

**SPECIAL
VETERANS DAY ISSUE**

ISSN 0736-802X

*The Livermore
Roots Tracer*



Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 901, Livermore, California 94551-0901

<http://l-ags.org> & <http://facebook.com/Livermore.Amador.Genealogical.Society/>

Membership Report

November, 2018

Thanks to the generosity of the following L-AGS members:

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Kristina Ahuja, Annette Breingan, Linda Driver and Walt Crawford, Richard and Wanda Finn, Arnold and Nancy Koslow, Tom and Natasha Mathews, Bob and Peggy Weber.

Total L-AGS Members as of July 9, 2018; 116 memberships and 126 Members

Meeting News

General Meetings — are held on the second Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court, Pleasanton. Map: <http://www.L-AGS.org/maps/Pls-BethEmek.html>

The L-AGS Writing Group — Meets monthly in Livermore. The encouragement to write your ancestors' stories and your own comes from this enthusiastic group. To join the email list, please send a note to <mailto:changes@L-AGS.org> with "Add me to the Writing Group list" in the subject line.

Let's Talk Genealogy — Meets monthly in Livermore. To join the email list, please send a note to <mailto:changes@L-AGS.org> with "Add me to the Let's Talk Genealogy list" in the subject line.

The Master Genealogist Group — usually meets on the third Saturday of the month, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Location: Contact TV-TMG Chair (Kay Speaks) tvimg.chair@L-AGS.org; TV-TMG Forum tvimg.group@L-AGS.org

Pleasanton Genealogy Center — is jointly supported by L-AGS, the Friends of the Pleasanton Library, and the Pleasanton Public Library. A L-AGS docent is available each Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Avenue Pleasanton, California. Or by appointment, e-mail: docents.chair@L-AGS.org.

Livermore Family History Center — Several L-AGS members, both LDS and non-LDS, volunteer as docents at the Livermore FHC. They are available to assist you in your genealogy research. The FHC has several subscription research sites not readily available elsewhere and is open Mondays 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday evenings 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. and Saturday 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. If the parking in front of the building is full, there is a large parking lot in the rear of the building. [Map](#).

L-AGS Leadership for 2018

President	president@L-AGS.org	Tom Mathews
First VP and Program Chair	program@L-AGS.org	Julie Liu
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Corresponding Secretary		Ken Bredlau
Recording Secretary		Susan Davis
Business Manager	business.manager@L-AGS.org	Duncan Tanner

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President's Message

Few Americans today can explain the difference between Veterans Day and Memorial Day. We can in my family. My father's earliest memory was of a day in St. Louis in November, 1918, watching a riotous celebration with "street cars clanging down Grand Avenue with washtubs and such tied onto the back." The Great War, so called because nobody back then could imagine that something so horrible could ever be repeated, had just ended. One of Dad's uncles, Ross, was fighting in Europe and another, Rolland, was preparing to ship out. War's spectral shadow would pass them by. Their father, my great-grandfather, was not so lucky. The week before, during another celebration prompted by premature reports of an armistice, Alexander Mathews collapsed on Main Street in his home town of Marissa, Illinois, and died of a massive heart attack.

Memorial Day, once called Decoration Day, grew from many local ceremonies that sprang up following our bloodiest war and evolved into a national day of mourning where we visited the graves of the hundreds of thousands of soldiers and civilians who perished during that War Between the States. Armistice Day, on the other hand, was a celebration of peace, of hope that we could one day learn from what happened and put our differences behind us.

I cede the rest of this column to *Breakfast of Champions: A Novel* by Kurt Vonnegut, whose words take us back to that brief moment when we had a chance to change the world.

"I will come to a time in my backwards trip when November eleventh, accidentally my birthday, was a sacred day called Armistice Day. When I was a boy, and when Dwayne Hoover was a boy, all the people of all the nations which had fought in the First World War were silent during the eleventh minute of the eleventh hour of Armistice Day, which was the eleventh day of the eleventh month.

"It was during that minute in nineteen hundred and eighteen, that millions upon millions of human beings stopped butchering one another. I have talked to old men who were on battlefields during that minute. They have told me in one way or another that the sudden silence was the Voice of God. So we still have among us some men who can remember when God spoke clearly to mankind.

"Armistice Day has become Veterans' Day. Armistice Day was sacred. Veterans' Day is not.

"So I will throw Veterans' Day over my shoulder. Armistice Day I will keep. I don't want to throw away any sacred things.

"What else is sacred? Oh, Romeo and Juliet, for instance.

"And all music is."

Tom Mathews, President, L-AGS

The Livermore Roots Tracer

The Roots Tracer is the quarterly publication of the Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society. The mission statement of the Roots Tracer is: **"Instruct. Inspire. Inform."**

We encourage members to submit articles for publication. Material can be e-mailed to: rootstracer.chair@L-AGS.org or mailed to L-AGS, P.O. Box 901, Livermore, CA 94551-0901. Want ghostwriting help? Just ask!

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George Morton Wagstaff, my grandfather

By Debbie Serpa

George Morton Wagstaff was born on July 23, 1892, in San Francisco, California, to Emma Frances Ayres, age 37, and William Gomber Wagstaff, age 37.

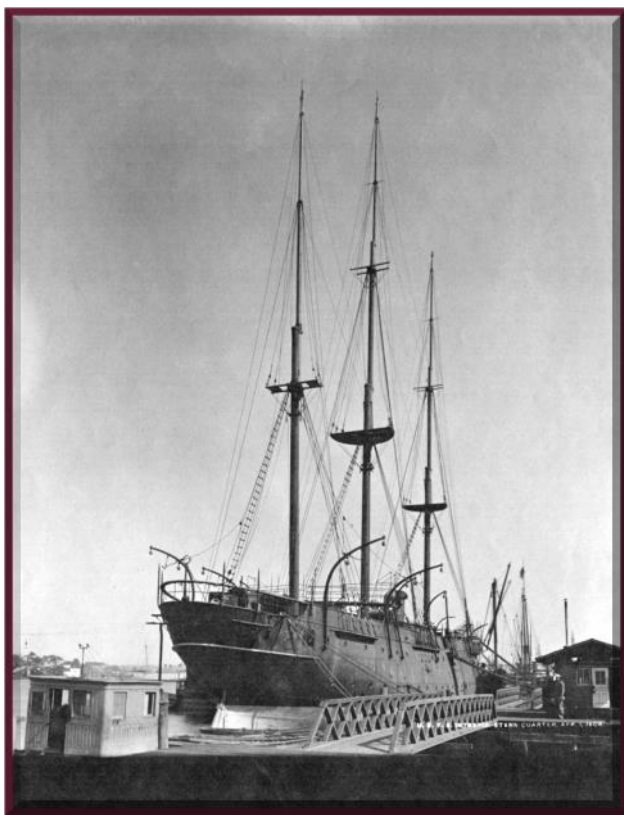
George lived in San Francisco, California, on June 2, 1900.

