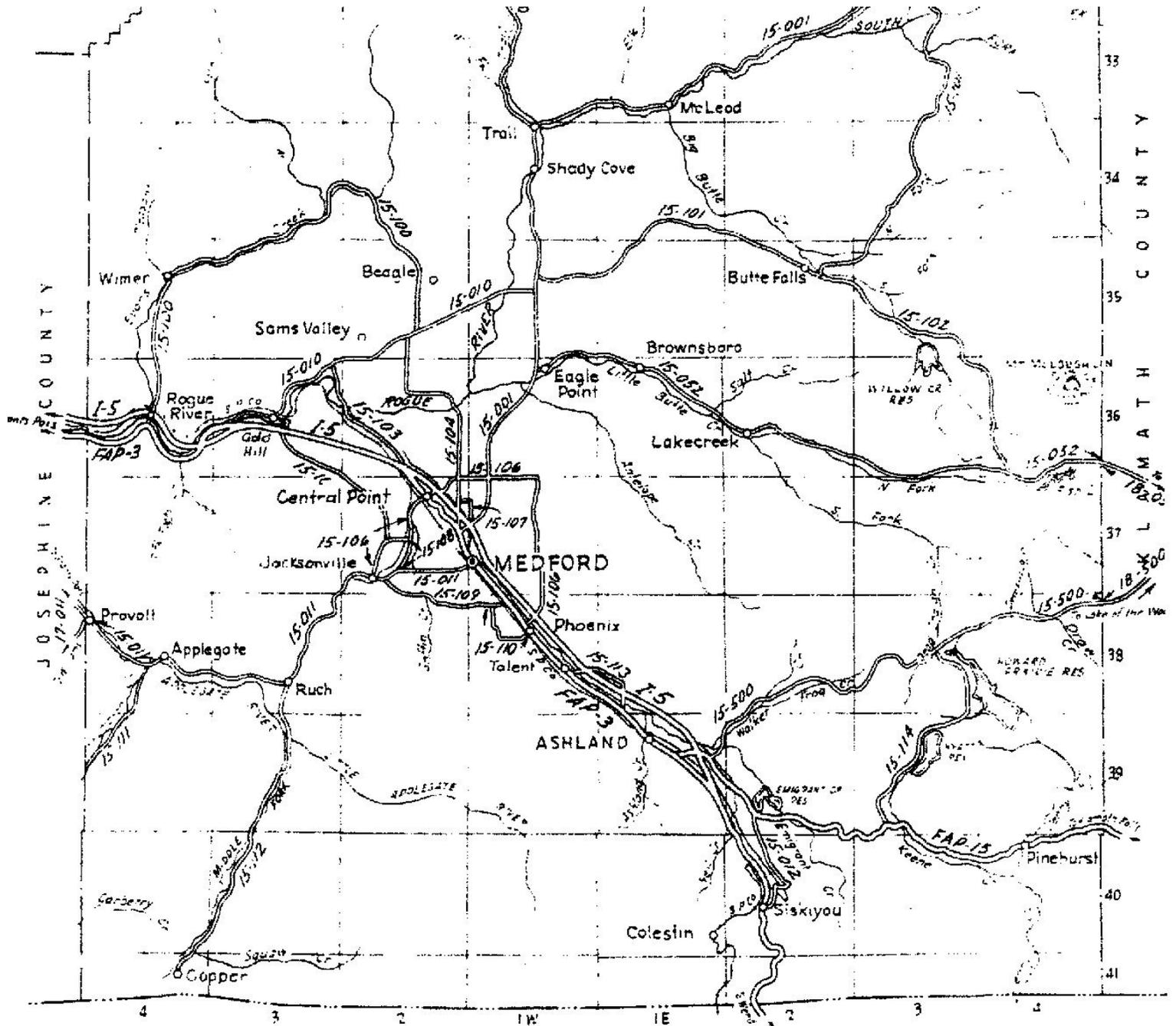


The Rogue Digger



June 2024



Our Mission

The mission of the *Rogue Valley Genealogical Society* is to inspire interest in genealogy, inform and educate the public, and maintain a growing sustainable library with a strong online presence. The Rogue Valley Genealogical Society (RVGS) is in the Rogue River Valley of Southern Oregon. We were founded in 1966 and house the largest collection of genealogical materials in Southern Oregon.

Our Elected Officers

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Rogue Valley Genealogical Society

3405 S. Pacific Hwy.
Medford Oregon 97501
541-512-2340
www.rvgslibrary.org

RVGS Library Hours:

Monday—Saturday
10:00 AM—4:00 PM
reception@rvgslibrary.org

Table of Contents

Page 2	About Rogue Valley Genealogical Society ...Mission, Officers, Appointed Directors, and Hours
Page 3	Table of Contents ...June 2024 contributors
Page 4	“Your Editor’s Thoughts” ...Cindi
Page 5-8	Books on the Shelf ...Mary Robsman
Page 9-12	Snake Charmer—A Brick Wall Story ...Pat Pfremmer
Page 13-19	Baby Iris—Father Unknown ...Ron Naumann
Page 20	Worth a Look or Listen ...Cindi Armstrong
Page 21-24	Local Connection Found in Antique Store Find ...Barbara Northrop
Page 24	Did You Know?
Page 25-28	Finding a Family for Lydia Smith ...Jeanne Hoadley
Page 29-32	Woodville Cemetery ...Cindi Armstrong
Page 33-37	John Mathews an Early Pioneer ...Cathy Ullrich

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To contribute an article email: roguedigger@rvgslibrary.org

"Your Editor's Thoughts"

Hi RVGS friends!

What an incredible community we have! I want to take a moment to express my deep appreciation for the contributions of Jeanne Hoadley, Ron Naumann, Barbara Northrop, Pat Pfremmer, Mary Robsman, and Cathy Ullrich to our June issue. Each of them has provided us with exceptional articles and enriched our community with their knowledge and passion for genealogy. Their work has been instrumental in the growth and learning of our community, and their articles will serve as a source of inspiration and learning for all of us. Contributing to *The Rogue Digger* is an opportunity to share your passion and learning experiences for genealogy with others.

Sharing your article is now easier than ever! We have streamlined the process to ensure your valuable insights and research can be easily shared with our readers. Are you hesitant to share your love for genealogy with our community? Our members are eager to hear from you! Your unique insights and experiences will enrich our conversations and inspire others to explore the world of genealogy. So come forward and be a part of our community today - we can't wait to hear what you have to share! Everything you need except your story is located at <https://rvgslibrary.org>. There, you can browse past issues of *The Rogue Digger* for inspiration and will find assistance in contributing your article for The Rogue Digger. Remember, the process is as simple as a few clicks!

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We value your insights and research and believe your contribution will significantly enhance our publication. Your contributions to *The Rogue Digger* are more than just articles; they are the threads that weave our collective understanding of genealogy. Your insights and research will undoubtedly add a new layer of depth to our publication and inspire others in their family hunts. Your contribution is invaluable to us, and we can't wait to read what you have to share! Remember, your article could be the one that sparks a discovery or inspires someone's research.

Enjoy your journey on the family hunt for those elusive ancestors. *Cindi*

P.S. Mark your calendar for the upcoming contributing deadlines:

August 1 for the September issue and November 1 for the December issue.

Books on the Shelf

by Mary Robsman, RVCS Volunteer Librarian

YOU FIND YOUR ANCESTORS IN STRANGE PLACES:

BE FLEXIBLE IN LOCATING BOOKS ON LIBRARY SHELVES

As a volunteer librarian, I learn about what resources are available at our library by helping researchers. When asked about a subject, I recommend checking the online card catalog, and I help to locate items. With all due respect to the Dewey Decimal Classification system, I found these excellent resource books NOT where I thought they should be. I considered their classification strange.

Call No.: 974.4 N298 Sea

Title: *The Search for Missing Friends: Irish Immigrant Advertisements Placed in the Boston Pilot*, volume III 1854-1856.

Editors: Ruth-Ann M. Harris and B. Emer O'Keeffe

Published: 1993, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston

Pages: 788

I can only assume a book with information about **Irish famine immigrants** was shelved in the **Massachusetts** section because the newspaper *Boston Pilot* was published there. Thousands of Irish persons, not limited to the Boston area, were featured in Information Wanted ads, published in the *Boston Pilot* in a missing persons column. The ads served as an information network for newly arrived Irish immigrants and anxious relatives in Ireland to connect with family and friends.

For researchers, the value of the ads transcribed in this book is the amount of information included to identify the missing person. (There were many with the same Irish name, such as Farrell, O'Brien, or Whalen.)



An example of an informative ad is the woman seeking her husband, Thomas Corcoran. The ad gave his place of origin, date of emigration, port of departure, name of ship, port of entry, arrival date, hospital stay, railroad employment, her first and maiden name, her relative and current location.

May 1854

INFORMATION WANTED

OF THOS. CORCORAN, of Ballyglisheen, parish Borriss, co Carlow, who with his wife, left Liverpool in Oct 52 in the ship Fides, and landed in New York about 10th Dec. following where both entered the hospital. He recovered, was discharged, and went to work on a railroad. His wife has not since heard of him. Information will be received by his wife CATHERINE (maiden name Cummins) care of Andrew Cummins, Galena, Ill.

Ad from *The Search for Missing Friends*, volume III 1854-1856, page 101.

Ads in which a brother looked for his siblings last seen in Pennsylvania or a family sought their 13-year-old niece who traveled alone to Quebec provide evidence of the effect of famine emigration on Irish lives.

The book's 66-page introduction provided statistical analysis of data gleaned from the ads. Table and charts showed emigration numbers for areas in Ireland, relationships of the seeker to the person being sought, occupations, and more demographics organized to show interesting patterns within Irish migration.

The Search for Missing Friends is a series with six books. Clearly visible in the Massachusetts section at RVGS library, Volume III 1854-1856 sits at the end of a shelf. Volume IV 1857-1860, Volume V 1861-1865, and Volume VI 1866-1870 begin the shelf below. The content in this set of books is first-hand information written by and about Irish immigrants who were there at that time. You can almost hear their voices.

