

Frederick Knickerbocker, son of Hugh Knickerbocker and Rachel Schram

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This is an update on the family of Hugh Knickerbocker and Rachel Schram. A report from 2017 discussed Hugh and Rachel in great detail, but failed to resolve the fate of one of their sons, Frederick.

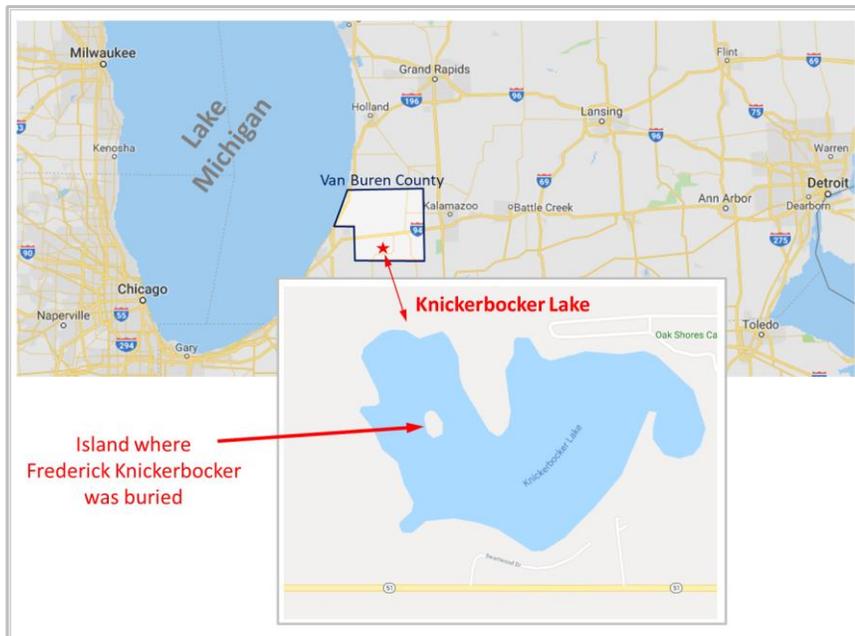
This report focuses on Frederick Knickerbocker.

Unfortunately there are few, if any, living descendants of Frederick Knickerbocker.

Background: Knickerbocker Lake in Van Buren County, Michigan

Van Buren County is on the shores of Lake Michigan.

In the southern portion of the county is Knickerbocker Lake. As we will discuss, the lake was named after an early resident, Frederick Knickerbocker, who owned part of the lake in the early 1800's.



Most of this report is focused on the life and family of Frederick Knickerbocker. However, we need to set the scene by discussing Frederick's brother, William.

Starting Point:
William Knickerbocker, son of Hugh and Rachel

We will start by discussing William Knickerbocker, the son of Hugh and Rachel. It turns out that William's travels can help us connect Franklin to the rest of the family.

William Knickerbocker's life was well documented.

WILLIAM M. KNICKERBOCKER.

The subject of this sketch claims his descent from the Pine Plains branch of the family, where he was born, August 29, 1811, being the twelfth of a family of thirteen children. His father, Hugh Knickerbocker, was born July 30, 1761, and his mother, Rachel Schram, December 1, 1769. The parents were married June 11, 1786. They were of the world's poor, and in consequence William was thrown at an early age upon his own resources. He obtained as good a common-school education as the times in which he lived and his opportunities afforded. In the fall of 1829 he went to the town of Elba, Genesee county, in the same State, and engaged in farming, continuing the business until the fall of 1835, when he came to Van Buren county, Michigan, and located a farm, which he afterwards sold, and purchased his present location on section 23, in the township of Albion. Returning to Genesee county immediately after his last purchase, he was united in marriage to Miss Harriet S. Babcock, August 17, 1836.

We know from the *History of Calhoun County, Michigan* (1877) that William once lived in Elba, Genesee County, New York.

William later moved to Van Buren County, Michigan, and then to Calhoun County, Michigan.

