



High on the list of important nineteenth century American folk artists is the name of Joseph H. Davis. His delightful water color portraits have been eagerly sought by museums and collectors. He was featured in the exhibition "Three New England Watercolor Painters" shown at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1974, and the St. Louis Art Museum, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center in Williamsburg, Virginia and the Currier Gallery of Art in Manchester, New Hampshire in 1975. More recent important exhibitions of American folk art, while not focusing especially on Joseph H. Davis, have also included his work.

Only a few of Davis' paintings are signed. The inscription on the portrait of Bartholomew Van Dame: "JOSEPH H. DAVIS/LEFT HAND/PAINTER/Bartholomew Van Dame. Painted at Bow Pond. June 27th 1836" indicates that the artist was left-handed. These signed paintings have permitted attribution of approximately 150 portraits to Joseph H. Davis; his style is so distinctive that the unsigned works can readily be recognized as being from the same hand as the signed ones.

Most of his paintings depict a single standing figure which, as would be expected from a left-handed artist, faces toward the right. In those instances where husband and wife are presented, the man is usually on the left and the woman on the right, facing each other, with a strongly grained table between. Figures are shown in profile, with the body turned slightly to allow better visualization of the clothing. A strongly patterned, brightly colored rug with geometric figures is generally present. In addition, eye-catching incidentals such as pen and ink, newspapers, letters, baskets of fruit, wall hangings, books, animals, flower arrangements and hats are often included. Finally, in a great many of the paintings, a fine calligraphy inscription giving the name of the subject, age, date and place of execution is present along the lower border.

The first published speculation on the specific identity of Joseph H. Davis was by Frank O. Spinney who, in 1943, suggested he was Joseph Hilliard Davis of Farmington, New Hampshire; or the

Joseph H. Davis: Identity Established

by Arthur and Sybil Kern



Photo: Courtesy of The Art Institute of Chicago

Asa and Theodosha Chaney; 1833; Watercolor and pencil on paper; 11 1/4 x 9 5/8"; Inscription: "Asa Chaney aged 29, 1833. Theodosha Chaney aged 28, 1832."

Joseph H. Davis of Dover. In 1950, however, Spinney proposed what he felt was a better candidate, Pine Hill Joe Davis of Newfield, Maine? G.E. Hall, of Portland, Maine, in a 1959 letter to a Mr. and Mrs. Sears of the same city, stated that he or she had done "some research on the forgotten artist, J.H. Davis, and found that he was of Limington."³ In the August 16, 1959 issue of the Portland, Maine, *Sunday Telegram*, Esther Wood, Professor of History at Gorham College, reported that the artist was a "native of Limington though at various times he used the address of Vassalboro, Maine, and Wilmington, Massachusetts." Esther Sparks, in the catalogue for the exhibition "Three New England Watercolor Painters"⁴ mentions as possibilities "the voter in Dover in the 1850s, the confectionery of Dover, the landowner in Farmington in the '40s or the Davis in Farmington who bought 26 pounds of nails from Clark and Scruton in the last half of 1844;" although her first choice was Pine Hill Joe. Finally, Robert L. Taylor, in his publication on early families of Limington,⁵ includes Joseph H. Davis, the "noted left-hand artist."

Was Joseph H. Davis of Limington the painter? Was it the Joseph H. Davis of Newfield? None of those who suggested one or the other presented any real evidence to support either possibility. Was he from Farmington, Dover or elsewhere? In order to resolve this problem, two parallel lines of research were conducted by the authors of this article. The first investigation identified those individuals with the name of Joseph H. Davis living in New Hampshire and Maine between 1830 and 1840, known to be the place and period of the artist's activity from his custom of placing inscriptions on many of his paintings. The second involved review of all portraits attributable to Joseph H. Davis. Most of these are included in the exhibition catalogue *Three New England Watercolor Painters*; the remainder have appeared in books, auction catalogues, exhibitions and advertisements. From these were extracted those paintings which carry an inscription in the artist's own hand on the front of the paper and only those which include the date of execution and



Joseph and Sarah Ann Libby Emery; 1934; Watercolor and pencil on paper; 14 x 14"; Inscription: "Joseph Emery. AGED. 25 | & 2 months. | 1834 | Sarah Ann Emery. AGED 20 YEARS. | 1834"; Collection of the New York State Historical Association.

name of the subject. Of this group, only those were finally considered if the inscription on the painting or if this could be established by genealogic investigation. The final result was a total of approximately 85 portraits, from which Joseph H. Davis' whereabouts during his years as an itinerant limner could be determined. Although the name Davis was extremely common in New England (the fifth most common name in 1790⁶), the task of identification was made simpler by the fact that the name, "Joseph H. Davis" was an uncommon one during the period under

investigation. A study of census indices and vital records of Maine and New Hampshire, the states where the artist was known to be active, disclosed only those previously mentioned individuals of Farmington, New Hampshire and Limington, Maine.

By correlating the facts obtained from these two lines of study, the authors have reached what they believe is the true identity of Joseph H. Davis, the American folk artist.

A preliminary identity was a Joseph Hilliard Davis born in Farmington, New Hampshire on January 24, 1820 to James and Rachel Hilliard Davis?



