

## CHAPTER 4

# SAM AND POLLY

Samuel Bell (1798-1883) and Mary (Polly) Codner (b 1806-1886)

### Spunk

In March of 1798, while she and all her family were still in Ireland's County Tyrone, Mary Gilmore Bell gave birth to a second son. Having named the first one "Thomas" after her father-in-law, they named the newborn after her own father, Samuel. Then, when he was two months old, the Bells and Gilmores set out for America (*cf. Chp 1*). The boys were so young when they left, they later had no memory of Ireland. They were Irish by birth, but American by experience.

Sam spent his childhood and early youth in New York's Montgomery and Herkimer Counties and then, in 1814, his family resettled in Cayuga County's Town of Mentz, where his Gilmore relatives had already arrived. When he was 24, he married 16-year old Mary "Polly" Codner who had been born on a nearby farm and, over the next twenty-four years, she herself gave birth to at least nine children: Mary/Maria, Lucy, Julia, William, Caroline, Margaret, Henry, Hattie, and Charles. An eight-year gap between William and Caroline lends weight to the claim Polly had another two children, but no one seems to have located records or tombstones to prove that.

Somehow, while busy with all that fruitful multiplying, they also found time to farm. After a few moves in the early years of marriage, they settled by the 1850s (and perhaps earlier) in a low valley on the west side of present-day McDonald Road, less than a mile south of the Erie Canal and village of Montezuma. The Montezuma Rural Cemetery was across the road by Mrs. Jones' place, where it overlooked the Bell's acreage from atop a high ridge called "Prospect Hill". During the 1820s and 30s, Sam's brother Tom had been farming a mile further along, directly opposite the Mentz Church, and their parents, William and Mary, were on the family homestead less than a mile southeast of Tom. His two younger, American-born brothers, Will Jr. and John, had established farms in the 1820s and 30s between Tom and their parents (*cf. Chps 1-3, 5-6*).

On Map 4A from 1853 (*cf. below*), Sam and Polly's farm (*Sam'l Bell*), along with their tenant farm across the road, are west and slightly north of center. The tenant farm was the one to the north. The Mentz Church (*M.E. Ch.*) is just southeast of center, as are the farms of William, Jr. and John, plus Will Jr.'s sons, Milo and Robert. The A.A. Phero farm (*center*) had been Tom's until 1835. "J. Bell" at the bottom right corner was the 1814 homestead of Sam's parents. Sam himself owned the acreage there for a short time around 1850, but it ended up going back to his father who then sold the entire farm to John in 1853, the year of the map's publication.



Map 4A – Bell Family Farms - 1853

- |      |                        |   |
|------|------------------------|---|
| Key: | Sam'l Bell             | Samuel and Polly Bell   |
|      | M.E. Ch                | Methodist Episcopal (Mentz) Church                            |
|      | Wm Bell                | Sam's brother, William Bell, Jr.                              |
|      | M. Bell                | Milo Bell (son of William, Jr.)                               |
|      | R. Bell                | Robert Bell (son of William, Jr.)                             |
|      | John Bell + J. Bell    | Sam's youngest brother  |
|      | J. Bell (bottom right) | William and Mary Gilmore Bell homestead, sold to John in 1852 |
|      | A.A. Phero             | Thomas Bell farm until 1835                                   |

## Cast of Characters - Chapter Four<sup>1</sup>

<b>Samuel Bell</b>	(1798- 1883)	m (1822+/-)	<b>Mary (Polly) Codner (1806-1886)</b>
❖ Mary (Maria) Bell	(1824-1858)	m (1845)	Elisha Tallmadge (1820-____>
• Caroline Tallmadge	(1846-1846)		
• Samuel Tallmadge	(1847-____)		
• James Tallmadge	(1850-____)		
• Harriet Tallmadge	(1855-____)		
• Anna Tallmadge	(1858-____)		
❖ Lucy Bell (1826-1901)		m (1855)	Jeremiah Balding (1811-1876) (alt. sp. "Baldwin")
• Finley Charles Balding	(1858-1908)	m	Della Conover (____-1945>
• Emma Balding	(1859-1918)		Never married
❖ Julia E. Bell	<1828-1854)	m (1849)	Erie "Tibbits" Ward (1823-1881)
❖ William Smith Bell	(1829-1908)	m (1856)	Rachel Twist (1830-<1860s>
• Elvira Julia Bell	(1857-1938)	m	Frank Shay
• Caroline Bell	(1859-____)		
• Mary A. Bell	(1861-1903)	m	Bernard J. Shay
• Anna Bell	(1863-1908)		
<b><u>Then</u></b> William Smith Bell		m (1871)	Sylvania P. Garsey (1847-1934)
• Charles L. Bell	(1872-1929)	m	Leah Valentine
• Viola Irene Bell	(1875-1956)		
• Cora Emily Bell	(1876-1948)	m	Everett B. Frain
• Tillie A. Bell	(1881-1964)		
• Ida Sylvania Bell	(1883-1957)	m	George Whipple
• Florence Bell	(1885-1952)		
• Irene Lulu Bell	(1890-1976)	m	Gustave Mullen
❖ Caroline Bell	(1837-1912)	m (1856)	Byrd S. Young, M.D. <1831-1893)
• Minnie Young	<1859-____>		
• Neva Young	(1862-____)	m	James Galloway Hood
❖ Margaret "Maggie" Bell	(1838-1890)	m (1858)	Erie "Tibbits" Ward (cf. above)
• Maud Ward	(1867-____)		Never married
• Charles Ward	(1869-____)		

❖ Henry Clay Bell (H.C.)	(1839-1909)	m (1861)	Marietta Van Slyke (1841-1919)
• Mary Bell	(1862-1919)	m	James McMichael (divorced)
✓ Harris C. “Harry” McMichael		m	Lillian Isabelle Jackson
✓ Anna McMichael		m	Robert John Moore
✓ Mabel McMichael		m	Clarence D Lovell
<b><u>Then</u></b> Mary Bell McMichael		m	Charles Cooper (died 1907)
<b><u>Then</u></b> Mary Bell McMichael Cooper		m	Frank Bosworth
• Ida Bell	(1863-1912)	m	George “Henry” Yesbera
✓ Elton B. Bell		m	Alba C. _____
✓ Charles L. Bell		m	Lois _____
<b><u>Then</u></b> Charles L. Bell		m	Ruth S. _____
• Neva Bell	(1871-1919)	m	Edward Sowden
• Harry Bell	(1873-1918)	m	Emma Yoe (divorced)
<b><u>Then</u></b> Harry Bell		m	Isabel MacLeod
<b><u>Then</u></b> Henry Clay Bell	<i>(Illegally)</i>	m (1890)	Ida Susan Krick (divorced) <sup>1</sup>
• Ina Bell		m	Lester R. Harrison
• Georgia Bell		m	George Merton Carr
❖ Harriet “Hattie” Bell	(1841-1904)		Never married
❖ Charles E. Bell	# (1844-19__>	m (1884)	Elizabeth Bates (1855-1910)
• Unnamed Infant			Stillborn
• Leighton R. Bell			Died in 1892 in childhood
• Gladys O. Bell			Died in 1895 in childhood

### **Key**

- ❖ Children
- Grandchildren
- ✓ G-Grandchildren
- m Married
- < Approximate date of birth
- > Approximate date of death

# The implied year of Charles’ birth varies across government records, from 1843 to 1845.

Inspired perhaps by their parents' tales of political and religious oppression in Ireland, Sam and his brothers immersed themselves in American politics at an early age. An Auburn newspaper, in fact, reported on Sam's involvement a year before mentioning Tom, noting that Sam and John Gilmore (either his uncle or first cousin) had served as delegates to a Republican Convention in Auburn on October 25, 1825. Those were the Republicans of John Quincy Adams' short-lived party, rather than Lincoln's, which formed later. Sam and William, Jr. (*cf. Chp 5*) eventually took part in dozens of local and regional political conventions, mostly for the Whig Party. Tom was a Whig-then-Republican, too, whereas John (*Chp 6*) was a lifelong Democrat. All four sons also held elected offices at one time or another. Among other things, Tom, Will, Jr., and John each served as Justices of the Peace, while Sam took a slightly different path.

One of his earliest official roles was to represent the Town of Montezuma as a vice-president of the 1841 Cayuga County Fair and Cattle Show. To modern-day city folk, that may seem less than glamorous, but nine of every ten Americans were involved in farming at the time and county fairs were important to the economy, so Sam's position held some esteem. An October edition of Auburn's *Journal and Advertiser* noted that his and Polly's daughter, Maria, received a third place diploma for stockings she entered in the knitting contest that year. Her older sister, Lucy, won a first-place prize of \$3.00 for needlework depicting a basket of flowers. None of the family's livestock won any awards, but as far as we know, the livestock really didn't care.

Five years later, Sam ran for the New York State Assembly on the Whig ticket and won, representing Cayuga County in 1846 and 1847. No records have emerged showing his voting record or other legislative activities, so we have no way of knowing his positions on issues, any legislation he might have sponsored, or even if he sought reelection. About the only thing clear is that he came away with the lifelong title of "the Honorable Samuel Bell". Whether he actually used it is another matter. In a small rural community like Montezuma, that might have come across as snobbish; but then, his younger brother, Will Jr., used the title "Colonel" for decades after leaving the cavalry. It's even on his tombstone.

When not legislating, organizing fairs, growing crops or tending livestock, Sam, like his father and brothers, traded in real estate, buying and selling acreage hither and yon – sometimes for tilling, but often for profit. Most of the tracts Sam bought and sold were seasonal add-ons and village lots: a few acres here, a hectare there, most of them too small to stand alone as a farm. The 1850 Census, though, shows that he also launched a huge farming operation. The value of his real estate that year was a whopping \$15,000 – more than twice that of his next most heavily invested brother, John, or of any other farmer in the area – and that was only his 'home' farm. The Federal Non-Population Schedule for that year shows he also had bought his father's acreage about a mile away, valued at another \$4,500. His father, William Sr., was in his mid-seventies by then and apparently sold most of his acreage to Sam while retaining a few acres, his house, and some animals (such as a horse and a milk cow) for himself and his second wife, Margaret.

Tables 4-1 and 4-2 show the magnitude of Sam’s enterprise: a total of 305 acres of tillable land and 85 farm animals. Crop farming in 1850 entailed plowing, planting, harvesting, storing, and transporting grain to market, all with implements powered by animals and humans. Cultivating even two-thirds of their tillable acreage would have required not only their eight horses and two oxen, but several people, as well, to handle and care for them. Managing 40 cows, 11 sheep and 21 pigs also would keep a few people busy. Beyond that, Sam had almost \$500 worth of implements and an array of barns and storage bins, all of which required regular maintenance. His eldest son, William, turned twenty-one that year (1850) and, evidently, took charge of at least part of the home farm. Two daughters, Maria and Julia, already had married, but every other able-bodied family member participated in some way. Most heavy labor fell to William and Sam, and it proved more than they could manage. In fact, the overall operation was more than their entire family could manage. They would need to have hired laborers from the village and nearby farms to help; but as the bottom rows of Tables 4-1 and 4-2 suggest, their flirtation with mega-farming was short-lived.

