
Whitmel Proctor

July 2012

The Periodic Newsletter on Family History and Genealogy of
Whitmel Proctor (1829-1884) and Elizabeth Williams Proctor (1838-1895)

Issue number 005

Katie Braswell Proctor (and her family) identified!

An earlier edition of this humble newsletter (27 August 2011, Number 2) provided information on the short first marriage of Henry Proctor, son of John William and Laura Proctor, and grandson of Whitmel and Betsey Proctor. All I knew then was that Henry married an Edgecombe County girl named Katie Braswell on December 23, 1908, when both were 19 years old. Their marriage registry information showed her father's name to be J. H. Braswell. The only Katie Braswell evident in the Census rolls was the daughter of a John L. Braswell, who in 1900 lived in Nash County.

That's all that was known until the 1910 Census, which contains information collected anywhere from 12 to 18 months after Henry and Katie's marriage. At that time, Henry is listed as a servant (farm laborer) for the William H. and Sarah Bone family, and he is shown as a widower. Katie had clearly died heart-breakingly soon after she was married.

New Information! I have recently found a piece of information which links together with what we already knew to finally prove who this Katie Braswell was, and who her people were — which were vexing and heretofore unanswered questions. This, of course, does not resolve *everything* we would wish to know about Katie and her short married life. So, to try to put everything into perspective, first I will list what we are still trying to uncover.

What We Still Don't Know:

- When did Katie die, and where is she buried?
- What caused her death? Was it in childbirth? Did the child survive?
- Did Katie's family keep any memories, family stories, documents or photos about or of her?
- Where did Henry and Katie live during their short marriage?



The young Henry Proctor.

And Now, Who Was Katie? Early on, we discovered the family of John L. and Margaret Braswell, with their nine children, living in Coopers Township, Nash County, NC in the 1900 Census. One of their daughters was named Katie, born September 1889, which would make her the exact same age as the Katie who married Henry in December 1908.

Almost immediately after that, however, we uncovered Henry and Katie's marriage registry document, which contained two pieces of information that seemed to prove that this couldn't be Henry's Katie. First, Katie was listed in that document as a resident of Edgecombe County, unlike the Nash County Katie found in the 1900 Census. Second, Katie's father's name was given twice on the document as J. H. Braswell, which did not agree with the John L. Braswell from the Census.

But... not too long after that, we found that the John L. and Margaret Braswell family were shown in the 1910 Census as having moved to Edgecombe County. Therefore, this Katie was once more in the running to be Henry's bride.

There were two obvious avenues of research at this point: (1) find some sort of explanation as to why Katie's father was listed as "J. H." or (2) find some incontrovertible link between this Katie's family and Henry. We haven't solved the "J. H." problem yet, but I can now say that ***the link between this Braswell family and Henry has now been made!***

I next searched to find dates, spouse, and other information for the children of the John L. Braswell family. Imagine my surprise (and delight) when I found that in 1903 Katie's older sister Sarah married William Henry Bone, and they settled down to farm in Upper Town Creek Township, Edgecombe County. So what's the link? Look back to the second paragraph of this article: Where was Henry found living and working immediately after Katie died? As we've known almost from the beginning, it was the farm of William Henry and Sarah Bone! Quite possibly that's where Henry and Katie lived after their wedding, and where Henry stayed for some time after her death.

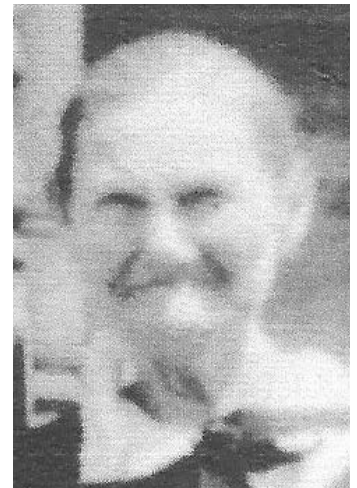
I don't think any further proof is needed to reach the conclusion that Henry's Katie was the daughter of John Lindsey and Margaret Braswell, and the sister of Sarah Braswell Bone. Now it's on to all the other remaining questions!