(As discussed in the Hugh Knickerbocker report, William helped to settle the estate of his brother John Knickerbocker, who died at the age of 36 in Elba. John Knickerbocker's death must have been unexpected, since he didn't leave a will. This line of Knickerbockers may have had a health problem that led to sudden death.)

William Knickerbocker moved to Michigan in the fall of 1835. He first moved to Van Buren County.

Here is the description of one of William's purchases in Van Buren County.

WHEREAS *William M. Knickerbocker of Genesee County New York*
has deposited in the **GENERAL LAND OFFICE** of the United States, a Certificate of the REGISTER OF THE LAND OFFICE at *Trompson* whereby it appears that full payment has been made by the said *William M. Knickerbocker*
the West half of the South East quarter of Section twenty, in Township four South of Range fifteen West, in the District of Land, subject to sale at Trompson, Michigan, containing eighty acres.

William Knickerbocker's land

- A) *The west half of the south east quarter of Section 20 in Township four south, of Range 15 west*
- B) *The south east quarter of the south east quarter of Section 20 in Township four south, of Range 15 west*

Here are the descriptions of two lots that William purchased. The significance of the highlighted words will become clear soon.

William Knickerbocker might have purchased additional land in the area. However, we have not bothered to do a rigorous search, because these two properties are sufficient for our purposes.

Original Land Tracts in Van Buren County, Michigan

The book *History of Van Buren County* discusses the history of the original tracts in Van Buren County.

Ranges 15 and 16 West in township Four South were combined, and became the town of Covington.

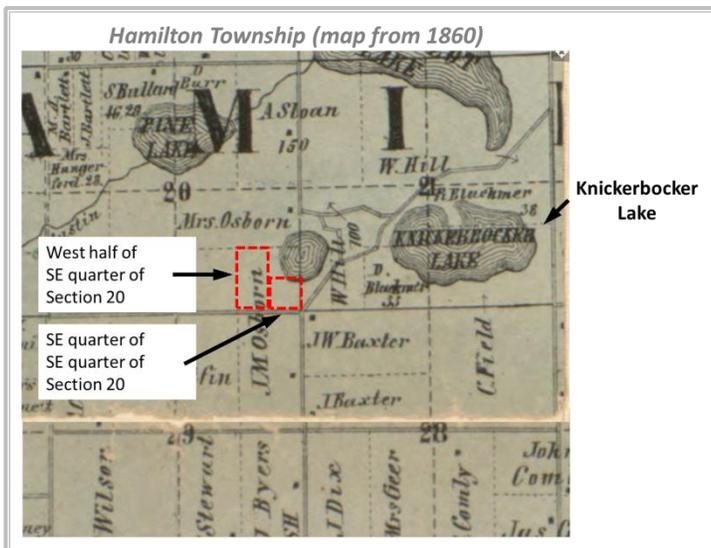
However, the name "Covington" was very short lived. Ranges 15 and 16 separated again, becoming the townships of Hamilton and Keeler.

A History of Van Buren County Michigan (1911)

"All that portion of the county of Van Buren designated by the United States survey as township four south in ranges fifteen and sixteen west, be, and the same is hereby set off and organized into a separate township by the name of Covington; and the first township meeting therein shall be held at the Keelerville postoffice in said township" (Covington, which covered the present townships of Keeler and Hamilton, sank into oblivion, as did its sister township of Clinch, and is not now even a memory save only to a few of the oldest inhabitants of the county).

Shown below is a portion of Hamilton Township from an 1860 map that is available on the Library of Congress website. The map includes the original grid numbers of Range 15 West of township Four South.

(The map shows the names of property owners, as of 1860. There are no Knickerbockers shown on the map, because they had all left the area by 1840.)



This section of the map shows the area around Sections 20, 21, and 28.

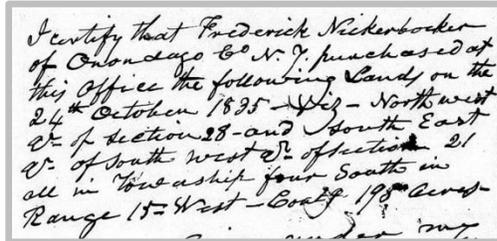
The William Knickerbocker lots in Section 20 are outlined in red.

