

**Charlotte Bray** was the daughter of Freeman (1811 Canada - 1895) and Caroline (Kilbourne) (1811 Canada - 1895) Bray who settled in "Hamilton," now Okemos, Ingham County, Michigan in 1839. "Pioneer Freeman Bray platted the village in 1841, giving it the name of Hamilton.", according to local Okemos historian Ruth Stillman. Thus, Freeman Bray is the "Founder" of Okemos. Freeman and Caroline both died in 1895 and were buried Riverside Cemetery, also called "Old Okemos Cemetery", Okemos.



Charlotte, born 10 December 1842 in Okemos, was one of six Bray children raised in the Okemos area. Charlotte, along with Mary Turner and three other area children were the first students in Okemos. Their teacher was Miss Samantha Worden.



Quoting from "How Okemos Began" by Ruth Stillman, "About two miles east (across from the Crest Drive-In Theater) was the cooper shop of Daniel Youngs where barrels were made (pictured)...and it was in this same log building the first school was kept in 1844 by Miss Samantha Worden. She had five pupils and received one dollar per week salary and probably her keep. Among her pupils was the aforementioned Mary Turner and Charlotte Bray who walked the distance to and from school." Walking to school in 1844 was not taken lightly in those early pioneer days. Perils faced by Charlotte and Mary were vividly described in an incident that befell Mrs.

Barnes on the walking trail that years later became Okemos Road. Again, quoting from Ruth Stillman, "There was only a rough, stump-strewn trail through the dense woods between the Marsh and Barnes Homes and wild deer, bears and wolves were a common sight by day and sound by night, oft-times a real nuisance as well. The story is told that Mrs. Barnes started out to go to the Marsh's to spend the day sewing. A short distance from their house she saw wolves slinking alongside the path behind the undergrowth. She began to run and ran all the way over the rough trail with the wolves keeping pace with her. One can imagine her relief on reaching the neighbor's house." Charlotte was just 2 years old when she started school. Imagine sending your

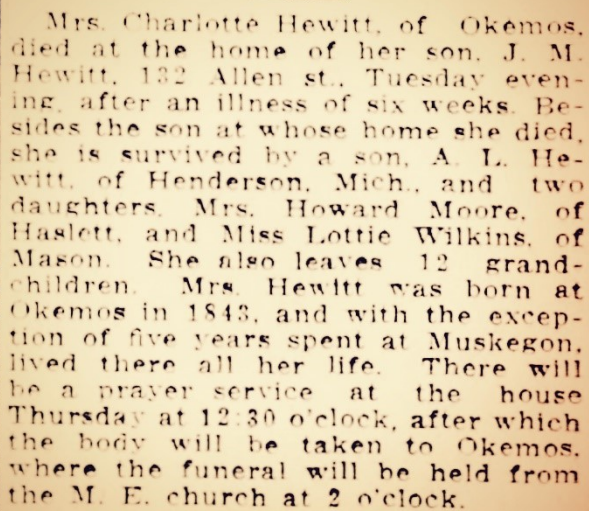
2-year-old off to school thru the wooded paths with bears and wolves known to be in the area. She attended the local school up to probably the 8th grade in 1856 at age 13.

Historian note: 8th grade of yesteryear was not like today. Students went through "forms" rather than grades and could start at literally any age to begin the climb up through forms. Charlotte probably started at age 2 but progressed right through the form or grade levels. I gave 1856 as an arbitrary year since the 1860 census did not list her as a student nor "in school."

Charlotte married John P. Hewitt, 24 April 1862, Ingham County. Together, they had 4 children, although census only counts 3; Richard "Archie", J. Merritt, Edith and Lottie. John, born 8 March 1838, New York, was a successful farmer in Alaiendon Township, Ingham County. He died 31 October 1902, Ingham County.

Charlotte died 28 April 1915 in the home of her son Merritt, Lansing, Ingham County. She was interred with husband John, Leek

[Lansing State Journal, April 28, 1915](#)



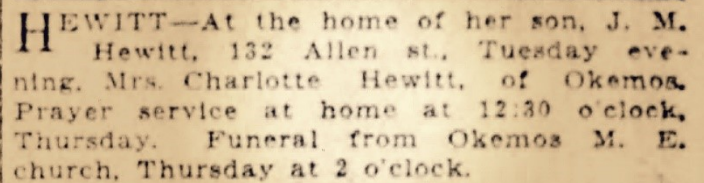
Mrs. Charlotte Hewitt, of Okemos, died at the home of her son, J. M. Hewitt, 132 Allen st., Tuesday evening, after an illness of six weeks. Besides the son at whose home she died, she is survived by a son, A. L. Hewitt, of Henderson, Mich., and two daughters, Mrs. Howard Moore, of Haslett, and Miss Lottie Wilkins, of Mason. She also leaves 12 grandchildren. Mrs. Hewitt was born at Okemos in 1843, and with the exception of five years spent at Muskegon, lived there all her life. There will be a prayer service at the house Thursday at 12:30 o'clock, after which the body will be taken to Okemos, where the funeral will be held from the M. E. church at 2 o'clock.

