

# FORTNER LINE

The purpose of this note is to report the status of my research into a Fortner line of descent for my wife, Betty P. Olds. For this reason, collateral lines are not emphasized. I'm sharing this information in the hope of encouraging further research, yielding additions, corrections and more accurate genealogy. Please help me improve this.

1. **AARON FORTNER** is the first of this line with whom I can make any connection. His name, dates, and places support the idea that he belongs in the FORTNER/FAULKNER family which lived in southwest Virginia and northern North Carolina. This family is known to have used the name Aron and one Aron Fortner appears in the 1800 tax list of Wythe County, VA.<sup>1</sup> Emmanuel Fortner who was in Warren County, NC, in 1774 and moved to Iredell County in 1798, left a will naming sons Moses, Aaron, John, Ford, Hardy and Francis.<sup>2</sup> An Aaron Fortner was in the 1810 census of Tazewell County, VA.<sup>3</sup> An Aaron Fortner and wife Sally are listed as parents of a Sally Fortner, d. bef. 1850, who was wife of Henry Blankenship, b. ca. 1800.<sup>4</sup> All of these Aarons pre-date ours.

Aaron Fortner appears to have been born about 1814, probably in NC. Several members of the family were married in Wilkes County by 1868.<sup>5</sup> Three marriages for an Aaron Fortner are listed. The most interesting for this note is that of Aaron Fortner and Sally Orand, on 13 Feb. 1831, for whom the bondsman was Jacob Orren.<sup>6</sup>

In the 1840 census of Wilkes County, NC, Alexander (age 20-30), Aron (age 20-30) and Solomon Fortner (age 50-60) are listed consecutively at the end of Bumgarner's district. Aron's listing shows 2 males under 5, 2 males 5-10, 1 male 20-30, 1 female under 5 and 1 female 30-40.<sup>7</sup> Solomon is not in the 1830 census of NC, and since he is not, consider that the younger man, age

---

<sup>1</sup> Photocopied page from "1800 Taxlists of Virginia – List A, Wythe County", sent by Bob Forkner, Albuquerque, NM, letter to Dan W. Olds, 28 April 1980.

<sup>2</sup> Walter V. Ball, Chevy Chase, MD, letter to Dan W. Olds, 7 Nov. 1963

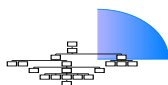
<sup>3</sup> Netti Schreiner Yantis, The 1810 census of Virginia, transcribed and edited (Springfield, VA, 1971), in notes sent by Bob. L. Forkner, Albuquerque, NM, letter to Dan W. Olds, 23 March 1980.

<sup>4</sup> Lee Taylor, Taylor Genealogy, <http://wc.rootsweb.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?db=lataylo6280>

<sup>5</sup> Brent H. Holcomb, Marriages of Wilkes County, North Carolina, 1778 - 1868 (Genealogical Publishing Co., 1983), p. 66

<sup>6</sup> The other two are Aaron Fortner m. Elenor Sharpe McEwen, 1 Dec. 1808, bondsman William Kertee, Jr.; Aaron Fortner m. July Phillips, 25 April 1831, bondsman Elijah Webster. An Aaron Fortner was bondsman for the marriage of Daniel Fortner and Nancy Howel, 31 Dec. 1831.

<sup>7</sup> 1840 Census of the United States, North Carolina, Wilkes County, p. 62. [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), 20 June 2002.



By  
Dan

Draft notes on a FORTNER Line

Printed: 14 August 2002

Dan W. Olds, 313 Pinelake Court, Spartanburg SC 29301

Page 1

20-30, in the 1840 household was Solomon and the 50-60 year-old was no longer considered head of household and thus not named. One IGI listing shows Aron Fortner, b. ca. 1810 in Wilkes County, NC, as son of Efel Fortner.<sup>8</sup> An Ethelred Fortner, age 50-60, is listed in the 1830 census of Wilkes County, NC. However, Aaron Fortner, b. ca. 1798, and son of Etheldred Fortner, is shown by Dan Johnson as marrying a Margaret Holifield.<sup>9</sup>

An Aaron Fortner “(of Sal.)” is named as a purchaser at the 1837 estate of Thomas Baskets in Burke County, NC.<sup>10</sup>

By 1850, an Aron Fortner was living in McDowell County, NC,<sup>11</sup> and I presume this to be the correct family.

Aron Fortner	36, m, Farmer
Sarah Fortner	41, f.
John	19, m
Alexander	16, m
Anna	13, f
W. B.	8, m

Part of the identification is based on the fact that the Mitchell County family remembers that their John Fortner had a brother “Elleck”, part that Sarah “Orange” is listed as mother of Alexander on the death record, and perhaps a little on the fact that one son of John Fortner was named Wm. Bascom Fortner.