A second conundrum, why is there a book with information about **pioneers like Jesse Applegate** in the 1800s in the **Nebraska** section?

Call #: 978 B314 Mat

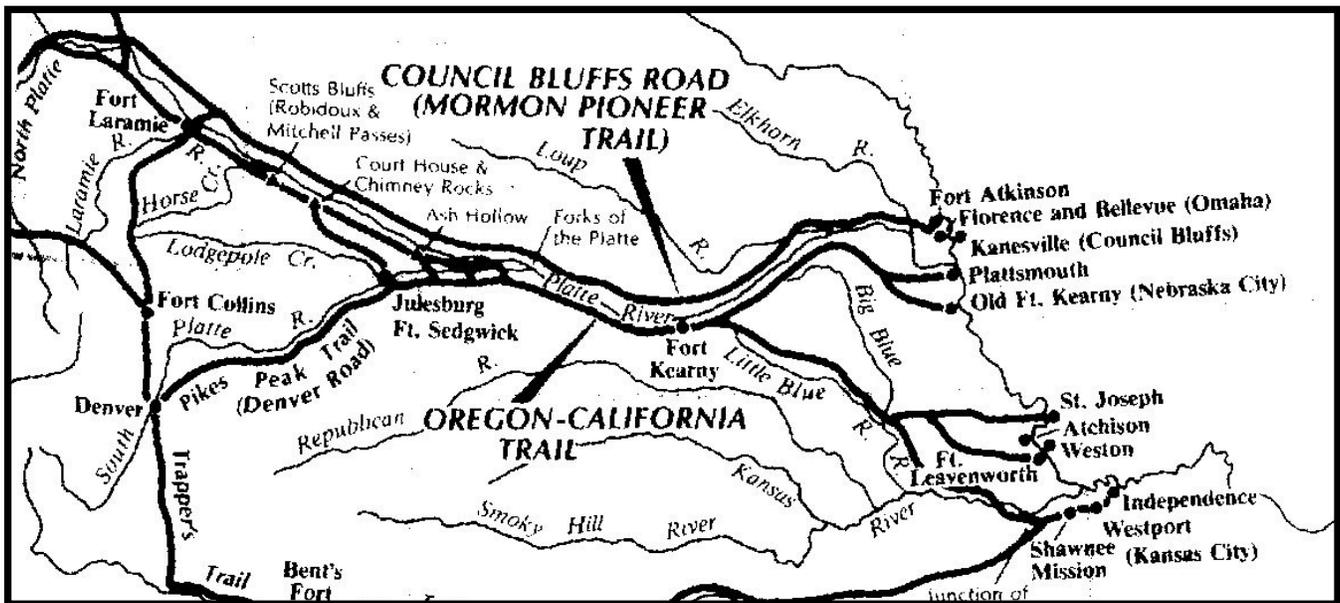
Title: *Platte River Road Narratives: A Descriptive Bibliography of Travel over the Great Central Overland to Oregon, California, Utah, Colorado, Montana and Other Western States and Territories, 1812-1866.*

Author/collector: Merrill J. Mattes

Published: 1988, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, IL

Pages: 648

The map on page 15 gave me the answer. It showed the Platte River flows from the Rocky Mountains all across Nebraska to its eastern border near Omaha, there it joins the Missouri River. People from around the world started at the Missouri River and headed west on the Great Platte River Road, overland paths that followed the course of the Platte River to South Pass (Wyoming) in the Rockies. The map showed the Oregon-California Trail along the south side and the Mormon Pioneer Trail along the north side of the river.



Platte River Road Narratives is a collection of 2,000 eyewitness accounts of travel on the road west in the 1800s. In the Foreward, author James A. Michener praised Mattes for his “expert eyes” in culling the extensive research. He was impressed with Mattes’ “dual personality,” practical and scholarly, a result of experience as a long-time National Park employee and college professor. Michener suggested that no one else but Mattes could have written the book. I agree with Michener.

The narratives were efficiently organized. Each of the 2,000 entries clearly identified the emigrant author’s name, source of the narrative, overland trip highlights, and **for further research**, where to find the source material. Beside each entry number were stars rating the

narrative's historical and literary value (1- limited value...5-outstanding.) Mattes' comments in italics followed the narrative.

Jesse Applegate's entry #72 was on page 48 in the 1843 section.

72 2 stars

JESSE APPLGATE

NSHS/ORHS

"A Day with the Cow Column," Oregon Historical Quarterly 1 (1900) 3-143.

Mattes commented "*the bulk of this paper is a classic account of a single day in a march beginning with sentinels firing rifles to awaken sleepers at 4 am.*"

The Applegate entry led to Dr. Marcus Whitman and Rev. Samuel Parker to Narcissa Prentiss Whitman, a missionary whose diaries were very "*revealing.*" Her narrative earned 5 stars.

32 5 stars

NARCISSA PRENTISS WHITMAN

DPLW/ORHS

Letters and diary in First White Women over the Rockies, 1836-1838, vol. 1, ed. C.M. Drury (Glendale, CA, 1963, pp. 25-101. See also My Journal, ed. L.L. Dodd (Fairfield, WA. 1985), 74 pp.

The first part of each entry is a summary of where the writer of the material went and when. I discovered Pauline Wonderley (#1325) left "Galena Illinois, April 12...to Hangtown, California September 10" in 1852. Galena is my hometown. The repository was El Dorado Historical Society. I called there and obtained a copy of her *Reminiscences of a Pioneer*.

You have 2,000 chances to find your family member in these narratives. Students, historians, and rut rats (trail enthusiasts) will learn about this era of travel from the descriptive eyewitness accounts with personal perspectives evident. Researchers will learn valuable sources from Mattes.

Platte River Road Narratives is found in the Nebraska section at RVGS library on a shelf facing the lunchroom.

Conclusion: Books that contain information written by people at a certain time and involved in historic events are valuable to current researchers. Look for them, even in places you think are strange.

The Snake Charmer – A Brick Wall Story

by Pat Pfremmer

Preface

This is a glimpse into the life of Hazel, a daughter of The Great Depression and the Dust Bowl. The story, *Finding Hazel*, was initially presented to a Genealogy group in 2012 after I successfully unraveled the early life of a woman who seemed lost in the absence of adequately recorded archives.

Simple questions often take on a life of their own. *I am trying to find my mother's birth certificate. She was born in 1925 in Las Vegas, but Clark County has no record. I checked Nevada Vital Records, too. Can you help me?*

This inquiry was posed to me in 2011. Georganna, Hazel's daughter, was creating a family tree. Her mother had died three years earlier; she sent me her obituary as a starting point. I am always mindful that obituaries are based on the family's recollections. They are often edited to portray their loved ones in the best possible light. Obituaries offer an excellent way to 'off' disfavored relatives. Write 'em out of the will and erase them for all posterity. All the facts need to be verified.

Hazel D. Copeland 1926-2008

Hazel Darlene O'Neil Vesik Copeland of Clatskanie died Sept. 23 in Wood Village.

Hazel was born in 1926 to Walter and Myrtle Walker in Las Vegas, Nev. Orphaned at age 14, she moved to Texas to be with her older brother, and upon his death during combat in World War II, she moved to San Francisco ...There she met and married George Vesik with whom she had four children.

Based on this information, was Hazel's birth name O'Neil or Walker? Her birthday was July 10. Armed with this information, it seemed like a straightforward question. Little did I know then that this would take a circuitous route through multiple states and many relatives. It turned out that her life had nothing to do with O'Neil or Nevada.

Early on, I decided that Hazel's birth name was probably not O'Neil since the name was spelled differently on her children's birth certificates. Her Social Security number looked promising. Out of desperation and frustration, I obtained a copy of her original application. It practically took an Act of Congress, but I persevered. Walker (sometimes listed as Mac Walker) was her *mother's maiden name*. Myrtle Walker married Walter Slaughter. Her birthday was noted as 10 July **1924**. With this information, we obtained her Arkansas birth certificate: given name at birth, Hasle. [Note to Readers: never be discouraged by creative spelling.]

Here are selected notes I made in my attempt to unwind the family story:

Hazel's Parents:

W.A. (Walter Allen) Slaughter was born in Texas ...23 August 1877 (In 1800, he was living in Bosque, Texas, the son of John A. Slaughter and Sarah ?. I got his date of birth from his WWI draft card. In the 1920 and 1930 census, he was listed as W.A. ...that's what Hazel initially put on her Social Security application.

Myril Walker was listed as her mother on the Social Security application; *Myrtle / Mirtle / Mertie / Mirtie D. Walker was born in Arkansas about 1892.*

Hazel's Siblings:

Austin Arlie was born in Oklahoma around 1909. He has three children, spoke with one son in Texas, and is currently in an email exchange with a daughter in Yucca Valley, California. There is another brother, but they don't know how to reach him and believe he knows nothing. Myrtle was born in Arkansas about 1915.

Estell / Estelle / Estella was born 25 October 1918 in Arkansas, died 7 February 2005 in Tarrant County, Texas, married to Tibbit, Cross, and Wales; one surviving daughter, Jo Mills in Fort Worth, email exchange with her.

Lorene was born in Arkansas on 17 August 1922, died 10 September 2001 in Stockton, San Joaquin County, California married at least twice, Thorpe and Elliott/Elliot. I do not know if she had children.

Hazel was listed as five years old in the 1930 census, which means she was probably born in 1924. In 1930, the parents lived in Willis, Marshall County, Oklahoma; in 1920, they lived in Fenter, Hot Spring County, Arkansas (now a different county), which, as the crow flies, is 10 miles from Melvern (Hazel claims on her original Social Security application to have been born in Melvin so I think this is a match).

In 1910, Hazel's parents were living with her maternal grandparents, James Mac Walker of Virginia and Frances Elizabeth Jewell of Arkansas. Hazel may have lived with her maternal grandparents, they died in Texas in December 1943 and January 1944 ...

