

## **Bottskill Baptist Church History Minute**

### **Church Historian Ken Perry**

#### **July 2025- The Sherwood Family and its Legacies**

The Sherwood family and its antecedents concern this month's History Minute. When this letter from Eileen Graham of Freehold, New Jersey arrived here in May, it seemed like the usual cut and dry request for church records pertaining to family research. However, the discoveries that followed showed how much hidden wealth may be under what appears to be an ordinary request about an ordinary family. That seemed to merit some attention as a history minute.

Given the information about the vital dates of William R. Sherwood and his spouse, Betsey, and where they may have lived, my first approach is to look at the 1850 census and determine where they were found. In this instance, I found William R. Sherwood, carpenter, living in the town of Easton, with his wife Betsey, their three daughters, a young man named Joseph Langdon, and two Irish boarders, James Collins, carpenter and John Dunlop, teamster. They were also in this same area in 1860.

The next thing that I would do is to look around them and see who their neighbors were- were there any relatives, notable individuals or specific occupations that



Photo of early Barber Ave. in Greenwich, NY. One of the likely the locations of the Sherwood Family.

might give a clue as to what part of town they lived in. In this instance, I found a number of blacksmiths living nearby and on another census page, I found the households of Waldron Eddy and Daniel Eddy. So, it seemed likely that the Sherwoods lived in the Easton portion of Union Village, either on Barber Avenue or on Eddy Street, near the Eddy Plow Company. They might even have been neighbors of our members, Colleen Burgess and Roger DeCorp. For that matter, as a carpenter, old Bill might have had a hand in building their house.



Early photo of Eddy St. in Greenwich, NY. One of the likely the locations of the Sherwood Family.

William and Betsey Sherwood appear on an 1841 list of church members, with their dates of death, 1864 for him, and 1889 for her, added at a later date. Their daughter Mary was baptized here in 1849. Both were buried in the Greenwich cemetery.

That would appear to be the end of their story, except that I wanted to know where Betsey was living after her husband died in 1864. I found her, in 1870, living in the village with Mary Tuttle, who had three daughters all born in Illinois. This was intriguing enough that looking at the 1860 Illinois census, I found Edwin R. Tuttle, a dry goods merchant who was born in Pennsylvania, and his wife Mary, born in New York, and their oldest daughter, who was only a year old. Also in their home was Mehitable Sherwood, one of the Sherwood daughters. Edwin died in 1863, so clearly Mary returned to her home state, and when her father died, her mother moved in with her.

This may be confirmed in 1880, when we find Betsey Sherwood living back over the kill with the family of Albert Bosworth, a grocer, whose wife was Hattie (Mehitable) Sherwood, and Betsey was listed as his mother-in-law. But also in the household was Anna Tuttle, one of Mary's daughters, listed as the Bosworth's niece. This ties both the Tuttle and Bosworth families to the Sherwood family.

By 1900, the Bosworths had moved to Cottage Street, perhaps 3 Cottage Street, which I made a drawing of some time ago. It is the second house on the street, just beyond the corner with Main Street. (It was later

found that the Bosworths first lived at the large house on the corner, and 3 Cottage Street became the home of another Bosworth relative.) Part of my certainty about this location was the discovery that one of the Bosworth daughters was the mother of Jane Haverly, a former Greenwich town and village historian, and the Haverlys lived at 3 Cottage Street.

That was my first unexpected discovery. Members of the Bosworth family are buried here, as is Julia Sherwood, who married Henry Knapp. There are, however, no Tuttle buried here. I did find out that Mary Tuttle went to live with one daughter in Michigan, but what I wanted to know was where was Anna Tuttle in 1900? Suspecting that she may have gone to live with relatives in Pennsylvania, where her father was born, I found her in Allegheny County, where the city of Pittsburgh is located.

Anna Tuttle was married to William H. Jeffers, given there as a theological professor. (The AI generated transcription of his profession said: "Theological Traffic Work." What's up with that? How can you read professor as traffic work and what does being one involve? Anyway, this is just a genealogical joke that I

omitted in this part of the talk.) William H. Jeffers was a professor at Western Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh.

William and Anna Jeffers had two sons, the younger one being Hamilton Moore Jeffers. Hamilton was a 1917 graduate of Berkeley, where he studied Astronomy, and was later associated with the University of California's Lick Observatory at San Jose. His older brother, John Robinson Jeffers, was known in American Arts and Letters as the poet, Robinson Jeffers. (In a blog concerning Robinson Jeffers, it was noted that Anna Tuttle lived with John Robinson, who was a cousin of her father, Edwin R. Tuttle. This blog also notes that upon meeting William Jeffers, a widower who was twice her age, Anna wrote a letter in 1885 to her Aunt Bosworth, but the blog doesn't identify Greenwich as her residence.)



Robinson Jeffers, great grandson of the Sherwoods.

This was my second unexpected discovery. The Sherwoods were great grandparents to

both someone who contributed to this community and to two brothers who contributed to our knowledge of arts and science on a national level.

Robinson Jeffers lived on the Pacific coast, at Carmel, California, which is south of San Francisco, many of his poems describing the natural beauty of that region. He was a contemporary, neighbor, and friend of John Steinbeck. His regional settings place him within the same category as two of his contemporaries, Carl Sandburg and Robert Frost, although his work has become less well known. Nevertheless, he was featured on

the cover of Time Magazine in April 1932, and a commemorative stamp was issued in his honor in the early 1970s.

