

The Livermore Roots Tracer



Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society

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

<http://l-ags.org> & <http://twitter.com/lagsociety>

Membership News

Welcome New Members

New Members

Natasha Mathews, Shirley Garnet

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

Patrons

Anonymous, Dick & Jean Lerche, Madelon Palma, Kay Speaks, Duncan Tanner

Benefactors

Kristina Ahuja, Sandra Caulder, Ralph & Jack Crouse, Marilyn A. Cutting, Linda Driver & Walt Crawford, Gail Fairfield, Richard & Wanda Finn, Leslie & Raymond Hutchings, Pamela Lewis, Cindy McKenna, Patricia Moore, Ileen J. Peterson, Peggy Weber

Total L-AGS Members as of January 7, 2014: 156 Memberships and 188 Members

Meeting News

General Meetings are held on the second Tuesday 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>

Study Group Chair *Vacant*
study.chair@L-AGS.org

Study Group Forum study.group@L-AGS.org

The Master Genealogist Group meets on the third Saturday of the month, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, at 7077 Koll Center Parkway, Suite 110, Pleasanton. <http://www.l-ags.org/maps/Pls-KollCenter.html>

TV-TMG Chair (Kay Speaks)
tvtmg.chair@L-AGS.org

L-AGS Leadership for 2014

President	president@L-AGS.org	Patrick Lofft
First VP and Program Chair	program@L-AGS.org	Pat Northam
Second VP and Membership Chair	membership@L-AGS.org	Thomas Mathews
Business Manager	business@L-AGS.org	Duncan Tanner
Corresponding Secretary		Cheryl Palmer
Recording Secretary		Julie Liu

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A Message from our President

Happy New Year!

I am gratified and humbled to be nominated and elected to be your L-AGS President for 2014. I will strive earnestly to guide L-AGS towards fulfilling all of its objectives as set forth in our bylaws.

I will avoid being a *do-it-myself* president. I will gently seek the assistance of all members. An obligation of membership is self-selected participation. What is your special skill? Membership expects involvement, participation, and constructive activity.

To advance genealogical research by modern technology and scientific means, I will encourage each member to establish a personal goal for indexing documents on Familysearch.org. I will also encourage members to consider volunteering to photograph grave markers for Findagrave.com and participate in Tri-Valley Heritage Happenings during October 2014.

To stimulate the publication of genealogies, family histories and related works, I will encourage members to take on the challenge to complete the *Pleasanton Times* transcription project. In 2009, the L-AGS board allocated funds for the digitization of the *Pleasanton Times*, 1929-1934. I will challenge each member to take responsibility for the *Pleasanton Times* newspapers for one month, that is 32 pages. Each member will be asked to carefully read each page for articles relating to birth, marriage, anniversary, and death and transcribe those articles into their favorite word processing software.

Other projects I'd like to see completed during my term in office include updating our burial records publications. L-AGS has published local cemetery records - both gravestone inscriptions and burial records - but the job is not done. The Livermore gravestone survey was last done in the 1980s. Pleasanton and Dublin cemeteries were done in 1990. Pleasanton Pioneer Cemetery records are now being thoroughly re-organized by Catholic Funeral and Cemetery Services, Diocese of Oakland, under contract with the city. I hope we will be able to publish their data, if they do not do so themselves. St. Michael Cemetery burial records are incomplete - we were given access only to the *old part* burial records.

To inspire members to continue searching for their ancestors, I will encourage members to set genealogy research goals for 2014. I will also encourage members to volunteer at local family history centers, libraries, and historical museums for genealogy docent training.

To provide workshops for training in principles and techniques of genealogy, I will encourage members to communicate their training needs. What training do you need? What do you want to learn? How to index records on Familysearch.org? How to transcribe newspaper articles? Or, perhaps how you can conduct cemetery research?

In closing, I ask one seemingly simple question of all members. What do you hope to gain this year as a member of L-AGS? Please feel free to email me your responses at president@L-AGS.org. Your responses will help me to understand your expectations and serve as a framework from which to build.

Sincerely,

Patrick Lofft

Apparently My 2nd Great-Grandfather Did Not Have Parents

By Danielle Forestier with the inestimable help of Rae Bryant

[Editor's Note: This article continues from the November 2013 issue. It's a story of long-time friends who banded together to discover the grandparents of Edmund Sylvester Ruth thus expanding Danielle Forestier's paternal Ruth lineage out several more generations.]

More than ten years ago, with a loud clarion call of distress, I summoned forth the assistance of Eurydice from the world of the dead. I could not persuade her to answer my plea for information on my elusive paternal 2nd great-grandparents who left barely a trace of their lives or their stories. Apparently, my 2nd great-grandfather did not have parents. Or, so it seemed.

