

NJS Presents**Museums, Archives, Artifacts, and Documents****In this Issue:*****Old Shrewsbury Map Discovered & Interpreted*****By Rick Geffken****DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14713/njs.v4i2.132>**

The Shrewsbury Historical Society recently discovered a fragile old map of Shrewsbury, dated 1849. Hand-drawn, it showed houses, churches, and waterways in the township almost 75 years before the incorporation of the current borough. Why was the crumbling map drawn, and by whom? Is it important; worthy of preservation? Read on to see what has been discovered thus far.

A few years ago, Don and Mary Lea Burden, President and Treasurer of the Shrewsbury Historical Society (SHS), were sorting through the hundreds of documents and artifacts in the Society's Museum. Most everything there was collected and assembled by the late J. Louise Jost, who apparently never missed a print mention of Shrewsbury anywhere. Searching through a dusty museum closet, the Burdens unrolled a fragile old map of Shrewsbury, dated 1849. Hand-drawn, it showed houses, churches, and waterways in the township almost 75 years before the incorporation of the current borough.

SHS member Rick Geffken first thought the map may have had something to do with the creation of Ocean County in 1850, when that county was lopped off of southern Monmouth County. Or, possibly, it was created to outline new boundaries when Ocean Township was separated from Shrewsbury in 1849. Intriguingly, the initials "BWC" on the map might be a clue to its creator. Geffken joined Don Burden (who also happens to be the Mayor of Shrewsbury) and

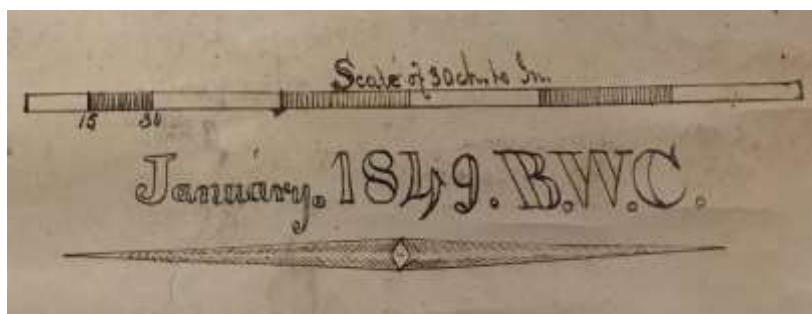
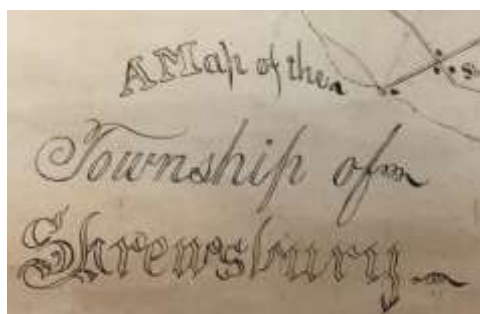
the map on a trip to the offices of the Monmouth County archivist Gary Saretzky in Manalapan. Saretzky suggested that the map was indeed unique and he recommended that the famed Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia assess it.

Burden and Geffken traveled to the Conservation Center in February 2018 to bring the map for evaluation. The expert team there will soon provide the SHS with an estimate of conservation costs, for which Burden hopes future grant money can be obtained. SHS also believes reproductions of this important map might be sold to recoup costs. In any event, the project of map conservation and research into its contextual history, if it does go ahead, could take up to a year. For now, SHS awaits their estimate.



Rick Geffken and Don Burden examine the 1849 map of Shrewsbury with a conservator in Philadelphia.

So what *is* known about the map at this time? The map encompasses an area from the Navesink River at its top or northern part to the Shark River at its southern. The western boundaries are Freehold and Howell; the eastern, the Atlantic Ocean. The inscriptions on “A Map of the Township of Shrewsbury” indicate it was drawn in “January 1849” by someone with the initials “BWC.” Black ink was used for town names, buildings, streams, etc.



Pencil notations, to include the words “present line” and “proposed line” written between Shrewsbury Town (centered on the Four Corners) and Eatontown (incorporated in 1873¹), strongly



¹ Eatontown was incorporated as a township on April 4, 1873. Before its incorporation, Eatontown was a part of Shrewsbury and Ocean Townships. Named for an early gristmill operator Thomas Eaton (1654-1688), it was settled as Eatontown Village in 1730.

indicate the map was created to show demarcations between these municipalities. The Township of Ocean was created by an act of the New Jersey Legislature on February 21, 1849,² from portions of Shrewsbury Township, at which time the newly formed township stretched from the Shrewsbury River to the southern tip of Avon-by-the-Sea. This comports with the scope of the map.