**Table 4-1: Comparison of Samuel Bell REAL ESTATE in 1850 and 1860**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Location of Farm</b>	<b>Value of Real Est</b>	<b>Value of Implements</b>	<b>Value of Livestock</b>	<b>Improved Acres</b>	<b>Unimproved Acres</b>
<b>1850</b>	McDonald Road	\$15,000	\$320	\$1,145	245	95
<b>1850</b>	Donovan Road	\$4,500	\$175	\$546	60	30
<b>1850</b>	Combined Farms	\$ 19,500	\$495	\$1,695	305	125
<b>1860</b>	McDonald Road	\$5,000	\$50	\$160	45	80

**Table 4-2: Comparison of Samuel Bell FARM OPERATIONS in 1850 and 1860**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Location of Farm</b>	<b>Horses</b>	<b>Milk Cows</b>	<b>Beef Cows</b>	<b>Oxen</b>	<b>Sheep</b>	<b>Swine</b>
<b>1850</b>	McDonald Road	8	6	25	2	0	5
<b>1850</b>	Donovan Road	3	7	2	0	11	16
<b>1850</b>	Combined Farms	11	13	27	2	11	21
<b>1860</b>	McDonald Road	2	1	0	0	0	3



at the beginning. Yet, as hard as that must have been on them, it counted almost for nothing in comparison with two other losses that decade. In 1855, their third daughter, Julia, who had married and moved to Illinois, died suddenly at age 25; and three years after that, their eldest daughter, Maria, died at age 33, leaving a husband and four children. The triumph of Polly and Sam was never in worldly success; it was in finding a way to go on after enduring heartache beyond words. And they did.

Somehow, Sam secured a mortgage in 1861 for a parcel near the village of Montezuma. The deed doesn't clarify how large it was or whether it lay east or west of the village, but says it bordered the "old Erie Canal" on the south and the turnpike road on the north. If he was leaving two thirds of his acreage at home unimproved, he certainly wasn't going to till fields a mile away, so he must have bought this parcel in the hope of renting it out or reselling it at a profit. It was simply an investment to ensure some kind of income as he and Polly moved into old age. Apart from the generosity of their children, they had little else to count on; but, in 1869, the bank foreclosed on that, too. Despite his ambition and effort, Sam simply had no gift for business.

After his 1852 bankruptcy and related debts to his father and uncles, Sam could have no illusions that he would inherit a fortune, or anything at all for that matter. His father, William Sr., recovered his land after the bankruptcy and, in 1853, sold the entire homestead to his youngest son, John (*cf. Chps 2 & 6*). His Last Will and Testament, drafted in 1859, then said he already had given Sam everything he was due. The exact words were: "My son Samuel Bell having been advanced by me his full share of my real & personal estate during my life, I give bequeath & devise to him *Ten Dollars* in full of any claims or demands upon my estate of any description whatever." Each of Sam's brothers, by contrast, inherited between \$1,300 and \$1,600.<sup>4</sup>

Soon after William Sr. died in 1863, Sam and Polly took his ten-dollar inheritance and moved with their daughter, Hattie, 160 miles southwest to Dunkirk, where they shared a house a few blocks from Lake Erie with the family of another daughter, Maggie (*cf. "Maggie" below*). They made the journey to Dunkirk either by train or by the Erie Canal, but if by train, they used the same tracks Lincoln had taken two years earlier on his famous whistle-stop inaugural journey to Washington. Whether Sam ever returned is open to question.

After close to ten years in Dunkirk, Sam, Polly and Hattie moved again, this time to Sacramento, California, where they shared quarters with their youngest son, Charles, and a Bavarian immigrant named William Haberman. Charles, who was still single, had become an "apothecary" (pharmacist), and they lived above his drug store at the northwest corner of J Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (*cf. photo, right – balcony and portico are not original*). As of 1880, Hattie was teaching school, while seventy-nine year old Sam was



involved in some kind of mercantile venture and Polly, who had rheumatism, “kept house”. A year later, Charles had gone into partnership with another pharmacist, Fred Kolliker, with whom he opened the “Bell and Kolliker” pharmacy at the corner of J Street and Sixth, four blocks to the east. He, his parents and Hattie, meanwhile, had moved to 1104 G Street.

Sam had registered to vote in Sacramento’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Precinct on June 18, 1877, and, along with Charles, was still on the voter list in 1882, when he was 84 years old. Because he’d arrived from Ireland when he was around two months old, each year’s voting register included a note certifying his eligibility to vote based on his having shown proof of his *father’s* citizenship.

Sam died on September 15, 1883, at the age of 85, and Polly on March 24, 1886, at about age 80. The cemetery record below lists both Sacramento and Oakland as Sam’s place of death, but the notation about the train arriving from San Francisco shows that he (and, probably, Polly) had been in Oakland at the time with their son William and his family. William then purchased the gravesite at Sacramento’s City Cemetery and arranged for the return and burial of the body. In recognition of Sam’s tenure in the New York State Assembly, the lower portion of the record refers to him as “Hon. Sam. Bell”. Listing his age as “68” was simply an error. By the time of their deaths, both Sam and Polly had outlived, not only two of their children, but some of their grandchildren, as well.<sup>5</sup>

Vital records -1883  
Bell, Samuel  
Born New York. Died Sacramento, September 15,  
1883, aged 68 years. Hemorrhage of stomach.  
Dr. Buck.

Buried Sacramento, City Cemetery, Lot 591.

[Died: Oakland, Sept. 15, Hon. Sam. Bell, a native of Auburn  
New York. ... funeral..will take place from the depot this  
morning upon the arrival of the San Francisco train.  
Sacramento Union, Sep 17, 1883 3/4 ]

★

## Spawn

**Maria:** On January 9, 1845, Sam and Polly's then twenty-year old daughter, Mary ("Maria"), married Elisha W. Tallmadge (b. July 18, 1820) from New York's Columbia County. They met after Elisha and his brother, John J. Tallmadge, came to Montezuma via the Erie Canal. Their parents were farmers and entrepreneurs, and other relatives were military and political figures. John (1818-1883) later became Mayor of Milwaukee, Wisconsin (1865-1866), before losing the 1867 race for Wisconsin Governor to the incumbent, a Civil War hero named Lucius Fairchild. Following a less colorful path, Elisha "engaged in various employments – mostly mercantile," meaning he sold stuff.<sup>6</sup>

Maria eventually had five children: Caroline (b Sept. 1846 and died at five weeks), Samuel B(ell?) (1847), James E(lisha?) (1850), Harriet (1855), and Anna (1858). Then, on March 30, 1858, a week or two after Anna's birth, Maria died at age 33. Anna seems to have died then, too, but there's no grave marker or other record to prove that. Maria is the only Tallmadge and only child of Polly and Sam with a headstone in the Mentz Church Cemetery, where she lies behind the grave of her grandmother, Mary Gilmore Bell. Needing someone to care for the children, Elisha married 17-year old Sarah Russell within nine months. They, in turn, had three children of their own and lived in both Champaign, Illinois, and, by 1870, Waukesha, Wisconsin.

**Lucy:** According to genealogist Sue Mullane, Sam and Polly's second child, Lucy, married Jeremiah Balding (alt. sp. Baldwin) on August 21, 1855, shortly before she turned 29. Her groom was a forty-four year old widower with a seven-year old son. Although born in Ohio, Jeremiah had been farming near Ellington in Chautauqua County, New York, when his first wife, Hannah, died in 1852. After he and Lucy married, they moved to Illinois, where she gave birth to a son, Finley Charles (1858-1908), and then to Iowa, where their daughter, Emma (1859-1918), was born. By the time Emma arrived, they were farming in the pulsing metropolis of Turkey Grove. Life was bliss.

Then, sometime in the 1860s, things began to sour. Jeremiah moved to Petaluma, California, in the mid-1860s, registering to vote there on September 27, 1866, while Lucy apparently remained in Iowa. Neither of them appears on the 1870 Census under either Balding or Baldwin, but their daughter, Emma, was living in Dunkirk, New York, that year with Lucy's sister, Maggie (*cf. below*). Maggie's household already included her husband Erie, two small children, her parents (Polly and Sam), and her unmarried sister, Hattie Bell. If Jeremiah was, in fact, no longer part of the Iowa household, Lucy might have sent Emma to New York because she (Lucy) lacked the resources to support both children. According to Sue Mullane, Jeremiah moved from California back to the Midwest at some point and was just south of Kansas City in Belton, Missouri, when he died September 19, 1876. Mullane believes Lucy and Finley were in Atlantic, Iowa, that year, but it's unclear whether Emma had returned by then. Documentation is sparse.

The 1900 Census then lists Lucy as a widow in Atlantic, which implies that she and Jeremiah were still married at the time of his death in 1876; but a 1911 Cass County court report said Jeremiah had been “intestate and unmarried” when he died (*cf. Atlantic Democrat, Cass County, Iowa, Jan. 13, 1911*). After Emma’s temporary exile to New York and Lucy’s divorce or separation or whatever that was, one might expect the two of them to empathize with the women and children of failed marriages, but within a few years, they were covering for Lucy’s brother after he abandoned his wife and young children and took up with another woman (*cf. below*).

Lucy died in 1901 and, two years later, a note in the town newspaper said Emma was leaving “for an extended visit in Oregon and Washington.” Washington, as it happened, was where her disgraced uncle was living. Her plan was to go from there to California, and she might have done that, but in 1904, she moved in with her uncle in Seattle (who then died in 1909). After she herself died in 1918, her sister-in-law, Della Balding, had her body returned to Iowa and interred next to Lucy, with whom she now shares a headstone in the Atlantic City Cemetery. As a side note, each of their birth dates on the headstone is off by several years, as they are on several census records. It’s as if they lied about their ages so often that family members just guessed.

**Julia:** In 1847, the school superintendant appointed the Bells’ third daughter, Julia, to be the only student from Mentz to attend the State Normal School, a teachers’ college in Albany (*Daily Advertiser, April 23, 1847*). She was one of five from the County. Her father was in Albany at the same time, serving his second year in the State Assembly. She later married Erie “Tibbits” Ward (b 1824) from Seneca County, who worked, appropriately enough, on the Erie Canal. He usually went by Tibbits or E.T. *The Cayuga Chief* mentioned their wedding in its edition of Thursday, April 26, 1849, referring to the groom as “Erie S. Ward” and the bride as “Miss Julia E. Bell, dau. of Samuel Bell, Esq.” The wedding, officiated by the Rev. Aaron Cross, took place on April 18 “near Montezuma”, which probably means the Bells’ farm just south of the village. E.T. had entered the United States Military Academy at West Point on July 1, 1842, at the age of 18 years, 9 months, and graduated with the class of 1846. His name and that of Ulysses S. Grant, who was in the class of 1843, appear on the same page of at least one Academy document from that time.

After marrying, Julia and E.T. lived in the village of Montezuma, where he was a merchant and she, presumably, taught school. They were sharing a house there in 1850 with Julia’s Irish-born second cousin, William Wright (age 19), who worked as a clerk (*cf. Chapter 8*), and a merchant named John Ross. When E.T.’s brother-in-law died in 1851, he and Julia formally witnessed the Will and E.T. served as co-executor of the estate with his sister, Julia Ann Stanly. In 1853, they moved to Salem, Illinois, 75 miles east of St. Louis. The town wasn’t incorporated until 1855, but the Ohio and Missouri railroad tracks crossed those of the Illinois Central there, which might explain the Wards’ move. E.T. changed his career at some point from merchant to railroad clerk, and the soon-to-be transportation hub of Salem could have been his first assignment.