Working in favor of this identity is the fact that Farmington is only about ten miles from Lebanon, Maine, home of Sally Rogers Chamberlin, and approximately 18 miles from Dover, New Hampshire, home of Sarah Ann Guppy, both of whose portraits were painted by Joseph H. Davis in 1832. Going against this theory is the problem that Joseph Hilliard Davis was only 12 years old in 1832 when these earliest paintings were done. Although it is possible that Joseph Hilliard Davis was unusually gifted, it is unlikely this young boy was the artist in question. A review of the

Stafford County Register of Deeds for the period 1818 to 1850 disclosed a deed dated January 24, 1847 for the purchase of land by Joseph H. Davis of Farmington, "a country trader," from Ebenezer Ransom. It is likely that this was Joseph Hilliard and that he was also the same Davis of Dover and Farmington referred to by Esther Sparks and Frank O. Spinney. More significantly, the authors have been unable to relate this Davis to any of the subjects of the portraits.

In contrast, the Joseph H. Davis of Limington, born August 10, 1811 to

Joseph and Phebe Small Davis⁸ who were married there November 27, 1808⁹; was 21 years of age when the first portraits were painted in 1832. His paternal grandfather, John, may have been married to Molly Harper¹⁰ and his maternal great-grandfather, Samuel, was married to Dorothy Hubbard;¹¹ his middle initial may, therefore, have been for Harper or Hubbard. He lived in Limington on his father's farm in that section known as Pine Hill. That he was living in Limington in 1821 is learned from the inclusion of his name, along with those of his parents and siblings, in a list of people then residing in the town's fourth school district.¹² The Maine 1830 Index to the Census records him as still living in Limington,¹³ about 20 miles from Lebanon, Maine, where the 1832 portrait of Sally Rogers Chamberlin¹⁴ was painted. Dover, New Hampshire, where the portrait of Sarah Ann Guppy¹⁵ was done that same year, is just 10 miles from Lebanon. Sarah Ann's mother was Hannah Dame Guppy of Maine; an interesting possibility is that she may have been related to Bartholomew Van Dame who was an important link between the painter and many of his subjects. In 1832, when Joseph H. Davis painted his first portraits, this Davis was of an appropriate age and lived close enough to the subjects to support the hypothesis that he was the painter.

In his conversations with residents of Newfield, a town only about eight miles from Limington, Frank O. Spinney learned of a Pine Hill Joe Davis who was remembered as a farmer inclined to suddenly leave the farm to go wandering from town to town "painting pictures of people on little sheets of paper." Spinney refers to the artist as Pine Hill Joe of Newfield rather than of Limington. However, as he states, the identification of Pine Hill Joe of Newfield was based on tradition and legend handed down through several generations. There is nothing to support the contention that Joseph H. Davis lived in Newfield in the 1830s.

What was learned is that the Davis of Limington did establish residence in Newfield in 1844 and it was this which undoubtedly led to the error in the legend. The tradition, as reported by

WHERE JOSEPH H. DAVIS TRAVELED





Spinney, is that "when spring came and it was planting time, [Pine Hill Joe Davis of Newfield] suddenly took a notion to go wandering . . . because he had an itch to draw pictures." In fact this was actually Pine Hill Joe Davis of Limington, who might have continued to carry the name of Pine Hill Joe when he lived in Newfield. This, plus the intervening years, would explain the confusion.

The next year, following the 1832 portraits of Sally Rogers Chamberlin in Lebanon and Sarah Ann Guppy in Dover, Davis painted those of Gideon Varney¹⁶ and Sarah Elizabeth Varney¹⁷ who probably lived in the Dover area of New Hampshire or the Berwick area of Maine (just five miles from Dover); Rebekah¹⁸ and Lucy Cottle,¹⁹ and Achsah Stanton²⁰ of Lebanon; Maria Jane Cram;²¹ probably of Limerick, Maine, five miles from Limington; and Sally Jenkins²² and Hannah Roberts and Lewis Tebbets²³ of Berwick. Also in that year he painted the portraits of Asa and Theodosia Chaney²⁴ and the Willey,²⁵ Pender²⁶ and Randall²⁷ families of Somersworth, New Hampshire, which is a few miles from Dover. Asa Chaney, born in Wells, Maine but a resident of Somersworth when his portrait was painted, was related to Reuben Chaney, born in Wells but later a resident of Limington. Reuben may have been a link between Joseph H. Davis of Limington and Asa Chaney and other subjects in Somersworth. It appears that in 1833 Davis spent a good deal of time painting in the Dover-Somersworth area of New Hampshire and the Lebanon-Berwick area of Maine.

A most important painting in establishing the artist as Joseph H. Davis of Limington is his 1834 double portrait of Ira and Fanny Libby.²⁸ Born in Berwick in 1788, Ira Libby, married Fanny Langdon of Lebanon and was a deacon in the Freewill Baptist Church of North Berwick. The father and uncle of Joseph H. Davis of Limington were both active in the nearby Freewill Baptist Church of Limington^{29, 30}; another member of the family, Ezra Davis Jr., was one of the first three deacons of the church.³¹ A common church interest was probably a significant link between

Joseph H. Davis of Limington and many of his subjects in Maine and New Hampshire. The fact that the Freewill Baptist newspaper, *Morning Star*, was published at Limerick (five miles from Limington) from 1826 to 1833, and after that in Dover, may explain the artist's greater activity in the former

area before 1834 and in the latter area after 1833.

Numerous marital connections between the Libbys, the Smalls and Joseph H. Davis of Limington help to establish the town as the artist's residence at this time. This Davis' maternal great-grandmother was Elizabeth Libby



Mary D. Varney; 1835; Watercolor and pencil on paper; 11 7/8 x 9 3/8"; Inscription: "Mary D. Varney. Born Decem^r 20th 1814. Painted at the age of 21, 1835"; Collection of the New York State Historical Association.