He was listed in the 1900 US Census - Marital Status: Single; George is listed as Joe Wagstaff - 7 years old and a Roomer - the first Emma Ayers is his grandmother and the second Emma, Emma F Ayers, is his mother. 2 Jun 1900 • 614 Hyde Street, San Francisco, San Francisco, California

Death of Mother - 1854–1907

His mother, Emma Frances Ayres, passed away on January 23, 1907, in Oroville, Butte County, California, at the age of 52.

George Morton Wagstaff enlisted in the US Army on June 15, 1907, when he was 15 years old,



Intrepid at Mare Island Navy Yard being outfitted 1 April 1905. Credit: US Navy photos from the Vallejo Naval & Historical Museum.

shortly after his mother died on Jan 23, 1907. don't have any information on where his father was at that time. His father seems to have abandoned him.

From: THE MASTHEAD, Official Treasure Island publication, page 2

San Francisco, California, SEPTEMBER 18, 1943

Meet The Chiefs

George Morton Wagstaff, Chief Buglemaster (PA), USN (Ret), embarked upon his colorful and varied naval career the 15th of June, 1911. Memories of recruit training at "Goat Island" are still vivid. The USS Pensacola lay at the short dock, he recalls, and the trainer USS Intrepid berthed at the long dock.



George Morton Wagstaff - 5 Jan 1916

Every morning, come fair, come foul, it was up and over the Intrepid's rigging for all hands.

Wagstaff, rated a bugler, was assigned to the armored cruiser, USS Maryland, for Alaskan duty. This cruise ended abruptly when the Maryland was ordered to Yokohama, bearing a party of high-ranking government officials to pay respects to the Japanese Emperor's funeral. At the conclusion of the ceremonies the Maryland returned to Seattle, where the official party disembarked, and the ship proceeded north to complete her Alaskan mission.

A slice of shore duty at Goat Island intervenes here, with Wagstaff acting as drum major for the Navy band during the World's Fair. After conducting many successful concerts and parades, he sounded Taps from high atop the Tower of Jewels



George Wagstaff, National Memorial Chairman, picture taken for US Army Navy Magazine - Sept 1950

to officially end the Fair in 1915.

Then followed in fairly rapid succession, cruises aboard four different ships: USS Pueblo, the flagship; USS San Diego, aboard her when war was declared in 1917; USS Pittsburgh and USS George Washington.

The USS Pittsburgh, he re-members amusingly, was a sort of martial ferry, transporting war brides from Liverpool to Hoboken. The palatial George Washington brought such distinguished personages as King Leopold, Queen Marie and Prince Albert to the United States for a good-will tour, then returning them to Ostend.

To follow Chief Wagstaff's interesting career gives one an animated review of most of the outstanding events of modern times. He was on duty at Guam when the great earthquake rocked Japan. Later, while stationed at Lakehurst, he was also on the scene when Lindbergh marched in triumph through the streets of New York City, following the Lone Eagle's historic-flight to France.

1928 found Chief Wagstaff master of the Navy band at Washington, D. C., passing in review at President Hoover's inaugural parade. After spending three eventful years in Washington, he was transferred to the USS California as Chief Buglemaster of the Pacific Fleet.

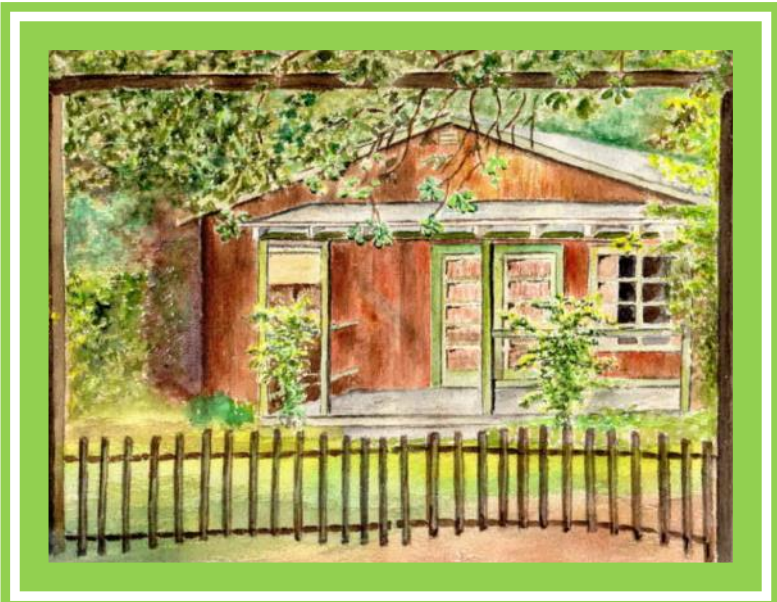
On January 21, 1931, after 23 years of military service, Wagstaff was trans-

ferred to the Naval Reserve. Three years in the US Army, and participation in the Vera Cruz and Haitian campaigns preceded his Navy enlistment.

Chief Wagstaff was recalled to active duty July 7, 1941 for the duration of WWII, and at present [September 18, 1943] is attached to Radio Materiel School. When Madam Chiang Kai-shek visited here recently, his drum and bugle corps paraded in honor of that gracious lady. Summing it up, Chief Wagstaff has been "around," and RMS is proud to boast of so colorful a figure.