Notice that Knickerbocker Lake is nearby, in Section 21.

Frederick Knickerbocker of Van Buren County, Michigan

We will now discuss Frederick Knickerbocker of Van Buren County Michigan.

Frederick Knickerbocker apparently bought and sold multiple properties in Michigan. He may have been trying to make money as a land speculator. For our purposes here, we will focus on two specific pieces of property.



I certify that Frederick Knickerbocker of Onondaga Co. N. Y. purchased of this Office the following Land on the 24th October 1835 - Viz - North West 1/4 of Section 28 - and South East 1/4 of South West 1/4 of Section 21 all in Township four South in Range 15 West - East 19th 1/2

Frederick Knickerbocker of Onondaga County, NY, bought two properties in Township 4 South on October 24th, 1835.

The detailed descriptions of the properties are included in this snapshot. We will return to these descriptions on the next page.

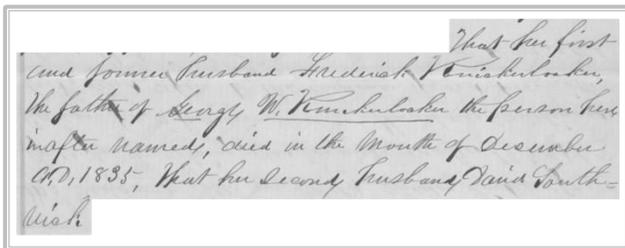
In this book excerpt, Frederick is called “Mr. Knickerbocker.” He died in 1835, before he even finished building his cabin.

Mr. Knickerbocker was buried on the island in the middle of what became known as Knickerbocker Lake.

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE PIONEERS AND THEIR TIMES

The first death was that of Mr. Knickerbocker, who with his family located on the bank of the lake that bears his name in 1835. He died as the result of exhaustion and exposure and the hardships endured, within a few days after he had occupied his unfinished pioneer cabin. The circumstances connected with this death were peculiarly harrowing. Hearing of the matter, Robert Nesbitt and Zebina Stearns went to the premises and found a most distressful scene. The dead man lay in one corner of the floorless, roofless shanty, while the weeping widow and children, gathered around a smouldering fire in another corner of the hut, completed a picture of utter wretchedness. Stearns at once started for Paw Paw, some fourteen miles distant, and in due time returned with Peter Gremps of that village and Elder Junia Warner, who preached the funeral sermon. Mr. Gremps provided the coffin and in accordance with the request of the dying man, he was buried on the island in the lake which bears his name, and there his bones still rest. After her husband's decease, the widow returned to her friends in the east.

When Frederick died, his wife was either pregnant, or had just given birth. Frederick's youngest son was born in Michigan in late 1835 or early 1836.



That the first and former husband Frederick Knickerbocker, the father of George W. Knickerbocker the person hereinafter named, died in the month of December 1835, that his second husband David Southwick

As we will discuss later, one of Frederick's sons died in the Civil War. Frederick's widow filed for a pension. Her application stated that Fred Knickerbocker died in December, 1835.

The lives of the early settlers were tough. In 1829, William Knickerbocker had helped deal with the death of his brother John, at the age of 36. (See the report on Hugh Knickerbocker and Rachel Schram.) William moved to Michigan. Soon thereafter, William helped bury his brother, Frederick, at the age of 31.

Two Frederick Knickerbockers in Onondaga County

We will pause briefly to discuss the fact that there were two different Frederick Knickerbockers who lived in Onondaga County.

Fred #1 was in Spafford, Onondaga County in the 1830 census. The household had a male and female who are both age 20-29. Fred #1 appears to have left Onondaga County before 1840.

We are now confident that Fred #1 is the man who moved to Van Buren County, Michigan.