Hazel was very secretive about her life. Her children never met any of her relatives, and she refused to tell them anything about her life before she married their father, George Vesik, an immigrant from Estonia. She was so adamant that nobody dared question her past.

The true story emerged when I found a surviving half-sister living in Sacramento. This is Lucy's abbreviated deathbed story as told to Hazel's daughter two weeks before she passed:

My family was born in Arkansas. Life was a struggle. In 1936, our parents went their separate ways, and we children headed West with our mother and stepfather, Otto Biggs. There were eight of us, I was the youngest. We would camp alongside the road at night and mingle with the other travelers. There were always a lot of people, everyone was headed to California. I had forgotten about Hazel until you mentioned her name. She was about 13. One way we paid our way was to perform for the evening audience. I would sing three songs for a nickel. I made more money than my parents. Step 'Daddy' Otto sharpened knives and told fortunes for a living; Mother sold handmade paper flowers. Hazel had a dance routine that she performed with a snake. I think she hated doing this. One night, she just up and disappeared. We never heard from her again. I was barely four years old - This was 74 years ago!

- Lucille Slaughter 1933-2012

All I could think of when this story was repeated to me was Cher's song about Gypsies:

*I was born in the wagon of a travelin' show
My mama used to dance for the money they'd throw
Papa would do whatever he could
Preach a little gospel, sell a couple bottles of Doctor Good*



*Picked up a boy just south of Mobile
Gave him a ride, filled him with a hot meal
I was sixteen, he was twenty-one
Rode with us to Memphis
And Papa woulda shot him if he knew what he'd done*



Hazel told her family that she lived with her brother in Texas, who was killed in World War II; I think a more likely story is that she went with a young man who promised her a better life. In the 1940 census, she was a boarder in Potosi, Taylor County, Texas, and was listed as single. In the 1950 census, Hazel was separated from Mr. Brown and lived in San Francisco. I was never able to confirm a brother who died in World War II.

The totality of her story may never be known. The best part was that she eventually settled in Oregon, raising four children and many puppies while tending to her miniature roses and orchids garden.

Epilogue

Further research continues to enshroud Hazel's life. Her assumed name, O'Neil, appears as O'Neill, McNeil, MacNeal, Neal, and O'Neal; there is no consistency. She married at least four times: first to J.R. Davis, the name on her Social Security application. In 1945, they lived in Corpus Christi. Marriage number two was to an unknown Brown, as noted on her license to her third husband in 1951, George Vesik; lastly, she spent her retirement years with Jack Copeland in the Columbia River Gorge area.

Georganna was named after her father, who we belatedly discovered is her stepfather. The surname of her birth father is none of the above. More children are showing up in DNA test results.



Hazel about 1949

Special Acknowledgment

I want to thank Hazel's daughter, Georganna, for greenlighting the retelling of this story. Without her recollections and permission, it would have remained a distant memory in my unwritten book of challenging cases.

Sources:

Ancestry.com

FamilySearch.org

Newspapers.com

thomsonreuters.com (Westlaw)

Official government records

Endless phone calls and conversations

Baby Iris – Father Unknown

by Ron Naumann

My wife Jill was adopted as an infant in the early 1950s in Portland, OR. Around 2001, a new Oregon state law allowed adopted children to obtain their birth records, usually including the original birth certificate. Jill requested her records and, so started a 20-year search. I joined the RVGS partly to continue that search for Jill's biological parents, as well as solve my family mysteries and break down some of my own brick walls, but that is another story.

I had some reservations when Sue Acuff and Wendy Purslow suggested I write something about the process. However, as I began to summarize the results into what, when, and who did it, I soon realized the process might be more valuable and interesting than the who. So, in the following three parts, I will describe the good, the bad, and the lucky part of our search for Jill's adoptive paternal parent.

Part 1

What I did right, what I did wrong, and what I'd do differently, and advice you might not need.

Do get a second monitor or display.

Beg, borrow, or steal a second display monitor. If you are not using a second monitor, you are handicapping your research. The second monitor will more than double your research ability. The genealogical process requires comparing records, meaning you must look at two things simultaneously. I used the main (primary) monitor as my reference and the second as my research window. Don't forget most new TVs are also useful as a computer display. If you don't have a second display, you will probably be printing a lot of paper. For the cost of a few toner cartridges and reams of paper, you can probably buy a reasonable second computer display.

Do continue to take courses at RVGS.

I feel fortunate in this process because as my research progressed and occasionally slowed to a crawl, RVGS always seemed to have another class that gave me a new tool or insight that helped me take the next step of discovery. Also, the discussion in the interest groups provided new ways of looking at or organizing the information.

Do remind yourself it is a marathon, not a sprint.

Whenever I made a new connection, I thought this must solve the conundrum, but only to find another door needed to be opened. Ultimately, I found that I was weighing a mounting pile of facts pointing to Jill's father rather than a single aha breakthrough. Enjoy each discovery and family connection.

Do test with different companies and download and/or upload your DNA.

Testing or uploading your DNA to other sites may give you additional matches and, if lucky, provide new ICW (in common with) relationships, expanding your search window and possibly the needed connection. Also, many will give hints that may lead to a new tree or match. Each company tends to have different ways of presenting information, which may trigger new insights in your search. When Jill tested with FamilyTreeDNA ten years ago, she had two suitable matches, Sarah and Susan. Recently, when she tested at Ancestry, Sarah's tree on Ancestry connected us with Susan.

Do be flexible. You may need to build a duplicate tree.

This might seem obvious, but I fought it initially. I did not want to manage two or more trees or learn a new process while pursuing this new endeavor. Each company you test with will want you to build a tree on their platform. Depending on the results of the DNA test may determine the best place to build a tree or a second tree. I have been using Ancestry.com for my family research for over a decade in parallel with FamilyTreeMaker for my database/tree building. Jill tested with FamilyTreeDNA, MyHeritage, and Ancestry. Because she had 5 to 6 times more matches on Ancestry, it was the obvious starting point for building her tree. However, despite my resistance to creating a second tree, I eventually was compelled to do so on FamilySearch. This was primarily because they had records on that platform I could not find on Ancestry and vice versa. Also, MyHeritage started providing hints for family searches. Each has a very different interface, search process, and tree construction, but once I jumped the learning gap, it was worth it.

Set a goal for each session when you start your research.

This (with practice) will keep you from wandering off into the wilderness of genealogy research. In the beginning, I started without setting a goal, only to find that I was three blocks away and lost after going down an exciting rabbit hole. This often led to another dead end, leaving me frustrated, only to do it again the next time. So I began to write my goals for each session at the top of my notepad, put it on a Post-it note on my computer display, or both.

Do create a hypothesis based on your current research.

As you progress and build the foundation of your tree, you will begin to develop hunches and see patterns (or at least believe you see patterns). Turn that hunch or belief into a theory or hypothesis with a method to prove or disprove it. This can then help guide your next research steps. Without this, you will bounce from one new find and potentially to another.

Do remember, windows and tabs are your friends.

Even if you do not have a second display, you will want to use multiple search windows and tabs in your browser (or print and organize a lot of paper). I keep one (primary) window open for my main tree and usually have two, three, or more tabs for the same tree but with a second or third person of interest. For example, if I am trying to figure out the relationship between DNA match 1 and DNA match 2, I will have a tab set for each in my primary window. That way, I can switch quickly without navigating the tree. The second window is my research window. I usually create multiple “reserve” tabs for DNA match 1 and DNA match 2. As I do searches (go down a rabbit hole) and reach a dead end, rather than try to backtrack and return to my starting point, I just close that tab (after making appropriate notes in my log) and open one of the reserve tabs. To bring some order to the tab chaos, I separate groups with a blank tab (or maybe my tab for DNA Painter or the RVGS website). For example, on the left are my tabs for DNA match 1, and on the right of the RVGS tab are three or four more tabs for my DNA match. Later, when I started using FamilySearch, I would have a third window open in FamilySearch in addition to my second window in Ancestry. Again, I used multiple tabs in each window to move quickly between research targets and the information I found. I knew I could return to my starting point by switching to the starting or reserve tab.



Do you have a plan for recording your research?

Usually, building a family tree is more or less a linear process because you typically have a starting point, such as mom, dad, grandma, or grandpa, and you build out from there. You find facts, add them to your tree, make notes, and move on. When you are searching for a yet-to-be-discovered parent and some number of unknown DNA relatives, you start with the test person, some matches, and a universe of possibilities. At first, you have a random set of DNA matches to research and try to connect them to, in this case, Jill. You find yourself going back and forth between the DNA information and the genealogy facts. It becomes a search of

successive approximation until all the DNA dots connect. I started using MS Word and Excel to record findings, and later, someone turned me on to “*Research Like a Pro*” and the Airtable Database (thank you, Randall). Had I adopted it from the start, I would have benefited. Had I not succeeded, I may have had to return to this or another tool to provide additional analysis. Following are the three things I did to record most of my research.

1 - Use Word or other text program.

From the start, one of the best things I did was create a Word (text) document for each of Jill’s DNA matches and a folder on my hard drive for each. Initially, I recorded the DNA data for the match and the information I gained from DNA Painter regarding the probable relationship to Jill. The DNA information was the Centimorgans (cM) match, the number of segments, and the longest length. I kept two or more Word documents open to record information or make notes quickly. One document was a scratch pad to capture a name or web URL I might want to research later. The other(s) was the person(s) I was researching at that moment. I would make notes if I found something useful regarding the person I was researching. This was more or less a log of my progress and notes about future research direction. I used facts I had added to my tree in conjunction with the Excel spreadsheet workbook discussed next. I would also review the scratch pad copy of what I needed and might discard it or start where I left off next time. A third Word document I created was a log of contacts with DNA matches (or their family). I created a document, copied emails, logged phone calls and text messages.

2 - Use Excel or another spreadsheet program or database.