While there, E.T. also immersed himself in the mystery of Cahokia, an ancient Indian settlement near St. Louis featuring an enormous (think ‘acres’) human-made mound and several smaller mounds (*cf. “Maggie”, below*). Julia, however, became seriously ill the following March and died suddenly at age 25. A month later, on Tuesday, April 4, 1854, the *Auburn Daily Advertiser* carried this terse notice: “WARD, Mrs. Julia E. Wife of E.T. Ward. dau. of Samuel Bell of Montezuma. d. Salem, Marion Co. Ill, Mar. 7<sup>th</sup> of Chill Fever (no age).” Chill Fever was a common term for fevers coming on suddenly with fits of shivering and cold sweats. There’s no record of her having given birth to any children.

**William (W.S.):** When Sam and Polly’s first son came along in 1829, they followed Ulster-Scot tradition by naming him after Sam’s father, William. His middle name, “Smith”, apparently honored Sam’s maternal grandmother, Mary Smith Gilmore. We’re calling him “W.S.” to distinguish him from all the other Williams in the Bell clan. In 1854, when he was around 25, he bought 165 acres from his parents, including their house, which helped them weather their financial challenges. A year later, he sold it back and headed to Wisconsin where, in 1856, he married a young woman with the wonderfully Dickensian name, “Rachel Twist” (*alt sp. Rachael*). She even had an uncle named “Oliver”.

Rachel had been born in New York in 1830, but her family was in Pleasant Prairie, outside Kenosha, when she and W.S. married. The circumstances of their courtship are now lost, but they were back in New York when Rachel gave birth to two daughters: Elvira Julia (1857-1938), whom they named after Rachel’s mother, and Caroline (b 1859). Within a year of Caroline’s birth, they moved to Cache Creek Township in California’s Yolo County, northwest of Sacramento, where they welcomed another two daughters, Mary A. (1861-1903) and Annie (*alt. sp. “Anna” or “Ann”*) (1863-1908). Elvira (daughter number one) eventually married Frank Shay, the son of Peter Shay, and Mary (daughter number three) married Frank’s brother, Bernard.

Yolo County was predominantly an agricultural community, but if farming were the Bells’ only pursuit, they could have stayed in New York or Wisconsin. What lured them to Cache Creek Township was gold mining, which had been underway there since the gold rush of 1848. Only a relative few were directly involved in mining, but it offered W.S. an opportunity to learn the trade while relying on farming to sustain his family.

The mining interest is but lightly represented in this county, with one exception. But little prospecting for the precious metals has been attempted, though ‘indications’ of the existence of various kinds of mineral are not wanting in the foothills and mountain ranges that form the western boundary of the county. Gold, copper, sulphur, lead and cinnabar indications are frequently found, such as would justify extended prospecting in a country where the attention of the inhabitants was directed to mining instead of agriculture. (*The Western Shore Gazetteer and Commercial Directory, For the State of California, Yolo County; C.P. Sprague & H.W. Atwell, Woodland, Yolo County, 1870, pp. 111-112*)

W.S.'s dreams suddenly faded, though, when Rachel died sometime between Annie's birth in 1863 and 1868, the year her father, Isaac Twist, died in Wisconsin. Had Rachel been alive at the time, the Court would have allocated a share of her father's estate to her, as it did to her mother and brothers; but her share went instead to her four daughters. By June 1870, her mother (Elvira) and brother, Russell, had made their way to California, where she took care of the children and he helped W.S. with the fieldwork; but on the day after Christmas, Elvira died of consumption (i.e., tuberculosis). They might already have left the farm by then because they buried her at the Sacramento City Cemetery, 40 miles from Cache Creek. W.S. would later bury his own parents there, too; but Rachel's gravesite is unknown and may lie unmarked where they farmed.

W.S. had no time for sentimentality after Rachel and her mother were gone. He was 41 years old and had four young daughters at home who needed someone to care for them while he focused on food and shelter. It was practicality, then, as much as romance that led him, within a few months, to marry 24 year-old Sylvania Garsey. While Rachel's family was farming in southeast Wisconsin near Lake Michigan, Sylvania's father was mining lead in Wisconsin's southwest corner, not far from the Mississippi. He then brought her and her family to California around 1853 so he could mine for gold in Sierra County's Cold Canyon Township (sp?). They were among 16,000 who arrived that decade, hoping to strike it rich (*cf.* 19<sup>th</sup> C. *Miners in Sierra County, CA, right*).



Apart from his occasional expeditions to neighboring states, W.S. and Sylvania spent the rest of their lives in California, where she gave birth to at least seven children: Charles L. (1872-1929), Viola (1875-1956), Cora Emily (1876-1948), Tillie A. (1881-1964), Ida Sylvania (1883-1957), Florence (1885-1952), and Irene Lulu (1890-1976). That brought W.S.'s total child output to eleven, of whom four of five were with them in 1876, when they were living in Oakland, across the Bay from San Francisco. Mining was a major industry in Oakland at the time, and W.S. had given up farming for good. He still made a living from the earth, but they were city folk now.

W.S.'s youngest brother, Charles (*cf. below*), had followed him to California by then and become an apothecary (pharmacist) in Sacramento, but he too was caught up in the adventure of mining. In 1880, the brothers and a third man, John Mason, discovered a nickel and cobalt lode in Nevada, which they developed into a productive mining operation (*cf. "Charles", below*). Oakland's 1881 City Directory then listed W.S. as a miner living at 1418 Eleventh Street, although his exact role in the ongoing Nevada operation, if any, is unknown.

The Bell brothers' parents, Sam and Polly, came to Sacramento with Hattie in the late 1870s and moved in with Charles. The Central Pacific depot was close by, so they and W.S. often travelled the 80-mile route between Sacramento and Oakland. There was a new grandchild in Oakland just about every time they showed up. It was during one of those visits to Oakland that Sam died in 1883. W.S. then arranged for the body's shipment by train and burial in the Sacramento City Cemetery (*cf. Spunk, above*). When Polly died three years later, they interred her next to Sam.

As of 1891, W.S. and his family were living at 1713 Lincoln Street in Oakland, and he was still involved in mining in some way, but it certainly wasn't making him rich. With all those children and no food crops in a field, they would have needed a lot of mine productivity to get by. They moved rather often, which could reflect tenuous finances. Within a few years, they were at 1316 Adeline Street and W.S. appeared in the 1897 directory as a "mining expert". From there, they went to 1576 Eighth Street and, around 1904, to 1059 Oak Street, at which point the directory said he was a "mining engineer". Evidently, one could become an expert mining engineer in those days through experience alone. All their houses are now gone, but neighboring homes from that era are narrow and small. For all this trying, W.S. never hit the main lode.

Online posts say he died in Oakland July 24, 1908, and that his family interred him at the Mountain View Cemetery there, but his name doesn't appear in the records there. Sylvania made it to age 87 before dying in 1934, and her gravesite, presuming she has one, also is unknown.

**Caroline (Carrie):** Carrie, who was born January 30, 1837, married B.S. Young in 1856 and moved to Chicago's Second Ward, just west of present-day Grant Park and Lake Michigan. Then, around New Year's Day 1860, she gave birth to Mary, whom they called "Minnie". Some genealogists say Minnie was born in 1861, which would be difficult, given that the U.S. Census says she was already six months old in June 1860. Several of their neighbors worked for the Rock Island Railroad, and its depot and tracks dominated the neighborhood and nearby Lake Michigan waterfront (*cf. 1860 sketch*).



An 1860 Census enumerator with terrible handwriting spelled the name of Caroline's husband as either "Barnus" or "Bamus", but his name, in fact, was "Byrd" Sidney Young. That Census also lists his birthplace as Pennsylvania, but later reports consistently identify it as Tennessee. He was working that year as a "Commission Merchant", i.e., sales person. Carrie's then 21-year old brother, Henry Clay Bell (H.C.), also was living with them that year after having traveled from the family home in Montezuma, New York. All three of them reported substantial real estate holdings, with Henry's valued at \$6,000, Byrd's at \$7,000 and Carrie's at \$4,000. Byrd also reported a *personal* estate of \$300, but neither Carrie nor Henry reported any at all.

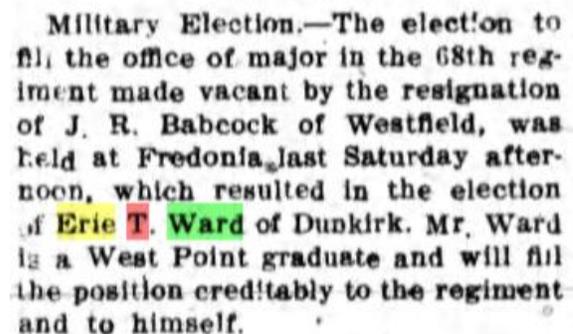
Chicago's population was still booming in 1860, and a combination of railroads and water traffic already had made it the nation's primary warehousing and transcontinental shipping center. It was the largest city in what, at the time, people considered the "Northwest" and was home to Abraham Lincoln's long-time political foe, Stephen A. Douglas. The newly minted Republican Party held its National Convention at Chicago's Wigwam that year (1860), nominating Lincoln over William Seward of Auburn, New York, for President (*cf. Chp 5*). Following the custom of the era, neither Lincoln nor Seward appeared at the convention itself.

The Youngs were in Byrd's home state of Tennessee in July 1862 when their second daughter, Neva ("Nevie"), was born. Carrie's brother, H.C., later gave the same name to one of his own daughters. Byrd also became a physician during that period, after which they moved to Hot Springs Township in California's Napa County, where he registered to vote on September 4, 1866. The County's population that year reached 7,163, due largely to silver mining, and it more than doubled over the next decade.

By 1880, the Youngs had moved to Sonoma County's Santa Rosa, some 35 miles northwest of Napa City. Santa Rosa's population reached 3,616 that year and the County's was close to 26,000, and both almost doubled over the next thirty years. Byrd died there in 1893 at around age 62 and ended up at the Santa Rosa Odd Fellows Cemetery. Carrie remained in their home another nineteen years before dying December 14, 1912, at age 75 and now lies next to Byrd.

**Maggie:** After Julia died in Illinois, her widower, E.T. Ward, moved to Dunkirk, New York, on Lake Erie and somehow courted her younger sister, Maggie, who was 140 miles away in Montezuma. They then married on February 22, 1858, and she joined him in Dunkirk; but just 14 months later, they lost their house in a bank foreclosure. By the next year, they were sharing a house with an older woman and her 19-year old son.

E.T., meanwhile, worked as a railroad freight clerk and, in 1860, had personal assets of around \$1,000. A 1911 edition of the Jamestown Courier included a reprint of an 1861 notice (*cf. right*), saying he had been "elected to the office of major in the 68<sup>th</sup> regiment". He then registered for the Civil War Draft on July 1, 1863, when he was 40 years old, and served in the New York National Guard. Maggie's eventual obituary also said he "spent several years in military service." Neither reference mentions any battles or service outside the state of New York. A January 1869 notice in the Buffalo Courier also lists him as a member of a Masonic lodge, which we also assume had no significant battles.