I have not positively identified Aaron in later records. The 1860 census of McDowell County<sup>12</sup> lists a John Fortner (not ours), age 44, with wife Elizabeth, with children, but no Aaron. The Aaron Fortner in the 1860 census of Alexander County, P. O. Taylorsville, was age 50 with wife Judith, age 49, and daughter Sarah, age 12. In a bastardy bond of Alexander County, NC, dated Jan. 1867, an Aaron and Sarah Fortner are the bondsmen and the mother is Sarah Fortner. A widowed Aaron Fortner, age 70, with grandson William Fortner, age 13, was living in Little River Township, Alexander County, NC, in 1880.<sup>13</sup> A 49 year-old Sarah Fortner is listed in the family of Thomas Loyd (age 66) and Rachel Loyd (age 69) in the 1860 census of Yancey County, NC ,

<sup>8</sup> [www.familysearch.com](http://www.familysearch.com), search IGI for Aaron Fortner

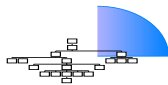
<sup>9</sup> <http://awt.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?db=danjohnsoniv> “The Johnson Pyatt Website” by Dan Johnson

<sup>10</sup> Burke County, NC: Records of Inventories of Sales of Estates, 1832 - 1838, p. 67. The meaning of the “of Sal” designation is unknown to me.

<sup>11</sup> US Federal Census, 1850, McDowell County, NC.

<sup>12</sup> In another note from this census, taken from the actual book in Marion, I also have John Fortune, age 35, wife Milley, age 30, and children.

<sup>13</sup> 1880 United States Census, LDS CD-ROM, c. 2000.



By  
Dan

Draft notes on a FORTNER Line

Printed: 14 August 2002

Dan W. Olds, 313 Pinelake Court, Spartanburg SC 29301

Page 2

family #1068. Possibly she is the same 49 year-old Sarah Fortner as the one listed in the family of John and reported below. I have noted a Sarah Fortner, age 77, in the 1880 census of Washington County, TN, as mother-in-law of John Schafer (age 46) and wife Annie C. (age 27), but have nothing further on them.

Our Fortner family, without Aaron, seems to have moved from Burke to Yancey County in the 1850 - 1860 decade. The Sarah who was John Fortner's mother is surely the one listed with him in the 1860 census of Yancey County. Thus Sarah, John, Alexander and Wm. B. are all found in the Yancey County census of 1860 and were living in what is now Mitchell County

Tentative list of the children of Aaron and Sarah (Orand) Fortner

2. i. John Fortner, b. 25 Dec. 1832, d. 1 April 1900
3. ii. Alexander Fortner, b. ca. 1834
4. iii. Anna Fortner, b. ca. 1837
5. iv. W. B. Fortner, b. ca. 1842

2. **JOHN FORTNER** was born 1 Dec. 1832 and died 1 April 1900. I have talked with several people who knew him and consider the line back to him to be well established.

In 1857, Jackson Stuard sold land in Yancey County, NC, to John Fortner.<sup>14</sup>

In 1860, John Fortner is listed in the census of Yancey County, NC, p. 451, with Post Office at Ledger, taken 11 Aug. 1860.<sup>15</sup> Mitchell County was not created until 1861.

1090	John Fortner	25
	Nancy	24
	Harriet	5, f.
	Wister	2, m.
	Eller	2, f.
	Sarah Fortner	45 [49?], f., can't read or write

A John Fortner was wounded at the Battle of Second Bull Run, Aug. 1862? Bailey gives him as being of Mitchell County<sup>16</sup> and, if so, it must have been this man.

In 1870, his family is listed in the census of Snow Creek Township, Mitchell County, NC (family

---

<sup>14</sup> Yancey County Deed Index.

<sup>15</sup> [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), 26 June 2002

<sup>16</sup> Lloyd R. Bailey, *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley*, Volume II, 1997 (Durham, NC, 1997), article 282, submitted by Lloyd Bailey.



By  
Dan

Draft notes on a FORTNER Line

Printed: 14 August 2002

Dan W. Olds, 313 Pinelake Court, Spartanburg SC 29301

Page 3

#22) as<sup>17</sup>

John Fortner	38, m., b. NC, farmer
Nancy	34, f., b. NC
Harriett	14, f., b. NC
Wister	12, m., b. NC
Eller	10, f., b. NC
Laura	8, f., NC
Mary	6, f., NC
Terressa	2, f., b. NC

In 1880, still in Snow Creek Township, Mitchell County, the family was enumerated as family #10.<sup>18</sup>

John Fortner	54, m., farmer, b. NC, parents b. NC
Nancy	37, f., wife, b. NC, parents b. NC
Mary	14, f., daughter
Trissa	12, f., dau.
Dexter	8, m., son
Gudger	5, m., son
Maggie	4, f., daughter
Bascum	9mo, m., son

John Fortner married Nancy Stewart, b. 9 Nov. 1837, d. 22 July 1922, daughter of Jackson Stewart. Her Mitchell County Death Record identifies her as the widow of John Fortner and daughter of Jack and Nancey Stewart. The informant was G. G. Fortner. John and Nancy are buried in a family cemetery in the Wing community, Mitchell County, NC..