Our Cabin in the Santa Cruz Mountains near Boulder Creek, California was built by George Wagstaff and Virgil Laney soon after WWII. Watercolor painting done by Mrs. Parker, a neighbor, in 1951. An insurance policy contained the following description - Lot 4, Block 'A', Wildwood by the river - 2 miles north of Boulder Creek on Hwy #9, Boulder Creek, F.D., Zone #2, California. The Cabin was built about 1945 off of Highway 9 on the San Lorenzo River near Boulder Creek.

George Morton Wagstaff lived with his wife, Myrtle, and daughter, Virginia, in San Leandro and Oakland, California, from 1942 through 1955. George Morton Wagstaff died on March 14, 1955, at Oak Knoll Naval Hospital, in Oakland, California, when he was 62 years old. His remains were buried at Golden Gate National Cemetery, San Bruno, San Mateo County, California.



Our Cabin in the Santa Cruz Mountains near Boulder Creek

Collett Rites Are Held

By Donna Toole, from a newspaper clipping

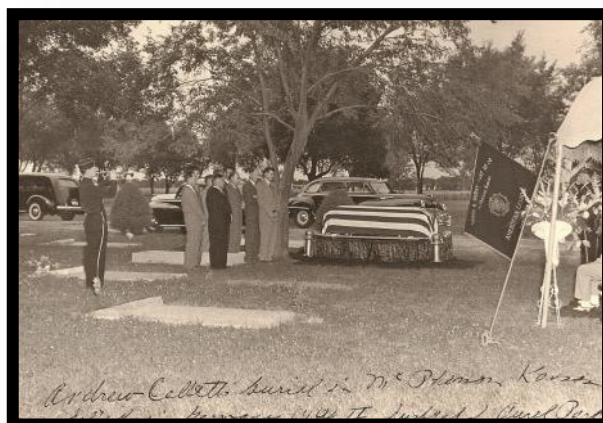
Interment is stated as 1949 for Andrew. He was possibly initially buried in Germany per the obituary, but in 1949 his body was probably brought back and buried in McPherson Cemetery in Section E, Lot 51, Space 4.

Burial services were held yesterday evening at the McPherson Cemetery for 1st. Lt. Andrew C. Collett, who was killed in action on April 1, 1945, near [Bad] Berka, [Weimar], Germany. The services were conducted by Dr. Orville S. Walters.

A quartet made up of Byron Broadbooks, Milan Crown, Robert Andrews and Robert Green, sang "Son of My Soul."

The colors and color guard from the McPherson American Legion Post met the train and accompanied the body to the cemetery.

Mr. Collett was born on March 9, 1920, at Geary, [Canadian Co.] Oklahoma, and was married to Miss Aurel Parks on Sept. 15, 1942.



1st Lt. Andrew C. Collett's burial



1st Lt. Andrew C. Collett's grave marker

Persistence and Luck - A Potent Mixture

By Frank Geasa

My grandfather, John Dwyer, was born 24 December 1879 in Brierfield Townland (now Druminda), Cappawhite, County Tipperary, Ireland. He was the 8th child of 14 live siblings born to Cornelius Dwyer and Johanna Ryan. All 14 were baptized in the Roman Catholic (RC) parish of Cappawhite, County Tipperary, Ireland.

Over the last 20 years or so I had been able to gather a reasonable amount of family information on all but the oldest 2, a brother named Martin and a sister named Mary. Talking to older cousins in Ireland and England I learned that Martin and Mary had gone to Australia but they weren't sure when they went or where they located. A younger cousin, granddaughter of Ellen, remembered that her grandmother would occasionally receive a letter or package from Mary. An only child, this cousin didn't have or know what happened to any of these. She indicated Ellen didn't remember some of her older siblings as they had emigrated before she was old enough to remember. Although I had frequently attempted to find infor-

mation on Martin and Mary I made little headway although I went to various Australian government sites and put queries on Australian message sites.

Until recently Australia has been very tight in releasing genealogy records. Almost no records, not even indexes of records were available. No census records, no land records, etc. Persistence pays off, however. Recently some genealogy records became available and the state of Queensland has released indexes of older sets of vital records. Fortunately some of these give enough information to definitively identify individuals. Also digital images of Assisted Immigration Records 1848 - 1912 became available online.¹ These indicate that Mary ODwyer [sic] was the first to arrive in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia on 13 October 1888 and Martin Dwyer arrived in Brisbane on 12 December 1889. From

¹<https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/arts/heritage/archives/collection/immigration>

Name	Christened	Located at death	Marriage
Martin Dwyer	12 Aug 1868	Brisbane, Australia	Hannah O'Brien, Abt 1895
Mary Dwyer	15 Aug 1869	Brisbane Australia	George Watson, 11 Jun 1894
Julia Dwyer	18 Nov 1870	Passaic, New Jersey	John F Dwyer, Abt 1902
Michael Dwyer	4 Feb 1872	Passaic, New Jersey	Margaret McShane, 17 Jul 1894
Patrick Dwyer	22 Mar 1874	East Rutherford, NJ	Elizabeth Kearns, 18 Apr 1898
Catherine Dwyer	16 Feb 1876	Foilaclug, Co Tipp, Ire	James Ryan, 1910
Bridget Dwyer	26 Oct 1877	Doon, Co Limerick, Ire	John Noonan, Abt 1921
John Dwyer	25 Dec 1879	New York City	Anne Leamy, 3 May 1906
David Dwyer	18 Jan 1882	Brooklyn, NY	Johanna McLaughlin, 3 May 1922
Johanna Dwyer	10 Oct 1883	Durham, England	Roman Catholic nun
Cornelius Dwyer	27 Dec 1885	New York City	Alice Dwyer, 10 May 1911
William Dwyer	29 Apr 1888	Brooklyn, NY	Mary Ganley, 30 Oct 1922
James Dwyer	11 May 1890	Brierfield,, Co Tipp, Ire	Never married
Ellen Dwyer	21 Oct 1891	Doon, Co Limerick, Ire	Dan Noonan, 28 Nov 1923

I had no such luck finding the senior Cornelius's christening in the Cappawhite parish. If he was born in another parish it would be like looking for a needle in a haystack as according to background information on the NLI site the library holds microfilm copies of over 3500 registers from 1086 RC parishes in Ireland and Northern Ireland up to the year 1880. I was pretty sure their first names were Martin and Julia as that would conform

indices also provided by the Queensland government I learned that Mary married a George Watson in 1894, raised a small family and died in 1922. Likewise these show that Martin married a Hannah O'Brien and raised at least 4 sons and 1 daughter.² Martin retired from the military and died in 1927. Along with newspaper stories, legal notices and other items the stories of Martin and Mary are still being filled out.

