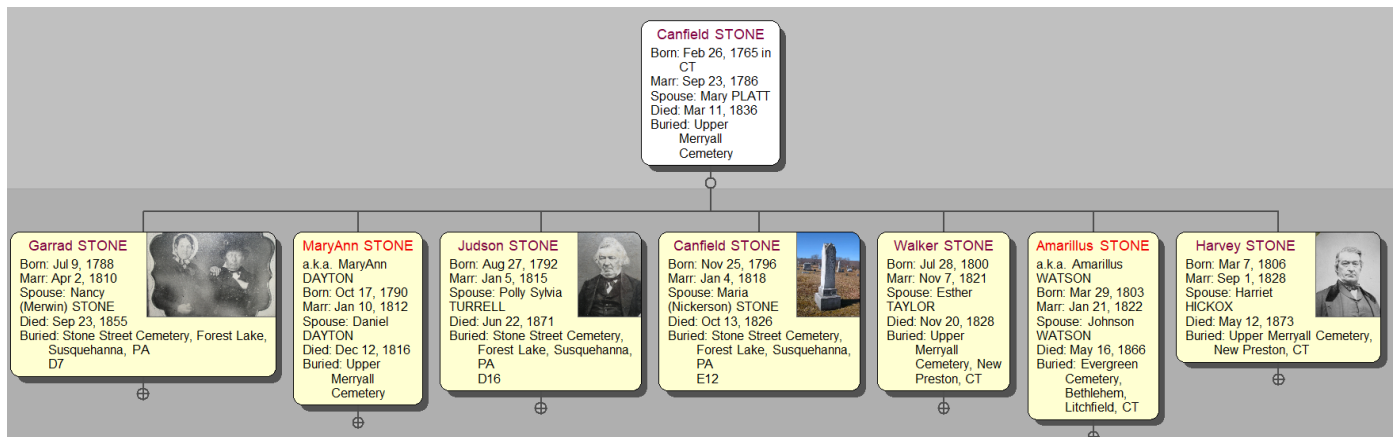


Origins of Stone Reunion and the Family Tree

(program for Stone Reunion 7/26/2025)

Background -

Mary Platt and Canfield Stone lived in New Preston, CT in the late 1700s. They had 7 children and many nieces, nephews, and cousins in the area around New Milford, CT.



In the early 1800s, several young members of the Stone family came to the area around Forest Lake Township in Susquehanna County, PA, including:

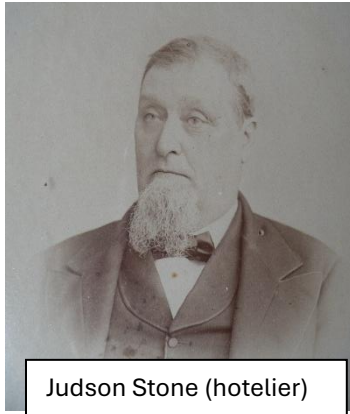
Brothers **Garrad Stone**, **Judson Stone**, **Canfield Stone, Jr.**, and **Esther Taylor Stone** (widow of **Walker Stone**). Additionally, Canfield's nephew **Lory Stone** and niece **Phebe (Stone) Cobb** came to this region. There were many other Stone relatives nearby, but we will focus on this group of close relatives that eventually came to make up the beginning of the Stone Reunion.

We'll now concentrate on the family of **Esther (Taylor) Stone and Walker Stone**. Walker had died in Connecticut in 1828 and his young widow, Esther Taylor, and 4 young children travelled to stay with relatives on Stone Street. Esther briefly remarried but died in 1831. Her 5 children were apparently raised by family members.

One of Esther Taylor and Walker Stone's children, the oldest boy, was named **Judson Stone** (seemingly named for his uncle Judson Stone who lived on Stone Street).

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This Judson Stone married **Betsy Loretta Smith**, whose family owned a farm at the north end of Forest Lake. By 1855 Judson had built a hotel on the farm at a busy intersection (today's Rt 4007 and Forest Lake Rd). By 1872 Judson had built a second, larger building diagonally across the intersection. This property originally housed a wagon shop and blacksmith shop, but eventually became the second "Forest Lake Hotel" at Stone's Corners, shown in the photograph following the map.