In 1878, Nancy declared herself a free trader. This was a very unusual step but, at that time, a necessary one for married women who wanted to make financial arrangements without a husband's consent. "Nancy Fortner of the age of twenty-one years or upwards, wife of John Fortner of said county of Mitchell with his consent testify & by this signature herto entered herself a free trader from the date of the registration hereof this 29<sup>th</sup> day of November 1878". Both John and Nancy signed by mark.<sup>19</sup>

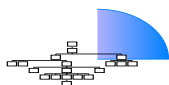
In 1900, Nancy Fortner, b. Nov. 1837, age 62, widowed, was living in Snow Creek Township,

---

<sup>17</sup> 1870 Federal Census, Mitchell County, NC (Toe River Genealogical Society, 1991)

<sup>18</sup> 1880 Federal Census, Mitchell County, NC (Toe Valley Genealogical Society, 1993)

<sup>19</sup> Mitchell County Deed Book a0-I, p. 108.



By  
Dan

Draft notes on a FORTNER Line

Printed: 14 August 2002

Dan W. Olds, 313 Pinelake Court, Spartanburg SC 29301

Page 4

with sons Bascomb, b. Sept. 1879, age 20, and Woodfin, b. 1884, age 16. She had had 11 children of whom 9 were still living.<sup>20</sup>

Ann Poteat Childress<sup>21</sup> told me that when she was young (maybe 12) she was taken to visit an old lady who was sick. A lamp was brought so the old lady could see her well and determine if she (Ann) looked like her (Ann's) mother. It was decided that she did not, a big disappointment to both the lady and to Ann. She is pretty sure this lady was Nancy Fortner. [Note: Ann was born in 1915 and Nancy Fortner died in 1922.]

Children of John and Nancy (Stewart) Fortner<sup>22</sup>

6. i. Harriett Fortner Prichard, b. 18 March 1855
7. ii. Dick Fortner<sup>23</sup>
8. iii. Ella Fortner Conley, b. Feb. 4 1860, d. 5 March 1942
9. iv. Laura Fortner Jarratt, b. 9 Sept. 1862, d. 5 March 1942 (sic, same death as Ella)
10. v. Zeb Fortner, b. 27 June 1864
11. vi. Mary [Etta] Fortner Pittman, b. 5 April 1866
12. vii. Beatrice (Trissie) Fortner Conley, b. 7 June 1868.
13. viii. Dexter Fortner, b. 11 July 1879 [1872]
14. ix. Gudger Fortner, b. 20 June 1873
15. x. Maggie Fortner, b. 9 Feb. 1877, d. 31 Dec. 1892
16. xi. [William] Bascombe Fortner, b. 21 Sept. 1879, d. 24 Dec. 1956
17. xii. Jasper W. Fortner, b. 13 April 1884, d. 6 June 1930

3. Alexander Fortner appears in the 1860 census of Yancey County, NC, and I presume this is the "Ellek" brother of John, that relatives have mentioned to me. He was listed (p. 935, P. O. Burnsville) as age 22 in the family of J. W. Barton, age 40, and Sarah J. S. Barton, age 29, at the end of a list of children, some of whom are too old to belong to Sarah, including an Aaron at age 17. Alexander lived long enough to have a death record in Mitchell County which states that he died 23 Feb. 1915<sup>24</sup>, age about 86 years and that his father was Aaron Fortner and the maiden

---

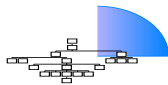
<sup>20</sup> [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), 24 June 2002.

<sup>21</sup> I interviewed her in Spartanburg on 23 Sept. 1979.

<sup>22</sup> The list of twelve children sent by Mrs. John Gudger Fortner, letter to Dan W. Olds, 6 July 1962. "I have the old John Fortner Bible at present. It is the most interesting book I have ever seen. I have spent hours reading it." I don't know why she did not list the names in age order and I have revised that where possible. I have also added a little information in brackets.

<sup>23</sup> There is also a "Miss T." Fortner listed in the Bible. She was born Jan. 4, 1858. (This is not Trissie Fortner, b. June 7, 1868. Mrs. John Gudger Fortner, letter to Dan W. Olds, 6 July 1962. [This compares favorably with the Wister of the 1860 census, but has also been read as "Hester" from the Bible record.]

<sup>24</sup> I need to recheck. Perhaps it should be 23 March.



By  
Dan

Draft notes on a FORTNER Line

Printed: 14 August 2002

Dan W. Olds, 313 Pinelake Court, Spartanburg SC 29301

Page 5

name of his mother was Orange. In the 1870 census of Mitchell County, Snow Creek Township, Household #15, the family was listed as<sup>25</sup>

Alexander Fortner,	33, m. b. NC, farmer
Susan M.	23, f., b. NC
Sarah E.	6, f., b. NC
John D. C.	4, m., b. NC

The family is listed in 1880<sup>26</sup> as

Alexander Fortner	40, b. NC, parents b. NC, Mine Hand
Susan Fortner	39, wife, b. NC, parents b. NC
Sarah E. Fortner	15, dau.
John D. Fortner	13, son
Mary L. Fortner	9, dau.
Carnealus Fortner	6, son
Samuel Fortner	4, son

Alexander Fortner married Susannah Young, b. 1844, daughter of William Young (1805 - 1885) and Margaret Buchanan. He was was in the Civil War, serving in the 16<sup>th</sup> NC Infantry, Company C, and wounded in The Wilderness, VA, 6 May 1864.<sup>27</sup>

The 1900 census of Linville Twp., Mitchell County, NC shows:<sup>28</sup>

Alex Fortner, b. May 1833, age 67, m. 14 years  
Martha, wife, b. Oct. 1848, age 51, m. 14 years, mother of 1 child, none living.