Fred #2 had married Wealthan Loomis of Cicero, Onondaga County, in 1835. Fred was in Cicero, Onondaga County in the 1840 census. Fred later helped fund the local burial ground, where members of the Loomis family are buried. In 1850, F. Knickerbocker (age 46) was in Chenango, Broome County, with Ann Knickerbocker and Addison Knickerbocker (age 14), plus a teenager named Adelia Loomis (which fits the name of a sister of Wealthan Loomis). In 1850, F. Knickerbocker was a hotel keeper. His birth location is shown as Connecticut.

We can't yet identify Fred #2.

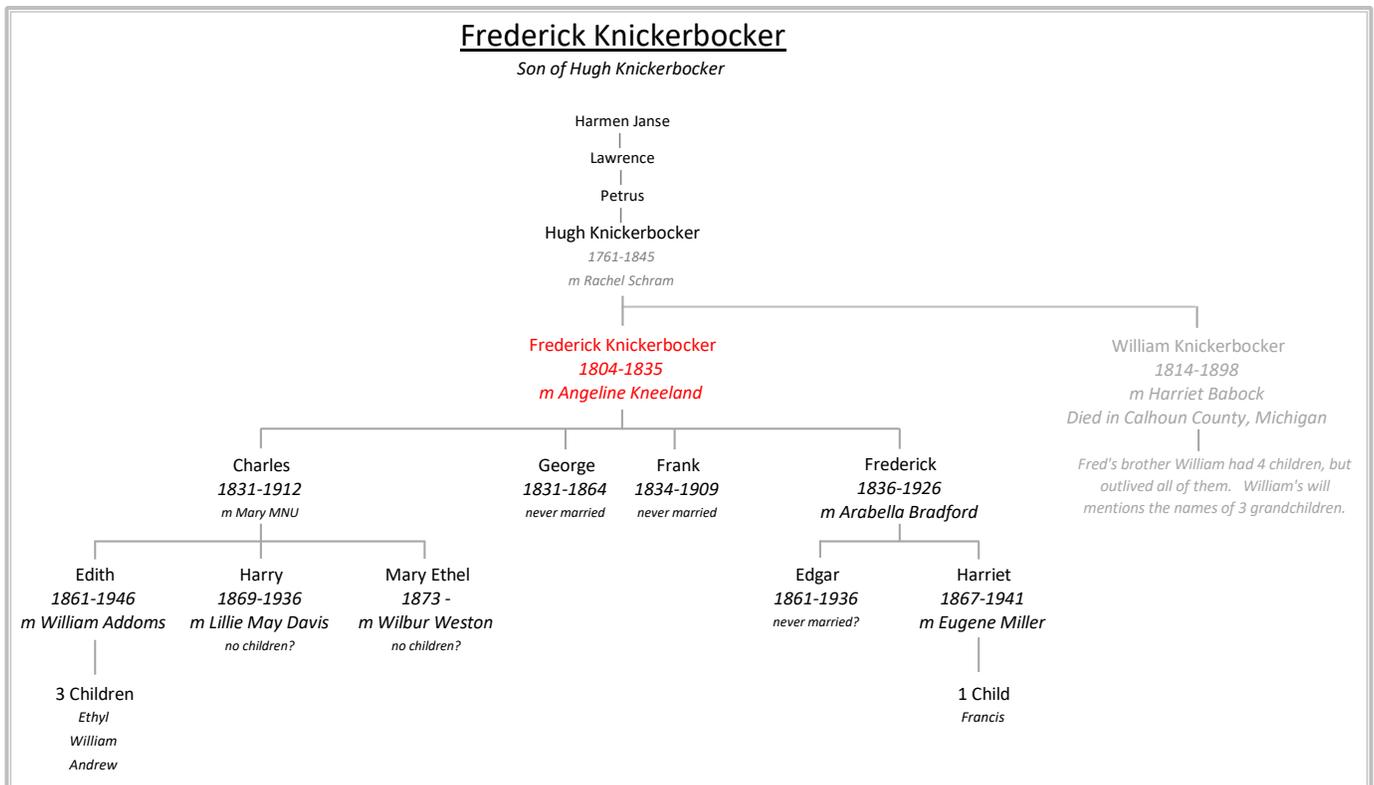
The Descendants of Frederick Knickerbocker

Angeline Southwick, the widow of Frederick Knickerbocker, died in Missouri in 1888, and left a detailed will.