My second big itch that I needed scratched with my grandfather's family was who Cornelius's father was. I had paid for several searches through a heritage site which in addition to the children's christenings above gave me the location and date of Cornelius (senior) and Johanna Ryan's marriage. Unfortunately it didn't give their parents names. The fact that the place of the marriage was the same RC parish and knowing the Irish custom was to be married in the wife's parish I searched the parish records available online via the National Library of Ireland (NLI) for her birth record which I found. It showed her parents as Michael Ryan and Mary Bourke. The surname Bourke rang a bell from many years back when I had asked a very elderly cousin if she remembered her grandparents name and the only name she remembers was that her grandmother was a Bourke. In the same parish books I also found the marriage of Johanna's parents and the christenings of 4 siblings.

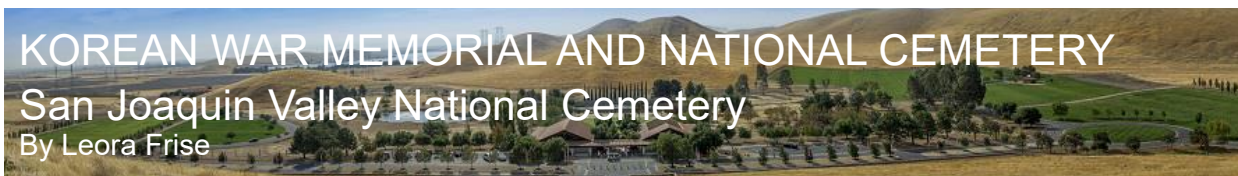
to the established naming convention in Ireland and much of Europe at that time. That convention held that the first son was named after the husband's father, the first daughter after the wife's mother, the second son after the wife's father and the second daughter after the husband's mother. That convention had been followed by Johanna's parents in naming their children. A very small clue to hang on to.

Like many others I have had my DNA analyzed by Ancestry DNA. On May 9th a lady in Cairns, Queensland, Australia contacted me on the Ancestry DNA site indicating she and I matched on the 3rd/4th cousin level. My first reaction was that she must be a descendant of either Martin Dwyer or Mary Dwyer Watson. Looking at a family tree she had the only surname I could find that we had in common was Dwyer and the only Dwyer there was an entry for a Paddy Dwyer married to a J Foilaclug, nothing more. Analysis of the tree showed Paddy was her 3 times great-grandfather. This and a look at her profile showed her to be the age of my oldest grandchildren meaning there was probably a 2 generation gap between us. It also

Continued on Page 13

²<https://www.qld.gov.au/law/births-deaths-marriages-and-divorces/family-history-research>

³<http://www.nli.ie/en/parish-register.aspx>



KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL AND NATIONAL CEMETERY

San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery

By Leora Frise

My trip with the Livermore Seniors was on November 8, 2017. After an hour ride down Highway 5 to Santa Nella, Merced County we turned left at Anderson's Pea Soup restaurant to West McCabe Road, Santa Nella. This takes us to the other side of the freeway passing several acres of solar panels that is probably the electric source of the local towns. This road takes us to 3205 West McCabe Road and San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery.



Avenue of Flags

As you approach the cemetery you are greeted by the Avenue of Flags. Then out in the middle of nowhere sits the The Remembrance Memorial for California Korean War Veterans.

In 1989, the Romero Ranch Company donated land to the Department of Veterans Affairs for the creation of a National Cemetery. The first phase developed 105 acres of land, and was completed in May 1992; there was enough space for the interment of over 20,000 remains. The cemetery now has 322 acres of land. In 2008 there were 30,054 interments.

The first stop was at the **Kiosk** where several of our ladies looked up their friends and relatives. This map was printed with the location of the graves. We drove around and found the locations. Each lady got out and walked to the site for pictures and to remember. Because one was a recent burial site, we were able to determine that they

are buried in the order that they died.

There is a small military museum on site; although we missed this, it has exhibits of uniforms, medals, and other memorabilia.

The California Korean War Veterans Memorial was erected in 1998. It consists of 16 five-foot-tall granite slabs arranged in a circle. Engraved on each "monolith" as they are called, are the names of the 2,495 veterans who left California, did not return and died during the Korean War. The monument was founded by Ron Jabaut and dedicated, August 1, 1998. The California Korean War State Memorial is entitled *The Remembrance Memorial for California Korean War Veterans*.

There is also, to the right, this statue dedicated to all Airborne Forces, "The 11th Airborne Memorial", a granite and bronze monument dedicated in 2002.



California Korean War Memorial

This picture is looking up from the monument to the back of the main building. We ended our trip at Pea Soup Andersen's for delicious split pea soup. We enjoyed shopping in their gift shop. I even got a squashed penny for my collection. This is a delightful one day trip, especially for genealogists.¹

¹Photos courtesy of Erin Carnahan, Cemetery Representative, San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery

A Veterans Day memorial for my father Royal William Abbott (1896-1992)

By Jane A. Southwick

Royal William Abbott was born on 26 October, 1896 to William Fillmore Abbott and his wife Agnes Ellen McAvey in Old Town, Penobscot, Maine. In 1910, when Royal was 14, the family moved to Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He joined a five year program as a machinist apprentice for the Canadian Pacific Railroad. During this time Royal thought about joining the U.S. Navy. He and his mother (Agnes Ellen) took a two week vacation to Dover-Foxcroft, Piscataquis, Maine to visit his grandfather, Thomas McAvey. Thomas had been in the Navy during the Civil War. Royal made his decision to join, although his mother, Agnes, was very unhappy about it.