The Ruth's of Pennsylvania

Ruth is the surname. Pennsylvania is the place. In the 1680s William Penn a Quaker who was personally persecuted for his faith, invited those Protestants in the Palatinate who were victimized by their governments or communities to accept land in Pennsylvania. He knew they were hard workers and would be productive. These folks were living under adverse circumstances, some having fled to Germany from France, Belgium or Switzerland to escape persecution. They felt that their future would see another wave of restrictions possibly including land impounds. Emigration from Germany seemed an attractive solution.

Several Ruth families were enticed by Penn's offer arriving in Pennsylvania by the mid-1700s. Each of these families had 15 or 16 kids, and most of those children also had 15 kids, each set of parents recycling names for their kids from past generations as oft was the custom. By the time the 3rd generation was born in the early 1800s, when my 2nd great-grandfather would have been born, there were dozens of families with the same surname, all using the same set of given names.

Tracing Edmund Sylvester Ruth

It had been a challenge to find my great-grandfather, Edmund Sylvester Ruth. As I mentioned in part 1, he skipped out on my great-grandmother and perambulated throughout the

West looking for rare minerals without telling his original family about a new wife and two sons. He left her living, probably in a dugout, in Kansas with a tiny grave, an infant son and no word of his whereabouts.

Edmund's Union military record shows that his parents are Peter and Maria Ruth. I was able to find them in several census records which then yielded the names of Peter and Mary's children, Edmunds' siblings. I quickly determined that Maria was part of a well-researched and well-documented family, the Gibboneys.



Earl Ruth Sr. wedding with WWI bride Marie Germaine Forestier

The Elusive Peter Ruth

Finding Peter Ruth's records was not so simple. All information was pointing to the Pennsylvania Dutch counties of Lancaster and Berks as original locale. Following the migration pattern of the fam-

ily from Pennsylvania, to Illinois, to Missouri, back to Illinois, to Washington State, and studying their neighbors and those mentioned in Civil War pension files never yielded a clue about Peter's parents or his siblings. Peter's parents and grandparents remained in their figurative and literal shrouds. I was beginning to doubt they had ever existed!

Undocumented clues indicate that Peter was born in 1818 in Cocalico, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. His birth is not recorded in any family bible. One would think there would be an entry in a church registry, or land entry file, or some document that provides information about him. Or that he lived with or nearby a sibling at some time. But when information is found the challenge becomes how to determine which Peter Ruth information pertains to 'our' Peter Ruth.

If this were an old movie, the images would show flipping calendar pages or falling leaves of the passage of time. The reality is that over ten years have passed since I first started the Ruth family history search launched with my good friend Rae Bryant. In all that time, I never found a clue linking 'my' Peter to any other Ruth family.

The Family History Search Continues

During Rae's annual trip to Oakland we decided it was time to find the elusive Peter Ruth with his parents. This year we would discover which Peter Ruth was the father of Edmund Sylvester Ruth. We were going to bring new pressures and "fresh eyes" to the problem of all the Ruth families in Pennsylvania. To accomplish this, my sunroom was turned into a war planning room. The skirmish locale became the computer table filled with spreadsheets of the Ruth family groups, census analyses and numerous files. It was going to be immersion genealogy research for Peter in Pennsylvania; we were determined to find him!

Certainly, even with the re-cycled first name and no information about Peter's parents, we would find some way of connecting him to a 'Ruth' family. Surely, he lived near someone at some point, or one of their relatives would have a link; fre-



Tracing Peter Ruth in the Pennsylvania counties of Berks and Lancaster. Original scale 1:2,500,000 U.S. Geological Survey, 1972, limited update 1990.

Source: Courtesy of the University of Texas Libraries, The University of Texas at Austin.

quently folks married their neighbors. Maybe one of his kids lived with or worked for one of his sibbs?

The research landscape is very different than it was ten years ago and the research arsenal has widened as well. Microfilm machines have their place, but they are secondary to computer databases. There are many more online sites and all have much more digitized information and greatly improved search algorithms.

We planned trips to the beautiful new Sutro Library and trips to other local libraries including the University of California Library, regional collections at Pleasanton and the Oakland Genealogical Society Library. Peter Ruth was likely born in 1817, so I created spreadsheets of any Ruth male with a male child of Peter's appropriate age. There were at that point 11 possible Peter Ruth's. We combed records, we read county accounts; we searched and searched again. Some evenings, our brains couldn't even function because we were so overwhelmed. We found secondary information on Peter, he had a postal route for two years, but he never seemed to live near any other Ruths. What is it with these Ruth men that they don't move with their family group? It seemed we weren't getting any breaks.

All research is worthwhile because sometimes the “breaks” don't look like breaks until much later. So we kept looking and enjoyed our genealogy adventures together, while finding nothing. It was fun going to the different libraries and taking in the regional libraries.

Our Brick Wall Begins to Crumble

The month with the luxury of my friend being nearby and having constant idea sessions about this brick wall was nearly up. She was returning to Texas in the morning. We discussed the likelihood of missing our goal and I decided I'd drop the project and move to another part of the family. Someday someone in Pennsylvania would post something; I would just return to this puzzle later. We were tired and felt that we had failed.