Military Election.—The election to fill the office of major in the 68th regiment made vacant by the resignation of J. R. Babcock of Westfield, was held at Fredonia last Saturday afternoon, which resulted in the election of Erie T. Ward of Dunkirk. Mr. Ward is a West Point graduate and will fill the position creditably to the regiment and to himself.

Maggie gave birth to a daughter, Maud, in 1868, and a son, Charles C., a year later. By 1870, her parents, Sam and Polly, were living with them in Dunkirk, along with her younger sister, Hattie, and her niece, Emma Baldwin – the daughter of Maggie’s sister, Lucy. The Census that year listed Emma’s age as eleven, confirming the previous Census, which listed her as a year old in 1860. Her implied date of birth varied by a few years on later census reports, and the date on her tombstone puts it at 1850, a full nine years before she was actually born. To accept the date on the tombstone as true would mean her parents passed a ten-year old girl off as an infant for the 1860 Census in Iowa, and her aunt passed off a twenty-year old woman as an eleven-year old girl for the 1870 Census. Neither scenario makes sense, so the tombstone must be incorrect.

The New York enumerator, however, did make a few errors, adding “te” at the end of Hattie’s formal name, “Harriet”, and added an extra “t” at the end of “Margaret”. Like the enumerators in Iowa, he also spelled Emma’s last name “Baldwin”, even though the family’s name was, in fact, “Balding”; but family members themselves varied in which name they used (*cf.* “Lucy”, *above*). One can imagine the Dunkirk enumerator scribbling down the information as Maggie or some other family member related it. When they came to Emma’s birthplace, he wrote “Eoway”, then realized the speaker was mispronouncing “Iowa”, so he crossed it out and corrected it. Regional accents were substantially different before the advent of talking pictures and television. The Census also shows the Ward’s real estate in 1870 was worth \$1,500 and their personal estate, \$300. Sam and Polly valued their own personal estate at \$800.

Five years later, Sam, Polly and Hattie were still living with the Wards, along with a 20-year old servant named Maggie “Ragan”. Emma, evidently, had returned to Iowa, where her parents had split up, leaving her mother, Lucy, on her own to rear Emma and her brother, Finley. The 1875 Census for Dunkirk lists both E.T. and Sam as property owners and “Native” born voters, which, in Sam’s case, was untrue because he was born in Ireland.

The July 6, 1875, edition of the Buffalo Daily Courier carried an extensive article by someone using the pen name, Black Hand, concerning “Prehistoric Miners” in the Lake Superior copper lands, as well as the Cahokia Indian Mounds in southern Illinois. E.T., as it happened, had become well acquainted with the mounds while living with Maggie’s sister, Julia, in nearby Salem, Illinois, before her death in March 1854. After discussing various scholarly theories, the author said, “I had addressed a letter to my friend Erie T. Ward, of Dunkirk”, asking for a description of the mounds in the ‘American Bottom’ of Illinois. E.T.’s reply is worth including here because it: a) is in his own words, b) demonstrates that his West Point education covered more than military tactics, c) shows his personal interests went beyond his employment, and d) sheds light on his time with Maggie’s sister, Julia.

Upon the east bank of the Mississippi river, commencing near Alton, Illinois, is what is called the ‘American Bottom,’ extending from the place named along the river to Cairo

– a distance of over two hundred miles below – intersected at two of three points by approaches to ‘bluffs’ by the river – its general width, however, is nine or ten miles.

This “bottom”, it would seem, was the favorite territory for the operations of the ancient-mound builders, who covered the entire area with their works, which may be numbered now by thousands, and ranging in size from the small hillock of a few feet in circumference and height to immense structures covering acres. The most extensive and important of them is one situated about four miles from East St. Louis, near the old stage road leading from St. Louis to Vincennes, which I visited and examined in 1853. Its situation is not far from the old French settlement near Cahokia.

It is in the form of a truncated pyramid, and was evidently laid out with a due regard to the points of the compass, standing, as it does, with its longer side exactly east and west, and its ends north and south – I say *ends*, as it is not square. No careful measurement was ever made; but, on pacing along the base lines, it was found to be about seven hundred feet long by five hundred feet wide, embracing an area of about eight acres and rising to a height of ninety feet. It was constructed with three terraces extending around the structure – each terrace was approached from the one below by means of an inclined roadway. The plain on top was, probably, not far from three acres.

This immense mound must have contained more than twenty million ... cubic feet of material, and, notwithstanding its situation upon a bottom subject to periodical inundations, it has retained its general shape remarkably – probably owing to its great size – as nearly all other and smaller ones were either built circular, or elliptical, or had been worn over into these shapes by the action of water, and most likely the latter.

At the time I visited it, 1853, Mr. Page, of the firm of Page and Bacon, bankers, in St. Louis, owned the land upon which the mound stands and had summer residence upon its summit, which was laid out and planted with trees, shrubbery, etc., but had otherwise left the mound as nearly undisturbed as possible. When first found by the white man it – as well as the entire bottom – was covered with a dense growth of heavy timber; this having been pretty much cut away, the view from the summit over the plain was very extensive, and from thence scores of smaller mounds could be seen.

It occurred to me to look around for any depressions from which the immense amount of earth requisite for such a structure had been taken, but none could be distinguished – such depression would, of course, in the lapse of time, fill up from the overflowing of the river and assume the same appearance as other parts of the bottom. How, where, or for what purpose these mounds were built remains a matter of conjecture.

That there were immense bodies of men employed in the construction of these works is certain, and this alone would indicate that the country was then occupied by an agricultural people, and doubtless, populous too, as no other could well furnish the necessary supplies for such large numbers of non-productive men.<sup>8</sup>

Within two years, Sam, Polly and Hattie moved to California, and the Wards moved, first, to Cincinnati and then to Atlantic City, Iowa, where Maggie’s sister, Lucy, and niece, Emma Baldwin, were living. Then, in November 1881, E.T. died, just shy of his 57<sup>th</sup> birthday. On December 8, Maggie and her nephew, Finley Baldwin (i.e., Lucy’s son), petitioned the County’s Circuit Court for a Guardian Bond by which she would take charge of the financial needs of her chil-

dren: Maud, who was fourteen at the time, and Charles, who was twelve or thirteen. The “estate” to be managed was a \$1,250 life insurance policy.

Six years later, Maggie was back in New York, where Dunkirk’s 1887 City Directory listed her as E.T.’s widow, living at 411 Central Avenue with then-19 year-old Maud as her boarder. Charles lived in Buffalo and came for Thanksgiving and other celebrations (*Buffalo Courier*, Dec. 1, 1889). In late 1889, though, she became so ill that her sister, Hattie, came all the way from California to care for her; but on February 7, Maggie died at age 51, two weeks shy of her birthday. They held her funeral the next Monday afternoon at the Dunkirk Methodist Church and buried her in the Forest Hill Cemetery of Fredonia, three miles south of Dunkirk. Her obituary from Montezuma confirmed that her family and friends called her “Maggie” rather than “Margaret” (*Auburn Bulletin*, February 25, 1890), but this one from Buffalo was more formal:



Mrs. Margaret A. Ward, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Bell of Auburn and widow of the late Erie T. Ward, died February 7, aged 51 years. She was born in Auburn, where she was married February 22, 1858, to Erie T. Ward, and came to Dunkirk and had since lived here except a few years spent in Cincinnati and Atlantic City, Iowa, where her husband died. Mr. Ward was a graduate of West Point and spent several years in military service. She leaves two children, Charles C. Ward of Buffalo and Miss Maud. Her sister, Miss Hattie Bell, was with her during her sickness.

**Henry Clay (H.C.):** See “Scandal” below.

**Harriet (Hattie):** Hattie was born in 1841 on the farm near Montezuma and lived with her parents until they died in the 1880s. She went along in the 1860s when they moved in with Maggie’s family in Dunkirk, and then, again, on their journey to Sacramento. The 1870 Census in Dunkirk listed her as a “Servant”, meaning she helped out around the house, but the next one, in California, identified her as a “School Teacher”, which is surprising because no record has surfaced showing she had either training or experience in that. From this distance, her life appears to have consisted of farming, housework, and looking after her parents. It’s hard to imagine her venturing out every day to get training or teach, especially when her parents were edging into their eighties; but it’s possible. In the interest of thoroughness, we’ll also note that, in 1882, while her parents were still in Sacramento, the San Francisco directory included a listing for a single woman named Hattie Bell. There were at least a few of them in California at the time.

Apart from her sister's obituary (*cf. above*), the first news reference to Hattie seems to have been this note, which appeared a year and a half after she had cared for Maggie in Dunkirk:

Miss Harriet Bell, daughter of the late Samuel Bell, a former resident of this village, who died several years ago at San Francisco, Cal., is visiting friends and relatives at her former home after an absence of twenty years. (*Auburn Argus, September 30, 1892*)

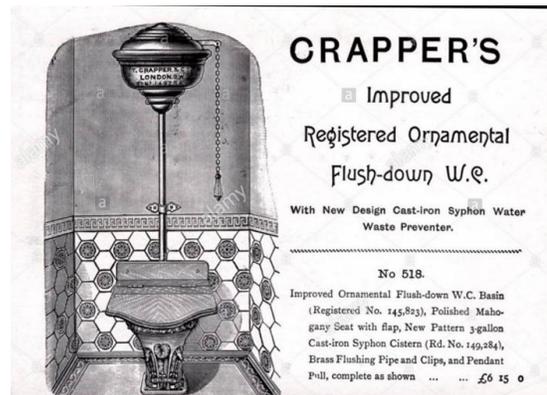
Then, less than four years later, the *Auburn Argus* carried this notice: "Miss Hattie Bell of Buffalo, late of Sacramento, Cal., and a former resident of Montezuma, is visiting relatives and friends in this and other localities after an absence of about thirty years." The item exaggerated how long she'd been absent, but what stands out is its reference to her being from Buffalo. From 1889 into 1890, she had stayed with Maggie in Dunkirk, which folks in Montezuma, evidently, considered part of the Buffalo region. Her name also is missing from Sacramento city directories from 1889 through 1901, and she visited Montezuma twice during that period. The implication is that she spent all of the 1890s in Dunkirk before returning to Sacramento, where the city directory listed her on 9<sup>th</sup> Street in 1901, 7<sup>th</sup> Street in 1903, and J Street the year after that. Then she disappeared for good, and her gravesite, if it exists, has yet to be found. It's as if, after spending most of her life in the shadow of her parents and siblings, Hattie, like Gen. MacArthur's old soldiers, just faded away.

**Charles:** In comparison with men of today, Charles was a little guy, but at 5'6 ½", he was the exact average height of American men born in the 1840s. Genetics in combination with the national average suggests all the men in his family – father, brothers, uncles and cousins – were around that height as well. His first cousin, Wm. Henry Bell, certainly was, and so was Henry's son, Lester (*cf. Chp 11*). According to his 1896 voter registration, Charles also had a light complexion, blue eyes, brown hair and no visible marks or scars (*cf. 1896 Voter Registration, Quincy Precinct, Plumas County, CA*). Apart from that, we have no clue what he looked like.