Alexander Fortner is said to have been the father of Ralph, Sid, and Lilly Fortner.<sup>29 30</sup> Ralph E. Fortner, b. Apr. 1880, age 20, is listed in the 1900 census of Yancey county, boarding in the family of William Murphy. Sidney Fortner, b. March 1875, age 25, is listed in the 1900 census of Yancey County, boarding in the family of John H. Edge The wills of Ralph E. Fortner (p. 311)

---

<sup>25</sup> 1870 Federal Census, Mitchell County, NC (Toe Valley Genealogical Society, 1991)

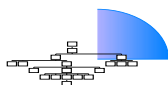
<sup>26</sup> 1880 United States Census, LDS CD-ROM, c. 2000, page 589D, Crabtree Twp., Yancey County, NC.

<sup>27</sup> Daniel Adkins, post on [www.genforum.com](http://www.genforum.com), Fortner forum, 23 Nov. 2000. He also noted that he had heard that Alexander m. (2) a Malinda or Maranda, a step-mother not much talked about by his great-great grandfather, John Coleman Fortner, son of Alex.

<sup>28</sup> ED 98, sh 23, l. 2, Ancestry.com, 25 June 2002

<sup>29</sup> I can no longer find my reference to which family member gave me these names in the early 1960s.

<sup>30</sup> "Dan, I just talked to another family member who is 75 years old. He said that Cole( John) Fortner had a brother named Ralph that lived in Booneford, so YES Ralph was a son of Alexander.He said that Lilly may have married a Fortner but not sure and lived around Bowditch so she could be a sister or sister-in-law not sure on this. He did not remember any of the other names.He also said that he didn't remember hearing anything about Alexander nor his wives." "Bill" Gillespie, e-mail to Dan W. Olds, 27 June 2002.



By  
Dan

Draft notes on a FORTNER Line

Printed:14 August 2002

Dan W. Olds, 313 Pinelake Court, Spartanburg SC 29301

Page 6

and of Mrs. Lucy Ellen Young Fortner (his wife) are in Mitchell County Will Book 2, but I have no notes from them. Lucy Young, born ca. 1874, daughter of William Young and his second wife Martha Greene, married Ralph Fortner.<sup>31</sup>

Children of Alexander and Susannah (Young) Fortner

- i. Sarah E. Fortner, b. ca. 1864
- ii. John D. Coleman Fortner, b. 15 March 1867, d. 1 Oct. 1942, Yancey Co., m. Julia Malissa Silver in 1889. She was the daughter of David and Margaret (Silver) Brinkley, b. 22 April 1870, d. 1 Jan. 1954, Yancey County. They are the great great grandparents of Daniel Adkins.<sup>32</sup> John C. Fortner, age 54, with wife Julia, age 51, is listed in the 1920 census of Yancey County, NC.<sup>33</sup>
- iii. Mary L. Fortner, b. ca. 1871
- iv. Cornelius Fortner, b. ca. 1874
- v. Samuel Fortner, b. ca. 1876

4. Anna Fortner

5. W. B. Fortner, son of Aaron Fortner, was born about 1842. "Baird Fortner, brother of John Fortner, was killed in Civil War, age approx. 20 years. He was always out front and yelling to others 'Come on!'"<sup>34</sup> William B. Fortner of Mitchell County was in Company I of the 29<sup>th</sup> NC Regiment and wounded at Muphreesboro, TN, in Dec. 1862.<sup>35</sup>

William B. Fortner, age 17, is listed as a farm laborer in the family of John S. Sparks, 24, and Elizabeth, 20, in the 1860 census of Yancey County, with Post Office at Spruce Pine.<sup>36</sup>

A Wm. B. Fortner married Mary Wilson in Mitchell County, NC, on 15 April 1864 and then Molton Buchanan married Polly Fortner there on 19 Aug. 1866. The family of Molton Buchanan, age 26, Polly, age 34 (b. Yancey Co.), and Jonathan M., age 1, as listed in the 1870 census of Mitchell County, NC, gives no hint of the Fortner connection.<sup>37</sup>

6. Harriett Fortner Prichard, b. 18 March 1855. In the 1880 census of Mitchell County,

---

<sup>31</sup> Bailey, Lloyd Richard, *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley*, Volume I, 1994, Article 741, submitted by Margaret Garland Timbs of Johnson City, TN

<sup>32</sup> Daniel Adkins, post on [www.genforum.com](http://www.genforum.com), Fortner forum, 23 Nov. 2000.