Photo: Courtesy of Helga Photo Studio



John L. and Nancy Crockett; 1836; Watercolor and pencil on paper; 10 x 14 1/2"; Inscription: "John L. Crockett, Aged 34, July 9th 1836. Nancy Crockett, Aged 33, Novem^r 25th 1836"; Collection of Hirschl & Adler Folk.

Plummer.³² His mother's sister, Martha Small, was married to Philomon Libby who received 100 acres of land in Limington from Samuel Small, great-grandfather of the painter.³³ Philomon Libby's son of the same name, following his marriage in 1798, settled in that part of Limington known as Pine Hill,³⁴ the same area in which Joseph H. Davis lived. The latter's cousin, Samuel, the son of James Small, brother of Davis' mother, married Mary Libby,³⁵ and a witness to the will of Joseph H. Davis' grandfather, Benjamin Small, was Abner Libby.³⁶ Finally, his great aunt, Sarah Small, married Timothy Waterhouse, son of Joseph and Mary Libby Waterhouse.³⁷

In 1834, at or near Limington, Davis painted the double portrait of Joseph and Sarah Ann Libby Emery. The latter was the daughter of Ira and Fanny Libby.³⁸ Joseph Emery, born in Limington, July 4, 1808,³⁹ was only three years older than Joseph H. Davis and

the two may very well have been boyhood friends.

Also in 1834, Davis executed the portraits of Lucinda Brown in Raymond, Maine,⁴⁰ (about 20 miles northeast of Limington), and of Oliver and Louise Fernald of North Berwick.⁴¹ In 1838, S.P. Fernald, probably a relative of Oliver Fernald, became pastor of the Freewill Baptist Church in Northwood, New Hampshire,⁴² a town in which Joseph H. Davis was active in 1836. The portraits of James and Hannah Butler⁴³ and Daniel and Betsy Otis of Great Falls (Somersworth)⁴⁴ were also painted in 1834. During this year, Davis' activity appeared to have been divided between Maine and New Hampshire.

In 1835, the only portrait he did in Maine was of Daniel Horn of Lebanon.⁴⁵ New Hampshire portraits painted that year included those of the Hayes family⁴⁶ of Strafford, about 10 miles west of Dover. Joseph Hayes' wife, Lois, was

the daughter of Paul and Elizabeth Davis Demeritt, raising the possibility that she may have been related to the artist. Of significance is the fact that Joseph Hayes' father, Wentworth, was active in the Freewill Baptist Church.⁴⁷ Also painted in this same area were the portraits of Sarah C. Hayes,⁴⁸ Mary D. Varney⁴⁹ and James Locke.⁵⁰ Moving about 10 miles north of Strafford to Farmington, he did the portraits of Franklin Kimball,⁵¹ Charles B. Roberts,⁵² Henry L. Roberts,⁵³ John L. Pinkham,⁵⁴ Jeremiah Jones⁵⁵ and the Furber sisters.⁵⁶ At Brookfield, New Hampshire, about 11 miles north of Farmington, he painted the portraits of Trueworthy,⁵⁷ Adaline⁵⁸ and William B. Chamberlin.⁵⁹ Again reflecting the frequent involvement of the subjects of Joseph H. Davis with the Freewill Baptist Church is the death notice "Chamberlin, Capt. William B. d 26 Mar 1842 at Brookfield, ae 29y" which appeared in the *Morning Star*, the church newspaper.

In 1836, Joseph H. Davis painted his small portraits exclusively in New Hampshire. About 15 miles west of Dover, at Deerfield, he did the double portrait of Page and Betsey Batchelder⁶⁰ and of Samuel and Sarah Woodman.⁶¹ He painted the double portraits of John and Nancy Crockett,⁶² John and Mary Ann Nealley,⁶³ and Thomas and Sally Demeritt⁶⁴ in Northwood, about six miles northeast of Deerfield. John Crockett was deacon of the Calvin Baptist Church and Daniel Crockett of Limington was a member of the Freewill Baptist Church of Buxton, Maine.⁶⁵ Following the death of John Nealley's sister, Mary Ann, his friend, Bartholomew Van Dame, an active member of the Freewill Baptist Church, wrote a memorial poem.⁶⁶ The portrait of Benjamin F. Winkley⁶⁷ was painted in Barnstead, about 11 miles northwest of Deerfield. Strafford or adjacent Barington were the settings for the portraits of Abigail Hall,⁶⁸ Samuel Mitchell Demeritt,⁶⁹ John F. Demeritt,⁷⁰ members of the Caverly,⁷¹ Hill,⁷² Knowles,⁷³ Montgomery,⁷⁴ Place,⁷⁵ Tasker,⁷⁶ Taylor,⁷⁷ Foss,⁷⁸ and Tuttle⁷⁹ families and, the most important, Bartholomew Van Dame.⁸⁰ Azariah Caverly was a member of the Freewill Baptist Church, as



Photo: Courtesy of The Art Institute of Chicago

The Tilton Family; 1837; Watercolor and pencil on paper; 10 x 15 1/8"; Inscription: "John T. Tilton. Aged 33. Decem^r 2^d. 1836. Isabell A. Tilton. Aged 1 Year. & 7-months June 13th 1837. Hannah B. Tilton. Aged 32 March 8th 1837"; Collection of Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center.

indicated by the publishing of his death notice in the *Morning Star*.⁸¹ John Caverly was ordained in 1827 and afterward had charge of the Church at Bow Lake, Strafford;⁸² it can be assumed that he was a minister of the Freewill Baptist Church since the death notice of both his father, John, and his brother, Azariah, was published in the *Morning Star* and his mother's brother, Joseph Boodey, of Strafford was a minister of the Freewill Baptist Church. Levi B. Tasker was also a minister of the Freewill Baptist Church.⁸³ Bartholomew Van Dame was a frequent contributor to the *Morning Star* and an itinerant school teacher, preacher and reformer who visited many of the New England towns where Joseph H. Davis was active. Van Dame's diaries indicate

his friendship with members of the Caverly, Nealley and York families;⁸⁴ he probably was an important link between the artist and many of his subjects.