OCEAN TOWNSHIP, MONMOUTH COUNTY.					
1849. Formed from Shrewsbury township.....	73	"	5	"	115
1850. That part of act authorizing the inhabitants of, to vote by ballot at town meetings, of Feb- ruary 24, 1849, repealed.....	74	"	6	"	306

The top of the map is rolled onto a black-painted dowel, attached by brads, and its bottom is attached to a black L-shaped piece of corner molding. The map was likely used for presentations to public audiences, possibly to the New Jersey Legislature itself, illustrating the proposed separation of Shrewsbury and Ocean Township.

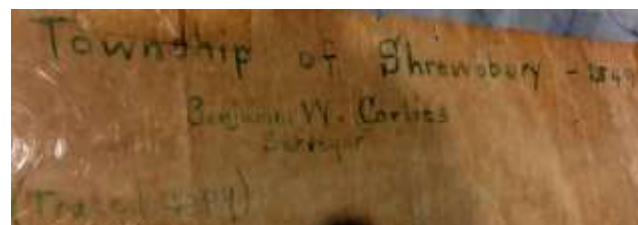
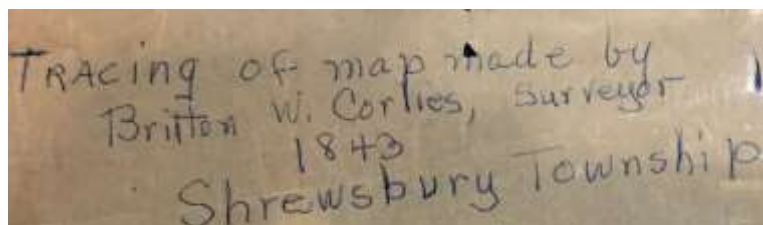


Why was Shrewsbury Township broken up in the mid-19th century? According to [Township of Ocean League of Women Voters](#),

² *Acts of the 73rd Legislature of the State of NJ & the 5th Session Under the New Constitution* (Trenton: Phillips & Boswell, 1849), 115.

By the middle of the 19th century, eastern Monmouth County had outgrown its single township government. The burgeoning populations and developing businesses of the lands incorporated into Shrewsbury a century and a half before required government more responsive to local needs. It included all lands from Sea Bright south to the Shark River and west to encompass Eatontown and Neptune. Growth and development continued. Communities within the incorporated boundaries of the Township of Ocean themselves began to require more parochial representation.

Now, who drew the map? The [Monmouth County Historical Association](#), headquartered at 70 Court Street in Freehold, was incorporated in 1898 to “discover, procure, preserve and perpetuate whatever relates to the history of Monmouth County.” Its museum collections include many old maps, one of which is a “traced copy” of the 1849 map under examination. Two inscriptions on the tracing attribute the map to two different surveyors: Britton W. Corlies in 1843, and Benjamin W. Corlies in 1849. The latter inscription (below, right) appears older. Britton W. Corlies (1789-1840) and Benjamin W. Corlies (1797-1884) were brothers. Since Britton W. Corlies died before the creation of this map in 1849, he could not have drawn it. That inscription must be a mistake. Can we prove that Benjamin Woolley Corlies drew the map?



Benjamin W. Corlies inherited Eatontown property as per his father's April 17, 1811 will (Britton Corlies, Sr. died in Oct 1816).³ We have maps and references confirming B. W. Corlies living in Eatontown: the Lightfoot map of 1851 (below, left); the F.W. Beers map of 1873 (below, right). We also have Corlies family information in genealogical records.⁴

³ *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of NJ, Calendar of Wills, Volume XIII*, 98.

⁴ *The Shark River District, Monmouth County, NJ and Genealogies of Chambers, Corlies, Drummond, Morris, Potter, Shafto, Webley, and White* (Asbury Park, NJ: George C. Martin, 1914), 57.

1850 United States Federal Census for Benj W Corlies

New Jersey > Monmouth > Ocean

Dwelling No.	Family No.	Name	Age	Sex	Race	Occupation	Real Estate	Birthplace
363	382	Benj W. Corlies	53	M		Farmer	20,500	
		Miriam	53	F				
		Henry	29	M		Farmer		
		Tylee W.	27	M		ditto		
		Francis	23	M		"		
		Sarah	20	F				
		Susan	17	F				
		Eliza	13	F				
		Mary Ann	20	F				Ireland

Genealogical information⁹ (below) provides more details of his life, including mention of the 50th Wedding Anniversary celebration he shared with his wife Miriam (Tilton) in 1870. The certificate¹⁰ memorializing the occasion, a Quaker tradition, is now at the Monmouth County Historical Association (seen on the next page of this article).