(See next page for Census and other items found concerning Henry and Katie.)

Acknowledgements: When referring to the research that was done about Katie and Henry, I have more often than not used the inclusive "we" to describe the process, because of the invaluable research that was done at my request and on my behalf all the way through. Huge thanks to the amazing genealogist **Kay Early**, who seems to be able to more find primary sources and documents per hour than anyone I know, and who has always been so generous with her time and expertise. Similar large thanks go to two research professionals and friends, **Traci Thompson** (Local History and Genealogy Librarian, Braswell Memorial Library, Rocky Mount) and **Pam Edmondson** (Local History and Genealogical Specialist, Edgecombe County Memorial Library, Tarboro). Thanks, ladies, for so much of your time and great research leads! Finally, thanks also to **Tommy Colbert**, who also has Braswell research interests, for the excellent suggestions he made for how to unravel the Katie mystery.

1900 Census, Coopers Township, Nash County, NC

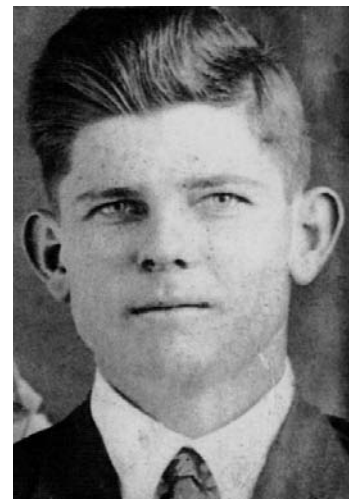
279	282	Braswell John	Head	w	m	Sept	1852	47	m	22
		Margaret A.S.	Wife	w	f	July	1854	45	m	22
		Mary A.	Daughter	w	f	June	1878	21	f	
		Sarah	Daughter	w	f	May	1881	19	f	
		Pattie	Daughter	w	f	July	1883	16	f	
		Lizzie	Daughter	w	f	Mar	1885	15	f	
		Minnie	Daughter	w	f	Jan	1887	13	f	
		Katie	Daughter	w	f	Sept	1889	10	f	
		Noah	Son	w	m	July	1891	8	f	
		Calley	Son	w	m	Apr	1894	6	f	
		John	Son	w	m	Sept	1898	1	f	



Margaret Ann Barnes Braswell (1854-1935), Katie's mother

1910 Census, Cokey (Number 13) Township, Edgecombe County, NC

17	17	Braswell John	Head	m	w	57	m	33
		Margaret	Wife	w	f	53	m	33
		Nora	Daughter	f	w	16	f	
		Callie	Son	m	w	15	f	
		John	Son	m	w	10	f	



Callie Braswell (1894?-1937), Katie's younger brother

1910 Census, Upper Town Creek (Number 14) Township, Edgecombe County, NC

Bene	William H	Head	m	w	38	m	7
	Sarah	Wife	w	f	28	m	7
	Ugene	Son	m	w	5	f	
	Lindsay	Son	m	w	3	f	
	Gladio	Daughter	f	w	2	f	
Proctor	Nervy	Servant	m	w	21	f	

December 1908 Marriage License for Henry Proctor and Katie Braswell (two excerpts)

and ¹¹ Katie Braswell, of ¹² Edgecombe, aged ¹³ 19 years,
 color ¹⁴ white, daughter of ¹⁵ J. H. Braswell and ¹⁶ _____
 united in matrimony ³ Henry Proctor and ⁴ Katie Braswell
 the parties licensed above, on the ²⁹ day of ^{Dec.} 1908, at ⁵ _____
 J. H. Braswell in ⁶ No. 13 _____ Township, in

(Special thanks to my cousin Hallie Alford Michel for bringing Katie to my attention in the first place, and to John Braswell of Castalia, NC for the photo of Margaret Ann Barnes Braswell.)