Of course, we spent Rae's last evening at the Oakland FamilySearch Library.

I moved on to old newspapers published in the various places Peter lived. My plan was to search each family member's name in each location. I started with the main character, Peter Ruth, whose undisclosed life seemed to be classified.

I'll start with his mid to later life – more newspapers then, I thought. How about the 1880s when

he was in Illinois? He lived then in Sterling, Whiteside County. A cryptic hit surfaces. “Mr. and Mrs. Peter Ruth carried with them a full line of delicacies for setting forth an appetizing table, as well as a variety of appropriate presents” to “give a pleasant surprise [to]...Mrs. Susan Ruth...in honor of her eighty-seventh birthday.”

I wondered if Susan could be Peter Ruth's mother. How many Mr. and Mrs. Peter Ruth's lived in Sterling in 1883? Could this be his mother and the other guests, Mr. and Mrs. Beecher, Mrs. George Mohler, and Mr. and Mrs. William Hess, his sisters and their husbands? We had been looking for so long for something to link Peter to his parents that we couldn't process it. You'd think we'd be yelling and clutching each other and high fiving - but all we could do was stare at the screen. Certainly, our reaction didn't have the drama to make a good You Tube video.

This time Rae and I stared at the screen in numbed silence. It didn't feel at all like the private intimate experience ten years earlier when we found Edmund Ruth. This time we were so tired and exhausted looking at Ruth material that it didn't register on an emotional level that this was it. It seemed anticlimactic. There was also the long experience of ‘hits’ not turning out that prevented any jubilation. Nonetheless, we had had a fun month of good friendship and good times, and Rae would depart the next morning.

I began entering the information that I'd found in The Master Genealogist (TMG). I can't research well without seeing my data organized– otherwise I waste time on false leads.

Meanwhile Rae, in Houston, Texas does the appropriate next step and checks Find-a-Grave for Susan Ruth in Illinois. After all she just turned 87 and it seemed to her that if the family had put in an announcement of her birthday in the paper, there would be some sort of cemetery record. After, perusing cemetery lists in Sterling, Rae found her. She had died the next year. The person who entered the Find-a-Grave information also provided Susan's husband's name and the names of both sets of their parents. Her obituary had been entered with extensive family members and history. Her husband was Jacob Ruth -- a Jacob who wasn't even on any of my spreadsheets. I emailed the Find A Grave submitter and



“Home News” Sterling (Illinois) Gazette, 1 November 1883, p. 9, col. 1; digital images, Sterling Public Library

(<http://sterlingpl.newspaperarchive.com> : accessed 15 January 2014), Digital Archives.

he gave me his personal email address. My next email bounced back.

Epilogue

There is an epilogue to this story. Epilogues don't happen only in movies and books; sometimes they can happen in genealogy. A third email didn't bounce back. The gray skies opened and a flood of light poured out. 'Hal' responded with a wealth of information. He had hired researchers in Lancaster County! He was willing to share! And, how kind, he was not even researching his own line but his stepmother's family!

What a generous soul! My next task is to learn the TMG program better so I can share my information with him. I felt like I'd been presented with a gift not purchasable and of immense value. The ten-year lapse was worth it. Hal had paid local Pennsylvania historical societies to check out material unavailable online. Through his generosity, I have been able to trace my family history across the pond to what is now present-day Germany.

Another generous person was a Sterling County Illinois Historical Society member who drove by the Ruth house where Susan lived in the 1880s and took a photo of the house – that was interesting to see and so nice of her to offer to do that! The next few weeks were amazing and fun. Part of the pleasure is learning about the interests of the ancestors: first I like to find *who* they were and then who they *were*. The 1883 birthday party announcement has a comment regarding the wonderful delicacies they ate. My ancestors were foodies! I'm a foodie too and my professional career has been as an artisan baker. German settlers known as the Pennsylvania Dutch brought the plans to make the first baking ovens with them to the American Colonies. Jacob Ruth's father was a Francis (Frank) Ruth and he was registered in the Revolutionary War Militia. Finally, the mystery of my father's hated middle name, Francis, had been solved too. I think my father would be pleased to know that Francis is one of the patriarch names of the Ruths.

This time there was yelling, clutching, and high fiving. Only we were doing it virtually online. It was great and fun and worth every bit.