151. BENJAMIN WOOLLEY CORLIES (Britton, #68; Jacob #14; George #1), was born 9 Feb 1797 at Shrewsbury, NJ. He died at Eatontown, NJ on 24 May 1884, "a Quaker" according to his obituary. Benjamin married at Shrewsbury Friends' Meeting House on 14 12-mo 1820 to Miriam Tilton Williams, daughter of Tylee and Elizabeth (Hartshorne) Williams. Miriam was born 8 Oct 1797 (Bible) and died 11 Oct. 1876.

In 1852, at the September Term of the Monmouth County Orphans Court, Benjamin W. Corlies was appointed guardian of Amy, Clarence and Phebe White, children of William White; Francis Corlies was a surety. In 1853, Benjamin W. Corlies, of Ocean Township was Vice President of the Monmouth County Agricultural Society. In the library collections of the Monmouth County Historical Association, Freehold, NJ, is a certificate which was signed in 1870 at the

50th wedding anniversary of Benjamin and Miriam. Beside each signature of those in attendance is also his/her age on that date.

Children (CORLIES):

- + 271. Henry T., b. 20 Oct 1821, d. 13 May 1910, m. (1) Ellen Vanderveer (2) Mary Hendrickson
- 272. Tylee W., b. 5 Sep 1823, d. 4 Nov 1893, unmarried
- 273. Edward, b. 15 Mar 1826, d. 21 May 1826
- + 274. Francis, b. 25 Jun 1827, d. 24 Apr 1897, m. Martha W. Cooper
- 275. Sarah A., b. 26 Jan 1830, d. 15 May 1896, m. 20 Oct 1852, Ezra Osborn
- 276. Susan H., b. 16 Oct 1832, d. 31 Jan 1856
- 277. Eliza H., b. 14 Sep 1836, m. 19 Jan 1858, Dr. Henry Townsend

(Stillwell, Vol 1/361, 365, Vol 3/294, Vol 5/289, 454, 458; Ellis pp 365, 899; Ramson pp 344, 345; Obituary; 1900 Federal census; MCHA collections)

⁹ Monmouth County Historical Association collections.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Golden Wedding.

Guided west guarded by our God,
 Two pilgrims here together tread.
 Now bright with smiles now wet with tears,
 Life's checkered path for fifty years.
 This is their "golden wedding day,"
 Ring out O bells, your sweetest lay!
 And you, dear friends, give loving cheer,
 To crown their march of fifty years.
 How few of us can blushing bride
 And joyous groom stand side by side,
 We had not known life's hopes or fears
 So long ago as fifty years.
 Their path was woe and pain,
 Ere our first thoughts of life were spun,
 And sick and ever the next morn,
 With golden rings of fifty years.

There's frost upon their hoardest heads,
 The silver signs that nature spreads;
 But from their hearts the life comes,
 Unchecked, unchilled, for fifty years.
 This is their "golden wedding day,"
 Now let us hark our song and pray
 That He whom love their lot endears,
 Whose grace has filled their fifty years,
 May guide them still, and still sustain
 Each cup of bliss or chastening pain;
 May soothe their griefs and ease their care
 Through many more than fifty years!
 And when earth's journey is done
 And life's last goal is hourly won,
 Take them to dwell in their bright spheres,
 Where moments give to fifty years.

The above was written by some of those at the gathering of the grandchildren
 at the meeting of the children of Grand children of Benjamin & Miriam
 & Corlis at the house of their son Francis Corlis at Long Branch N. J. on 11th day the
 14th day of 12th mo at 1870 to celebrate this their fiftieth anniversary of their wed-
 ding which took place at Friends Meeting House at Shrewsbury on the 14th day
 of 12th mo AD 1820. as per Certificate signed by Fifty One of their Friends and
 relatives then and there present of which number there are only ten now
 living. The said Benjamin & Miriam & Corlis being at this time over
 their seventy third year and have present with them at this gathering
 all their children and Grand children now living but Henry Corlis and
 Mary Hindinokens his wife and son Charles D. Tyler & Corlis with Mary
 Francis Corlis and Martha W. Cooper his wife, Sarah Corlis wife of Ezra C.
 Estlin and their children Mary W. Estlin, David Estlin and Susan C.
 Estlin, Eliza H. Corlis wife of Henry Penniman. And at a moment
 of the said gathering we have hereunto set our signatures the day
 and year first above written

- Henry Townsend 40
- Eliza H. Townsend 34
- Francis Corlis 23
- Martha H. Corlis 27
- Wm. H. Corlis 20
- Henry Corlis 47
- Henry H. Corlis 46
- Charles J. Corlis 11 years
- Wm. H. Corlis 70
- Opie & Estlin 27
- Sarah C. Estlin 40 years
- Eliza W. Estlin 17 years
- Frank Estlin 19 years
- Susan C. Estlin 9 years

Six months before he died, perhaps in failing health, Benjamin W. Corlies sold his estate on “the south side of the Eatontown and Sea Shore Turnpike (Broadway)” to Mathew Byrnes in November 1883.¹¹ Corlies likely retained some other real estate to which he moved.