A good database/spreadsheet program is a must. I have used Excel for at least three decades, so that was my starting point. I created one workbook with multiple tabs (worksheets).

Remember, tabs are your friend. Here are the tabs I created in Excel as my search progressed. I debated on prioritizing these, but they are all important at different times in the process.

However, the first two should be done initially to help guide your research.

- I created a match matrix tab. I will explain more about this in the next portion. However, a critical part of the analysis is knowing which of your matches is related to the others or not. This helped identify two branches of Jill’s family.

- I created a tab showing the probable “cousin” relationship of the DNA matches to Jill based on the DNA in centimorgans. There may be a better tool for this, but I put this together in Excel and used DNA Painter’s **The Shared cM Project 4.0 tool v4.** to predict the probability of the relationship.

- I also created a tab to record addresses. I got this idea from one of the RVGS programs. It made a big difference in my research going forward and, ultimately, in my proof. I again put the DNA match and their relatives as they were discovered in the rows. In the columns header, I put years sequentially. Look for the address on the following records – census, birth, death, marriage, immigration and naturalization records, draft registration, enlistment, court

judgment, and newspaper articles. I would use colors to highlight the matches if an address came up multiple times. If an address came up multiple times, I would use colors to highlight the matches. Following is an example.

jills - DNA work book.xls [Compatibility Mode]										
	A	B	C	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD	AE
1										
2			Year of Record	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930
3		Name Last, First								
20		Sherman, Harry			616 Dumont Ave., Brooklyn, NY, NY from Declaration of Intent. For Nat., Feb 1925				560 Riverdale Ave., Brooklyn, NY, NY from Petition for Naturalization Note son born in 1928 and doc signed 1929	560 Riverdale Ave., Brooklyn, NY, NY From 1930 Census and from Petition for Naturalization
21		Sherman, Becky (Harry's Wife)								
22		Sherman, Max H		632 Vermont St NY, NY Attestation to Harry Sherman's Naturalization Petition						632 Vermont St NY City, Brooklyn, NY, USA Max and Family Celia, Abibert, Stanley, Rose

- A tab for each family group. I ended up with three family groups as the family relationships orientation came into focus. Each group tab listed the DNA match in a row with blank rows beneath to record the following information. As I found trees that matched that group, I recorded in separate columns the following.

- **the name of the tree**

- **the owner/creator** of the tree (these are found in the header of the home page of the tree)

- **the URL** – so I could go directly back to that tree for future research (not go down a rabbit hole)

- **rating** - the ratings I used were good (green), possibly useful (yellow), and useless/don't bother (red). I graded based on the information about the target DNA match and the number of people in the tree.

- **family names** - as I found them

- **and a few notes** about the tree

Most of the information can be cut and pasted into your worksheet. This became useful in follow-up research and when the same tree came up on future searches of other family members and, on occasion, kept me from going down another rabbit hole. See additional thoughts below: "Don't trust the trees you find."

3 - Use the notes feature in Ancestry (or FTM) to manage your tree.

I exploited the notes feature in Ancestry in the following ways:

- I copied the DNA match profile information and assumed relationship (1st cousin, 2nd, 3rd, etc.) based on the DNA Painter analysis (see next suggestion).

- Below these, I used dashes to create a separator and recorded the URLs for the most useful

trees I had found so that I could quickly return to them.

- Then, I would include notes on key details I found and items I wanted to follow up on.

- Once I started creating a tree in FamilySearch, I started recording the unique seven-digit alphanumeric code at the top of the Ancestry notes page for that person. This allowed me to quickly navigate to the same person in both trees, especially when there were duplicate family names. I found out there were around a dozen couples in New York in the early 1900s named Sarah and Abraham Cohen, and most of them had children named Sarah, Abraham, or Isaac (or many variations).

Do learn the tools in DNA Painter (DNAPainter.com).

You must first know about **The Shared cM Project 4.0 tool v4**.

There are other similar tools out there that you may find preferable, but in any case, knowing you share DNA is only helpful if you know how close they are related and the most probable relationship.

To borrow from Sherlock Holmes: When you have eliminated all that is impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.

I repeatedly returned to this tool to establish the probable relationship of DNA matches as I garnered new facts or connected to other matches. This helped me eliminate the impossible and gauge probability.

	Name	DNA Value in cM				Half A/U or N/N	Great Aunt/Uncle	1C	1C1R	2 C	1C2R	2C1R	2C2R	3C
4														
5						492-1315	330 - 1467	396 - 1397	102 - 980	41 - 592	33 - 471	14 - 353	0 - 244	0 - 234
6			Most Probable Relationship	Statistical Probability	Does Genealogy Match	871	850	866	433	229	221	122	71	73
7	Deana A	547	1st Cousin 1 Removed	79%	Yes	19%	19%	19%	79%	<1%	<1%			
8	Barbara B	459	1st Cousin 1 Removed	89%	Yes	4%		4%	89%	6%	6%	<1%		
9	Susan G - FTDNA	434	1st Cousin 1 Removed	89%	Yes	1%			89%	8%	8%	<1%		
10	Carissa M	326	Half 1st cousin	58%	Yes	<1%		<1%	58%	39%	39%	1%		
11	Sara A	317	2nd Cousin	55%	Yes	<1%		<1%	55%	42%	42%	2%		
12	Lori A	188	2nd Cousin	65%	Yes				5%	65%	65%	26%	3%	3%
13	Roberta H-G	149	2nd Cousin 1 Removed	44%	Yes				1%	45%	45%	44%	8%	8%
14	Shirley T	127	2nd Cousin 1 Removed	50%	Yes				1%	32%	32%	50%	14%	14%
15	Diane G	123	2nd Cousin 1 Removed	50%	No				<1%	30%	30%	50%	16%	16%
16	RU-Kin	53	3rd Cousin	37%	Yes					3%	3%	26%	37%	37%

I also recommend becoming familiar with the What Are The Odds (WATO) tool in DNA Painter. I used this in several ways, which I mentioned in one of the Genetic Genealogy Interest Group sessions and will explain in Part 2.

Do change your home person.

In Ancestry and FamilyTreeMaker, you can set a home person. In this case, I was in search of the home person! So, by setting the home person as the current person of interest in your search, you have a shortcut or quick link to that person. Jill started with over a dozen good DNA matches. As we began to connect DNA matches, I moved the home person to the MRCA (most recent common ancestor) for that newly discovered family group or the next person I was researching. By the way, if you are trying to remain private on your tree, don't make yourself the home person, and don't use your name in the title of the tree. Although you can only hope your matches don't follow that recommendation.

Do use icons or pictures in your tree.

As I built my tree, I found the DNA matches got lost in the clutter. I just learned who these people were and their relations, adding to the confusion that some names were duplicated between generations. In one tree I found, they used an icon or image showing the DNA double helix for their DNA matches. I borrowed it and used it in my Ancestry tree for each match. I later started not defining male or female, for the individual which I suspected might be Jill's parent, so they appeared gray rather than blue or pink in Ancestry. Here again, I could have found an icon to use.

Don't trust the trees you find!

More than once, I found a very convincing tree with lots of people's names that seemed to match and many facts attached, only to find after I started using the facts to build Jill's tree there were flaws in the construction or assumptions of the newly discovered tree. I mentioned the Excel tab(s) to log the tree I found; here is how I used it. Rather than research one tree at a time, I would first look for as many trees linked to my DNA match as possible and log them for later comparison. I cover this further in Part 2. The most common problem was couples with the same first names and approximate correct ages. However, in one case, the wife was married in New York, the next census was in Chicago, and the next census was back in New York. It was not until I examined the children's details that I realized they were two different women. Ultimately, it was built up based on names, not detailed facts. In another case, I determined that the census record had confused the mother's name, Annie, with the daughter, Ida. The newly found tree attached Ida's census record to another family (husband Jacob) and added Ida's sibling as her children to that family. Never mind, no records showed the connection other than the name. Yes, Jacob married an Ida, but not this Ida.

Don't believe you will take a test and find your family overnight.

If you are lucky, you will get some very good DNA matches—over 100 cM and a few in the 200 cM or higher range. Even with a dozen good matches, it took six months, probably over 1,000 hours (20 hours a week), and some great cooperation with newly discovered family members to find one of Jill's parents. This included a steep learning curve. I am sure I learned many other dos and don'ts, but those are the top 10.

In Part 2, I will summarize hundreds of hours of research and explain the methodology used. Part 3 will describe how I arrived at a conclusion and what facts became important in the proof.

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Website

- **It's all about that Date! This is a great website, and you need to keep it.**
<https://freepages.rootsweb.com/~fgris/family/brown/agecalc.html> You can calculate the birth, death, or age in various ways in years, months, and days. Do you prefer the 8870 method? Maybe you don't know what the 8870 method is; it was an the old-school method before we had the internet. Which really doesn't seem like that long ago.

YouTube

- **You need this Search Hack! How to Google Site Search**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1bKQCUJHAU>
Genealogy Gem—by Lisa Louise Cooke Viewing time: 11:31 minutes
- **How to Create a Genealogy Research Notes Template in MS Word**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JSx8s8Ku2Qc>
GenealogyTV—by Connie Knox Viewing time: 19:05 minutes
- **How to Use Excel for Genealogy**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eONcu9ITbYY>
GenealogyTV—by Connie Knox Viewing time: 41:06 minutes
- **The Most Important Tip for GOOD Genealogy = Sources (+ My Source Writing HACK)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B2BuD0EGBgE>
GenealogyHints—by Aimee Cross Viewing time: 18:40 minutes
- **What to do with Your Ancestry DNA Matches**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81OsvG81SyU>
GenealogyHints—by Aimee Cross Viewing time: 18:47 minutes

Podcast

- **The Family Tree Podcast has 54 episodes to listen to, covering many subjects.**
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjDfwaaZKtS32kRgIxpANuTjAJOV555st>
Each episode features interviews with genealogy experts and Family Tree editors on using genealogy websites, records and resources. Listening time: 9:49 to 50:53 minutes

Local Connection in Antique Store Find

by Barbara Northrop, CG®

One of my favorite pastimes is wandering antique stores to see if I can find “a treasure.” Unbeknownst to me, the first “treasure” spotted in a Corvallis, Oregon, antique store was an 1899 marriage certificate of a local couple.