Ruth Family Lineage

Jacob Ruth

b. 1792, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania
d. 1830, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania
m. 16 March 1814

Susannah Johns

b. 31 October 1796, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania
d. 31 March 1884, Sterling, Whiteside County, Illinois

Peter Ruth

b. about 1817, Pennsylvania
d. 19 April 1895, Toutle, Cowlitz County, Washington
m. 16 March 1841

Marie Gibboney

b. 1822, Pennsylvania
d. 4 April 1907, Toutle, Cowlitz County, Washington

Edmund Sylvester Ruth

b. 28 April 1849, Cherry Tree, Indiana County, Pennsylvania
d. 2 February 1909, Provolt, Grants Pass, Jackson County, Oregon
m. 2nd, 15 May 1881, Phillipsburg, Phillips County, Kansas

Marie Antoinette Garvey

b. 23 October 1861, Bedford, Lawrence County, Indiana
d. 29 January 1940, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri

Earl Francis Ruth

b. 2 October 1883, Phillipsburg, Phillips County, Kansas
d. 5 March 1936, Kickapoo, Leavenworth County, Kansas
m. 21 February 1920, Saint-Loubes, Gironde, France

Marie Germaine Forestier

b. 20 September 1900, Petit Bordeau, Izon, France
d. 26 December 1988, Sarasota, Sarasota County, Florida

Earl Francis Ruth, Jr.

b. 12 August 1921, Fort Leavenworth, Leavenworth County, Kansas
d. 29 March 1997, Oakland, Alameda County, California
m. 2 May 1942, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri

Dorothy Margaret Steil

b. 11 December 1919, Mason City, Cerro Gordo County, Iowa
d. 7 January 1999, Norwalk, Fairfield County, Connecticut

Danielle Forestier (née Dinah Ruth)

Daughter: Jetta Ruth
Son: Mark (née Ruth) Toms

The Fountain's Journey

By Debbie Conner Mascot

I have been working on a book about the Mariani family of San Francisco for several years. My great-grandfather, Orville Thomas Conner was a caretaker on their Portola Valley, California ranch for many years. My father, Harry Conner spent his summers at the ranch with his grandfather and when my father grew up and had a family, we became caretakers on the Mariani ranch. I always believed the Marianis were family--I called them *aunties* and *uncles*. They are all gone now, except Louise Mariani, a beautiful, marvelous 99-year-old granddaughter who I discovered recently. Someone needed to document the Mariani family history and I decided it should be me.



S. Mariani & Sons Hardware, 23rd and Columbia (now Florida) Streets in San Francisco, California, ca 1891.¹

S. Mariani & Sons Hardware

The Marianis owned two hardware stores in San Francisco called S. Mariani & Sons from 1875 through the 1950s. They lived above one of the hardware stores at 23rd and Columbia (now Florida) Streets. In collecting old pictures of S. Mariani & Sons at 23rd and Columbia, I noticed an old fountain in front of the store. In many of these pictures, Stefano (aka Stephen) Mariani, the “S” of S. Mariani & Sons, was standing next to it proudly.

When the store below the house closed, they lit-

erally just closed the doors leaving the store items intact. We used to go downstairs into the hardware store and play with the old cash register and tools. My dad even had some items I inherited when he died—business cards, a brush with the logo and address on it, and a pencil stamped, “S. Mariani & Sons.”

Throughout my lifetime of visits, I never saw a fountain out front on the sidewalk. So what happened to it? When I was combing through items at the California Historical Society in San Francisco in March 2013, I found a newspaper clipping as transcribed below. Unfortunately, the clipping did not include either the publisher or date of publication.

New Park Gets an Old Fountain

An unusual antique fountain of broad multi-purpose design—it was made to serve horses, humans and dogs alike-- has been presented to the State for inclusion in the new Victorian Park at the foot of Hyde street.

The fluted cast-iron fountain has stood since 1881 in front of the old Mariani hardware store at 23rd and Florida streets.

It was donated for the State Park by the sons and daughters of Stephen and Victoria Mariani, who came to San Francisco in 1862 and established their store in 1875.

One of the daughters, Mrs. Stella Bryant, who

¹S. Mariani & Sons Hardware store, photograph; 1891, digital image, privately held by Deborah Conner Mascot, Livermore, CA. Original photo held by Carl Pisaturo in San Francisco, CA and scanned in San Francisco, CA by Carl Pisaturo and displayed on his website at: http://carlpisaturo.com/Carlovision_MAIN.htm. Used with permission.

²“New Park Gets an Old Fountain,” undated clipping, ca 1961, from unidentified newspaper; California Historical Society, 678 Mission Street, San Francisco, California, 2013.

still lives at 23rd and Florida, said the fountain was cast in Oakland in 1872 and acquired by her father nine years later.

Charles DeTurk, State Director of Parks and Recreation, said the fountain "reflects all the ornate grandeur of its period."²

I decided to search for more information about this fountain. Using my best friend, Google, I found a website that described where it was located.³ Armed with the newspaper article and directions, I took a trip to San Francisco on BART, determined to see if the fountain was indeed still there.

I got off BART at the Embarcadero Station and walked up Embarcadero towards Ghirardelli Square, stopping for a bit at Pier 35, where I walked across the street to the corner of Kearny

Death From a Careless Blast.