Charles was two years old when his father won election to the New York State Assembly in 1847, six or seven when the family went bankrupt and 18 when his Irish-born grandfather, William Bell Sr., died. At around age 21, he made his way out to Sacramento, California, which, at the time, had close to 21,000 residents. In January 1867, he was studying to be an apothecary, the forerunner of a modern-day pharmacist. New York had its own array of good schools in those days, and the journey to Sacramento took at least twelve days – a trip one had to be really committed to pursue – so it's reasonable to assume Charles made the trek, not only for school, but to be near his newly-widowed brother, William, who lived near Sacramento at the time.

Sacramento was growing rapidly during that era, which created a huge array of everyday problems for residents. The Sacramento River flowed north and south on the western edge of the business district where Charles lived, and disastrous floods in the early 1860s led the City to raise the level of streets and buildings as much as 12 to 15 feet. Public sanitation, though, re-

mained abominable and the gagging stench was constant. Horse droppings and garbage filled every street, and large animal carcasses could lie rotting for days. “There were more than 20 [commercial] stables in the city, with private stables in the alleys behind many homes,” and an estimated eight to ten tons of animal waste dropped onto city streets daily. Each city block had as many as 64 outhouses, and most of the indoor toilets people began installing in the 1870s drained onto their own property. Some property owners illegally connected their new septic lines to a city sewer system designed only for storm water run-off, so human waste ran directly into the streets and Sacramento River.



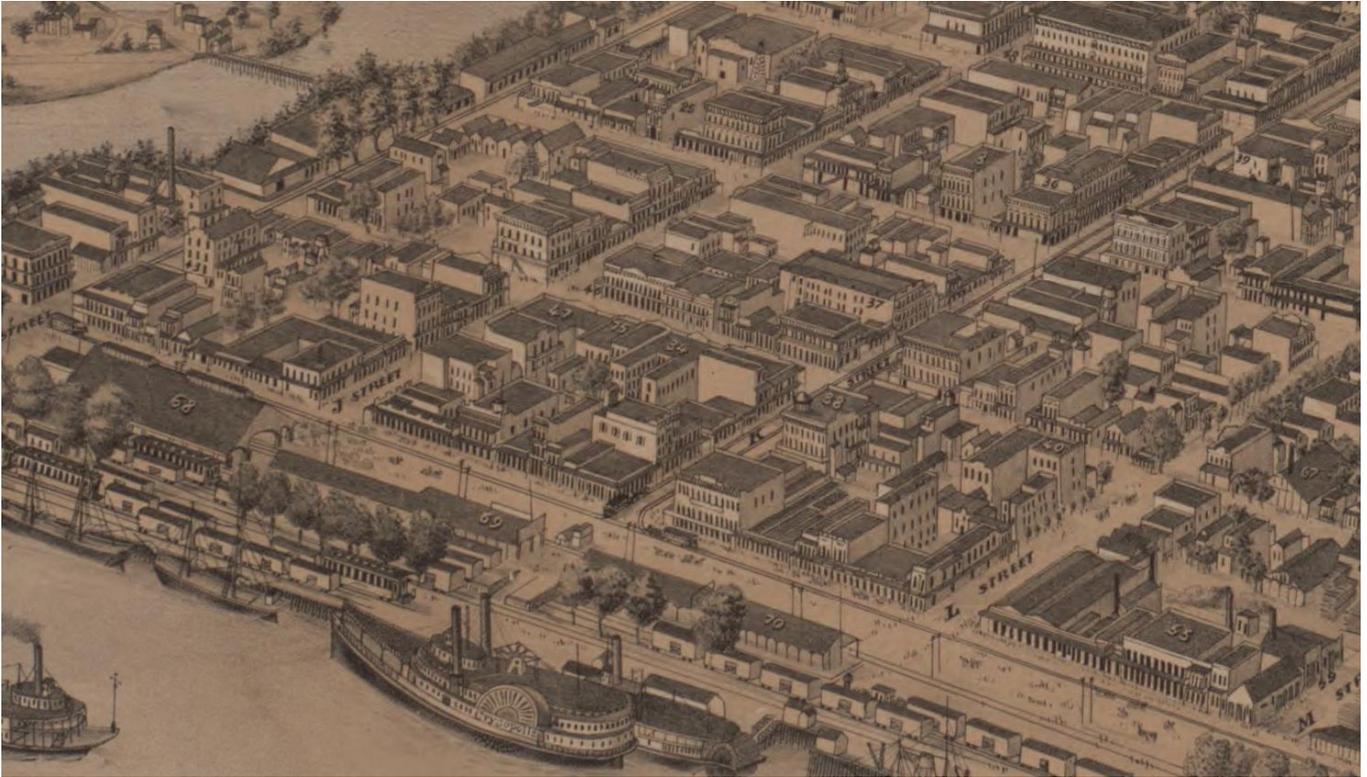
Other toilets and sinks emptied into people’s own basements, “where noxious fumes rose in the living quarters above ... Sacramento in the late nineteenth century was an unhealthy, unpleasant, uncomfortable place to live.” One marvels that Charles decided to make it his home. (*Water, Sewers, and Public Health, St. Francis of Assisi Parish*. <https://www.stfrancisparish.com/history/chapter4/index.htm#saloons>)



While in school, he worked at the George Wait Drugstore and lived above it in the “Morse Building” at K Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> St., which is now a chocolate shop in Sacramento’s restored and preserved historic district (*cf. image left*). Colleges in and around Sacramento seem not to have published student names in that era, so there’s no way to know which one Charles attended. Wherever he went, he finished the course of study within two years, which was the norm in that era, even for

medical doctors. The 1868 Voter Register then listed him as an “apothecary”, still living above Wait’s drugstore, but now working full-time there as a “clerk”, meaning he was George Wait’s apprentice. He was still there in 1870, along with two other apothecaries: Otto Walther, a German immigrant whose family also lived in the building, and William Martfeld.

The portion of the 1870 “Bird’s-Eye View of Sacramento” shown here was the business district where Charles lived, which is now a historically preserved area – although that has nothing to do with Charles. True North is to the upper left of the drawing, and the Sacramento River runs north and south at the bottom, as do the railroad tracks and depot alongside it. Streets crossing from the bottom left corner to upper right corner head due east. The broad avenue next to the railroad tracks is Front (1<sup>st</sup>) Street, and the streets parallel to it are numbered: 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, and so on. The streets perpendicular to Front Street and stretching away to the upper right are alphabetical, beginning with “I” Street at the far left, then J Street, K Street (ending near the bow of the side-wheeler) and, at the lower right, L Street. You might want to use a magnifying glass as you read along here.



### Bird's-Eye View of Sacramento, CA - 1870

The two-story Morse Building, where Charles lived and worked during the late 1860s and early 1870s is pictured just right of center, at the northeast corner of K Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (with its long wall toward the river). The drugstore occupied the ground floor, and both Charles and the Walther's lived on the second floor.



Charles and Otto then went into partnership in 1870, the same year the “Bird’s-Eye View” drawing came out, and bought George Wait’s drugstore, changing its name to “Walther and Bell”. Otto, twelve years older than Charles, was married with a growing family, which made for tight quarters, so Charles moved sometime before 1875 to the International Hotel at the southwest corner of K Street and Fourth (*cf.* #39, *upper right of Bird’s-Eye View*). When his parents and Hattie arrived a few years later (*cf.* “Sputter”, *above*), they shared an over-store apartment with Charles at the northwest corner of J Street and Second (*cf. photo, left*). By

1880, Charles and Otto had gone separate ways, Otto taking over the “Boston” drugstore at J Street and Third while Charles and a new partner, Frederick Kolliker, opened “Bell & Kolliker” at J Street and Sixth, three blocks north of Otto’s new store.



That partnership folded as well and, sometime before 1884, Charles opened a pharmacy of his own at the southwest corner of K Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (*cf. photo right, previous page*). It was directly across from where he had lived and worked as a student, but like his previous ventures, it was short-lived and, as the decade came to a close, he was managing the George Parker Pharmacy at 625 J Street.

Charles wasn't incompetent; he was just too distracted to address all the minutia involved in running a drugstore: ordering and tracking inventory, staying abreast of medical advancements, preparing proper dosages, interacting with customers, paying bills. It required ongoing attention to detail, but throughout the 1870s and 1880s, Charles's attention was most definitely elsewhere. His professional interests had less to do with preparing and dispensing remedies than with finding and extracting the elements that went into the remedies. He was so engrossed with prospecting and mining, he neglected his retail and partnership obligations to go off on long expeditions. The romance of mining, in fact, brought him romance of another kind.

During the 1850s and early 1860s, William and Sarah Bates had been a young working class couple in Bethnal Green, England, halfway between the City of London and Stratford. They were in their mid-thirties and already had eight children when, in 1865, they packed up their household and headed for America, where they added another two children over the next five years. From the east coast, they made their way immediately to Salt Lake City in the Utah Territory (*cf. 1869 photo*), where Thomas worked as a shoemaker. Making shoes was a trade he



could have plied just about anywhere, so going directly from London to Salt Lake City, the domain of the Mormons, is compelling evidence he and Sarah had converted to Mormonism in England, then left to join all the other latter-day saints in what Mormons considered to be "Zion", the Promised Land. Saints in the Promised Land, evidently, still needed shoes.

Droves of non-Mormons also were showing up there, lured by emerging opportunities in mining and industry. The Mormon leader, Brigham Young, at first considered the influx of "Gentiles" a threat, but soon came to see at least some as potential converts. That and economic development then inspired him to help finance work on the transcontinental railroad, which was completed just north of the Great Salt Lake in 1869, with a branch line to Salt Lake City a year later. The western terminus of the railroad, as it happened, was Sacramento.

The Bates' fourth child, Elizabeth, was around ten years old when her family arrived in the Utah Territory, and in her early twenties when she encountered Charles, a through and through Methodist, who was there prospecting for minerals. The only mystery is how she managed to remain unmarried so long in that culture, in which the primary role of females was to marry at a young age and bear children. In fact, before the federal and territorial governments intervened, some

Mormon men (including Brigham Young) had several wives at a time. Charles and Elizabeth, in any event, became sufficiently smitten with one another that she returned with him to Sacramento, where they married on the Fourth of July in 1880. (cf. Marriage License, next page)

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## MARRIAGE LICENSE.

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO.**

**These Presents** are to authorize and license any Justice of the Supreme Court, <sup>Justice of the Peace</sup> District or County Judge, Justice of the Peace, Mayor, Priest, or Minister of the Gospel, within the County of Sacramento, to join in marriage Charles Bell, a resident of Sacramento, County of Sacramento, State of California, aged 25 years, and Elizabeth Bates a resident of Salt Lake, County of Utah Territory State of California, aged 23 years,

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**In Witness Whereof** I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Seal of the County Court of the County of Sacramento, State of California, this third day of July A. D. 1880


Thos. H. Bessley  
 County Clerk of the County of Sacramento.  
 By J. H. Merrill  
 Deputy Clerk.

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**STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO, SS.**

I Herely Certify, That I believe the facts stated in the above License to be true, and that upon due inquiry there appears to be no legal impediment to the marriage of said Charles Bell and Elizabeth Bates; that said parties were joined in marriage by me, on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of July A. D. 1880, in Sacramento said County and State; that Wm. H. Hall, a resident of Sacramento County of Sacramento, State of California, and M. C. Bates, a resident of Sacramento County of Sacramento, State of Cal., were present as witnesses of said ceremony.