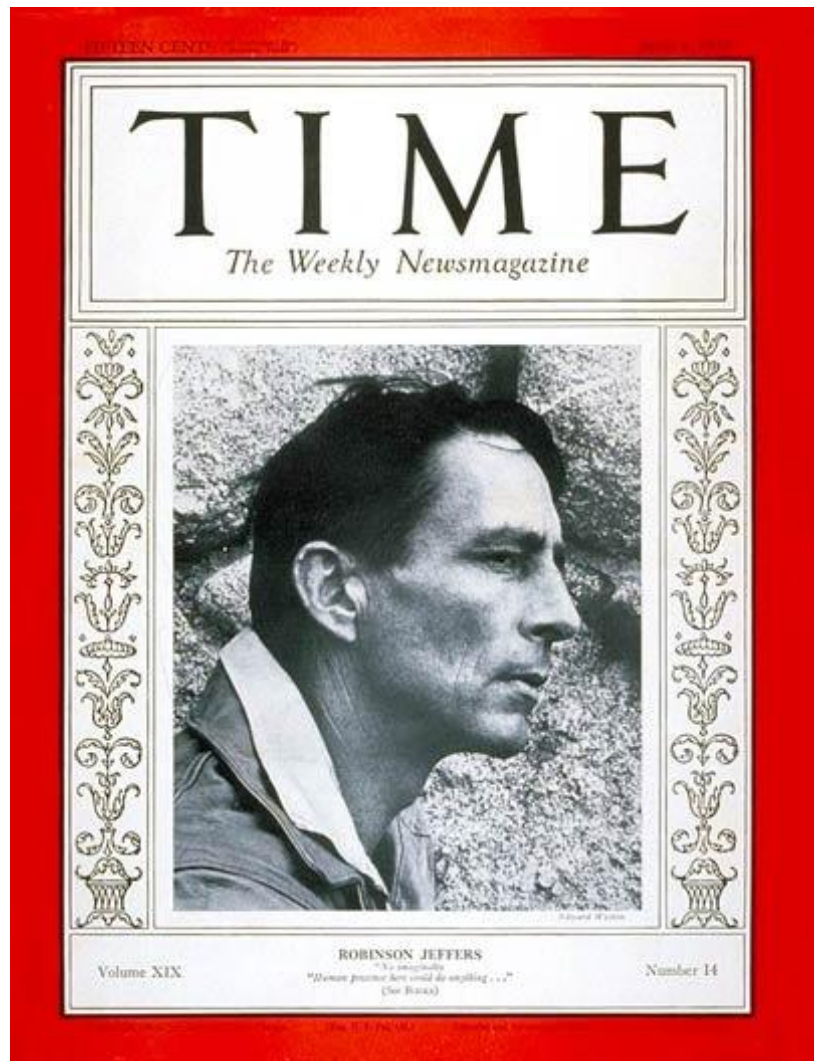
Two aphorisms attributed to him are:

“The heads of strong old age are beautiful beyond all grace of youth.”

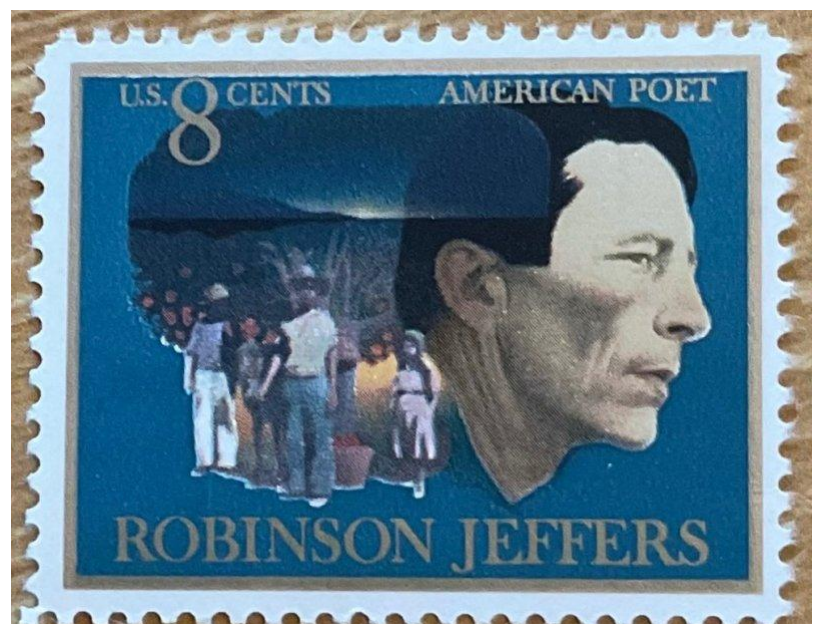
“The cold passion for truth hunts in no pack.”

Some now out of print volumes of his work are, of course: *The Selected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers*; *Roan Stallion Tamar and other poems of Robinson Jeffers*; *Be Angry at the Sun and other poems of Robinson Jeffers*; and, *The Beginning and the End*, the last works of Robinson Jeffers.

For the Sherwood’s membership in this church and their legacy in Jane Haverly, an historian in this community, and the Jeffers brothers, Hamilton Moore Jeffers, who contributed to our scientific knowledge, and Robinson Jeffers, a major American poet, we remember them.



Robinson Jeffers Time Magazine cover.



Robinson Jeffers Commemorative stamp.