Royal enlisted in the Navy on July 19, 1915. He became an Apprentice Seaman, and was sent to Boston where he served on the Cruiser, USS Salem, (a Receiving ship) for a short while. He was given uniforms and \$19.50 a month which had to pay for everything including the maintenance of his uniforms.

While Royal worked as an Apprentice Seaman in Newport, Rhode Island in 1915, he heard of classes being set up at the Naval Training Station for men wanting to attend the Naval Academy. A friend of his, Ensign William Porter encouraged him to sign up for these classes. He said to Royal, "Would you rather be a midshipman, or a coal passer? Then get in this class." (A "coal passer" stoked the boilers.) Royal decided and he applied for the classes at the Naval Academy Preparatory School.

In the spring of 1916 he passed his exams, resigned as a Seaman 2nd Class and the next day, June 24, 1916 he became a Midshipman. Royal's first assignment as an Ensign was on the USS New Mexico in July 1919. He wanted a ship that had an electrical system, and he writes that he was the "Engineering Watch and Division Officer of an electrically driven battleship." The New Mexico was at the Norfolk Naval Station (a part of Hampton Roads, Virginia) and "on the 16th of July 1919 the New Mexico became the flagship of the newly organized Pacific Fleet; and three days later she sailed for the Panama

Canal and San Pedro, California, arriving on August 9."

Royal met Loreen Murphy and they were married March 31, 1921 in San Pedro, Los Angeles, California by Loreen's father, Archibald B. Murphy in the First Baptist Church.

In the summer of 1921, Royal was undecided about entering the submarine field or the naval air force. Loreen was very uncomfortable about flying, so he chose submarines. He was assigned to Submarine School in New London, Connecticut. In January 1922, Royal was assigned to the Submarine H-4. In 1923, the whole Submarine Division was transferred to Hawaii. The family spent the next three years in Hawaii.

In the spring of 1927, Royal attended Columbia University in New York City. Loreen and the children joined him there. Royal received his Master of Science Degree in the Schools of Mines, Engineering and Chemistry from Columbia University, June 6,



Commander Royal

1928.

In the summer of 1931, the family traveled to Jefferson Park, Alexandria, Virginia, where Royal was assigned to the Naval Research Laboratory. In July 1933, Royal made Lieutenant Commander and was assigned to the USS Mississippi (a battleship) as an Electrical Officer, and Senior Assistant Engineer. The ship was in Norfolk and was due to sail from Norfolk to Long Beach. In June 1938, Royal was assigned to the USS West Virginia as the Navigator and Tactical Officer. In 1940, he was promoted to Commander.

On Jan 10, 1941, Commander Royal Abbott assumed command of the USS Aldebaran, a supply ship, formerly the SS Stag Hound, a cargo ship for Grace Lines. It was renamed the Aldebaran [a star of the first magnitude in the Constellation Taurus], and placed in commission on 26 December 1940. Royal was the first to command the Aldebaran as it was placed into full commission January 14, 1941.

Continued on Page 14

Solving a 90-Year-Old Adoption Mystery

By Jim Stinecipher

My maternal grandmother, Portia Oakes, was adopted at birth. For decades, the only information we had about her birth family came from a succinct court order describing the timeline of her adoption and mentioning, tantalizingly, her birth name (Gloria Dawn Downen) and the name of her birth mother (Ida Downen). We tried searching Ancestry and FamilySearch to no avail -- could it be *this* Ida? Or *that* one? Were we even searching for the right names? Obtaining additional information from the custodians of the adoption records was similarly unsuccessful. The adoption

22 together as husband and wife; that on or about the 11th day of
 23 May, 1925, the said Gloria Dawn Downen, minor herein,
 24 was born unto Ida Downen, out of wedlock. That said mother, by
 25 an instrument in writing duly acknowledged, relinquished said
 26 child unto The Children's Home Society of California for the purpose
 27 of adoption. That prior to the commencement of this proceed-

May 11, 1925 Court Order Excerpt

agency had long since closed down. Frustrated, we searched in vain and wondered.

Last year, all of my family, enticed by Black Friday specials, got our DNA tested with 23andMe. Nothing too unexpected came out of the results initially – surprise! We're all European mutts! -- But as we dug into the mile-long list of DNA relatives, we ran into a problem: without my maternal grandparents' DNA, we had no way of knowing which of my mom's relatives were from her mother's side of the family.

Then we got a note from a fairly close match -- could we tell if he was a clue in this mystery?

Using some DNA ideas that I hope to describe in a future article, I was convinced that, yes, this person was a relative of my grandmother. Two pieces of information got us even closer. For one, my mom and he shared a segment of DNA on their X chromosome -- meaning the match had to have come through *his* mother as well. A second

close match on 23andMe ended up being a known cousin to our first match, pointing us to the proper grandparent. We'd whittled down possible branches on his side by 75%.

From there, I started building a tree, careful to note not just parents, but siblings as well. At the end of an afternoon, I had covered a coffee table with taped-together papers, CSI-style lines and arrows pointing every which way. I knew we were closely enough related that, somewhere, I had already written the name of our common ancestor.

The range of estimated relationships provided by 23andMe was broad: the two matches were 2nd and 3rd cousins of my mom, and 3rd and 4th cousins of my uncle, her brother. With the preliminary work done, we knew that my mom and uncle had to have the same relationship to both of these matches. I started testing hypotheses: suppose this person was my mom's 2nd cousin -- what did that imply about the possible relatives? How about the third cousin, twice removed? In about half of the cases I tried, I was able to strike the relationship as implausible or impossible -- this person was unlikely to be a grandmother at 25, that person can't have shared an X chromosome. After whittling down the list to the closest 4 possibilities (2C1R, 2C2R, 3C, 3C1R) I could start filling in the common ancestor, and then try to work my way back down to my grandma.

Gloria Don's Birth Certificate, May 11, 1925

At the same time, I started searching Los Angeles for the surnames I had found. During one search, FamilySearch suggested a birth record as a "not quite, but maybe" match. Here was a Gloria Don (sic), born to Ida Colson and John Pinder on May 11, 1925 at the Salvation Army Women's Home in Los An-

geles, California. My heart lurched. The birth date was correct, the birth name was close, and her father's name was scrawled on my paper tree. But Colson?