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**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this 7 day of July A. D. 1880

R. Bentley  
Clerg.

Filed for record, at request of R. Bentley, this 26 day of July A. D. 1880, at 12 min. past 11 o'clock A.M.

The Rev. Robert Bentley, who officiated at the wedding, was the pastor of the Sixth Street Methodist Episcopal Church, a block and a half from Charles' current store. The witnesses, Thomas H. Hall and M.E. Gates, could have been friends of Charles and Elizabeth, but the only thing certain is that they weren't family members. Thomas was the same age as Charles and employed as a store clerk, so it's possible he worked in Charles' drugstore, but there's no way to verify it. The only M.E. Gates in that year's Sacramento City Directory was a freight agent with the Sacramento and Placerville Railroad, who lived at 1325 'O' Street. Placerville was on the rail route from Sacramento to El Dorado County, which was a major mining area, so perhaps M.E. and Charles became acquainted during his retreats in that region. The father-in-law of his brother, W.S., was mining in El Dorado County as early as the 1850s. Or perhaps everyone belonged to the same church, which is doubtful.

A more pressing challenge is to figure out exactly when Elizabeth was born. The 1870 Census in Salt Lake City listed her age as 14, which would mean she was born in 1855 or 1856. The 1880 Marriage License indicates she was 23, which would make her birth year 1856 or 1857, but other government records put it as late as 1865, which is absurd. At least one family genealogical site says she was born November 22, 1855, which seems as good as any other date, so we'll go with that. She won't mind.

Sacramento's 1880 U.S. Census is dated June 3, almost a month to the day before Charles and Elizabeth married; but her name doesn't appear in it, nor is she listed in either the Sacramento City Directory or the Census for Utah. For now, then, we have no way of unpacking exactly how and when she and Charles came to know one another or how and when she arrived in Sacramento. She remains a mysterious figure. The woman in the photo at right, by the way, is Ida Elizabeth Bates, who was born in 1875 and, so far as we know, had no relationship whatever to the Elizabeth Bates who married Charles; but she was so lovely that posting her photograph here can only uplift anyone fortunate enough to be reading this.



The year 1880 was especially busy for Charles. He was running (or running from) the drugstore with Fred Kolliker, living with his sister and elderly parents, wooing and marrying Elizabeth, and wandering hither and yon with his brother, William (W.S.), in search of ore deposits in other states. In fact, he, W.S., and another partner, John Mason, discovered a major nickel deposit in Nevada that year. A mile west of there, George Lovelock discovered nickel and cobalt deposits in Cottonwood Canyon and then financed a mining venture, with Charles as Superintendent. An unattributed University of Nevada article titled "Nickel Deposits in Cottonwood Canyon" describes the two discoveries, but appears to contradict itself, saying, first, that Lovelock discovered the second lode and, then, that Lovelock and Charles discovered it together. Lovelock, at

least, must have purchased the site because the mine carried only his name. A later report said, "The Nickel Mine was worked from its discovery until 1890 when it was shut down on account of litigation; reopened in 1904, and again closed down in 1908" (*Mining Districts and Mineral Resources of Nevada*, 1932, p. 11). An 1889 news update back in Auburn, New York, said Charles had become "...the head of the Nickel Plate Mining Company of Nevada and is on the road to fortune" (*Auburn Weekly News and Democrat*, December 26, 1889). Someone associated with the University of Nevada later compiled details of what happened.



There are two nickel-cobalt mines in the Table Mountain district that were of sufficient importance to induce a number of attempts at exploitation ...The deposits were situated in the vicinity of the old camp of Bolivia about 3 miles up Cottonwood Canyon on the east slope of the Stillwater Range.

The Nickel Mine at Camp Bolivia was discovered in 1880 by John Mason, **Charles Bell, and his brother, William**. The Lovelock or Cobalt mine, about 1 mile west, was located at the same time by George Lovelock, Sr. The mines were prospected for a number of years ... following their discovery, and the first ore is said to have been shipped to Swansea, Wales, from the Lovelock mine by W. S. Keyes.

In the late eighties the company erected a sulfuric acid leaching plant at the mine at a cost of \$50,000 ... Later, a 5-ton-capacity water-jacketed furnace was erected at the Nickel mine, but it blew up a short time after it was placed in operation.

There was formerly a road up the canyon to the mines, but it has been completely washed out, and the mines at present can be reached only on foot through a steep-walled canyon.

According to Lincoln, nickel and cobalt deposits were discovered by George Lovelock and **Charles Bell** about 1882. Production was chiefly from the Lovelock Mine until 1886. About 200 tons of ore was shipped to England for reduction, 90 tons during 1885. The Mine reopened during 1898 and an attempt was made to smelt, but there was little or no production. There was less work on the Nickel Mine - one car of ore was shipped to Camden, New Jersey. It was reopened in 1904 and an attempt was made to leach ore with sulphuric (*sic*) acid. A small smelter was built, but there was only 50 tons of pro-

duction (matte.) Idle since 1907. (University of Nevada, *Nickel Deposits In Cottonwood Canyon*)<sup>9</sup>

The Reno Evening Gazette provided periodic updates on the Cottonwood mining camp over a twenty-three year period. The grammar here is original, but some of the spelling is not.

1883 August 29: S.R. Young of Lovelock has sent a fine specimen of nickel ore to this office. It is from the mine of that mineral, at Cottonwood, owned by **Bell**, Curtis & Co. It is from the lowest level of the mine, the permanency of which is now established without a doubt.

1883 September 20: Reports brought by persons just arrived at Lovelock's from the Cottonwood Canyon nickel mines are very encouraging. The ledges increase as depth is attained, and carry ore in quantity that assays from 40 to 63 per cent of metal. It is stated on good authority that New York men are about to purchase the mines, the consideration being \$250,000, but the owners do not care to sell even at those figures, knowing that they have a good property, with an unlimited quantity of ore in sight.

1884 May 22: Two Chicago experts arrived at Lovelock last Thursday and left for Cottonwood Canyon to examine the nickel mines belonging to **Bell**, Curtis & Co, and the cobalt and nickel mines of George Lovelock.

1886 August 15: The English companies who bought Lovelocks' nickel mine have men on the ground now looking at the property.

1887 July 14: Only a few men are at work in the Cottonwood nickel mines in Churchill County, and consequently the camp is very quiet. A party of mining experts are expected there soon, and if they report favorably on George Lovelock's mine it will, in all probability, be sold.

1897 January 30: Operations have again resumed in the nickel mines at Cottonwood, thirty miles south of Lovelock.

1897 September 13: A SAD ACCIDENT - A Life of Usefulness and Honor Ended. The national Nickel Company has been for some years experimenting with its ore in Cottonwood Canyon, near Lovelocks [sic] and a few weeks ago Dr. C.P. Turner of Hartford, Connecticut came out and set in motion the works patented by him for reducing the ore by a chemical-electric process. He was succeeding entirely to his satisfaction and was planning to return to his home and his family, when, on Wednesday last, he had a terrible fall which caused his death It 6 o'clock on Friday evening.

1902 November 7: Colonel D.J. Noyes has arrived at Lovelock and tells the Tribune that the American Nickel Company will resume work on its properties at Cottonwood, Churchill county, at once. Colonel Noyes estimates there are 16,000 tons of nickel ore in the company's mines, which is worth from 50 to 60 cents per pound and represents a total value of \$17,020,000.

1904 December 22: NICKEL MINE TO BE OPENED Eastern Capital Sends Man to Nevada. An expert mining engineer was recently sent to Nevada to make an inspection

of the mines of the American Nickel Company. The engineer has reported that he found the mines were of no recent discovery, having been first found about thirty-five years ago. The property is forty-nine miles by wagon road southeasterly from Lovelock, Humboldt County, Nev. It costs \$20 a ton to get freight to the nearest town. At the time of the engineer's visit in November the entire force, it is stated, consisted of one engineer, one fireman, a superintendent, cook, and one miner.

1906 September 17: **Charles Bell**, superintendent of the American Nickel Company's mines at Nickel, or more familiarly known as Cottonwood, was in town over Sunday. Mr. Bell stated that they have been making good progress in the development of their properties this season. Even since the installation of the new boiler, air compressor, pump, and other machinery this spring then have been sinking or crosscutting, always in ore of greater or less value. At the 400-foot level they ran 130 feet in good ore and found only one of the vein walls. They will soon begin sinking to the 500-foot level, and are fast developing one of the largest nickel mines in the United States, if not in the world.

In the midst of all that, Charles registered to vote in 1896 while staying near Quincy in Plumas County, 145 miles north of Sacramento. There's no way to know whether Elizabeth accompanied him on any of those treks, but having come all the way from England to spend her teen years in frontier Salt Lake City, she was surely tough enough to do so. She and Charles also had endured serious heartache and loss through the births and early deaths of three children. Sacramento City Cemetery records show that, in addition to Charles' parents, the Bell family's burial plot includes: 1) an "unnamed infant" (1888), 2) Leighton R. Bell, who died of pneumonia at eighteen months in 1892, and 3) Gladys O. Bell, who died April 30, 1895. The 1900 Census indicated Elizabeth had given birth to two children, neither of whom had survived. The 1910 Census said only that they had no children, which, at that point, was true.

Burying their children in Sacramento suggests they lived either there or somewhere nearby during the 1890s, but Charles, like Hattie, doesn't appear in any Sacramento City Directory from that decade. The 1893 directory, however, includes a listing for "Bell Lizzie Mrs, opr Cap T and T Co, r 2415 F." In translation, that means "Mrs. Lizzie Bell, operator for the Capital Telephone and Telegraph Company, residing at 2415 'F' Street". Whether she was Elizabeth Bates Bell is anyone's guess, but it's fun to imagine that "our" Elizabeth might have gone by "Lizzie". The directory listing appeared only that one year, 1893, but that would be consistent with a lifestyle that entailed frequent moves among mining camps out in the wilderness.

The Bells eventually landed in San Francisco, where the 1900 City Directory listed Charles as a "miner" living at 786 Post Street, an address shared with three other couples and a single adult male. The neighborhood lay between the so-called Tenderloin District and the charmingly named "Polk Gulch". By 1905, they had moved across the bay to 4138 Hillside Avenue in Oakland, and Charles identified himself as a "Mining Engineer". The listing remained the same in 1906, the year of the infamous earthquake, but then, in 1907, another Charles Bell, a carpenter

with the middle initial 'S', appeared in the directory at the same address, and Charles Bell the mining engineer wasn't listed at all; nor was Elizabeth ... or Lizzie, or whomever.

The 1910 Census then found them staying with Charles' nephew, who also was named Charles Bell, but with the middle initial 'L'. He was the youngest son of Charles' by-then-deceased brother, W.S., and his wife was the liltingly named Leah Valentine Bell. The younger Charles worked that year as a sales clerk in a furniture store, while his uncle, who had identified himself as a miner on the 1900 Census, was now a "mining superintendent". Then, sometime between June 1910 and November 1911, Elizabeth died at age fifty-five or fifty-six. Consistent with her life in the shadows, no one today seems to know the location of her grave, presuming she had one. If she did, it wouldn't be surprising to find it marked with an exotic stone – a chunk of nickel perhaps.