An inquest was held last evening by Coroner Letterman in the case of Joseph Mariani, who was killed several weeks ago by rock from a blast exploded at North Point. Following is the testimony:

Dr. M. J. Bolan, sworn—I am resident physician of the City and County Hospital. Joseph Mariani was admitted in the hospital on the 20th of April; he was bleeding from a wound on the right side of the face; found the bones of the lower jaw fractured. The wound extends from the middle of the ear to the chin. He was not conscious, and did not recover consciousness. He died on the 30th of April. After he had been removed to the room I noticed that he bled freely, and I had all I could do to stop the hemorrhage. I think he died from a fracture of the base of the skull.

George Dougherty, sworn—I was the contractor in charge of the blast that was set off at North Point. It occurred two weeks ago to-day. The blast was charged and the fuse lit. My horse was hitched to a fence across the street which is seventy-five feet wide. The moment the match was lighted to the fuse I called out "Fire" at the top of my voice as I always do, and the alarm being given, Mr. Story took my pony and I followed him in a northerly direction from the blast on the line of Bay street, and when I got on the crossing I faced eastward. I saw Mariani standing on the wharf about half the distance down the wharf. I hollowed as loud as I could to him to go down the wharf and motioned to him to go further down, saying, "For Heaven sake go down the wharf." I then turned and looked up Bay street, saw two horsemen and said to them "Fire," and they stopped. The blast was intended to spring the rock for the purpose of making it larger. I took the ordinary precaution in this case so that no one should be hurt, or that any damage should occur. I put in about three cups full of powder, and I do not think that more than two carts full of rock was thrown out. I have been blasting there for 18 months, and nothing ever occurred before.

At this point the enquiry was continued until this evening.

May 11, 1871, Daily Evening Bulletin, San Francisco, California⁴

and Bay. Why did I stop there? That is the spot that the California pioneer Giuseppe (Joseph) Mariani, father to Stefano Mariani, was fatally injured in a blasting accident in 1871.

I walked across to the pier and sat looking at the boats near the shore. Is that what Giuseppe was doing there? Was he watching the boats? He was a house painter, so I do not think he was working. I think he was thinking just as I was. As I sat there on the fancy redwood benches staring into the San Francisco Bay, a veteran approached me "for some lunch money."

Giuseppe was there a few years after the Civil War. Were there Civil War vets asking him for spare change while the dynamite was being set? Did Giuseppe see children chasing seagulls and couples holding hands? What was he thinking about in those moments before his life ended?

I felt sad and continued my journey to the fountain. I passed the street performers and tourists from many countries sightseeing at Pier 39. I passed the scent of crab and sourdough at Fisherman's Wharf. All sites I had walked through hundreds of times before, but this time was different. This time I was seeing everything through the eyes of Giuseppe, a hundred years ago, making it more beautiful and poignant than ever before. I passed the stagnant water and homelessness of Aquatic Park and there it was.

The Fountain

I placed my hand on the fountain in reverence. This fountain was cast in Oakland in 1872 and shipped to San Francisco.⁵ It had been touched by S. Mariani, Vera, her siblings, shoppers in the hardware store, and passersby. Possibly even my own father touched the fountain when he was a young boy. As I thought of each of them, I imagined seeing them there with me. Only they all were in black and white like the photos of the

³About in the City blog (<http://aboutinthecity.blogspot.com/2010/04/forgotten-fountain.html>), "Forgotten Fountain," rev. 30 April 2010.

⁴"Death from a Careless Blast," Daily Evening Bulletin, San Francisco, California, 11 May 1871; digital images, 19th Century Newspapers from Godfrey Memorial Library (<http://www.godfrey.org> : accessed October 2011).

⁵Oakland to SF "New Park Gets an Old Fountain," California Historical Society.

fountain in front of 23rd and Columbia. I was in color and so was the fountain. As was the sleeping homeless woman on the nearby bench, lying around MY fountain, as if MY fountain was a stove giving off the heat of 140 years.

I sat on one of the surrounding benches and just stared at the fountain. I admired the different drinking spots for horses and dogs. I wondered how it was filled. I think through the top, but clearly, no water other than that from the skies had been in it for years. Now it was full of leaves, gum, and cigarette butts. I cleaned out the largest drinking spot of the debris and then wrote down the words from the small plaque at



*Debbie Conner Mascot finds the Mariani Fountain.*⁷

the bottom, silently promising my fountain that I would be back to clean her again someday soon.

*“A gift to the State of California by the pioneer Mariani family. The grandfather, James Mariani, arrived on these shores in 1852. Presented in the memory of the father, Stephen Mariani, who purchased the fountain in 1881 to place in front of his establishment at 23rd and Florida. November 1961.”*⁶

The grandfather was Joseph or Giuseppe, but the rest is, as they say, history.

⁶Fountain Victorian Park (Jefferson Street, near Hyde, San Francisco, California), Mariani Fountain plaque.

