



# Ancestors West

*A quarterly publication for the members of the*  
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY  
*Winter 2020 Vol. 45, No. 4*

## Winter Celebrations and More

Santa Barbara's Christmas Trees of the Past

A Norwegian Holiday Meal

A Christmas Voyage

Sending a holiday tradition that is priceless more than 90 years later...





## Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society

[www.sbgen.org](http://www.sbgen.org)

E-mail: [info@sbgen.org](mailto:info@sbgen.org)

### Sahyun Genealogy Library

(SBCGS facility)

316 Castillo St., Santa Barbara 93101

Phone: (805) 884-9909

Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Sunday 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Third Saturday 1:00 – 4:00 PM (Except August)

**Membership:** Benefits include *Tree Tips* monthly newsletter and *Ancestors West* (quarterly publication).

**Active** (individual)–\$40; **Family** (2 same household)–\$60; **Friend**–\$50; **Donor**–\$75; **Patron**–\$150; **Life**–\$1000 (one-time donation)

**Meetings:** Regular monthly meetings are held on the third Saturday of each month except August. Meetings begin at 10:30 a.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, 21 E. Constance Ave. at State Street in Santa Barbara. At 9:30, special interest groups (SIGs) meet that include the following: Writers, JewishGen, DNA, German Ancestry Research, Genealogy and Technology, Italian Roots, French Canadian Genealogy, Civil War, New Member and Beginning Genealogy, and Scandinavian Roots.

Established in 1972, the Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society (SBCGS) incorporated as a nonprofit 501(c) (3) organization in 1986. Its aim is to promote genealogy by providing assistance and educational opportunities for those who are interested in pursuing their family history.

*Ancestors West* is currently published quarterly in February, May, August, November. Articles of family history or of historical nature are welcomed and used as space permits (see inside back cover for submission details). As available, current and back issues are \$6.00 each including postage. Library subscription to *Ancestors West* is \$20.00 per year. *Ancestors West* is indexed in the **PERiodical Source Index (PERSI)** published by the Allen County Public Library, Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

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## From the Editor *Kristin Ingalls*

**W**E HAD HOPED that our final issue of 2020 would be your stories of your ancestor's holiday traditions. Although we did get a few, there were not enough to fill our entire issue. Happily, our members generously shared other stories of interest.

You will notice that we are printing a story much longer than our usual submissions. A new member, Elaine Lane, sent her great-grandfather's memoir, written by him in 1963. In the past, we have printed longer articles in two or more issues, but since we had room and found the story so interesting and compelling, we decided it would be a shame to keep you waiting until next year to finish it.

We have technology to thank for some of our stories. Through DNA connections and Family Tree contacts, our

members are finding kin who have information on their shared family members. A few brick walls have tumbled down; puzzles have been solved; interesting details about family members shared; secrets revealed. Not only do we know more about our ancestors, we have new cousins who share our passion about genealogy.

**OUR NEXT ISSUE**, the first of 2021, we invite YOU to share what you have found from these newly-discovered family members. Or, maybe you have a story told to you long ago by a family member that opened up a whole new understanding of your family.

My very first introduction to the SBCGS was when my sister, Lynne, met Judy Johnson at a genealogy conference. Judy, who turned out to be a third cousin, invited me to one of our general meetings. I loved it and quickly visited the library, where I was helped by Emily Aasted, who pointed out that she was also related to someone on the family tree sheet I brought with me. Since then I have found lots more cousins here in Santa Barbara!

I know some of you have found cousins right here among our membership. Let us know if you have found any, who they are and how you found them.

**THE DEADLINE FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE OF ANCESTORS WEST IS FEBRUARY 1, 2021.**

## Sahyun Library Closure

**H**ELLO TO ALL OUR SBCGS MEMBERS. I hope you are all staying healthy and safe with the continuing restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

I wanted to take this opportunity to tell you that our Sahyun Genealogical Library continues to remain closed to our membership and the community for research and gatherings. At the present time, the State and County Public Health Departments are not allowing libraries in California and the County of Santa Barbara to be open for any type of indoor activities. The Public Health Department has not yet issued any definitive guidelines covering the opening of libraries. State of California libraries, our Santa Barbara Public Library, other Genealogical Libraries and even the Family History Library in Salt Lake City remain closed to any kind of indoor activities including gathering together in an indoor environment, using books and materials and of course accessing computers.

Our Society membership and visitors to the library are mostly an older and more vulnerable population. The primary reason for remaining closed is protection of the health and wellbeing of our members and visitors as well as our volunteer librarians who staff the library. In addition, we are obligated to follow the guidelines published by the County and State Department of Public Health.

Genealogical research is about so much more than gathering information from books and computers. A large part of our joy in doing this research is our connection to each other and the sharing of stories and bits



of information. We greatly miss our time in the Sahyun, finding those long-lost ancestors, sharing lunch during a "Lunch and Learn" meeting, and just seeing each other in person and sharing a smile.

The most important thing for each of us to do right now is to follow the guidelines, stay healthy and safe. When specific guidelines are issued for the safe opening of the library, safety protocols and procedures will be implemented, physical barriers will be set up as needed, personal protective equipment will be available, volunteers will be trained in procedures of safe use and social distancing. We sincerely appreciate your patience. In the meantime be sure to try to participate in the many offerings the Society is making available over Zoom and of course be sure to access the *AncestryLibrary.com* and *GenealogyBank.com* computer sites that are available via the Society website.

Stay Well,  
Kathie Morgan, Library Director

# Persimmon Pudding ~ a Family Tradition By Jim Wilson

**J**UST AS A FAMILY MEMBER always had a pot of *billbergia nutans*\* growing for their February clusters of small dark-violet and cream-colored flowers on bright pink stems, someone had a persimmon tree in their yard. At holiday time the dark orange, sweet, gelatinous fruit would turn up, after the main course dishes were cleared, as a pudding.

My mother, Ruth Rawson, born in 1907, remembered it from her childhood, ascribing the recipe to her mother, Annie Lottie Rawson, (1876-1934) so we can judge, that with some variation, the recipe has been served for more than 100 years.

Lottie's recipe used one cup of sugar. Our mother modified, titling it The One-One-One Recipe, (one cup of persimmon, one cup of milk, and one cup of flour) increasing the sugar to two cups. I found this to be too sweet, ultimately reducing the sugar to three-quarters of a cup. In addition, I have substituted cake flour, and steam the pudding rather than bake it in an oven. The recipe is a living entity evolving over the generations just as we have.

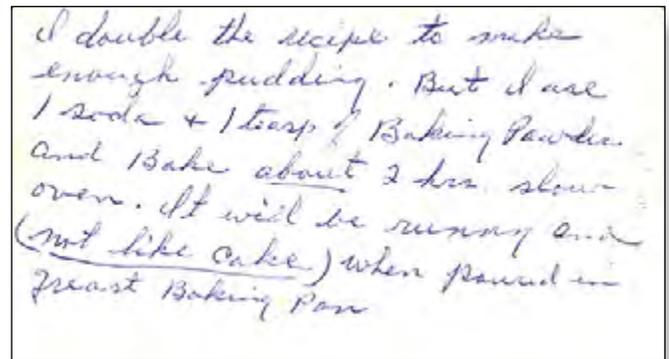
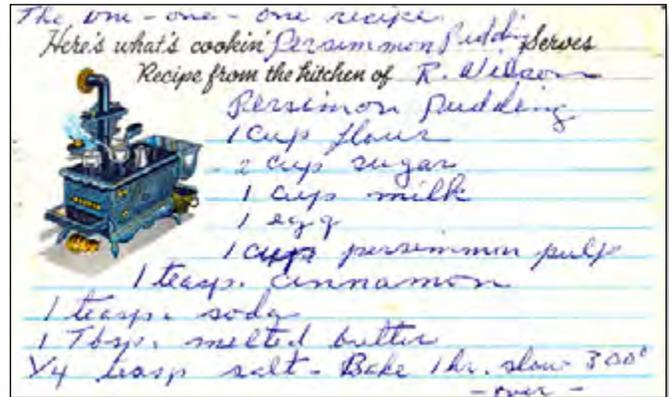
The pudding is always served with lemon sauce. Interestingly the lemon sauce recipe does not seem to have changed. It is being served today as Annie Lottie served it 100 years ago.

Jim will happily share the recipes with anyone who asks!

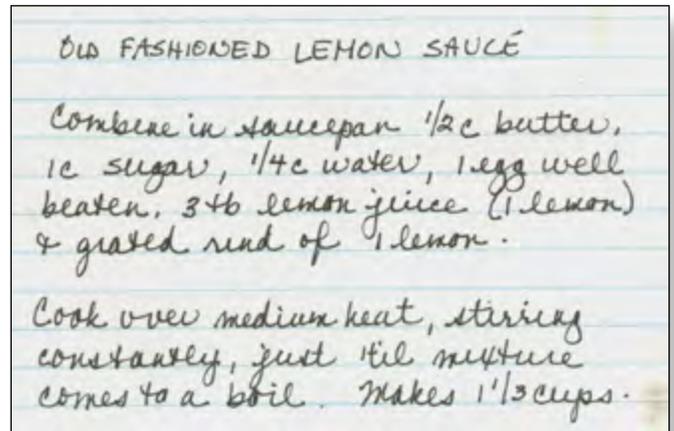
\* *Billbergia nutans* (Queen's Tears) - A vigorous bromeliad. In spring the arching flower stalks carry pink bracts and pendant flowers that have chartreuse green petals edged with royal-blue.



Yearbook of the U.S. Department of Agriculture 1907



One-One-One recipe card, front and back



Jim Wilson has been compiling his family history since 1991, and a SBCGS member since 2005. Until recently he has served as a Director-at-Large and Chair of the Investment Committee.

# A TOUCH OF OLD SANTA BARBARA

## Santa Barbara's Christmas Trees of the Past *By Betsy J. Green*

IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME ONCE AGAIN in Santa Barbara, and I have some stories to share from my *Way Back When* books about Christmas trees here some 100 years ago.

Many Santa Barbarans think that the Norfolk Island Pine at the northwest corner of Carrillo and Chapala streets has always been the "official Christmas tree," but there have been other trees so designated. In 1914, there was a move to collect money to cut down a tree in the Santa Ynez Mountains and haul it into Santa Barbara, but perhaps for economic reasons, a living tree was chosen. The tree was described as a 40-foot-tall Cypress tree on the courthouse property at the northeast corner of Anacapa and Figueroa streets. There are a couple of trees near that corner today, but none is a Cypress.

Santa Barbara historian Hattie Beresford told me that the Norfolk Island Pine at Chapala and Carrillo streets that we now decorate has been the Community Christmas tree since 1928, although there were a few years when another tree was substituted. The Chapala-Carrillo Tree was planted in 1877 when there was still an adobe house on that corner. Over the years, the tree has continued to survive while the neighborhood around it has changed from an adobe to the YMCA to a vacant

lot and now Ralphs Grocery Store.

This is Santa Barbara's Christmas tree when it was located on the northeast corner of Anapamu and Figueroa streets, near the old courthouse. The photo is labeled 1923, however, the women's



dresses in the photo look more like 1913. Notice the dome of the Santa Barbara County Courthouse on the far left. Image: courtesy of the Santa Barbara Historical Museum.

In 1916, the Community Christmas Tree was on the grounds of the old adobe that was used by the Associated Charities. (According to John Woodward, Santa

Barbara's adobe expert, this adobe was located on the northeast corner of Santa Barbara and De la Guerra streets, catty-corner from the present Historical Museum.) It was mentioned in the newspaper that the tree would have lights.

On Christmas Eve in 1916, children went around the city in cars and stopped at various locations where they got out to sing. What were the songs they sang in 1916? A lot were the old favorites that are still popular

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In Assorted Colored  
*Mazda Lamps*

8 light set.....	\$ 4.00
16 light set.....	8.00
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today – minus tunes such as *Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer*, of course.

Here is an ad for Christmas tree lights from Santa Barbara's *Morning Press* on December 18, 1918.

Back in the 19-teens, some people still used candles on their trees. Years ago, I interviewed an older gentle-

man who had been a kid during World War I. He told me that at Christmas time, his parents would not let him play at the homes of friends who had electric tree lights. The old lights were hot and were known to start fires because people left them on too long. Whereas, candles on the tree were lit on Christmas Eve, enjoyed, and extinguished in a matter of minutes.

And I'll close with a Christmas joke from the December 25, 1919, issue of *Life* magazine.