Allen st., Tuesday evening, after an illness of six weeks. Besides the son at whose home she died, she is survived by a son, A. L. Hewitt, of Henderson, Mich., and two daughters, Mrs. Howard Moore, of Haslett, and Miss (*should be Mrs.*) Lottie Wilkins, of Mason. She also leaves 12 grandchildren. Mrs. Hewitt was born at Okemos in 1843, and apart from five years spent at Muskegon, lived there all her life. There will be a prayer service at the house

Cemetery, Okemos. The [Lansing State Journal](#) obituary incorrectly stated her birth year, which was 1842 according to her death certificate.

[Lansing State Journal \(Lansing, Michigan\) Wednesday 28 April 1915](#)

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HEWITT—At the home of her son, J. M. Hewitt, 132 Allen st., Tuesday evening, Mrs. Charlotte Hewitt, of Okemos. Prayer service at home at 12:30 o'clock, Thursday. Funeral from Okemos M. E. church, Thursday at 2 o'clock.



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PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS			MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH	
<b>1 PLACE OF DEATH</b> County <u>Lapeer</u> Township _____ or Village _____ or City <u>Lansing</u> (No. <u>132 Allen</u> St.; <u>5</u> Ward)			<b>STATE OF MICHIGAN</b> Department of State—Division of Vital Statistics <b>CERTIFICATE OF DEATH</b> Registered No. <u>173</u> 508	
<b>2 FULL NAME</b> <u>Charlotte Hewitt</u>				
<b>3 SEX</b> <u>Female</u>	<b>4 COLOR OR RACE</b> <u>White</u>	<b>5 SINGLE, MARRIED, OR DIVORCED</b> <u>Wid</u>	<b>16 DATE OF DEATH</b> <u>Apr 28</u> 191 <u>5</u> (Month) (Day) (Year)	
<b>6 DATE OF BIRTH</b> <u>Dec 10</u> 18 <u>42</u> (Month) (Day) (Year)			<b>17 I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from</b> <u>March 14</u> 191 <u>5</u> to <u>Apr 28</u> 191 <u>5</u> <b>that I last saw her alive on</b> <u>Apr 27</u> 191 <u>5</u> <b>and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at</b> <u>12</u> m.	
<b>7 AGE</b> <u>72</u> yrs. <u>4</u> mos. <u>18</u> ds. <b>OR</b> <u>18</u> yrs. <u>4</u> mos. <u>18</u> ds.			<b>The CAUSE OF DEATH* was as follows:</b> <u>Cirrhosis of Liver</u> <u>Metastatic deposits Hypertrophy</u> <u>of Heart about 20</u>	
<b>8 OCCUPATION</b> (a) Trade, profession or particular kind of work <u>Retired</u> (b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (or employer)			<b>Contributory</b> (Secondary) _____ (Duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds. (Signed) <u>Rev. C. Campbell</u> , M. D. <u>Apr 28</u> 191 <u>5</u> (Address) <u>Lansing</u>	
<b>9 BIRTHPLACE</b> (State or country) <u>Michigan</u>			<b>18 STATE THE DISEASE CAUSING DEATH, OR IN DEATHS FROM VIOLENT CAUSES, STATE (1) MEANS OF INJURY; and (2) WHETHER ACCIDENTAL, SUICIDAL, OR HOMICIDE.</b>	
<b>10 NAME OF FATHER</b> <u>Freeman Bray</u>			<b>19 LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (FOR HOSPITALS, INSTITUTIONS, FRANCHISES, OR RESIDENTS)</b> At place of death _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds. State _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds. Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death? _____ Former or usual residence _____	
<b>11 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER</b> (State or country) <u>Canada</u>			<b>20 PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL</b> <u>Lakeview Cemetery</u>	
<b>12 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER</b> <u>Caroline Kilbuck</u>			<b>DATE OF BURIAL</b> <u>Apr 29</u> 191 <u>5</u>	
<b>13 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER</b> (State or country) <u>Canada</u>			<b>20 UNDERTAKER</b> <u>R. M. Mahan</u>	
<b>21 THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE</b> (Informant) <u>J. Merritt Hewitt</u> (Address) <u>Lansing</u>			<b>20 UNDERTAKER</b> <u>R. M. Mahan</u>	
<b>22</b> <u>April 25</u> 191 <u>5</u> <u>John M. Bell</u> <u>capbell</u> REGISTRAR			<b>20 UNDERTAKER</b> <u>R. M. Mahan</u>	