The will listed Angeline's surviving children:

I hereby will and bequeath to my children, Charles H Knickerbocker, Street A Knickerbocker, Edward D Southwick, Hollis B Southwick, Dan W Southwick and Mary C Lane each the sum of one dollar here my already provided for said children to the full support of my invalid and infirm son Francis Knickerbocker and in order that this may be done I have

We will discuss the Knickerbocker children in the order of their deaths.



It appears these family lines had more than their share of poor health and/ or bad luck. (For example, William Knickerbocker buried two of his older brothers, and all four of his own children.)

It appears that there are zero living male Knickerbockers descended from these lines.

In fact, it appears that there are very few living descendants, male or female, of either Frederick Knickerbocker or his brother William.

George Knickerbocker (1832-1864), son of Frederick

George Knickerbocker was a soldier in the Union Army. He was killed during Sherman's march across Georgia.

George died near New Hope Church, just west of Atlanta.

After George's death, his mother Angeline applied for a military pension. Her application is available on Fold3. We have already shown the key excerpt from this application, where Angeline named both of her husbands.

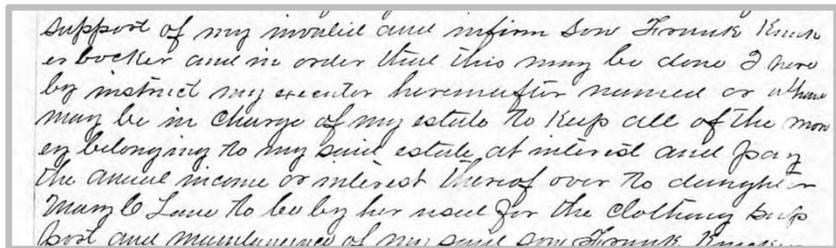
There are no living descendants of George Knickerbocker.

Frank Joseph Knickerbocker (1834-1909), son of Frederick

Frank Joseph Knickerbocker had some sort of serious health problem. He never married.

Frank lived most of his life with his half-sister, Mary (Southwick) Lane.

His mother Angeline set aside money to help Mary care for Frank.



Frank died in 1909 in Milton, Van Buren County, Iowa, where he was living with his half-sister.

There are no living descendants of Frank Joseph Knickerbocker.

Charles Knickerbocker (1831-1912), son of Frederick

Charles Knickerbocker's wife was named Mary. They had three children: Edith, Harry, and Mary Ethyl. Charles Knickerbocker moved to Colorado. He died and was buried in Rio Grande County, Colorado.

Edith Knickerbocker (1861-1946) married William Addoms and remained in the Kansas City area. Edith and William had several children. There might be living descendants of this Addoms line.

Harry Knickerbocker (1869-1936) married Lillie May Davis and remained in the Kansas City area. It appears that Harry and Lillie May never had children. Harry is buried in Kansas City.

Mary Ethyl Knickerbocker (1873 -) married Wilbur Weston. They remained in the Kansas City area. It appears that they never had any children.

Frederick Knickerbocker Jr, (1936-1926), son of Frederick

Frederick Knickerbocker Junior married Arabella Bradford in Wisconsin. They moved to the Kansas City area, and later to Hollywood, California. Frederick died and was buried in Hollywood.

Frederick had two children, Edgar and Harriet.

Edgar Gerard Knickerbocker (1861-1936) apparently never married. He moved with his parents to the Los Angeles area. He lived for a time with the family of his sister, Harriet. He died in Los Angeles.

Harriet Knickerbocker (1867-1941) lived most of her life in California. She married Eugene Miller (1864 -) and had one son, Francis (b 20 Jun 1906). There might be living descendants of this Miller line.