Judging from his dated portraits, 1837 was the last year of Davis' painting activity and he again worked only in New Hampshire. These portraits include the Haleys⁸⁵ in Epping, about 11 miles from Deerfield, the Averys,⁸⁶ and Tiltons⁸⁷ in Deerfield, the Cheswells,⁸⁸ Hannah Monroe,⁸⁹ Thompsons⁹⁰ and Yorks⁹¹ in Durham, (about three miles from Dover), the Dockums⁹² and Gliddens⁹³ in Dover, Laurana Little⁹⁴ in Hampstead, (about 15 miles south of Epping), and possibly Andrew Wiggins⁹⁵ in Sandwich, New Hampshire, 40 miles west of Limington. The por-

trait of Thomas York significantly depicts him reading the *Morning Star*.

After reviewing the known portraits by Joseph H. Davis, certain questions come to mind: Did he have any occupation other than painter prior to 1838? Why did his artistic activity suddenly cease after 1837? And, if it was not death that was responsible, what happened to him after he stopped painting?

Since his father was a farmer as well as a land owner in Limington,⁹⁶ it is likely that the son also worked on the family farm, at least before 1835. Prior to that time his output of portraits was small and we may speculate that these were painted during his occasional trips away from the farm, as described by Spinney. Joseph H. Davis' greatest activity was from 1835 through 1837.



This increased productivity may have been due to the growing responsibility that marriage placed upon the young man: On November 5, 1835 he married Elizabeth Patterson, the marriage record indicating that they were both of Saco.⁹⁷ She was born October 25, 1795,⁹⁸ making her 16 years older than her husband; at the time of their marriage he was 24 years of age and she 40. Five days after their wedding, on November 10, 1835, "Joseph H. Davis of Saco, gentleman" was involved in a land transaction⁹⁹ and on November 13, 1835 there was recorded the sale of a parcel of land in Vassalboro, Maine owned by Joseph and Elizabeth Davis of Saco to Ezekial Small,¹⁰⁰ a former resident of Limington. These deeds, in addition to the marriage record, indicate that by November 1835 the Davises had moved to Saco.

Joseph H. Davis suddenly stopped painting after 1837, for reasons not known. The birth of his daughter, Elizabeth Ann, in 1838 or 1839 may have been a factor.¹⁰¹ Equally puzzling is the absence of records of any type indicating the nature of his activity during these years.

In February 1840, there is evidence of the resumption of Davis' activity as a land trader in the transfer of a parcel in Vassalboro from his father to him; at that time his residence is given as Vassalboro.¹⁰² One month later he sold a parcel of land in the same town and in the deed for that transaction¹⁰³ his occupation is given as "trader." Some time during the following year he moved to Wilmington, Massachusetts: Deeds dated March 31, 1841 record the purchase of land by Joseph H. Davis of that city¹⁰⁴ and his sale of land to Phillips Academy.¹⁰⁵ By December 10, 1844 he had moved to Newfield. A deed of that date, which gives his occupation as "yeoman," records his purchase of land there, with Newfield as his residence.¹⁰⁶ Many deeds in 1845, 1846 and the first part of 1847 testify to the fact that Davis continued to live in Newfield during this period.¹⁰⁷ The fact that he was also employed in another capacity is indicated by a newspaper announcement of January 13, 1847 signed by Joseph H. Davis as treasurer of the Mount Eagle Manufacturing Company

of Newfield.¹⁰⁸ A final deed giving Newfield as his residence is dated August 7, 1847.¹⁰⁹ He moved back to Saco after that, for there is the record of the purchase of land by Joseph H. Davis of that city on December 2, 1847.¹¹⁰ Interestingly, a deed recorded eight days later dealing with his sale of a parcel of land in Cambridge, while giving Saco as his address, describes his occupation as "manufacturer."¹¹¹ Davis moved next to Morristown, New Jersey, his place of residence on a deed of June 30, 1848 indicating his purchase of land there.¹¹² Many deeds filed between 1848 and 1855 testify to Davis' continued activity as a resident land trader in Morristown.