<sup>33</sup> [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), 26 June 2002.

<sup>34</sup> Mrs. John Gudger Fortner, letter to Dan W. Olds, 6 July 1962.

<sup>35</sup> Lloyd R. Bailey, *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley*, Volume II, 1997 (Durham, NC, 1997), article 39, submitted by Lloyd Bailey.

<sup>36</sup> [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), 26 June 2002.

<sup>37</sup> 1870 Federal Census, Mitchell County, NC (Toe River Genealogical Society, 1991)



By  
Dan

Draft notes on a FORTNER Line

Printed: 14 August 2002

Dan W. Olds, 313 Pinelake Court, Spartanburg SC 29301

Page 7

Adolphus Pritchard, age 33, had a wife named Harriett, age 25, with children George, Finley, and Alice.<sup>38</sup>

7. Dick Fortner, son of John and Nancy (Stewart) Fortner, is probably the one listed in the Bible Record as born in 1858. Joyce Fortner Murphy is a granddaughter and has his name as Westate "Dick" Fortner and his dates as 22 Feb. 1857 - 14 July 1926. He married Nancy Adelaïd "Addie" Wilson and is buried in the Greenhill Cemetery, Waynesville, NC.<sup>39</sup>

The following family is from the 1880 census of Bakersville, Mitchell Co., NC

#26	Wist. T. Fortner	22, farmer
	Adelaide	18, wife
	Mary M.	1, daughter

His family is listed in the 1900 census of Waynesville Township, Haywood County, NC, as:<sup>40</sup>

#337	Wiss T[?]. Fortner	b. Feb. 1857, age 43
	Nancy D[?].	b. Feb. 1864, age 36
	Idar	dau, b. Sept. 1881, age 8
	George W.	son, b. Feb. 1888, age 2
	Bessie M.	Dau, b. Aug. 1890
	Charley	son, b. July, 1892
	John A.	son, b. Feb. 1895, age 5
	Roberta	dau., b. Feb. 1898

On 1902, a W. P. Fortner, age 45, of Waynesville, NC, registered his right to vote and listed John Fortner as the ancestor who was eligible to vote on 1 Jan. 1867.<sup>41</sup>

#### Children of Westate "Dick" and Nancy (Wilson) Fortner<sup>42</sup>

- i. Mary Elizabeth Fortner. Mary Elizabeth Fortner Neil (b. 1881, d. 22 Oct. 1921)
- ii. Ida Fortner. Ida Fortner Neal, b. 1883, d. 1975. M. (1) her sisters husband and (2) William Vaughn.
- iii. Blanche Fortner, later of Franklin, NC. Blanche Fortner Burleson, b. 8 May 1880, d. May 19880. The Social Security Death Index confirms these dates for Blanche Burleson of Franklin, NC.

---

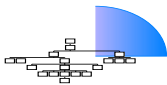
<sup>38</sup> 1880 Federal Census, Mitchell County, NC (Toe Valley Genealogical Society, 1993)

<sup>39</sup> Joyce Fortner Murphy, Draper, VA, e-mail to Dan W. Olds, 24 June 2002.

<sup>40</sup> ED 31, sh. 19, l. 7, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), 26 June 2002

<sup>41</sup> Charles D. Biddix, Permanent Roll of Registered Voters, Haywood County, North Carolina, 1902 (Old Buncombe County Genealogical Society, Asheville, NC, n.d). The so-called "grandfather law" in North Carolina provided that you could not be kept from voting if you showed that an ancestor had the right to vote on 1 Jan. 1867.

<sup>42</sup> Joyce Fortner Murphy, e-mail to Dan W. Olds, 24 June 2002, 1 July 2002, 12 Aug. 2002, and 13 Aug. 2002. There are some discrepancies with the 1900 census record.



By  
Dan

Draft notes on a FORTNER Line

Printed: 14 August 2002

Dan W. Olds, 313 Pinelake Court, Spartanburg SC 29301

Page 8

- iv. Charles Smith Fortner, b. 13 July 1893, d. Dec. 1985
- v. John Arnold Fortner, moved to VA in 1930s with brother Charles and their mother. He is the father of Joyce Fortner Murphy and was born 7 Feb. 1896 and d. 18 Oct. 1967
- vi. Roberta "Bertie" Fortner. Roberta Fortner Penland/Pendleton, b. 1899, d. unknown but lived in Murphy, NC
- vii. Betsy Fortner. Betsy Fortner Tenanbaum/Tenenbane (b. 1899, d. 1930, Portland, OR, in an accident.
- viii. George W. Fortner, later of Birmingham, AL, where he died during brain tumor surgery.
- ix. Edward Fortner, the last child, d. at age 8 while playing outside a mine

8. Ella Fortner Conley, daughter of John and Nancy (Stewart) Fortner, was born on Feb. 4 1860 and died 5 March 1942. This birth date, from Mrs. John G. Fortner, disagrees with the dates (1858 - 1942) on her tombstone in the Conley Cemetery, Beacon Church, near Penland, NC. She married Cyrus Bailey Conley. My wife can remember her great-great grandparents, Cyrus and Ella Conley. For more on this family, see my notes on the Conley Line.