As it turns out, Ida Colson (1901-1965) married Pharris Downen in 1920 in Colorado. They had a daughter, Genevieve, in 1922 (Gloria's birth record mentions a second sibling).

Sometime around 1924, Ida Colson and John Pinder (a native of Sudbury, Ontario) were in the same place at the same time and conceived a child. On May 11, 1925, their daughter,



My grandmother with her family, l-r: Beverly Oakes, her adoptive sister; Pearl Thom, her adoptive mother; my grandmother, Portia Oakes; Ruben Oakes, her adoptive father

Gloria, was born, then surrendered to the Children's Home Society of California for adoption. Her adoptive parents, Ruben and Pearl Oakes, took her in less than a month after her birth and had formally adopted her by the time she was 6 months old.

As with any discovery, this has led to even more questions. How and when did Ida and John meet? How did she end up in California?

Which cousins might be able to fill in the gaps? We still have a lot to learn, but we're on the right track.

Honoring My Father on Veterans Day

By Sue Davis

My father, Ellsworth Ammon Barr (12/31/1913 – 6/22/1984), served in the Army Air Force in WWII. (A side story: growing up in Wisconsin and Montana, he was always called by his middle name, Ammon, apparently a family tradition. When he enlisted they took one look at his birth certificate and declared his name was Ellsworth! He went by Ellsworth ever since.)

Apparently he enlisted 20 Aug 1943. He received training in Airplane Mechanics and was the Flight Engineer for a B-24 bomber. At 30 years old he was substantially older than most of the crew and they called him "The Old Man." He served in the 490th Bomb Group, 851st Bomb Squadron. They flew 31 bombing missions from January 1944 to April 1945. He kept a mission diary and it is quite an interesting read, from the first mission where they flew a chaff ship (no bombs) and was the second ship over the target ahead of 780 planes (crew members passing out from the lack of oxygen, communications within the plane not working, none of the guns on the

plane worked, etc., etc.) to a final 2 "chow missions" dropping food on Holland. I don't think he thought much of the combat missions, but he was quite moved by the food drops and noted in his diary. The following is an excerpt from the first chow mission: "This was quite interesting. Dropping food to starving people instead of death and destruction. The feeling one gets is good. I got quite a thrill seeing the Dutch people waving hands, handkerchiefs and just about anything they could wave to demonstrate their thankfulness. They had spelled out "Thank You Boys" on the field in which we dropped the supplies."

I think he was profoundly affected by his experience in the war and made lasting relationships with the men in his crew, even though they resided all over the US. He was actively involved in organizing reunions of the crew. My parents married after the war. My mother was a Geography teacher and loved to travel (and had done an unusual amount of traveling before she was married). However, she could never get my dad to travel overseas – he felt he had enough in the war!

Proud to Serve

By Patricia Northam

I've been trying to write every week using Amy Johnson Crow's writing prompts from *52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks*.

<https://www.amyjohnsoncrow.com/52-ancestors-in-52-weeks/>

Amy's prompts have been good as it provides me with some questions for my parents while they are still living and with good memories. And it also makes it easier to pull something out and tweak it for possible publication.

Most of my relatives, who served in the military, served during WWII. The US Government had signed into law on 16 September 1940 the Selective Training and Services Act of 1940. It was the first peacetime draft in US history. It required all males between the ages of 21 and 45 to register for the draft. However, on 27 September 1942 the age was lowered to 16 provided there was parental consent. Of course, by 1942 we were involved in war both in Europe and in the Pacific.

The relative closest to me who served in the military is my father, Douglas Northam. I have detailed more about him in two other articles, "Freedom Ain't Free" in the Roots Tracer November 2005 issue, Vol. 25, No. 4 and "Douglas Northam, POW No. 1984" in the Roots Tracer November 2010 issue, Vol. 30, No. 4. Douglas was born 23 October 1919. He joined the Navy in July 1940. He served first as a seaman first class and then a gunner's mate. His ship the USS Boise sailed him to China where he was transferred to the USS Oahu river boat to patrol the Yangtze River to protect US interests. When things heated up in the Philippines the USS Oahu was ordered to the Philippines. On May 7, 1942 the U. S. military was surrendered at Corregidor by General Wainwright. Douglas was a POW from then until the end of the war 2 September 1945. Douglas stayed in the Navy until July 1948 when he received an honorable discharge and the rank of Chief Gunners Mate. Amazingly, Dad is still with us



*Douglas Northam,
1919-living*

at age 99.

Douglas' older brother, James Wardlow Northam, was born 20 February 1917 and died 26 August 2012. JW served in the U. S. Army Air Force as a waist and tail gunner. His Draft Registration Card gave his registration date as 16 October 1940. He flew with



*James Wardlow Northam,
1917-2012*
and 260 Bomb Squadron in Europe during WWII. Refer to <http://www.303rdbg.com> for more information on some of the missions. Photos and maps are included.

Douglas' younger brother, Donald Northam, was born 9 March 1921 and died 14 January 2010. After Doug was taken prisoner by the Japanese, Donald joined the Navy in 1942. He wanted to fight the Japanese who had taken his brother. Donald enlisted 12 May 1942. He was sent to Ames, Ohio for an electricians course. When he finished, he was promoted to EM3C (Electrician's Mate Third Class). He is listed on various muster rolls as he was



*Donald Northam,
1921-2010*

transferred to different ships. After the war, he was sent to Bikini Atoll to assist with radiation testing. Donald was honorably discharged in 1952. After his Naval service Donald worked as an electrician.

Doug's father, Wardlow Nugent Northam, was too old for the draft at age 48 (birth 8 June 1894). However, he served during part of the war by working at an army base in the arsenal where he had a job testing machine parts on a conveyor



*Wardlow Nugent
Northam, 1894-
1963*

belt (quality control). If parts weren't passing the level of quality expected, he would stop the conveyor. One time, the production manager asked "What is wrong? Why did you stop the line?" Wardlow told him the products weren't meeting the standard. The manager said "Let them go." Wardlow refused. A colonel in charge was making his rounds of inspection with his aides and asked "What is wrong?" Wardlow told the colonel that he would not send faulty equipment as passing inspection because he didn't want his sons to have nothing to fight with except a rock or a stick. The colonel replied, "You and your sons are the type of people that are to win this war." The conveyor belt was stopped and the parts were taken off to be corrected so that our military wouldn't have flawed equipment. Wardlow passed away 9 January 1963.