A commemorative marriage certificate found in a Corvallis, Oregon antique store on 30 December 2023 details the marriage of Theodore A. Glass and Anzonetta V. Case, both of Beagle, Oregon, at the home of Mrs. Belle Case, on the 24th day of August 1899. Pastor J. T. Wallace of the M. E. Church South performed the ceremony, which Ralph F. Dean and Clarence F. Case witnessed.



Barbara Northrop, CG®, holding
1899 Marriage Certificate

What sets this certificate apart? Its provenance is a significant part of its charm. This family heirloom, a beautifully preserved framed certificate under glass, was acquired from a great-grandson at a Corvallis, Oregon, antique shop on the 30th of December, 2023. The certificate, with its browning spots in the center top, bottom left, and bottom center, remains legible and unmarred. Adhered to it are photographs of the bride and groom, adding a personal touch. The text, written in elegant calligraphy, bears one misspelled word, “Chu[r]ch.” The lithograph certificate, published by A. H. Eilers & Co., St. Louis, Certificate No. 39, in St. Louis, Missouri, circa 1888, is housed in a 16 by 20-inch wooden frame with chipped corners, a 3/8-inch crème colored mat border, and a paper-sealed back with no markings. It is likely an original record, created at or close to the 1899 marriage, based on a similar certificate displayed at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.¹

©Barbara Northrop, CG®, Bnorth1956@gmail.com, has been a Board for Certification of Genealogists Certified Genealogist since 2021. She has been a member of RVGS since 2004. She graduated from the Salt Lake City Community College Genealogy Program, Professional Genealogists (ProGen) 43, Mastering Genealogical Proof (GenProof) 64, and numerous institute courses. She is a frequent RVGS, Jackson County Public Library, and Olli instructor and presenter.

1. Glass-Case marriage certificate (1899 marriage); privately held by Barbara Northrop, CG® [address withheld for privacy]. A similar 1888 A.H. Eilers & Co. lithograph marriage certificate of comparable size is on digital display on the Philadelphia Museum of Art website: <https://philamuseum.org/collection/object/216263-one>.

Theodore and Anzonetta were indeed a lucky couple. Two surviving certificates record their 1899 marriage, the commemorative church product from the antique, and the second, a certificate registered with Jackson County; both record similar information with variations. With one exception, the antique store certificate contained the words “Beagle, Oregon” under both the bride and the groom, signifying where they were residing. That detail is missing in the other.²

Beagle, an extinct farming community first platted in 1855, is fourteen miles north of Medford and northeast of the Table Rocks. It is called Sam’s Valley today. The community is named after its first postmaster, William Beagle, who arrived in 1872. With the onset of World War II in 1942, the federal government determined the “agate desert” a prime location for the Camp White Military Reserve. The residents were paid for their land and left their community behind, except for the Antioch Cemetery. After community outcry, the headstones were laid flat and buried where they remained protected by feet of soil until the war ended.³



Theodore A. Glass and Anzonetta V. Case 1899 marriage certificate photograph

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2. "Marriage Licenses, Certificates and Letters of Consent, Jackson County, 1854-1926," Southern Oregon Historical Society, General History Collection MS271, Theodore A. Glass & Anzonetta V. Case, 24 August 1899, at home of Mrs. I [Isabel] Case, witnessed by Ralph F. Case & C. F. Case, J. F Wallace, Minister, M.E. Church South, Ashland, photocopy retrieved 18 January 2024.
 3. Kay Shelnett, *Beagle, Oregon, An Unknown Casualty of War: Camp White and the Destruction of a Farming Community During the Second World War*, Master’s Thesis, imaged (Oregon State University: 30 January 2007), regarding Antioch Cemetery, see p. 55. The author’s grandparents were members of the Beagle community until 1942.

Theodore, born 27 February 1877 in Texas, arrived with his family from Arkansas around 1888. He is the son of Stephen Henry Glass and Susan (Bunch) Glass.

Anzonetta, born 25 August 1881 in Ohio, arrived in Jackson County about 1893 with her parents, Morris Case, and second wife, Isabelle[a] (Foskett) Case.⁴ From Beagle area farming families, Theodore and Anzonetta likely met while attending the one-room Antioch School. Theodore attended school off and on until 1896. Anzonetta is found attending in 1894 and 1895, just three years before her father died in 1898.⁵

Six months after their marriage, in February 1900, Theodore's father sold two-hundred-forty acres to him and his brother, Elbert. Both Theodore's parents and Anzonetta's widowed mother and families lived nearby.⁶ By then, Stephen and his sons began their legendary threshing business, helping families harvest their seed crops. Stephen eventually passed the business to his sons in 1905, and it flourished for at least another ten years.⁷

During the same time period, Theodore and Anzonetta welcomed four children to their family, two daughters and two sons.⁸

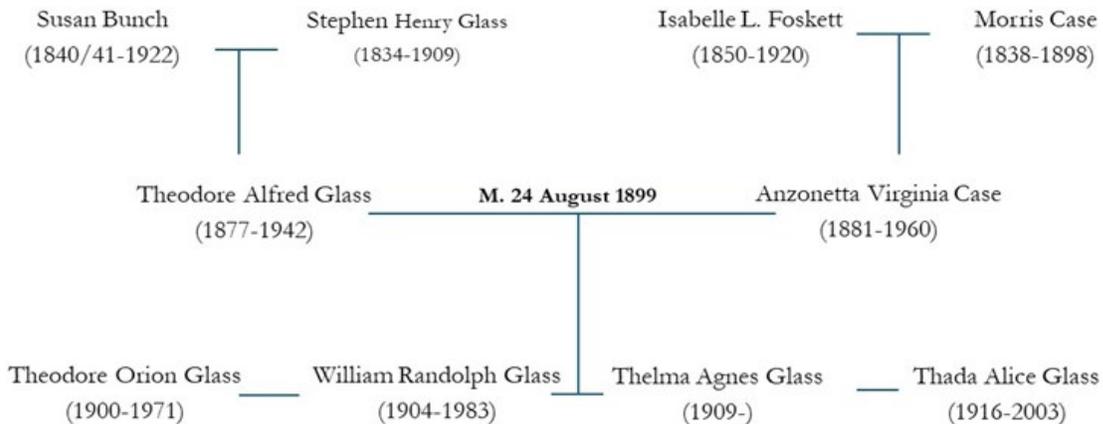
4. See Stephen Henry Glass Research Report by Barbara Northrop, CG®, RVGS Pioneer Files.

5. Members of the Rogue Valley Genealogical Society [RVGS], transcribers, *1893: Jackson County, Oregon School District Census (including 1898 Ashland District #5)* (Medford: RVGS, 1984), 979.527. C248 1893, no page number. Also, Southern Oregon Historical Society, Research Library, General History Collection, District Clerk's Book of Records, 1893-1894 volume, 6 March 1893, Theodore Glass, age 16, son of S.H. Glass, line 20. Viewed 1 March 2024. Also, 1893-1894 volume, 5 March 1894, Theodore Glass, age 17, son of S.H. Glass, line 15 [second unpaginated page]. Nettie Case, age 12, daughter of Morris Case, line 15 [first unpaginated page]. Also, 1895-1896 volume, 4 March 1895, Theodore Glass, age 18, son of S.H. Glass, line 19. Nettie Case, age 13, line 2, same page. Also, 1895-1896 volume, 2 March 1896, Theodore Glass, age 19, son of S.H. Glass, line 5. Nattie [Nettie] Case, age 13, line 33, same page. Viewed 18 January 2024.

6. 1900 U.S. census, Jackson, Oregon, Theodore Glass, head of household, ED District 102, Table Rock Precinct, line 9, dwelling 73, family 74, Page 4A, 13 June 1900, image, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-DCR3-YP6>; accessed 10 Feb 2024), image 585. Also, 1900 U.S. census, Jackson, Oregon, Isabel Case, line 88, dwelling 68, family 69, p. 3B. Clarence was Isabelle's stepson. Also, "North Medford Items," Medford Mail, 21 February 1908, p.7, Col. 3, Southern Oregon Historical Society Research Library Glass Family Newspaper Collection, retrieved 18 January 2024. Also, *Table Rock Sentinel*, "Beagle Country," Volume 9, p. 2-9, emphasis on p. 5, col. 2, 1989, RVGS 979.527 P273 Tab. Also, Jackson County Deed Book 40:376, S.H. Glass to Theodore & Elbert Glass, 12 February 1900, recorded 27 September 1900.

7. "North Medford Items," Medford Mail, 21 February 1908, p.7, Col. 3, Southern Oregon Historical Society Research Library Glass Family Newspaper Collection, retrieved 18 January 2024. Also, *Table Rock Sentinel*, "Beagle Country," Volume 9, p. 2-9, emphasis on p. 5, col. 2, 1989, RVGS 979.527 P273 Tab.

8. *Find A Grave*, Theodore Orion Glass, Memorial 59796346. Also, "Oregon, World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1940-1945," FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QLBR-H6R3>; 22 April 2024); NARA, William Randolph Glass, 16 February 1942. Also, "Oregon Death Index, 1903-1998," FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VZHJ-BF3>; 22 April 2024); William Ran[dolph] Glass, 27 February 1983. Also, Oregon Birth Certificates, Jackson, 1908, Thelma A. Glass. Negative Search for death record under surname of Smylie & Morris. Also, *Find A Grave*, Thada Alice Glass Hilton, Memorial 59797208. Headstone birth year 1916, death year 2003.