Children of Cyrus Bailey and Ella (Fortner) Conley

- i. Retta Lee Conley, b. 1879, m. (1) John Phillips and (2) John V. Cox
- ii. Grover Cleveland Conley
- iii. Margaret Conley, m. Claude C. Morgan.

9. Laura Fortner Jarratt, daughter of John and Nancy (Stewart) Fortner, was born 9 Sept. 1862 and died 5 March 1942 (sic, same death date as Ella). Larkin Berry Jarrett, b. 1857, married Laura Fortner (b. 1862) on Feb. 5, 1880.<sup>43</sup> The 1880 census of Mitchell County shows the family as:<sup>44</sup>

#113 Larkin Jarrett 21, farmer  
 Laura J 18, wife  
 Isabella 59, widowed mother  
 Nancey E. 24, sister

Children of Larkin Berry and Laura (Fortner) Jarratt<sup>45</sup>

- i. Dock Jarrett
- ii. Cleveland Jarrett

<sup>43</sup> Bailey, Lloyd Richard, The Heritage of the Toe River Valley, Volume I, 1994, Article 347, submitted by Joseph L. Erwin, Arlington, VA.

<sup>44</sup> 1880 Federal Census, Mitchell County, NC (Toe Valley Genealogical Society, 1993)

<sup>45</sup> Listed by Mrs. John Gudger Fortner, letter to Dan W. Olds, 6 July 1962.



By  
 Dan



- iii. Docia Jarrett
- iv. Morris Jarrett
- v. Nan Jarret (Mrs. Barney Huskins)
- vi. Lester Jarrett
- vii. Ellen Jarrett
- viii. Bertie Jarrett
- ix. Nola Jarrett
- x. Maude Jarrett (Mrs. T. L. Robinson)

10. Zeb Fortner, son of John and Nancy (Stewart) Fortner, was born 27 June 1864. "Zebulon Fortner died as a child".<sup>46</sup>

11. Mary [Etta] Fortner Pittman, daughter of John and Nancy (Stewart) Fortner, was born 5 April 1866. She married John Pittman (1 Jan. 1862 - 13 Dec. 1933) and she died 5 July 1942.<sup>47</sup>

Children of John and Mary (Fortner) Pittman<sup>48</sup>

- i. Oscar Pittman
- ii. Homer Pittman
- iii. Clyde Pittman, b. 5 Jan. 1882, d. 13 Nov. 1950, m. Buena Bell Buchanan.<sup>49</sup>

12. Beatrice (Trissie) Fortner Conley, b. 7 June 1868. She died 8 Feb. 1943<sup>50</sup>. Mitchell County marriages include that of James Conley and Tressia Fortner on 23 Jan. 1886. The Mitchell County Death Record of John N. Conley, b. 1897, d. 14 Feb. 1928 at Boonford, NC, lists his parents as James A. Conley, b. Penland, NC, and Rissie Fortner, b. Wing, NC. James A. Conley (9 Mar 1866 - 14 July 1948) and Beatrice Conley (8 June 1867 - 8 Feb. 1943) are buried at Lily Branch Cemetery, Mitchell County, NC.

Children of James A. and Beatrice (Fortner) Conley<sup>51</sup>

- i. Gudger Conley
- ii. George Conley
- iii. Nanny Conley

---

<sup>46</sup> Mae (Mrs. John G.) Fortner to Joyce Murphy, phone conversation, 13 Aug. 2002, then e-mail from Joyce Murphy to Dan Olds, 13 Aug. 2002.

<sup>47</sup>Lloyd R. Bailey, *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley, Volume II*, 1997 (Durham, NC, 1997), article 295, submitted by Alice Davenport Charles.

<sup>48</sup> Mrs. John G. Fortner, letter to Dan W. Olds, 6 July 1962

<sup>49</sup> Lloyd R. Bailey, *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley, Volume II*, 1997 (Durham, NC, 1997), article 295, submitted by Alice Davenport Charles.

<sup>50</sup> Her Mitchell County Death Record lists her parents as John Fortner and Nancy Stewart and husband as James Conley. My note from there says she was born 8 June 1866.