1872 Map of Forest Lake Area

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The second hotel survives in 2025. Only the foundation of the original hotel remains. The area became known as “Stone’s Corners” and the sign in the photo below reads:

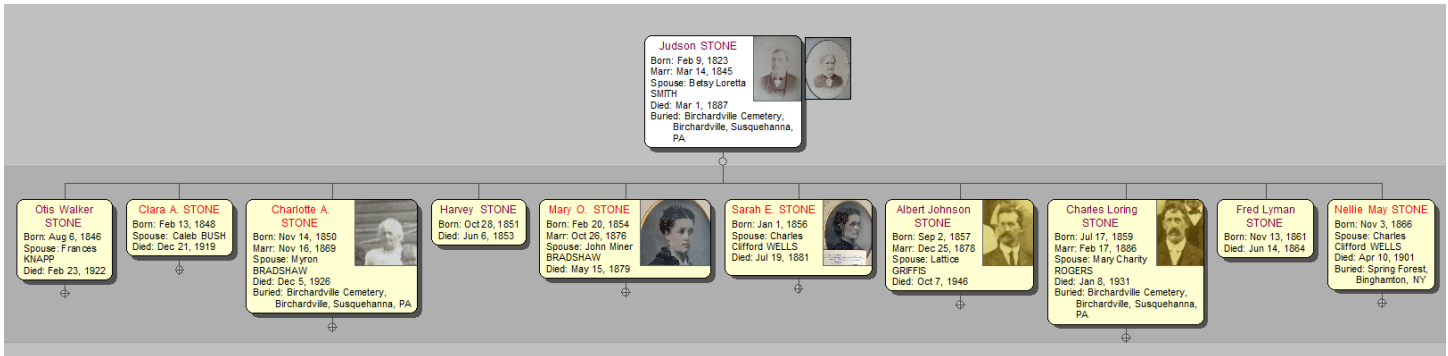
“Forest Lake
HOUSE
J. Stone”



Origins of Stone Reunion and the Family Tree

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Judson Stone (the hotelier) died in 1887, but his wife Betsy lived another 10 years, being cared for at the hotel by their eight surviving children.



At this point the various branches of the Stone family had been in Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania for almost 100 years. The children of Betsy Smith and Judson Stone held a small family picnic at Forest Lake campground on 8/9/1902. There were 34 people attending and they enjoyed themselves so much that they agreed to have an official “Stone Reunion” the following year. In 1903 the Stone Reunion was formally held, and Judson’s and Betsy’s sons **Charles Loring Stone** and **Albert Johnson Stone** were elected the first President and Vice-President of the Stone Reunion. Charles’ and Albert’s niece, **Cora Bradshaw**, was elected Secretary-Treasurer, and their cousin, **Clark Dayton**, was elected Assistant Secretary. The total attendance was reported at 104 people.

The First Family Tree –

1st SFR President, **Charles L. Stone**, conceived the idea of an illustrated tree that would have family names and show how all the branches were connected. Charles and his wife, Mary, convinced their daughter, **Edna Leola Stone** (at age 11), to work on this first family tree. It was presented at the 1904 Reunion with great success and acclaim. (Photo is Edna Stone at age 11)



Origins of Stone Reunion and the Family Tree

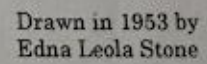
(program for Stone Reunion 7/26/2025)

The 50th Stone Reunion was held at Forest Lake in 1953. In honor of the occasion, **Miss Edna Leola Stone** presented a larger, more complete, drawing of the Stone Family Tree. The group awarded Miss Stone \$10 for expenses in making the tree. (Photo is Edna Stone on the right, with her sister Lillian Griffis at left at the Reunion.) This family tree was duplicated, and a copy is included in G. Richard Handrick's *Descendants of Canfield and Mary (Platt) Stone of New Preston, Connecticut*, as shown on the next page. Several of us here today in 2025 have our names on this family tree hand-drawn by Edna Stone.



(program for Stone Reunion 7/26/2025)

(program for Stone Reunion 7/26/2025)



Origins of Stone Reunion and the Family Tree

(program for Stone Reunion 7/26/2025)

In 1977, Reunion minutes indicate that because there was no more room on the old family tree, **Miss Edna Stone** (at age 84) had created a new, 3-panel family tree. The minutes further indicate that Miss Stone had only missed one Stone Reunion, and her older sister, **Lillian (Stone) Griffis**, had never missed a Reunion. Dayton Birchard had made a durable wooden frame for the new family tree. There is also mention of Dick Handrick submitting typewritten labels with colored edges for the tree. This tree was then formally unveiled at the 75th Reunion in 1978, and this is the tree on display here today.