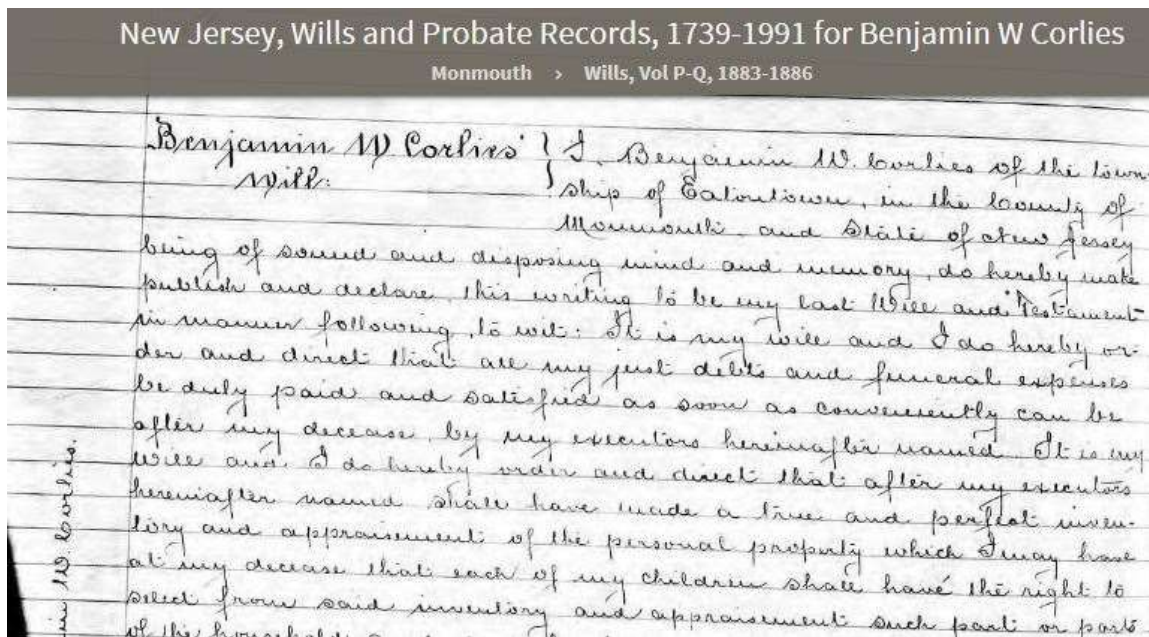
Benjamin W. Corlies } This Indenture, made the 20th day of
 To Mathew Byrnes } the 11th month in the year of our Lord one
 thousand eight hundred and eighty three
 Between Benjamin W. Corlies of the town-
 ship of Eatontown in the County of Monmouth and State of
 New Jersey of the first part, and Mathew Byrnes of the town of
 Ramoth in the County of Burlington and State of New Jersey,
 of the second part, Witnesseth, that the said party of the first
 part, for and in consideration of Fourteen thousand four
 hundred and twenty five Dollars lawful money of the United
 States of America, to him in hand well and truly paid
 by the said party of the second part, at or before the sealing
 and delivery of these presents, the receipt whereof is hereby
 acknowledged and the said party of the first part, therewith
 fully satisfied, contented and pleased hath given, granted,
 bargained, sold, aliened, released, conveyed, confirmed and
 confirmed, and by these presents, doth give, grant, bargain,
 sell, alien, release, convey and confirm to the said
 party of the second part, and to his heirs and assigns
 forever, All that certain farm tract or parcel of land
and premises, hereinafter particularly described, situated,
lying and being in the Township of Eatontown, in the County
of Monmouth and State of New Jersey on the south side of the
Eatontown and Sea Shore Turnpike, beginning at the south
east corner of a tract of land heretofore conveyed by the
aforsaid party of the first part to Daniel W. Safetra,

¹¹ Monmouth County Clerk Records, Deed Book 380, 17.