According to a U.S. Consular Registration Certificate (*cf. below*), Charles left his home in California on November 13, 1911, and arrived a week later in Ameca, a village in Jalisco, Mexico, a bit west of Guadalajara. Although Elizabeth had died, he remained close enough to her family to name her younger brother, Charles Bates of Salt Lake City, as the person to contact in case of accident of death. The first Charles was in Mexico for a mining project and, two months later, the Consulate issued a similar certificate to his business partner, Harry Thorn Payne, although whoever typed the certificate misspelled Harry's middle name as "Tom". Their Consular certificates expired in 1913, but we don't know how long either Charles or Harry remained there – or, for that matter, exactly what they were doing.

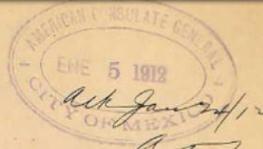
The last indisputable reference to Charles is in the 1920 Census, when he was 74 years old and sharing a home with then 75-year old Harry in El Dorado County's Cosumnes Township. El Dorado County, in the Sierra Mountains northwest of Sacramento, is where Lewis Garsey, the father-in-law of Charles' brother, W.S., was mining for gold in the 1850s (*cf. "William" above*). Sixty-five years later, Charles and Harry were doing the same thing.

The 1920 Census enumerator had even more difficulty with Harry's name than did the U.S. Consulate, spelling it "Harry Thom Boyne". He was from Illinois, the son of British immigrants, and had been a photographer and, then, a journalist before getting involved in mining with Charles. As of 1897, he was editor and publisher of "Field Sports" in San Francisco, while his wife, Aurilla, was a portrait painter. Then, in 1904, he was a "Deputy Fish Commissioner" there. Harry sailed to Honolulu in 1927 at the age of 82 and then died in Los Angeles the day after Christmas in 1932. He was 88. The unresolved question is what Aurilla was doing while he was up in the mountains with Charles back in 1920. People want to know.

A few different Californians named Charles Bell were born around 1845 and died there in the early 1920s, but none, so far, has turned out to be the son of Sam and Polly. The only thing certain is that he was their last surviving child. If he made it to 80, he also would have been their longest-living child. For now, the winner of that particular contest has yet to be determined.



(FORM No. 210—CONSULAR.)  
(Corrected April 22, 1910.)



### CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION OF AMERICAN CITIZEN.

I, Samuel E. Magill (Name of consul.) **Consul** (Title.) of the United States of America at Guadalajara, Mexico (Name of place.) hereby certify that Charles Bell (Name of person registered.) is registered as an American citizen in this consulate. He was born Nov. 9th.-1845. (Date of birth.) at Montezuma, N. Y. (Place of birth.) and is a citizen of the United States by birth ~~and~~. He left his residence in the United States on Nov. 13th.-1911 (Date.) and arrived in Ameca, Jalisco, (Place of foreign residence.) on November 20th.-1911 (Date.) where he is now residing for the purpose of mining. (Reason why residing in foreign place.) He ~~is~~ <sup>was</sup> married to Elisabeth Batea. (Name of wife.) **(Deceased.)** who was born in (Place of birth of wife.) and resides at (Place of wife's residence.)

He has the following children:

Administration (Name of child.) 543 of 554 (Place of birth.) © 19

(Name of child.) born in (Place of birth.)  
 on (Date of birth.) and residing at (Place of residence.)  
 and (Name of child.) born in (Place of birth.)  
 on (Date of birth.) and residing at (Place of residence.)  
 and (Name of child.) born in (Place of birth.)  
 on (Date of birth.) and residing at (Place of residence.)

His local address is Ameca, Jalisco, Mexico.  
 The person to be informed in case of death or accident is Chas. Bates, Salt Lake City, Utah.  
 His citizenship of the United States is established by native birth of which he has (Nature of proof of citizenship produced.)  
 satisfied me.

This certificate is not a passport and its validity expires on January 4th.-1913. (Date of expiration.)

The following is the signature of Chas. Bell (Signature of person registered.)

In testimony whereof I have hereunto signed my name and affixed my seal of office.

[L. S.]

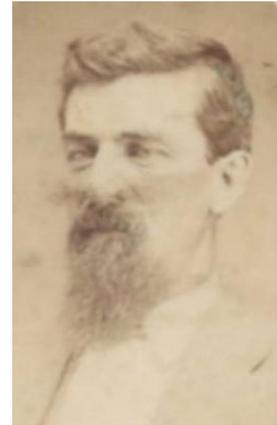
Samuel E. Magill  
 American Consul

(NO FEE.)

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## Scandal

**Henry Clay:** To distinguish him from a Bell cousin who also went by Henry (*cf. Chps 5 and 11*), we're referring to Sam and Polly's seventh child as "H.C." (*cf. photo, right – he looks marginally better without the smear over his nose*). After growing up on his parents' farm, he worked for a year as a farm laborer in 1859 while living in a house they owned on Montezuma's Morocco Street. Then, at age 21, he went off to Chicago and moved in with his sister, Carrie, her husband, and newborn daughter.



In less than a year, though, he was farming a parcel he bought in Michigan's Napoleon Township, ten miles southwest of Jackson. Then, a few months into that, he managed to woo and marry (in 1861) twenty-year old Marietta Augusta Van Slyke (b. 1841, *cf. photo left*). She too had come from New York, and had been living on a neighboring farm with her parents, Peter and Rachael, and five siblings (*1860 Census*). The Civil War was raging by then and H.C. was enumerated for the draft in June 1863, but there's no record of him having served. He and Marietta were still working the farm in Napoleon Township in 1870 and she was still the only Van Slyke child to have married or left home. She gave birth to four children within their first thirteen years together: Mary (b Sep 12, 1862), Ida (b 1864) in nearby Brooklyn, Michigan, Neva (b June 1869), and a son named Harris C. (b May 22, 1873), who went by "Harry". Soon after Harry's birth, they moved to 140 Jackson Street in Auburn, Indiana, where H.C. found work as a railroad master mechanic. Mary and Ida, in turn, each found a beau and married there: Mary to James McMichael in 1880 or 81, when she was about nineteen, and Ida to Henry Yesbera in 1882, when she was eighteen.

Right about then, everything went to hell. America's railroad industry had expanded tremendously during the 1870s and early 80s, and H.C. had taken advantage of that by starting his own business. With financial backing from friends, he soon became one of the area's most prominent railroad contractors. Then America's economic expansion gave way to the 1882-1885 Depression and H.C.'s company went bust. He himself was ruined and friends who had backed him endured heavy financial losses (*cf. Fort Wayne Sentinel, June 5 and 12, 1901, below*). Unable to face the consequences, he ran off in 1883, leaving his now impoverished family and debt-ridden friends to fend for themselves.

Marietta somehow made her way to Detroit with Harry and Neva that year, and H.C. might have gone, too. The 1884 Detroit City Directory (using data gathered the previous year) lists "Henry C. Bell" at 488 Lafayette Avenue, but he was already in the wind by the time the directory came out. The 1885 edition lists "Mrs. Marietta A. Bell (wid Henry)" at 202 Fifth Street, and she relo-

cated several more times over the next few years: 336 Porter in 1886, 268 Third Street in 1887, and 280 Third Street in 1888-1890. To move that frequently, she must have been renting furnished apartments and taking little or no furniture of her own. She never listed an occupation, so her source of income is unknown, but nineteen-year old Neva worked as a clerk in 1890 while boarding with her mother. Her brother, Harry, married in 1896 and went off to live elsewhere, but Neva was still with their mother and employed as a clerk in 1898, at which point their address was 82 Elizabeth Park near Detroit's Grand Circus Park. The 1900 Census shows Neva's employer was the Michigan Central Railroad. Having been around her father's business as a child, she would have been at home there, and railroading *per se* was still one of America's largest industries.

The reason Marietta began calling herself a widow after Henry left must have been to save face. Neighbors would have asked questions when she and her young children moved in, and saying her husband had died would have been far less scandalous and humiliating than revealing he had run off. Over time, that cover story reached distant Bell-Gilmore relatives, some of whom were genealogists, which is how the family's "Boston Transcript" (*cf. Chp 1*) of the 1930s came to say H.C. had been "killed in Michigan". The absence of any documents to confirm or explain that then confounded family historians for more than a century. Finally, in 2014, more than 130 years after H.C.'s disappearance, the Internet enabled genealogists Sue Mullane and Michael Ruddy to uncover what had become of him.

The year after he deserted his wife and children, H.C. sold 185 acres of Wisconsin farmland to his sister, Lucy Bell Balding, in Iowa (*cf. above*), so at least some of his siblings (and, perhaps, his parents) knew both his whereabouts and what he had done. None of them told Marietta, though, despite being in contact with her children. Then, when Lucy died in 1901, H.C. and Marietta's two middle children, Ida and Neva, travelled to Iowa for the funeral. Someone there – almost certainly their cousin Emma – let slip that H.C. was in the Pacific Northwest, where he had resumed work with the railroad. Ida and Neva, in turn, boarded another train and made their way to his home in Arlington, Washington – perhaps at a discount because of Neva's employment. After returning, Ida, who was still living in Indiana, told their story to a newspaper there. The ensuing article (*cf. Fort Wayne Sentinel, June 12, 1901, right*) says, upon seeing his daughters for the first time in eighteen years, H.C. "appeared greatly rejoiced". Sure he did.

#### FOUND THEIR FATHER.

Auburn, Ind., June 5.—Mrs. G. H. Yesbera, wife of a well known business man of this city, together with her sister, Miss Neva Bell, who left for the west some time ago in an effort to locate their father, Henry C. Bell, have been successful in their search, and father and daughters met at Arlington, Wash., where Mr. Bell is superintending the construction of a new line of railroad. The father appeared greatly rejoiced at meeting his daughters. Bell left Auburn eighteen years ago, and from that time his family practically lost track of him completely. He had been a prominent railroad contractor, but lost all his property and caused heavy losses to friends who had backed him. It is supposed he could not face these conditions and therefore left.

Ida might have wanted her Indiana friends to believe that, but either she or the reporter omitted a rather crucial detail: while still married to their mother, their father had taken a second wife, marrying Ida Susan Krick at Seattle's Snoqualmie Hotel in May 1890. He and Ida No. 2 (his daughter being Ida No.1) then lived in Idaho before he became a railroad contractor in Arlington, Washington. During that decade, Ida No. 2 – blissfully unaware of H.C.'s other family – gave birth to two daughters of her own, Ina and Georgia. Then Neva and Ida No. 1 knocked on the door. One can only imagine the delicious awkwardness of the moment.

**Marriage Certificate.**

STATE OF WASHINGTON, } SS.  
COUNTY OF KING, }

THIS CERTIFIES, That the undersigned, Rev. Geo. A. Sewichney  
by authority of a License bearing date the Twenty-first day of  
May A. D. 1890, and issued by the County Auditor  
of the County of King did, on the Twenty-second  
day of May A. D. 1890, at the Snoqualmie  
Hotel, in the City of Seattle County and  
State aforesaid, join in lawful wedlock Henry C. Bell of  
New Whatcom of the County of Whatcom (?) and  
Ida S. Krick, of Whatcom of the  
County of Whatcom (?) with their mutual assent, in the presence of  
Lena Krick, Mrs J. N. Jones and  
Lucius G. Talcott, witnesses.