"Say, Pa, would you an' uncle mind if I borrow my new engine for a little while?"



*Betsy J. Green is a Santa Barbara historian and author of Discovering the History of Your House and Your Neighborhood. Her website is [betsygreen.com](http://betsygreen.com).*



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# A Norwegian Holiday Meal

By Gloria Clements

**A**LL THROUGH MY CHILDHOOD, we had lutefisk in Wisconsin over the Christmas Holidays. Lutefisk is a Scandinavian fish claimed as originating in Norway or Sweden. This is usually cod that is dried and if kept dry, can be stored for years and yet keep its full nutrition. To hydrate it, however, you could not just put in water, you put it in lye which is made from wood ashes, thus the name from Norway, “lut” meaning lye (lutefisk in Sweden). Incidentally, it is the same chemical that might be used for pretzels to give that deep, shiny brown, cures fresh olives for eating, and what makes bagels gleam; these foods just don’t advertise this fact like “lutefisk” does.

Originating more than likely back before the Vikings, the lutefisk could be put on board the Nordic ships and provide protein and sustenance throughout their voyages.

The fish is dried in the cold, windy spring days of Northern Norway where the fish loses all the moisture that makes it attractive to bacterial attack. Also, the drying process reduces the fish to one-fifth its original size, which makes it easy to store and transport. Yet, once the stockfish has finished soaking in its lye bath, the hard, dried fish plumps up to a size even greater than the original fish.

The second reason behind the lye treatment is nutrition. The lye breaks down the protein in the fish into amino acids that are easily absorbed by the small intestine. It’s because of this protein breakup that lutefisk acquires its characteristic gelatinous, jelly-like texture. It is essentially pre-digested by the lye treatment and transformed into a highly edible, digestible, and nutritious food package that delivers instant energy to the eater. What is remarkable is that no nutrients are lost in this process and all the calories and vitamins are delivered intact and efficiently to the body.

Our immigrant Scandinavian ancestors possibly brought this dried fish with them and probably were better able to survive shortly after arriving in America as lye would be made and used also for soap making here. Many of these immigrants settled in Wisconsin and Minnesota where the fertile lands abound and the cold winters were no strangers to them. Traveling through parts of Sweden you could almost believe you were in Wisconsin, the difference being the red barns

and buildings all had white trim in Sweden.

Along with your dinner of lutefisk, you would have boiled or mashed potatoes, green peas and lefsa (a potato-based tortilla relative), maybe lingonberry jam and lots of melted butter and possibly a mustard sauce or spiced white sauce as the taste of lutefisk is very mild. Generally, meatballs would also be served for those who opted not to have the lutefisk. My mother usually made chicken instead of meatballs.

When we moved from Wisconsin to Santa Barbara in the early 1960s my mother was able to find frozen lutefisk to grace our holiday table. This would have been lutefisk that had already been hydrated, re-packed and sold frozen.

My Welsh English ex-spouse did not have the taste for my ancestral heritage holiday dish of lutefisk and as the children grew older his disdain and unbecoming comments about it caused my children to reject the lutefisk, and they ate the chicken or meatballs. It was



Bergen, Norway, \$50 lutefisk lunch plate.

harder to find lutefisk in Santa Barbara in the 1980s and as I was the only one eating the 3-4 pounds you had to buy, I reluctantly stopped this holiday tradition in our home.

My brother and sister-in-law in Seattle area, however, have maintained this tradition in their home for over 60 years. They are able to find lutefisk in their area and on Christmas Eve their table displays lutefisk and all the trimmings.

The Norwegian Americans were questioned about this strange custom of eating fish that had been put in lye. The smell is also somewhat subject to comment and ridicule. So, the Norwegian Americans developed a sense of humor over the comments and teasing from the non-Scandinavian world. Despite its long history in Scandinavia, however, lutefisk has fallen out of favor in the Nordic countries as very few people need to preserve food to last all winter.



Sign from Norskarv

Several years ago, my daughter, granddaughter and I went to Disneyland and there was a Viking skit at one of the outdoor arenas. One of the characters bought out this gi-normous box of cereal that said "Lutefisk Flakes." My daughter and I started laughing hysterically. We looked around at the entire audience and not one other person "got it." Were

we the only Scandinavian descendants in the audience

that knew about "gelatinous" lutefisk?

There are many Minnesota and Wisconsin Church groups that still have an annual lutefisk feast during the Christmas holiday season. Proud of their heritage, you might hear a descendant of Ole or Sven saying "I eat lutefisk because I am a Norwegian; and am a Norwegian because I eat lutefisk."

In 2009, I made a trip to Sweden and Norway and I was bound and determined to have lutefisk while I was there. At the very end of the trip in Bergen, Norway I finally found a restaurant that actually had lutefisk on their menu. I ordered it even though it was a \$50 lunch plate. It was smothered in bacon and did not have the lefsa, or the melted butter or cream sauce as our Norse American meal should have had in my mind, so I was very disappointed from our Americanized tradition of what a lutefisk meal should be.

A couple of years later, my Seattle brother and sister-in-law feeling sorry for me with my disappointing Norway meal, surprised me with a lutefisk dinner on one of my fall visits there. After many years of preparing this holiday tradition, my sister-in-law had the preparation down pat and I finally felt content with this surprise meal, more than likely the last lutefisk meal I will ever have unless I just happen to travel to Minnesota or Wisconsin around the holidays.

Some say "Uff-da" but as for lutefisk, we Norwegians just say "it's an acquired taste."

*Gloria Clements, SBCGS member since 2003. Has done indexing for SBCGS and is currently working on putting together family history stories for her family and connecting with new relatives through DNA.*



Map of Norway, Wikimedia Commons.

# A Christmas Voyage

By Margery Baragona

This is a Christmas story, though not traditional or historical.

Nine years ago, my husband and I decided to abandon the confusion and exhaustion of huge Christmas family gatherings. We decided on a cruise from Florida to Charleston, North Carolina up the inland waterway. Our small ship was elegantly decorated, and the 70 other passengers were relaxed and convivial. I noticed one couple who looked more sophisticated than others who were seemingly more casual. Upon introduction we learned they were Hal and Eunice David. You might not know the name Hal David although he is one of our most important lyricists. In collaboration with Burt Bacharach he wrote *What The World Needs Now Is Love*, *Alfie*, *Rain Drops Keep Falling*, *Do You Know The Way To San Jose*, and many, many more. Perhaps as we were fellow Californians, they invited us to lunch while docked in Savannah, Georgia. It was fun hearing the inside stories of stars and vocalists, and Eunice had a wealth of gossip to share. The nightly entertainment was brought in from local areas. One performer, Phyllis Dale, older but talented, played the piano and sang. She started playing "Raindrops" when Hal interrupted and said, "No, it should be in b minor." With that he quickly sat down and played his song and sang it. At 90 Hal was frail so it was a very touching moment.



Lunch in Savannah, Left, Hal and Eunice David, Margery Baragona, Jim Wilson



Alligator—No It's Not Made of Rubber!

Hilton Head, a stop on our itinerary, offered several excursions. Eunice and I opted for one to see huge alligators. Our small boat docked by an enormous alligator sunning itself on shore. We sat there for a long, long time. It did not move—not at all! I truly believed it was a monstrous rubber Disney creation. I fervently told the other passengers my theory, only to find out from passengers on a subsequent tour that they had to hastily leave as the same alligator lunged at their boat, threatening disaster.

Several months later Hal and Eunice came to our home for lunch, and we showed them the beauty of Santa Barbara. Shortly before Hal's death in 2012, Eunice went to Washington D.C. to receive a medal awarded by President Obama in recognition of Hal's contribution to our musical heritage.

We now have resumed festive family holidays, but 2011 was memorable.



*Born and raised in Santa Barbara, I enjoyed a career in real estate. In retirement I entertain, have traveled extensively, and am an avid reader. I'm kept busy with a large family and have met many lovely people at the Society. It was fun to write of the Santa Barbara of old.*

# Sending a holiday tradition that is priceless more than 90 years later...

By Paula Burnham Johnson

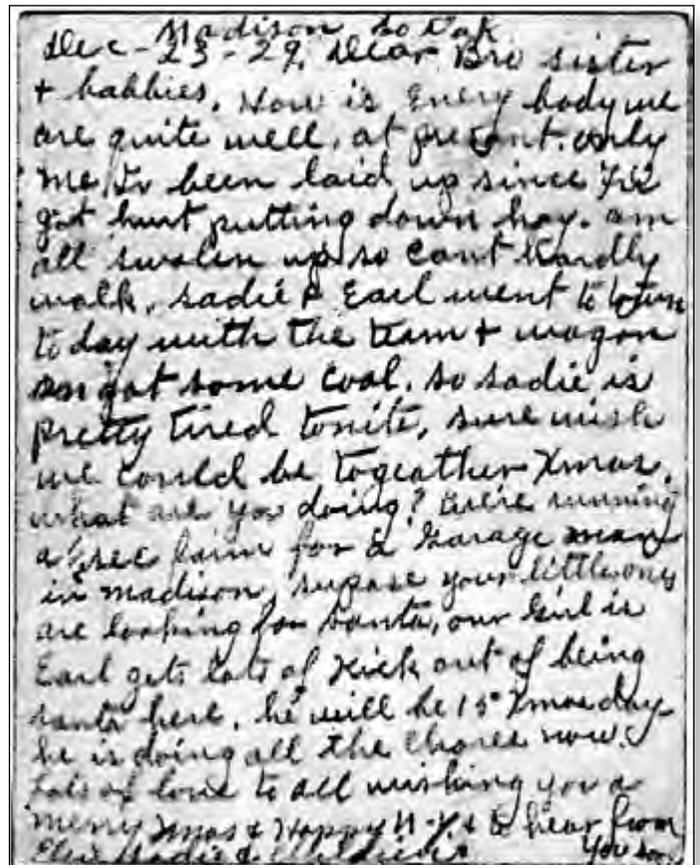
FEW MONTHS AGO I made a connection with my second cousin, Larry Hutchinson. I had been admiring his Ancestry Family Tree and the wonderful research he has done on our mutual paternal grandfather's line. Larry's grandfather is a younger brother to my grandfather. When we spoke, he had wonderful memories to share with me of my grandparents. A couple of days after we spoke, he remembered he had something that had been passed down to him, and he was very sure that I would be interested in having it. He found two Christmas cards that were sent to his family, one dating back to 1929. One was sent by my grandfather, Ellsworth Ray Hutchinson (1895-1967), and the other was sent by my grandmother, Sadie Wilhelm Hutchinson. The sending of Christmas cards was a "must do" each year and adding a personal note to everyone was important. My mom told me that if we wanted to hear what had been happening in their lives during the past year we needed to take the time to let our family and friends know what was noteworthy in our past year. I always looked forward to our family getting Christmas cards from family and friends and catching up on their news, especially after our family moved from South Dakota to Arizona in the winter of 1962.

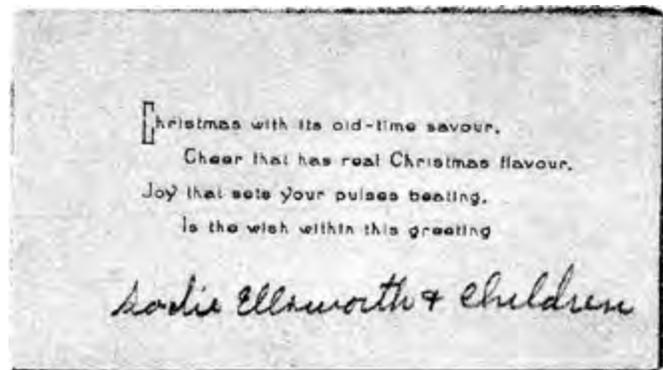
Larry mailed the original cards to me, and when I read the card written by my Grandpa "Hutch," it brought tears to my eyes as I could just hear my grandpa's voice.

I carry on this tradition. Although Larry is eleven years older, I see exchanging Christmas cards in our future. Maybe 90 years from now our cards will be passed on to our great-grandchildren, and they will have the opportunity to bond as Larry and I have.

*\*Since submitting this story, Paula went traveling and ...\** I got to meet second cousin Larry last week in Arizona. Also, I visited the gravesite of my great-grand-aunt Catherine Winchester Whittaker in Cedar City, Utah. I was surprised to learn she was a "sister-wife."

