PROJECT SCROLL RESEARCH NOTE 2026-24

The founders' families of the Cassopolis lodge of 1846: two Sarah Talbots and a doctor's teacher bound for California

Michael Urbanski ORCID 0009-0006-8183-5828 (https://orcid.org/0009-0006-8183-5828), Project Scroll · Issued 5 November 2026 · Version 1 · doi:10.5281/zenodo.23968675 (https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23968675)

SUMMARY

Gilbert Cope's *Genealogy of the Sharpless Family* (1887), read entry by entry, shows that the four charter members of the Cassopolis lodge of 1846 were bound more tightly than by three marriages to the Beall sisters. Dr. Evan J. Bonine's mother, Sarah Talbot (born near Winchester, Virginia, in 1791), and his wife's mother, Sarah (Talbot) Beall (born in 1804), were aunt and niece: Mrs. Beall was a daughter of Samuel Talbot, the elder brother of Sarah (Talbot) Bonine, who had "removed from Wythe Co., Va., to Centreville, Ind., 1822." Bonine therefore married his first cousin's daughter, and the two founders who married her sisters married into his mother's family. The same genealogy puts the doctor's uncle John Talbot's death "about 1846, at Isaac Bonine's, Cass Co., Mich.," and records that both families had come from Tennessee to Wayne County, Indiana, before Isaac Bonine's family moved to Michigan in 1842. Bonine had read medicine with Dr. J. Prichet of Centreville (Mathews, 1882), whom Cope identifies as the husband of Emily Talbot, the sisters' aunt, and who "went over the plains to California, 1849"; his journals, opening on 26 March 1849, are at the Indiana State Library, and an 1849 overland diary of a "Dr. Bonine" is listed by Townley (1988) at the Fort St. Joseph Museum, Niles.

THE RECORD

1. **Gilbert Cope, *A Genealogy of the Sharpless Family* (Philadelphia, 1887), p. 413, No. 663, Samuel Talbot**

   > *"He was a millwright, carpenter and architect; removed from Wythe Co., Va., to Centreville, Ind., 1822." Among his children: "2312. Sarah, b. 10, 28, 1804; m. Nathaniel Beall."*

   Internet Archive · See the record (https://archive.org/details/genealogyofsharp00cope)

2. **Cope (1887), p. 413, No. 662, John Talbot**

   > *"d. about 1846, at Isaac Bonine's, Cass Co., Mich."*

   Internet Archive · See the record (https://archive.org/details/genealogyofsharp00cope)

3. **Cope (1887), pp. 415–416, No. 670, Sarah Talbot, wife of Isaac Bonine**

   > *"Upon the marriage of Isaac Bonine and Sarah Talbot, both families removed from Tennessee … to Wayne Co., Indiana, near Richmond. In 1842, Isaac Bonine and family removed to Michigan."*

   Internet Archive · See the record (https://archive.org/details/genealogyofsharp00cope)

4. **Cope (1887), p. 413, No. 2315, Martin Sharpless Talbot, son of Samuel**

   > *"d. California, 1853, unmarried; a merchant."*

   Internet Archive · See the record (https://archive.org/details/genealogyofsharp00cope)

5. **Cope (1887), p. 749, No. 2351, Evan J. Bonine**

   > *"m. Centreville, Ind., 8, 8, 1844, Evaline Beall (No. 6843)"*

   Internet Archive · See the record (https://archive.org/details/genealogyofsharp00cope)

6. **Cope (1887), p. 735, No. 2314, Emily Talbot, daughter of Samuel**

   > *"m. Centreville, Ind., 3, 4, 1830, Dr. John Pricket … went over the plains to California, 1849"*

   Internet Archive · See the record (https://archive.org/details/genealogyofsharp00cope)

7. **Alfred Mathews, *History of Cass County, Michigan* (Chicago, 1882), p. 97**

> *"The young man entered the office of Dr. J. Prichet, of Centerville, Ind., and remained there three years and a half. In 1844, he removed to Michigan and settled in Cassopolis."*

Internet Archive · See the record (https://archive.org/details/historyofcasscou00wate)

8. **John Prichet journals, 1849–1851, Indiana State Library, collection L130, box 1, folder 7**

> *"Journals, 1849 March 26-1849 July 22"; the collection describes "his trip from Centreville, Indiana to California by steamboat on the Ohio and Missouri rivers, and overland from Independence, Missouri to California using the Truckee River route."*

Indiana State Library, Rare Books and Manuscripts · See the record (https://archives.isl.lib.in.us/repositories/2/resources/232)

9. **John M. Townley, *The Trail West: A Bibliography-Index to Western American Trails, 1841–1869* (Reno, 1988)**

> *"BONINE, Dr. Diary. Fort St. Joseph Museum, Niles, MI.", indexed to the 1849 overland route by Independence, Fort Hall and the Truckee*

Internet Archive (lending copy) · See the record (https://archive.org/details/trailwestbibliog0000town)

WHAT IT CHANGES

The Cassopolis lodge's founders are shown to be one kin group: the doctor who led it was the first cousin of his wife's mother, so all three founders married to Beall sisters married into the Talbot family of Bonine's mother, and the family's Centreville branch links the lodge to the town of Indiana's Jackson Lodge. The same records name the doctor's medical teacher as the sisters' uncle by marriage and put him on the overland trail in 1849, the year Bonine went west.

LIMITS

The kinship rests on Cope's compiled genealogy of 1887, built partly from family correspondence; it misprints Leander Osborn's father as "Jonah" (p. 734). John Talbot's death date is Cope's "about 1846." The "Dr. Bonine" diary is known only from Townley's listing, which marks it as not seen; its identification with Evan J. Bonine rests on the name, the date and its keeping at Niles. Prichet's route and dates come from the Indiana State Library's description of his journals. The family connections say nothing about what the lodge did.

WHAT WE SEARCHED BEFORE CALLING IT NEW

Cope's Sharpless genealogy read entry by entry (Nos. 151, 662, 663, 670, 2312–2315, 2351, 6843–6847); Mathews (1882) and the *Portrait and Biographical Record* (1893); the Michigan Legislative Biography; the Indiana State Library's finding aids; the Internet Archive's full text for "Bonine" with California, Truckee and diary 1849, and for "Prichet" and "Laban Harter"; the order's histories (*Then and Now*, 1966; *Credo quia absurdum*, 1949; Slopes, 2000). None connects the lodge's founders to one another through the Talbots.

Our standard for calling a finding new is set out in How we research (projectscroll.com/how-we-research/), and how we weigh each kind of record in Scrollsigns (projectscroll.com/scrollsigns/).

"New" means new to print as far as we can tell. If you know of an earlier publication, tell us and we will credit it here and raise the note's version.

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WORKS CITED

Earlier work, catalogues and databases named in this note, besides the records quoted above.

1. E Clampus Vitus, *E Clampus Vitus: Then and Now, 1852–1966* (Stockton, 1966). https://ecv13.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Then_and_Now_1966.pdf

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THE FULL STORY

The finding is set out in context, with the rest of its sources, in A lodge of E Clampus Vitus, in Cassopolis, in 1846 (projectscroll.com/news/e-clampus-vitus-in-cassopolis-1846/). In the discoveries register:

- `cassopolis-1846-two-sarahs` (projectscroll.com/discoveries/#cassopolis-1846-two-sarahs)
- `bonine-trail-1849` (projectscroll.com/discoveries/#bonine-trail-1849)

HOW TO CITE THIS NOTE

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