While Davis never resumed painting, his years in New Jersey were by no means limited to land trading. The April 7, 1853 issue of the Morristown newspaper, *The Jerseyman*, reports that "The Democracy of this Township had a meeting . . . and nominated . . . Assessor — Joseph H. Davis." It went on to state that, "The Ticket formed will of course be elected, as the probabilities are that there will be no organized opposition to it." The Democratic party

in 1853 was the dominant one in Morristown¹¹³ and it can be assumed that he did win election to the post of assessor. Another significant item, this in the December 15, 1853 issue of *The Jerseyman*, is a notice which states, "The subscriber respectively tenders his thanks to the citizens and Fire Companies of Morristown, whose timely and united exertions saved his Paint Mills from total destruction by Fire on the 1st. inst." The notice is signed "Jos. H. Davis, Agent," so that although he may have owned the factory, it is also possible that he was only an employee. Still another type of activity while in New Jersey was his work as an inventor. On August 8, 1854, Joseph H. Davis received patent number 11,476 for his invention of "new and useful improvements in forming the ores of iron into paint by a direct process and of different colors."¹¹⁴

A deed filed in May 1855 indicates that Davis and his wife were still in Morristown,¹¹⁵ but by September of that year they had moved again, for a deed at that time gives Woburn, Massachusetts as his place of residence and his occupation as "gentleman."¹¹⁶ The family continued to live there and in November 1858 evidence appeared of his continuing activity as an inventor. Joseph H. Davis of Woburn received patent number 22,003 on an arrangement "for transmitting power from any prime motor to a propelling gear or wheel." The United States Census of 1860 gives Woburn as his town of residence and his occupation as "inventor." On July 31, 1860 Davis received patent number 29,364 on "certain new and useful improvements in chimney flues and radiators for warming apartments."

The final recorded reference to events in the life of Joseph H. Davis is the listing of his death at Woburn in that town's vital records: "Davis, Joseph H., s. of Joseph and Phebe (b. in Limington, Me.), of disease of liver. May 28, 1865; 53 y. 9m. 18 d."¹¹⁷ He is buried, along with his wife, daughter, father-in-law and mother-in-law, in lot number 305, Cypress Path, Laurel Hill Cemetery, Saco.

This review of the life and work of Joseph H. Davis of Limington, Maine



Photo: Courtesy of The Art Institute of Chicago

Charlotte D. Cheswell; 1837; Watercolor and pencil on paper; 10³/₁₆ x 8¹/₄”; Inscription: “Charlotte D. Cheswell. Her Birth Day. Aged 15. June 19th 1837.”; Private collection.



presents strong evidence to support the conclusion that he was the painter of the water color portraits attributed to "Joseph H. Davis/left hand painter." During the period when these portraits were executed, he lived in towns from which he could readily reach the relatively small area in which the subjects resided. Marital connections between him and many of the subjects, the fact that he was a neighbor of some, and his connection to many others through Bartholomew Van Dame and through the Freewill Baptist Church all lend support to this hypothesis.

His increased activity as a painter from 1835 through 1837 may be explained by his marriage in 1835, and the sudden cessation of his work as an itinerant limner by the arrival of a baby and the resultant necessity not only of staying closer to home but also of increasing his income to support his larger family. A study of recorded deeds reveals that he adopted the role of land trader, following the example of his father, in place of that of portrait painter.

Finally, it might be argued that his later activity as an inventor would — as in the case of Leonardo da Vinci and such nineteenth century portrait painters as Rufus Porter, Samuel F. B. Morse and George Freeman — indeed be in keeping with his earlier creative activity as an artist.