⁷Debbie Conner Mascot with the Mariani Fountain, San Francisco, California, photograph; September

2013, digital image, privately held by Deborah Conner Mascot, Livermore, California.

New at the Pleasanton Genealogy Library

Courtesy of Julie Sowles, Administrative Librarian

1. 929.208 BOYER.

Boyer, Carl, 1937-. Medieval Welsh ancestors of certain Americans: a comprehensive genealogy with biographical and historical background as well as critical commentary / compiled by Carl Boyer, 3rd.

2. 929.3 FREITAS.

Freitas, Mildred E., 1919-2012. The Mildred E.

Freitas collection: genealogical data extracted from The Livermore [California] Herald 1899-1913 / [project leader, Richard Finn; editors George Anderson, Patrick Lofft, Terry Berry.

3. 929.3772 INDIANA.

Indiana source book / edited by Willard Heiss.

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:

managing.editor@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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Loring Averill Jewett: Civil War Veteran & Former POW

By Shannon Bagley Ryan

In the course of researching my family history, I learned that my 2nd great-grandfather Benjamin F. Wood (1843-1930) was a Civil War veteran. Benjamin's story was previously told in the *Livermore Roots Tracer*.¹ His youngest daughter, Zetta Wood married into the Jewett family through her first marriage to Loring Hoffman Jewett. He worked in Reno, Nevada as an engineer for the Reno Brewing Company.²

Loring Hoffman Jewett was named after his uncle, Loring Averill Jewett (1847-1921) who descended from a very long line of Jewetts, originally from Yorkshire, England.³ After immigrating to the United States, many of the Jewetts became well known in their communities. Loring Averill Jewett is the brother-in-law of my great-grand-aunt, Zetta Wood.

Loring Averill Jewett was a Union Civil War veteran, having enlisted in the 32nd Regiment, Massachusetts Infantry. Like Benjamin Wood, Loring Averill had trouble receiving his pension, in his case in relation to the gunshot wound to his knee that he sustained

during the Civil War. The government seemed to doubt his story and apparently asked for names of his comrades to corroborate details. Loring Averill sent a handwritten letter to the government - witnessed by the Nevada City Court and signed by the court clerk - most of which is transcribed below:

In May 1863 I was detailed from Regiment on division provo guard and the same month I received my wound while on duty escorting stragglers to the front at second Fredericksburg or Chancerville VA (sic). I was then taken to Alexandria Hospital and placed in convalescent camp. About the 29 of June was mustered...and sent to Gettysburg PA and put on duty of July 2nd. While in skirmishing line, was taken prisoner with a lot of others and rushed to Richmond VA where I lay six months [in Libby Prison] and was then taken to Andersonville [Prison in Georgia] and was there until the close of the war, having made my escape twice and was captured both times. While there, I was taken sick with malaria fever and was taken to the hospital outside more dead than alive.

I got well and made my escape but was captured again. In April 1865 we were sent to Annapolis, Maryland, the war being over. From there, home. And it is from the foregoing troubles and exposure to the hot climate of Georgia that I cannot at this day remember any of my fellow comrades that were with me when I received my wound.

I have written to Charleston, Mass, the place of my enlistment and have tried my utmost to gain information of my comrades, but have failed. I also swear under oath that the foregoing statement is a true one.⁴

While Loring Averill's account is extremely short and matter of fact, the imagination can only grasp in a small way the horrors that he likely suffered in these two infamous Con-

¹Ryan, Shannon Bagley, "John J. Ryan and Benjamin F. Wood, Civil War Veterans." *Livermore Roots Tracer*, November 2010, 7.

²"United States World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com>; accessed 23 January 2014), card for Loring Hoffman Jewett, Local Board of Washoe County, Reno, Nevada; citing original data NARA microfilm publication M1509.

³Jewett, Frederic Clarke, *History and Genealogy of the Jewetts of America: A Record of Edward Jewett, of Bradford, West Riding of Yorkshire, England, and of His Two Emigrant Sons, Deacon Maximilian and Joseph Jewett, Settlers of Rowley, Massachusetts, in 1639; also of Abraham and John Jewett, Early Settlers of Rowley, and of the Jewetts Who Have Settled in the United States Since the Year 1800*. (Rowley, Massachusetts: *Jewett Family of America, 1908*), *Google Books* (<http://www.Google.com/books>; accessed 23 January 2014).

⁴Loring Averill Jewett (32nd Regiment, Massachusetts Infantry, Civil War), letter dated 12 Oct 1891, Civil War and Later Pension Files; Department of Veteran Affairs, Record Group 15, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

federate prisons of Libby and Andersonville. After the war, Loring Averill made his way to Nevada City, California, a Gold Rush mining town, and married Josephine Hoffman in 1880. The couple had many children. By 1910, the Loring Averill family had moved to Vallejo, California. Loring Averill worked at the Naval Shipyards at Mare Island. Apparently, his letter proved to help his cause. He eventually received a pension, which his wife Josephine Hoffman inherited after his death in 1921.