<sup>51</sup> Mrs. John G. Fortner, letter to Dan W. Olds, 6 July 1962



- iv. Eliza Conley m. \_\_\_\_ Huskins
- v. Effie Conley m. \_\_\_\_\_ Willis
- vi. Ed Conley
- vii. Gertie Conley
- viii. Viola Conley
- ix. John Conley. John W. Conley, 22 Jan. 1894 - 14 Feb. 1928, and a WW I soldier, 1918 - 1919, is buried at Lily Branch Cemetery, Mitchell County, NC.
- x. Frank Conley
- xi. Fred Conley

13. Dexter Fortner, son of John and Nancy (Stewart) Fortner, was born 11 July 1879 [actually 1872, according to 1880 and 1900 census records]. He first married Mattie Young and he married (2) Dovie McBee Buchanan. "Dexter Fortner, who lives at Marion, is the only one of the children left."<sup>52</sup>

The 1900 census of Snow Creek Twp, Mitchell County, NC shows:

Dexter Fortner, b. July 1872, age 27, m. 8 years  
 Mattie Fortner, wife, b. Feb. 1870, age 30, 4 children, all living  
 Nannie Fortner, dau., b. July 1893, age 6  
 Hattie Fortner, dau., b. Sept. 1895, age 4  
 Samuel Fortner, son, b. Sept. 1897, age 2

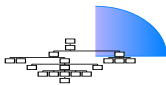
Children of Dexter and Mattie (Young) Buchanan<sup>53 54</sup>

- i. Claude Fortner. Claude Fortner was born April 10, 1902
  - ii. Nan Fortner. Nannie Fortner was born July 12, 1893
  - iii. Hattie Fortner m. \_\_\_\_\_ Swaford. Hattie Fortner was born Sept. 26, 1895
  - iv. Dewey Fortner. McDewey Fortner was born Sept. 1, 1899
  - v. Robert Fortner
  - vi. Geneva Fortner. Jeneva Fortner was born April 28, 1905
  - vii. Sam Fortner. Samuel Fortner was born June 18, 1897
- Children of Dexter and Dovie McBee Buchanan Fortner
- viii. Jack Fortner, killed in WW II
  - ix. Effie Fortner
  - x. Edna Fortner

<sup>52</sup> Tri County News, Spruce Pine, NC, 27 Nov. 1958, in a long article on Retta Conley Phillips Cox.

<sup>53</sup> Mrs. John G. Fortner, letter to Dan W. Olds, 6 July 1962

<sup>54</sup> I have added birthdates from the Fortner Bible, but have not rearranged the order from Mrs. Fortner



By  
 Dan

14. Gudger Fortner, son of John and Nancy (Stewart) Fortner, was born 20 June 1873. The will of G. G. Fortner is in Mitchell County Will Book 2, p. 539, but I have no notes from it. Gudger was for many years the Mayor of Spruce Pine, NC, and also manager of Asheville Mica Company.<sup>55</sup> “A native of Mitchell county, he was born at Wing, on June 20, 1873. He was the son of John Fortner, farmer. At the age of 14 years, he stopped school and went to work as a hand at the Flat Rock mine, said to be one of the largest in the United States. Four years later, at 18, he was made a mine forman and worked in that capacity at mines in Haywood, Jackson<sup>56</sup>, and Macon counties. In 1896 he came to Spruce Pine as a local buyer for the Asheville Mica company, of Asheville; and at this time he is head of that company and is a manager of a large mica house in Spruce Pine. Active in business and civic affairs since coming here, he was elected mayor of Spruce Pine in May, 1931, serving in 1932 and 1933, and was again named to that office in July, 1935, and has served since that time as chief promoter of Spruce Pine interests. He is one of Mitchell county’s leading Democrats. Mr. Fortner has for several years served as a member of the board of trustees at the First Methodist church in Spruce Pine. He is also a member of the local Masonic order. He was married in 1907 to Miss Hattie Ellis, a member of a prominent Mitchell county family. Also active in civic and social affairs, Mrs. Fortner is a member of various local organizations. Two sons are leading Spruce Pine citizens. Frank B. Fortner is engaged in the mining business here. Edward Fortner is head of a local insurance company and cashier of the Bank of Spruce Pine.”<sup>57</sup> The 1920 census of Mitchell County, NC, lists the family of Gudger G. Fortner, age 38, wife Hattie, age 38, with sons Frank, age 17 and Ed, age 15.

Children of Gudger Fortner

- i. Frank Fortner, b. ca. 1903 (per 1920 census)
- ii. Ed Fortner, d. 8 March 1960 (b. ca. 1905, per 1920 census)

15. Maggie Fortner, daughter of John and Nancy (Stewart) Fortner, was born 9 Feb. 1877 and died 31 Dec. 1892

16. [William] Bascombe Fortner, son of John and Nancy (Stewart) Fortner, was born 21 Sept 1879 and died in Mitchell County, NC, 24 Dec. 1956<sup>58</sup>. He married Esther McKinney.<sup>59</sup> She was

---

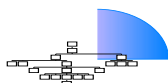
<sup>55</sup> Lloyd R. Bailey, *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley*, Volume II, 1997 (Durham, NC, 1997), article 282, submitted by Claudia C. Foulk. At the time this article was written, Dexter Fortner was the last survivor among the twelve children of John Fortner.

<sup>56</sup> The 1900 census Soundex microfilm for NC shows a G. G. Fortner, age 29, living alone in Savannah Twp., Jackson County, NC.

<sup>57</sup> A newspaper clipping, dated 1939 in pencil, possible from the Spruce Pine paper or the Asheville Citizen.

