Revolution Five: Ottawa County Veterans in the American Revolution

By Linda K. Huber

About This Series: This is the third and final installment of a three-part series on the American Revolution and five veterans from that conflict who are buried in Ottawa County.

Part III: Home

Ottawa County is the final resting place of the Revolution Five. Two veterans are buried in Elmore, one in Marblehead, and two in Danbury. What brought the Revolution Five to Ottawa County? The reasons for John Clemons and Benajah Wolcott most likely were quarry work and surveying the land, respectively. For Isaac Ambler, John Green, and Israel Harrington, it may be that family members were already in Ottawa County.

Other more general reasons might be the fact that thousands of people left Connecticut and New England for a new life in the west after the American Revolution ended and established the lands of the Connecticut Western Reserve. Also, perhaps, was the lure of land, new opportunities and just to 'go west young man and grow up with the country'.

Isaac Amber. Died January 31, 1818 at the age of 61. He is buried in Sackett Cemetery, Danbury Township, as are his wife, Nancy, their daughter, Rhena (Ambler) Richards and her husband, Alfred. Isaac married Nancy Skelding and had several children. A reference in the Hardesty 1874 *Illustrated Atlas of Ottawa County* places Ambler in the Danbury Township narrative, "Amongst the early settlers were E. W .Bull, Z. Wildman, Benajah Wolcottt, Thomas Pettybone (sic), Isaac Ambler, Judge Ruggles, Horace Ramsdell, Jacob Ramsdell, John Ramsdell and Valentine Ramsdell." Also listed in that same Atlas is Alfred Richards, husband of Isaac's daughter, indicating Richards came to the Township in 1816-1817 from Canada. An 1810 Stamford, Connecticut census lists Ambler along with James Skelding, father of Ambler's wife, Nancy. No conclusion is readily apparent from these records as to why or when Ambler arrived in the Township.

John Clemons, Jr. Died March 5, 1845 at the age of 81. He is buried in the Clemons Family Cemetery in Marblehead, Ohio, along with his wife and various members of the Clemons family. John and his wife, Abigail, had several children. From information in *The Clemons Family of Hiram, Maine* genealogy, Clemons farmed their land in Hiram then at the age of 54 relocated in 1817 to Sandusky, Ohio. There he quarried stone on Kelly's Island then moved to Ottawa County in 1834 at the age of 71. One of John and Abigail's many children was Alexander Clemons. In the Winter 1954 edition of *Inland Seas,* Merlin Wolcott indicates Alexander came to Sandusky in 1817 and his parents and family joined him in 1819, not 1817. Whenever John actually came to the County, there is extensive history of the significant impact the entire Clemons family had on the development of both Marblehead and the surrounding Peninsula area.

John Green. Died March 30, 1837 at the age of 80. He and his wife, Sarah, and daughter, Diana (Green) Thompson are buried in the Harris-Elmore Cemetery. John and his wife. Sarah, had several children, all born in New York. Their daughter, Diana, married Solomon Thompson. In Green's pension declaration, Solomon states he knew Green for a number of years while living in Virgil, New York. Virgil was part of the Central New York Military Tract, two million acres of land set aside to compensate soldiers of the American Revolution. Lots were drawn and assigned to settlers. It may be that Green acquired land as part of this process. At some point, John moved to Harris Township, Ottawa County, and lived with daughter, Diana, until their deaths on the 'Thompson Farm'.

Israel Harrington. Died September 10, 1825 at the age of 85. He and family are buried in the Harris-Elmore Old Cemetery (aka Harrington Cemetery). Israel married Mehetebel Shippee in 1759 and together had several children. Mehetebel died in 1798 and is buried in Danby, VT. Oldest son, Israel, born in Danby, is referenced in the *First Families of Ottawa County* as settling in Harris Township about 1824 and in 1825 was elected a Trustee. It is unknown whether his father, Israel, was already living in this area or whether he relocated once his son was already living in Harris Township.

Benajah Wolcott. Died August 11, 1832 at the age of 70. He is buried in the Wolcott Family Cemetery, Danbury Township, along with several members of the family. In *Ohio Yankee: Benajah Wolcott, Revolutionary Soldier and Pioneer,* author/historian Merlin Wolcott has provided details on Wolcott's post-Revolutionary War years. Returning home, his father, William, died in 1784 and his mother, Phebe, died four years later in 1788. In 1783, Benajah married Elizabeth Bradley, after which he followed a military career and in 1793 was appointed a Lieutenant at Catskill, New York, serving in Capt. Peter Raymond Light Infantry Company, Brig. Gen. David McCarty Regiment. Together, Benajah and Elizabeth had three children. Leaving the militia in 1796, he settled his family in Danbury, Connecticut.

Of the Revolution Five, Benajah is the only one with definitive information answering the question how and why he came to the area, and that is, the Connecticut Western Reserve. Specifically, Benajah was one of the 13 members of a party to survey the 'Fire Lands', a half million acres of the Reserve to compensate Connecticut residents for property losses caused by British raids during the War. After finishing the survey, Benajah entered into a land contract with Epaphras W. Bull in 1809 for part of the land in Danbury Township where the Wolcott Keeper's House still stands today. At completion of the land contract in 1816, Benajah was deeded the property.