Loring Averill's brother, Thomas Montgomery Jewett (1850-1931), also moved to Nevada City where, coincidentally, my own family lived for many years, without having any knowledge of this familial connection. Thomas married Bertha Hoffman in 1877.⁵ He worked as a carpenter. Thomas and Bertha had several children, including Loring Hoffman Jewett, Zetta Wood's future husband.

Among the many unidentified photos that my father, David Leland Bagley, handed over to me some years ago, one struck me by the clearly expressed respect and regard with which both men seemed to convey to each other.

The identity of the person on the right is Benjamin F. Wood. It was only when I discovered the story of Loring Averill Jewett, and found out that, he was nearly 6 feet tall,⁶ that I put two and two together. This is a meeting between two Civil War veterans. The photo was probably taken some time between 1919-1921, perhaps in Reno.



Two Union Civil War Veterans meet. Photograph circa 1919-1921, probably Reno, Nevada. L-R: Loring Averill Jewett and Benjamin F. Wood

⁵1900 U.S. Census, Nevada County, California, population schedule, Nevada Township, p. 3-8, dwelling 58, family 58, Thomas Jewett, digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 23 January 2014); citing NARA microfilm publication T623.

⁶Loring Averill Jewett (32nd Regiment, Massachusetts Infantry, Civil War) surgeon's report dated 18 Oct 1891[height listed as 5 feet 11.5 inches], Civil War and Later Pension Files; Department of Veteran Affairs, Record Group 15, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Finding Frommel's Ancestral Village

By Patrick M. Lofft

Edward T. Frommel Senior, the great-grandfather of my wives', Joan and Charlotte (Heckmann), died 21 February 1911 in Buffalo, Erie County, New York. His death certificate stated that he was born 14 February 1842 in Germany. It also stated that his parents were born in Germany.

My genealogical quest was to locate the name of the specific village where Edward was born. His obituary in the *Buffalo (NY) Courier* newspaper stated, "... He was born in a little village near, Coblenz, Rhineland, Germany, and came to this country with his parents when he was nine years old..." I wanted to learn the name of that village.

Further research revealed an 1869 entry in the baptismal register at St. Mary of Sorrows in Buffalo, New York for his firstborn child, Maria. The baptismal register stated that her father's

**EDWARD T. FROMMEL
WILL BE BURIED SATURDAY**

**Well-known Business Man Died on
Tuesday.**

Edward T. Frommel, one of the well-known German-American residents of the city, died late Tuesday night at the home of his son-in-law, Henry Elbers, No. 666 Riley Street. He was 69 years old.

Mr. Frommel was a piano tuner and is believed to have been the oldest follower of that occupation in Buffalo. He was born in a little village near Coblenz, Rhineland, Germany, and came to this country with his parents when he was nine years old. He has lived in Buffalo ever since.

Mr. Frommel's funeral will be held from the Elber residence and from the Church of St. Mary Magdalen, on Saturday morning. He is survived by three daughters, Mrs. Henry Elbers, Mrs. Edward Deck and Mrs. Eugene Heckman, and a son, Edward T. Frommel, Jr.

Edward T. Frommel obituary. Probably published February 1911

Partial Listing of Frommel Descendants

Edward T. Frommel Sr.

b. 1842, Kirchberg, Kirchberg, Rhein-Hunsrück, Rhineland-Pfalz, Germany
m. 1865, Buffalo, Erie County, New York
d. 1911, Buffalo, Erie County, New York

Magdalena M. Haas

b. 1842, Buffalo, Erie County, New York
d. 1904, Buffalo, Erie County, New York

Eleanora Frommel

b. 1882, Buffalo, Erie County, New York
m. 1902, Buffalo, Erie County, New York
d. 1944, Buffalo, Erie County, New York

Eugene Anthony Heckmann

b. 1879, Buffalo, Erie County, New York
d. 1935, Buffalo, Erie County, New York

Harry Francis Heckmann

b. 1910, Buffalo, Erie County, New York
m. 1937, Buffalo, Erie County, New York
d. 1989, Cheektowaga, Erie County, New York

Mildred Barbara Meidenbauer

b. 1915, Buffalo, Erie County, New York
d. 1992, Gates, Monroe County, New York

Joan Marie Heckmann

b. 1940, Buffalo, Erie County, New York
m. 1963, Buffalo, Erie County, New York
d. 1995, Columbia, Howard County, Maryland

Patrick Michael Lofft

Blazes Edward Heckmann

b. 1909, Buffalo, Erie County, New York
m. 1938, Johnstown, Fulton County, New York
d. 1994, Snyder, Erie County, New York

Ruth E. Stoller

b. 1912, Johnstown, Fulton County, New York
d. 1996, Williamsville, Erie County, New York

Charlotte Eleanora Heckmann

m. 1999, Santa Clara, Santa Clara County, California
Patrick Michael Lofft

birthplace was Ehrenbreitstein.¹ That was probably *not* the name of the ancestral birth village. Ehrenbreitstein is the name of a famous fortress built as the backbone of the regional fortification system, Festung Koblenz, by Prussia between 1817 and 1832.