John Charles Vitaich, 1924-1947

My maternal grandfather, Joseph Louis Vitaich, was born 18 October 1885 and died 13 October 1948. He, too, was too old for the draft. However, he served our country by working in the shipyards of the San Francisco/Oakland/Alameda area (California). He worked as a riveter and boilermaker. At times, he was the foreman of a crew.

My maternal uncle, John Charles Vitaich, was born 28 April 1924 and died 20 October 1947. Although he was the right age to serve, he was not accepted into service because of his severe hearing loss. Essentially he was considered deaf. So instead, like his father, he hired on in the shipyards to support the war effort.

Though Louis Marino was not a direct ancestor, he had married my Auntie (Mom's sister, Dorothy Marie Vitaich). Our families were quite close. Uncle Louie was born on 4 October 1919 in Verbicaro, Cosenza, Italy. He died 6 August 1961 in Daly City, San Mateo, California. He did not know he wasn't a U. S. citizen until he went to enlist with the army. He did petition the courts in 1942 to



Joseph Louis Vitaich, 1885-1948



Louis Marino, 1919-1961

become a naturalized citizen. The U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs notes his Navy enlistment date as 8 May 1944 and release from service as 30 December 1945.

So, whether a member of the military or someone on the home front, my family members were proud of their service to our country.

Persistence and Luck, Continued from page 7

meant if she and I were blood related that Paddy might be the oldest brother of Cornelius. Indeed Cornelius's 3rd son was named Patrick, again following the Irish naming pattern of naming the 3rd son after the father's oldest brother. One other thing stood out to me. I had never run into the surname Foilaclug in my Irish research but I was aware of an Irish townland named Foilaclug. My great grandfather Cornelius's sister, Catherine, married a James Ryan from Foilaclug and went to live on his farm about 5 miles from her family's home in Brierfield. I have exchanged home visits with one of their great granddaughters.

My next step was of course dictated by a strong hunch. I found that Foilaclug is in the RC parish of Kilcommon, still in County Tipperary. I was able to view the parish records online at the National Library of Ireland site. Knowing the approximate time frame from Cornelius age on census records I started looking about 1835. I found the baptism record for a Patrick Dwyer on 31 May 1838 and it gave his parents as Martin Dwyer and Julia Ryan.

It took just a few minutes more to find our Cornelius written as Cornel on 17 Aug 1840 with parents Martin and Julia. Finally!! As a bonus I also found 4 more siblings of Patrick and Cornelius.

Lessons reinforced:

- 1) If the information at a location is not yet available at wherever, go back periodically to see if it has become so.
- 2) You probably know more than you think. Analyze, analyze and analyze some more.
- 3) Luck comes when you least expect it.

Abbott, continued from page 9

On December 1, 1941, the Aldebaran left Pearl Harbor and returned to San Francisco December 6. When the December 7 Pearl Harbor attack came, the ship was filled with supplies and left December 17 to return to Hawaii.

In the summer of 1944, Royal's assignment changed and Royal and Loreen drove to San Diego where Royal trained in Amphibious Warfare. He became Acting Commodore of an Amphibious Division of seven ships and spent the rest of the War in the Pacific.

After the war, in 1946 Royal became the General Inspector for the 19th Fleet (Pacific Reserve Fleet). He took over from Captain Rickover and was in charge of moth balling the fleet. In June 1947, Royal retired from the Navy.

On June 8, 1967 Royal and Loreen bought a Town House in Rossmoor, Walnut Creek, California. They moved in May 8th 1968. In 1971 they had a beautiful 50th Wedding Anniversary

at the Rossmoor Dollar Club House. Then in 1987 they celebrated their 65th anniversary, again at the Rossmoor Dollar Club House.

In 1990, Royal had a stroke which paralyzed his right side. He worked very hard with physical therapy to make a reasonable recovery. With help oreen and Royal maintained an adequate life style. In January 1992, Royal experienced another set of strokes which claimed his life. He passed away January 23, 1992.

In December 1992, Loreen fell and broke a hip. She came through surgery all right, but the Doctor discovered colon cancer. She had a successful operation for this but grew weaker. She passed away March 4, 1993.

Royal and Loreen were interred at Hulls Memorial Chapel in Walnut Creek Jan 23, 1992. On April 17, 1998 his three children, Richard, Bill and Jane moved the urns of Royal and Loreen to the San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery in Gustine, Merced, California.



Changes of A Lifetime — “Clara, we’ve seen it all!”

By Gene R. Block

Recently I had the occasion to review one of my genealogy files that I had not looked at in a number of years. In the process of looking at all the papers in the file, I came across something written by one of my maternal grandmother's first cousins, Clara Johnson, in the 1980's, near the end of her life. She was reminiscing about all the changes she had seen in her lifetime.

After I reread what Clara had written I realized it was a wonderful description of what life was like for our ancestors and their children who lived in rural America in the early part of the 1900's.

Clara was born in Monroe County, Illinois in

April, 1906. Her father, Joseph Kipping, was born in Herdorf,¹ Germany and came to America as a child in 1868 with his parents and siblings. Clara's mother, Frances, was also born in Monroe County. Clara's early childhood was spent growing up on the family farm speaking only German. She described her early life as “pleasant” with the family being well-fed and “always cheese and supplies cooling in the well and enough milk from the family cows to keep six active children satisfied.” Her brothers hunted in the nearby woods and her father made wine from the grapes grown in their vineyard. Her mother would make jellies and preserves

from the grapes. She stated that “no one ever went hungry.”