By 1940, Theodore and Anzonetta had moved to Central Point. Theodore passed away there two years later, on 12 January 1942. He was remembered for being a member of many organizations, including the Central Point City Council with fellow [Robert] Fred Hesselgrave, whom Anzonetta married in October 1942, ten months after World War II was declared in the United States. Robert Fred Hesselgrave died in 1955 from a brain tumor. Five years later, on 17 August 1960, Anzonetta died at her home in Medford. Theodore and Anzonetta are buried next to each other in the Siskiyou Memorial Park Cemetery.⁹

9. Jackson, County, Oregon, Standard Certificate of Death, Theodore A. Glass, 1942, State No. 17, Local No. 10, retrieved February 5, 2024; RVGS 979.527 D218 DEA 1942, Medford. Also, *Central Point American*, 13 January 1942, p. 1., col. 2. Also, “Robert Hesselgrave,” *Medford Mail Tribune*, (Medford, Oregon), 23 January 1955, p. 7, col. 2. Also, Coos-Jackson Counties, 1960, Standard Certificate of Death, State of Oregon, Anzonetta Virginia Hesselgrave, 1960, state file no. 11386, local registrar's no. 315, imaged, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com/discouveryui-content/view/155200:61675>: 22 February 2024).

DID YOU KNOW?

Melvil Dewey introduced his innovative Dewey Decimal System for libraries in 1876. Dewey's system reflected the Easterners' perception of the West, which they often defined as anything west of the Mississippi. The Dewey Decimal number identifies books about “The West.” Dewey assigned 978.1 to Kansas and 978.2 to Nebraska, and so forth.

The Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) began its journey as a modest 44-page pamphlet in 1876. Over the years, it has grown in scope and complexity, expanding to twenty-three books, with the last update in 2011. This classification, a testament to its global reach, has been translated into 30 languages, implemented in over 135 countries, and adopted by more than 200,000 libraries worldwide. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dewey_Decimal_Classification

Finding a Family for Lydia Smith

by Jeanne Hoadley

It was my great aunt Ruby who ignited the spark of genealogy in me. She, too, had been born a Hoadley and worked diligently to push back that line. She did her work in libraries, courthouses, cemeteries, and the attics of her cousins. When Aunt Ruby passed away in 1994, Ancestry.com was still a few years into the future, and she was left with a brick wall named Stephen Hoadley, her great grandfather, my 3x great grandfather. What she had learned was that he married Sophronia Lawson in Moretown, Vermont, in 1831, fathered two children, my 2x great grandfather Lester Stephen Hoadley, born in Vermont, and his younger sister Cevilla, born in upstate New York, and then Stephen disappeared.

In the 1990s, I was working in Washington, D.C., and spent many a Saturday afternoon in a darkened room at the National Archives sifting through Soundex cards, microfilm, and microfiche in hopes of finding one or two census records. It was not until census records finally became available online in the early 2000s that I located an 1830 census record for a William Hoadley in Moretown, Vermont, who had a male in his household the right age to be Stephen. Still, there was no way to prove that it was Stephen or that William was, indeed, his father.



Ruby Louise Hoadley

BIRTH—MALE	
Name of Child	Stephen Hoadley
Color	
No. of Child of Mother	6
Date of Birth	Hartland 1803 Month November Day 21 st
Maiden Name of Mother	Lydia
Mother's Birthplace	Age 27
Mother's Residence	Hartland Vt.
Full Name of Father	William Hoadley
Father's Birthplace	Age 34
Father's Occupation	
Condition of Child as to Live or Still Birth	Live
If Still Birth the Cause	Still
Name of Informant	Daniel Buck J. Clerk
Town	Hartland, Vt.
W. R. STURTEVANT, Town Clerk	

I continued to poke and prod at that brick wall from time to time. I found an 1840 census record for Sophronia's father, David Lawson, which had a woman and two children the right ages to be Sophronia, Lester, and Cevilla. This led me to conclude that Stephen had died in New York between 1833 and 1840, and Sophronia had returned to Vermont to live with her parents. But again, there was no proof, only speculation and theory.

It was not until 2013, when the Vermont Vital Records¹ came online that I was finally able to make some headway in breaking down that brick wall. I found a card telling me that Stephen Hoadley was born in 1803 in Hartland, Vermont, to William and Lydia Hoadley. The Hartland connection also helped me to place William in the family of Thomas Hoadley, who had immigrated from England around 1760, married into an old New England family, served on the Massachusetts line during the American Revolution, and settled in Hartland, Vermont, in the early 1780s².

Similar cards existed for each of Stephen's siblings, but none registered the maiden name of Lydia Hoadley. It was not until I found the card recording the death of Stephen's brother Artemas that I finally struck paydirt. Their mother's maiden name was Lydia Smith³. My heart sank. How was I ever going to find the parents of someone named Smith?

DEATH—MALE	
Full Name of Deceased	Hoadley, Artemas P1085
Usual Residence	
If in Hospital or Institution, its Name	
Color	Age 68 Yrs 4 Mos 26 Days
Occupation	Farmer
Birthplace	Hartland
Father's Name	William Hoadley
Father's Birthplace	
Mother's Maiden Name	Lydia Smith
Mother's Birthplace	
Date of Death	1869 Month Oct Day 17
Disease Causing Death	Heart disease
Contributing Disease	
Medical Attendant	Isaac H. Huntley
Town	Duxbury

I put Lydia aside for a while. Then, having been introduced to the FAN (Families, Associates, and Neighbors) club concept, I started looking for clues in the records of Stephen's many siblings. I found a death record for his sister Clarissa "Clara" Hoadley Huntoon⁴. It indicated that her mother had been born in Woodstock, Vermont. I knew from other records that

she was born in 1776. I also knew that this would have been very early in the settlement period for Vermont and wondered if Lydia's family might be mentioned in a County or Town history.

I happily found an 1889 publication by Henry Swan Dana entitled *History of Woodstock, Vermont*⁵ available as a free e-book on Google Books, with the added bonus of a hyperlinked index. So, I started clicking on Smith's and reached a few dead ends in the early part of the alphabet, not Andrew, not Arnold, not Daniel, and began to wonder if I was on a fool's errand. When I got to Elias, something told me to go back and look at the names of Lydia and William's children. Sure enough, one of their sons was named Elias Smith Hoadley. Perhaps I was getting warm.

¹ [Ancestry.com, Vermont Vital Records 1720-1908](https://www.ancestry.com/vermont-vital-records-1720-1908), 2013, Ancestry.com Operations, Provo, Utah (accessed 4/19/24).

² Trowbridge, Francis Bacon, *The Hoadley Genealogy*, 1894, Francis Trowbridge, New Haven. (Hathi Trust, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=wu.89063107767&seq=15>, accessed 4/19/24)

³ [Ancestry.com, Vermont Vital Records 1720-1908](https://www.ancestry.com/vermont-vital-records-1720-1908), 2013, Ancestry.com Operations, Provo, Utah (accessed 4/19/24)

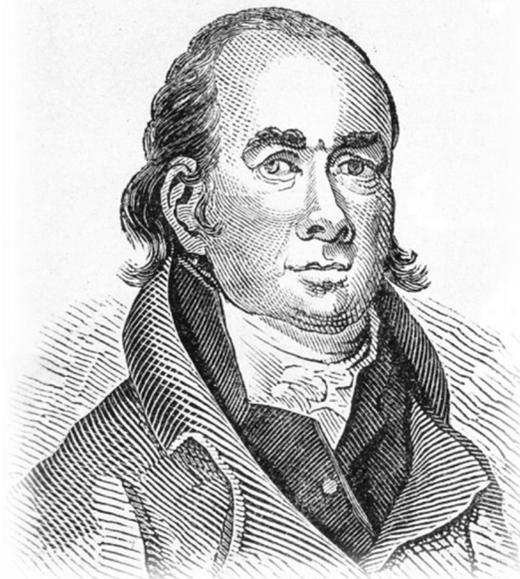
⁴ [Ancestry.com, Massachusetts Death Records, 1841-1915](https://www.ancestry.com/massachusetts-death-records-1841-1915), 2013, Ancestry.com Operations, Provo, Utah (accessed 4/19/24).

⁵ Dana, Henry Swan, *History of Woodstock Vermont*, 1889, Houghton, Mifflin and Company, New York and Boston (https://books.google.com/books?id=Y4EUAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false, accessed 4/19/24).

It turned out that Elias Smith was too young to be Lydia's father, but I did not rule out a possible brother and kept reading. I soon learned that Elias Smith, was the son of Stephen Smith, who arrived in Woodstock in 1782. Given that Lydia and William named their 4th son my ancestor, Stephen Hoadley, this had promise.

My next step was to do an Ancestry search on Stephen Smith of Woodstock, Vermont. This time, I found the Mother Lode. First, I saw his will and opened it in great anticipation. After wading through all the infirm body but sound mind stuff, I got to the bequests to the wife and sons. Finally, about three paragraphs in, what to my wondering eyes did appear but "I give unto my beloved daughter Lydia Hoadley thirty dollars..."⁶ Yes! I had found her father, there was no room for doubt.

I give unto my beloved daughter Lydia Hoadley thirty dollars to be paid by my wife Irena at her discretion out of the Inventory which I appoint as my executrix to this my last Will and Testament. It is also my Will that in case there should arise any dispute respecting the tenor or meaning of this Will that the parties so contending



Elias Smith

If that wasn't enough, Ancestry next led me to Stephen Smith's birth record in Lyme, New London County, Connecticut⁷ as well as his marriage record with his wife's maiden name (Irena Ransom) and the birth records for all of his children (It turned out Lydia was born in Lyme, not Woodstock as reported on her daughter's death record, but lived in Woodstock from the age of six). From Stephen's birth record, I learned that his father had the deliciously unique name of Hezekiah Smith and, in turn, found *his* marriage record to Sarah Chadwick in 1732⁸. Happy dance, happy dance, happy dance.

The icing on the cake was discovering that Lydia's brother Elias Smith had grown up to be quite famous as a minister and writer in Christian literary circles. His autobiography provides a rich background of what life was

⁶ Ancestry.com, Vermont, Wills and Probate Records, 1749-1999, 2015, Ancestry.com Operations, Provo Utah (accessed 4/19/24).