Also among the sacramental registers at St. Mary of Sorrows, I discovered Edward's 1865-

marriage record in which his birth village, Kirchberg² was listed. An Internet search revealed more than 20 German villages named Kirchberg in Bavaria, Hesse, Baden Württemberg and Saxony. Which one of these was closer to Koblenz or anywhere in Rheinland-Pfalz? Diligent searching rewarded me with Kirchberg, Rhein-Hunsrück a mere 73.7 kilometers or 46 miles southwest of Koblenz.



Above: Ehrenbreitstein Fortress built by Prussia between 1817 and 1832.

Left: Charlotte Lofft reaches Edward T. Frommel ancestral village, Kirchberg, Rhein-Hunsrück, Rhineland-Pfalz, Germany.

¹St. Mary of Sorrows Parish (Buffalo, New York), Church Records 1874-1921, Maria Frommel baptism (1869); FHL microfilm 1292740 Items 1-9.

²St. Mary of Sorrows Parish (Buffalo, New York), Church Records 1874-1921, Edward T. Frommel marriage (1865); FHL microfilm 1292740 Items 1-9.



G. R. O. W.

Genealogy Resources On the Web — The Page That Helps Genealogy Grow!

Compiled by Susan Johnston and Kay Speaks



keyword: "world war 1"
plus keyword: *location*

Focus on: World War I Records

This year marks the beginning of the World War I centenary and announcements of new online World War I databases, complete or in progress, are already appearing. The U.S. would not enter the conflict until 1917, but Ancestry.com has already added some important American records to its collections. Major record losses on the national level may hinder your success, so use the *Google* tip to locate state and local holdings.

WHAT'S NEW AT ...

Ancestry.com: The recently uploaded database, "[U.S., Lists of Men Ordered to Report to Local Board for Military Duty, 1917–1918, Select States](#)," is what initiated this month's topic. Given the difficulties in researching WWI U.S. Army service records, it's exciting that one of the few surviving federal records that names individual soldiers is being digitized. This set currently comprises the eight states whose records are held in NARA's regional archives in Atlanta: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Hopefully, Ancestry will locate, scan and index *all* these records.

CANADA ...

Soldiers of the First World War – CEF:

<http://tinyurl.com/nd59cw>. This is an index to more than 600,000 members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Digital images of each person's attestation paper, an excellent genealogical source, are included. Check the box for "Digitized file(s)" and you might be lucky enough to see your subject's complete service file.

Canadian Virtual War Memorial:

<http://tinyurl.com/3tp84ld>. The fallen soldiers of World War I form the bulk of names on this memorial. After finding your subject, follow the links to the *First World War Book of Remembrance* and the cemetery. Photographs, newspaper clippings, and other digital objects may be included as well.

Researching Canadian Soldiers of the First World War:

<http://tinyurl.com/6q8vn84>. This is the first of an extensive series of lessons about Canadian WWI research prepared by Michael O'Leary. The examples are Canada-specific, but it's still an excellent guide for WWI research in general.

AUSTRALIA ...

National Archives of Australia: Army – World War I: 1914-18:

<http://tinyurl.com/3nq9atv>. First, read about the records, and then select the "NameSearch" link. Click on "RecordSearch"; then "NameSearch" in the top menu bar. Enter the surname and choose "World War I" from the drop-down menu. Voila! Digital images of Australian army service records.

First World War Diaries:

<http://tinyurl.com/ldp556y>. These *diaries* tell the day-to-day movements of each unit, providing the detailed information necessary to help you recreate your WWI soldier's combat experience.

IRELAND ...

In Flanders Fields Museum:

<http://imr.inflandersfields.be/>. This site corrects errors in *Ireland's Memorial Records*, the listing of about 49,000 fallen Irish soldiers. View the original pages on Ancestry.com, but note that those images, as well as additional records, may be added to this site by the end of 2014.

FRANCE ...

Mémoire des Hommes:

<http://tinyurl.com/lyl4z8>. Knowing French will help, but this site is accessible without it. Begin with the "Recherche globale" link. To search by name, select "Rechercher dans les bases nominatives." After you find your subject, investigate his unit's history by selecting "Rechercher dans les unités engagées dans la Première Guerre mondiale."

Future General Meetings

Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court, Pleasanton

February 11, 7:30 p.m.

Loretta Kaskey

Researching Your Old House

March 11, 7:30 p.m.

Tim Cox. CGS

Hard Drive Organization:

Making Use of Your Computer File Folders

April 8, 7:30 p.m.

Anne Homan

Topic to be Determined

The Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society is exempt from Federal Income Tax under Section 501(c)(3)(public charity) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Taxation Code 2301g.

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