Aunt Catherine "Kate" Winchester Whittaker is my 3rd great-grand-aunt and Larry's 2nd great-grand-aunt. She is my 3rd great-grandmother's sister. She emigrated from Bristol, England in 1857 and traveled on the Mormon Handcart Trail from Iowa City, Iowa to Salt Lake City. I found two headstones for Catherine. One includes her, plus her sister-wife and their husband, James Whittaker, and the other, which is new, just lists her and mentions her marriage to James. I want to find out who paid for that one as she died in poverty and had no children of her own."





Paula retired in 2013 from a career in the field of medical office and for non-profits. She now enjoys having days that are free to do as she wishes but balanced with working on affordable housing issues. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of Peoples' Self-Help Housing, a board member of the Democratic Service Club and several committees at her church. She enjoys spending time with her four grandchildren that live locally. They range in age from nearly 20 years to 14 months. Paula joined SBCGS in January 2019.

## Finding a 2nd Great-Grandmother's Story

By Kate Lima

ONE OF THE JOYS of doing genealogy is when, after spending so much time in a confused and frustrated state, - BOOM! - something opens up.

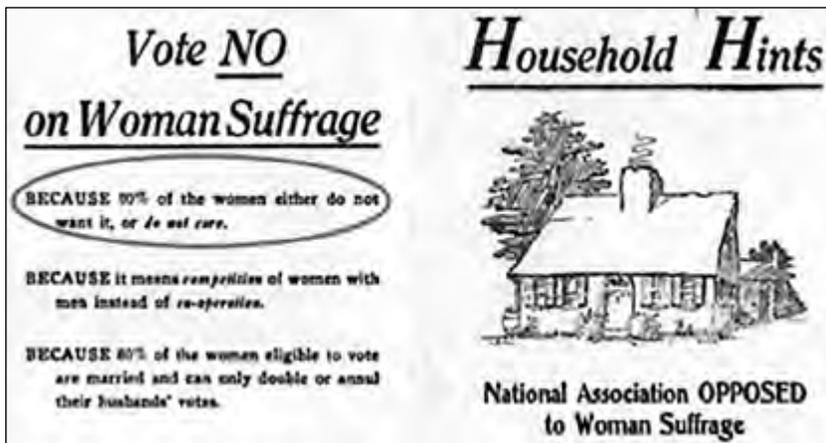
For the last issue of *Ancestors West* we were asked to write an article about our ancestors and the Women's Right to Vote. I was sure someone in my line played a part, mainly because my sisters, my mother and I share a strong passion for women's rights (Million Mom March, Women's Marches, League of Women Voters, knocking on doors to get out the vote, etc.). Such passion must be in our DNA, right?

I decided to look along my female line, to my 2nd great-grandmother, Louisa Frances Kline Turpin Poe and her two daughters, Serena Poe Shaff and Sara Ellen Poe. All were in Idaho at the time of the suffrage movement, with educated and intellectual family surrounding them. Idaho gave women the right to vote in 1896 when "Fannie" was in her mid-50s; Serena and Sara were in their early 30s. I searched many newspapers, many ancestry sites, and the "deep" web. I contacted women's organizations in Idaho, libraries, anywhere I could think of.

Nothing!



Louisa Frances Kline Turpin Poe



I thought that perhaps these women just didn't enter the political fray. I had read somewhere that Idaho gave women the right to vote simply because their husbands wanted their vote. Women would vote the same way their husbands voted, right? I also heard that women received the vote because many wanted to make Idaho a "dry" state long before Prohibition, and women would make that happen. (They did make it happen when they got the vote!) Maybe my ancestors just weren't interested? I couldn't believe it, but I couldn't find anything to prove otherwise. My research dwindled, and I moved on.

WELL, less than two months later (and after the deadline for *Ancestors West*) I received an email from the Historian for the Lewis-Clark State College. He was writing a story about Fannie! The reason? She was instrumental in the Women's Movement! He learned of me, a direct descendent, from a newly-found cousin of mine; he wanted to know if I had any information that could be helpful for his article. Talk about luck! It's lucky and rare when these chinks in the brick wall show up. And the chink can bring the wall crashing down.

Having valuable ancestry research fall into my lap happens, oh, once in a million searches.

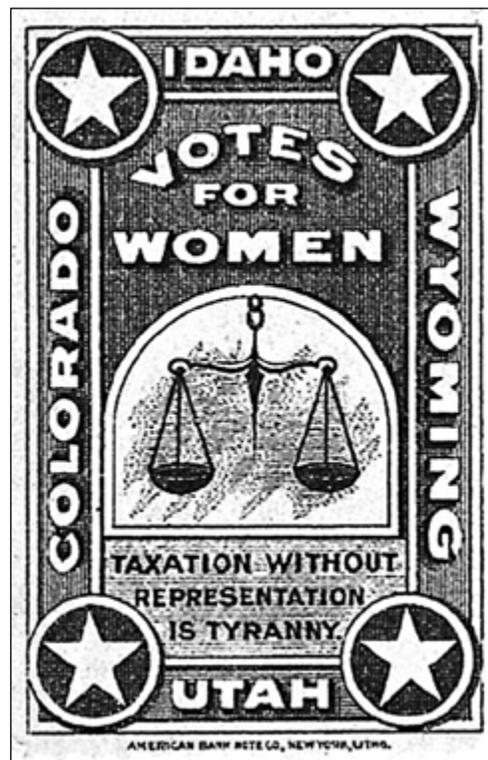
Idaho gave women the right to vote in 1896, and Fannie was the President of the Women's Suffrage Association at the time. A lot of work happens before the momentous event, of course. For example, in the early 1880s, Idaho women had the right to vote for school board officials. People believed that women had more understanding of children and their education than the men did. The papers said women had a "softening and healthy influence on children." However, they were not allowed to serve on the school board. Why? Because men - and women! - didn't think they should be the judges of how public money was spent!

Well, in 1881 my forthright Fannie ran for the school board! So did another woman. They didn't win, but they sure put the cause front and center. She was working for women's rights years before they won the right to vote.

She found much resistance though. To her chagrin, a lot of the resistance came from the women themselves. In March of 1896 she spoke at a particularly rousing

public meeting at the Lewiston Courthouse. So disenchanted, she was quoted as saying "Lewiston ladies don't want the ballot. There is absolutely no interest in it and consequently the club [Women's Suffrage Association] has died. No, Lewiston ladies don't want the vote." Fortunately, she didn't give up the fight. The club didn't disband; the hearty women wrote letters and spoke at local and state events. She and others continued to work tirelessly, and it paid off. The state legislature enacted a referendum to amend the Idaho Constitution; women's right to vote was approved in a statewide vote in November 1896.

It's said that we have our ancestors to thank for so many of our traits, and I've found an important one. Thank you, Great-Great-Grandmother Fannie! Your spunk and spirit, your persistence and fortitude, live on in all of us.



*Kate is a recent retiree from UCSB, leaving the university after 28 years to enjoy her grandson...and genealogy!*

# Proof is in the Provenance:

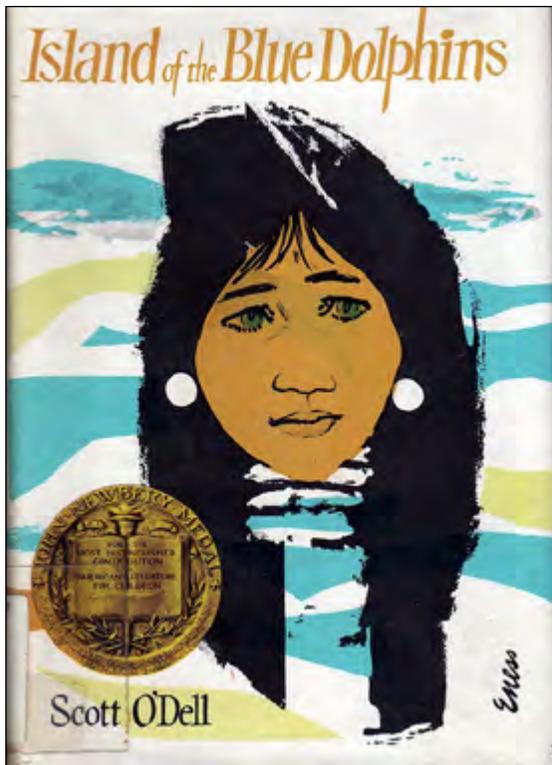
## —Juana Maria's Donut Stone— and a Compelling New Mystery

By Marla Daily



Portrait of Juana Maria, based on research by artist, Holli Harmon, 2017 (SBMNH)

WITH THE 1960 PUBLICATION of Scott O'Dell's book, *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, a fictionalized story of the Lone Woman of San Nicolas Island was spread throughout California and beyond. Sixty years later, O'Dell's book is still required reading for California 4th grade students. The Nicoleño woman's life alone for eighteen years, and subsequent rescue from San Nicolas Island, is a California household story.



JUANA MARIA'S DONUT STONE  
Height 10 cm; length 11.5 cm; width 11.5 cm  
Center perforation 3.8 cm in diameter  
Decorative incised line around the rim of the base  
Quarry source unknown  
(Santa Cruz Island Foundation)

In 1853, pioneer frontiersman and otter hunter, George Nidever sailed from Santa Barbara to San Nicolas Island on an otter-hunting expedition. Over the several weeks he was there, he found footprints in the sand, and eventually located the Lone Woman. She returned with Nidever to his home in Santa Barbara<sup>1</sup>, bringing with her precious few possessions, including a whale baleen hairpin<sup>2</sup>, an abalone fish hook<sup>3</sup>, a chert bird point<sup>4</sup>, and a donut stone<sup>5</sup>. The Lone Woman, baptized as Juana Maria at the Santa Barbara Mission, died in the Nidever home on October 19, 1853, seven weeks to the day after she arrived. For his part, George Nidever (1802-1883) lived another 30 years.

It is this September 1853 San Nicolas Island adventure for which Nidever is perhaps most well known — more so than his rescue of the passengers of the *Winfield Scott* at Anacapa Island in December of the same year. In 1870, Ralph Waldo Emerson penned the poem, *COURAGE*, about George Nidever.

<https://www.islapedia.com/index.php?title=COURAGE>

Fast forward 125 years after Nidever's death, when I learned of the great history mystery surrounding his unknown final resting place. Through a set of fortuitous circumstances, in 2008 George Nidever's long-lost grave was discovered in Calvary Cemetery<sup>6</sup> in a large unmarked family plot, along with his wife, Sinforosa, and sons Mark and Jake. With permission from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, on November 1, 2008, the Santa Cruz Island Foundation placed a period Victorian granite headstone<sup>7</sup>, designed by the great Santa Barbara stonemason, Osi DaRos (1921-2018), on the Nidever family grave. Jed Hendrickson

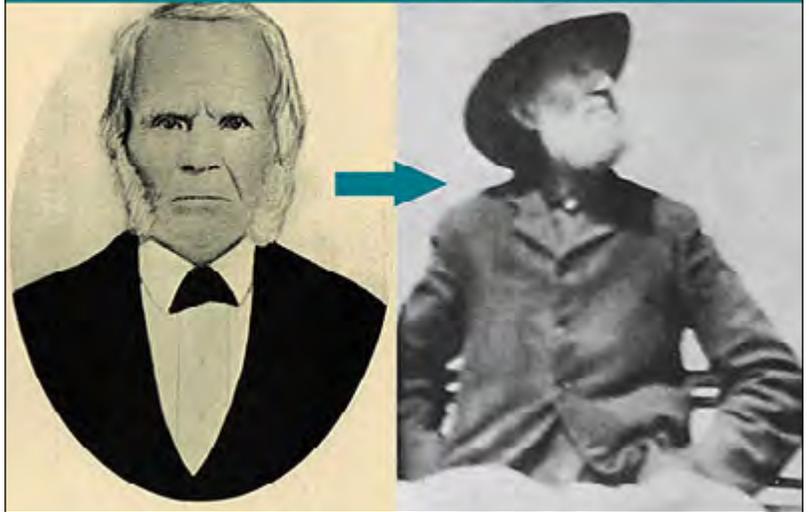


Captain George Nidever (1802-1883)

of Santa Barbara Monumental fabricated and installed it.

