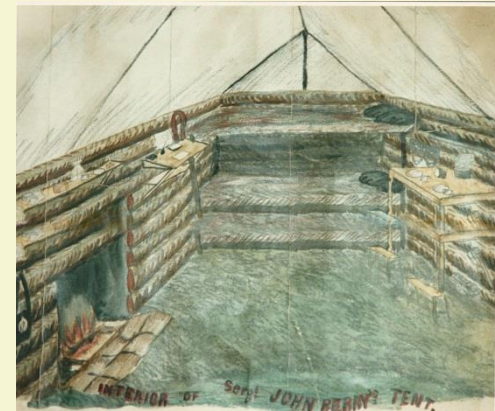


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that he enlisted in Company A, 16<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry in 1861. During his 4 years of military service, Berry was promoted from Corporal to Sergeant to Lieutenant to Captain. As a reminder of his military service, Berry had an artist create the painting shown here of the interior of his tent.

In 1864, Berry re-enlisted and returned to the Army of the Potomac under General Meade. He was honorably discharged in 1865 and returned to Ontonagon. Soon after, he moved to Detroit and started a new chapter of life.

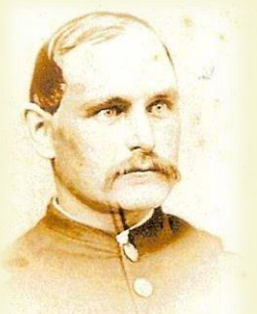


In Detroit, Berry worked for a wholesale hardware company and later ventured into real estate and construction. Soon after, he got married and started a family.

Have you ever heard of Berryville? It was located in Corwith Township about 5 miles southwest of Vanderbilt, as shown in the above map. The town was founded in 1877 by John G. Berry and his brother-in-law Barney Gagnier who built a lumber mill on Berry Lake. The settlement grew quickly and Berry served as the first post master in 1878. The first Masonic Lodge in Otsego County was started there.

Berryville's decline began when it was bypassed by the Michigan Central railroad that went through Vanderbilt instead. A devastating fire in 1911 destroyed most of the buildings, which resulted in Berryville becoming a ghost town.

So, who was John Gayfer Berry and how did he end up in Otsego County? John Berry was born December 13, 1837 in New York City. He was the 7<sup>th</sup> of 8 children of William and Mary (Gayfer) Berry. The family moved to England –



his parents' homeland – in 1846 and returned to the USA six years later. From there, John got a job on the Erie Canal. Later he headed west and eventually worked in the Upper Peninsula and northern Wisconsin. It was from Ontonagon

John and Mary (Elder) Berry were married on June 19, 1867. They had 4 children: William, James, Leticia (Lettie), and John. Mary's ailing health required the family to find a more suitable climate. This motivated the family to move north in the late 1870s and establish a new life and the community of Berryville.



In 1888, John Berry was elected to the State Senate and served one term. Mary passed away in 1904. Later, John moved to Vanderbilt and lived on Main Street. The house still stands today. John passed away on August 3, 1923 at the age of 85 and is buried in the Vanderbilt cemetery.

Berryville is one of the many early settlements that have come and gone in Otsego County. It began as a dream of John and Mary Berry and ended due to external forces and changing times.

*A special thank you to Pam (Respecki) Flesher for her assistance and contributions to this week's Update. She is John and Mary Berry's great, great granddaughter.*