⁷ [Ancestry.com, Connecticut Town Birth Records, Pre 1870 \(Barbour Collection\), 2006, Ancestry.com Operations, Provo Utah \(accessed 4/20/24\).](#)

⁸ Ancestry.com, Connecticut Town Marriage Records, Pre 1870 (Barbour Collection), 2006, Ancestry.com Operations, Provo Utah (accessed 4/20/24).

like for the Smith family as pioneers in early Vermont. Of their arrival in Vermont, he writes that his father had gone ahead and started building a house but had not completed it before bringing the family up from Connecticut⁹:

The house was made of split bass-wood logs, locked together at the corners. There was no floor to the house, nor was there any roof to it. The grass had grown up within these wooden walls, and there was one large stump in the middle of the house, which, to heighten my trouble as I thought, my father said would do for a light stand. We made a fire by the side of a log: cooked some dinner, and let our horse eat down the grass in the house, before we prepared it for a lodging place for a night. My father had prepared boards for a chamber floor, and shingles for the roof; but had not time to put them on before he returned. The shingles consisted of brown ash bark, eight feet long, and from four to six feet wide. We corded up our bedsteads on the ground; and before night, placed over our heads several of those large pieces of bark, and at night, without any floor but the ground; having no door, with a few pieces of bark over our heads to keep off the dew, we lay down to sleep and all rested quietly till morning.

Smith goes on to write about finishing the house, clearing the land, struggling to find enough fodder for their cows and oxen, and gives a detailed account of making sugar from maple sap during the late winter months. In the spring, his father sold one of his two cows to buy wheat only to find the other dead a few days later. This was very distressing because milk was one of their main sources of food. They were only able to survive thanks to a neighbor lending them a cow until they could get another.

I still have work to do on the Smiths and Ransoms of Lyme, Connecticut, but I've pushed them back several generations. I'm happy to have found parents for Stephen Hoadley and a family for his mother, Lydia Smith. I've learned not to give up even when a brick wall seems insurmountable. I'd like to think that Aunt Ruby would be proud.

⁹ Smith, Elias, *The Life, Conversion, Preaching, Travels, and Sufferings of Elias Smith*, 1816, Beck & Foster, Portsmouth, New Hampshire (Internet Archive <https://ia802802.us.archive.org/28/items/lifecon00smit/lifecon00smit.pdf>, accessed 4/19/24).

Woodville Cemetery - Established 1889

by Cindi Armstrong Hobson



Photo by Pam S.

Woodville Cemetery, a place of profound historical significance, is officially recognized as a historic cemetery in Oregon.¹ It is also known as Rogue River Cemetery or Wards Creek Cemetery. Nestled at 185 Wards Creek Road in Rogue River, Oregon, it stands as a testament to the past, offering a unique blend of historical importance and natural beauty that is sure to captivate any visitor. Its serene and contemplative setting invites visitors to pause and reflect. In the 1850s, the city was known as Tailholt, later in 1872 was changed to Woodville and incorporated in 1912 as Rogue River. The Woodville Museum, located at 199 1st Street, Rogue River, Oregon 97537, further enriches the historical context.²

On Find a Grave, the cemetery has an ID of 39681 with 1,922 memorials. This comprehensive database provides a wealth of information about the cemetery's burials, with approximately 3% of the memorials having GPS coordinates and 90% having been photographed, ensuring a rich and detailed exploration of the cemetery's history.³

Who was the first person buried in the cemetery when it was established in 1889? Who is the oldest person buried in the cemetery? Who was the youngest person buried in the cemetery? Who was the oldest burial in the cemetery? These are all questions to be answered.

When I used Find a Grave to search for the oldest person buried in the cemetery, it was Forest Webb Heard. Various spellings for Forest Heard are found throughout research documents, such as Forrest, Herd, and Hurd.



Forest



Anna

The Woodville Cemetery, a testament to our past, is the final resting place of Forest Webb Heard, the oldest person buried here. Whose life spanned from 1802-1891, he was born in Fleming County, Kentucky, and died in Jackson County, Oregon.⁴ Forest and his wife, Anna E. Simpson Heard (1803-1886), have left an indelible mark on this hallowed ground, representing a significant era in the cemetery's history.⁵

The journey of Forest and Anna Heard, a couple whose lives are intimately intertwined with the history of Woodville Cemetery, began on 5 June 1828, when they were united in marriage in Clark County, Ohio. Their story unfolds through various records, such as Forrest Heard, having the U.S. General Land Record Office issuing land in Shelby, Ohio, Township 2, Range 13, Section 2 on November 10, 1831, and their presence in the 1840 census in Des Moines Territory. The 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 censuses trace their path to Penn Township, Jefferson County, Iowa, providing a tangible connection to the past for us today.⁶

On 21 April 1851, Forest was appointed Postmaster of the Walnut Post Office in Jefferson County, Iowa. The 1854 state census finds two males and seven females living in the home. There are two voters and one militia.⁶

Forest and Anna, a couple of remarkable resilience, had seven children (one boy and six girls): Nancy A., Stephen, Anna, Elizabeth, Amanda, Miranda, and Henrietta. The exact date of their arrival in Oregon remains a mystery, adding to the intrigue of their story. On 14 June 1880, the family was in Penn, Jefferson County, Iowa, and the following trace of them is when the mother, Anna E. Simpson Heard, breathed her last on 16 April 1886 in Rogue River, Jackson County, Oregon.⁴

The following of their children are shown to be buried at Woodville Cemetery: Nancy A. Heard (1829-1906), Elizabeth M. Burkhart (1836-1929), Amanda J. Neil (1838-1910), and Henrietta D McHugh (1841-1903). It is presumed that Stephen A. (1831-1878), Anna (1837-unknown), and Miranda C. (1838-1870) stayed in Iowa.⁴



The oldest grave in the Woodville Cemetery belongs to John Oldfield, born in Warwick, Orange County, New York, on 18 February 1810 and died on 18 January 1854 in Rogue River, Jackson County, Oregon. John's life was tragically cut short, reportedly by Indians, as per Oregon, Biographical and Other Index Files, 1700-1900s, Territorial and Provisional Government Papers Index, card #12005.⁶ The Shasta and Modoc Indian tribes near the Rogue River killed John and three others.⁸ John is not known to have ever married or had any children. The circumstances that led John Oldfield to Rogue River, Jackson County, Oregon, are yet to be fully understood, adding to the intrigue of this historical site and the life stories it holds.

When looking at the burials from 1889, when the cemetery was first established, only two were shown in that year. First, my attention was focused on Sarah Jane Johnson Breeding. She was born in Oregon in 1852 and died in Jackson County, Oregon, in 1889.⁹ She was the daughter of John W. Johnson and Mary Hamlin.



Sadly, Mary Hamlin Johnson died soon after arriving in Jackson County, Oregon, on 5 September or October 1854. After their mother's death, Sarah Jane and her sister, Mary Catherine, were boarded by different families until marriage. In the 1860 and 1870 censuses, Sarah was found living in the household of Thomas and Margaret Smith in Ashland. In 1860, Mary Catherine was living in the household of G.D. and Hannah Taylor in Manzaneta, Jackson County, Oregon.⁶

Sarah married William George Breeding on 14 February 1875 in Jackson County, Oregon. During the 1880 census, William and Sarah lived with their two children, Laurie A., age 4, and John T., age 2, with his father and mother in Rock Point, Jackson County, Oregon. Sarah died before the 1900 census, survived by her husband William and five children. They were Laura Ann Farlow (1875-1959), John Thomas (1877-1962), Henry Clarington (1882-1948), James William (1884-1970) and Robert Elmer (1889-1956).

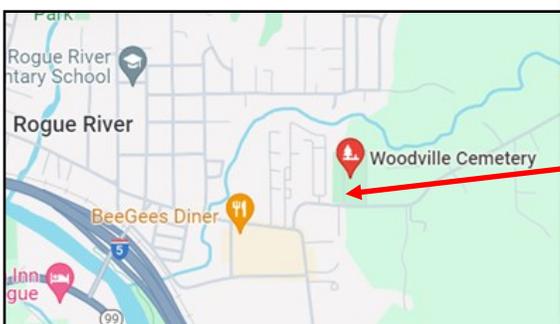
Mary Catherine (Sarah Jane's sister) married William C. Butler on 24 September 1863, in Jackson County, Oregon. Mary Catherine Butler died at Sarah's home in Green Springs on 2 August 1887 and is buried in Ashland Cemetery.



The other burial in 1889 at Woodville Cemetery was a tiny angel who left this world fifteen days after his birth. Robert White was born on 27 November 1889 and died on 12 December 1889. His headstone shows his parents as J.G. & F. White.¹⁰ While searching the Woodville cemetery for the tiny angel Robert's parents, I found the following burials:

Presumably, Robert's parents are John G. White (1841-1918)¹¹, who is also buried in the Woodville Cemetery, and Julia Florence Lancaster Warren (1867-1935)¹², who is shown as his spouse.

To reach the cemetery from Medford, take I-5 north and exit at #48 in Rogue River. Turn right on Depot Street, then right on East Main Street. Turn left on Wards Creek Road, and Woodville Cemetery will be on the left.¹³ The GPS coordinates are 42°26'04.3"N 123°09'36.0"W.¹⁴



Sources

- ¹ https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/OH/Documents/Cemetery_List.pdf
- ² <https://archive.seattletimes.com/archive/?date=19910210&slug=1265524>
- ³ <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/39581/woodville-cemetery>
- ⁴ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/25510365/forest-webb-heard>
- ⁵ https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/25510364/anne_e_heard
- ⁶ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/70687757/mary-johnson?> Sarah Jane https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7667/images/4282811_00335?pId=43985819 https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7667/images/4282811_00399?pId=43968353 Mary C. www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7667/images/4282811_00399?pId=43968353
- ⁷ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/205430043/john-oldfield>
- ⁸ <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/RRIWcasualties.html>
- ⁹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/25509994/sarah-jane-breeding>
- ¹⁰ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/25511258/robert-white>
- ¹¹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/25511259/john-g-white>
- ¹² https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/25511234/julia_florence_warren
- ¹³ <https://www.google.com/maps/>
- ¹⁴ <https://rvgslibrary.org/Page.asp?NavID=105>

John Mathews an Early Pioneer

by Cathy Ulbrich

Every weekday for over twenty years, I passed a tiny cemetery in Eagle Point, Oregon. Every day, I wondered about this “Pioneer Cemetery” and vowed to stop and check it out, but I never did. The Pioneer Cemetery, located on Crystal Drive, is in the midst of a modern housing tract. For a number of years, I traversed the route, and the cemetery sat alone on the promontory as the homes grew nearer and nearer, then right up to its fence.