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NOTES

- Frank O. Spinney, "Joseph H. Davis: New Hampshire Artist of the 1830's," *The Magazine Antiques*, October 1943, pp. 177-180.
- Frank O. Spinney, *Primitive Painters in America 1750-1950, An Anthology by Jean Lipman and Alice Winchester*, Books For Libraries Press, New York, 1950, p. 97.
- Letter from G. H. Hall of 64 Promenade Street, Portland, Maine to Mr. and Mrs. Sears, dated September 6, 1959.
- Gail and Norbert H. Savage and Esther Sparks, *Three New England Watercolor Painters*, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1974, p. 22.
- Robert L. Taylor, *Early Families of Limington, Maine*, Private printing, Limington, 1984, pp. 95, 96.
- Walter G. Davis, *The Ancestry of Nicholas Davis 1753-1832 of Limington, Maine*, The Anthoensen Press, Portland, Maine, 1956, p. 1.
- New Hampshire Vital Statistics*, State Archives, Concord, New Hampshire.
- A birth record for Joseph H. Davis has not been found. However, his death record gives the date of death as May 28, 1865 at 53 years 9 months and 18 days, indicating a birth date of August 10, 1811.
- The New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, Vol. LXXXVII, April, 1933, p. 126.
- Taylor, *Early Families of Limington*, p. 95.
- Lora A. W. Underhill, *Descendants of Edward Small of New England*, Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1910, Vol. I, p. 147.
- This record is in the collection of the Maine Historical Society, Portland. The listing is "Joseph Davis and Wife/Emeline Davis Joseph Davis 3d/ Anna Davis John Nelson Davis/Richard Lewis Davis." Since we know that Emeline was his older sister and Anna, John Nelson and Richard Lewis his younger siblings, there is no question but that Joseph Davis 3d was Joseph H. Davis. In the Joseph Davis family bible, now owned by a descendant, Joseph H. is also recorded as Joseph 3d, again to probably indicate that he was the third Joseph in the family living at the time (the other was the son of Robert). The fact that Joseph 3d was actually Joseph H. is confirmed by the death record of the latter which indicates that he was born in Limington to Joseph and Phebe Davis.
- In the census he is listed as Joseph Davis Jr., undoubtedly the result of the census taker's assigning the Jr. designation to a son with the same given name as his father.
- George W. Chamberlain, *Vital Records of Lebanon, Maine to the Year 1892*, Maine Historical Society, 1922-23, Vol. I, p. 135 records that Sally Rogers was born December 6, 1767, Vol. II, p. 180 that she married Amos Chamberlin January 1, 1788 and Vol. III, p. 19 that she died in Lebanon in 1858.
- John Scales, *Colonial Era History of Dover, New Hampshire*, Heritage Books, Inc., 1977, p. 289, 295. Sarah Ann was born April 5, 1812 in Dover to John and Hannah Dame Guppy. On July 5, 1838 she married Samuel H. Henderson of Dover.
- Nothing specific has been learned concerning Gideon Varney. However, the census and other records for Maine and New Hampshire indicate that a great many Varneys lived in Berwick, Maine and the Dover-Somersworth area of New Hampshire.
- The New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, Vol. 20, p. 319, as cited in *Three New England Watercolor Painters*, reports that Sarah Elizabeth was born February 2, 1831 to William and Hannah Clark Varney. However, the daughter of these Varneys was Elizabeth, not Sarah Elizabeth. An early owner of this portrait was a Mrs. Henderson and she may have been a descendant of Sarah Ann Guppy Henderson of Dover.
- Chamberlain, *Vital Records of Lebanon, Maine*, Vol. I, p. 40 lists the baptism of Beky, daughter of Edmund and Comfort Cowell, on October 11, 1801 and Vol. II, p. 42 her marriage on September 15, 1823 to John Cottle Jr.
- The painting is inscribed "Lucy Cottle. Aged 8 years. 1833." The subject is probably the daughter of John and Rebekah Cottle, who were married in 1823.
- Chamberlain, *Vital Records of Lebanon, Maine*, Vol. I, p. 147 and Vol. III, p. 129. Achshah, the daughter of James and Sabra Stanton, was born September 27, 1814 and died August 2, 1836.
- Robert L. Taylor, *Early Families of Limerick Maine*, Private printing, 1984, p. 22. Maria A. Adams and Jacob Cram, both of Limerick, were married September 3, 1815 and both died in Limerick. Maria may have been related to John A. Adams, whose portrait was painted by Davis in 1834, and she was probably the mother or aunt of Maria Jane Cram, subject of this portrait.
- This painting is inscribed "Sally Jenkins, Born Sept 3d 1776. Married/Jan 31st 1805. Painted at Berwick, August 19, 1833./In her 57th Year of her age. (J.H. Davis painter)"
- Wilber D. Spencer, *Burial Inscriptions and Other Data of Burials in Berwick, York County, Maine to the Year 1922*, Sanford, Maine, 1922 records the death of Hannah, wife of Rev. Tebbetts, March 17, 1879 and of Rev. Tebbetts March 12, 1885.
- Charles H. Pope, *The Cheney Genealogy*. Published by Charles H. Pope, Boston, 1897, p. 355. Asa Cheney was born in Wells, Maine and married Theodosia Hilton there in 1826. He was a resident of Somersworth, New Hampshire until 1834.
- New Hampshire Genealogical Record*, Vol. VI, No. 1, January 1909, p. 34. Daniel Willey and Mary Clark, both of Dover, were married December 19, 1824. In 1830, according to the census, he was living in adjacent Somersworth.
- The inscription on this portrait records that it was painted in Great Falls, Somersworth.
- New Hampshire Genealogical Record*, Vol. VI, No. 1, January 1909, p. 36 records the marriage on October 1, 1827 of Daniel Randall, Jun., of Somersworth, to Judith Nason of Dover.
- Charles T. Libby, *The Libby Family in America 1602-1881*, B. Thurston & Co., Portland, Maine, 1882, p. 203. Ira Libby lived his entire life on his father's homestead in Berwick. The painting's inscription indicates that it was done at Beach Ridge, presumably a section of Berwick.
- The obituary of Joseph Davis, father of the artist, reports that he died at 89 years of age and that he "was the oldest member of the Free Church."
- Maine Gazetteer*, p. 405 reports that John and Sarah Davis were among the members of the Freewill Church of Limington.
- G. T. Ridlon, Sr., *Saco Family Settlements and Families*, Published by author, Portland, 1895, p. 234.
- Underhill, *Descendants of Edward Small of New England*, p. 150
- Ibid.*, p. 152.
- Libby, *The Libby Family in America*, p. 122.
- Underhill, *Descendants of Edward Small of New England*, p. 153-155.
- Ibid.*, p. 151.
- Ibid.*, p. 152.
- Rufus Emery, *Genealogical Records of Descendants of John and Anthony Emery of Newbury, Mass. 1590-1890*, Salem, 1890, p. 434.
- Taylor, *Early Families of Limington, Maine*, p. 119.
- Three New England Water Color Painters*, p. 57 reports that Lucinda was the wife of Ellison Brown. The Maine 1830 census shows Ellison Brown living at Raymond, Maine.
- The name of Oliver Fernald appears in the September 14, 1832 issue of the *Kennebunk Gazette* on a list of those with letters at the N. Berwick post office. The Maine 1840 census places an Oliver Fernald in N. Berwick and *Vital Records of Lebanon*, Vol. III, p. 40 records his death in North Berwick on March 30, 1883.
- Elliott C. Cogswell, *History of Nottingham, Deerfield, and Northwood*, Printed by John Clark, Manchester, 1878, p. 557.
- George H. Butler, *Thomas Butler and His Descendants*, Trow's Printing and Bookbinding Co., New York, 1886, p. 108. James Butler was born in Berwick January 17, 1783 and married Hannah