Call to Duty

The Congressional Research Service provides a report to Congress titled "Instances of Use of United States Armed Forces Abroad" for the period 1798 to the then current report publication year. The last report completed June 7, 2023 is 58 pages long and has literally hundreds of instances listed. The first notable deployment was 1798 in an undeclared naval war with France. The United States officially declared war on five occasions.

No records were found that answer why the Revolution Five chose to enter service. No matter the reason. It is important we remember and honor these

five as well as every service person who has chosen to answer that Call to Duty.

The National Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) created a special Patriots Marker for America's 250th anniversary to honor those who served in the American Revolution. The Ottawa County Historical Society applied for and received a grant from the America-250 Ohio Commission to help defray the cost of a DAR Patriot Marker. Since submitting the grant, the Society confirmed Ottawa County has a total of five veterans of the American Revolution buried in the County, i.e., the 'Revolution Five': Isaac Ambler, John Clemons Jr. , John Green, Israel Harrington, and Benajah Wolcott. On May 17, 2025 the DAR Patriot Marker will be dedicated and placed at the Wolcott Family Cemetery in Danbury Township in honor of all five veterans.

The DAR Patriot Marker and this three-part series are the first efforts to honor those who have answered the Call to Duty. A multi-phase project is under discussion to collectively recognize all veterans interred in Ottawa County who served in America's armed forces. To learn more about this multi-phase project and volunteer, please contact Linda Huber at abhawkins57@me.com or David Barth at drb360@gmail.com.

Ottawa County

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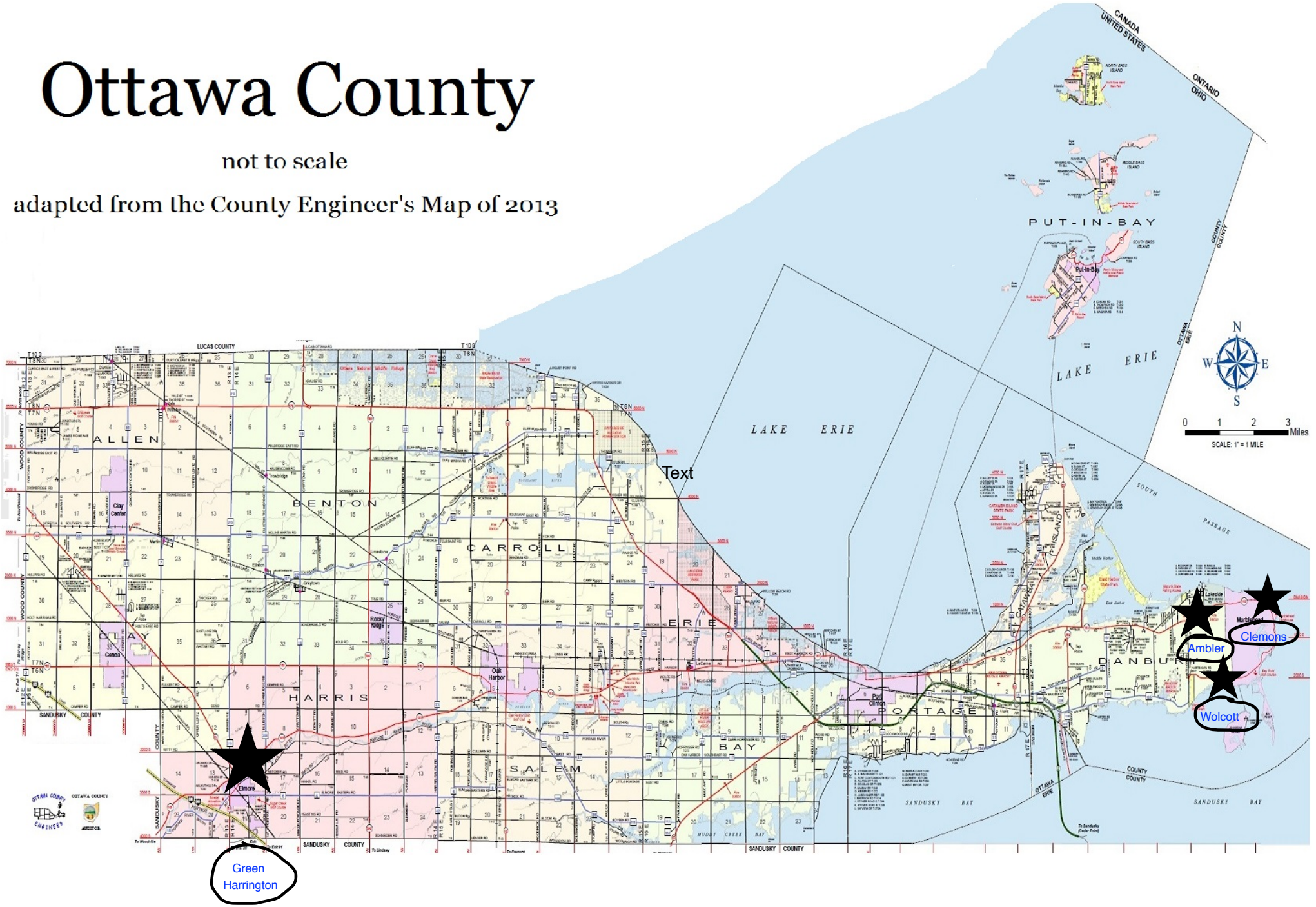
adapted from the County Engineer's Map of 2013