While the family worked during the week, Sundays were reserved for worship at the Catholic Church² located in Madonnaville³, several miles away. In good weather the family walked to church on Sundays. When the weather was inclement the family rode to church in a horse drawn surrey. When there was snow on the ground they rode to church in a horse drawn sled. Clara stated that the sermons during Sunday Mass were always one hour long. One Sunday they were given in German for the local “German settlement” and the next Sunday they were given in English for the local “Irish settlement.” Since there were no nearby funeral homes, when family members or friends passed away, the mourners would visit the home of the deceased where the coffin would be brought into the parlor for everyone to “pay their respects.” All in all Clara described her life in the countryside as peaceful, except for the occasional peddler who came by “trying to sell his wares.”

Things changed during World War I. Clara’s oldest brother enlisted in the Service and was stationed in Kentucky. She stated that as far as the family knew, “Kentucky was as far away as the other side of the world.” After the war her brother returned home unharmed, but a cousin lost his right arm and left leg in the war. The school to which the Kipping children walked to and from each day was five miles from their farm. A huge disruption in their life occurred when the school no longer permitted the children to speak German. Clara stated that learning English and studying their lessons in English was difficult. While the Kipping children struggled, they eventually began to understand English “and study the tough English lessons.”

Clara stated that her mother whom she called, “Mama” went from cleaning the family clothes on a washboard to cleaning them in a washing machine, “that she operated by stepping on a pedal,” to using an electric machine after the area where they lived obtained electricity. She stated that the family’s first telephone was a twenty party phone line. Their ring was two longs, one short and one long. She said that the temptation to “listen in” when other parties were on the phone was “strong!”

She mentioned the invention of “talking machines” which apparently were the forerunner of the phonographs. She wrote that their family was

fortunate in that a neighbor who had such a machine would play their talking machine on the telephone every Sunday so that all the neighbors could enjoy the music. She mentioned that in her youth she saw the advancement of the airplane, the automobile and the “heyday” of the railroads.

Then the Great Depression hit. Clara, by this time in her 20’s, was fortunate to be working in St. Louis for \$50.00 a month. She described St. Louis as “a sad city during the Depression.” She stated that “Veterans would line the streets selling apples for a nickel” to people passing by.

After the Depression Clara married a young attorney named Clarence Johnson who died of pneumonia at the age of 49, “just a few years before Penicillin was introduced for treatment of this and many other illnesses.” Interestingly, Clara’s husband, Clarence, died on April 23, 1947, just three days after her father passed away.

Clara lived from the time of our 26th President, Theodore Roosevelt, until the 40th President, Ronald Reagan. A former schoolmate of Clara’s became a Catholic priest and was a life-long friend. One day while they were discussing changes they had seen in their lifetime he told her, “Clara, we’ve seen it all!”

I’m not sure whether Clara’s priest friend was correct when he told her that during their lifetime they “had seen it all.” One can only imagine what their reactions would be if they were still alive today and were able to witness the explosion of personal electronic devices and all the advances in medicine in the last 25-30 years that are so commonplace today. Then there are things on the horizon like driverless automobiles, drones delivering packages to our door and the whole field of artificial intelligence which is really in its infancy.

I have the feeling that even our generation “hasn’t seen it all.” It really is only the beginning of what is to come in the future. Whether all these changes will ultimately prove to be good or bad, only time will tell.

¹Herdorf is a town in the district of Altenkirchen, in Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany. It is situated on the river Heller, approx. 20 km south-west of Siegen.

²Immaculate Conception Church, Madonnaville, Illinois; the church, was built by hand out of native stone. The parish dates from 1838, with the first church being built in 1844; the current church dates from 1855.

³Madonnaville, Illinois is a small unincorporated community in the historic Bluff Precinct of Monroe County, Illinois, 31 highway miles south of downtown Saint Louis, Missouri.

Future General Meetings

Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court, Pleasanton

Visitors are always welcome.

December 10, 7:30 p.m.

Dvorah Lewis

*How your Hard Work Can Conquer All at
the Sutro Library*

January 14, 7:30 p.m.

Christine B. Green

British Online Genealogy

February 11, 7:30 p.m.

Lisa Gorrell

Tips for Breaking Brick Walls

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FIRST CLASS



Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society

Presents ~

Dvorah Lewis

Genealogy Librarian-Sutro Library

You Are Invited-Bring a guest

**WHEN: Monday, Dec. 10, 2018 ~
7:30 PM**

**WHERE: Congregation Beth Emek
3400 Nevada Court
Pleasanton**

**COST: No Charge - Visitors
welcome**



Labor Omnia Vitae: Hard Work Conquers All at the Sutro Library.

Dvorah Lewis, (MLIS), joined the California State Library in June 2017 as the Genealogy and Local History Librarian at Sutro Library. With a background in academic libraries and archives, she is excited to help genealogy patrons learn how to navigate the State Library's extraordinary collections and resources.

Originally from Davis, Dvorah earned her Bachelor's degree in English with a minor in Jewish Studies at UC Irvine and earned her Master's in Library Science (MLIS) from UCLA. Prior to joining the California State Library, she worked as a Reference Assistant at the Charles E. Young Research Library and as a Project Archivist for two Los Angeles Jewish institutions.

Her passion for archives and genealogy was inspired by an interview with her great Aunt Essie, the then eldest member of her family, which revealed that Essie and her siblings grew up in America's first Jewish orphanage located in Philadelphia.

Dvorah feels that by preserving that past we can understand the present and bring positive change to the future.

For additional information contact: Julie Liu/Kay Speaks, Program Chairperson,
email: program@L-AGS.org



Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society

Presents ~
Christine Bell Green

You Are Invited

WHEN: Monday, Jan. 14, 2019 ~
7:30 PM

WHERE: Congregation Beth Emek
3400 Nevada Court
Pleasanton

COST: No Charge - Visitors welcome



British Genealogy on the Internet

This presentation will focus on discovering your British Ancestors on English and Welsh Internet research sites that complement Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org and FindmyPast.com, the big three websites for British and Welsh genealogy. We will explore what records and information are available on free or pay-as-you-go sites.

Christine Bell Green PLCGS is a professional genealogy researcher and educator. Genealogy education is her passion. She teaches beginning to advanced genealogy in Mountain View/Los Altos and Palo Alto adult schools, is past president of SMCGS and the current seminar chair for the society.

For additional information contact: Julie Liu, Program Chairperson, email:
program@L-AGS.org