- Grant in 1804. Vital records of Lebanon, Vol. III, p. 15 records his death at Berwick January 8, 1856.
44. William A. Otis, *A Genealogical and Historical Memoir of the Otis Family in America*, Chicago, 1924, p. 182. Daniel Otis married Betsey Jaffrey in 1810 and they settled in Great Falls.
 45. *Vital Records of Lebanon*, Vol. I, p. 87, Vol. II, p. 106 and Vol. III, p. 71 record the birth in Lebanon of Daniel Wentworth to Elijah and Anna Home on May 29, 1809, his marriage to Sarah A. Dore in 1829 and his death in 1876.
 46. Katherine F. Richmond, *John Hayes of Dover, New Hampshire*, Tyngsboro, Mass. 1936, pp. 200, 201. Joseph Hayes was born August 1, 1783 in a part of Barrington, now Strafford. His children were all born in Strafford, including the last two born in 1832 and 1835.
 47. *Ibid.*, p. 199.
 48. *Ibid.*, p. 291. Sarah Clough Guy of Wheelock, Vermont married John Hayes in Dover May 11, 1820. He died in 1829 and she married Elijah Austin August 6, 1835, in Rochester. Since the inscription on the painting refers to her as Sarah C. Hayes we can assume that the portrait was done before her second marriage.
 49. *The New Hampshire Genealogical Record*, Vol. VI, No. 1, January 1909, reports that her parents were married at Rochester.
 50. Arthur H. Locke, *A History and Genealogy of Captain John Locke*, The Rumford Press, Concord, N. H., 1917, p. 102. James Locke, born August 8, 1811, probably in Barnstead, in 1836 married Ellen C. Kimball. In 1835 he was living in Barnstead or Rochester.
 51. Leonard A. Morrison and Stephen P. Sharples, *History of the Kimball Family in America*, Damrell & Upham, Boston, 1897, p. 427. Benjamin Franklin Kimball, brother of Ellen Kimball who married James Locke, was born in Farmington October 5, 1814. He would have been 24 years of age when the portrait was done, which is what the inscription on the painting of "Franklin" Kimball indicates.
 52. Spinney, cited in *Three New England Watercolor Painters*, p. 32 reports that the "Constitution and Records of the Farmington (N.H.) Washingtonian Temperance Society" indicates that Charles B. Roberts was one of the society founders.
 53. *Ibid.*, p. 62. Henry Laurens Roberts, brother of Charles B. Roberts, was born, lived and died in Farmington.
 54. Charles N. Sennett, *Richard Pinkham of Old Dover*, Rumford Printing Co., Concord, N.H., 1908, p. 253. John Langdon Pinkham was born August 16, 1813 in New Durham, New Hampshire, about four miles from Farmington. The 1840 census shows him in Dover, but in 1835 he was probably still living in the Farmington area.
 55. D. Hamilton Hurd, *History of Rockingham and Strafford Counties, New Hampshire*, J. W. Lewis & Co., Philadelphia, 1882, p. 639. Jeremiah Jones, father of the subject, was born in Farmington, December 3, 1791, married Tamson Roberts in 1827 and died at Farmington in 1871.
 56. Frank O. Spinney, "The Method of Joseph H. Davis," *The Magazine Antiques*, August 1944, p. 73. Reports that the Furber girls are "of either Rochester or the neighboring town of Farmington."
 57. The painting is inscribed "Painted by Joseph H. Davis/Trueworthy Chamberlin Esq and Wife/ Painted at Brookfield May 1835"
 58. The painting is inscribed "Adaline Chamberlin. Painted at Brookfield, Maine/1835" Chamberlins lived at Brookfield and at Lebanon, many moving from one town to the other as did Adaline whose portrait was painted in Brookfield but who died in Lebanon.
 59. Death notice of William B. Chamberlin was published in the April 27, 1842 issue of the *Morning Star*.
 60. Locke, *A History and Genealogy of Captain John Locke*, p. 215. Page Bachelder, who was related to James Locke, was born in Deerfield in 1788 and lived and worked there as a farmer until his death in 1879.
 61. Cogswell, *History of Nottingham, Deerfield, and Northwood*, p. 507.
 62. *Ibid.*, p. 677.
 63. *Ibid.*, p. 762.
 64. The inscription on the painting includes "Painted October 12th 1836. Northwood, N.H."
 65. Taylor, *Early Families of Limington*, p. 88.
 66. *Three New England Watercolor Painters*, p. 63.
 67. The 1830 and 1840 New Hampshire census show a Benjamin Winkley residing in Barnstead.
 68. Abigail S. Hall was born in Strafford May 8, 1812 to Samuel and Betsey Stiles Hall.
 69. Spinney, *Joseph H. Davis, New Hampshire Artist of the 1830's*, p. 179, 180. Samuel M. Demerit, brother of John F. Demerit, was born in Barrington (Strafford), where he was a school teacher.
 70. *Three New England Watercolor Painters*, p. 28. Gravestones of Barrington, New Hampshire, Barrington, N.H. Historical Society, 1976, p. 52.
 71. According to the inscription this was "Painted at Strafford/Bow Pond/August 9th/1836."
 72. The inscription includes "Painted at Bow Pond Strafford May 19th 1836"
 73. Spinney, *Joseph H. Davis, New Hampshire Artist of the 1830's*, p. 179. David C. Knowles sold his 40 acre farm in Strafford in 1838.
 74. Inscription on double portrait of John and Abigail Montgomery includes "PAINTED AT - / STRAFFORD RIDGE, MAY 22, 1835" Tamson and Mercy, also subjects, are believed to have been their daughters.
 75. Inscription includes "PAINTED AT STRAFFORD/RIDGE, MARCH 3, 1836"
