

Bradner Smith House, 105 N. Bench Street, 1855

Summary



Bradner Smith and Mary A. Baker Smith, both native New Englanders, made their way to Jo Daviess County after living for a time in Chicago. First, they managed a tavern and hotel in Elizabeth, Illinois, then made their home in Galena the rest of their lives.

Bradner and Mary Smith had no children, but they had a rich circle of friends and invited nephews and nieces to live with them. They seemed to have had a good life until near the end. Mary, especially, had a series of health issues as she aged.

After their deaths, there was unfortunate litigation about Bradner Smith's last will and testament.

Bradner Smith, son of Jesse and Elizabeth Ainsley Smith, was born 22 July 1806 in Goshen, Orange County, New York.

Jesse and Elizabeth's children were baptized 5 August 1814 in the First Presbyterian Church of Goshen, New York.

Mary A Baker was born in 1818 in Ryegate, Calendonia County, Vermont.

Bradner Smith and Mary A. Baker married in 1836 Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.

The Smiths moved to Elizabeth in Jo Daviess County, Illinois, and kept a tavern and/or hotel.

They moved to Galena in either 1841 or 1843 (conflicting sources).

Mary Smith was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Galena for over 20 years. Towards the end of her life, she became a Presbyterian.

Bradner Smith bought land in Jo Daviess County, Illinois, 1 July 1848.

In the 1860 Federal census for Galena, "Bradnor" Smith is proprietor of a livery stable. His business is doing very well financially. Living with "Bradnor" and Mary Smith are a nephew and three nieces.

Bradner Smith retired in 1872. He sold his livery stable and entire stock of horses and carriages.

Mary A. Baker Smith died 24 May 1885 in Galena. Bradner Smith followed her two years later, dying 31 March 1887. David Sheean served as executor of Bradner Smith's estate.

Bradner and Mary Smith are buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Galena.