In Testimony Whereof, witness the signatures of the parties to said ceremony,  
the witnesses, and myself, this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of May A. D. 1890

WITNESSES.	PARTIES.
<u>Lena Krick</u>	<u>Henry C. Bell</u>
<u>Mrs J. N. Jones</u>	<u>Ida S. Krick</u>
<u>Lucius G. Talcott</u>	<u>Rev. Geo. A. Sewichney</u>
<u>(Of Olympia)</u>	<u>Pastor Plymouth Church.</u>

This Certificate must be filed out and filed with the Probate Judge of the County WHERE THE CEREMONY IS PERFORMED, within three months after the ceremony.—See Sec. 2385 of Code.  
The Probate Judge's Fee for recording this Certificate is One Dollar, to be paid by the party applying for the license at the time each license is issued.—See Sec. 2386 of Code, as amended in 1886.

of Tacoma

Even if H.C. did, in fact, “greatly rejoice” at seeing his now fully adult daughters, he was soon out on his ear. He occupied a room at a boarding house the next year (1902) and, in 1904, was sharing a house in Seattle with his niece, Emma Balding – the snitch from Iowa. Perhaps comforting him amid his degradation and loss was her penance for leaking his whereabouts. On September 11, 1909, some five years after she came to live with him, H.C. died in Seattle. A note on the death certificate lists “Tumorous growth in region of stomach and liver” (*sic*) as the cause of death and adds, “undetermined whether cancer or not”. One wonders if any family members other than Emma went to the funeral. She then remained in the house they had shared until she herself died in 1918.

H.C.’s work in the Pacific Northwest had focused on timber, which led to his membership in the Woodmen of America. They, in turn, provided a headstone for him at Lake View Cemetery in Seattle. In keeping with their policy, they refuse to this day to share any information about him from their records, but it’s clear that H.C.’s marital status wasn’t his only deception. Early Census reports show he was born in 1839, but, as an adult, he varied the year across all manner of legal documents, including the Census – claiming repeatedly to be younger than he actually was. His vanity and deception then carried on into death, with both his death certificate and headstone listing his birth year as 1844.

By 1910, Ida No. 2 and her daughters had moved in with her parents in Bellingham, Washington. The Bellingham directory for that year includes a ‘D’ after her name, which might have stood for “Divorced”, which seems unnecessary. H.C.’s pre-existing marital status would have invalidated their marriage from the beginning, but, just as Marietta preferred the label “widow” to “abandoned wife”, Ida No. 2 might have preferred “divorcee” to “illegal spouse”. She remarried in 1913 – no doubt, after thoroughly researching the groom’s background.

Marietta’s last laugh was to outlive H.C. by ten years, dying at age 77 on March 4, 1919, in Redford, Michigan, an annexed township on the west side of Detroit. The official cause of death was “Old Age”, but, in another sense, it might have been unimaginable heartache. At the time of her passing, she had endured, not only the pain and humiliation of H.C.’s desertion, but also the premature deaths of three of her four children: Ida in 1912, Harry in 1918 and, in January of 1919, just two months before her own demise, Neva. Then, to complete the family’s dissolution, her eldest child, Mary, died on June 8, two months after Marietta. Marietta, Mary, Neva and, probably, Harry, too, all were interred at Detroit’s Woodlawn Cemetery. Neva’s grave, like those of her husband and mother-in-law, features a flat stone with her name and the dates of her birth and death; but the graves of Marietta, Mary, and Harris are unmarked and can’t be located precisely.

## Children of the Forlorn

**Mary:** Mary (*cf. photo, right*), the eldest child of H.C. and Marietta, grew to be an attractive young woman and, at 18, married James Montrose McMichael (b 1852 Canada), an attorney involved in real estate for the railroad. They apparently met through her father in Auburn, Indiana. She gave birth to their first child, Harry R., in Cook County, Illinois, in 1881 before they moved to the village of Manton, a new lumbering town established by the railroad in Michigan's Wexford County. She delivered a second child, Anna, on December 4, 1884, and then another daughter, Mabel, on June 13, 1889 (or 1891).



Some genealogists imply Mabel's father was someone other than James McMichael, labeling her in online posts as a "half-sister" to Harry and Anna. No one has yet provided compelling evidence to support that, but genealogist Michael Ruddy has said, while still married to James McMichael, Mabel's mother, Mary, might have become romantically involved with Charles Cooper, the editor of the Manton Gazette. Ruddy begins with the revelation that, in 1895, James was living with his sister, Amelia, in St. Paul, Minnesota, while Mary and the children remained in Manton. James then was back living with Mary in 1900, but a year later, had moved to another house in Manton, where he lived with their son Harry.<sup>11</sup> Then Cooper's wife died in 1903 and Mary divorced James in 1905. Just two days after the divorce, she married Cooper. Their bliss was short-lived, though, because in 1907 he died of the "grippe", a now outdated term for the flu.

Here's a chronology:

- 1880: Mary Bell marries James McMichael
- 1881: Birth of son, Harry, in Chicago
- 1884: Birth of daughter, Anna, in Manton, MI
- 1889 or 1891: Birth of daughter, Mabel, in Manton, MI
- 1895: James living in St. Paul, MN, and Mary in Manton
- 1900: James and Mary together in Manton with the three children
- 1901: James living with Harry, and Mary with daughters, all in Manton
- 1903: Mrs. Cooper dies
- 1905: Mary divorces James and marries Cooper two days later
- 1907: Cooper dies of the grippe

By April of 1910, Mary and her daughter, Mabel, had moved to Detroit's first ward, where they boarded together on Melbourne Avenue, a neighborhood of two story homes east of Woodward and seven blocks north of Grand Boulevard. Mary was a dressmaker at the time and Mabel, who married in August of that year, was a pattern designer.

On May 1, 1912, at age 49, Mary acquired a third husband, Frank Bosworth, who was farming west of Detroit in the un-annexed part of Redford Township. The license identifies her as “Mary Cooper Bell” and says she had just one previous marriage, which, unless she had one annulled, was an untruth.<sup>12</sup> Michael Ruddy says Bosworth soon took all her money and ended up in jail.

After all those marital woes and the loss of her entire childhood family (*cf. below*), Mary herself died of “apoplexy”, a now outdated term for a stroke, on June 8, 1919, at age 56. Her death certificate identifies her daughter, Anna McMichael Moore (“Mrs. John Moore”), as the “Informant”. Mary had been living in Redford Township, but her family (probably Anna) arranged for her burial in Detroit’s Woodlawn Cemetery next to her mother, Marietta.

**Ida:** In 1882, 18-year old Ida (i.e., “Ida No. 1”) married Henry Yesbera in Auburn, Indiana. They had two sons together, who were just eleven and six when Ida and their Aunt Neva set out, first, to the wedding in Iowa and, then, on the longer jaunt to Arlington, Washington, in search of their own scandalous father, the grandfather Ida’s sons would never know. Whether Ida ever told her sons, Elton and Charles, what she and Neva discovered is lost to history. She then died in 1912 at around age forty-eight.

**Neva:** In 1906, Ida’s amateur detective partner, Neva, married Edward Sowden, and her mother (Marietta) came to live with them. Edward had been a bookkeeper and then a mail carrier before becoming a secretary for a mining company, possibly the one mining salt beneath southwest Detroit. Neva had been a clerk for the Michigan Central Railroad in the 1890s (*cf. above*) and then, apparently, met Edward while working as a bookkeeper for the same mining company. A sidelight about Edward is that his mother, the daughter of a Scottish father and an Irish mother, was born “at-sea” in 1837 while her immigrant parents were on their way to America. Neva died at age 49 on January 5, 1919, in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Her reason for being there and cause of death are unknown, but she now lies in the Sowden family plot at Woodlawn Cemetery. She and Edward had no children and he reached the age of 85 before dying in 1955.



**Harry:** Harry, the youngest child, crossed the Detroit River to Walkerville, Ontario in 1896 and married Emma Yoe. She then gave birth in 1902 to a son, Marvin, who died from pneumonia just 19 months later. Harry and Emma divorced sometime later and he married Isabel MacLeod in 1911. Then, in 1914, while working as a clerk at the Ford Model T plant in Highland Park, Michigan, he had a mental breakdown of some kind and was committed to the Pontiac State Hospital, an “asylum for the insane”. He died there on August 20, 1918, at age 45, of what the resident quack described as “Exhaustion due to general paralysis of the insane”, meaning they had no idea what the problem was. Harry’s place of interment has been lost, but he might be in an unmarked grave near his mother and sister, Mary, at Detroit’s Woodlawn Cemetery.

## ENDNOTES – CHAPTER 4

- <sup>1</sup> Angled brackets, e.g., < >, indicate approximate dates. An angled bracket on one side only, e.g., < ), indicates the date next to it is an approximation or otherwise uncertain.
- <sup>2</sup> New York Land Records, 1630-1975, Cayuga County, NY, Reservation Deeds 1842-1853, Vol. I-J, pp. 474-77. Cf. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-L9WK-8BG1?i=625&wc=M7HR-HTP%4A358133001%2C358416901&cc=2078654>
- <sup>3</sup> As reported by Sue Mullane, Mullane Family Tree, <https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/14528583/person/20294936065/facts>
- <sup>4</sup> William Bell, “Last Will and Testament”, February 16, 1859, Cayuga County Records Retention Office, Auburn, NY, Box 44, p. 332, Recorded November 30, 1863.
- <sup>5</sup> With thanks to Sue Mullane (Mulane37), a descendant of Sam and Polly Bell, who posted this cemetery document on her family’s Ancestry.com site.
- <sup>6</sup> Ancestry.com. *North America, Family Histories, 1500-2000* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> “Pre-historic Miners”, Black Hand; Buffalo Daily Courier, Vol. XL, July 6, 1875. By coincidence, I myself visited the Cahokia mound in 1997, almost 150 years after Erie Ward and Julia Bell Ward were there, and more than twenty years before I became aware of their existence and place in our ancestry.
- <sup>9</sup> Reconnaissance of Mining Districts in Churchill County, Nevada (1940); William O. Vanderburg, U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Mines; cited by <http://www.them-or-us.com/sites/main.html>
- <sup>10</sup> San Francisco Earthquake, 1906; The Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives. <https://www.archives.gov/legislative/cla>
- <sup>11</sup> Harry McMichael was working as a machinist in Chicago in December, 1904, when he married a Detroit woman named Belle Jackson. The witnesses were Harry’s sister, Mabel McMichael, who was just 13 at the time, and the pastor’s wife, which suggests it was a small private wedding with no guests. The minister, E.W. Ryan, was the pastor of Detroit’s Simpson M.E. Church, where Mary’s second cousin, Lester Bell (b 1885), attended and, in 1907, played on the church’s baseball team. Mary’s grandfather, Samuel Bell, was an older brother of Lester’s grandfather, William Bell, Jr. Mabel herself married six years later, at age 19, although the marriage record lists her age as “20”. She was a “pattern maker” at the time and her husband, “Clarence Lovell” (sp) was a 22 year-old mechanic. According to her 1939 Social Security application, Mabel’s date of birth was June 13, 1891.
- <sup>12</sup> According to her third marriage record, Mary was 50 years old on April 30, 1912, which would make her date of birth sometime before April 30, 1862, but her death certificate lists her date of birth as September 12, 1862.