A human-interest story about the forthcoming gravestone installation was published in the *Independent*. The office phone rang, and the caller introduced himself as Jim Leslie, George Nidever's great-grand nephew. Jim had read the article and was thrilled to learn of the grave discovery and headstone placement. "Would the Santa Cruz Island Foundation like Juana Maria's donut stone?" Jim asked. He explained that after Juana Maria died, George Nidever had given the stone to his older brother, John Nidever – Jim Leslie's great-great grandfather. It had passed down to Jim through four generations of Nidevers. In a most curious turn of events, Jim's grandfather, George Leslie, had been employed on Santa Cruz Island for several years in the 1860s, when, on February 12, 1865 he was one of three men drowned in the Channel while heading from the island to Santa Barbara in a small open boat. He was 27 years old, and left behind a wife and infant son – George Leslie's father!

George Nidever gave Juana Maria's donut stone to his older brother John Nidever of Carpinteria, CA



## Provenance of Juana Maria's Donut Stone



John Nidever (1844-1930)  
Gave the stone to his daughter Nancy Ann (#8 of 12 children)



Nancy Ann Leslie (1796-1872) Passed the stone to her son, George Grant Leslie



George Grant Leslie (1864-1937) Passed the stone to his son, James Vincent Leslie



James Vincent Leslie (1929-2018) Great-great nephew of George Nidever, donated Juana Maria's donut stone to the Santa Cruz Island Foundation, 165 years after she brought it off San Nicolas Island



Proof is in the provenance! The donut stone can be traced from the hands of Juana Maria through the hands of five owners over 165 years. Thanks to Jim Leslie (1929-2018) and his wife Judy, the Santa Cruz Island Foundation is the proud recipient of Juana Maria's donut stone.

Now to the remaining mystery. Most donut stones found on San Nicolas Island are made of island sandstone, which this is not. A few others are made of soapstone<sup>8</sup>, which originated on Santa Catalina Island or from various mainland sources. Using an energy-dispersive spectrometry (EDS) system, geologists at UCSB<sup>9</sup> were able to determine this donut stone has no "soapstone" affinity. It is metavolcanic rock, unmatched from any San Nicolas Island source. Further forensic studies remain to be carried out. Where was the stone quarried?

Through the generous sponsorship of Tony and Sabrina Papa, and of AGIA in honor of John Wigle (1950-2018), the donut stone will be placed on permanent exhibit in the Chrisman California Islands Center currently under development in Carpinteria.

**ENDNOTES**

1. Nidever's wife, Sinforosa, was caring for their five children, ages 2-11 when Juana Maria was added to their household.
2. American Museum of Natural History, New York
3. Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Santa Barbara
4. *ibid*

5. Santa Cruz Island Foundation, Carpinteria
6. Clues to the location of the Nidever plot were uncovered by Alex Grzywacki in the original card file records of Calvary Cemetery, 199 N Hope Ave, Santa Barbara
7. Installation of upright headstones had been prohibited in Calvary Cemetery for decades. Special dispensation was granted by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles to the Santa Cruz Island Foundation as a result of the case presented on behalf of the Nidever family.
8. Steve Schwartz email to Marla Daily, July 8, 2014
9. Frank J. Spera and colleagues, Dept. of Earth Science & Earth Research Institute, UCSB



*Cultural anthropologist, Marla Daily, President of the Santa Cruz Island Foundation, has been researching and writing about the California Islands for more than 40 years. She is a recipient of the California Historical Society's Distinguished Service Award for her dedicated efforts to preserve and promote the history of California's Islands. The Santa Barbara Independent also*

*recognized her with their Local Hero Award. Marla's free online California Islands encyclopedia, ISLAPEDIA.com, is now over 15,000 pages, and has served over 10 million users worldwide. She is currently developing the Chrisman California Islands Center in Carpinteria, CA.*



Map of Channel Islands, California, Wikimedia Commons

# The Strange Case of The Missing Commodore

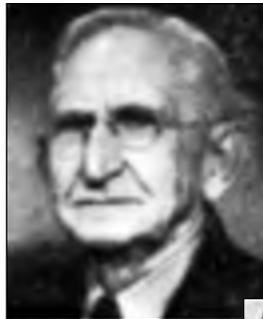
*Wild Mesa Stories by Wendel Hans*

*Wendel Hans is a member of the Santa Barbara Yacht Club and noticed the Commodore for 1918 was missing and went on a search...*

## Commodore and Doctor George Selmon Wells

Many old organizations keep track of their past officers. In the case of Santa Barbara's yacht club, founded in 1872, history has forgotten several early commodores. One forgotten commodore, Dr. George Selmon Wells, served his term in 1918. However, if you venture into the lobby of the Santa Barbara Yacht Club, you will not see Dr. Wells' picture on the wall of fame for the year 1918. Dr. Wells is forgotten no longer because I wrote this story.

The Commodore Nobody Knows,  
Dr. George Selmon Wells.  
Photo source:  
Santa Barbara Newspress,  
Dec 03, 1946.



March 30, 1898 Sel Wells, leading farmer and stockman, is in town and a flood has overturned every derrick on his island. Source: *Daily Oil Review*  
Wells Island- Officially named in 1891, Wells Island is offshore from Sistersville on the Ohio River. Wells Street parallels S Chelsea Street. When the Ohio river flooded, oil derricks on the island were wiped out. The railroad that everybody traveled runs next to WV-2. Source: USGS Topo maps.

George Selmon Wells was born in 1863 in Bens Run, Tyler County, West Virginia, along the Ohio River. In 1896, George S. Wells, now a doctor, married Maud B. McFarland, a farmer's daughter, in Marshall County, West Virginia. Their two children were Mary, born in 1897, and Frank Howard, born in 1900. At that time Dr. Wells had a general practice in Bens Run and in a nearby town on the river, Sistersville, where his family lived. He then became a specialist in Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat (EENT), in Wheeling, West Virginia, in 1902, and traveled by train, along the river, between Wheeling and Bens Run. In 1903 he had his own bout with disease, (see the news clipping) and was treated in Ohio. He advertised his services in local newspapers, and saw eye patients at prestigious hotels.

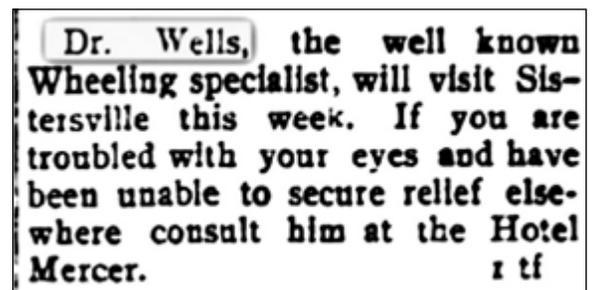
Following his father's death in 1905, Dr. Wells vanished from West Virginia, and by 1907 the family reappeared in South Dakota.



Sistersville West Virginia with oil derricks- Dr. Wells, his brother, and sister, inherited the family farm which had become an oil field. With royalties from gas and oil Dr. Wells was considered well-to-do, wealthy, and rich. Wells Island is separated from Sistersville by a narrow channel of the river



Before Santa Barbara- Many brief reports about the doings of Dr. Wells and his father, Selmon, were carried in the *Daily Oil Review*. West Virginia was swimming above pools of coal and oil.



**Dr. Geo. S. Wells Seriously Ill.**  
 The large circle of friends in this city and vicinity of Dr. Geo. S. Wells, of Wheeling, will regret to learn he is seriously ill. He had an operation performed on his nose a short time ago at Cleveland, O., and from which it is now feared has resulted in blood poison. As we went to press, however, this afternoon, his symptoms for recovery were more favorable.

July 28, 1908-  
 Dr. Wells needed a doctor. Source: Sisterville's West Virginia Daily Oil Review



1910- El Reposo, east of Pasadena, was a moderately priced place to treat lung and throat patients accompanied by family in the cabin bungalows. Source: Bing.com

### Doctor Wells in South Dakota

In a bizarre twist, Dr. Wells was again in the news in South Dakota. He bought a sheep ranch about 1907 and took his wife and children to the town of Belle Fourche. His father was a stockman but there is no evidence that Dr. Wells had any experience with sheep. According to the press release he lived in a sheep wagon and sued his wife for divorce for deserting him. Instead, the court awarded to her the children plus maintenance but no divorce. In 1920, Maud Wells, now a music teacher, and son Frank, are living in Boston. Maud reports she is a widow. But we know the doctor, after his temporary stay at the South Dakota sheep ranch, was alive and well in Santa Barbara, California, since at least 1912, where he is listed in practice at 1201 State Street.

**SHEEP WAGON**  
 Was No Home and the Wheeling Doctor Could Get No Divorce.  
 SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE ENQUIRER.  
 Belle Fourche, S. D., May 14.—On the ground that the plaintiff had not established residence in good faith, and that desertion by his wife was not shown, Dr. George S. Wells, formerly a wealthy physician of Wheeling, W. Va., was to-day refused a divorce here. Testimony showed that Wells and his family came here two years ago, he taking up a sheep ranch and living in a sheep wagon.  
 Over a year ago Mrs. Wells went East to nurse her sick father. Recently Wells sued for divorce, and she and the children returned. She was awarded the children and \$100 monthly for maintenance.

Cincinnati Enquirer, May 15, 1909 – Dr. Wells' first wife, Maud, may not have taken enthusiastically to life in a sheep wagon as she had a servant in 1900. Ultimately, Dr. Wells' daughter, Mary, would end up in Santa Barbara living with dad, his new wife Jennie, her step-brother Selmon Willard "Jim," on Quinientos Street and then on the lemon orchard up Mission Canyon. She would graduate from Santa Barbara High School about 1915. She would adventure to Hawaii by steamship and eventually marry and settle in Hawaii. Her younger brother, Frank Howard, would stay with his mother in Boston. As occasionally happened back then, when a marriage ended in a mess, the dumped partner would often declare themselves a widow or widower. To the widow Wells, Dr. George is dead to me! To the widower Dr. George, Maud is dead to me.

### Doctor Wells in Sierra Madre, California

Selmon Willard "Jim" Wells, the adopted son of Dr. Wells, had penned an autobiography. In it he said his dad had practiced medicine in Pasadena. In 1910, Dr. George S. Wells found himself at the base of Mount Wilson in the San Gabriel mountain town of Sierra Madre. He was doctor in residence for the new-age El Reposo Sanatorium where mid-income tubercular lung patients could recover in cabins with their family. He was advocating electrical medical devices. In addition, a story in the *Los Angeles Times* recounted how Dr. Wells treated a stoic Japanese patient in 1911, who had taken a broken wooden wagon axle shaft through the chest. By 1912, Dr. Wells had moved on to Santa Barbara.

**Sierra Madre.**  
**PERFORATED MAN'S BREAST.**  
 Japanese Terribly Injured on Mountain Trail.  
 Shaft of Wagon Tears Hole in His Lungs.  
 Marvelous Stoicism Was Displayed by Victim.  
 SIERRA MADRE, Aug. 17.—M. Harono, a Japanese employed by Mrs. O. M. Cadwell of this place, lies in the Pasadena Hospital in a precarious condition, the result of a collision with a milk wagon while riding his bicycle down Mountain Trail boulevard. That Harono was not killed immediately appears marvelous. The right shaft of the wagon penetrated his body nine inches, then snapped in two and left an additional

August 18, 1911, *Los Angeles Times*- Dr. Wells treated this grievously injured man with the aid of a surgeon. The man was expected to live. Dr. George S. Wells would be practicing in Santa Barbara within months.

## Doctor Wells in Santa Barbara

Dr. Wells, was again in the news in February, 1913, when he treated the supervising engineer of the Santa Barbara water tunnel for a blood infection at the new Cottage Hospital. In January, 1914, he was elected Vice President of the County Medical Society. That same year he moved into luxurious suites in the new San Marcos building, and married his office nurse, Jennie Belle Busby, a divorcee from Iowa. In 1916, they adopted, at birth, a boy whom they named Selmon Willard Wells, aka "Sunny Jim." Mary Wells, daughter of George and Maud Wells, was then a student living in her father's household from 1915 to 1922 - with the man her mother considered to be dead.

Oddly, in his autobiography, Selmon Willard Wells, said did not remember meeting Mary, his step-sister.