 76. The inscription on the portrait of Levi B. Tasker includes "Painted/AT STRAFFORD/RIDGE, MARCH 20th, 1836" His wife, Hannah, and son, Charles M., presumably are the other subjects.
 77. Inscription includes "Painted at Strafford, N.H. 1836"
 78. The double portraits of Sylvanus and Mary Jane Foss and of William and Polly Foss and the single portrait of Richard B. Foss all carry inscriptions indicating that they were painted at Strafford in 1836. The single portraits of Cotton H. and Harriet T. Foss were presumably painted in the same town.
 79. Inscription on the double portrait of James and Sarah Tuttle includes "Painted at Strafford/January 25th, 1836" Single portraits of their children, Betsy and Esther, were also painted in January 1836.
 80. Inscription "JOSEPH H. DAVIS/LEFT HAND PAINTER/Bartholomew Van Dame. Painted at Bow Pond. June 27th 1836"
 81. David C. Young and Robert L. Taylor, *Death Notices From Freewill Baptist Publications 1811-1851*, Heritage Books, Inc., 1985, p. 60.
 82. *Genealogy of the Caverly Family, Lowell, Mass.* George M. Elliott, Publisher, 1880., pp. 80, 81.
 83. Cogswell, *History of Nottingham, Deerfield, and Northwood*, p. 777.
 84. *Three New England Watercolor Painters*, p. 63.
 85. Spinney, *Joseph H. Davis, New Hampshire Artist of the 1830's*, p. 179. Reports that the Haleys lived in Epping, N.H.
 86. Jeremiah Avery is recorded at Deerfield in the 1830 and 1840 census.
 87. *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, Vol. V, No. 1, reports that John T. Tilton of Deerfield married Hannah B. Barstow and that he owned two houses there in 1857.
 88. The 1830 census shows Paul Cheswell, the subject of one of the two Cheswell portraits, living in Durham.
 89. Everett S. Stackpole and Winthrop S. Meserve, *History of the Town of Durham, New Hampshire*, Vol. II, p. 291. Hannah Monroe, born May 6, 1761, died in Durham February 8, 1851.
 90. *Three New England Watercolor Painters*, p. 62. Thomas Thompson was a minister in Durham and his wife was the daughter of Captain Joseph Thomas Jr., who was possibly from Durham.
 91. Stackpole and Meserve, *History of the Town of Durham*, pp. 401, 402. Thomas York of Durham married, as his third wife, Harriet Bartlett, after the death of his second wife in 1827. Children of his second marriage included John and Dorinda Maria and Julia Ann was of his third marriage.
 92. These include the single portraits of Sarah, Catherine T. and Emily P. Dockum. *Vital Records of Dover, New Hampshire 1686-1850*, Heritage Books, 1977, p. 258 lists the December 7, 1840 marriage of Catharine Dockham to James M. York.
 93. This is a double portrait of James and Abigail Glidden. The New Hampshire census of 1830 shows him as a resident of Dover.
 94. *Vital Records, Births, State Archives, Concord, N.H.* Laurana Rebecca Little, daughter of Joseph and Rebekah Webster Little was born March 15, 1834 at Hampstead.
 95. Andrew J. Wiggins is the subject. The 1830 New Hampshire census shows an Andrew Wiggins living in Sandwich.
 96. The records of numerous deeds in York County indicate Joseph Davis' activity as a land trader.
 97. Records of the First Church of Biddeford, as cited in the notes of Sybil Noyes.
 98. Ridlon, *Saco Valley Settlements and Families*, p. 1095. Other sources give her age differently.
 99. *Registry of Deeds, Kennebec County*, Book 95, p. 351.
 100. *Ibid.*, Book 95, p. 351.
 101. A birth record has not been found for Elizabeth A. Davis. The U.S. Census for Morristown records her age as 12 years when taken on December 20, 1850, indicating that her year of birth was 1838. According to the inscription on her tombstone, Elizabeth Ann Davis died September 9, 1863 at age 23 years 11 months; if correct, this would mean she was born in October 1839.
 102. *Registry of Deeds, York County*, Book 167, p. 280.
 103. *Registry of Deeds, Kennebec County*, Book 119, p. 457.
 104. *Registry of Deeds, Middlesex County*, Book 400, p. 492
 105. *Ibid.*, Book 400, p. 495.
 106. *Registry of Deeds, York County*, Book 183, p. 207.
 107. *Ibid.*, Book 187, p. 20; Book 180, p. 195; Book 190, p. 79, 80, 269; Book 189, p. 192; Book 192, p. 159; Book 193, p. 167; Book 195, p. 65.
 108. *Maine Free Will Baptist Repository*, January 13, 1847.
 109. *Registry of Deeds, York County*, Book 197, p. 288.
 110. *Ibid.*, Book 198, p. 445.
 111. *Registry of Deeds, Middlesex County*, Book 520, p. 276.
 112. *Registry of Deeds, Morris County*, Book N 4, p. 316.
 113. *History of Morris County, New Jersey*, W. W. Munsell & Co., New York, 1882, pp. 73, 74.
 114. This and his two subsequent patents are recorded in the files of the United States Patent Office, Washington, D.C.
 115. *Registry of Deeds, Morris County*, Book 65, p. 268. This deed conveys two parcels of land from Joseph H. Davis and Elizabeth P., his wife, of the town of Morris, to Joseph Davis, of the town of Woburn, Mass.
 116. *Registry of Deeds, Middlesex County*, Book 468, p. 717.
 117. Edward F. Johnson, *Woburn Record of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Part II*, Woburn, Mass., 1890, p. 51. The same date of death is inscribed in a family bible owned by a descendant.