

JAMES BARTLEY

James was the only child known to have been born to Jared (I) Bartley and Mary Jane Johnston in Ireland. At least he was the only one to survive and emigrate to Canada with his parents. He was born in the parish of Templecarne in County Donegal on March 27, 1838, baptised on April 1, 1838 and died on the family farm in Oxford-on-Rideau Township on June 13, 1842. A small stone marks his grave in the Kemptville Anglican cemetery where he was buried on June 14. The inscription says that he was four years, two months and seventeen days old, exactly the elapsed time in years, months and days from his birth, according to the Templecarne baptismal register, to his death, according to the burial register of St. James Anglican church in Kemptville.

According to the 1842 census of Oxford-on-Rideau township, James and his parents had been in the province for 1 year. In the 1901 census his mother said that they had arrived in 1840 and that may be so but it may also be that sixty years later, when she was very old, that was her best recollection. Or it may be that in round figures, 1840 was her best representation of the actual year of arrival. Still, the 1842 census was recorded in the spring of that year so it can be reasonably taken that they had arrived in the spring of 1841. Accordingly James lived only one year in Canada.

The burial register offers no clue as to the cause of his death and we know nothing more of him. Still, we may assume that in his short life he faced more risks than many who live a normal life span. First there was the fact of being born in Ireland to a family who had little to share with him and who took him out of the country when he was only three years old. Then there was the rigour of an 1841 voyage to North America in a sailing ship. And after surviving that, there was the first year in the new country, in a house which was probably over-filled with other immigrants and located in a forest and swamp environment where insects and fevers were the norm. So it may be that the little fellow did pretty well after all.