1940- Jennie and Dr. George S Wells Source: *The Life And Career of Lt. General Selmon "Sundown" Wells*

## Doctor Wells, the yachtsman and rancher

In the meantime, a consortium of yachtsmen bought a racing boat named the *Royal* from a club in San Pedro, and one of the owners was Dr. Wells. Except for the fact that he lived on the Ohio river, there is no indication he had experience with boats. Wheeling, West Virginia, had a yacht club founded in 1929, long after Dr. Wells departed. On July 24, 1917, Dr. and Mrs. Wells, co-owners of the *Royal*, went on a pleasant cruise aboard the yacht. Captain George Gourley, not Dr. Wells, was in command of the *Royal*. Then, on January 23, 1919, at 8 PM, officers of the yacht club met in the posh medical offices of 1918 Commodore Dr. Wells, to elect a commodore for 1919. Also on the agenda was repairing the flagship *Royal* that was wrecked on the beach in a storm. The election finally took place May 8, 1919, with "former Commodore Dr. Wells" becoming a director of the club. On May 29, 1919, the repaired *Royal* was launched again in bad conditions; a cable broke, and the yacht was destroyed totally. There is a yearly award at the club for the biggest screwup of the year. The award is called the "Royal Dolt-on." Certainly, the loss of the *Royal* was the result of a royal screw-up.

Dr. Wells then bought a 30-acre lemon orchard in Mission Canyon in 1920, where he later retired after serving as head of the ENT (ear, nose, and throat) Departments at Cottage and St. Francis hospitals. Dr. George Selmon Wells passed in 1946 at age 83. Alas, there was no mention of his association with yachting in his obituary. There was no mention of yachting in "Sunny Jim's" autobiography.

After his South Dakota adventure misfired, Dr. Wells was at the top of his game in Santa Barbara by 1913. Did he ever get a divorce from Maud, or was he a bigamist? There is no record. He was practicing medicine again on notable patients and was a vice president of a medical association, a yacht club commodore, hospital department head, and circulating in Santa Barbara high society. Dr. Wells also owned a share of a racing sailboat. At age 53, he was father to an adopted infant son born in 1916.



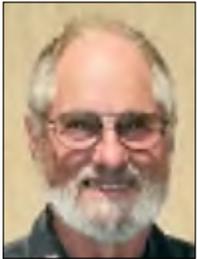
Yacht *Royal*, foreground, on a good day - Location was Pelican Harbor at Santa Cruz Island. Perhaps Dr. and Mrs. Wells were on this cruise. Source: *A Waterfront History* by Erin Graffy de Garcia



Dr. Wells yacht *Royal* on a bad day- Bad day in May 29, 1919, days after Dr. Wells had passed his gavel to 1919 commodore, Dr. James Bainbridge, the flagship was wrecked again, this time totally, with Stearn's Wharf in the background. Source: *A Waterfront History* by Erin Graffy de Garcia

## General Selmon Willard "Jim" Wells

Selmon, the adopted son of George and his second wife, Jennie, at a young age on the ranch was already scanning the sky for the rare airplane. He would later learn to fly and would log over 12,000 hours as a pilot captain of bombers in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. His career would end as he retired a three-star General, and Inspector General of the Air Force. Jim was considered kind-hearted and he loved the ladies. He could ride a horse and keep a garden. In retirement, General Wells had one of 60 homes on the Alisal Ranch golf course. Born of Bavarian immigrants and adopted by the Wells, Selmon Willard "Jim" Wells died in 2010 at the age of 94. Where did the name "Jim" come from? When he was born the nurses loved his personality and called him "Sunny Jim."



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whalumns@aol.com



Inspector General United States Air Force- Selmon Willard "Jim" Wells was the adopted son of Dr. George Selmon Wells and his nurse and wife, Jennie Belle. Jim was a bomber pilot. One person said, "Fighter pilots make movies, bomber pilots make history." He flew the A20 "Havoc" in WWII, B29's over Korea, and the B52 over Vietnam. His birth parents were Bavarian immigrants. He was born and adopted in California by Dr. Wells and Jennie Belle Wells. Source: Findagrave.com

# My Great-Grandfather's Memoir

Submitted by Elaine Madelon Lane

**T**HE FOLLOWING IS A MEMOIR my great-grandfather, George Raymond Hopkins, wrote in 1963. It covers six years during his childhood that his family were homesteaders on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington State. It has been in the family since he wrote it but I only got my chance to read it earlier this summer, and I was very affected by the hardships and outcomes they faced. It is useful for the reader to know that grandpa George worked for the Northern Pacific Railroad and was an expert surveyor -he is very skilled at describing places, names and events. His dedication to his family is included at the beginning.



George Raymond Hopkins

*Editor's note: No editing or changes were made to the manuscript; it is presented as written.*

This paper is dedicated to the memory of a little pioneer family who settled on the upper Soleduck River in Clallam County, Washington in 1892 and to the memory of their pleasures, associations and hardships,

And

It is also dedicated to my loving wife Margaret Josenhans Hopkins and to my daughter Sally May (who is now Mrs. Charles von Loewenfeldt of San Rafael, California), and to the memory of my son, George Parsons Hopkins, who served in the South Pacific Area during the Second World War as a P-38 Fighter Pilot and who finally came down in Texas in an electrical storm in July of 1945 in his P-51 Mustang at the age of 23 ½ years.

The four of us spent many wonderful days hiking up the Elwah, the Quinault, Wynooche, Skokomish, Hoh and Queets Rivers.

### *Six Years on the Soleduck River*

Written by George R. Hopkins  
who was eight years old when the family moved to Clallam County, Washington.

THIS IS THE STORY OF THE FAMILY of William Francis Hopkins, who was one of Clallam County's early settlers on the upper Soleduck River, State of Washington. It is a story of six rather hard years, with some pleasant memories and some events bordering on the tragic.

I feel that I am called upon to leave some record of our years there in order to help preserve some of the atmosphere of the life of the early settlers in the area. In

my later years, I have covered Clallam County pretty thoroughly and many times have I come upon the old homes that are now falling to pieces and are almost entirely hidden by the new growth and the thought always comes of the forgotten hopes, hardships, romances and the tragedies that must have existed in the early days, but now live only in the imagination. At this time there is practically no visible evidence at all of the families and friends that lived around us in those early days.

To begin with, my father's family moved by ox team from Kentucky into Southeastern Indiana where my grandfather was born in 1831. Another move into Central Indiana was made in 1843. My father was born here in 1850. Then westward the family went into Wisconsin, then into Iowa and finally into the Black Hills of South Dakota, settling down near Fort Mead where the three youngest of us children were born. Drought and storms drove them westward again, this time by horse drawn covered wagon to Miles City, Montana, where the horses and wagons were sold and the family continued on westward by Northern Pacific Railway, arriving in Tacoma in mid-December 1888. Tacoma was to be the end of the journeying, but within three years my father was again looking for new land, this time in Clallam County, on the Soleduck River. He found his location here in 1891, built the cabin, and in November, 1892, moved his family into it. The home was located in Section 31, Township 30 North, Range 11 West, immediately south of the Big Bend of the river in that section.

The move from Tacoma to the cabin on the Soleduck river was interesting, indeed. There were seven in my family at that time: Father and Mother and five of us youngsters. My brother Darwin, or Dor, as we called him, was fourteen years old. May was twelve, Elmer was ten, I was eight years old, and Stephen was six. We took passage from Seattle to Pysht on the steamer *Garland*. Clallam Bay had been and was the principal point of entry, with travel going from Clallam Bay to Beaver and Forks, but with our neighborhood being seven miles upriver from Beaver, it became apparent that a much shorter route could be found from Pysht, over Pysht Mountain and down Bear Creek to Collins' home and thence southeasterly about two miles to our new home. Actually, the new trail was about fifteen miles shorter for us than the trail from Clallam Bay. This trail was laid out by Irvin E. Franklin and was built by the settlers themselves, including the Sawyer boys, Garland, my father, Collins, Franklin and others.

The *Garland* stopped off Pysht for us, about one quarter mile from shore, where a row boat with several men came out to help us ashore. It was raining hard. We

were all loaded into the boat and moved as far in towards shore as the loaded boat could go, and then we had to take to the water. We kids were carried ashore, and two big rough looking slicker-covered men waded up to my mother, made a chair for her with their hands and said "Come on, Mam." I can still hear my mother say "No, thank you. I would rather walk." She didn't walk, though." She sat on the "chair" made for her, and with an arm around each pair of wet shoulders, she was carried up to the shore. We stayed at the "hotel," such as it was, overnight. We youngsters, who had been pretty sick coming up on the boat, did not especially appreciate the Chinese cooked fish balls and rice given us for supper.

The next day the trip over Pysht Mountain, across and down Bear Creek to Bert Collins' place was made by most of us. Father had met us at Pysht and with him were Franklin, Wash Humphrey, and Collins. Collins was in charge of the train of horses that was taking us in. Stephen and I rode in style on a little donkey. Empty kerosene boxes, each of which had originally held two five-gallon cans of kerosene, or coal oil, as we called it, were strapped on the little animal, one on each side. Steve sat in one box and I sat in the other, so that the day was much less rigorous for us than it was for the older folks, all of whom walked. We made the first part of the trip to the base of the climb without event, and all stayed fairly well together. Steven and I were lifted out of our boxes and walked up the mountain, followed by Father and Mother. Mother gradually weakened and by the time the rest of us had reached the top she and Father had fallen far behind. We passed Buck Cale's cabin on Upper Bear Creek and then came to where it was necessary to cross the creek. Again we two youngsters came out of our boxes and were led across the rain swollen creek on a small foot log. The horses forded without difficulty, but the little jack had to swim. It had



Hopkins Cabin abt 1895

been raining hard all day and darkness began to fall after we crossed the creek. It became difficult to keep in the trail. The horses followed along without trouble, but those walking had a difficult time. It wasn't long before Franklin slipped off the trail in the darkness. May was riding up ahead with Garland who had ridden from Collins' place to the Bear Creek crossing to meet us. She called back, "Mr. Franklin, are you all right?" Franklin, who was splashing around in the brush off the trail, answered, "Go on, May, go on, and leave me here to die." Eventually we all arrived at the Collins home, all cold and wet, well after night had fallen. That is, all arrived safely except Father and Mother, who did not reach Collins' place until the end of the third day. Those of us who did get through greatly appreciated the hot supper of elk meat and potatoes that Mary Collins set before us.

The next day, Collins and Franklin started back to look for Father and Mother. It had been raining continually, and was still raining hard. Bear Creek was high. The foot log was gone and the men did not get through to Cables' cabin until nightfall, but they found the lost couple in the cabin and safe. The experience of Dad and Mother had been terrific. They had made Cable's place at nightfall. Mother had had a hard time on the trail, and they were thankful to find shelter from the hard rain. The cabin stood in the midst of tall spruces and one great tree stood very near the corner of the building. Rain was pelting the roof and the wind began to howl about the shack. Father had been unable to start a fire that first night, and the two huddled in a corner of the cabin in each other's arms. They could hear falling trees crash out on the hillside and they shivered with fear lest their shelter should be struck by one of the falling giants. Then the great spruce tree at the corner of the cabin began to creak and groan and finally broke and began to crash down. The two people huddled close in fear that the big tree would fall on their shelter. It finally landed with a crash, the cabin still stood, and they were safe. Next morning, Dad found that the big tree had fallen directly away from the house. They stayed in the cabin that second day and at dusk Collins and Franklin came with food. The folks reached Collins' home the end of the third day, safe and sound, and happy that they had been spared.

The next journey was the two miles from the Collins' home to our new home. There was but a foot trail. It led past the Wisen location, where Mr. and Mrs. Wisen were to live later, and past the homesite of their son Charley. We reached the Soleduck at the big bend, were rowed across in Dad's homemade boat and in ten minutes we were H O M E. Our dog Fan, a little black long haired, some-kind-of-a-terrier, who had come up on the *Garland* with us, and who had remained alone at our cabin, after a trip over with Dad from Collin's the day or so before, met us at the house. Father had laid something down on the porch and Fan had stayed to watch, while Dad went back for his family. The little dog was to play a great big part in our life on the "ranch".

Our cabin was made of logs, calked with moss, with

a porch extending out at the front end for about six feet. The shake roof carried out over the porch. The cabin faced north toward the river, which was about one thousand feet away. Directly behind the cabin the hill rose steeply. There was a single sash window in the front and one similar window on the east side, looking back up the trail. The one room home was twelve feet by sixteen feet inside, and within three years she was to shelter eight of us. That first night there was a tier of double bunks on one side and about four feet away a double bed for Dad and Mother, and for the first few nights Steve and I slept at the foot of the big bed. Later there was another bed build in the bunk style over the double bed.

Mother found a good substantial cook stove in place, and the chairs and table were hand made. The house stood on a bench about 40 feet above the bottom land, and at the foot of this bench, about one hundred fifty feet away, was a wonderful permanent spring. Later the spring was dug out to fair size and rock walled and a shake house built over it. This was our spring house, and during the years when we could afford a cow, my mother kept her milk here.