Fast forward a few years, and now, in retirement, I’m satisfying that curiosity.

Called the “John Mathews Pioneer Cemetery,” the burial ground is the final resting place for early Eagle Point rancher John Mathews and many of his family members. Mathews is credited with naming the community Eagle Point because of the bald eagles he saw soaring over the area’s eastern peaks.

John Mathews was a true pioneer. He was born on 2 March 1818 along the Pee Dee River in North Carolina. His surname at birth was Mask.

The Mask family came to America during the 1600s from England. By 1765, the Masks owned hundreds of acres on both sides of the Great Pee Dee River and operated a ferry. The Masks were active during the Revolutionary War, ferrying troops and supplies across the river.

As a Southern family of their time, the Masks owned slaves. In 1797, a young girl was purchased by the Masks off the auction block in Virginia. She was named “Jane.” Jane was born about 1783 in the African Congo. Her family, of Bantu origin, had migrated to southeastern Africa for better access to land. Eventually, the family immigrated to the island of Madagascar, where Jane and others were taken captive, put on a British ship, shackled, and transported to America. Jane survived the journey, and from all accounts, she matured into a lovely young woman.

Dudley Mask, the plantation owner’s son, found her attractive, and Jane became pregnant at thirteen years to his thirty-three. In 1798, Jane gave birth to a daughter, Penelope Ellender “Nellie” Mask. The following year, a son, also fathered by Dudley, was born and christened Hezekiah. Sadly, Jane did not survive the birth of her second child.

Jane’s daughter, Nellie, was raised by the Mask family, though remained a slave. Like her mother, she matured into a beautiful woman with cinnamon skin, curly hair, and a petite curvaceous figure. And like her mother, Dudley Mask was attracted to Nellie. The incest

between master and slave - his daughter - resulted in the birth of three children: John, 1816 (or 1818); Dudley, 1821; and Susannah, 1823.

In about 1825, Nellie was either given to or perhaps married a neighbor called Drury Matthis. With Drury, she had two additional children: Drury in 1826 and Mary Amanda in 1828. Drury Matthis resided on the Mask plantation with seven free people of color, so he may have been emancipated.

Nellie was a domestic slave. She is reputed to have been an excellent seamstress and weaver. Much of the Mask clothing, as well as that of the slave population, was made by Nellie. Her son, John, was educated and trained in horsemanship, both unusual for a slave. The Masks apparently valued and cared for Nellie and her children, as they were never sold or separated.

It is unclear whether Nellie, now using the surname Matthis, and her children purchased their freedom or were granted freedom. Evidence indicates that occurred before her father, Dudley's, death.

In about 1831, free people of color, such as Nellie and family, decided to leave North Carolina. It was not a safe environment for freed slaves. Nellie and her extended family joined the neighboring (white) Michael Wooley and Seth Smith families, bound for Tennessee.

Setting off with a large group of children and babies was a courageous undertaking. The party included Nellie, now a widow, at age 33, and children John, 14; Dudley, 10; Susannah, 8; Drury, 4; and Mary Amanda, 3.

The Matthis family settled in Claiborne County, Tennessee, near Tazewell. Michael Wooley hired the Matthis boys, John, Dudley, and Drury to work for him as Wooley assumed a position as overseer of roads.

In 1837, at the age of 19, dark-skinned, green-eyed, reddish-haired John Matthis married Michael and Martha Wooley's daughter, Elizabeth. She was reported to have been small and fair, with brown hair. Tennessee was a slave state, and it was unlawful for a white and a mulatto to marry. John and Elizabeth took great risks to wed.



Nellie

Children followed quickly. A daughter born in 1838 did not survive; William C. arrived in 1839, Drucilla in 1840, and Milla in 1842. The names William, Drucilla, and Milla were Mask family names.

During the 1840s, religion, slavery, and politics necessitated another move for the extended Matthis clan, including John's sister Susannah, husband Lewis Johnson, and children. Accompanying them was a family surnamed Smith, perhaps the same Seth Smith family they'd traveled with before. They set out for Mercer County, Missouri, in February 1844. Eventually, the Matthis, Johnson, and Smith families settled on the border between Mercer County, Missouri, and Decatur County, Iowa.

Things did not fare well for the family in Missouri. At that time, Missouri was a slave state, admitted as such by the Missouri Compromise. Neighboring Kansas was a free state. This led to skirmishes along the shared boundary. When John's brother, Dudley, was caught stealing, he was immediately hanged, according to family records, due to the fact he had "Negro" blood. Sister Susannah's husband, Lewis, died in 1851, leaving the family in uncertainty. While Missouri continued as a slave state, the West remained free - and it beckoned to John Matthis.

The discovery of gold in California in 1848 opened trails to the west. John and extended family set out in April 1853, bound for Oregon. At Fort Bridger, Wyoming, the wagon train obtained supplies for the push over the mountains. Breaking from the Oregon Trail, they followed the California Trail along the Humboldt River, eventually cutting over on the Applegate Trail.

Passing safely through the Modoc territory around Tule Lake, the Matthis train traveled via the Green Springs down to the Rogue River Valley and eventually made it to the bustling gold-town community of Jacksonville. John's sisters, Susannah and Mary Amanda opted to remain in Jacksonville while John and his family continued north to the banks of Little Butte Creek.



John Mathews

John sought land in which to farm and raise horses.

The banks of Little Butte Creek had fertile soil and ample water. As a mulatto, John could not buy or homestead land. A fellow traveler, John Woodson Tucker, obtained a Donation Land claim, and John leased land from him and erected a small cabin.

John began to farm and raise cattle and horses under the brand Lazy JM. It was not easy carving out a living from the wilderness where vigilance was required. Indigenous people and others stole cattle and horses, but the Matthis family persevered and succeeded.

Deer and game were also plentiful in the wooded area along the Little Butte Creek. In early November 1857, John, Woodson Tucker, and John's nephew, Jasper Hamilton, went hunting in the thickly wooded terrain. Hearing rustling in the brush, John fired - and tragedy struck. Instead of a deer, John shot and killed companion Woodson Tucker. John had the sorrowful duty of letting Tucker's wife, Angeline, who was still in Iowa, know of her husband's death.

Woodson Tucker was interred on a knoll with a beautiful view of the surroundings. And so commenced the Pioneer Cemetery.

Woodson's land went into an estate and was purchased by James Jackson. In 1859, John purchased the 160 acres for \$910 in gold coins, and eventually, in 1867, added the rest of Woodson's claim to his possessions when he paid \$300 in gold coins to Woodson's widow, Angeline.

John's finances waxed and waned, and between 1859 and 1866, he had numerous judgments brought against him for monies owed to neighbors. Somehow, John managed to pay the notes and continued to be successful. Documents show John was at this time, signing his name as "John Mathis."

In 1863, the military at Fort Klamath was using a rough, narrow trail, dubbed the Rancheria, to haul supplies between there and the Rogue Valley. John, with his background in road building in Tennessee, was instrumental in forging an easier route into the Rogue Valley. John's path crossed the Rogue River at Bybee Ferry, then via Union Creek across the Cascades and down Annie Creek on the east side into Fort Klamath. This eased the transport of goods and supplies across the mountains.

By the late 1860s, Oregon cattle supported the gold markets in Washington, Idaho, Montana, and British Columbia. Horses were at a premium. By this time, the Mathews ranch was renowned for breeding excellent horses. In the winter of 1875, John and his sons decided to chance herding 200 ponies over the mountains to Idaho. By February 1876, most of the stock had sold, and John and his son Dudley headed back to Oregon.

Sons Ki (Hezekiah) and William remained in Boise to sell the last of the horses. During the night in late February, a commotion was heard outside by the corrals, and John's son William grabbed a pistol and rushed out, followed by brother Ki. Shots were exchanged, and William was hit in the face and died on 1 March 1876 and was buried in Boise.

In August 1885, typhoid fever struck the Mathews family. All recovered except John, who succumbed on 12 August 1885. A newspaper printed the following tribute: "Mr. Mathews came to the valley at an early day in its settlement and located a house on Little Butte Creek, where he lived and prospered and raised a large family of children. He had reached the 'allotted age' of threescore and ten and leaves the record of a life of activity and honorable industry. He will be held in kindly remembrance as a good neighbor and good citizen." John was interred in the cemetery he had founded in 1857 after the accidental shooting of Woodson Tucker.

John's surviving sons, Ki, Dudley, Grant, and Greene, continued to raise horses in the Rogue River and Little Butte vicinities. Eventually, Dudley added 75 acres of wheat, and Greene constructed a granary.

John's mother, Nellie, outlived her son. She had been prosperous as a washwoman and a seamstress and continued living on the Mathews' Ranch, caring for the extended family. She passed away on 3 November 1892 at the age of 94. She was buried near her son, John, in the Mathews Cemetery.

Nellie and John's descendants continue to live and thrive in Southern Oregon as writers, farmers, family historians, and an actor. Ty Burrell, of the TV show *Modern Family*, is a great-great-great-grandson of John Mathews.

Though I no longer pass the Pioneer Cemetery on the crest of Crystal Drive, the ghosts of early Eagle Point pioneers continue to whisper to me for a story of their own.

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