When Benjamin W. Corlies died of a stroke in May 1884 his obituary¹² (right) incorrectly listed his middle initial as “J.” His wife of fifty-six years, Miriam T. Corlies, predeceased him in 1876. Five of their children were living when Benjamin died. Before his death, the life-long Quaker was an Elder in the Shrewsbury Friends’ Meeting.¹³

Benj. J. Corlies.
 Last Saturday Benjamin J. Corlies, one of the oldest residents of Eatontown, died from the effects of a stroke of paralysis received the previous day. He was widely known, and was a member of the Friends’ Church at Shrewsbury. His funeral was held yesterday, and a large number of friends and relatives followed the remains to the grave. Mr. Corlies was in his 88th year.

Benjamin W. Corlies’s Last Will & Testament is dated February 13, 1882.¹⁴ In it, he bequeaths money and other valuables to his children. No specific mention is made of how he wished to dispose of his real estate, which may be why court-appointed Administrators divided his remaining real estate among his heirs in November 1888.¹⁵



¹² *Red Bank Register*, May 28, 1884.

¹³ *Friends’ Intelligencer*, Vol. XLI, Philadelphia, 1884, 250.

¹⁴ *New Jersey Wills & Probate Records, 1739-1991*, 202.

¹⁵ Monmouth County Surrogates Office map, Case #61-9, Filed January 8, 1890.

Where is the proof that Benjamin W. Corlies drew the 1849 map? The 1880 U.S. Federal Census lists Francis Corlies¹⁶ (Benjamin W. Corlies’s fourth child) as a “Surveyor.” Could this be a case of “Like father, like son?”

1880 United States Federal Census for Francis Corlies

New Jersey > Monmouth > Ocean > 118

House No. Dwelling Family No.	Name	Race	Sex	Age	Birth Mon	Relations	Single Married Widow/D Married C	Occupation	Months U	Sick	Blind Deaf and Idiotic Insane Disabled	Attended	Cannot r	Cannot w	Birthplace	Birthplac	Birthplace
	Elizabeth	W	F	22		Wife	1	Keeping house							U.S.	U.S.	U.S.
	Sarah	W	F	56		Mother	1								U.S.	U.S.	U.S.
	Van Velsor George	W	M	58			1	Imholder Original House							U.S.	U.S.	U.S.
	Elizabeth	W	F	40		Wife	1	Boarding							U.S.	U.S.	U.S.
599 797	Raynor George	W	M	25		Servant		Servant							U.S.	U.S.	U.S.
	Corlies Francis	W	M	52			1	Surveyor							U.S.	U.S.	U.S.

As shown previously in the Monmouth County Historical Association genealogical records, Francis Corlies died in 1897. His obituary¹⁷ reveals what just might be the final proof we need:

Francis Corlies.

Francis Corlies, a native of Eatontown township, and for many years a resident of Long Branch, died at Asbury Park on Sunday. He was about 65 years old. **He was the son of Benjamin W. Corlies, who was one of the foremost surveyors of Monmouth county in his day.** Francis Corlies married Miss Martha Cooper of Long Branch, who died a number of years ago. He leaves no children. He was a member of the legislature from the old second assembly district for three terms. He was for many years secretary and treasurer of the Eatontown and Seashore turnpike company. He was a popular resident of Long Branch but since his health failed he had lived at Asbury Park. His funeral was held yesterday and the burial was at the West Long Branch cemetery.

¹⁶ 1880 U.S. Federal Census, June 26, 1880, 372.

¹⁷ Red Bank Register, April 28, 1897.

As you can see, it notes that Benjamin W. Corlies was “one of the foremost surveyors of Monmouth County in his day.” Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that the “BWC” initials on the January 1849 map refer to Benjamin W. Corlies, who presumably drew it to illustrate the separation of Ocean Township from Shrewsbury Township.

The SHS looks forward to continuing to investigate this map, to hearing from the conservators about the preservation path forward, and, possibly, to making copies accessible for those interested. Stay tuned!

Rick Geffken is an archival historian retired from careers in the computer industry and teaching. He is a member of the Shrewsbury Historical Society as well as the Monmouth County Historical Association. Rick is the former publisher of “The Monmouth Connection,” the newsletter of the Monmouth County Genealogy Society. Historical and genealogical articles he's written have been published in The Howell Times, the on-line Patch blogs, “The Crown” newsletter of Christ Episcopal Church in Shrewsbury, and in many other publications. Rick is a well-regarded speaker at many local and state-wide historical societies and preservation conferences. His most recent book for Arcadia Publishing is Lost Amusement Parks of the North Jersey Shore, widely acclaimed during his current book tour.