I do not especially recall what happened that first winter, and it will be difficult to state definitely when each particular event occurred, but we got through the first winter and through five more. I do remember the winter of 1893 in particular. The snow lay three feet deep over everything and one afternoon I stood at the window in the east side looking out over the snow that covered the trail as far as I could see. The air was quiet, there was no snow falling, and there had not been any snow since morning. Suddenly, without warning, heavy snow began to fall. The flakes were large, very close together and the underside of the falling snow was like a great blanket, level in all directions. Small as I was, I began to wonder how we could continue to live, where our food would come from. We could keep warm, but food was scarce and could be obtained only after a hard trip to Beaver, over almost impassable snow. About this time a figure was seen coming down the trail over the snow with a pack on his back and with snow shoes on his feet. It proved to be Mr. Eiholtzer who was bringing us a sack of flour. How he happened to do this I never knew. Eiholtzer with a wife and two daughters lived about three or four miles away on the Calawa River southeasterly of us. The Eiholtzer family was to play a big part in the life of the County. I do not remember Mrs. Eiholtzer, but I do recall Mr. Eiholtzer and the two daughters, Cordelia and Nettie, very well, Cordelia, the oldest, later married A.M. Konopaski, and Nettie married Theodore Klahn. Klahn and Konopaski had visited us with Eiholtzer on their way over to Eiholtzer's claim during our first winter. A few years after we had left the County, I returned and found Cordelia living at Beaver. Later, I met Mr. Klahn on his farm west of Beaver and he told me of the loss of his son the year before. The boy had been gored by a bull. I recall very well indeed having a little party with Nettie out in our front yard. Nettie was about one year older than I. We



William Francis Hopkins and family about 1895

spent a happy afternoon roasting elk meat over an open fire. A number of years later I was at Clallam Bay, and found Nettie living only a short distance from the dock. We had a good visit, and when I left to go to the boat, Nettie walked down to the boat with me, followed by seven small youngsters.

### George Raymond Hopkins

By the year 1893, neighbors were getting more numerous. Down the river at the mouth of Bear Creek were the Obergs, up Bear Creek were the John Iverson family and Bert and Mary Collins, with their little daughter, Millie. And between us and the Collins Ranch, later to be designated as Collins Post Office, were Mr. and Mrs. Wisen's and Charley Wisen's cabins. We did not see much of the Wisen family. I remember one day when Mrs. Wisen was sick, my sister May and I stopped to see her on our way to the Collins', and gave her a big bunch of wild flowers, big yellow lilies, but they were not greatly appreciated. They proved to be skunk cabbage blossoms! About half a mile below us on the north side of the river was the McColsky cabin. Up river, a short mile away, was the shake cabin of Dave Christopher. The cabin of Mrs. Vail and her family of five boys and two girls was a little farther up and about two to three miles up river were the cabins and claims of Foster Sawyer, Leslie Sawyer, and Wash Humphrey, and then the Schofield family and the Higgins family. I remember well one day how thrilled I was when I took little red-haired Annie Schofield by the hand and helped her along from rock to rock in the shallow water at the river's edge. Beyond the Higgins ranch and across the river was the cabin of Mr. Brasch. Mr. Snyder's ranch was between Christopher's and Leslie Sawyer's on the opposite side of the river. Snyder's memory will long continue as he had much to do with the location of trails throughout the County.

Mr. Irving W. Garland was back in from the river about five miles from us and upstream. His shake cabin stood on a large hill that had been burned over and we called it "Burnt Mountain." Herman Kopp had a claim a few miles away from Garland's on Calawah River.

To the south of us in the flat valley beyond our nearby hill were the cabins of Buck Cable, Mike Bigler, John Anderson, Elmer E. Hopkins, Irvin E. Franklin, C. A. Gorder, George Town, and Chris and Hans Emmett. The Eiholtzer ranch was on the Calaway River about three or four miles southeasterly of us. Cable had located a claim over near Pysht Mountain

and had built a cabin there, but abandoned it for a new location mentioned above. One day Buck Cable killed a fine elk near his cabin and then came down to our place to invite us to get as much of the meat as we wanted. The Doolittle family lived over on Upper Bear Creek for a while, and then spent some time with Dave Christopher a little way up river from us.

The claims of E. E. Hopkins, Franklin, Gorder, the Emmetts, George Town, and many others, were timber claims, and the stand of Sitka spruce and Douglas fir around their cabins was beautiful to see.

Other neighbors that must be mentioned were the Dimmels, who built a home about midway between us and Sappho on the north side of the river. The road ran much closer to the river than the present 101 highway does. The Dimmels had a small store and we took advantage of this quite often. They had previously lived near Beaver.

The community began to worry about school, since the number of youngsters was increasing. In 1894 all five of us youngsters went to school, and there were four of school age in the Vail family, with two others coming along fast. Bert Vail, the eldest, and my brother Darwin attended school for a year or so and then dropped out as both were well able to work. Our first school was held in the summer of 1894 in the Dave Christopher cabin and Dave was our teacher. At the end of each day, each class was given a spelling test and the boy or girl who was at the head of the line at the end of the class was given a "headmark" written by our teacher. A picture of one of these headmarks is shown. During our six years in the County, school was held during four summers for a grand total of twelve months of school during the entire six years. Our next teacher was Ed Lamereaux of Beaver, who taught us for two summers, and the summer of 1897 Miss Sue A.

LaFollette had the school. We all loved Miss LaFollette and I am still the proud possessor of two letters she wrote me during the summer of 1898 when she was teaching at Piedmont.

Numerous little incidents occurred as time went by, many of which I recall vividly. One rather minor incident, to me it was quite tragic, stands out very definitely. Good footwear was scarce. I believe it was John Iverson who made shoe pacs for as many as he could supply. Steve and I had passed the winter of 1893-94 with practically no shoes at all. However, our minds worked overtime on what we would like to have, and after a great deal of coaxing I had been promised a pair of red boots which were to come by mail from Tacoma. The day arrived when they were to reach me. My brother Elmer was to bring them from Pysht and I waited on the river bank, dancing up and down and hollering "Oh, my pretty little red boots, my pretty little red boots." The moment came, Elmer arrived with the mail and we opened my package on the spot. My "pretty little red boots" proved to be a pair of men's No. 9 shoes in which I might have lost myself.

Another memory creeps in: my father had obtained a brass fife and he was quite good in the use of it. Many times, Steve and I would be playing Indian back in the woods, sometimes a quarter of a mile away, and the shrill tones of the fife would come to us clearly and distinctly. I have always liked to think of him sitting out on the porch of the cabin playing his fife.

One event I remember very definitely and distinctly and I have told the story to my own children and grandchildren a great many times. My sister May and I were returning from Sunday School at the Wisen home one day. We were idling along busily talking, and the dogs, old Fan and her pup Major, were somewhere in the brush behind us. I glanced up and saw a "stump" in the trail ahead, and then a few seconds later decided that I did not remember any stump in the trail at that point, and pointed it out to May. It was about sixty feet ahead of us and right in the middle of the road. As I pointed toward it, our little dog Fan came tearing by and made straight for the cougar! She was followed about two jumps back by Major, who was considerably bigger than Fan. The cougar didn't dally at all but "got the heck out of there" at once. On the first leap he made the top of a windfall and then disappeared in the woods with the dogs close behind. It was a good big cougar and we had had a close broadside look at him as he left the road. May and I made it back home in a hurry.

Another cougar incident occurred a year or two later. I was about twelve years old and had become fairly good in the use of cross cut saw and axe. I was about a quarter of a mile from home and possibly a hundred feet up on the hillside from the trail, and was sawing stove wood in an absorbed manner as I watched the saw cut into the big log. Suddenly I felt that something was wrong. I was being watched by something back of me on the hill. Turning suddenly, I saw the head of a large cougar resting on the top of a log scarcely thirty

feet from me. The animal was watching me closely. Without any sign of haste, I stood up, picked up my double bitted axe and walked down to the trail and home without looking back. The cougar did not follow me. There were a great many cougars in the territory and several children had had similar experiences. Men were followed along the trail at night. Mr. Franklin, walking home after dark one night, was followed closely by two cougars, one on either side of the trail. He did not even have a lantern.

My brother Elmer, bringing his pack horses over the Pysht trail, was followed persistently one night by a cougar. Occasionally, as the moonlight hit the trail behind him, he could see the cougar following closely. He kept close to the horses and was not otherwise bothered.

Another little incident must be noted, too: Mr. Gorder, who was youthful and spry in spite of his long red beard, was cruising out his claim one day with his big 44 strapped to his side. With his mind on anything but bear, he came to a waist high windfall and vaulted over it. Imagine his surprise and consternation when he came down astride a good sized black bear! The bear was as much surprised as Gorder was, and cleared out of there at once. The 44 remained in its holster, entirely forgotten.

The story of Little Jack: There were lots of black bear in the area as there still are after all the years. They often came into our "slashing," possibly with the thought of picking up a little fresh pork. One day my father spotted an old bear and a cub not far from home in the bottomland near the river. He rushed back to the house for his rifle and in a short while again ran onto the two bears. Soon the cub, which was a good sized bear in its own right, took to a tree, and Dad dropped it with a bullet in the neck. However, the wound was slight and the bear took off again. Hearing the shot, Elmer came tearing down with his 40-50 single shot Remington, and then Mother and Steve and I made for the noise. Elmer was ahead and close behind him came Mother and we two youngsters. Suddenly, with no warning at all, the little bear jumped out into the trail just ahead of Elmer and ran down the trail toward the river as fast as he could go. Close on his heels came Elmer with the muzzle of his rifle almost on the bear's back, and he was yelling loudly, "It's a bear, it's a bear!" but forgot to shoot. Dad came out of the brush then with the two dogs. He told us youngsters to stay put and then he ran after the dogs which were hot on the bear's heels. The old bear was still around and Dad was afraid she would interfere in the melee any minute.

The dogs had gotten close to the little bear now and soon chased it into a small back water pool near the river, where it stood at bay. And now the fun began. Dad dropped his rifle and advanced on the bear in the pool, bare handed, with Mother and the dogs standing guard. Dad soon got his chance and fell on the bear and then dragged it ashore where he flattened it out and Mother helped hold it down. Dad dug up some string from some source and soon succeeded in tying

the bear's legs and jaws tightly, and then sprang up yelling to Mother to get up and out of the way. But she couldn't get up – one of her legs was tightly tied to the bear! And there the two prisoners lay with the old bear still at large in the nearby brush. Dad corrected the situation and the parade started for home with the little prisoner. The bear wasn't so little after all, as it stood about eighteen or twenty inches high and must have weighed close to sixty pounds. He was likely a year old cub. Dad's hands and arms were pretty badly cut up in the scuffle.

Near our home we had a small log building which was used for potato storage, and here Dad put the bear down and released him from his ropes. The next day Dad had made a collar for the bear with a long chain attached. He entered the building and put the collar on the bear with almost no difficulty. The bear had learned his lesson and offered but little resistance. We called him Jack, and he came to know us, but he had no respect for anyone but Dad. When Dad approached, Jack would gather up his chain and go into his shelter and stay there. When Elmer, whom Jack especially disliked, approached, Jack would gather up his chain and go back to the door of his home, and then as soon as Elmer approached near enough, Jack would rush out at him to the end of his chain. Three or four months later, Dad found it necessary to leave for Tacoma to find work. He felt he could not leave Jack who had no respect at all for the rest of us. Therefore, the end came for little Jack – and the roasts and spare ribs were wonderful indeed.

There is another little wild life episode that I like to think of. Our Fan had brought us a batch of pups and we soon disposed of all of them but one, which we called Ring. Ring was jet black with a white ring around his neck, and we came to love him. One day when Ring was about three months old we heard a terrific ki-yi-ing down in the garden. We soon discovered that a wild cat had attacked Ring and had cut him up pretty severely. Fan had come to his rescue and chased the cat away, though Fan was no taller than the wild cat itself. We were so mad at the way Ring had been handled that Mother and I decided to do something about it. The only gun in the house was Father's thirteen pound buffalo gun in which he used 45-70 ammunition although the true bore specification was 45-125, a fine looking single shot Remington with heavy octagon barrel.

