #499, Elizabeth Harris, daughter Ellen, and granddaughter Ada. Fernando Harris son of Delpha, above, is at residence #506, and Wooster, son of Pearly and Elizabeth is at residence #534.Pearly (died 18 Jul 1875) and Elizabeth (died 5 Oct 1881) are both reported to have been buried at Limestone Cemetery, Limestone, NY (Family Record) but current online cemetery listings do not reflect that.

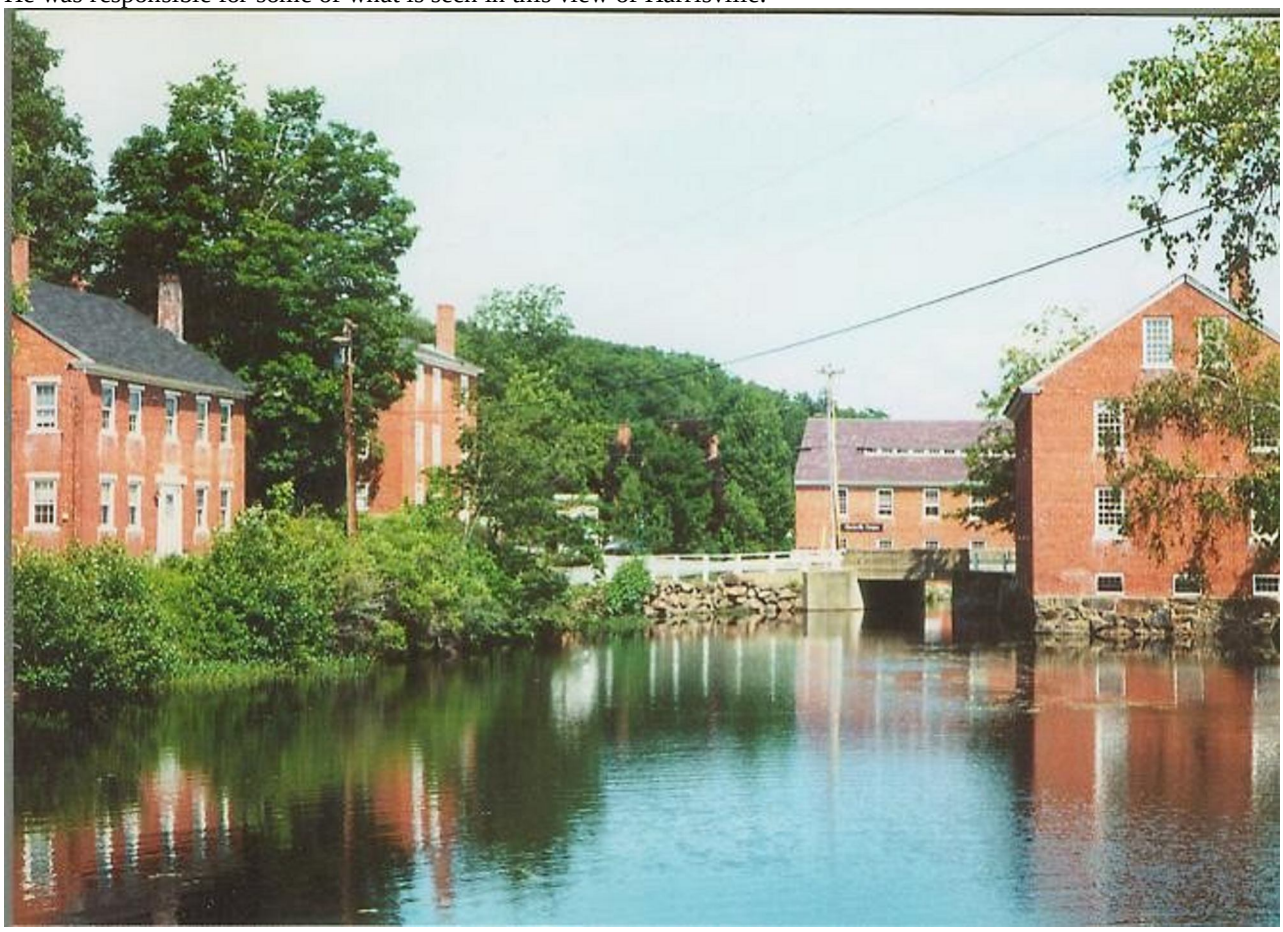
Children of Pearly and Elizabeth (WEBB) Harris:
Ellen E. (b 1846 married Alexander DeLAND. Their children, surname DeLAND, Ada, Roy, Harris.); Wooster B. (b 1848 married Sarah E. TURK. Their children, surname HARRIS, Maude, Walter, Frank, Leon, Elizabeth, Albert, Wallace, Ethel); Alice (1855-1856); Leila M. (b 1858 married “Jas” (James?) McKUNE. Their children, surname McKUNE, Bertha, Millicent, Jessie); Alberti (1866-1879, who is also reported buried at Limestone Cemetery).

12. Margy Harris (May-Nov, 1815)

And yet again, some conflicting information:
13. Matilda Harris (1816-????) From the Ullman article.

The Ullman article cited above gives a professionally prepared account of the Ancestors of Ebenezer and Margy.

The book Factory Under the Elms, a History of Harrisville, New Hampshire, John B. Armstrong, Museum of American Textile History , 1985 gives recognition to a town formerly known as Nelson (and at times as Packersfield). Margy's brother Bethuel and his family are prominent in the story.
He was responsible for some of what is seen in this view of Harrisville:



These are highlights from the adventure to date. There have been contacts with several cousins previously unknown, and there remains a great deal of information to be collected, processed, compiled, and … corrected. I hope that someone may benefit from this presentation, that it will be a step toward correcting a bit of confusion, and that when it has created confusion you will help me correct my mistakes!

Doug Crosby