

[Eric Weber](#)

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There's another story to tell about something that appears in the photo of Edgar Chandler. On August 23, 1823 Spencer Bartlett and Mary White of Williamsburg published their intention to marry, and carried it out a little later that year. 33 years and three grown children later, they were living in the present MacLeod house at 16 Old Goshen Road when Mary went out to the barn one day and hanged herself. No one knew why. Two years later, Spencer married widow Saloma (Larabee) Hastings of Hatfield. They were both in their mid-fifties then, and seem to have lived happily together. Spencer had for many years bought and sold real estate in addition to doing some small-scale farming, and when his blacksmith son George ran into financial difficulties in the deep recession of 1873, Spencer helped him out by buying his two-story house on Main Street in Williamsburg. It stood where the Lawrence Lashway house is today, beside the driveway into the Highway Department yard and the Lashway Lumber sawmill.

The elderly Bartletts moved in with George, whose blacksmith shop was a little way up the street toward the middle of the village. He must have been in it working or away on some errand when Collins Graves raced by on the morning of May 16, 1874, shouting that the reservoir was coming. If George was in the shop, he cleared out. Spencer and Saloma Bartlett were at home, perhaps at breakfast. Apparently they heard the warning cry, because they fled the house, probably heading for the steep hillside behind it. They were too late. Caught in the avalanche of water, gravel, boulders, trees and the wreckage of upstream buildings, both were killed. Their house was lifted off its foundation, floated a hundred yards into what is now the southeast corner of the Highway Department yard, and came to rest largely intact. Most other houses that had stood within sight of it were demolished -- reduced to scrap lumber and splinters. If the Bartletts had stayed in theirs, they might have survived. Their house is the one at far right in the photo.