I was able to find but one 45-70 shell, and Mother soon came up with a ten inch hunting knife that Dad had made from an old file. Thus armed, the two of us took after the wild cat with Fan's help. We followed it for nearly a mile in the dense woods. I can still see Mother following Fan along the top of a big Douglas fir windfall with the big hunting knife in one hand and keeping the brush out of her hair with the other, and me close behind with the buffalo gun. Needless to say, the wild cat got away, and Mother and I got home safely, pretty well tired out, but with our ire somewhat lessened by the efforts we had made.

## The Eighth Wonder of the World:

On the East side of our land, the river came to our property flowing nearly due South. As it struck the high rock bluff on our eastern side, it turned from south to the northwest making a decidedly sharp bend of more than ninety degrees, and in the bend thus formed lies a deep pool of quiet water known for years as "Hopkins Hole," and possibly still is. A few years after we left the ranch, a basket crossing was located here, and the maps showed "Hopkins Crossing." Just below this bend in relatively quiet water was our boat crossing. If one came down to the river on the far side, all he had to do was to yell loudly and one of us boys would bring him over in the boat. We tried to put foot logs across the shallows just below the deep hole, but they would remain only until the next high water, so we had to depend on our boat.

Mother, May and I were down on our side of the river one afternoon, when a homesteader by the name of Lee called from the opposite side. May went after him with the boat, since I was two or three hundred yards downstream, and started back with him. Some discussion started and he was put out somehow by May's uncooperative reply, and deliberately upset the boat in the deep water. In spite of the fact that she could not swim, she struggled and floundered and managed to stay afloat until she was nearly across, when she began to go down. Mother waded in up to her shoulders and managed to grab her just as she sank. We did not see Lee again.

Then it happened, the "Eighth Wonder of the World", we called it. A heavy rainstorm came and exceptional high water, and the next morning there was a wonderful foot log over our deep hole, and it was high and dry. A big spruce had been felled by Foster Sawyer and his brother Leslie, two and a half miles upstream for foot log purposes near their cabins. When the river rose to an unusual height, the big log was washed out into the stream and floated down to our crossing. The big butt end grounded on the north side of the river and the top swung hard up against the bluff on the south side. Finally, the log came to a stop with the top end high up on the bluff where it was lodged firmly in the rocks, and the butt end was pushed up onto higher ground on the north side. We could hardly believe our eyes the next morning. The log was eight to ten feet through at the butt, and twenty-five to thirty inches at the top, and the length was close to one hundred and fifty feet. Mr. Sawyer has reported the log to be eleven and one-half feet in diameter at one end, and two hundred feet long, but I am sure that these measurements were too large. From the attached photograph of the log as it lay in position over the deep hole, it can be determined that the length was nearer one hundred fifty feet. Numerous neighbors turned out to develop the new "gift" into a useable bridge, and the work was soon accomplished. The top surface of the log was hewed down to provide a flat surface which would be safe for travel, and then holes were bored at intervals along each side and



Log bridge

posts and railings were erected, making the bridge safe for horses as well as food travel. The picture attached shows twenty two people on the bridge at one time, including Mr. Garland on horseback, and a cow and calf. Mr. Gorder is standing on the ground near the big end of the log. I do not remember when the bridge went out, but it did remain until the next season's floods arrived. It finally went out, since the load of drift that must have piled up against it in the new floods was too great for the log to withstand.

### The Poll Tax:

The roads over which we traveled were not really roads, but horse trails. There were no wagons, everything was moved on pack horses. But there was considerable expense to the County in keeping the trails open. All work was done by the settlers either at their own expense when immediate action was required, or at the expense of the County. The only income the county had, as far as I can remember, was the Poll tax which was assessed against each person, big or little, at the rate of \$2.00 per capita per year. For our own family this amounted to \$14.00 per year until 1895, when my youngest sister came along and increased the tax burden to \$16.00 per year. The tax was generally paid by the settlers in labor at a rate of about \$2.00 per day. When road repairs were required by the County, the work was paid for in County Warrants, which generally had a cash value from 50% to 75%.

One day everyone was invited by Mr. Irving Garland to his home on "Burnt Mountain" where we danced and ate and generally had a good time. When we left for home, my father somehow had acquired a pack consisting of 50# of bacon, which really was a wonderful thing for us. For a long time, I could not figure out how Father came to get this amount of bacon, but finally learned that it was tied up somehow with the Poll Tax. Dad had evidently worked out Garland's Poll tax and had been paid by him in bacon. When we had money to spend, which was not often, we sent out orders to Cooper and Levy's General Store in Seattle.

### Timber Claim Troubles:

Many of our neighbors were living on timber claims, the government requirements on which were much less in obtaining title than for the Homesteads. Among the neighbors around us, those living on timber claims were my uncle, Elmer E. Hopkins, Franklin, Gorder, George Town, Pete and John Anderson, the Emmetts, and others. While the government required a cabin to be built on the claims, there was little else required except living on the claim for a certain specified length of time. Gradually, difficulties began to appear for some of those seeking to obtain title to their timber claims. Two of our close neighbors were active in their efforts to prevent certain

men from obtaining title to their claims. Two or three men failed to obtain title to their claims. Then conditions became worse and warnings were given to the two men. Failing to get the two men to cease their efforts to create trouble for the settlers, those in the general neighborhood decided to take things into their own hands, and one day a group of masked men called on the two trouble makers. The leader could not be found, but his helper was caught and a warm coat of tar and feathers was administered to him and then he was given an old-fashioned ride on a fence rail. Later that day a number of men were returning home from Sappho in small groups, and in the front were Foster Sawyer and my brother Darwin, or Dor, as we affectionately called him. Dor was eighteen years old at the time. Somewhere midway between Sappho and our river crossing as these two men were walking along in the early darkness, a sudden command to "halt" was heard, and the two men stopped. The flashes and reports of two rifles came quickly, and my brother was down. Foster Sawyer told me later that one bullet whizzed uncomfortably close to his head. Dor was not dead, but had received a horrible wound at his right temple. The bullet, a 45-90, struck him just at the outer edge of his eye, taking away flesh and bone and leaving a terrible wound. I do not know what the men did with him that night, but next morning a group of four men, one of whom was my father, crossed the log bridge at the deep hole carrying Dor on a litter. Mother and I saw him lying on the litter alongside the trail and I will never forget the sight. Dor was a big strong boy, but there he lay silent but breathing, unconscious, and with the terrible red gash across his face. The four men carried him on the litter to Lake Crescent, about eighteen miles away, found a boat that carried them to the east end of the lake, and then walked the rest of the way to Port Angeles, where he was placed in the hospital, and later was taken to the Navy Hospital at Port Townsend.

The wound healed, but the eye was lost, and Dor never got over the effects of the wound. Years later, I found him in a rest home in southern Utah. I had not seen him for fifteen to twenty years. He was an old

man, over seventy years old and did not know me. His mind was affected somewhat, but finally after he had asked me about his mother and sister, he accepted me. He spoke of his wound and said that his father had shot him. I tried to explain that his father had not fired the shot but he was firm in his belief and several times restated that his father had shot him. I could not help but feel that he was right in one way, his father should not have allowed him to take part in the raid.

I knew well the two men that provoked the raid but I am sure that it will do no good at this late date to name them. Actually, a third man, who also was a close neighbor of ours, had become involved and had taken part in the shooting. Father met this man at Port Angeles and the man asked if Father would talk to him. Father had replied, "Yes, sir, I would talk to the Devil if I thought it would do any good." The man apologized for his part in the shooting and said that he was sorry that he had been drawn into the trouble.

### **Mother Needs a Doctor:**

Very shortly after we reached our home in 1892, Mother began to have trouble with her teeth. The great suffering that she must have endured was kept to herself alone. There were no dentists in the area, and reaching a dentist would have necessitated a trip to the outside. This we could not afford, so Mother kept her suffering to herself. Her teeth became ulcerated and these sores actually worked through the cheek, and the whitish cores, of considerable size appeared on the outside. The scars resulting from these sores remained with her through life. I remember well how, when her work allowed, she kept hot cloths pressed to her cheek. The stamina and will power shown in resisting the suffering she must have experienced was wonderful and I don't think any of us realized at the time how much she was suffering. Six years later, when we reached Tacoma, her trouble was ended with the installation of a set of new teeth.

### **Fish in Season:**

Although our principal food supply came from the garden in the form of potatoes, cabbage, rutabagas, etc., we made an effort in the proper season to obtain a supply of fish. This supply came from the fall runs of dog salmon in the river and in the creek coming into the river just above the Deep Hole. These fish went up the creek in great numbers, and it was fine sport for my brother Steve and myself to handle this job. Father smoked a good deal of the fish, and a barrel or so of salted salmon was put away each fall. A simple trap was made in the creek, and many wonderful fish were taken in this way. Another method of obtaining the fish was by spearing them, and the weapon used was what we called a "Chinook spear." The Indians made this spear by using a piece of deer horn about three or four inches long, with a point sharpened properly. A good shaft and a long strong cord completed the equipment. When this spear was thrown and passed through a fish, the Chinook point came off and was held solidly against the fish on the far side. Steve and I became very

adept at spearing fish in this way. We made our own "Chinook" points by cutting out a diamond shaped section from an old saw blade and then after heating, rolled the piece so that the edges on one end would come together. This method gave us a good sharp point. This was all very pleasant work for us, and even the dogs enjoyed it. I remember seeing the pup, Major, (or Swipe, as we liked to call him because we always had to hunt for our shoes in the morning) jump off a foot log eight to ten feet above the water in an effort to grab a salmon in the creek below him. He always had lots of fun and excitement but I do not recall any success in his efforts.

### **When Grandpa Gets His Money:**

Early in our life on the "ranch," great news came to us and throughout our stay this great hope held sway in our waking moments, especially for us youngsters. Word came to us from our homefolks in Tacoma that Grandpa Hopkins was going to receive a very large sum of money from an Estate in New York City, and the property there was tied up with other property England. The sum was said to be in the millions of dollars. Hope became rampant, and we kids spent our waking hours in planning what we would do when Grandpa got his money. At night, Steve and I would lie awake in our upper bunk dreaming what we would do, what we would get, where we would go when the golden time came. Because of our great hardship on the place caused by the scarcity of food, that item became the most important with us. We very seldom had flour, and when we did Mother always mixed it with 25% to 50% potato meal. Our food came from the garden and from the streams, with very occasional wild meat. We had a cow generally and that helped immensely. So, our thoughts were often of food. We would have all we wanted to eat of hot biscuit, roast beef, gravy, apple pie, and many other wonderful items. Next would come a pony apiece, real fishing poles and real lines and hooks, a new rifle apiece (we could both shoot well) and finally, new clothes. Many and many a night we dreamed of our coming good fortune and often offered to share our good luck with our near neighbors, the Vail children.

Incidentally, we continued to dream, moved back to Tacoma via the "Alice Gertrude," in 1898, and continued our dreams there. Grandfather was called back East to confer with his lawyers, raised all the money he could to help pay the "legal costs" and finally gave up entirely and died years later as poor as he had always been. The dreams were tied up with the settlement of the Edwards Estate near New York City, and "heirs" by the tens of thousands must have been dreaming as we dreamed. This proved to be an old hoax that had often been held up to possible heirs, the principal motive being to obtain as much money as possible from the "heirs" to pay the cost of "legal" efforts.

I would like now to speak of a row of spruce trees that my father had set out a few yards in front of our home. In 1936 we had located the place only after finding this row of trees which then were tall and of large

size. In 1953, I was again at the home site, but a pulp wood contractor was working toward the pot from up the river and these trees were cut down at that time. In the summer of 1957 my grandson, George C. Hopkins, and I were on the place again and took several pictures of the home location. Two of the stumps were measured and each was found to be 42 inches in diameter at the cut-off and each showed fifty-eight annual rings of growth from the center to the bark. This would indicate that they were fifty-eight years old. My Dad had planted them about 1895 when they stood about three feet high.

There is one additional thought I would like to leave with those who are historically minded. After considerable thought and a good many hours of study in the Seattle Public Library, I am very strongly of the opinion that all thought of degenerating the fine old Indian name of Soleduck into so meaningless a name as the fictitious "Sol Duc" should be forgotten. Edmond S. Meany, in his book on "Origin of Washington Geographic Names" on page 296 says "Sol Duc, a river in the southwestern part of Clallam Co., and Hot Springs at which was developed a resort and hotel and post office." He adds, "More recently, the hot springs are called "Sol Duc" and the river "Soleduck," and cites Mr. Landes' "Geographic Dictionary of Washington."