<sup>58</sup> Mitchell County, NC, Death Records, Book 33 p. 41A.

<sup>59</sup> Mitchell County, NC, Death Records, Book 33 p. 41A.



By  
Dan

Draft notes on a FORTNER Line

Printed: 14 August 2002

Dan W. Olds, 313 Pinelake Court, Spartanburg SC 29301

Page 12

born 19 July 1883 and died 16 Oct. 1934.<sup>60</sup> Bascom and Esther Fortner are buried in Lily Branch Cemetery, Mitchell County, NC. The tombstones do not have the full dates, only the years. Although listed as married, Bascom Fortner, age 39, is listed in the 1920 census of Mitchell County, NC, as boarding with the family of Chas. M. Smith.<sup>61</sup>

- Children of Wm. Bascombe and Esther (McKinney) Fortner<sup>62</sup>
- iii. Cecil Fortner, b. 11 July 1906, d. 16 April 1962, m. Irma Sally
  - iv. James E. Fortner, b. 20 Oct. 1908, m. Elizabeth Hensley<sup>63</sup>. He was living in Asheville, NC, in 1962.
  - v. Zella Fortner, b. 7 Jan. 1911, m. Harry Wilson. Harry Lee Wilson was a son of Ed W. and Mary Louise (Pannell) Wilson.<sup>64</sup>
  - vi. John Gudger Fortner, b. 31 Dec. 1914, m. Mae Freeman
  - vii. Paul Fortner, b. 2 Aug. 1912, m. Lola Wilson

17. Jasper W. Fortner, son of John and Nancy (Stewart) Fortner, was born 13 April 1864 and died 6 June 1930.<sup>65</sup> Woodville<sup>66</sup> Fortner and his wife Missouri F[leming] Fortner (3 July 1888 - Mar. 12, 1972) are buried at Lily Branch Cemetery, Mitchell County, NC. Mrs. Fortner lived on the Fortner home place with her daughter in 1962. I visited her about 1962-63 (apparently with no notes!) and it was not until after I drove away that the generation gap really dawned on me. She was the great-great-great aunt of my daughter.

- Children of Jasper "Wood" and Missouri (Fleming) Fortner<sup>67</sup>
- i. Lola Fortner, b. 16 Feb. 1910, d. 13 Feb. 1932<sup>68</sup>
  - ii. Kitty Fortner (Mrs. Jack Bailey) b. 12 Nov. 1911
  - iii. Edith Fortner (Mrs. Lawrence Ellis), b. 31 May 1914

---

I have been unable to connect to the fifteen year old Emma Fortner listed as niece in the 1880 Mitchell County census record of the family of William (age 38) and wife Harriet (age 36) Young.

There has been a large Fortner family in Madison County, NC. It includes a William B. Fortner

---

<sup>60</sup> Mrs. John G. Fortner, letter to Dan W. Olds, 6 July 1962

<sup>61</sup> [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), 26 June 2002.

<sup>62</sup> Mrs. John G. Fortner, letter to Dan W. Olds, 6 July 1962

<sup>63</sup> This Elizabeth Hensley was a daughter of James B. and Georgia Hampton Hensley. See Lloyd R. Bailey, *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley*, Volume II, 1997 (Durham, NC, 1997), article 365, submitted by Charles M. Hensley.

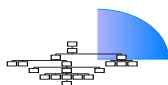
<sup>64</sup> Lloyd R. Bailey, *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley*, Volume II, 1997 (Durham, NC, 1997), article 558, submitted by June H. Wilson.

<sup>65</sup> I have a note from the Death Records of Mitchell County which says that a J. W. Fortner, son of Alex and Nancy Fortner, d. July 6, 1930, at age 45. The informant was Mrs. J. W. Fortner. I am not sure that my notes on this are valid.

<sup>66</sup> The name was given as Woodville by his wife and on his tombstone. In some older records, he is listed as Woodfin, a family name in the area.

<sup>67</sup> Mrs. John G. Fortner, letter to Dan W. Olds, 6 July 1962

<sup>68</sup> Lola, daughter of J. W. and M. E. Fortner, 1910 - 1932, is buried at Lily Branch Cemetery, Mitchell County, NC



By  
Dan

Draft notes on a FORTNER Line

Printed: 14 August 2002

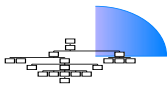
Dan W. Olds, 313 Pinelake Court, Spartanburg SC 29301

Page 13

living in Big Pine Creek Twp., in 1900, b. 1874, age 26, married 5 years. His wife was Dortha, b. June 1878, age 21, who had had 3 children with two living. Only the son Elmer A, b. June 1898, age 1, was living with them.<sup>69</sup> This family is reported in one of the Madison County Heritage books, and his ancestry is given, in story fashion, back to Maryland. I have not connected with him.

---

<sup>69</sup> [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), 24 June 2002.



By  
Dan



Draft notes on a FORTNER Line  
Printed: 14 August 2002  
Dan W. Olds, 313 Pinelake Court, Spartanburg SC 29301

Page 14