In 1982 the 79th Stone Reunion was held, and **Miss Edna Stone** was asked to provide some remarks about the beginnings of the Stone Reunion. Miss Stone was then 89 years old. Edna Stone attended one more Reunion in 1983, and died in 1984 at the age of 91. In retrospect, her father was the first President of the Stone Reunion, her mother Mary (Rogers) Stone wrote the words for the “Stone Reunion Day” song, and Edna gave us three versions of the Stone Family Tree.

Following are Edna Leola Stone’s remarks in 1982.

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT THE START OF THE STONE REUNION

By Edna L. Stone (1893-1984)

Let’s go back in time to before there was even what later became known as “Stone’s Corners.” At that site there was once a log cabin belonging to a family by the name of Smith, and in that family a daughter by the name of Betsy. Which explains why Judson Stone came to that location, as he later married Betsy and later built a home there.

Just a few feet from the site of the Smith log cabin, Judson Stone built a rather large and imposing hotel. At that time many cattlemen used to travel through the country buying up cattle and other stock, and this made a convenient place to stop over, where roads to the east, west, and south crossed, or joined—

Origins of Stone Reunion and the Family Tree

(program for Stone Reunion 7/26/2025)

hence the location became known as “Stone’s Corners.” As a child, I was much impressed with the large, long dining room and the large pantry with broad shelf and its door at shelf level that opened into the dining room for the serving of meals from the big kitchen.

Another feature of the hotel was its ballroom which had a “spring floor” which moved up and down with the rhythm of the dancers. There was a platform for the musicians at one side.

Judson and Betsy had several children. Their first son, Harvey Stone, died in infancy, in 1853. Another son, Fred, died eleven years later, but their other eight children grew up and married. Otis Stone married Frances Knapp, Albert Stone married Lattice Griffis, Mary O. Stone married John Bradshaw, Charles Stone married Mary Rogers, Sarah Stone was married to Charles Wells, Clara Stone to Caleb Bush, Charlotte Stone to Myron Bradshaw, and Nellie Stone to Charles Wells.

The way the family tree came about, my father, Charles Stone, told me, “They speak about one’s “family tree,” can’t you draw a diagram that would suggest the branching of a tree, and put the names on the branches? So I tried it out. It remains that crude first drawing, but we thought it seemed better than just printed words. It explained the relationships.

At the Stone Hotel an ell had been built at right angles to the main part of the hotel; that is where Betsy lived after Judson died.

After he died, their children adopted the custom of getting together for New Year’s dinner each year with the object of each contributing to their mother’s living expenses for the year, for as long as she lived. The place was no longer run as a hotel, but Otis and his wife and son Lamont lived there, and Otis ran the farm, which at first was rather extensive.

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When my father was young, he was bound out, as it was called, to an uncle. He had to work very hard and early and late. It sounded to me as though he was almost like a slave. If anyone here knows about this being “bound out,” I wish you would tell me about it later. I believe it was binding until the young person was twenty-one years of age.

When Charlotte Stone married Myron Bradshaw, they moved to Binghamton, but they bought a lot at Forest Lake and came there to camp in the summer. The first summer they lived in a tent while building their cottage. Later, when our reunions became larger, they were held at their cottage and tent. They invited many people to visit them. One summer when “Aunt Flora Watson,” as everyone called her, came out from Connecticut, my father became much interested in finding out about our relatives in the New England states, and as that interest widened, it took in more and more territory, even to the Midwest and to California.

He was especially anxious that the young people become interested—not just in having a big meal, but to get to have a sort of pride in relationship and family. I am glad to see that there is a committee who meets with the young people. I hope that in addition to helping them to be entertained, they can also manage to get them to have a feeling of “belonging” and a family pride in being a part of the Stone Reunion.

(Miss Edna Leola Stone is buried at the Birchardville Cemetery near her parents and grandparents, and the Stone Reunion is indebted to her for her years of service to her family and the Reunion.)