Mr. Landes recognizes the words "Sol Duc" as the name of the Resort and of the Post Office, and of the Falls, but that is all. He recognizes "Soleduck" as the name of the river from its source to its junction with the Bogachiel. Mr. Landes' work consisted of *Bulletin #17 Washington Geological Survey*, published in 1917. Mr. Meany's book was published in 1923. I knew both Mr. Meany and Mr. Landes, having attended the University

of Washington from 1907 to 1911, and both were professors there at that time.

The pictures submitted with this paper, with the exception only of those showing my grandson on the old place, taken in 1957, were all taken by my uncle, Elmer E. Hopkins. I can still see him, with his large box type camera, timing his exposure by the use of a dark cloth against the lens opening. There was no shutter. After sixty years the 5 x 7 and 5 x 8 plates are practically in their original condition.

There are three of us children still living: Cecile, who was born on the Soleduck in 1895, now Mrs. Art Roberts of Tacoma; Stephen T. Hopkins, now seventy-seven years old and myself.

George R. Hopkins, December 6, 1963

Present address: Freeland, Washington

*Elaine Madelon Lane joined SBCGS during the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020. Her Santa Barbara connection is through her paternal lines of Kingsley, Malcolm and Hollister. Her interest in genealogy is vast and she is working to preserve her family's history and effects.*

*Elaine grew up in the Twin Cities of Minnesota and she moved to New York at 17 to attend the Fashion Institute of Technology. After two decades working as a celebrity/editorial makeup artist, she has taken on the new role of a full-time mom. She lives in the heart of New York City with her husband Colum and their young son Ronan.*



## Reverend Polhemus and the Pirates

By Kristin Ingalls

**A**FTER THE SPLENDID JULY 2020 general meeting featuring speaker Dan Earl, entitled "AncestArrghs!: The Life and Records of the Atlantic Pirates," I remembered my own distant 10th great-grandfather and his brush with piracy.

Surprised by learning that I had Dutch ancestry, I spent about three very fun years researching them. My ancestors coming to this part of the world from the Netherlands began in 1624 to what they called New Netherland. By 1664, when the British decided they really needed to take over New Netherland and rename it New York, there were 35 of my ancestral families living there, Dutch, French Huguenots and Belgian Walloons.

One of the most interesting was Reverend Johannes Theodorus Polhemus. Not the least of which is his name! (the name is spelled Polhemius and Polhemus) The more I read about him, the sorrier I felt for poor Theodorus – he just could not catch a break.

There are competing stories about his origins, which I shall not labor over now. Most do agree that Johannes was born about 1598, probably in Bavaria, and he studied for the ministry. On February 26, 1620, he matriculated as a student of divinity at Heidelberg University as Johannes Theodorus Polhemius.

Upon graduation he served briefly as a minister in the Palatinate. In November 1624 he was designated to serve the church at Gieten, Drenthe, in the Netherlands. His doctrinal convictions, inexperience with the Dutch language and his Palatine dialect were not well received by the conservative congregation, and he had to sue for payment of his salary when he left in August 1627.

He accepted a call to Meppel, Drenthe, where he served for seven years as Minister and Rector of the Latin School, receiving a stipend of 400 florins. Leaving Meppel, he applied for service overseas with the Dutch

West India Company, the Minutes citing, "...on account of renewed persecution he was forced to leave..." Now what could that mean? The request was granted and on October 25, 1636, a large expedition to Brazil left Amsterdam with the new governor, staff, soldiers, scientists, merchants and ministers, among them my Reverend Polhemus. They arrived at Recife, Brazil, on January 23, 1637. Little did I know that the Dutch, after conquering the Portuguese, had established colonies in Brazil in 1630. What a shock the change of weather must have been for them all. Recife, being just a stone's throw south of the equator, boasted temperatures most northern Europeans could not imagine.

Polhemus stayed a short time in Recife, preaching to small audiences. Again, his faulty elocution is mentioned, although he was a good linguist, able to preach in Dutch, German, French and Portuguese. In 1638 he went to the island of Itamaracá, adjacent to Recife. Most of the colonists were Westphalian or Palatine, and he was especially selected for his diction. He preached there and also accompanied the army into the mainland to preach to the Indians.

He married there, about 1643, Catherine Vander Werven. At least three of their children were born in Itamaracá where the family remained until losing their plantation to an insurrection in 1647/8. While at Itamaracá he sold six Negroes and three Negro children and the right to eight runaway Negroes. Some things we would just rather not know about our ancestors, alas.

Not surprisingly, the Portuguese rather resented the Dutch and revolted. The Dutch capitulated in January 1654 and were given three months to leave - or become Roman Catholic Portuguese citizens. In April of that year a fleet of 16 ships were in Recife to take them back to the Netherlands. For some reason, Catherine Polhemus and her children went on one of the first boats; the reverend waited and left on the last boat. Fifteen ships made it without apparent difficulty. The last ship leaving, however, had no such luck. Aboard that ship was Rev. Polhemus and other Dutch, and 23 Dutch and Portuguese Jews, who later established the first Hebrew synagogue in New Amsterdam.

In South Atlantic waters, the ship carrying my ancestor was captured by a Spanish pirate ship that happily took over the ship, the sugar cargo, all the freight, and the crew and passengers.

Heat-filled days passed as the pirates slowly hauled their prize toward a friendly Caribbean port. Perhaps the reverend prayed for help; prayers were answered when a French man-of-war, *St. Charles*, pirated the pirates! (As we learned from Dan, these seafaring gents did not consider themselves pirates. They were government sanctioned privateers. Only their government considered them such - to everyone else they were pirates!)

The above account is undoubtedly the same ship reported in *A. Biet's Voyage de la France Equinoxale*,



Canon Shot by Willem van de Velde, II. Source: Wikimedia Commons

translated as follows: "A Spanish pirate being about March or April 1654, at Barbadoes, with a barque or vessel captured from the Dutch near Recif, was ordered to retire from the island. But the Spanish privateer with its prize was in turn captured by a French Man-of-War, the ship *St. Charles*."

Now what are the chances of being captured by pirates not once, but twice? I love this!

The Dutch prisoners were at last in friendly hands, but at a price. Jacques de la Motthe, master of the *St. Charles*, brought them to New Amsterdam. The *St. Charles* sailed into the bay in September, 1654. He then sued for their passage.

Meanwhile, poor Catharine and the children had arrived back in the Netherlands destitute, as Reverend Polhemus had not received a salary for some time. Several pleas were made to the Classis, the governing body of the Dutch Reform Church, by her for financial assistance and then permission to join her husband in New Netherland. The Classis mentions her as a "worthy matron wishing to join her husband" and that she "has struggled along here in poverty and great straits and has always conducted herself modestly and piously." Do you think if they mentioned that they might have sent her a few guilders? Finally, in June 1656, she and her children left on the ship *Gulden Otter* arriving in New Netherland in September.

From the first settlement of New Netherland in 1609 until 1624, there was no religious institution of any



The Wyckoff House, the oldest building in New York City, was built about 1652 by my 10th great-grandfather, Pieter Claesen Wyckoff. This historic house is located at 5816 Clarendon Road in the Canarsie neighborhood of Brooklyn in New York City. Pieter was first on the list of citizens who were taxed for the salary of Domine (Reverend) Polhemus in 1657. He did promise 20 florins.

kind. When settlers were sent to colonize the area in 1624, there were attempts to establish the Dutch Reformed Church, with mixed success. The governing of the new settlements was problematic; several governors left under questionable circumstances. It proved difficult to keep ministers also; life was good back in the Netherlands, few wanted to leave to work for little money in a wilderness.

So, the surprise arrival in 1654 of the reverend after his "Pirates-of-the-Caribbean adventure" must have seemed a godsend to the settlers in New Netherland. He was immediately called to minister to the inhabitants of Midwout (now Flatbush on Long Island) and the adjoining towns, subject to the approval of the Classis of Amsterdam and the Directors of the West India Company.

Under the direction of Dutch director-general of the colony, Petrus Stuyvesant, it was resolved to erect a building in Midwout, 60 x 28 feet, with housing for the Polhemus family in the rear. This building would become a parsonage and barn as soon as funds could be collected to erect a church. Inhabitants of Midwout felt they could not bear the expense alone, and Governor Stuyvesant ordered a collection of money, lumber and labor taken from the villages of Breukelen, (Brooklyn), Midwout (Flatbush), and Amersfoort (Flatlands) to build a church and to support the minister and his rapidly growing family.

Dissent was immediate. Outlying villages thought it unfair they contribute to a minister not serving them. These folks could be rather cantankerous and seemed to love to sue each other with little provocation. They also seemed particularly reluctant to part with their guilders. The compromise was that the Reverend Polhemus would preach mornings in Midwout, evenings alternately in Breukelen and Amersfoort.

The unfortunate Reverend Polhemus fared no better than his predecessors. He was not paid for the first two years of service and was compelled to draw from the company warehouse the necessities of life, going into debt to them. The parsonage was so uninhabitable he and his family "had to live and sleep on the bare ground and in the cold." Lumber sent by Governor Stuyvesant was appropriated by townsmen and given to others, so that the parsonage remained unfinished in spite of the approach of winter. Oh, my...going from equatorial Brazil to a New York winter with no adequate housing...

Equally problematic was collecting money for Reverend Polhemus' salary. Breukelen claimed itself too poor, and resented paying a minister they did not call and whose service they considered unsatisfactory. The travel from town to town

seemed too much for the elderly minister (he was in his late fifties at the time) and subsequently his sermons too short. He is a man of the cloth, you ungrateful citizens, pay his salary! Threatened by Stuyvesant, they did approve a tax to help pay their share.

My dear old reverend grandfather died at his home on June 8, 1676, almost 80 years of age. He had served the Dutch Reform Churches in Germany, the Netherlands, Brazil, and New Netherland for about 55 years. He was survived by his wife, Catherine, who died in 1702.

The Dutch were wonderful record-keepers. I had no end of fun going through court records, town records, council minutes, and found a number of instances when the poor, cold, destitute minister beseeched the authorities for money again and again.

Oh, shame on them!! I am sure if there is a Heaven, he and Catherine have a warm, safe, landlocked new home where they are more appreciated than they were here on Earth. Amen

*Kristin Ingalls joined the Society and became a library volunteer 20 years ago when she retired from UCSB Bookstore. In addition to editing Ancestors West she buys and sells books at the Sayhun Library and at our monthly meetings. A collector of many hobbies, she lives with her crazy cats and happily writes nonsense poetry.*



# Author Guidelines - *Ancestors West*

Updated August 2020

**A**RTICLES FOR *ANCESTORS WEST* focus on useful genealogy or research sources, helpful research strategies, compelling historical accounts, and interesting case studies. The items represent the mutual interests of the Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society membership. Each issue follows one or more themes that are meant to draw together a selection of content within the journal; submissions are not limited to the themes, however.

## Manuscripts

Suggested length is from 250 to 2500 words. Longer pieces or serial pieces are also published. Submit your document in Word format if possible. If not, please submit in text format. Endnotes are recommended, especially for books, articles and websites. Please follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* and the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* for usage.

*Ancestors West* reserves the right to edit and revise submissions as necessary for clarity, substance, conciseness, style, and length prior to publication.

## Images

Any piece is enhanced by images. Please provide images if you can to support your piece. The images in general must be over 1 MB, and preferably over 2 MB, with good quality resolution (300 dpi) – clear and sharp to the naked eye when printed at a reasonable size (e.g., 3" x 4" - plus). Please include a caption for each picture, a photo credit or source, and insert the caption in the location in the document where it should appear. The images must be sent as separate files and not included within a word file.

## Author information

Provide one or two sentences about the author(s) along with author(s) photo.

## Deadlines

Submissions with images are due the 1st of the month in February, May, and August, and October 15 for the November Issue. Address submissions to Kristin Ingalls, [antkap@cox.net](mailto:antkap@cox.net)

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## 13 Common Genealogy Myths and Misconceptions

1. Surnames were changed at Ellis Island.
2. It's in print. It must be true!
3. All the records you need about your family history are online.
4. This is most definitely my ancestor, according to these 423 online trees.
5. We descend from a Cherokee princess.
6. The courthouse burned and the records are gone.
7. Same surname—must be a relative.
8. Hey look, it's our family crest!
9. Three brothers came to America . . .
10. Source citations are just for professionals.
11. Our ancestors were much shorter than we are.
12. Our ancestors died young.
13. Our ancestors were mostly illiterate.

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